



Building new lives in the community

The Derwent

Refugee Community

Development Support Project

Evaluation and end of project report - March 2006



"I am pleased that the project has been able to bring refugees and their neighbours in Derwent together to form constructive relationships with each other. I would like to thank NDC for financing the project and the many projects, agencies and organisations also operating in the area for their support in its delivery. It has become a priority for Refugee Action to raise funds to meet some of the continuing needs of refugees in the area, and Derby City as a whole".

**Sandy Buchan,
Chief Executive,
Refugee Action**

"The Refugee Action project is critical to the overall New Deal for Communities programme. One of our ambitions when we started the programme was to integrate minority communities into the wider community of Derwent. The project has been successful in both raising awareness of the status of refugee and asylum seekers in the area and in providing a critical service to this part of our population. In addition, the co-location of the refugee action project with Timebank has ensured that awareness is raised with Timebank users and that new friendships are forged between participants of both projects. This interaction is mirrored with other projects and services within Derwent enabling the fabric of the community to grow and integration to become more of a reality."

**Karl Walkinshaw
Programme Director,
Derwent Community Team**

Acknowledgments

Refugee Action would like to thank **New Deal for Communities** for not only providing the funding for this project but for their support at the early stages, and throughout the project's life. It has been very challenging at times working in partnership but I think we have all come through it in the end, older and wiser three years on! Special thanks to **Jill Robinson, Carol Hardwick, Paige Bramley** and **Karl Walkinshaw** and all of the support team including the finance department and NDC IT. We would also like to thank all the other projects and agencies in Derwent and Derby City who have worked with us including **Time Bank, Cacti, Derwent First Steps, Refugee Housing Association**, the local schools and many, many others. Also not forgetting **Refugee Action's Asylum Advice Team in Nottingham**.

Thank you to **all the refugees and people seeking asylum** who live in and around Derwent who have welcomed and supported the project from the start, attended events and always came forward with thanks and gratitude, and suggestions of how we could do things differently. Many thanks to **Emilio Sanchez, Said Hagos** and **Ann Herbert** and all those connected with Derwent Zambezi, and of course thank you to **the residents of Derwent** who have been receptive, welcoming and prepared to literally open their minds and doors to the new arrivals living amongst them.

This report was co authored by:

Gail Pringle: Project Manager (Ed)

Gersh Subhra: Senior Lecturer Derby University

Caron McLoughlin: Project Co-ordinator

Andrew Jackson: Community Development Officer

Further contributions from:

Sheila Fox: External Consultant

Hayley Collinson: Community Link Worker

Jill Robinson: Derwent Community Team

Design and printing: **Eazymultimedia**

07939 140 812 - eazymm@yahoo.co.uk

For further copies of this report and/or more information about Refugee Action and its work contact: **www.refugee-action.org.uk**

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Introduction

This report aims to provide an overview of the achievements of the Refugee Community Development Support (RCDS) project as it draws to the end of its three years of funding from the New Deal for Communities programme in Derwent, Derby. The project was developed in partnership with this localised community regeneration programme and support for its evaluation processes was built in from the outset. This support from the University of Derby was not the traditional external and so-called `objective` evaluator facility but rather a capacity building and enabling role. The aim of this approach was to encourage the project staff to self-evaluate, using tools suggested by the University and to generate evidence of their accomplishments throughout.

In addition to the self-evaluation evidence, the University was asked to gauge the views of local stakeholders including residents and therefore conducted a short mid-term evaluation (Dec 2004) and an end of project focus group (Feb 2006), summaries of which are included in this report.

This evaluation report includes a range of feedback from a variety of residents, partner projects, NDC, project staff and the University. The analysis has a balance of both positive acknowledgement of the impact of the work undertaken, and constructive and critical feedback which it is hoped provides Refugee Action, New Deal and others with guidance about future work of this nature.

