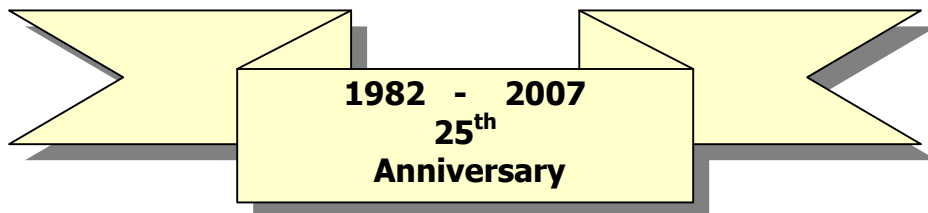


Enriching lives in our Community

Annual Report 2006/07

Including: -

- Centre Manager's Report
- Summer Activities Report
- Crèche Report
- Old Trafford News Report
- Chair's Report



Centre Managers Report

Over the last 12 months the Centre has been as successful as ever in providing learning opportunities and health related activities for people from Old Trafford. There has also been more growth & diversity in some areas within the Centre Project: more Esol provision; further activities for children and families during the school breaks and provision of space for other groups during the day. We have hosted and been involved in other larger scale events held here, and have had some involvement in a supportive capacity with 'Old Trafford Party in the Park'.

Courses/Activities and Numbers attending

We have been able to provide the following courses: Esol, Citizenship, Basic skills mentoring, level 1 & 2 Maths and English, Computers for beginners & Intermediate including internet training, Computer drop in sessions (all levels), Photoshop, Digital photography, Assertiveness training, DIY, Art, Flower & craft, Asian women's dressmaking, Spanish. Healthy eating, Keep fit, Yoga, Reflexology, First Aid, Pot painting, Badminton drop in.

Crèche provision is still available for most courses and activities. The creche doesn't just act as a childminding service, but has a role of its own in the development of children in its care. We are still registered with Ofsted and continue to strive to meet their very high standards. *(See creche report).*

We also ran the Summer Play Scheme again in August which was very successful and attracted 39 local children, and parent volunteers. We hope to be able to continue with this provision in the future.

Numbers attending have risen year on year and this year has been no exception, with many gaining skills and confidence and a healthier lifestyle. The number of newly registered members is higher for 2006 due to us re-registering everyone at the start of the new funding from ERDF.

Attendances 5,925 (2006) new members added to database = 290

Attendances 5,806 (2005) new members added to database = 169

(Numbers attending the Summer Scheme are not counted in our attendance figures, nor do we count numbers from other groups that we support using the facilities in an evening).

Male/ female break down = 20%/80% (average) Though we have tried to recruit more men by providing courses that would be of interest to them, this trend has continued over the life of the project.

Diversity

The Centre continues to attract a very diverse mix of people to the courses and activities we offer, which reflects the make up of the community.

Those who come to us are drawn together by a common need, which we believe contributes greatly to integrating members of the community and breaking down some of the barriers between race, culture, age, and religious belief.

We have forged good relationships with many different ethnic groups and members of the community over the last 25 years, and we are fortunate indeed to be able to offer the continuity of service that has not been available from other Voluntary Community Sector organisations.

In October 2006 we were visited by, the head of the Governments Commission on Integration & Cohesion, Darra Singh, who when interviewed in the Manchester Evening News hailed the Centre as a success, and a model for other communities. He was quoted as saying "What struck me was the enthusiasm of the staff, but also of the people using it"; a compliment indeed.

Funding

We are still in receipt of an earmarked grant from TMBC which is now received quarterly on production of a monitoring form from us around how we are meeting the targets for Trafford's 'Vision 2021 a blueprint'.

We were fortunate at the beginning of 2006 to have been able to access a further 2 years of ERDF funding. This is coming to an end in December this year. We submitted an Outline Proposal application to Big lotteries 'Reaching Communities' fund, and have been invited to apply for the 2nd stage of the process. We are asking for 5 years funding from them to be able to continue with the work of the Centre. We also wish to expand our provision to include regular Family Learning sessions and activities for children during the summer and other school breaks the latter of which has already been piloted and been successful. (*See Development workers report page 5/6*). An application is being prepared for Big Lottery, Family Learning fund, to enable us to this provision.

