

# ELREC Newsletter



## **Edinburgh & Lothians Racial Equality Council**

*Promoting Racial Equality and Fighting Racial Discrimination*

Dear Members,

This is our last newsletter before the 2005 Annual General Meeting, and there is no doubt that the last year has been eventful and challenging. I took over as the chair of ELREC about ten months ago as it was emerging from a crisis point. During this period we have strengthened our position by:

- Strict financial control resulting in wiping out the inherited deficit;
- Increasing the staffing level;
- Increasing the funding base and also succeeding in obtaining a grant from the

Commission for Racial Equality;

- Hosting of a high profile seminar addressed by leading educationalists and employers from private and public sectors for your benefit;

I believe we need a cultural transformation within ELREC if we are to continue with an ambitious future growth strategy and meet the demands and challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. ELREC is your institution and your support is essential to move forward.

**Emeritus Professor, B. Sinha  
Chair, ELREC**

### **ELREC Seminar on Employment, Education and Career**

Saturday 23 April 2005  
9:00 am to 3:30 pm

John McIntyre Centre, Pollock Halls, Holyrood Park Road,  
University of Edinburgh

The seminar aims to develop a strategic approach in tackling the under-employment and unemployment of BME communities with the following objectives:

- To identify barriers for BME individuals in accessing professional advice in career choices
- To tackle racial discrimination experienced by young people
- To offer BME young people aspirations, guidance and support
- To develop a strategic approach in helping BME young people into employment

Speakers include:

- Commission for Racial Equality, HBOS plc, City of Edinburgh Council, Lothian & Borders Fire Brigade, STUC, Chambers of Commerce, University of Edinburgh, University of Strathclyde, Careers Scotland, and Scottish Executive

**Places are limited. Please book a place as soon as possible.**

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**Issue 3  
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### **ELREC MANAGEMENT BOARD**

**Honorary President**  
Prof Geoff Palmer OBE  
**Chair**

Prof Braj P Sinha  
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## Message from Chair of Personnel & Policy Subcommittee

The last few months have been extremely busy for the Personnel & Policy Subcommittee as we are the people who execute the recruitment of staff on behalf of ELREC Management Board.

Julie Fraser left the post as **Administrator** in January to return to her home in Richmond, Yorkshire. The post has now been filled by Cathy Murray. Cathy has a good understanding of the voluntary sector and equality issues as she was previously an employee of Scottish Human Services Trust.

Other additions include Mara Menzies, **Youth Zone Support Worker** and Shelley Kelly, **Clerical Assistant**. With the expansion of the Youth Zone, Mara will be responsible for the planning and running of Youth Zone. Mara has extensive experience in working with BME young people. Shelley was formerly a New Deal Placement with ELREC. We are delighted that she is now a full-time employee of ELREC.

The working hours of **Youth Development Officer** has been increased to 30 hours as Aisha Sohail (YDO) will be delivering the Reaching Out Programme funded by Edinburgh Youth Social Inclusion Partnership.

We have succeeded in obtaining a grant of £26,000 from the Commission for Racial Equality for the development of a complainant aid service. We will shortly be recruiting a **Complainant Aid Officer** who will take charge of this service.

Sadly, Ali Abdoul Wahidi, **Community Development Officer** will be leaving us at the

end of March. The post of CDO will be advertised alongside the Complainant Aid Officer.

I thank the members for their contribution. This Board will continue to work hard to bring about further expansion of ELREC.

Foyso! Choudhury MBE  
Chair of Personnel and Policy  
Subcommittee

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## Editorial

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Welcome to the third issue of ELREC Community Newsletter. We try to bring you news and information about the work and changes of ELREC as well as the latest development in the race equality field. On 23 March 2005, we held a membership reception to consult our members on our communication strategy. It was a well attended event and we were encouraged to hear that ELREC Community Newsletter form a vital part of our communication to those who support our work.