(Gersh Subhra Feb 2006)

About Refugee Action

Introduction to Refugee Action

Refugee Action is an independent national charity working to enable refugees to build new lives in the UK. It provides practical advice and assistance for newly arrived asylum seekers and long-term commitment to their settlement through community development work. As one of the country's leading agencies in the field, Refugee Action has over 20 years' experience in pioneering innovative work in partnership with refugees.

History of Refugee Action

Refugee Action was founded in 1981 to provide a new approach to the successful resettlement in the UK of refugees and asylum seekers. This was based on supporting, promoting and working in partnership with refugee communities. Work has included the reception and settlement of thousands of newly-arrived refugees from Vietnam, Bosnia, Kosova, Liberia and the Congo.

Refugee Action's work today includes:

> **Support and advice services for asylum seekers and refugees**

Refugee Action is one of the largest refugee organisations in the UK. Support and advice services are provided in 22 counties in England, from offices in Manchester, Liverpool, Leicester, Nottingham, Bristol, Plymouth and Portsmouth.

> **Integration and supporting refugee community organisations**

Refugee Action works with refugees in the community, helping them to develop new roots, participate in the wider society and set up their own community organisations. Good practice is promoted by working with the voluntary and statutory sectors.

> **Advice for asylum seekers considering return**

Refugee Action's voluntary return project, Choices, offers independent advice and information to refugees and asylum seekers who are considering whether to return home and want to discuss their options.

> **Providing a voice**

Refugee Action campaigns for the rights of refugees and asylum seekers and works to ensure that their voices are heard both in the media and in the formation of public policy.

For more information go to
www.refugee-action.org.uk

About the project

A. Understanding the context to the Refugee Community Development Support (RCDS) Project

It is important to contextualise any evaluation report within the wider environment. The context leading up to the establishment of the Derwent Refugee Community Development Support (RCDS) project was one of rapid change and it is important to be reminded of this. The time period leading up to this project included the following:

- > various pieces of new government legislation which impacted negatively upon people seeking asylum
- > media reporting of the issues and changes (both local and national) facing Refugees and People Seeking Asylum which had a detrimental effect, and can be said to have contributed to what amounted to a national and local "social panic"
- > A dispersal programme that involved moving people away from the South-East to many other parts of the UK, some of which had no history of receiving significant numbers of people from other countries, or from black ethnic minority backgrounds.
- > a new system of supporting and housing people seeking asylum (National Asylum Support Service-NASS)
- > voluntary, community and faith sector organisations scrambling to respond to create a safety net to support people facing real hardship, some with little experience of

dealing with this new group, and with limited resources

- > local authorities and Primary Health Care Trusts expected to provide a strategic lead with incomplete information about the extent and complexity of needs emerging from the new and extremely diverse communities being moved to their localities

The above context was also a period of extensive research and consultation by those attempting to create a better and more accurate baseline of needs so that services and responses could be planned more effectively. Refugee Action commissioned the University of Derby to undertake a study in 2001 that looked at the situation in Derby, Nottingham and Leicester. The report, 'Developing Services for Refugees & People Seeking Asylum (2002) looked at the issues emerging, the services being developed and ways forward.

Other examples of work at around this time included

Aldridge, F. and Waddington, S. (2000) Asylum Seekers, skills and qualifications Audit Pilot project report for NIACE funded by the East Midlands Development Agency's Skills Development Fund

Carey-Woods, J. (1999) Meeting Refugees needs in Britain: the role of refugee-specific initiatives London: Home Office Publication

O'Neill, M. and Tobolewska, Bea (2002) Towards a cultural strategy for working with refugees and persons seeking asylum in the East Midlands, Staffordshire University

Stansfield R. (2001) Another Country, Another City, report for Nottingham City Council