Though we are applying to Big lottery for funds, we also need to apply elsewhere in case we are not successful and will be looking for funding from other bodies. The Centre needs circa £85,000 per year, £30k of which is at present provided by TMBC from earmarked grants.

Staff & Management Committee

Amirjit Singh replaced Lisa Crosse as Crèche supervisor in January, and has settled into the culture of the Centre really well. Amirjit is helping Shani towards her NVQ 3 in Childcare, which will then give the Centre crèche 2 very well qualified workers.

The Management Committee welcomed John Hughes, our new Priest in Charge, in the latter half of 2006. John has been attending meetings and is intending to take over as Chairman of the project from the first Meeting after the AGM. The position has been held by Colin Barson since Rev. David Wheeler left in December 2005. Colin has done a great job of leading and supporting the project and has agreed to stay on the committee in an advisory role. Other members of the committee have formed a dedicated and committed team over the last year

and have supported and made decisions that have helped to govern and guide the organisation. There have been no major issues this year.

Over the last few months The MC and staff have been working together to develop a 5 year strategic plan for the Centre and a vision for the future – this has involved reviewing ourselves as an organisation, through doing a PEST analysis to look at Political Economic, Social & Technological changes that may affect our organisation, and SWOT Analysis, looking at our Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities & Threats. We have revised our constitutional, objectives, and reviewed our aims, mission, vision and values to ensure they are still suitable for our needs. We also have a new 'Strap line' for our 25th Anniversary year which we hope will see us through the next 25 years.

25th Anniversary

The Centre has been around in one form or another since 1982, prompted by the Moss Side Riots. Over the years the project has grown and changed considerably and best of all, is still here serving the people of Old Trafford in many and diverse ways, and that is something to celebrate.

In October, we will be holding that celebration in both the Church and Hall, (which if everything goes to plan, will be joined together by a Marquee), and will include a thanksgiving service in church, food, displays, music, and guest speakers including the Bishop and the Mayor of Trafford.

Old Trafford News

Under the leadership of Ally Fogg, the Old Trafford News magazine continues to go from strength to strength and has just secured 3 years funding from Big lottery, this is to fund Ally's position as editorial co-ordinator, a part time admin assistant, training costs and some overheads; the magazine will continue to pay for its own production and distribution costs through advertising. This is fabulous news for the community as the magazine is a much needed tool for communication. (Full report page 9)

Thanks

I would like to thank all those who have contributed to another successful year of St John's Centre. In particular the staff team, Management Committee members, volunteers and all our supporters.

Christine Aspinall

Summer Scheme and Easter Fun Day

The Local Network grant was used to develop a summer play scheme for children and young people living in the Old Trafford area.

Our aim was to develop a team of workers paid and voluntary to run schemes during half term breaks to alleviate the pressures from parents/carers who are on low income or unwaged and are unable to participate in other local children and young peoples activities due to time constraints high costs or age restrictions.

The grant enabled us to employ qualified paid workers, attract new volunteers and purchase materials for specific activities. It also helped us to attract interest from other agencies willing to participate in delivering services within the scheme.

In addition to the activities within St Johns Centre we were able to arrange a day trip around Manchester and at the Urbis. We also held a competition for the participants of the Play Scheme to win a trip up the new Beetham tower. This was featured in the Manchester Evening News; unfortunately they put incorrect information in the article, so we were not recognised as the participating party.

Our day trip was to encourage the children and young people to use resources available locally as part of their pastime and to pass on information and their experiences on to those who have not yet visited the attractions.

With the monies left over we decide to pilot a one off family fun day during Easter, to attract parents in the hope of encouraging them to volunteer for future activities during half terms. It was also a chance to consult with them to find out what they felt about provisions available for children and young people during the half terms. We also spoke to some of the children and young people about their interests and asked them what would attract them to participate in future play schemes.

The Play scheme and the Family Fun day enabled children and young people from the age of 6 months to 14 years to participate in a variety of activities including arts and craft, dance, sports and group work.

