



## **Annual Report of People in Harmony**

**2009 - 2010**

*A Positive, Friendly, Interracial, Anti-racist Organisation*

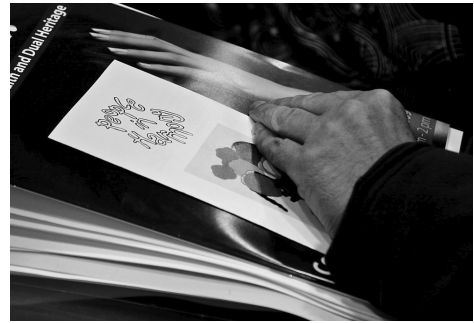
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## About the Charity

People in Harmony, a charity and a company limited by guarantee, was set up in 1972 to support people living in mixed race families. Over the years attitudes to and experiences of mixed race people have changed, although the need for support is as important as ever. As statistical information from the 2001 Census has become available there seems to be an increased interest in mixed race matters and a steady number of enquiries from the students wishing to study



aspects of mixed race experience and from the media have been received. There is now a greater acceptance that mixed race cannot be swept under the carpet or subsumed into the 'black' or 'other' designations but requires investigation and services more sensitively prepared for mixed race people and families.

PIH continues to contribute to debates and to respond to media requests for information and discussion. It also continues to support to those experiencing problems, for example within the education system and social care. This has been an important aspect of PIH work over the decades. So too has the encouragement offered to people seeking to examine their social experiences, the newsletter and website offer ample opportunities for such activity.



The services which the charity provides to its members, the public, voluntary and statutory organisations as well as the media and researchers include support and information on a range of mixed race issues. We are able to assist with members who are willing to be interviewed by the media, to support and participate in research projects, to link up with other members and to facilitate, or speak, at conferences and seminars for statutory bodies. We also sell a range of resources including books and DVDs. These services are part of the core work of the charity that meets our objective of advancing the education of the public in matters pertaining to the promotion and achievement of equality of opportunity for persons of different racial groups.

This has been another busy and challenging year for People in Harmony and we have worked together to maintain services and take on new challenges. The sale of the Slough premises has required the relocation of regular committee meetings. The Gestalt Centre in east London has provided a very suitable place for meetings which is convenient and which has ample space and facilities.

## Committee and volunteers activity

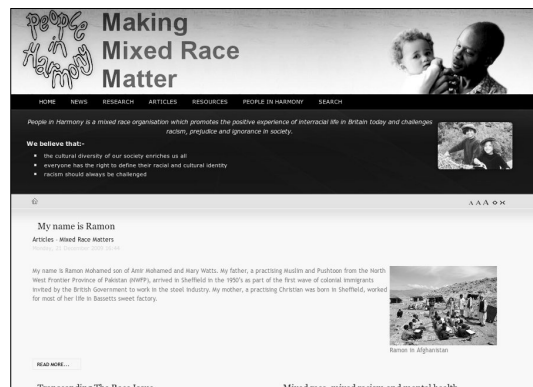
The committee elected at the 2009 AGM has served with the additional help of Cindy Matthews, Steven Evans was voted on to board and during the year took on the role of company secretary from Adrian Rollins. Emmanuel Nnatuanya has been co-opted during the year with the expectation that he will serve as Treasurer. Slough

Volunteer Bureau have been helpful in putting us in contact with people interested in volunteering.

The usual business of People in Harmony has continued, providing services to both members and the public. The telephone line has offered information and support for families under pressure from statutory services and others. This is part of the 'unseen' value of PIH, which not everyone is aware of.

The Newsletter, which is regularly published for members, with copies sent to enquirers, continues to be published and is a valued resource. It includes articles, information, research, poetry, resources and personal experiences written by both members and non-members living here and abroad. The newsletter also carries information about forthcoming events and reports of PiH conferences and contributions to seminars and conferences organized by other agencies.

