

*Enriching lives in our Community*

# **Annual Report 2007/08**

Including: -

- Centre Manager's Report
- Report from committee member
- Summer Activities Report
- Crèche Report
- Old Trafford News Report

# **Project Manager's Report - AGM June 2008**

## **Christine Aspinall**

### **General overview**

Once again the Centre has had a really good year; has been exceptionally well used, and been able to offer an excellent timetable of activities to the community, enriching and improving people's lives in many ways.

The Centre celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in October, with a thanksgiving service and a party in the hall which was attended by many members of the community and also the Mayor of Trafford and the Bishop of Bolton.

As part of our 25<sup>th</sup> year celebrations we produced a fabulous community pantomime in December, which was really successful and great fun for everyone involved.

Having been unable to secure further funding to replace ERDF we have sadly had to say goodbye to one of our most valued workers. Sandra did an excellent job of developing activities for the project and she is greatly missed.

Change is inevitable, and we have seen many changes in the life of the Centre over the last 25 years. We need to view these changes as an opportunity to look with fresh eyes at our project and to do things differently if necessary to keep up with the changes. This next year will bring us a few challenges, but as ever we will strive to continue to serve the community and its needs for at least the next 25 years and beyond.

### **Courses/Activities**

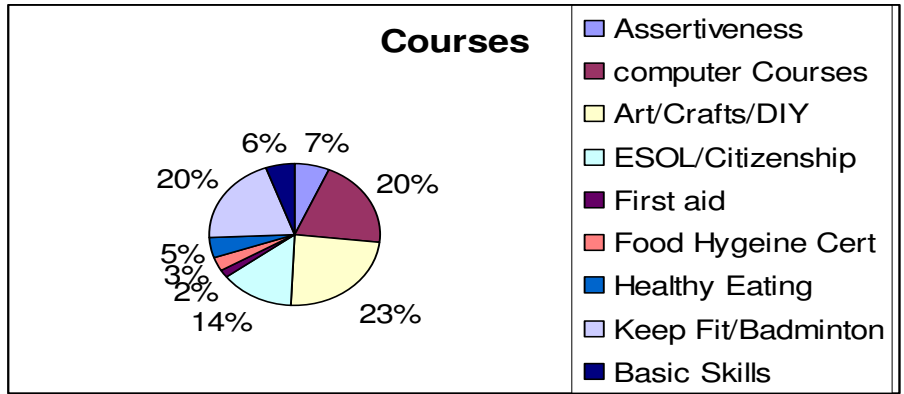
Courses have been well attended and we have been able to offer the following: -Art, Assertiveness, Citizenship, Computers (Various levels) DIY, Dressmaking & soft furnishings, Esol, Improve your English, Maths, First Aid, Craft, Food Hygiene Cert, Healthy Eating, Sugar craft, Ladies keep fit; with again English/Esol and Computers being the most popular courses and Ladies keep fit being the most popular health activity.

- *Numbers attending*

Monitoring figures for 2007 - 217 individuals registered on database. Average attendance per month is 521: an increase again from 494 in 2006. We still don't manage to capture everyone's details and estimate the Centre is used by 20% more than we have on record

We have met all our targets for the ERDF project which finished at the end of December.

Regular evening activities we have estimated 1500 attendances per qtr though this figure is likely to be higher. (see attached monitoring sheet).