The family Fun day encouraged parents/carers and people with skills in crafts and childcare to increase their confidence by sharing their skills to deliver various activities to adults, young people and children. This created a very harmonious atmosphere which was enjoyed by all who attended.

The family Fun day helped St Johns Centre to attract parents with and without skills to participate in a variety of activities with their children and also to improve communication between them when facing different challenges, especially in arts and craft.

When asked to comment about the day (parents and carers) we received numerous compliments, such as:-

"Fab"

"Nice atmosphere"

"Brill"

"Great Value"

"Good job"



Some felt we should have had it over a few days during the Easter and were willing to pay more for sessions over two weeks. We administered a charge of £2 per child to pay towards some of the equipment and snacks. We asked if any of the adults/carers would volunteer for future activities to increase our database, improve their skills and to keep costs down. We received a number of names of those willing to spare some time so we hope to act on this for our Summer Scheme 07.



Sandra Barber - Project Worker AGM Report 07

Crèche report 2007/

The crèche continues to be a vital asset to many Centre users. 89 children have registered since September 2007 the crèche has turned away 7 children. The number of children attending each session has increased, with several of the sessions reaching full capacity (7 children).

Since the last AGM there have been some staff changes: Shani Kaur is now the crèche supervisor and is looking at ways to improve the crèche and continue good relationships with parents and carers. Jasbir Kaur has joined us as crèche assistant. Crèche held a coffee morning which parents/carers can attend with their child/children, to meet other parents and talk to staff about new courses within the Centre. We also encourage parents to look at their child's/children's progress within the crèche. This was very successful and was attended by many of our parents.

Staff within the crèche have been working on developing children's files to monitor their progress within the time they spend in the crèche, giving support to children learning ability and working alongside parents to support their needs when attending classes within the Centre.

During this morning we asked parents for feedback on how they feel about the crèche. One parent said "*the crèche staff helped my son to settle in very easily.*" All the feedback was positive. Many parents found that on some days the crèche was full and felt it should be bigger with more staff so that they can attend their course within the Centre.

The crèche staff and parents/carers have suggested that in the future it would be nice to have an outdoor play area and a larger room.

Staff would like to find new ways to support children and parents/carers within the Centre, looking at ways to help parents/carers to support their child's/children's learning needs at home. We have been working towards family learning in Old Trafford and this is going very well. The crèche has become an important part of the Centre and we would like to see both the Centre and the crèche build up a community spirit. It is very rewarding knowing that the children and their parents/carers are happy to leave their child/children with our service and that we are assisting them to improve their quality of life.

Shani and Jasbir are planning an end of year crèche party in July

Shani Kaur – Crèche Supervisor

Old Trafford News

Report for St Johns Centre AGM, May 22nd 2007

Financial stability

Since May 2006, the priority for the Old Trafford News project was securing financial security for the coming year. Several bids were prepared to funding agencies and in February we were delighted to secure a three-year funding programme from the Big Lottery Fund totalling £143,497. This funding regime begins from June 1st, and includes sufficient revenue funding to employ a part-time administrator. The process of appointing this employee is currently underway. The Big Lottery Fund requires extensive monitoring and evaluation of the project, and so the administrator's role will principally be to oversee this data collection.

One unforeseen problem with the Lottery funding is that although the award was announced at the beginning of February, it actually took four months for the Lottery staff to initiate the first quarterly payment and give an official green light to the project. This caused OTN to run up a substantial financial deficit within the Centre accounts (as has been shown in the finance report). The Lottery will not backdate payments, so OTN will have to pay back the deficit from external project funding and additional trading activities. Over the past year, such contracts (including project funding, media consultancy, design for print work, external training and similar work) have generated over £8,000 in additional income, so we are confident that paying off the deficit to the Centre's main account will be attainable in the near future.

An additional source of income may soon be the magazine itself. While in 2005-6 each edition of OTN brought in approximately £1,500-£2,000 in advertising and sponsorship money (against production and distribution costs of approx £4,000) in the past year advertising and sponsorship revenue has continued to rise, with the last two editions of OTN actually breaking even, with almost exactly £4,000 raised for each issue. We are optimistic that this year each edition of OTN could actually return a profit.