### **Race Equality Education Strategy**

City of Edinburgh Council Education Department has recently published its Race Equality Education Strategy with the aim to:

- Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- Promote equal opportunities
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups

An implementation group with representatives from different services of the Department along with ELREC, chaired by Rob Jobson, will be working hard to ensure the actions set out in the strategy will be appropriately delivered.

A summary of the strategy is

enclosed with this newsletter.

**Should you require further information, please contact Laura Mitchell on 0131 469 3058.**

### **Community Safety Partnership**

The Community Safety Partnership has recently conducted a comprehensive audit. The audit had identified key three priorities for the Partnership's action plan:

- Supporting accident prevention, fire and home safety
- Reducing the harmful effects of drugs and alcohol
- Reducing the incidence of violence, housebreaking and other forms of anti-social behaviour

Black and Minority Ethnic Community Safety Working Group (BMECSWG) will support the Partnership in delivering those priorities to BME communities. As Chair of the working group, I will also be a member of the Partnership Executive Group who oversees the implementation of the action plan. The next meeting of BMECSWG will be held on 17 May 2005. Anyone who is interested in community safety issues including hate crime and anti-social behaviour should attend this meeting as we will be developing an action plan to be delivered by the working group.

### **Edinburgh Partnership**

The Edinburgh Partnership, a strategic partnership for Community Planning is also going through some changes. Instead of having two representatives from each of the equality forum, there will be one representative elected by the equality fora. ELREC is pleased that Keith Cowan, Co-chair of LGBT Equality Forum, has been voted as the representative.

By Nina Giles  
Director

## Community Development

### The world commemorates Auschwitz. Have we learnt the lesson?

As the world is commemorating Auschwitz many special events are taking place around the world. For the first time a special session was organised by the United Nations General Assembly on 24 January to mark Auschwitz liberation, where an estimated 1.5 million Jews were killed. Before the event, the United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan indicated that "such event was deeply significant for the organisation; and that it was essential for all of us to remember, reflect on,

"the evil that destroyed 6 million Jews and others in those camps is one that still threatens all of us today"

and learn from what happened 60 years ago." He pointed out that "the evil that destroyed 6 million Jews and others in those camps" is one that still threatens all of us today. It is not something we can consign to the distant past and forget about it. Every generation must be on its guard to make sure that such things never happen again."

This reiterates what Prime Minister Tony Blair said in his speech on the commemoration day. Tony Blair said, "while the Holocaust Day commemorations had a "very special emotional significance" for the Jewish community, it was important that the whole country remembered what had happened. "It is a way of remembering what was probably the most terrible event in the history of humanity." "We should never forget where these things end. They end in the Holocaust and in the deaths of millions and millions of innocent people in the most appalling and wicked circumstances."

The European Parliament highlighted in a resolution on remembrance of the Holocaust, anti-Semitism and racism,

(27 January 05) for the European Parliament it is not only a major occasion for European citizens to remember and condemn the enormous horror and tragedy of the Holocaust, but also for addressing the disturbing rise in anti-Semitism in Europe, and for learning the wider lessons about the dangers of victimising people on the basis of race, ethnic origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation or politics.

The resolution highlighted that Europe must not forget its own history, even though it has shameful and painful pages. The crimes committed at Auschwitz must live on in the memory of future generations, as a warning against genocide of this kind, rooted in contempt for other human beings, hatred, anti-Semitism, racism and totalitarianism.

Europe calls on the institutions of the European Union, the Member States and all European democratic political parties to condemn:

- all acts of intolerance and incitement to racial hatred, as well as all acts of harassment or racist violence,
- in particular and without reserve all acts and expressions of anti-Semitism of whatever kind,
- in particular all acts of violence motivated by religious or racial hatred or intolerance, including attacks on religious places, sites and shrines belonging to Jewish, Muslim or other faiths, as well as against minorities such as the Roma.

