



# ELREC NEWSLETTER

PROMOTING EQUALITY - FIGHTING DISCRIMINATION  
FOSTERING GOOD RELATIONS

*IN THIS ISSUE*

## UPDATES ON CURRENT INITIATIVES WITHIN THE PROJECTS

## UPCOMING EVENTS

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## From the Chair

Welcome to our Spring Newsletter I hope that you are enjoying the milder weather and longer days. It has been busy few months at ELREC, all the projects are doing well and keeping busy with many activities so do follow us on our social media pages so you don't miss them.



ELREC's Annual General Meeting took place in March 2019 and was a great success, we had amazing speakers from Police Scotland, Edinburgh Council, Professor Sir Geoff Palmer and of course

the wonderful Lord Provost, Frank Ross. Thank you to them all for supporting ELREC and we hope that you continue to do so for many more years to come. ELREC will also be working with Police Scotland by hosting monthly surgeries open to everyone, so do come along and discuss any issues or queries you have as well as learn more about what the Police are doing for the communities. The first surgery will be on the 25th March 2019 and then on the last Monday of each month from 1-3pm.

I want to thank the ELREC Staff and Volunteers for their continued hard work and all our funders, supporters and members, if anyone wishes to become a member of ELREC please contact us.

Thank you

Foyso Choudhury MBE

## Honorary Members

Honorary Patron:  
The Rt. Hon. Frank Ross, Lord Provost  
of the City of Edinburgh  
Honorary President:  
Prof. Sir Geoff Palmer DSc OBE

## Management Board

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Vice Chair and Convenor of Personnel  
Subcommittee: Shami Khan DL  
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Company Secretary: Rajnish Singh  
Convenor, Membership Subcommittee:  
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Convenor, Education Subcommittee:  
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Board Members: Irshad Ahmed. Ijaz Nazir,  
Shahid Riaz, Jing Si

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Office Manager: Parveen Ishaq  
Administrator: Aleksandra Szczygielska  
Finance Officer: Adrian Barbascumpa  
Work Space Maintenance: Agnieszka Wojtkowiak  
Equalities Engagement Project: Mizan Rahman  
Support and Advice Service: Parveen Ishaq  
True Colours Project: Didem Kaner Ural  
Bright Choices Project: Mitra Rostami  
Young People Against Hate: Jackie Massie, Anna  
Baran  
Open Arms Project: Hannah Lawrence  
Communities for Conservation Project Lead:  
Jean- Matthieu Gaunand  
Community Link Officers (CLO):  
David Tai- Chinese CLO  
Ewelina Lukaszek- Polish CLO  
Dina Ahmed- African CLO  
Fahmida Huczewska- South Asian CLO  
Laura Alvarado- Spanish CLO

## About us

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

## Our Objectives

- to work towards the elimination of unlawful discrimination
- to reduce inequality and promote a culture of human rights
- to promote good relations between persons of different groups without distinction

## We pursue our aims through

Engagement with communities of protected characteristics  
Complaint aid for victims of discrimination and harassment  
Support for communities in influencing change by facilitating interaction between communities and authorities  
Consultancy on equality policies, procedures and delivery of customized training on equality matters

Edinburgh & Lothians Regional  
Equality Council (ELREC)  
14 Forth Street Edinburgh EH1 1LH  
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(E) [admin@elrec.org.uk](mailto:admin@elrec.org.uk)  
(W) [www.elrec.org.uk](http://www.elrec.org.uk)  
Charity Number: SC007896  
Company Number: SC183419

## Annual General Meeting 4th March, Edinburgh City Chambers



*"The City will continue to be required to be highly connected to the world through heritage, through community and through shared aspiration. A city where everyone enjoys opportunity and justice, and where everyone benefits from our economic success."*

Rt Hon Frank Ross Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh

*"There are still communities within Edinburgh that are underrepresented and the Council is looking for dialogue with them about their needs to efficiently improve the services we provide. Thank you to ELREC for helping us reach these communities and all the hard work they do."*

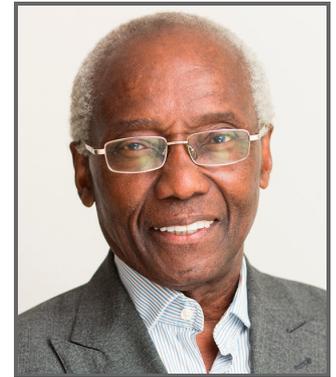
Cllr Donald Wilson  
Culture and Communities, City of Edinburgh Council