At the heart of the situation in the time leading up to the Derwent project being established in 2003, were individuals in vulnerable situations who, by definition, were escaping persecution, war and conflict, facing great traumas of loss and separation, often risking their lives in journeys to the UK in order to seek asylum. At the time it seemed that the urgency and impatience of many in each of the voluntary, community, health and local authority sectors was not really resulting in significant change, but it is to the credit of the many communities and agencies involved that an extensive set of responses have been made in the last six years. The picture in cities like Derby is currently one of an expanding refugee community organisations sector, and activists within it who are growing in confidence to articulate emerging needs. Neighbourhood projects such as the Derwent project and the beginnings of strategic responses from local and health authorities. The picture is by no means perfect and serious issues continue to be highlighted such as the destitution being experienced by failed asylum seekers, but again agencies like Refugee Action are commissioning work to sharpen the focus on the emerging needs. Their report ‘Filling the Gaps’ (2006) by Sheila Fox is an illustration of how the analysis of needs has moved on from 2002 and provides guidance on the new priorities. This report will be available on our website.

B. Development of the RCDS Project

The project was initiated by Jill Robinson, Community Empowerment and Capacity Building Theme Group Leader for NDC. Jill approached Refugee Action (Kevin Bartlett – the East Midlands Asylum Advice Team Manager) who involved Gail Pringle (the Development and Integration Manager responsible for the Midlands and the North). An initial meeting was held at the Cacti building which gave both Kevin and Gail an opportunity to visit the area for the first time and hear about the issues in

Derwent. It was also an opportunity to find out about the number of families from refugee and asylum seeking backgrounds resident in the area. A subsequent meeting was held with Carol Hardwick from NDC and Pam Richardson, the Regional Manager for Refugee Housing Association (RHA). The group explored the possibility of Refugee Action and Refugee Housing jointly delivering a project to support the 30 -40 families in the area, many of whom were housed in RHA accommodation.

After some consideration Refugee Action felt that the two organisations were structured too differently for a joint project to be feasible – differences in pay structures, management, ethos and culture etc. would make joint delivery very complicated. NDC also had reservations about RHA delivering the project as they were the landlord to the majority of the Asylum Seekers in the area and it was felt could not therefore offer wholly objective support.

Refugee Action were keen to have a presence in Derby as it was originally its headquarters and also because they had been heavily criticised for not providing any locally based services in Derby. They were also keen because they wanted to pilot a project that worked with both host and refugee communities. This was very different from its generic community development work with refugee community organisations (RCOs) across the English regions. Although Refugee Action had always worked in partnership with many agencies and organizations, this project would be an opportunity to offer intensive support to a small number of families as well as awareness raising and support to individual host residents and agencies.

Both Refugee Action and Refugee Housing Association were invited to give a presentation to the Theme group who, after careful consideration, decided to offer funding to Refugee Action to deliver a three year project in Derwent. Internally RA decided that the project would be best situated within its Development and Integration Directorate.

C. Aims and objectives of the RCDS Project

- 1 Providing individual support and information to Refugees, people seeking asylum and their families in Derwent. Support included advice to individuals claiming asylum who may need additional help with accessing solicitors, school places, ESOL and so on. Also assistance to Refugees in terms of help accessing relevant education, training and or employment opportunities, referral to other relevant agencies in the area and in Derby city for additional support e.g Citizens Advice
2. Awareness raising with host community individuals and agencies working in the area: in order to provide factual information about why people seeking asylum come to Britain and to encourage good relationships between people in what was previously an area of high racial tension.
3. Training a Community Development Link Worker who is from the local host community. Enabling a resident from the community to be trained and given opportunities to work with the client group, and be an advocate in the community for Refugees and Asylum Seeking families and individuals.
4. Providing orientation for individuals and families from Refugee and Asylum Seeking families. Giving new arrivals to the area information about living in Derby and the UK but also about the opportunities available to them primarily through NDC and its various projects.
5. Increasing the participation of Refugees and Asylum seekers in local projects and initiatives. Working closely with individuals so that they feel able to take up opportunities within the Derwent area. For example accompanying people to projects or events and offering language support.
6. Referral to other agencies inside and outside of the Derwent area. Building up referral

procedures with various agencies inside and outside of Derby including Asylum Advice in Notts, agencies that help with employment, training, obtaining driving licences etc.

