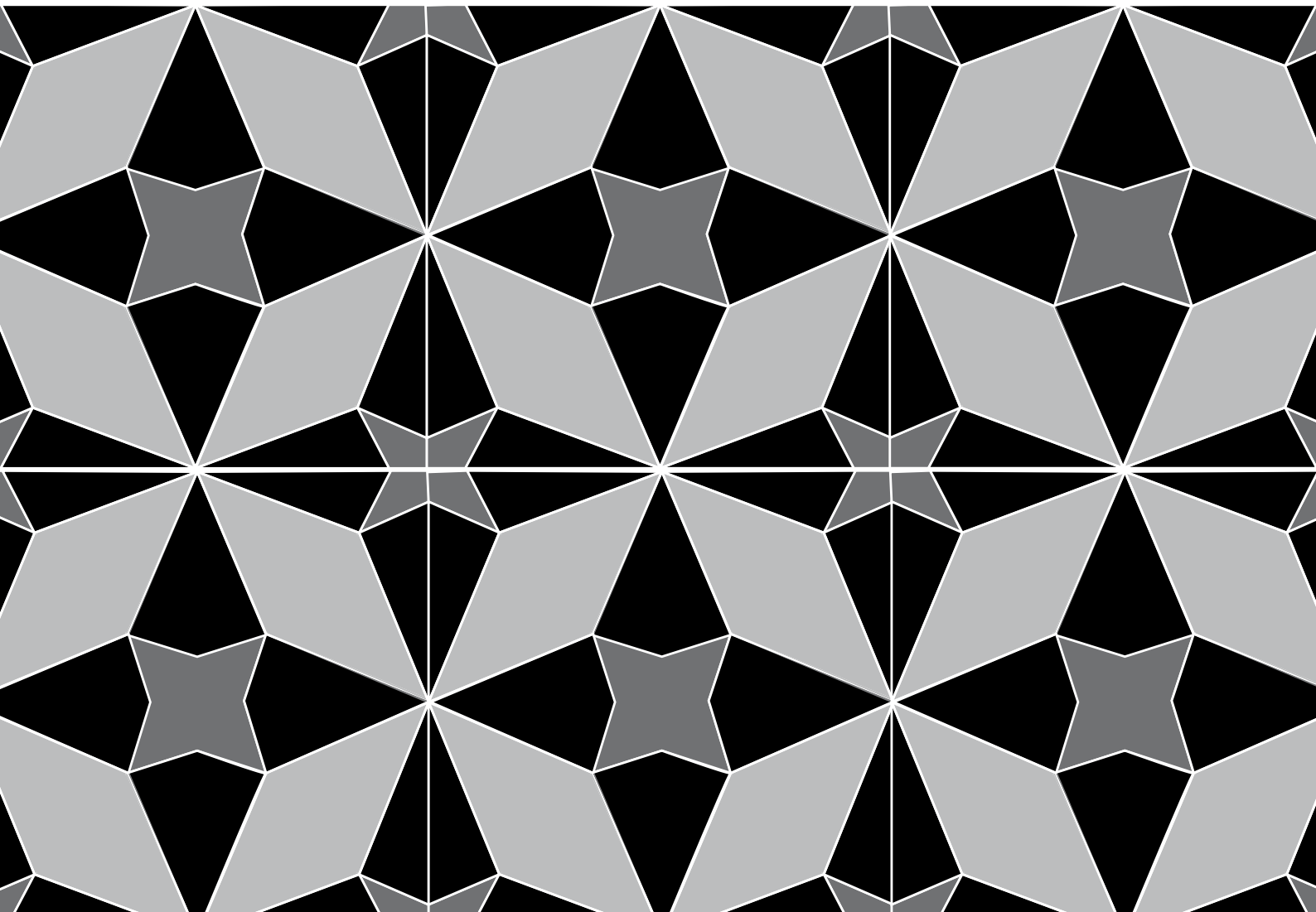


# YOUR VOICE

**NEWSLETTER OF THE BLACK & MINORITY ETHNIC FORUM PROJECT**

*NORTH SOMERSET      SEPTEMBER 2006*



# NORTH SOMERSET BLACK & MINORITY ETHNIC FORUM

The Project to set up a forum came about because of work by Somerset Racial Equality Council (SREC) here in North Somerset. SREC was asked by the Council, Police and Primary Care Trust to help them meet their responsibilities under new laws which were passed as a result of the enquiry into the death of Stephen Lawrence. These laws (Race Relations Amendment Act 2000) gave all public authorities a duty to work to eliminate racial discrimination, promote equality of opportunity for all and encourage good relations between different racial groups.