*"Eliminating discrimination, reducing inequalities and promoting a culture of human rights reflect the values of Police Scotland and we look forward to working with ELREC and a range of partners to achieve this common goal in the future."*

Chief Supt Gareth Blair  
Divisional Commander, Edinburgh

## From The Honorary President - Prof. Sir Geoff Palmer OBE



### Windrush Generation: Different But The Same

It has been reported that a ship called the Empire Windrush left Jamaica in 1948 with 1027 people on board: 802 passengers gave their last country of residence as following... 539 left from Jamaica, 139 from Bermuda, 73 from Trinidad, 44 from British Guiana and 7 from other Caribbean countries.

It arrived at Tilbury Docks, Essex, on the 22nd of June 1948...71 years ago. My mother and her cousin also migrated to London in 1948 but they sailed on the Mauretania. In 1955, when I was nearly 15 years of age, I arrived at Liverpool Docks on the Ascania to work as a grocery boy to help my mother. She worked in dressmaking factories in the East End of London. She received £5 per week as a 'finisher' and our rent was nearly half this sum. The landlord did not provide a kitchen and we used paraffin heaters for heating and cooking. My mother never took a holiday. She worked for 'holiday pay'. In one job she was fired because she was sick. I had morning paper rounds which helped our income but they sometimes made me late for school. I also worked at a handbag factory in the East End of London called Fassbender and Evens during the school holidays. Family members who arrived after I did worked as carpenters and in factories, hospitals and in the transport system. Most of us thought we would return to Jamaica as soon as possible but after I attended my first funeral in 1958, I realised that we were here to stay.

Our lives as Caribbean migrants were daily periods of working, sleeping and eating. Some of us went to church. The Minister of our church was uneasy with our presence because he felt we were driving his usual flock away. For a while, it was believed by white people that we could tell the time by looking at the sun. If I had some idea of the time, I sometimes joined in this prejudicial game. My accuracy in telling the time by looking towards the sun, produced puzzled looks. We sometimes held Saturday night Sound System parties which made us laugh and feel better. Ossie's System was the best. Some neighbours complained about 'the noise'...the music. The white neighbours often called the police. When they arrived, they would say, 'Turn the 'racket' down', which later became part of popular music: Ska, Ike and Tina Turner, Big Joe Turner, Fats Domino and Nat King Cole.

The 'sending home' of money, as postal orders in blue air-mail letters, also made us feel better. However, the injustice suffered was sometimes costly. For example, we had to pay higher insurances. I remember a bus driver who had to pay higher insurance for his car because, for racial reasons, he was regarded like other black migrants, a greater risk. Also, when a white person had a dream, it was 'fantasy'; when we had a dream, it was 'insanity'. In 1964, a politician called Peter Griffiths used, a sad consequence of our Chattel slavery, the N-word, to win a seat in the election and become a Member of Parliament. He had a poster which said: "If you want a nigger for a neighbour, vote Labour" ...he won the Smethwick seat for the Conservative Party. We could not understand such injustices, because we were British subjects helping the 'Mother Country' earning small wages in difficult circumstances.

By definition, my mother and I were members of the 'Windrush generation' because we arrived before 1971. The Immigration Act of 1971 made it necessary for migrants to have proof of their residency, such as a registration certificate or passport. To add to this the 1971 Immigration Act granted "leave to remain" to the 'Windrush generation' that settled in the United Kingdom before 1st January 1973. I had no idea of these laws even though in 1973, when I returned from a trip abroad where I represented the UK, "Given leave to enter the United Kingdom for an indefinite period" was stamped in my passport. Many migrants who came as children on their parents' passports have no such documents. Sadly, this has resulted in wrongful deportation and detention.

People have lost their jobs, homes and have been deprived of medical treatment to which they were entitled. Since 2010, this prejudicial activity has been described as 'the hostile environment' and was designed to reduce the presence of people in the UK who had no documents to prove they had the right to stay or who were residing illegally. This rejection and association with illegality in a country for which our ancestors were worked to death and which we called the 'Mother Country', was disturbing to some of us.

