

Equality & Diversity

June 2011

**Bedfordshire Race & Equalities Council**



## **EQUALITY MATTERS**

*Newsletter of Bedfordshire Race & Equalities Council*

*Challenging Inequalities Across Bedfordshire*

# **CONGRATULATIONS!**



## **Mr Kuldip Singh Rupra OBE**



We are delighted to report that Mr Kuldip Singh Rupra has been awarded the Officer of the Order of the British Empire—OBE—in her Majesty the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2011 for services to Black & Minority Ethnic Communities in the East of England.

Mr Rupra has been involved with Beds R&EC for many years and has been Chair and Treasurer during office. He has helped to steer the R&EC through some difficult times in previous years and his passion and dedication for equality & diversity has brought about significant changes for both this organisation and the wider community.

Mr Rupra has also been involved with several other not for profit organisations who have also benefitted from his foresight, dedication and vision for a fairer and just society. This recognition is justly deserved and we are thrilled that he has finally been rewarded for his voluntary work to improve the outcomes for people from BME communities.

**CONGRATULATIONS KULDIP!** From all of your friends, colleagues and associates at Beds Race & Equalities Council we are all immensely proud of you.

*Wendy Anderson-Welsh*

*Chief Executive*

*Beds R&EC*

**Sponsorship can be provided at a level of your choice. There are 4 levels of support as a sponsor:**

Level of Sponsorship	Package Provided
<b>£2000</b>	<p>Your organisation's name/logo included in event programme &amp; all Beds Race &amp; Equalities Council publicity for 1 year</p> <p>10 Tickets for the Event</p> <p>Equality &amp; Diversity Champion Award named &amp; engraved as sponsored by your organisation</p> <p>Presentation of the award can be made by your nominated representative</p>
<b>£1000</b>	<p>4 Tickets to the event</p> <p>Organisation listed as a sponsor in the event programme &amp; event publicity</p> <p>1 award named &amp; engraved as sponsored by your organisation</p> <p>Presentation of the award can be made by your nominated representative</p>
<b>£500</b>	<p>2 Tickets to the event</p> <p>Organisation listed as a sponsor in the event programme &amp; event publicity</p> <p>1 award named &amp; engraved as sponsored by your organisation</p>
<b>£250</b>	<p>For corporate table of 10 people</p> <p>Organisation listed as a supporter in the event programme</p>

**The awards are divided into the following 8 categories:**

1. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CHAMPION OF THE YEAR – Individual Award** – For the individual who has excelled in equality & diversity and who has brought about definitive change in equality and diversity practices in their organisation
2. **LEADING CHANGE - Organisation Award - Making a sustainable difference by leading on initiatives that made a significant change to the equality & Diversity practices of the organisation**
3. **TRAINING – Organisation Award** – Positive Contribution to Equality & Diversity Agenda through innovative and creative training
4. **PARTNERSHIP WORKING – Organisation Award** – Successful Partnership(s) that have contributed to the promotion and embedding of Equality & Diversity

5. **INNOVATION – Organisation Award** – What project/initiative has been innovative in furthering Equality & Diversity
6. **BALBIR DUTT COMMUNITY CHAMPION AWARD** – Individual Award—For the individual who has championed community initiatives & encouraged activities in their role that have made a significant difference to the community - Sponsored by Luton Law Centre
7. **BEDFORDSHIRE RACE & EQUALITIES COUNCIL SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD** chosen by the Chief Executive & Trustees of Beds R&EC.

**To sponsor an award or book tickets please contact Robyn Anderson or Purva Joshi on 01234 350459 or email us at [bedfordrec@btconnect.com](mailto:bedfordrec@btconnect.com) with the following details:**

- The name of your organisation
- The level of sponsorship you wish to purchase
- Name of the Award Category you would like to sponsor

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## **The Red Tape Challenge**

### **A message from Lynne Featherstone, Minister for Equalities**

The Red Tape Challenge aims to tackle the burden of excessive red tape, both to free businesses to compete and create jobs and to give people greater freedom and personal responsibility.

However, the presence of the Equality Act 2010 on the Red Tape Challenge Website has raised some concern amongst some stakeholders. I'm therefore writing to clarify the Government's position.

Firstly, I would like to assure you of this Government's strong commitment to equality. We are not changing direction on this. We set out our commitment in the Coalition Programme and Theresa May, the Home Secretary and Minister for Women and Equalities, set out the Government's approach in more detail in the Equality Strategy published last December.

Secondly, as the website now makes clear, a particular regulation being featured on the Red Tape Challenge website should not be read as implying any intention on the part of the Government to remove that regulation.

Indeed, the Home Secretary stated in Parliament on 5 May, in reference to the Equality Act's inclusion on the Red Tape Challenge website, that "it is not the Government's intention to abolish the Equality Act."

Instead, the Government wants to hear from members of the public, businesses and voluntary and community organisations about how the Act is working in practice. We want to know whether the Act could be simplified, better implemented, or if certain provisions should be dropped or amended, or whether it should be kept exactly as it is.