Magazine production

The production of OTN magazine has been successful over the past year, with four editions produced on schedule. The standard of content has, we believe, continued to rise, particularly with regard to design and layout, which has improved significantly since May 2006, largely thanks to volunteer designers Caroline and Hassan.

Website

With support from Cash for Action, and thanks to the hard work of our volunteer Zahir Khan in particular, the Old Trafford News website (www.otnews.org.uk) is now finally up and running, featuring content from the magazine plus additional news and features and extensive local community links. Several additional features are still in development, including a partnership with Action for Sustainable Living which will enable a 'good neighbour' networking scheme to be established.

Partnerships

OTN is continuing to sustain and develop collaborative projects with other agencies and community & voluntary sector groups. The most successful of these so far is an ongoing operation with Trafford Youth Offending Team to provide placements for young people on community service and reparation orders. So far this project has led to two complete magazine features, plus a centre-page anti-gun poster.

Volunteers and Training

Over the past year OTN has featured contributions from 44 volunteers. To our knowledge, at least four volunteers from May '06 have moved on to further education and training. We know of three who have moved off benefits and into part- or full-time employment.

We have run two free writing and journalism skills courses in the past 12 months which were completed by a total of 19 trainees.

Conclusion and thanks.

In many ways it has been a transitional year for Old Trafford News. February 2007 marked the 10th anniversary of the Old Trafford News project, and it appears that we are about to enter our most secure and productive period yet. I would like to thank all our volunteers and contributors who have formed the basis of this success. I would also like to thank the staff and management committee of St John's Centre for their support and advice, and thank our friends, supporters, advertisers and sponsors in the Old Trafford Community, especially OT Neighbourhood Manager Teresa Marriott, and TMBC's Director of Communications, Lindsey McDonald, for their invaluable support over the past year.

Ally Fogg. May 22nd, 2007.

ST JOHNS CENTRE

AGM May 2007

Report by Chair – Colin Barson

This is my second and final report to the membership of St Johns Centre as a new chair will be in post after this AGM. On reflecting on my time as Chair I thought of all the positives contributions that the centre makes. The service offered, the flexibility to meet changing demands, the work of the staff and their own development to meet the challenges of a changing world, the dedication of a management committee that is motivated by the positive contribution they make to a vulnerable community. All these areas are important to the life of the community and the Centres standing within but the one area that most depict

the culture of the centre – for me is the ability to share the Centres facilities with all the community.

In times of a changing society the Centre holds its membership across all parts of the community, sharing the skills and abilities and providing a welcome to all people. This is not simply my understanding but was independently evaluated by the visit form the Commission for Diversity last year. The Centre was seen as a leading light in relation to the community it serves by providing opportunities for all groups of people. This at a time of heightened tensions and changing community relationships is a major contribution of the centre.

The last year has shown again the resilience of the centre to develop interventions on behalf of the community. The centre has the community at its heart and strives to meet the demands placed upon it. The relationship of the centre with external bodies is positive and the centre contributes to the strategic objectives of Old Trafford. This is important as the future for the centre will be built upon such relationships. The impact of the neighbourhood management project has yet to be seen, but the centre is a significant partner to the development. I would like to thank the staff team, the management committee and all those volunteers who work to make the centre a successful project, flexible in meeting the needs of a dynamic and changing community.

The future holds great opportunities for the centre whilst life in the voluntary sector gets ever more stressful. It is likely the opportunities will come from service delivery, acting in unison with our partners offering joined up delivery. The centre is well placed to develop these relationships and is an active member of community engagement work in the community. The funding for the future will no doubt be tenuous but we strive to ensure we meet our objectives and will seek new opportunities to meet the demands of the people we serve.

Finally I would reiterate my thanks to those within the centre for their support over the last year. I appreciate their support and their loyalty to the cause. I appreciate the humour and the commitment shown to me and the centre by the management committee. I would like to thank the staff team for their continuing ability to think outwardly and look for opportunities to develop the relationships between centre and the community. I would like to thank the funders for their continued support and hope these relationships continue to develop. The future for the centre is a positive one and I look forward to being a part of its ongoing evolution as it strives to work for a more educated and active community.

Colin Barson - Chair



Enriching lives in our Community!



Part funded by ERDF