In the late 1990s my mother received documents threatening her with deportation if she did not register. She did not understand this demand...she had arrived in 1948. I helped her to complete her registration form and paid the sum requested. Earlier in 1971, I spoke at a conference in Portugal. I returned with my Research Director, Dr. A. H. Cook FRS and other colleagues. All my colleagues passed the Immigration officer without being stopped. He stopped me. My Research Director returned and questioned the officer why I was being questioned, informing him that I was a registered citizen. The officer apologised and allowed me to enter the country that I had lived in since 1955 and had just represented abroad. However, in 1972 after a similar working trip abroad, the immigration officer at Heathrow stamped "Visitor...Three Months" in my passport... racial prejudice is a terrible disease which only education can cure.

Although we are the descendants of British-owned Chattel slaves and troops that died for the 'Mother Country', some people, politicians and black shirt fascists attacked us, called us negative names and told us to 'go home'. However, when I was advised at an interview in 1964 to 'Go home and grow bananas'; I replied that, 'It was difficult to grow bananas in Haringey'. Like other members of the 'Windrush generation' this country is part of my historical sense of belonging and I am here to stay.

There are many stories I could tell about the 'Windrush generation' but the story that I remembered recently is the story of my friend, Skee. We were 'street boys' in Jamaica. Before I left Jamaica in 1955, he 'stowed away' on a ship to England. He returned to Jamaica within two months. I asked him, 'what happened?' He said that he reached England and came out of his hiding place on the ship to help a friend who was being abused by a crew member of the ship. He was arrested and set back to Jamaica. He eventually returned to the UK because I met him in Haringey during a visit to my mother in 1986. His sacrifice for a friend was part of the spirit of the 'Windrush generation'. Men of the 'Windrush generation', perfect strangers, would nod at each other as a form of reassurance when they passed each other on pavements...I used to do the same.

It was hard walking pass the newspaper headlines which referred to 'more arrivals' from the West Indies. There were times, such as during the Notting Hill Riots, when I thought, those headlines are going to get me killed. However, the great tragedy of the 'Windrush generation' is what is now called the 'Windrush scandal'. The sadness of this tragedy is that in 2018 the Prime Minister apologised to the 'Windrush generation' for the treatment received. The Home Secretary also apologised and resigned because she was associated with the appalling "complacency" which denied the rights of people who, as the descendants of British slaves, have been associated with the development of the 'Mother Country' for hundreds of years.

My mother worked, sometimes night and day, from 1948 to 1955 to save the £86 that paid the fares that brought me here to live and work. As we continue to work for this society, we will continue to remind those people who discriminate against us, that 'ingratitude is the worst of sins'. Such prejudice is almost unpardonable. The law was used in the past to maintain a terrible slavery (Chattel slavery). The law should never be used to deny rights and support prejudice.

Racism damages people's sense of belonging, especially those children who were labelled by some educationalists as 'Educationally Sub-Normal', using invalid (biased) criteria in tests. I was one of these

children. However, I was fortunate to be accepted by Shelburne Road Secondary Modern School, London, in 1955. A teacher helped me to become a London School Boys Cricketer which assisted my transfer to the local grammar school which needed a cricketer! Caribbean parents who questioned the validity of ESN results were told that their educational expectations of their children were 'unrealistic'.

The curriculum should help children to develop a sense of belonging. In this regard, relevant history should be taught to all children. Without a sense of belonging people fail to contribute optimally to society: The greater the sense of belonging, the greater the contribution. The history of Chattel slavery is part of the sense of belonging of the 'Windrush family' and politicians who use the cruel conditions associated with this slavery such as, "Colony" and "Slave State", to gain selfish racist support in the Brexit argument remind me of the social problems caused by the racism of Powell and Griffiths.

The UK Government has instituted a Windrush Day. It will be on the 22nd of June annually. There is an English, 'Windrush Day' fund for projects. The devolved Governments will apply different but equivalent approaches. I hope these approaches will materialise and will help to repair the damaged caused to the people of the 'Windrush generation'. A few good people have given free service to many people of the 'Windrush generation'. The UK Government has now stated that there will be a compensation fund of about £200M for those of the 'Windrush Generation, who have suffered wrongful deportation, lost jobs and denied the right to enter University. Conditions set by the Government will have to be met before such payments are made. It is hoped that these conditions will not prevent people from receiving the compensation they deserve.