D. Challenges and Constraints

The Derwent project has faced a number of challenges and constraints, which have impacted upon the development of the work and staff alike. The following is intended to highlight issues that occurred but also give an overview of how these challenges were addressed.

1. The need to work in partnership

This project, like any other, can only be successful if it builds strong working relationships with other relevant agencies and organisations in the area it seeks to operate. Unfortunately before the project even started Refugee Action was placed in a situation where they had to compete for funds with one of the main organisations it would have to work very closely with. The project staff worked hard to build up a good relationship with support staff from RHA. This did prove challenging in the first year of the project but gradually staff on the ground and managers were able to work well together for the benefit of the client group. Proof of this is evident in that both RA and RHA were able to work together to engage an external consultant as part of the project's exit strategy of mapping services to Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the City.

2. Office location difficulties

The initial premises for the project were not suitable to run project activities and meant key project developments such as establishing a drop-in time for clients and developing volunteering opportunities had to be delayed

until more suitable office accommodation could be procured. The initial office was also located in one of the areas “hot spots”. The Project was able to relocate to 17 St Marks Road with the assistance of Derwent Delivers and share a private house with Time Bank which proved to be a very successful partnership

3. Dual accountability

Refugee Action is a national charity with several offices across England. This project was placed within its Development and Integration Directorate which is made up of generic Community Development Officers working across regions in the East and West Midlands and Yorkshire and Humberside, and other small projects. Refugee Action receives core funding from the Social Policy Unit of the Home Office to provide services to Refugee Communities. Project managers and staff therefore had a responsibility to not only report to NDC on service delivery in Derwent, but also a responsibility to the agency to contribute to agency reports for the Home Office, and participate in agency requirements, for example regional team meetings, agency working groups, attendance at staff conference etc. The recording and monitoring of the project activities created particular difficulties because the outcomes and milestones reported to NDC did not link with that of Refugee Action’s regional development management group plan and therefore meant that at quarterly reporting stages, two reports had to be generated. Future developments by Refugee Action should link/rationalise reporting processes with partner agencies.

4. Suspension of dispersal programme of people seeking asylum to Derby

When the project was developed, estimates of need were made in order to plan project targets. This assumed that people would be moving into and out of the area and therefore entailing an ongoing need for orientation support. The suspension of new arrivals of asylum seekers into

Derby had direct consequences for the project in that people living in Derwent became a fairly settled group and there was a reduced need for orientation support. The numbers of people also dwindled and the current number of families is approximately half that of the original estimate.

5. Staffing and Management

Originally the project was staffed by two full time workers -The Community Development Officer, and the Community Link Worker. The project was managed and supported by the D&I manager based in Refugee Action’s Leicester office. The original Community Development Officer left the project mid way through the project, resulting in the office having to close for most of the week for a period of several weeks in order to avoid lone working. This disrupted the support to clients, the overall plan of work and also meant that new staff had to work quickly to build relationships and trust with clients when they first commenced work in March 2005. The impact of this kind of loss on a neighbourhood project like this cannot be understated. In addition the project manager who also worked very closely with NDC to devise the project in the very early stages went on maternity leave for several months during 2003 which meant that a new manager (based in Leeds) was responsible for recruiting staff and setting up the project. Obviously from such a distance this was problematic. The Community Link Worker unfortunately had to reduce her hours to p/t for personal reasons and, given the feedback from the midterm evaluation, and the loss of the original CDO it was decided to employ a p/t CDO, and a f/t Project Co-ordinator to provide day to day management and support to the staff and project, based in Derwent at 17 St Marks Road. This was negotiated with NDC and enabled the project to increase its output and exceed original targets.

6. A great deal of our client's needs were around advice, advocacy and pastoral support.

When the staff change occurred in 2004, the staff joining came from the Refugee Action Asylum Advice team and were experienced in case-work recording and monitoring systems. An early priority was to set up systems to better capture this type of work as it was realised that a great deal of work was not being reported to our funders and therefore developed a system to be able to report these "additionalities". A simple spreadsheet was developed and regularly updated with information relating to advice, advocacy, pastoral support and referrals to other agencies.