From June 9 until June 30, the Red Tape Challenge will have a spotlight on the Equalities theme, which will be facilitated by Caroline Waters, Head of HR, at BT. During this period, I would like to invite you to visit [www.redtapechallenge.cabinetoffice.gov.uk](http://www.redtapechallenge.cabinetoffice.gov.uk) and participate in an informed debate on how we can deliver better regulation.

Any proposals for change would receive careful consideration as to whether they were proportionate, practical, beneficial and in keeping with our wider commitments and EU or domestic legal obligations. Any proposals that passed that test would need to go through the appropriate consultation and Parliamentary process.

I hope this helps to reassure you and clarifies what we are aiming to do. We welcome your input to the Red Tape Challenge website and all relevant consultations.

# EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION CASEWORK

Have you, or a friend or relative, suffered discrimination in the work place as a result of your:

- **Gender**
- **Race**
- **Disability**
- **Age**
- **Sexual orientation**
- **Religion or belief?**



Discrimination may happen at any stage of the employment relationship, e.g.:

- Recruitment
- Treatment at work: transfer, promotion, training, pay, benefits, disciplinary action, work allocation etc
- Dismissal
- Post dismissal if connected with the employment, e.g. adverse reference

**We are able to provide advice on what you can do about discrimination in the work place. There are strict time limits for taking action about discrimination so early advice is vital. If you think we may be able to help you then please telephone us on 01234 350459 and ask to speak to Linda, or email [lindabrec@btconnect.com](mailto:lindabrec@btconnect.com)**



**Supported by the Equality & Human Rights Commission &**



## **BEDFORDSHIRE RACE & EQUALITIES COUNCIL**

**FREE ADVICE SURGERY**

**REGARDING THE**

**FOLLOWING:**

**Immigration & Nationality**

**Welfare Benefits**

**Housing**

**Debt**

**Discrimination at Work**

**PREEN FURNITURE BANK**

**The Preen Centre, Shortmead Street  
Biggleswade, Bedfordshire SG18**

**Every 1st & 3rd Monday of each Month**

**10.00am—1.00pm**

**No Appointments Necessary**

**For further details please call 01234 350459**





**Bedfordshire Race & Equalities Council**  
**Annual Charity Ball and Awards Evening!**  
**FRIDAY 14TH OCTOBER 2011!**



**7:30pm - Late!**

**Dress: National Costume, Black Tie or Evening Dress**

**at**

**The Barns Hotel, Cardington Road, Bedford**

**To book your tickets or find out about sponsoring an award please contact  
Robyn or Purva on 01234 350459 or  
email: [bedfordrec@btconnect.com](mailto:bedfordrec@btconnect.com)**

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**BEDFORDSHIRE RACE & EQUALITIES COUNCIL**  
**CHARITY BALL & EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**  
**AWARDS EVENING**  
*Friday 14th October 2011*  
*The Barns Hotel, Cardington Road,*  
*Bedford*  
**7.00 pm – Late**  
**Dinner served at 7:30pm**

**Dress: Black Tie, Evening Dress**  
**Or Traditional Costume**

**£25 per Ticket**  
**Admits one person**

**3-course dinner, prize draw, dancing til late all in beautiful surroundings**  
**All proceeds from the Prize Draw will support projects delivered by the R&EC**

**SELLING FAST SO BOOK YOUR PLACE NOW!**

**Applications for awards available from [Bedfordrec@btconnect.com](mailto:Bedfordrec@btconnect.com)**

## RACE



### Two men to stand trial for Stephen Lawrence murder after court ruling

The parents of Stephen Lawrence, stabbed to death by a racist gang who "targeted" him because he was black, saw their 18-year campaign for justice for their son result in a court ruling that two men will stand trial for the murder.

Doreen and Neville Lawrence witnessed the court of appeal clear the way for Gary Dobson, 35, to face a jury. The court's permission was needed because Dobson had been acquitted of Stephen's murder in a prosecution brought in 1996.

Judges headed by the lord chief justice decided new forensic tests on Dobson's grey bomber jacket and a cardigan had produced evidence that was compelling enough to quash his acquittal and see him stand trial for a second time.

He will go on trial in November alongside David Norris, 34, who was a suspect in the original murder investigation but who has never previously been charged.

Lawrence's death stood out for nearly two decades because of the effect it has had on race relations in Britain and the failings it revealed. The Met police bungled the first murder investigation and pressure from the campaign started by the Lawrence family led to a public inquiry, which found "institutional racism" had plagued the case.

## RELIGION & BELIEF

### Faith charities delivering public services 'could increase discrimination'

Contracts should be awarded only to groups that have demonstrated commitment to equality, Unitarians body warns Public Administration Select Committee.

Giving more responsibility for delivering public services to local faith charities as part of the big society agenda could result in increased discrimination against marginalised groups, according to the [General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches](#).

In a submission to the [Public Administration Select Committee](#), which will start holding oral hearings for its inquiry into the big society agenda next week, the organisation warns: "Whilst the churches and other faith groups have always been active in the big society, we have concerns that some religious groups that seek to take over public services, particularly at local level, could pursue policies and practices that result in increased discrimination against marginalised groups, particularly in service provision and the employment of staff."

