

# ELREC Newsletter

**Edinburgh & Lothians Racial Equality Council**

*Promoting Racial Equality and Fighting Racial Discrimination*



**Issue 2  
November 2004**

## Editorial

### TRIBUTE

**The last few months have been a very sad time** for many of us who are involved in the race equality field. We have lost three important friends and supporters.

Mohammed Saeed Arshad sadly took a heart attack during a friendly cricket game with the Lothian & Borders Police. Mr Arshad died at the age of 49. He was a great supporter of the Pakistani Cricket Club and an active member of the Pakistan Society.

Mujahid Hamid passed away peacefully in his sleep on 11 September 2004 at the age of 19. I have known Mujahid since he was 10. For me, it was a real privilege to have known Mujahid, to see him grow from a timid, quiet boy to an assertive young man. Mujahid became interested in equality work through my

contact with him. He was the first BME young person to be elected on the City of Edinburgh Council's Youth Council. I was and will always be very proud of him.

Most recently we lost Lord Yousaf Inait who passed away on 26 September 2004 at the age of 69. Lord Yousaf Inait has been a prominent and influential figure in race equality for the last 40 years. He was a founding member of ELREC. Lord Inait was a committed community activist. Amongst being involved in many management committees of voluntary organisations and government representative groups, he was also a key member of the Scottish Crime Prevention Council, City of Edinburgh Council Older People's Forum and a Justice of the Peace for Edinburgh. Lord Inait's death is a

great loss to race equality and many communities; he has worked tirelessly for the benefit of all communities in Edinburgh and in Scotland.

Our friends will be greatly missed and their work will be continued for a long time to come.

### MAINSTREAMING RACE EQUALITY

With the publication of the White Paper "Fairness for All – A New Commission for Equality & Human Rights", there appears to be a new drive towards a single equality agenda in many settings. Many of you may remember a partnership set up in August 2001 named "Rooting Out Racism" which is a joint declaration of intent and action against racism in the City of Edinburgh, the Lothians and the Scottish Borders. The signatories include City of Edinburgh Council, East Lothian Council, Forth Estuary Transport

### ELREC MANAGEMENT BOARD

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Authority, Lothian & Borders Fire Brigade, Lothian & Borders Police, Midlothian Council, NHS Lothian, NHS Borders, Scottish Borders Council, West Lothian Council and ourselves – Edinburgh & Lothians Racial Equality Council.

The partnership identified eight guiding principles which demonstrate their commitment and shared determination in tackling racism. For example, all people in the Lothians and Borders are entitled to expect equal protection and equal treatment from all public services; public services in the Lothians and Borders will recognise the reality of racism, its unacceptability in any form, and the need for positive action; and so on. Since the emergence of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, much of the energy and resources of individual statutory partners have been directed to meet their General and Specific Duties as required by the Act. The Rooting Out Racism guiding principles have been subsumed by the Duties.

In light of the single equality and diversity agenda, at the most recent meeting of Rooting Out Racism, it was proposed that the partnership will be renamed to Lothian and Borders Equalities Practitioners Group (LBEPG). The purpose of the new group is to enable officers to share good practice within the wider equality agenda including race equality. As the only member from the voluntary sector, it is yet to be decided whether ELREC will have an

active role within the proposed group.

Having learnt the proposal you may find yourself asking, on a practical level, how will this impact on race equality? Specifically how will the change effect the commitment pronounced by the declaration signed by the partners?

**ELREC would like to hear from you, members of ELREC, about your views of the proposed change.**

One of the guiding principles of the Rooting Out Racism is that "the policies and practices of the partners will be open to public participation, accountability and influence". Therefore it is vital that you express your opinions and help identify an effective way to combat racism.

Similarly, some members of the **Black and Minority Ethnic Community Safety Working Group (BMECSWG)** is proposing to expand the group to incorporate all hate crimes. With the imminent introduction of more statutory powers in tackling hate crime, it was felt that other equality groups have much to learn from how racist incidents have been managed. The expansion will also help public agencies streamline the support they offer to a wide ranging voluntary organisations. A meeting of the BME Community Safety Working Group has been scheduled for Tuesday 7

December 2004, 10:00am at the City Chambers.