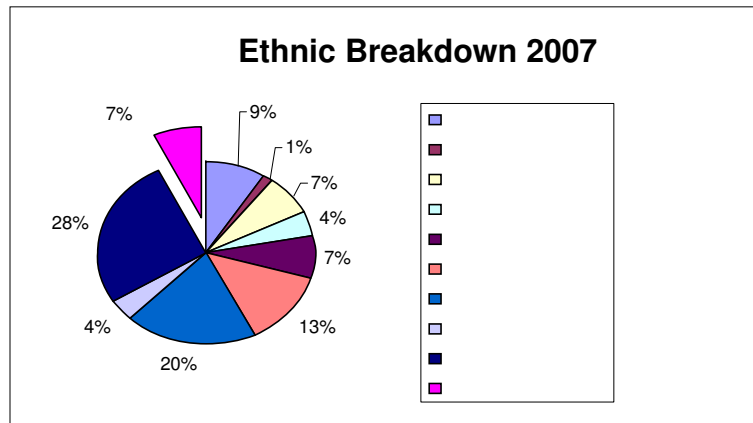


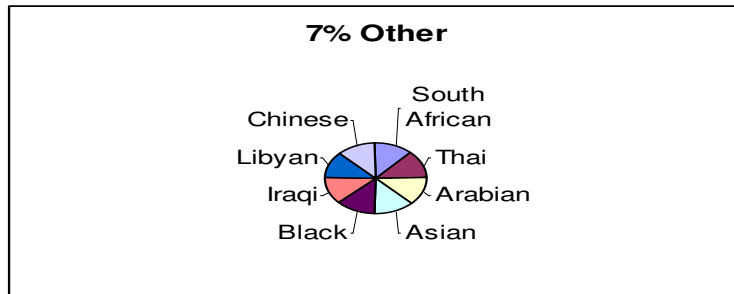
- *Male- female break down*

The male female breakdown is approximately 80% female and 20% male - this seems to be the norm for the project, though we would like to attract more men into learning. We need to do some consultation outside of the Centre to find out what men would be interested in attending, as all our efforts so far have had little effect.

- *Ethnic breakdown*

The ethnicity of Centre users remains very diverse and representative of the community as a whole. See tables below. This continues to be one of the major strengths of the work of the Centre that we are able to attract users from all different faiths & cultures, enabling community cohesion and integration within the community.





### **Young people's activities**

Since April last year we have put on 2 family activity sessions and held Summer Activities for children aged up to 13yrs for two weeks during the August school holidays. These were funded by the Local Network Fund, with a further small amount from OTNM's Cash 4 Action money and a small contribution from parents. In total these activities attracted 40 children & young people to each session. **(See attached report)**

### **Crèche**

The crèche is a very important part of the Centre and provides a much needed resource for parents who would otherwise be excluded from activities. The crèche staff members have become more involved in the running of children's activities and have also held several coffee mornings to develop relationships with parents and to inform them of their child's progress. This also acts as a way of consulting with the parents on many issues regarding the resource. A great number of children have been registered with us this year. We have applied to BBC Children in Need for 3 years funding for the crèche. **(See attached Crèche Report)**

### **Funding**

Our main funding is from TMBC's earmarked grants at present with some funds from Trafford College, and bits and bobs from other sources.

ERDF funding finished in December 07, and we have made many applications to other funders to replace this, without success.

Old Trafford Neighbourhood Management gave us 3 months interim funding whilst we were awaiting results of bids, with which we were able to continue employing our project worker for that period of time.

Our funding sub group have been meeting regularly to discuss the way forward and we have made an application to Capacity Builders' Improving reach for a BME/Faith communities development worker. The results were originally expected by the end of March, but due to the volume of applications received, the date has been pushed back to at least the end of May.

We applied to sub contract with the prime contractor for delivering Job Centre plus. That contract has now been awarded and those who wished to work with us were unsuccessful.

St John's Centre, Trafford Adult learning and CDI have formed a consortium to apply for a Lottery grant to provide ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) for those who cannot access government funded provision. If successful this will run as a 3 year programme.

At present we are working with the Church Urban Fund advisor to look at longer term sustainability and how we might become a social enterprise. This will involve looking at governance, finance, and feasibility, culminating in a written business plan for 3-5 years

### **Old Trafford News**

Old Trafford news is going from strength to strength and we now employ an admin assistant for the project. OTN (Ally) is doing some great work with young offenders, who have written articles and had them published in the quarterly editions. There is also a workshop for young people once a week. **(See attached report)**

### **Thank you**

Our thanks go to: -

- Staff and management committee for their dedication and hard work this year, and in particular to the Funding sub group who have spent much time and had to make some major decisions. **(see report below from committee member)**
- St John's Church & PCC and all our supporters and partners. **(see back page)**  
We look forward to working with you in the future.

**I have had invaluable experience as a management committee member and have given valuable advice and support. The management committee has performed in a professional manner and always looked at the best interest in the development and community cohesion of our diverse community.**

**I am pleased to report encouraging progress at St. John's - our objective of improving the health and wellbeing of our communities and providing opportunities towards enriching people's lives.**

**Our working relationship with the voluntary, private and public sector is excellent and I hope that the reward of working so closely has and will become obvious to all our residents as our services develop.**

**A vitally important part of our work has been to progress plans for the development of our services for the future - in particular, educational prospects and seeking funding for continuity.**

**I would like to thank all our, staff and management committee for their excellent commitment throughout the year - during a period of challenging changes.**

**Gulnar Khan, Committee Member**

## Summer Scheme



This year St. John's had 40 children attending the summer School programme, 3 days a week for 2 weeks. Funding was from Local Network Fund (L.N.F). The targeted age range was 8-14yrs, with the usual addition of younger children being welcome with parents in attendance. We felt it important to include younger children as it is beneficial for larger families who can then enjoy the Summer School together.

