

One World Week

Promoting intercultural engagement and caring for our planet

One World Week (OWW) is an annual opportunity for people from diverse backgrounds to come together to learn about global justice, to spread that learning and to use it to take action for justice locally and globally, by:

- Working together in caring for the Earth and its resources
- Taking action for justice, equality, peace and fullness of life for all
- Building relationships of mutual respect
- Running local events that celebrate the diversity of cultures

Making it happen

OWW and Black Environment Network (BEN) were keen to develop activities that would involve the Muslim community and contribute to community cohesion in Manchester during OWW 2007. BEN identified two areas of the city where an element of tension existed between diverse communities and recent incoming migrants. Events were planned aimed at challenging intercultural myths and providing opportunities for real meeting and exchange between different faith and ethnic groups.

An important opportunity for young people

With the support of the Aston All Stars community group, fifteen Muslim youngsters from the local Madrassa and the wider area arranged to visit a nearby church. The boys, aged between 11 to 14 years, spent two hours with the vicar and members of the Holy Trinity church: they discussed what the Islam and Christian faiths shared and saw how the church was both similar and different to the Mosque. Everyone went away with something new and interesting to think about.

This visit was entirely enabled through the BEN development worker and his knowledge of the Muslim community: their trust in him meant he could assuage parents' concerns over their youngsters' going into a strange place of worship and meeting those from another faith. Contacts made through this visit will lay the foundations for more community activity in the future.

Working with the whole community

A conference organised by Tameside Inter Faith Forum Group provided a great opportunity for diverse individuals, community and faith groups to come together for personal contact.

Dunkenfield Town Hall Tameside offered a neutral environment for everyone to feel at ease, and faith and



OWW Walkers gather outside the Jami Mosque, Summerstown, Portsmouth. © Sue Ganter, Interfusion



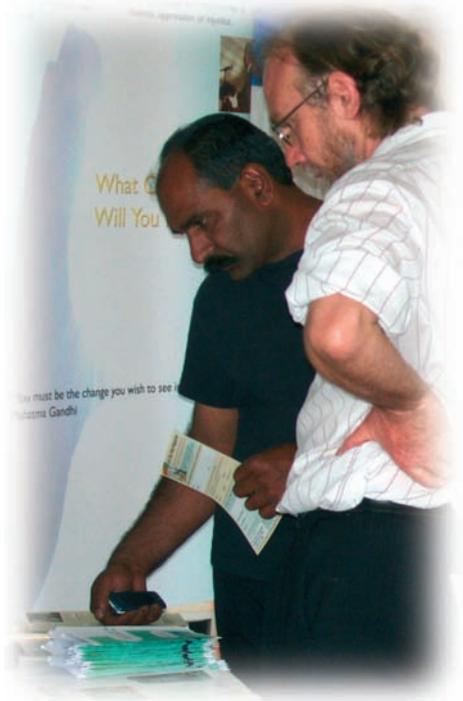
non-faith community organisations displayed their work and were able to explain what they did. The lunchtime menu included Indian, Chinese and British food, allowing for everybody's tastes.

Four workshops enabled lively discussion of a range of issues: tolerance and understanding, community faith groups and the media, police and BME faith groups, sharing religious venues, young people and faith, impact of 9/11, image and clothing.

150 people came and community members made new contacts in the locality to build relationships with into the future.

The Future

It was acknowledged that there is work to be done to build trust and greater inclusion for the Muslim communities who have suffered particularly from misrepresentation post 9/11. Through these events OWW has begun to publicise its activities and ethos within a range of Manchester communities; and are optimistic that awareness and support for more intercultural events will grow in future years.



FACTFILE

- **Funders:**
One World Week
Community Fund
- **Partners:**
One World Week
Tameside Interfaith Forum
Aston All Stars
Holy Trinity Church
- **Target:**
BME communities in Tameside area
- **Numbers:**
200 community members from different groups were involved
- **Key Points:**
 - Be creative in winning the trust of some faith groups and do not give up
 - Getting people from different faiths and communities talking together directly links to better global understanding and forms the basis for joint action



For further information please contact:
BEN UK Office: 60 High Street, Llanberis, Wales, LL55 4EU Tel/Fax: 01286 870715
Email: ukoffice@ben-network.org.uk Website: www.ben-network.org.uk