**If you are interested in community safety issues, it is important that you attend this meeting to discuss and decide on the future direction for this group.**

ELREC is interested in any debate on race equality or equality in general. We would be happy to publish any comment or article you may have on the subjects. Please contact ELREC's office for more information.

*By Nina Giles  
Director*

## WHAT'S ON

### Race Equality Forum

Thursday 18 November  
2004  
6:30pm  
City Chambers  
High Street

### Black & Minority Ethnic Community Safety Working Group

Tuesday 7 December  
2004  
10:00am  
City Chambers  
High Street

# Community Development

## ELREC a pioneer in the fight against racial discrimination in the Lothians

On Wednesday 29 September 2004 Edinburgh and Lothians Racial Equality Council (ELREC) held an open day of which purpose was to raise awareness of its work throughout the 33 years of its existence. Moreover, it was also an opportunity to pay tribute to those who have contributed to make ELREC one of the most prominent organisations in the fight against racial discrimination and injustices in Edinburgh and the Lothians.

***ELREC was established 1971 during difficult times when combating racial discrimination was not high on the agenda***

ELREC was established 1971 during difficult times when combating racial discrimination was not high on the agenda of central and local governments.

The story of ELREC started when a group of people, many of whom are still with us today, felt that the rights and well-being of BME individuals were not safeguarded enough. Therefore, it was high time that an official group was established who would exist to advocate and raise awareness of the issues and concerns of BME communities. Such a group would have the objectives to work towards eliminating racial discrimination, promoting racial equality and multiculturalism. They would also ensure that the needs and concerns of BME communities are fully considered in the making of policies and legislation.

From that idea a steering group was first set up. Even though there were small community associations which were trying in their own capacities to deal with community problems on their own, it was the

first time that a body of issues were considered on a big scale, involving important partners such as, the Lothian Regional Council, Lothian and Borders Police and many others. To achieve this, it took a lot of hard work, and dedication to convince public authorities of the realities of BME individuals in their every day life.

The steering group's hard work enabled to develop and sustain, until today, a valuable partnership with public bodies and non-governmental organisations. Such a partnership was important since it created a platform on which to initiate the fight against racial discrimination on large scale, to raise awareness of other issues faced by BME communities in the Lothians and Scotland as a whole.

From the onset ELREC immediately started to address the core issues involving racial harassment and discrimination, housing, immigration, social work, health, policy development, education and employment through providing advice, advocacy, casework and much more.

As I was preparing myself for the open day, I went to talk to some of the people who were involved at the earliest stage of ELREC, in order to have the feeling of the way things were 20 to 33 years ago. One interviewee said: *"33 years ago times were hard; and managing to establish organisations like ELREC was a big achievement. Even though the objectives still remain the same today; a lot have been achieved. 33 years ago, nobody wanted to listen to what we had to say. It was difficult to convince anybody of any of the problems that BME people were facing. Today, even*

*though there is still a lot to be done, we have many organisations in place, such as ELREC, the Pakistani Society, BCDP, Skillnet, Saheliya, Shakti and many others which provide services directly to black minority ethnic communities. 33 years ago such organisations did not exist. Now we have many anti-discrimination laws that protect everyone. We did not have that in 1971."*

It was a major step forward towards recognising, particularly from local authorities and other public and voluntary bodies, that racism existed and was the principal barrier to BME people having and achieving a decent life. Naturally, as time was changing the racial equality work was changing with it. ELREC has strongly adapted to time and continued the fight to ensure that the values and objectives it has always fought for, were still kept strong and well nurtured.

Yet, it would be selfish and ungrateful today to talk about ELREC or the fight against racism without paying tribute to the men and women whom, thanks to their hard work, full dedication and determination, have strongly and in many ways contributed to the continuous existence of ELREC.

Special tributes go to those distinguished individuals, Board Members, Ordinary Member, and many others, who have made their time available, days, nights and weekends; who have worked hard; to the cause of ELREC; to ensure that ELREC continues to engage in the fight against racial discrimination and injustices.