E. Evaluation evidence

Summary of the Evaluation process

The project team has worked with the University of Derby throughout the life of the project to develop systems for evaluation which have undoubtedly assisted in the pulling together of this final report.

The approach of the University is essentially a capacity building and support role which encourages organisations to self-evaluate using tools and techniques that are complimentary to the way they work with communities, i.e. embedded within a community development philosophy and approach. The evaluation work is based upon an approach set out within a Resource Pack developed by Gersh Subhra from the University- 'Re-claiming the evaluation agenda'

The University's work with the Refugee Action project is now part of an area-wide strategy that has been funded by the Derwent Community team and many other projects are also accessing this capacity building through a mixture of advice sessions, workshops, mini-conferences and 1:1 support.

The project team has utilised various evaluation tools suggested by the University including case studies, the evaluation flower and interviews with agencies and residents. These interviews, whilst not reproduced in this report show the value of the project team seeking feedback and incorporating it into exit strategies for this project.

Evidence was also compiled from various sources including newsletters, reports and client files and suitable information was extracted to be included in the final evaluation document.

At the mid- term stage of the project it was decided to consult with clients and stakeholders and gain feedback on the experiences of working with the project. This evaluation was carried out by the University and utilised questionnaires and follow-up telephone calls.

In addition to this an end of project focus group was held with a number of residents and agencies that have worked with the Refugee project and a summary of the discussion and feedback is provided later in this report.

The range of evaluation evidence as well as ideas for ensuring the sustainability of the work undertaken by this project have been collated into this end of project report which hopefully provides a balanced picture of the impact, lessons learned and sustainability strategies.



A Synopsis of the project- Time Line of key events(2003-2006)

PRE-PROJECT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — DERWENT COMMUNITY TEAM VISION FOR PROJECT — REFUGEE ACTION FUNDING APPROVED BY DCT
JULY 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — FIRST OFFICE LOCATED AT BANGOR STREET — COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER APPOINTED — FIRST RACIAL HARASSMENT GROUP MEETING
SEPTEMBER 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — COMMUNITY LINK WORKER APPOINTED — DIFFICULTIES WITH PARTNERSHIP WORK
JANUARY 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — DERWENT ZAMBEZI LAUNCH PARTY — WORKING WITH LOCAL AGENCIES TO IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING OF CLIENT ISSUES — HOME VISITS TO CLIENTS WITH REFUGEE HOUSING ASSOCIATION
APRIL 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — MOVE TO MORE SUITABLE OFFICE — STARTING EVALUATION — REFUGEE WEEK CELEBRATED WITH ZAMBEZI
SEPTEMBER 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF ZAMBEZI — AWARENESS RAISING WITH TIMEBANK - BUDDYING SCHEME INTEREST DEVELOPS — JOINT LAUNCH PARTY WITH TIMEBANK ATTENDED BY 100 RESIDENTS
JANUARY 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — FIRST DRAFT SLA FOR RACIAL HARASSMENT — CDO LEAVES POST
APRIL 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — ZAMBEZI FIRST ANNIVERSARY PARTY AT BLUE BOY PUB — APPOINTMENT OF NEW CDO AND CO-ORDINATOR — ZAMBEZI FIRST INDEPENDENT FUNDING FROM DCT
JULY 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — BUDDYING SCHEME DEVELOPED — HOME VISITS AND MEETINGS OF NEW STAFF WITH LOCAL AGENCIES — REFUGEE WEEK CELEBRATION - FOOTBALL, BARBEQUE & DERWENT COMMUNITY SCHOOL
SEPTEMBER 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — 3 SUMMER ACTIVITIES FOR CLIENTS AND TIMEBANK PARTICIPANTS — OPEN SESSIONS FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO RAISE AWARENESS
JANUARY 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — RACIAL HARASSMENT SLA SIGNED OFF — EVALUATION REPORT — WORK ON EXIT STRATEGY
MARCH 2006	