The Chattel Slavery which the ancestors of the 'Windrush Generation' suffered was 'legalised racism'. This was abolished in 1838. The legislation against the 'Windrush generation' in 1971 was another form of 'legalised racism' against people who have been associated with the historical development of this country for hundreds of years. The law should not be used to take people's human rights away. We cannot change the cruelties of the past but we can change the consequences using education, equality and inclusion.

## Support and Advice

Support and Advice has been busy this quarter, we have had about 30 enquiries ranging from hate crime, discrimination, benefits, housing, council tax and complaints about services. We offer advice over the phone and face to face appointments.

We work closely with many organisations in Edinburgh to resolve these issues. One theme this quarter seems to be about issues with neighbours being abusive or noisy or both. This is a very common issue our clients come to us about so it will be good to maybe work with other partners on finding the best way moving forward with this and making it easier for clients to report these problems to the relevant authorities and seek a resolution promptly.

Parveen Ishaq  
Support and Advice worker

## Do you ...

Need housing 🏠 and benefits 💰 advice

Have suffered from discrimination 🧑🏿🧑🏻🧑🏼🧑🏽🧑🏾

Need assistance in working with public bodies 🚔

Need to report a hate crime ❌



## We are ...

funded by the Scottish Government, a confidential service 🙄 which provides free and impartial advice 🧑🏻 for individuals. If we're unable to help 🙄, we'll help you take your case to an appropriate organisation that can. ELREC provides Third Party Reporting as a free service\*.



# Open Arms at ELREC

- Open Arms has been busy planning our weekly, women-only Squash sessions in association with the Scottish Squash Association. We are very excited to start these weekly sessions soon!
- We have also hosted – in collaboration with Edinburgh Napier Film Society - a monthly women and children movie night – so far we have screened Brave, Moana, and Mulan! We try to choose family friendly films based around a theme of strong women.
- Additionally we have secured a three month collaboration with a fantastic yoga teacher. Yoga classes will be delivered to Open Arms women in the coming months. In the same vein, we still have our £5 monthly gym subscription at Projekt 42.
- Also, look out for our upcoming creative writing course – in collaboration with Saheliya!

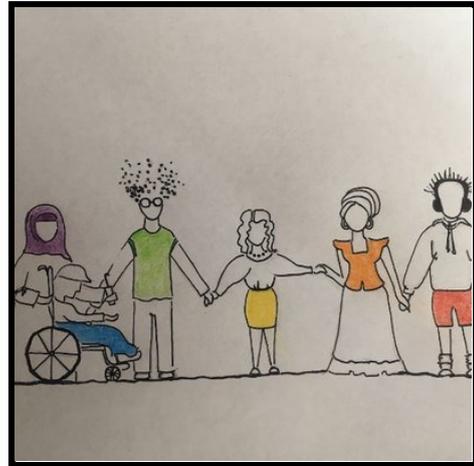


Hannah Lawrence  
Open Arms Project Coordinator  
hlawrence@elrec.org.uk





## Young People Against Hate



Great start to the year.

We have now done over 40 sessions with Balerno High School and Trinity Academy, working with over 200 people.

Also always our amazing peer educator have support us to lead and develop the sessions. We have also been working with young people to prevent them getting expelled from school due to hate speech. We are doing this by educating them and sessions on empathy. Over the next few months we will continue to work with Balerno and Trinity as well as starting to work in Penicuik and Howden Hall.

Here are some quotes from the amazing young people we have worked with

- *"It was really relaxed and fun, I learnt a lot but it could always be better, I barely knew nothing at the start but I still don't know everything". ( Leith Academy)*

- *"It was always our choice and it was just really enjoyable, I have learnt about what it is, how it happens and how to stop it". ( Leith Academy)*

- *"This was really fun and super informative, amazing job". ( Positive Realities)*

Jackie Massie and Anna Baran  
Young People Against Hate Project  
jackie.massie@elrec.org.uk



EUROPE & SCOTLAND  
European Regional Development Fund  
Investing in a Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Future



## Young people Against Hate

Working Together With Young People And Communities To Tackle and Prevent Hate Crime