***By Ali Abdoul Wahidi  
Community Development Officer***



## YOUTH ZONE DEVELOPMENTS

### The first Youth Zone session took place on September 23rd.

It was a great success and has been open once a week for 3 hours since then.

The young people at the youth zone have made concrete decisions about the interior design, equipment and soft furnishings. You can expect to find a communal chill out area with a wide screen telly, play station, pool table and music centre. Along with lots of soft seating and Internet access. It is a place designed by young people, for young people.

I am pleased to report that young people have shown a really good level of commitment and dedication in developing the Youth Zone. This is reflected by their involvement in the project and use of the space created by them.

I am now considering opening the Youth Zone on another day, as more young people are demanding alternative opening times.

### YOUTH ZONE MEMBER HAVE THEIR SAY...

I asked young people who come to the youth Zone how they felt about the Youth Zone and how it benefited them.

Here is their response.....

- *"it's cool"*
- *"I use it 'cos I like to chill here and 'cos it's a good place to chill."*
- *"...and 'cos I get help with other things from staff, people are so friendly."*
- *"I think the Youth Zone is cool and that I get help."*
- *"It's a good place to chill and its better than home."*
- *"It was really good getting all the equipment and stuff in the room."*

**One to One Support** - Working with young people in a group setting is great however, it is becoming increasingly apparent that there is a real gap in support available to young people where they need it most.

Over the last 2 months I have begun to work closely, on a one-to-one basis with some young people. In particular we have been addressing the issue of career options. Accessing information about courses, where to study and qualifications required and how to go about entering in to a professional qualification are just a tip of the iceberg!

We are also keeping our options open and getting involved with service providers such as Lothian and Borders Police and the Fire Service as they provide positive employment opportunities, in particular for BME communities.

**Up close with the Chief Constable, Thursday 25th November, 6pm - 9pm at Police HQ, Fettes Avenue, Edinburgh**

This event has been designed to put young BME people in touch with the Chief Constable, on the young peoples terms! The young people will have the opportunity to ask questions, expect on the spot answers and explore some of the barriers and/or prejudgements they might have about the police service.

If you are a young person aged 14 - 21 or know of someone who may be interested in coming along then contact me Aisha Sohail at ELREC 556 0441.

There will be buffet refreshments, tour of the Police Headquarters and at the end of the evening there will be a rap band performance. Far from dull and boring!

### APPROACHES THE YOUNG PEOPLE & HEALTH CONFERENCE

As we have 'some' experience and working knowledge of young people and issues relating to them, we felt it would be appropriate for us to share some of that knowledge with other like

minded professional. Hence our involvement with Approaches.

This is a two day conference in January 2005, where many individuals and organisations from all sectors will attend to take part in sharing their learning relating to health and young people.

We are hosting a workshop at this conference event, which will be good learning for us at ELREC but also for other people attending the workshop.

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### **WHAT'S HAPPENING IN EDINBURGH**

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**Young Edinburgh** is a ten-year strategy, implemented by The City of Edinburgh Council and its partners, aimed at improving services for all young people aged 11-21 years.

Young Edinburgh has come about from research which, was carried out in 2001. Young people have been the focus in the development of the strategy through their contribution to the research and through their ongoing involvement in developing the strategy.



The main objectives of Young Edinburgh are focused key themes to improving the City of Edinburgh for young people.

- Being an active citizen.
- Getting around.
- Participating in and feeling safe in Edinburgh.
- Developing skills for living.
- Promoting young people's health and wellbeing.
- Providing information to make choices.
- Supporting families.
- Learning for life.
- Preparing young people for working life.
- Enjoying life and making Edinburgh an affordable city.

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### **ELECTIONS FOR THE FIRST YOUTH COUNCIL**

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The Youth Council, which is part of the city's Young Edinburgh strategy to improve services for young people over the next ten years, is due to meet in The Hub on Monday, 8 December 2004.

Any young person in High School up to the age of 25 can stand for election.

