

DERBY CULTURAL DIVERSITY COMMUNITY GROUP

Activities Report

- Title of Project:** 'Celebration for Cultural Diversity' (Somali Culture)
- Date / Venue:** Held on Sunday 28 November 2004 at the Indian Community Centre, Rawdon Street, Derby, from 4.30 pm to 10.00 pm. (Publicity material attached).
- Project Organiser:** The project was organised through the Derby Cultural Diversity Community Group (Action Plan 2004). The planning arrangements and organising of the particular event was achieved through the Somali Education & Welfare Foundation (SEWF) – information leaflet attached. SEWF is a member of the Derby Cultural Diversity Community Group. The project bid was submitted by the Derby Racial Equality Council as the managing body of the Derby Cultural Diversity Community Group. The project was funded by the Small Change fund.
- Project Aim:** To enhance community cohesion through the celebration of cultural diversity. In particular to increase the community engagement of the, recently arrived, Somalia community by promoting and enhancing its cultural heritage through cultural activities. This is a self-development approach to help this community to build up the confidence and capacity to participate fully in the life of the City of Derby.

Participants, Activities and Attendees

- Participants:** Opening of event: Cllr Robin Turner, Derby City Council.
Mr Sulieman, Somalian Elder in Derby
Somali Education & Welfare Foundation Background – Kamal Amier, SEWF Chairperson
- Activities:** Education and Cultural Awareness Workshops – led by A Hassan. Focussed on young children of primary school age and included those of secondary school age (smaller as this is a newly arrived group in Derby). This was an inter-active engagement in bringing together all the children who live in the Normanton and Peartree area (attend Peartree School) in a community setting. Active participation of 150 children. Cultural positiveness and confidence building exercise through involvement of children in historical understanding of culture (carried through by story telling).
- Group, Dance, Poetry – presentations by Somalia Arts Group which incorporated lively upbeat African rock type music. This is native music 'infiltrated' with a western rhythm. The key is it has an African ambience; its rock rhythm gives it a participative and enjoyable element.
- Cultural Exchange – The Ukrainian (Derby based) Hoverla Dance Ensemble gave a performance of Ukrainian dance, music and song, setting it in the historical context and relating the connection of its community to Derby. The Dance troupe comprised of local boys and girls; of Ukrainian origin, engaged the attendees in the performances also. Very significantly the Somalian youngsters, both male and female, joined in this dancing activity. This helps different cultural groups to

understand each others backgrounds but, does so through activity with a fun element.

Attendees: 102 adults (male and female) and 150 children mostly from Somalian community.

Publicity: Article in Derby Evening Telegraph, Saturday 27.11.04. Press release 23.11.04 attached.

Outcome: The Derby Cultural Diversity Community Group aims to bring together the diverse communities in the City. This is targeted through cultural expression: the initial aim is simply to encourage the different groups to do activities together in a participative, informal but structured manner.

The celebration reached that goal. It also enhanced the confidence of the Somalian community in three ways:

- i) developed self confidence to organise and run their own cultural activities;
- ii) developed confidence in expressing and feel proud of their own cultural background;
- iii) developed confidence to engage more activity in the opportunities and life of the city.

These positive outcomes assist the aim to increase the level of cohesion amongst all groups in the city; and, can only impact positively in reducing community tensions and institutional discrimination.