In North Somerset a Race Equality officer was appointed (See "Goodbye to Sharon" below) who saw that there was a need for work to be done which would reach out to people from minority ethnic backgrounds to ensure they were receiving appropriate services, link people up with one another and help to build a network of minority ethnic groups across North Somerset.

As the name of our project suggests, an important part of our work is to set up and support a Forum for people of Black and Minority Ethnic origin. The purpose of the Forum is to give the minority ethnic community in North Somerset a voice, to encourage closer working between different groups and to promote good race relations.

Plans are in hand to have the first meeting of the Forum at the end of October. We would welcome views and input from all people of minority ethnic backgrounds - or who support the work and aims of the project - who live or work in North Somerset. At the meeting we are planning to have a speaker from Somerset Black Development Agency to talk about how they set up and developed their organisation and we will hopefully be creating a structure and steering group for the Forum. Light refreshments will be provided.

**Please get in touch if you would like to know more about the Forum, when it is meeting and how you can contribute.**

# CASE WORK SERVICE

The case work service has now been operating for 6 months and to date we have managed to help 12 individuals to access services which they did not know were available to them. These individuals were supported through this process and were offered guidance throughout. We have helped people apply for jobs by helping with c.v.'s through to assisting people apply and move into new housing.

If you do have a problem and do not know where to turn regardless of how small or large you think it may be please do call and we will try our utmost to have you going in the right direction.

## DETAILS BELOW OF A MEETING FOR THE POLISH COMMUNITY IN WESTON

Zaproszenie

Zapraszamy na wieczor na ktorym mozesz dowiedziec sie wiele waznych i uzytecznych informacji oraz spotkac sie ze swoimi rodakami.

Spotkanie odbedzie sie we wtorek 19wrzesnia 2006 o godzinie 19.00-21.00

w Weston Room on The Badger Centre,  
3-6 Wadham Street,

Weston-super-Mare BS23 1JY

W programie: NHS – jak dziala, Wszelkie informacje o prawie pracy, I wiele innych,

Po wiecej informacji prosze dzwonic pod numer telefonu 01934 414455

Spotkanie zostalo zorganizowane przez Polskiego konsula Grzegorza Peszynskiego

The Black & Minority Ethnic Forum Project part of Somerset Racial Equality Council.

We are going to produce this newsletter every two months, if you would be interested in attending a focus group to feedback on content, look, distribution etc. please contact us using the details supplied on the back page.

# GOODBYE TO SHARON

At the end of July we said goodbye to Sharon Roberts who had been Race Equality Officer in North Somerset for the past two years. While Sharon worked primarily with the Council, Primary Care trust and the Police in helping them comply with Race Relations law she also made contact with many people in North Somerset. This was clear at her leaving party when people from all over the area, from statutory and voluntary services, and from many different ethnic backgrounds, came together to wish her well and thank her for all her hard work.

## ....AND HELLO TO ELVIS

While Sharon will be a hard act to follow, we are lucky to have a new Race Equality Officer, Elvis Johson-Idan, who started in August and who introduces himself below:

### North Somerset Race Equality Project

'The aim of this project remains to work towards the elimination of racial harassment and discrimination, promote equal opportunities and promote good relations between people from different racial groups within North Somerset.

Over the last two and a half years, a lot of hard work Has been put in by the Somerset Racial Equality team in North Somerset, supported by SREC head Office, North Somerset Council, Avon and Somerset Constabulary, the North Somerset Primary Care trust and the Big Lottery. I have joined the team to help carry on the good work that has already been done. As a replacement to the former Race Relations Officer, Sharon, my particular responsibilities are similar and would involve taking part in multi-agency working arrangements, policy development, helping various organisations to meet their obligations under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, raising awareness of racism, community consultation, social cohesion, and current, medium and long-term race equality work.

I look forward to working here, and helping to sustain a vibrant cohesive local population at peace with itself, celebrating its diversity, and benefiting from it.



# THEATRE ORCHARD

- Cultivating theatre in North Somerset -

An exciting Community Theatre project will be taking place soon across North Somerset in various locations, such as Weston-super-Mare, Clevedon, Portishead, Pill, Churchill, Nailsea and Yatton.