Are you 14-24? Been a victim of or seen a Hate Crime and don't know what to do? Please come to the ELREC office 14 Forth Street, EH1 3LH on the First Monday of Every Month between 4:30-5:30pm starting on the 4th of Feb 2019, to get support and advice. Either drop in or contact [jackie.massie@elrec.org.uk](mailto:jackie.massie@elrec.org.uk)

**Next Drop in is on the 1st of April 4:30-5:30pm**

LGBTQ+  
Religions Hate  
Transphobia  
Disability Discrimination  
Racism



European Union



gov.scot

**EUROPE & SCOTLAND**  
European Regional Development Fund  
Investing in a Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Future



# Communities for Conservation

**“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” —Margaret Mead**

We are delighted to announce that we have received a grant of £10,000 from the National Lottery Awards For All to scale up the annual **Edinburgh Climate Festival** in the Meadows. The festival will take place on the July 6th. Save the date! It will be a large community event raising awareness about climate change, co-organised by Climate Challenge Funded groups.

## Home Energy & Waste Advice:

During a home visit, we provide energy efficiency advice and energy saving tips to help people save energy at home. We set up an energy monitor that shows how much each electric appliance consumes and we advise on a more efficient use of appliances. We provide clients with a shower timer and a water efficiency leaflets which help participants to reduce their water and electricity use. The advice on saving energy at home covers lighting, appliances, heating, and water. We emphasize on what the person can do to save energy and be more energy efficient. We can also help to switch to cheaper/green suppliers. We now provide advice and support to encourage households to recycle more.

## ELREC Cycling Club:

There has been great progress from all participants at our Saturday cycling classes. We now see new faces every week. Since December, we have lent our electric bikes to 15 people. Contact us for free loans - up to 3 weeks.

*“Practical tips are shared and we have good laughs whilst doing it. I recommend this class if you are looking to build confidence & gain experience.”*

*“The course gave me the confidence to cycle through the city in the correct way which allows for mutual respect between you & the surrounding traffic.*

*I’d not only recommend it to new cyclists & experienced cyclists new in the city but almost feel it should be a prerequisite!”*

*“I want you to know that I am very happy that I can ride a cycle myself. I never thought of this in such a short time. Credit goes to you and your team.”*



### Workshops & films:

In December, the Chinese CLO organised the screening of 'Under the Dome', a film about pollution in China attended by 20 people. We had a great discussion with all participants. The African CLO delivered our 'Islam, the Green religion' workshop to members of the Welcoming's Syrian Women's group.

In February, we organised a 'Jumper up: Gloves and Hat' upcycling workshop with a group of 22 Sikh ladies from Sikh Sanjog. The South Asian CLO ran a sewing workshop to 10 ladies from Shakti Women's aid, demonstrating how to do simple repairs, how to use a sewing machine and teaching different stitching techniques. We screened 2 films on the issue of plastic: 'A Plastic Ocean' attended by 38 people, and 'Blue' attended by 80 people. It was great seeing such a good number interested in the issue and hearing different perspectives at the discussions. We attended the CCF EM Network and met with other CCF groups in Glasgow. It's a great place to share knowledge, best practice & find solutions to common problems.

In March, we held an upcycling workshop "Making tea coasters out of old newspaper" as part of the International Women's Day organised by Edinburgh Women Interfaith Group. We also held upcycling workshop 'making fashionable shopping bag out of old T-shirts' with the African Ladies Forum.



To coincide with the Independence Day of Bangladesh on March 26th we will be screening the award winning documentary "Shunte Ki Pao! Are You Listening!", an incredible film addressing Climate Justice in Bangladesh. Book your ticket here: <https://listeningfilm.eventbrite.co.uk>

On February 2nd, we organised a Big Swap Event in partnership with Asociación Española Alba. The 'feria de trueque' helped save 100kg of textiles, books, plastic and metal from landfill. We organised another Big Swap Event with the Welcoming attended by over 250 people on February 16th. The event saved over 620kg of textile, paper, plastic & materials from being wasted! Thank you to all the volunteers who helped organise and run those events.

### Sewing & repair:

Our professional tailor Awara has been giving a new life to countless clothes. If you have clothes that need repaired please come and see us. Our Sewing Club is now also expanding as a knitting club. It runs every Monday from 12:30 to 2PM at ELREC.



### Food Growing:

We have started our new community garden at Iqra Academy but our other community gardens continue to run on volunteer basis.