Derek McAuley, chief officer of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, told *Third Sector* he was concerned that gay and lesbian public sector staff who were moved to local faith charities under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations might face discrimination by other staff at those charities.

His submission to the PASC says: "Non-religious people and those not seen to confirm to the dominant ethos of a religious body, such as being in an unmarried relationship or divorced and being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered, could find themselves subject to discrimination.

"Contracts should therefore only be awarded to faith-based organisations that have a public commitment to, and can demonstrate compliance with, the promotion of equality in line with the commitment of recent governments."

The submission says Unitarians have "an historic and ongoing commitment to the provision of services on a non-sectarian basis".

(Source: <http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/News/DailyBulletin>)

## AGE

### Figures reveal rise in age discrimination claims

Age discrimination claims rose 164% in 2010, despite an overall fall in the number of employment claims, according to figures obtained by London firm EMW.

Data from employment tribunals shows that they issued 1,100 age discrimination claims in the last quarter of 2009, and 2,900 in the last quarter of 2010.

During the same time period, the number of employment claims fell 51% from 81,300 in 2009 to 39,900 in 2010.

John Taylor, head of employment at EMW, said the 'unexpectedly high jump' in age discrimination claims could be due to employees becoming more likely to claim as their knowledge of the law in this area has grown following some high-profile cases.

In January 2011, Miriam O'Reilly, the 53-year-old ex-presenter of the rural affairs show Country file, won a court case against the BBC for dismissing her and other presenters in favour of younger staff.

The disproportionately large number of older people made redundant during the recession may also have contributed, Taylor suggested.

Taylor predicted that the abolition of the default retirement age earlier this month, which had allowed firms to make staff retire at 65, could lead to a further increase in the number of claims.

He said: 'Because older people find it harder to find a new job, then they are more likely to make employment tribunal claims if they are made redundant.'

'The disappearance of the DRA means that employers will find it much harder to retire older staff, increasing the risk of age discrimination claims.'

Taylor added that firms will have to prove through a formal performance process that older staff are no longer performing well.

He added that many employers still make basic mistakes that could lead to age discrimination claims, including using job adverts including words such as energetic, dynamic, young, strong, or experienced, that could be considered ageist. (source: <http://www.lawgazette.co.uk/news/figures-reveal-rise-age-discrimination-claims>)

## EASY READ PUBLICATIONS FROM THE EQUALITY & HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Who we are & what we do

How Fair is Britain

Equality and Human Rights Commission

equalityhumanrights.com

Who we are and what we do

Equality Scheme

How Fair is Britain?

Our Strategic Plan

Personalisation: How some groups are missing out

Human Rights Inquiry Report

Service Providers and the Law: What service providers must do more to treat disabled people fairly

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/publications/easy-read-publications>

## SEX

### New Law Journal 29 April 2011

10. p.571 'Out of proportion.' "There is a fine line between protection and unfairness in sex discrimination cases.." The decision in *Eversheds v De Belin* (UKEAT, heard on 1 and 2 December 2010) ..... has made it clear that although women who are pregnant or are on maternity leave may be entitled to more favourable treatment than their colleagues, any such treatment must not go beyond what is reasonably necessary."

11. pp.573-574 Employment. "Unanswered questions.' 'A recent Supreme Court rulings leaves working Brits abroad on tenterhooks.' "The extent to which British workers abroad are protected by domestic law was thrown into sharp relief by the repeal of s196 Employment Rights Act 1996, which defined the territorial scope of Britain's employment protection legislation. The Equality Act 2010 (EA 2010), which took effect last October, did not replace the similar provisions on territorial scope in the repealed anti-discrimination legislation. The gap left by the repeal of s196 has been plugged to some extent by House of Lords decision *Lawson v Serco* [2006] IRLR 289, [2006] 1 All ER 823, but there is no definitive guidance on how to approach the similar problem we now face in relation to claims under EA 2010.



## SEXUAL ORIENTATION

### STONEWALL EQUALITY WALK

1st May 2011



On 1st May 2011 some members & supporters of BR&EC took part in the 10k Equality Walk in Brighton to raise money for Stonewall UK.

There were 504 walkers on the day and although it is a participation event and not a race, we are delighted to announce that our own Chief Executive and her husband were the first to finish!!

If you want to know more about Stonewall and their campaigns & events, visit [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk)

## HAVE YOUR SAY!!



From June 9 until June 30, the Red Tape Challenge will have a spotlight on the Equalities theme, which will be facilitated by Caroline Waters, Head of HR, at BT who says "During this period, I would like to invite you to visit and participate in an informed debate on how we can deliver better regulation" I hope this helps to reassure you and clarifies what we are aiming to do. We welcome your input to the Red Tape Challenge website and all relevant consultations." Any proposals for change would receive careful consideration as to whether they were proportionate, practical, beneficial and in keeping with our wider commitments and EU or domestic legal obligations. Any proposals that passed that test would need to go through the appropriate consultation and Parliamentary process.