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### **VIEWFINDER**

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Young people in Edinburgh can take part in the second Viewfinder survey. The first Viewfinder survey was carried out in 2001. It asked over 5,000 young people in Edinburgh questions about which aspects of life in the city

and in their local area they would like to change.

Through the survey young people will have a voice improving services in Edinburgh, such as education, leisure, transport health, police, housing, shops and businesses.

Findings from the survey will then be used to improve services and opportunities for young people through Young Edinburgh, the city's youth services strategy.

The survey will be distributed to young people through schools, youth groups and all Young Edinburgh partners. Young people can get a copy of the survey by contacting the Council's Youth Services on

*By Aisha Sohail  
Youth Development Officer*

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### **WHAT'S ON**

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**School Board / PTA  
Meeting**  
**An Introduction to how  
they work and how to  
get involved**

Tuesday 25 January 2005  
10:00am to 12:00noon  
Venue to be confirmed

**Training for  
Transformation  
Taster Course**

Thursday 16 December 2004  
10:00am to 3:00pm  
Quakers Meeting House,  
7 Victoria Terrace

## Our Tenants



### The Remember When

**Project** is dedicated to collecting and celebrating the histories of Edinburgh's LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) communities. Funded by a Heritage Lottery grant and supported by the City of Edinburgh Council, it is based on the top floor of ELREC's building at 14 Forth Street.

The project's remit is to develop an archive of oral history interviews, memorabilia and other historical materials to form the basis for a permanent archive on the history of the capital's LGBT communities, to be lodged within the City's social history museum collections and to mount a high-profile exhibition at the City Art Centre in Autumn 2005. We will also be creating a number of community events at other venues across the city before and during the period of that exhibition.

We are absolutely committed to making this project as diverse and inclusive as possible. LGBT people exist in every ethnic community, and in every generation, and it is vitally important that the stories of our lives are not marginalized or hidden from history. We would particularly welcome participation from anyone

within the city's BME communities, either as volunteers to help develop the project, or as possible interviewees. (Confidentiality is guaranteed, and the uses to which recorded interviews are put will depend entirely on the wishes of those people interviewed.)

If you would like to find out more about the project – either as a potential contributor or to take part in any of our varied volunteering opportunities, feel free to contact Ellen or Brian at The Remember When Project, 14 Forth St, Edinburgh EH1 3LH. Tel: 0131-558-2820 Email: [rw@rememberwhen.org](mailto:rw@rememberwhen.org)



**Part of ELREC's success** over the years concerns the way it has helped launch various anti-racist initiatives within, and outwith, Edinburgh. This is also true in the case of the Edinburgh Racial Incidents Monitoring Project (ERIMP) which was established by the Black/Minority Ethnic Community Safety Working Group as a pilot project in 2001, and worked within ELREC until its independence in July this year.

In October, ERIMP sent out its first quarterly report. It is planned to produce and distribute these reports that give an overview of the "wheres, whats, whens and whos" about racial incidents

each quarter to partner agencies. These reports, along with more detailed findings tailored to each agency's specific needs, will be used to empower agencies in their work with and for Black and Minority Ethnic communities in Edinburgh (and, it is planned, outwith the city in the future). Space does not permit more than a very brief summary of ERIMP's findings for the third quarter of 2004, and how these compare with the previous two quarters. There have been 89 incidents so far reported for the period 1 July 2004 until 30 September 2004, which is slightly less than the previous two quarters – but it is important to note that reports tend to be forwarded to ERIMP weeks and sometimes months after they actually occurred. It therefore seems likely the actual number of incidents reported to ERIMP will rise to around 200 for this last quarter when all reports are entered. As ERIMP continues to be incorporated into various agencies' anti-racist strategies, both the scope and the precision of its findings will increase. This will in turn increase the strength of tailored findings that can inform policy decisions at every level. If you have any questions about ERIMP, please contact the Co-ordinator at 0131 466 1949, or through the website ([www.erimp.org](http://www.erimp.org)) or by emailing [jeff@erimp.org](mailto:jeff@erimp.org) – or by climbing the stairs the next time you visit ELREC.