The resolution also urges the Council and the Commission, as well as the various levels of local, regional and national government in the Member States, to co-ordinate their efforts to combat anti-Semitism and attacks on minority groups including Roma and third-country nationals in the

Member States, in order to uphold the principles of tolerance and non-discrimination and to promote social, economic and political integration.

Moreover, as we are all remembering the victims of the monstrous horrors committed by the Nazi between 1930s and 1940s in America they are also remembering a man who made a huge impact in the fight against racism, injustice of any form. Such man is Martin Luther King Jr. In times like these, his life and his struggle deserve celebrating. Monday 17 January 05, Martin Luther King Jr Day, is also a special day to reflect on, not only for the Americans, but also for every one of us around the world. Martin Luther King left us all a huge legacy and responsibility. His dream is also every one of us dream. To live and prosper, to be treated equally with dignity and respect in a fair and just society.

Yet, it would be very difficult to say that we have learnt the lessons of history. After 6 decades racism and anti-Semitism still exist today. It was nice to see that there was a common voice in remembering the victims of anti-Semitism, racism, and xenophobic ideas. But have we done enough to ensure that it does not happen again? What will happen to those who already advocating such ideas? Unfortunately, there are places in Europe today where neo-nazi ideas are being promoted. Political parties advocating such ideas are established. They are winning elections; they are holding important positions in national and local governments. Even though the world seems stronger today than 60 years ago, it is very important not to ignore the threat.

*By Ali Abdoul Wahidi  
Community Development Officer*



***Being Young, BME and living in Edinburgh***  
***By Safia Ahmed aged 19***

My name is Safia Ahmed and I am 19 years old. It's been 5 weeks that I have been in Edinburgh. I'm originally from Nottingham in England, but I have moved to Edinburgh to study. My parents gave me the opportunity to study and I want to make the most of it because not everybody gets this chance. I'm studying childcare at Stevenson's college.

When I was in England I used to work with children, in hospitals, day nurseries, schools etc working with children is something I enjoy very much. I am qualified to level 3 as a nursery nurse and hoping to go further.

When I first came to Edinburgh, I found it really difficult to adapt within the environment, but thanks to Shaz, Jay, Shayru and Awais, who helped me to find my way around the city. I have no family or relatives in Edinburgh, which makes it even more difficult for me because it makes me feel very lonely and

***"I was aware that I was becoming more confident"***

and scared, I even I got lost in the city centre few times.

When I started to attend college I met people and began to make friends. When I expressed my feeling towards others, I was aware that I was becoming more confident. As I talk about my feelings, the way I feel, it makes me stronger, builds my self-esteem and I'm becoming more confidence in whatever I do. I used to be very shy and quiet but I'm now more open.

My friends introduced me to the Youth Zone club, where I would meet more new people. When I attended my first session I thought it was quiet interesting, I felt very comfortable, I felt like I fitted in the group. I got to know people from the same background as me, which I was well open towards and had no problems to socialise or to communicate with them.

I started to attend the youth club on a regular basis; things just seemed to get better for me. I became a good friend of Aisha, who organises and runs the youth zone club. Aisha was a great help, she was kind and willing to help me if I wasn't to sure about certain things.

***"I started to attend the youth club on a regular basis; things just seemed to get better for me."***

I felt really comfortable talking to Aisha because she is a female. When I talk to Aisha I feel like I am being listened to, knowing she understands my problems from a female point, which I found really helpful. Attending the youth zone made me realise I do fit in with the community and I do have friends who care. This also helped me to build various skills such as; language, social and emotional, and many more.....

As days go by I'm becoming stronger and stronger, I now know that I'm not as scared as I was, when I first moved to Edinburgh. I feel that I have settled in very well as, and hoping to do my best with my studies, inshallah.