I hope this helps to reassure you and clarifies what we are aiming to do. We welcome your input to the Red Tape Challenge website and all relevant consultations."

[www.redtapechallenge.cabinetoffice.gov.uk](http://www.redtapechallenge.cabinetoffice.gov.uk)

## **DISABILITY**

### **Disabled people take anti-cuts protest to the courts**

Disabled people are using the courts to challenge multimillion-pound spending cuts which they say will hit them hardest.

They have launched a number of legal actions against council plans to slash vital support services after cuts in government funding.

As disabled people, their families and carers, which organisers expect in their thousands, gear up to demonstrate in Westminster in protest against the cuts to their jobs and services on Wednesday, lawyers in test cases said they were looking forward to a decision in the high court next week.

In a judicial review brought by the families of four severely disabled people which is being keenly followed by the caring community, a judge ruled last month that Birmingham city council's plans to limit social care for disabled people are unlawful.

The local authority, a Conservative-Liberal coalition, hopes to save £17.5m from its budget this year by limiting council-funded social care only to those assessed as in "critical" need.

But in an interim judgment, Mr Justice Walker ruled that the council business plan was unlawful because it failed to comply with section 49a of the Disability Discrimination Act



## **Supporting Brain Tumour UK**

**BR&EC's Strategic Development Officer, Glenis Orkisz, her husband and friend have been raising funds for a national charity which supports individuals and families who are affected by Brain Tumours.**

"On Monday May 2nd we set off with 204 walkers and runners to do the first ever Northumberland Coastal Challenge Walk.

We started off at Waren Mill, just north of Bamburgh. From there everybody followed the Northumberland Coastal path back to Alnmouth, a total of 26.2miles, along the most stunning coastline the UK has to offer. the weather was fabulous and we raised over £700 for Brain Tumour UK."

Watch out for the next challenge.....!

**WELL DONE TO GLENIS AND TEAM!!!!!!**

## LEARNING DISABILITY

### Commission welcomes ruling on London Borough of Hillingdon v Steven and Mark Neary

A recent ruling by the Court of Protection in the case of the London Borough of Hillingdon v Steven and Mark Neary, a case in which the Commission intervened. The court ruled that the local authority breached the human rights of Mark Neary, a 20-year-old man with autism and learning difficulties by unlawfully removing him from his father's care and placing him in a care home.

John Wadham, Group Legal Director at the Equality and Human Rights Commission said:

"This is a significant victory for the human rights of disabled people and their carers. The Commission intervened in this case as Hillingdon Council were failing to uphold Steven's human rights. He, like everyone else, has a right to personal freedom and a family life and the state should not take away this without good reason. Public bodies – such as care providers and hospitals - must pay better attention to the human rights of people in their care if they are to protect vulnerable adults and improve service standards."

For more information and to access the full judgment please visit our website at: <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/news/2011/june/comment-on-the-judgment-in-the-case-of-steven-neary/>

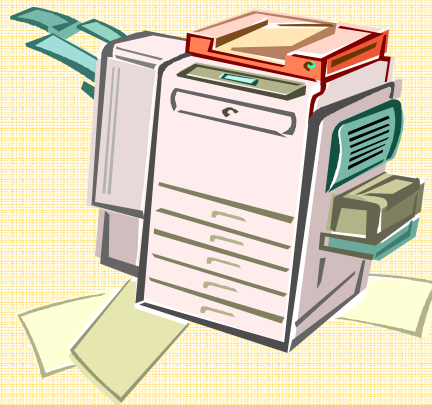
# BR&EC'S PRINTING & PHOTOCOPYING SERVICES

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For more information contact BR&EC on: 01234 350459 or Email: [bedfordrec@btconnect.com](mailto:bedfordrec@btconnect.com)

## MP tables Volunteering Bill to replace Criminal Records Bureau checks

Source: Third Sector Online, 13 June 2011

Christopher Chope says 'fit and proper person certificate' would remove barriers to volunteering, but critics raise concerns about risk

The Conservative MP Christopher Chope has tabled a private member's bill that would replace Criminal Records Bureau checks for volunteers with what it calls a "fit and proper person certificate", which would be a declaration by volunteers that they did not have any convictions.

The Volunteering Bill, which had its second reading in the Commons last week, would set up a new type of certificate that volunteers could present to any charity with which they were involved. Chope, the MP for Christchurch in Dorset, said it would remove a barrier to volunteering.

**"An individual knows whether they have a criminal record, so they should be quite capable of signing a declaration of whether they do," he told MPs. "If they do not, and they sign a declaration to that effect, on the face of it that should be sufficient evidence that they are a fit and proper person to engage in volunteering activity."**

Chope said he was aware there would be concern that his proposals would make it easier for criminals to gain access to vulnerable people, but this had to be balanced against the need to remove barriers to volunteering.