Service Delivery – What the Project was able to achieve

A. Advice and Advocacy work with refugees and people seeking asylum

Making contact with families in the area

When the project was first set up the initial challenge for the project workers was to establish contact with the asylum seeker and refugee residents in Derwent. At first the project team struggled to find out where these families and individuals were living which meant that home visits were very difficult to arrange. After negotiations between Refugee Action and a number of agencies in the area, the project team were provided with addresses of some families and were able to begin visiting these people. The majority of the home visits took place between January and March 2004, and the project team accompanied Refugee Housing Association staff on their visits. These opportunities were used to introduce the team to the families, promote the project and its services, and to identify particular needs of the families that could be met by the project. It was essential that project staff were able to work in partnership with RHA who were already supporting the majority of families in the area, but also Social Services and engage interpreters to communicate effectively with our clients in the area.

Finding a suitable base for the project

The original office was located in a house on Bangor Street close to the Sussex Circus area of

Derwent. Due to the large number of new NDC projects in the area, and the lack of office type accommodation suitable space was difficult to acquire. A number of problems arose with these premises including the size of the office, and the geographical location of the building. There was very little space for the staff to work in and therefore it was almost impossible to hold drop-in sessions for clients. Bangor Street was also known to be an anti-social behaviour hotspot and this meant that clients were often unwilling to visit the office due to potential harassment. After some negotiation it was agreed that it would be possible to relocate the office to a private house in a different area of Derwent. With the help of Derwent Delivers, another NDC project in the area, the St Marks Road premises were acquired and shared with the Derwent Time Bank (a voluntary time swap project) office. Refugee Action moved into the building in February 2004 and it provided ample room for an office, a resource room (which enables use of fax, internet and phone for clients use) and a separate drop-in room.

Establishing advice sessions

After some consultation it was decided that the project would run pilot drop-in sessions for clients on Wednesday mornings and Friday afternoons. The timing of the sessions were reviewed at a later stage to make sure the majority of people could access this service. The drop-in sessions began in May 2004 and gave people the opportunity to approach the staff with issues such as benefits, housing, healthcare and education (both for children & adults). Clients could be assisted by the project staff or referred to the Refugee Action office in Nottingham (for more specialist asylum advice), other agencies within Derwent and citywide

services, depending on the individual’s need. As described above it took several months from the start of the project to actually employ staff, undertake outreach to communicate with potential clients, and actually establish a base in a safe place for people to access the project’s services – however once this was done the project clearly had a very immediate impact. Here are some of the things our clients said about our services:

“...I’ve been making use of all the facilities such as the internet, computer, telephone, fax and also taking part in the excursions and taking part in get-togethers. Also it has been helpful in giving us advice and support, since we don’t have anybody here as relatives or friends. It’s the only place we can come to get advice and moral support. So it has been wonderful.”

Client discussing the services provided by the project

“I have been made to feel very welcome here as I have been able to cry on their shoulders and off load which has been a great feeling and I know they will support me and listen”

“It has really helped me all the way. Since I am a doctor initially I had to do the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) test and most of the funding and things like that were obtained through your assistance”

“You are down to earth Caron, you don’t look on anybody in any way like, I’ve sat down and told you things I’ve done in my past and you didn’t even look down on me, do you know what I mean, you judge me for me. Everybody that come into that office was so pleased when you was there Caron and you treat everybody, cup of coffee, are you alright? It’s like Refugee Action is your family, even though you’ve got family at home, do you know what I mean. Andrew Is nice and he will go out of his way as well and so will Hayley”

“Well it is really hard for me to give an evaluation to the support I am receiving, not because of lack of words, but just because I cannot find the right word to express my gratitude”

The pilot drop-in sessions proved quite successful and it was decided that the original dates and times continued. Posters were created to advertise the sessions and an advert was also placed in the Derwent Together newsletter (produced by Derwent Community Team).