***This page is dedicated to young people to express their thoughts, feelings and concerns about some of the key elements in their lives.***

***If you are a young person aged from 14 to 21 and wish to contribute to this page please get in touch with me Aisha Sohail on 556 0441 or email [asohail@elrec.org.uk](mailto:asohail@elrec.org.uk)***

***Look forward to hearing from you!***

**WELCOME**

...Latest recruit...  
Mara Menzies  
Youth Zone Support Worker

Elrec has successfully employed Mara Menzies to take on the post of Youth Zone Support Worker.

Mara will now be responsible for running the Youth Zone and I (Aisha) will continue to support the one to one work. I have also taken over the Reaching Out Programme from EYSIP. This expands the Youth Development aspect of my role into more capacity building for BME youth work with 'other' youth services and organisations.

So welcome and its good to have you on board!

**ELREC Youth Zone to be awarded as part of the Citizen Y Recognition Factor 2005**

The Citizen Y Recognition Factor 2005 is an awards initiative that formally recognises some of the many



positive contributions made by young people in Edinburgh together with the valuable and skillful youth work that enables young people to make such positive contributions. ELREC have been selected for recognition for the Youth Zone project.

The process

The Edinburgh Youth Work Partnership and EYSIP were asked to nominate individual pieces of work that could be closely related to the Citizen Y campaign. The idea behind this approach was to move away from the traditional winners and losers scenario, usually associated with awards initiatives. The emphasis is therefore on recognising the efforts of young people and staff. It was felt this approach could overcome some of the barriers organisations and groups of young people can experience with awards initiatives e.g. lack of awareness and resources.

The pieces of work

Through this process 27 pieces of work/organisations were put forward for the Citizen Y Recognition Factor 2005.

From these 16 were

shortlisted as examples of youth-friendly ways of working with young people.

**ELREC were shortlisted for the Youth Zone they have created for young BME people** to meet, socialise and work on issues important to them.

Outcome

The 16 shortlisted organisations will be recognised and awarded at the Youth Work Fair on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> March. A Citizen Y Recognition Factor Resource Pack has been produced with a view to sharing good practice and exploring the issues addressed by the Citizen Y campaign. The pack includes:

- a publication summarising the 27 pieces of work nominated.
- a board game that can be used as an interactive tool for young people and workers to find out about the work of other organisations and discuss young people's issues.

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**ELREC would like to give a HUGE thank you to EYSIP for their invaluable support over the last year. Gonna be missed.**

ERIMP  
**Edinburgh Racial Incidences  
 Monitoring Project**

By Jeff Kemp  
 Project Manager

Things at the Edinburgh Racial Incidents Monitoring Project (ERIMP) are about to get particularly busy, as they do every three months. This is because a report is sent out to all of ERIMP's partner agencies at the start each quarter which gives a brief summary of racist incidents reported to ERIMP during the previous quarter. Figures for previous years are also shown, which gives initial indications of emerging trends – such as the increase in inner-city incidents which appears to have occurred in 2004.

In addition to this regular surge in work ERIMP is also preparing itself to expand its services. With the project successfully trialing how to gather information about racist incidents from many, varied, organisations and then disseminate relevant findings; as well as establishing itself as an independent agency, the time is ripe to look at working beyond Edinburgh City.

Finally, findings such as 28% (of Scots) **“thought it was not racist to speak negatively about people from other ethnic or cultural backgrounds as long as they were speaking in private”** (reported in *Scotland on Sunday* 17/3/05) show how much work still remains to be done before a culture imbued with mutual respect flourishes here.

***Lothian & Borders Police implement commitment to support our youth***

Lothian and Borders Police recognises and acknowledges the important contribution that young people make to our communities and society.

We are committed to creating a responsive service. To achieve this we must actively engage with everyone in the communities we serve to understand their needs and address them appropriately, recognising that whether as victims or offenders, young people can be vulnerable and many are at risk. We will consult and participate with young people across all abilities, ages, ethnic, religious and social backgrounds and personal circumstances.