**"If we are to have a responsible society, we have to trust people," he said. "However many controls and regulations we bring in, we cannot pre-empt the activities of fraudsters, villains, inherent, compulsive liars, paedophiles or whoever."**

Nick Hurd, the Minister for Civil Society, said that the government opposed Chope's bill. "For the proposed fit and proper person certificate to be successful, a means of independent verification and checking for accuracy would be required," he said.

**"There is of course a balance to be struck between protection and trust, but we think a basic level of protection and independent verification of claims is necessary and believe that the CRB check fulfils that role, although we are very clear that it needs to be reformed."**

Roberta Blackman-Woods, the shadow civil society minister, said: "It is not clear who, if anybody, would check the background of the people who signed the statement or what system would be in place to verify what they had stated.

**"I appreciate that the intention may be to encourage people to volunteer, but this bill has neither the capacity nor the ability to do that; indeed, it actually introduces a serious element of risk into the system."**

The Commons debate on the bill is due to resume on 17 June.

<http://www.thirdsector.co.uk>

**2011**

**EUROPEAN YEAR OF VOLUNTEERING**



# FREE TRAINING

Are you a community group?

Do you give information or advice to your community?

Would a quality system help you to develop your services?

BR&EC is running a regular series of free training programmes for groups that give information or advice to their communities.

The training will help groups develop and improve their services by supporting them to obtain a local quality mark called Q-cas. This quality system has been developed especially for small community groups in Bedfordshire.

The next programme of courses (6 morning sessions) will take place in Bedford on:

June 8th & 29th

July 20th

September 7th & 21st

October 5th



**Q-cas has 4 themes**  
A wareness of your community  
B uilding your organisation  
C ompetence in giving advice  
D elivering high quality advice

For more information about the programme contact Purva Joshi:

[purvabrec@btconnect.com](mailto:purvabrec@btconnect.com)

01234 350459



Bedfordshire Race  
& Equalities Council



June 2011



June 2011

Government spending cuts have meant no more funding for Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month, but communities across Britain look set to continue the celebrations anyway.

The loss of funding has meant that no magazines will be produced for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month this year and even this website will not be regularly updated. But if you have an event you'd like to promote you can list it yourself at the Travellers Times website.

[www.travellerstimes.org.uk/website/Events.htm](http://www.travellerstimes.org.uk/website/Events.htm) >

However, the Gypsy Media Company Ltd, has paid for this website and all of the information on it to remain online until future funding to continue Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month is found.

Source: <http://www.grthm.co.uk>

## Myths and Truths

### **Gypsy and Traveller culture and history – the myths and the truth**

**Myth:** Gypsies are foreign.

Much media coverage talks of Gypsies and Travellers “invading” places. Invasion is a military term used about armies. How can it be used about a community that has been a part of British society for centuries.

**Truth:** Gypsies and Travellers have been part of British society for over 500 years.

**Myth:** Gypsies are dirty.

**Truth:** Gypsy culture is built upon strict codes of cleanliness learnt over centuries of life on the road. Concepts such as mokadi and mahrima place strict guidelines, for example, on what objects can be washed in what bowls. Gypsies view gorgias (non-Gypsies) as unclean because of the way they live.

For example, Gypsies and Travellers rarely let animals inside their homes, because they believe them to be carriers of disease.

**Myth:** Gypsies are criminal.

Many Gypsies and Travellers say that legislation passed to curtail their traditional way of life is inherently racist.

**Truth:** Members of the Gypsy Roma Travellers communities are statistically under represented in the main stream prison population. Just as in any other ethnic minority, some Gypsies are involved in crime. But Gypsies and Travellers say they have been criminalized by laws created to curtail their traditional life-style.

**Myth:** Gypsies and Travellers have never contributed anything to the economy or mainstream culture

#### ***Here's an unbelievable entry in the Encyclopaedia Britannica from 1954.***

“The mental age of the average adult Gypsy is thought to be about that of a child of ten. Gypsies have never accomplished anything of great significance in writing, painting, musical composition, science or social organisation. Quarrelsome, quick to anger or laughter, they are unthinkingly but not deliberately cruel. Loving bright colours, they are ostentatious and boastful, but lack bravery.”

These amazingly ignorant “facts” in the Encyclopaedia Britannica were printed just ten years after thousands of Gypsy men died fighting for this country in the Second World War. And to claim that Gypsies have not accomplished anything of great significance in the arts and sciences is astonishing. Gypsy and Traveller journalists, artists and musicians, academics and historians are all involved in Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month 2008. It is hoped that attitudes and knowledge has advanced since 1954, and GRTHM hopes to continue the process.

June 2011



June 2011

## Myths and Truths

### **Gypsy and Traveller culture and history – the myths and the truth**

**Truth:** Romanies are Europe's largest and fastest growing ethnic minority.

Execution, deportation and toleration have not dealt with the "Gypsy problem." Gypsies and Travellers are here to stay and are becoming increasingly good at demanding that their culture and way of life is accommodated.

The current conflict over Gypsy and Traveller site provision is in nobody's interests, it is in everyone's interest to resolve it through educating the wider public about Gypsy and Traveller culture and needs.