We have organised a few Driving Efficiency training sessions with James. Participants have learnt how to drive more efficiently, reducing fuel consumption and carbon emissions, reducing the risk of accidents, lowering wear and tear on tyres, brakes and clutch.

We welcome new volunteers Wioleta, Martyna, Shannon, Pietro, Amina, Severin and Mona.

Jean Matthieu Gaunand  
Communities for Conservation Project Coordinator  
[cfc@elrec.org.uk](mailto:cfc@elrec.org.uk)



# Bright Choices



Bright Choices has dived into 2019 with full power. In January, we continued our very successful collaboration with Drummond Community High School by piloting our “Bright Peer Mentor” program. It has been a true pleasure working with these ambitious and bright young people and to see how effectively they engage with the course. A day-long workshop was delivered at SACRO’s spacious board room and pupils from the first, second and third year came along with their very supportive proactive teacher, Michael Paley. We had a fantastic session discussing how are men and women represented in the media? How does this skew our expectations from ourselves and others? How does our 'culture' dictate these principles? We discussed our role in reducing violence in society and how to respect each other in our daily relationships. Participants formed three working groups to work on projects to showcase their learning via a form of expressive art. The final results of the group works to be presented through an event in Drummond High School. Watch this space!



This period, also involves the 6th of February, which is labeled as the International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation. On that day, Bright Choices had Fantastic participation at our FGM Level 2 training organised at SACRO, also, following the first conviction after legislation was introduced in 1985, hopefully we will all continue to work together to end FGM.



Mitra Rostami  
Bright Choices Project Officer  
mrostami@elrec.org.uk



LOTTERY FUNDED



# True Colours

Hello all from the TRUE Colours group!

Welcome to our new volunteers and work placement students Megan Bennett, Tabitha Kanyui, Julia Lazenbatt, Katherine Turner and Damiano Cruccu. They brought lots of positive energy to the project and have already contributed a lot in terms of research and creative output. We are delighted to have them on board!

True Colours has been very busy in the last three months delivering disability and hate crime workshops in Leith Academy and racism and discrimination workshops in St Mary's Leith Primary School. We are delighted to see young people participating in the sessions. We are looking forward to the new sessions we will deliver this term.

The group participated in violence training for students of Drummond High School run by our Bright Choices project.

On 28th March, our group participated in the Third Sector Career Day in Edinburgh College Sighthill Campus. We would like to thank the HND events management for hosting us.

True Colours' funder Voluntary Action Fund has rebranded as of 6th Feb 2019 and they are now called Impact Funding Partners

Didem Kaner Ural  
TRUE Colours Project Coordinator  
didem.kaner@elrec.org.uk



@TrueColoursEdi



/truecoloursgroup



TC volunteers Tabitha and Megan in the Third Sector Careers Day in Edinburgh College Sighthill Campus

# DROP IN SURGERIES

WITH POLICE SCOTLAND

come and meet Police Officer and discuss any concerns  
or issues that the Police can help you with  
in friendly and informal atmosphere

25 March

29 April

27 May

1pm - 3pm

ELREC, 14 Forth Street, Edinburgh  
EH1 3LH

All welcome!

no booking required



**Contact:**  
[admin@elrec.org.uk](mailto:admin@elrec.org.uk)  
(t) 0131 556 0441

# Equality Engagement



Equality Engagement project had a busy time over this quarter with many events and activities. We have undertaken various activities to promote BME engagement in the Leith Walk by election which will take place on 11 April. Works in partnership with the different political stakeholders went very well too. Number of workshops and engagement events has been planned over the quarter.

## Leith Walk by election 2019

We have organised a drop-in and workshop on Thursday, 07 March 2019, 2pm – 4pm at ELREC aiming towards members of the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Communities living around Leith area who are interested to get involved in democratic process or looking for more information about the by-election, nominations and voter registration etc.

Our second event; Voter Registration drop-in session for BME Communities – took place on Wednesday, 13 March 2019 Time: 2pm - 4pm at ELREC. The event aims to encourage BME electors to register to vote ahead of the Leith Walk by-election. In collaboration with the Lothian Electoral registration office.