Lothian and Borders **Police acknowledges that the vast majority of young people do not engage in criminal or other anti-social activity.** But we also recognise that a small proportion do and are responsible for a disproportionate level of crime and anti-social behaviour, leading to significant resource implications for our service.

This Youth Strategy is intended to provide all members of the Force with clear guiding principles for the way we interact with young people throughout Edinburgh, the Lothians and the Scottish Borders.

The most important of these principles is that we must engage early with young offenders to divert them from

offending, but also identify and engage with persistent offenders. We must strive to achieve national targets in relation to timescales for reporting young people who offend or are at risk.

**We will continue to develop joint working with other agencies to promote interaction with young people and to encourage and support them to be safe, responsible and contributing members of society.**

The Lothian and Borders Police Youth Strategy has been developed in line with the ACPOS Youth Strategy, the Strategic Aims of Lothian and Borders Police, and relevant Lothian and Borders Police Strategies taking account of the Community Planning processes and Integrated Children's Services Plans of the Local Authorities in the force area.

Promoting the safety of young people in communities, tackling youth offending and improving the effectiveness of our overall service to young citizens are the three interrelated areas on which the Lothian and Borders Police Youth Strategy focuses to ensure that we deliver a high quality of service and an increased confidence in policing within our communities.

**Paddy Tomkins  
 Chief Constable**

### **COME ON BOARD**

School Board Elections are being held in the Autumn. Why not put yourself forward as a parent member and help to contribute to the life of your child's school?

School Boards were first set up in 1989 with a range of responsibilities for the management of local authority schools. Boards consist of a number of parent members (elected by parents), staff members (elected by teachers) and co-opted members (chosen from the local community). Boards have an important say in the affairs of their school and promote contact and the exchange of information between the school, parents and the community. Boards are also involved in the appointment of staff, approving the Head Teacher's proposals for buying books and materials, and nominating members to serve on Area Attendance Advisory Groups.

Head Teachers consult boards on matters such as the School Development Plan, school dress, hours, homework and discipline policy, etc.

### **Find Out More**

If you would like to find out more about boards, contact the **School Board Unit (469 3137/8)** for a Further Information Booklet. Alternatively, contact myself, Graham Douglas, on 469 3131 or come along to the Information Evening at Broughton High School in September. (Full details will be available shortly from the School Board Unit.) The full election process will be explained at the information evening but if you cannot attend and wish details of how to put your name forward, contact the Unit.

### **Don't Feel Apprehensive**

Through training and advice, you will be guided through your role and have the chance to gain a better understanding of the running of your child's school. By attending training courses, you will get to know members of other boards and, most importantly, you will be given the opportunity to contribute to the successful running of your school. **Existing school board members say it is a pleasant and enriching experience - so come on board and participate.**

Graham Douglas  
Administrative Officer, Support Services  
Education Offices, Wellington Court, Tel: 469 3131

### ***What's On***

19 April 2005  
6.15pm - 8.00pm  
Race Equality Forum  
City Chambers

19 April 2005  
2-4pm  
Multi-Agency Meeting on  
Racial Attacks and Harassment  
City Chambers

20 April 2005  
Grampian REC's Holistic  
Approach to Racial Harassment  
Conference  
Dundee

23 April 2005  
9:00am to 3:30pm  
ELREC Seminar on  
Employment, Education and  
Career  
John McIntyre Centre, Pollock  
Halls, Holyrood Park Road,  
University of Edinburgh

26 April 2005  
10am to 4:00pm  
Developing Best Practice in  
Race Equality  
(EVOC Training Programme)  
Update

17 May 2005  
2:00 to 4:00pm  
Black & Minority Ethnic  
Community Safety Working  
Group  
City Chambers

## 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

Mara Menzies—Youth Zone Support Worker

Cathy Murray—Administrator

Shelley Kelly—Assistant Administrator

Tracy Pan Shuang—Volunteer

Rafaela Buendia—Cleaner