**Myth:** All Gypsies live in caravans

**Truth:** Romani Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised ethnic minorities with their own culture, language and beliefs. Yet planning law defines Gypsies simply as people with a nomadic way of life. While this is historically true. 90% of Gypsies across the world now live in houses. Being nomadic is more common in Western Europe. But even here only 50% of Gypsies live in caravans. Gypsies also live in houses but they take their culture indoors with them.

**Myth:** Gypsies and Travellers are work shy

**Truth:** Labour formed the bed rock of the agricultural economy until mechanisation. Gypsy and Traveller often start work younger, traditional skills are passed down to the next generation. There is a strong work ethic, based on the need to survive. Many Gypsies also sacrificed their lives for this country in the 1st and 2nd world wars.

**Myth:** Gypsies and Travellers have become rich through avoiding paying tax.

There is no evidence for this at all.

**Truth:** Traditionally many Gypsies Roma and Travellers are self-employed and pay tax like anybody else. Both Romani Gypsy and Irish Traveller culture values portable wealth and unlike non-Gypsy culture this wealth is often highly visible. A Gypsy man with a new car and caravan may look flash, but his wealth is just more visible. The amount of capital their home is worth is far less than the equity many non-Gypsies have in their houses but is constantly depreciating in value.

**Myth:** Gypsies are endowed with special supernatural powers, including the ability to curse and see the future.

**Truth:** Some Gypsies may well have psychic powers, but no more than anyone else. But some myths can be turned to a community's advantage. A nation without an army is forced to defend itself with curses and superstition. Some Gypsies have turned the myths about them on their head and earned a living telling fortunes. Gypsy and Traveller fortune tellers have cultivated the mystery that has always surrounded Gypsy culture.

**Myth:** Gypsies have a genetic wanderlust

Persecution has always been a factor in nomadic life.

**Truth:** As an ethnic group GRT people do have a nomadic heritage. Nomadic life has been created by two factors, the pull of economic opportunity and the push of persecution. Gypsy and Traveller culture has adapted to suit this by continually working within trades that are highly mobile. Historically, that may have meant working as agricultural labourers, nowadays, it means providing services in the building trade or products that can be easily transported.

**Source:** <http://www.grthm.co.uk/myths-and-truths.php>



Central Bedfordshire Council and DisabledGo  
invite you and your colleagues to join them at  
one of our



Community Consultation events for

## DisabledGo-Central Bedfordshire

[www.disabledgo.com](http://www.disabledgo.com)

An on-line directory, which will provide information  
on access to 1000 venues across the county.

**Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July**

10:30am - 12:00pm

**Priory House**

**Monks Walk**

**Chicksands, Shefford**

**Bedfordshire, SG17 5TQ**

**Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July**

6:30pm - 8:00pm

**Leighton Buzzard Day Centre**

**Duncombe Drive**

**Leighton Buzzard**

**Bedfordshire, LU7 1SD**

Priory House is more suitable for larger motorised scooters.

**Refreshments will be provided at all events.**

Join your community and give us your feedback on DisabledGo-Central Bedfordshire and suggest venues that you would like to see on your local guide.

**Please RSVP to the event of your choice as soon as possible.**

**Pease let us know if you have any specific requirements.**

**Tom Felton – DisabledGo**

**Ardent House, Gates Way, Stevenage, SG1 3HG**

**Telephone: 01438 842710**

**Email: [tom.felton@disabledgo.com](mailto:tom.felton@disabledgo.com)**

**DisabledGo practice a Green policy. If you would like hard copy information please let us know prior to the event.**



# VACANCY!



**Office Manager with Marketing Responsibilities (35hr/wk)**  
**£17,000 - £20,500 (according to experience)**

**To work from our Bedford office**

Age Concern Bedfordshire is an established and successful independent charity working to promote the well-being of older people across the unitary authorities of Bedfordshire. Its two main service areas of Information and Advice and Welfare Services are widely recognised and growing. Servicing in excess of 11,000 older people per annum throughout the County.

In order to develop further, our charitable aims, we require a dynamic Office Manager with marketing responsibilities. To develop and maintain a business administrative function across all departments of the organisation, whilst managing the administrative resource. To support the marketing of Age Concern Bedfordshire throughout the county by delivering presentations to relevant groups and individuals as well as helping to create imaginative advertising copy, publicity material and power point presentations. This will enhance the stability of Age Concern Bedfordshire's current position and enable possible future initiatives.

If you have an interest in the welfare of older people and feel you possess the competencies and experience to meet the demands of the role, please write, in the first instance to:

Steve Perry, Age Concern Bedfordshire, 78-82 Bromham Rd, Bedford, MK40 2QH

**Please provide an active email address**

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## APPLAUSE PLEASE!

We are delighted to announce the following good news!!

**Congratulations** to Gurbaksh Mahi and her husband Surinder on the arrival of their baby Daughter, Amilie. A sister for Jasmyn.

**Congratulations** also to:

- **Gary Burchmore**, Street Ranger for Goldington on his MBE for community services in Goldington and
- **Ian Pryce**, Bedford College Principal and Chief Executive on his CBE for services to further education locally and nationally in the Queen's Birthday Honours list June 2011

**WELL DONE TO YOU ALL! We are proud to have benefitted from your support and involvement at the R&EC over the years**



Listen out for Refugee Week Questions at your local pub quiz throughout the borough.