We took part and set an information stall at the election husting event organised by Save the Leith on 13 March 2019, 7pm at Leith Theatre



## Training session on Confidence Building in Public Life

Diversity in public life hosted a training session on how to building confidence in public life. The session took place at Leith Community Education Centre on 19 March 2019, 11am - 3pm. The interactive session was delivered by Safia Ali and members of the PLC scheme and BME individuals took part in the session. Participants learned many tricks and tips on how to be 'confident' in different unfamiliar scenarios in their day-to-day life as well as in public life scenario.

## Community event: Diversity in Public Life in Midlothian

Date: Thursday, 02 May 2019 Time: 6pm - 8pm Venue: Dalkeith Arts Centre, 2 White Hart Street, Dalkeith EH22 1AE.

ELREC Diversity in public life hosting this event in collaboration with the Midlothian Council, Federation of Midlothian Community Councils and MPEG (Midlothian

Council, Federation of Midlothian Community Councils and MPEG (Midlothian Peoples Equality Group). The community event aims to encourage BME communities lived in Midlothian to get involved with the grassroots democratic institutions I.e; Community Councils, Development Trusts and Community Gala in Midlothian. To register/book a place, please contact E-mail: mrahman@elrec.org.uk

### Interested to work for Police Scotland?

Police Scotland is running a 3 day course aimed at encouraging people from minority ethnic communities to consider a career in policing. The course is designed to provide an insight into being a police officer / special constable.

Dates are:

- Saturday 16th March 2019 Craigroyston Community High School, 67 Pennywell Road, Edinburgh
- Sunday 24th March 2019 Craigroyston Community High School
- Saturday 6th April 2019, Scottish Police College

Over the 3 days attendees will receive inputs from specialist departments, try the fitness test, visit the unique training facility and learn about the recruitment process. You can reserve a place by emailing to:

recruitmentpositiveactionteam@scotland.pnn.police. uk For support /more info about this program please get in touch with diversity in public project. Contact: mrahman@elrec.org.uk



### Scottish Government Launched Equality Evidence Finder

Scottish government has recently launched an interactive website to provide data, statistical information in relation to equality evidence across a wide range of policy areas. To access the site: <https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sg-equality-evidence-finder>



Please note, Scottish government still working on the site, and welcome any comments or suggestions by email to [social-justice-analysis@gov.scot](mailto:social-justice-analysis@gov.scot)

### MSP/Councillor shadowing program

Diversity in public life program is running MSP /Councillor shadowing program to encourage BME individual to get involved in public life. If you are interested to enrol, please get in touch asap. Transport cost and childcare will be provided.

If you have any queries or looking for more information about any of these events/activities in this newsletter, please contact me directly - Mizan Rahman Coordinator Equality Engagement / Diversity in Public Life. E-mail: [mrahman@elrec.org.uk](mailto:mrahman@elrec.org.uk) Tel: 0131 556 0441 / 07930183352

## News from Your Local Electoral Registration Office

Due to the resignation of 2 local councillors, one in Edinburgh and one in East Lothian, council by-elections have recently been called to replace them. I have included some key dates and details of where you can find out more information about the by-elections below.

### Upcoming Electoral Events

City of Edinburgh Council By-Election – Leith Walk – Ward 12

- Date of By-Election – Thursday 11 April 2019
- Applications to register to vote must be received by midnight on 26 March 2019
- Further information can be found on Edinburgh City Council's website

[http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20033/elections\\_and\\_voting](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20033/elections_and_voting)

East Lothian Council By-Election – Haddington & Lammermuir – Ward 5

- Date of By-Election – Thursday 9 May 2019
- Applications to register to vote must be received by midnight on 30 April 2019
- Further information can be found on East Lothian Council's website

[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210600/elections\\_and\\_voting](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210600/elections_and_voting)

If you have recently moved house and want to register at your new address, or if you have not already submitted an application to register to vote you can do so online at: [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote)

Registering to vote online only takes a few minutes and you will need to have your National Insurance number handy.

### Engagement Activities

Throughout the year our office takes part in various engagement activities to promote the voter registration message. As 16 year olds are eligible to vote in Scottish Parliamentary and local government elections we have visited schools across Edinburgh and the Lothians to give pupils the opportunity to register to vote and promote engagement in the democratic process.