The website, maintained by Matt Hoskins and hosted by New Information Paradigms is a source of interest all over the world with monthly hits peaking at over 22,500, and visits at over 5,000. Many people use the contact details to get in touch with People in Harmony. Although the majority of our members are in the UK we have, for example, members in Germany and value all the opportunities to reach out which the website offers. Matt has adapted a Joomla design to use as a new template for our website. We have received volunteer help from Sonja Lund through it4communities and she worked on setting up the pages on the new website and transferring material. A research page has been added and this will provide information on current and past mixed race research. There remains updates to be made to some of the pages and new material added and will then be ready to be launched. Using the Joomla software enables more people to assist with updates and regular maintenance. The members and committee e-lists continue to be well used forums for debate and for discussing business.



The Annual Conference in 2009 took the form of a discussion about future plans and strategies for the Charity. This was facilitated by Carmel O'Brien, community development worker Slough CVS. Carmel kindly produced a report of the discussions and has continued to offer support during the year in matters such as finance and employment of a paid worker.

People in Harmony has participated in the continuing ESRC seminar series on mixedness and mixing held at London South Bank University and the London School of Economics. These events have gathered together insights from academics and practitioners interested in exploring aspects of life for people from 'mixed racial and ethnic backgrounds' and their families. At the final seminar Val Hoskins and Jill Olumide gave a presentation on behalf of PIH and participated in the discussion.

A second conference in collaboration with Central Conference Consultants was held at the King's Fund entitled Mixed Race, Mixed Racism and Mental Health. Speakers from a broad range of interests in the subject made for a very well received programme. A grant of £500 was made by the Zeena Ralph Memorial Fund in order to produce a conference report. The report is in hand and will soon be available; meanwhile a synopsis has been published in the Newsletter.



Education is a major objective of People in Harmony and the Charity is currently working towards a third collaboration with CCC, this time for a conference on the subject of mixed race and social care to be held at the School of Oriental and African Studies in November 2010.

### **Review of Annual Business**

Our income comes from membership fees, donations and sales of publications but these sources do not cover our core costs and we rely on additional income from grants.

At present the proceeds from the sale of premises is set aside pending a decision on future purchase of property.

We plan to raise grants both for project and core activities, although this is not easy in the present economic climate. Meanwhile we continue to maintain a presence in national debates and to raise the profile of the Charity. In addition our core functions are maintained through fees and donations.

The annual subscription is due to be paid on 1<sup>st</sup> April each year and with an increasing number of subscriptions being paid by standing order this assists with the administration work of the charity.

Committee meetings during the past year have been held at the Gestalt Centre, London and using telephone conference calls.

### **Staffing**

Following a decision taken at the 2009 AGM, we have appointed a part time worker Rienkje Attoh who now has a contract to assist with items of work such as events organisation and publicity. Rienkje has been interviewed and has started to work.

Cathy Douglas has continued to manage the sale of resources and publications for The Charity and we are grateful to her for the funds this generates.

## **The year ahead**

The Annual Conference theme for 2010 is Mixed Race and The Arts and artists from a variety of artistic media have been booked. This is an interesting departure from our usual focus on aspects of public service.

With regards the recruitment of trustees and volunteers, the search will continue for people with specific skills and interests, in particular for someone able to take on the work of membership secretary. Another important skill much needed is fund raising with the continuing need to raise grants for core and project funding.

The Mixed Race and Social Care Conference is already being planned with CCC and a number of speakers have been secured.

There will be ongoing effort to improve communications with the public and with members. Facebook pages have been used to publicise our 'Mixed Race & The Arts' Annual Conference for example.

## **And finally....**

We are grateful to the Zeena Ralph Memorial Fund for a grant of £500 which enables us to publish a report of our 2009 public sector conference.

We thank all the volunteers and members who carried out many hours of voluntary work and who have supported the aims and objectives of People in Harmony. We look forward to continuing support and development in the year ahead.

We welcome people with ideas and time to come forward, to get involved and to help further develop the organisation. Special skills are welcome, but goodwill is just as important in developing People in Harmony.

## **Management Committee 2009/2010**

Committee members, who are all members of the charity, are the Trustees of the charity and are Directors for the purpose of company law.

Jill Olumide Chairperson, Val Hoskins Vice Chairperson, Denis Matthews Treasurer, Steven Evans Company Secretary, Adrian Rollins, Peter Aspinall, Tania Widener, Emmanuel Nnatuanya (co-opted)





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