By Jeff Kemp

### Lothian & Borders Police 2004 MELA Survey



Lothian & Borders Police has been a committed supporter of Edinburgh's Mela for many years and this year it was suggested that the Mela could be a great opportunity for some real consultation with some of the Black and Minority Ethnic community who we often don't get to hear. We worked with ELREC and Councillor Shami Khan to develop a questionnaire to ask people attending the festival what their experience and views of Lothian and Borders Police were. We had female staff at the womens only night and worked in conjunction with ELREC staff for the two main days of the festival. Those attending were asked to take part in a short questionnaire and the main issues were:

Questionnaires completed	97
Participants residing or working in Edinburgh/Lothians	70%
Participants having recent contact with the police	30%
Satisfied-very satisfied with the service given in that contact	76%
Participants requiring police to translate information	51%

Other general issues were a lack of knowledge of Lothian and Borders Police Remote Reporting scheme. This scheme allows people to report incidents and crimes without having to speak to a police officer by going instead to organisations like ELREC and WEGARAH. As a result of the survey we are going to re-launch this scheme with a publicity campaign throughout Lothians. Similarly three quarters of participants did not know of the services provided by the voluntary organisations such as WEGARAH, ELREC, BCDP or the Pakistan Society.

The survey was well received and it gives us some ideas of what we need to do to build upon the trust and confidence of the black and minority community in the police. We hope to do this again next year so we can keep an eye on our performance. We need to listen and respond to the community. So if you're at next year's Mela and you're asked to take part, it's your chance to have your say on your Police Service.

**Chief Inspector George Denholm**  
Diversity Unit

### EID CELEBRATION

Eid—UI—Fitr will be celebrated on the 13 or 14 November this year.

Eid celebrates the end of Ramadan, the month of fasting for Muslims all over the world. Fasting takes place from sunrise to sunset every day during this month.

This is one of the most important duties in the Muslim religion—when we should be focusing more on our faith, and be taking time out of our day-to-day duties to help those in need whether related or not.

This is the month of giving charity to those who are less fortunate.

After the Eid celebration the Pakistan Society has organised an Eid Festival, which is full of entertainment for people of all ages. There are various stalls. The event will take place on Sunday 21 November 2004 at Meadowbank Centre, Edinburgh starting at 12 noon till 10pm and the entry is free.

## Back Page Information



### ADVERTISING

We welcome organisations to advertise on ELREC Community Newsletter, for example:

- Promoting services
- Disseminating flyers
- Advertising
- Vacancies
- Consultations
- General marketing

This service is available for a contribution of £100.

To find out more, please contact Nina Giles on 0131 556 0441 or [admin@elrec.org.uk](mailto:admin@elrec.org.uk)

The newsletter is available on a quarterly basis.

### CONFERENCE ROOM BOOKINGS

You can book our 20-seat meeting room on an hourly basis for £10 per hour

Tea & Coffee £1 per head

Please contact the office for any bookings

### DONATIONS

ELREC is a registered charity in Scotland. We welcome donations however small, from individuals or organisations to help us to pursue our goal - *racial equality and justice for all.*

If you would like to share any interesting fundraising ideas with us, please give the office a ring.

### SERVICES

**Edinburgh & Lothians Racial Equality Council (ELREC)**, founded in 1971, is a voluntary body and charitable company made up of individual members and representatives from a wide range of organisations. ELREC has a remit to work across the areas of City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian Councils.

#### We aim to:

- Work towards the elimination of racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups
- Promote and organise co-operation of the statutory authorities and voluntary organisations

#### We pursue our aims through:

- Individual Complainant Aid Service
- Education and Training
- Campaigning
- Publications
- Consultancy and Signposting

### OUR TEAM

**Nina Giles—Director**

**Ali Abdoul Wahidi—Community Development Officer**

**Aisha Sohail—Youth Development Officer**

**Julie Fraser—Administrator**

**Shelley Kelly—New Deal Placement**

**Tracy Pan Shuang—Volunteer**