Additionally, we have worked in partnership with the 'ELREC – Diversity in Public Life' project to promote democratic participation within the BME community. Both the Electoral Registration Office and 'ELREC – Diversity in Public Life' are happy to assist anyone from BME communities who may need assistance in registering to vote. You can contact our office by emailing [enquiries@lothian-vjb.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@lothian-vjb.gov.uk) or by calling 0131 344 2500. You can contact ELREC by email at [mrahman@elrec.org.uk](mailto:mrahman@elrec.org.uk) or on 0131 556 0441.

We recently held a voter registration drop-in session at ELREC's offices on Forth Street to allow service users the chance to check their registration details, submit applications to register or ask our staff any other questions that they may have – I would like to extend my thanks to Mizan and the rest of the ELREC team for their hospitality and we look forward to working together again in the future.

Chris Beaton

Electoral Registration Engagement Officer – Lothian Valuation Joint Board



Every Monday 12.30-2pm  
 ELREC, 14 Forth Street  
 EH1 3LH  
 Book by emailing: [cfceelrec.org.uk](mailto:cfceelrec.org.uk)

## What's on at ELREC

NKS 7 Gillespie St Edinburgh  
 EH3 9NH  
 Book by emailing: [cfceelrec.org.uk](mailto:cfceelrec.org.uk)



**Sewing service**  
 Our expert volunteer Awara is giving people's clothes a new life by repairing them.

Pop into ELREC's office with any clothes needing repair.

Mulan  
 Free Movie Night  
 Women and children only  
 Snacks provided  
 26th March, 5.30pm  
 10 Colinton Rd, EH10 5DT



From Kinga :

My name is Kinga. I am 43-year-old Polish, economics graduate, happy wife and mom of two wonderful kids. I am an optimistic person who is able to find a positive side of every situation and able to appreciate even the smallest good things happening. I enjoy cooking, reading, driving and making people happy.

I have been volunteering in ELREC since January 2018. My task is to help the finance officer Adrian Barbascumpa with on-going finance administration. Voluntary work helps me to gain confidence while speaking English and to refresh my skills after a career break. Surrounded by friendly people and warm atmosphere, I feel as a member of one big ELREC family.



## Volunteer Spotlight

From Blessing :



Hello there, my name is Blessing Wilson. I started volunteering with ELREC in January 2019. I am currently working as an HR Administrator / Receptionist. I have enjoyed working here in ELREC, as it has afforded me a platform to learn new things and meet interesting people. The staff are amazing to work with and they are always happy to give support whenever it's needed, which has made it a more comfortable and relaxed environment to work in. The recent CCF volunteers' celebration provided an opportunity to meet and interact with other volunteers and staff in a relaxed environment whilst having a wonderful time. I feel happy to be volunteering with ELREC!

## Please support our work

We welcome organisations to advertise in the ELREC Community Newsletter for:

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

This service is available for a contribution of £50-£150 depending on the size and placement of the advertisement. To find out more, please contact Administrator on: [admin@elrec.org.uk](mailto:admin@elrec.org.uk) Our newsletter is published every quarter in March, June, September and December of each year.

## Volunteers

Big Thank You to all volunteers that contributed to ELREC for last months.

Your involvement in ELREC's is very much appreciated.

We are very proud and grateful to have you in our organisation.

Thank you!

## Room Hire @ELREC

You can book our 20-seat meeting room on an hourly basis for £20 per hour (reduced rate for small charities and community groups) Tea & coffee £1 per head Please contact ELREC office for additional information or to make a booking.

For more info, contact us: [admin@elrec.org.uk](mailto:admin@elrec.org.uk)

## Third Part Reporting

Another way to report Hate Crime.

You do not need to talk to the police directly

**ELREC is here to help**

Get in touch whether you are witness, victim or a carer.

## Calling for new members at ELREC!

ELREC strives to embody the principles of transparency; integrity; equity; mutual cooperation; and participatory democracy. ELREC welcomes all individuals and organisations who share our aims, visions, and values to join us as members. As a member you will have the opportunity to shape ELREC policy direction; participate in ELREC's annual Management Board election; and attend ELREC events and lectures. Our members also act as links to various communities. We welcome membership from individuals from diverse groups as this results in the better representation of all protected characteristics. We would be much obliged if you would consider joining us, as well as helping us by encouraging individuals and organisations known to you to join ELREC.

Please contact our office: <http://www.elrec.org.uk/join-elrec-member/>



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[elrec.org.uk](http://www.elrec.org.uk)



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