The previous year we recognised that although we were extremely good at getting younger children involved in the programme we didn't really provide activities that engaged older children of high school age (11+). Therefore this year we chose a topic that we felt would give us an advantage in successfully reaching the reluctant pre-teens and those older. We decided on film making.

Along with our main topic we ran the usual art and craft activities on arrival at the centre, plus group games and quizzes used to bring everyone together and create a more cohesive feel to the Summer School. Playing "Run Around" (for those old enough to remember it!) with a group of 30+ children proved extremely entertaining to watch.

Film making proved an enormous success. Children were allowed to work in their own groups and to write and make a film of their own choosing. We had 5 groups ranging from a group of 3 to a group of 8 deciding to work together. Each group was assigned an adult helper who was briefed on what the basic requirements were for the children to agree on and produce prior to filming. The film maker was there to advise on what was and was not possible in the ideas stage.



Groups came to decisions on story lines and organised props, costume, make-up, and in one case built their own sets from cardboard boxes. Children tended to copy their favourite film or TV series, or to tell a story using a classic film genre. Each group was able to make a short film in a very tight time schedule. Children mainly chose to be in front of the camera; although there was the option to be involved on the technical side (only one girl took up this opportunity as camera woman). All editing was done by the film maker – partly due to the availability of technical equipment, and partly due to time constraints in teaching children to edit. All films were shown in our own film show – complete with homemade popcorn. Each family was provided with a DVD of all the films. Organising consent was difficult for this project and if repeated would need to be considered more closely to make it easier. One of the films made went on to be shown at Manchester Urban Screens Festival 2007 on the big screen in All Saint's garden.

This year we held a photography competition. Thanks to Trafford Housing Trust we were able to take advantage of a photo competition they ran. We used the free throw away cameras provided by THT as well as the new digital cameras bought with previous funding. Our children were encouraged to take part in this competition as well as us hosting our own exhibition and deciding our own winner. Children who entered the Old Trafford wide competition did well, with one runner up and 3 highly recommended awards gained.



Other activities were cooking – with our volunteer Farhana making some excellent pizzas from scratch in our healthy eating kitchen. We had family history clock making, where children brought in pictures of themselves and their family. This allowed important family conversation about personal history as well as giving others a glimpse of their neighbours' lives. Plus we held a traditional sports day in Seymour Park – including wheelbarrow race and three legged race (which some children had never even heard of, doing well to hobble across the finish line). Thanks to the beautiful weather our annual day trip, this year to Hulme Adventure

playground, was a great success. So much so that we repeated it on another day as everyone enjoyed themselves so much – even after a few complaints on the long walk there and back! Thanks to Hulme Adventure Playground staff who were warm and welcoming to us all.

There were 5 paid members of staff this year and 6 unpaid volunteers, without whom the Summer School would not be as successful as it was. It was good to see familiar faces turning up and new children, we really are building a good reputation for this piece of work at St. John's Centre.

### **St. John's Festive Fun day - Christmas**

St. John's Centre was able to put on a family fun day / consultation session. In December a group of 5 adult workers and 3 young people volunteering provided 35 children and their families with a host of festive craft activities to get involved in. Card making, mug painting, badge making, calendar making and a fancy dress competition were some of the activities on offer. One of the young volunteers used this experience to help build her portfolio in her Child Development course. A great deal of effort went into creating a fantasy grotto where all children were given the opportunity to meet Father Christmas and receive a gift (once a feedback form had been completed). It was very encouraging to see that even the most hardened teenager enjoyed the magic of Santa's Grotto. And thanks to Santa for giving his time freely to us for the day.



## Crèche report 2007/2008



The crèche continues to be a vital asset to many Centre users. 89 children have registered since September 2007 and 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. The 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 the children's 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 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*



Trafford MBC  
VCAT  
Old Trafford Neighbourhood Management  
CDI  
Trafford Community Learning  
South Asian Families Assoc.  
OT Family Centre  
ACE women's group  
WEA  
Trafford College  
Blue Sci  
New Way Forward  
HB Associates  
Faiths 4 Change



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