The people in the group will create their own piece of theatre, with the help of a professional theatre worker. It is a chance to meet people, say something about where you live, express yourself, share your experiences, learn new skills, be creative and have fun! No previous experience of theatre is necessary.

We will soon be starting to recruit people who would like to take part and we hope the groups will draw from a cross-section of people and ages. We are particularly interested in reflecting the diversity of the area, and incorporating the stories and ideas of people from a wide range of backgrounds who live in North Somerset. The workshops will run through to next summer, when we hope there will be several original pieces of community theatre that will have been devised and ready for performance.

Interested? Want to find out more? Know somebody else who might be up for it? Contact Cathy Mackerras on 01275 544103 or leave a message with Lesley or Quentin at S.R.E.C. so we can contact you.

Funded by Arts Council South West and North Somerset Council

**Your contributions to future newsletters would be very welcome.**

**Let us know what interests you, details about future events, websites, exciting recipes etc! See contact details on the back page**

## O QUE É SOMERSET PORTUGUESE ASSOCIATION?



- A S.P.A – Somerset Portuguese Association (Associação dos Portugueses de Somerset), é uma organização de apoio a integração dos cidadãos descendentes dos países de língua Portuguesa. Por outras palavras, - dos cidadãos que falam português.



- A S.P.A foi criada por cidadãos Portugueses com o apoio da SBDA – Somerset Black Development Agency, pelo S.R.E.C – Somerset Racial Equality Council, bem como outros projectos iniciativas do Governo do R.U, com o intuito dar a comunidade portuguesa igualdade de oportunidades, direitos e deveres, criando apoio multifacetário no sentido de ajudar essa comunidade, no esclarecimento, aconselhamento por forma a melhorar o entendimento da lei e o sistema Inglês facilitando a integração sem riscos.



- A S.P.A esta a dedicar a sua actividade no sentido de localizar e unir a comunidade Portuguesa em toda a extensão de Somerset, para não so se certificar de que estes estão integrados na sociedade (educação, emprego, saúde, direitos assegurados pela lei Inglesa) mas também para promover actividades desportivas, culturais e recreativas entre as várias comunidades.



- A S.P.A em conjunto com a S.R.E.C, S.B.D.A e outras organizações, vai envidar esforços no sentido de promover o ensino e aprendizagem da língua inglesa, refrescamento técnico-profissional e formação profissional junto das comunidades Portuguesas em Somerset.

- No Norte de Somerset, a S.P.A trabalha em conjunto com o projecto Black & Minority Ethnic Forum Project cuja morada se encontra na parte inferior deste boletim informativo. O objectivo do trabalho conjunto, é de encontrar portugueses que se queiram aproximar do projecto para representarem a S.P.A em Weston-Super-Mare e conhecerem as vantagens de estar ligado a um projecto desta natureza.

## DO YOU ENJOY THE COUNTRYSIDE?

The Government is asking why certain groups make less use than others of the countryside. They are introducing a Diversity Action Plan which “encourages making opportunities for disabled people, people from Black and minority ethnic communities, young people and people from inner cities to enjoy the countryside and greenspaces” and are asking for views on proposals “to enable those under-represented groups to make informed decisions about visiting the countryside and taking advantage of outdoor recreational opportunities.”

The Diversity Action Plan asks questions about how to help give more people the opportunity to enjoy the countryside and greenspaces. At the moment many people don't have the chance to enjoy the outdoors or don't think it's a place they can enjoy spending time in.

You can let them know what you think about the plan by filling in a survey form at [www.diversity-outdoors.co.uk/survey.html](http://www.diversity-outdoors.co.uk/survey.html)

## A DAY IN THE PARK

On a windy but warm weekend in early July the annual multicultural festival “Music and Dance from Around the World” took place in Grove Park, Weston super Mare. It was colourful and very enjoyable, with information stalls as well as a variety of food and drink and some great entertainment with music and dance from five continents. The Black and Minority Ethnic Project had a stall on the Sunday, and was well received with a variety of people coming up for a chat.



To contact us phone 01934 414455, email: [bmeproject@srec.org.uk](mailto:bmeproject@srec.org.uk)  
or write to us at Badger Centre, 3-6 Wadham Street, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 1JY