Check out [www.amnesty.org.uk](http://www.amnesty.org.uk) for details of the World Refugee Day Umbrella Parade on Sunday 19th June 2011 in Central London.

**This year is the 60th anniversary of the Refugee Convention.**

**Refugees have made a massive cultural, social and economic contribution to like in the UK in the last 450 years.**

**Refugee Week (first held in 1998) was created in response to the growing negative perceptions of refugees and asylum seekers held by the general public in Britain. It remains the only UK-wide event that promotes the importance of sanctuary and the benefits it can bring to both refugees and host communities.**

For more info go to: [www.refugeeweekbedford.org](http://www.refugeeweekbedford.org)



## **Monday June 20th - Sunday 26th June 2011**

An opportunity to discover and celebrate the contributions refugees bring to the UK. All events listed are free



### **Monday 20th June**

11am to 6pm ***Launch of Refugee Week Bedford***

Harper Square outside Bedford Central Library

Enter the Refugee Week Quiz, pick up an information pack. Find out how you can get involved.

7pm ***Talking about Jane Austen in Baghdad***, Bedford Central Library

A talk by World Service journalist Bee Rowlatt & Iraqi Academic May Wilwit. A chance email sparks an unusual relationship and gives a fascinating portrayal of post-invasion Iraq.

### **Wednesday 22nd June**

7pm Ice&Fire present ***The Asylum Monologues***, at St. Peter's Church, De Parys Avenue, Bedford

Professional actors give a rehearsed reading of these powerful and thought provoking stories.

8pm ***Human Library***, at St. Peter's Church, De Parys Avenue, Bedford.

Post-show discussion with refugee speakers and case workers. Refreshments available.

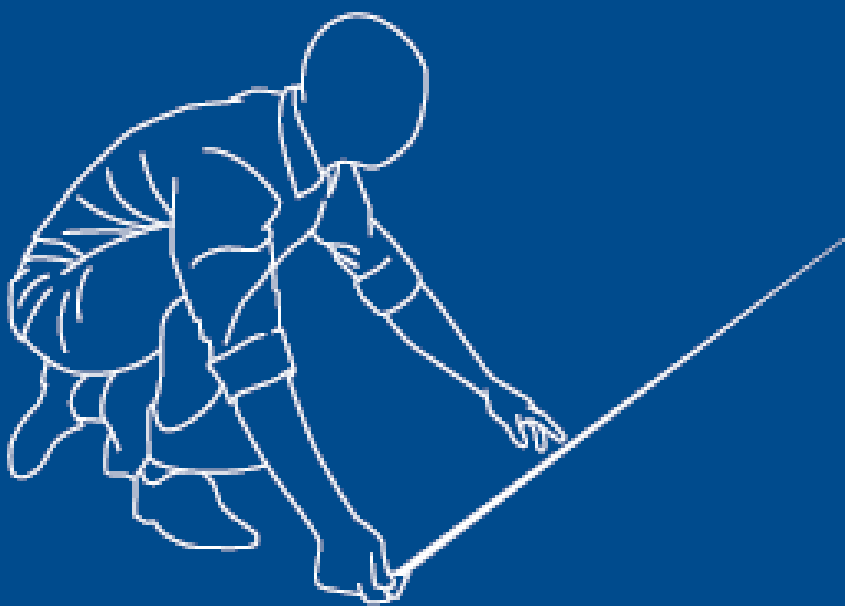
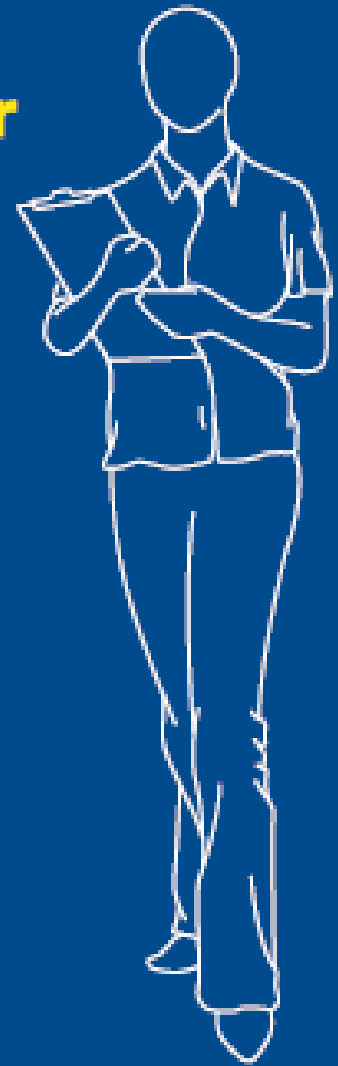
### **Sunday 26th June**

1:30pm to 4pm ***Family Football Fun Day***, at Alexander Sports Centre, Sidney Road, Bedford

5-a-side football tournament (adults only) plus a full programme of activities for children (and mums!) to ensure fun for all the family. Activities will include beat the keeper, hit the cross bar and other challenges. Please contact Bob Bridle on 01234 791145 to register, or email [bob.bridle@bpha.org.uk](mailto:bob.bridle@bpha.org.uk)

[www.refugeeweekbedford.org](http://www.refugeeweekbedford.org)

**Are you a local disabled person or carer looking for an interesting temporary employment opportunity?**



If you like working out and about, talking to a wide range of people and enjoy collecting information, DisabledGo's surveying opportunities available in Central Bedfordshire could suit you.

For more information regarding this exciting opportunity please call:

**0845 270 4627**

or email:

**rachel.felton@disabledgo.com**

**[www.disabledgo.com](http://www.disabledgo.com)**



# Office for Civil Society gives former strategic partners new advisory roles

Organisations including Voice4Change England and Community Matters will focus on the impact of big society policies

The [Office for Civil Society](#) has given contracts to several of its former strategic partners, including [Voice4Change England](#) and [Community Matters](#), to continue advising the department on policy.

In March the OCS cut the number of strategic partners from 42 to 17, of which 12 were in partnerships.

However, the department has now given a 12-month contract to Community Matters, which received £261,603 from the programme in 2010/11 but was not retained as a partner in March.

It has also commissioned Voice4Change England, which received £275,953 under the strategic partnership programme in 2009/10 and has campaigned against the OCS decision to end its funding, to provide advice on how the big society agenda can address inequality.

Both organisations said they could not yet reveal how much money they will receive. A spokesman for the Cabinet Office would not give any further details. "An announcement will be made in due course," he said.

Rosie Anderson, policy and research manager at Community Matters, said the contract was to advise the department on "big society policy and its impact on the community sector". It would focus on encouraging volunteering, shaping the Communities First grants programme and advising on the community right to buy and the right to challenge, both in the Localism Bill.

She said the OCS had asked her not to say how much funding it would receive, because other charities would be given new contracts to continue advising it on policy and some of these had not yet been told the details of the contracts.

Vandna Gohil, director of Voice4Change England, told Third Sector: "The voice of BME communities will be heard at top decision-making tables and this is what we were campaigning for. We will champion and support the BME voluntary and community sector to build a big, inclusive society."

It is understood that both charities will use the funding for specific projects that have been agreed by the OCS, but details of these projects have not yet been revealed.

Source: Office of Civil Society, June 2011

# Carer's Week

**13-19 June 2011**



Find out more about what is going on in your area and where support is available by visiting the Carer's Week website <http://carersweek.org>

For further information on your rights as a carer and for employers, please go to: <http://www.acas.org.uk>

## [MPs in your area who support Carers](#)

### **Bedfordshire North East**

#### **Alistair Burt MP**



Carers across my constituency work so hard day in day out supporting their partners, friends and relatives. They are devoted and dedicated, and I admire their commitment. As President of my local Carers Association I know how tough funding and support are at the moment, new skills for tendering are being learnt, and new funds sought. We all need to support our local carers, give a little extra time to our neighbours, and be that helping hand to those who do it day in and day out.

### **Bedfordshire South West**

#### **Andrew Selous MP**



Most of us are likely to be carers at one or even more times in our life. The world of carers is often very hidden from the rest of society. That's why I am pleased to support Carers Week on behalf of this important group of people who do so much for others.

# ***Falls Awareness Event***

***Monday 20th June to Wednesday  
22nd June***

***Between 10 o'clock and 2 o'clock***

Come and enjoy a cup of tea and biscuit and have a chat about how to prevent falls.

We will have our own advisors and representative from the NHS that you can speak to as well as receiving information on fall prevention.

Please come and join us at  
78-82 Bromham Road  
Bedford  
MK40 2QH or  
Phone us on 01234 360510



**AGE**  
*Concern*



# Services Provided by Bedfordshire R&EC



- **Assessment & Audit of Equality Impact Assessments**
- **Equality Impact Assessment Training**
- **Equality & Diversity - Managing Diversity Training**
- **Conferences & Seminars: facilitation & organisation**
- **Cultural Awareness Workshops**
- **Consultations & Research**
- **Community Leadership & Development Programmes**
- **Equality & Diversity Self Assessment**
- **Trustee Board Training**
- **Multi Faith Calendars**
- **Quality Assurance Training for Advice Services**

To discuss any of these services please contact Wendy Anderson-Welsh on 01234 350459 Ext 117 or email: [wendybrec@btconnect.com](mailto:wendybrec@btconnect.com)

## WANT TO JOIN US?

### Opportunities include:

- **Volunteering on Projects**
- **Bedfordshire Women's Forum**
- **Trustee Board Membership**
- **Mentoring with BME Education Support Service**
- **Work Experience**
- **Trainee Volunteer Adviser**
- **Student Placement**

**For more information: Tel: BR&EC on 01234 350459**

**or**

**Email: [bedfordrec@btconnect.com](mailto:bedfordrec@btconnect.com)**