In order to maximise the potential of the project it was felt that volunteers should be recruited to assist the project staff. Two local residents were recruited, one to assist with the administration and the other to help out during the drop-in sessions.

“I was doing some volunteering work. I was coming once a week just to help out, if I can contribute something then why not because I am not allowed to work. I have enough time, so I am happy to do that.”

Drop-in volunteer

It was decided that a second wave of home visits should be carried out in order to re-establish contact with families after the original CDO left the project in Dec 2004 in order to introduce the new members of staff. The drop-in times were then revised to just one specific session (Wednesday mornings) but clients were advised they could also visit the office at any other time during the week but it could not be guaranteed that staff would be available at these times. Having three staff instead of two meant that the likelihood of someone being available had increased even though two of the staff were working three or four days a week.

As the new community development officer had previously worked for the Refugee Action asylum advice team in Nottingham as a case worker it meant that the project was better able to respond to residents' needs regarding issues such as benefits, housing and immigration with less need to refer to Nottingham office staff. This knowledge was updated as staff were able to access in-house training as new legislation came on board.

Clients began to gradually use the drop-in session and resource room more regularly and therefore the amount of client casework began to increase throughout 2005. The team also received referrals from other agencies in the Derwent area including the Derwent Community Team, the Cacti Centre and also a local health visitor.

Mainstreaming services and ensuring sustainability

In the final months of the project, staff have been mindful that their time in Derwent is limited and have been looking at how current project services can be mainstreamed once the project ends.

Examples of this work include:

- > A directory which provides information on refugee and asylum seeker services (as well

as other generic services) that are available locally, city wide, regionally and nationally. This will be given to all clients as well as other agencies and projects in the Derwent area.

- > The project team are also arranging training sessions, in partnership with the Nottingham asylum advice team, for various agencies in the Derwent area including the Derwent Community Team, and the staff and volunteers from the Cacti Centre. Anyone in the Derby area including all NDC projects are able to access additional training and support from Refugee Action's Asylum Advice Team in Nottingham post March 2006.
- > The Cacti Centre, an advice and information centre servicing the needs of local residents, is keen to take on a role in supporting refugee and asylum seekers once the Refugee Action project has ended. Hopefully the training provided by Refugee Action will assist their staff to be better equipped.
- > Advice and support work has been an integral part of the Derwent project and although this will come to an end in March 2006, Refugee Action will still have a presence within the city through its regional staff based in Nottingham. This asylum advice team provides weekly outreach sessions at the Council House in Derby as well as seeing clients in Nottingham.
- > Other advice providers include the Derby Refugee Advice Centre, based at the Bosnian Centre close to the city centre and the Derby Citizens Advice Bureau which offers advice and information for all Derby residents including refugees and asylum seekers and holds a weekly outreach service at the Cacti Centre. These services will be highlighted in the directory being produced by the project team.

**Refugees and Asylum Seekers Awareness
Wednesday 9th November 2005 12:30 - 3:00pm
Mayfield Road Methodist Church**

•	Introductions	All
•	Quiz	Caron
•	Definitions of Asylum Seekers / Refugees	Caron
•	Support Issues	Andrew
•	Asylum Seekers in Derby	Caron
•	Problems people have when they come to the UK	Andrew
•	BREAK	
•	Personal Perspective – Refugee Speaker	Refugee Speaker
•	Media Issues – Misconceptions in the Media	Caron
•	Question and Answers	All
•	Evaluation	Caron

B. Awareness Raising work with the host community and agencies in Derwent

The project had as one of its core objectives raising the awareness of local residents and agencies about refugee issues, and why people had moved into Derwent in recent years. The project developed and then delivered formal and informal awareness raising work.

- > Formal sessions involved developing session plans in partnership with the group organiser e.g. Health services staff, Probation Service and Derwent Community Team, who had invited the team to deliver the session.
- > Informal awareness raising was done through attendance at meetings within the community, answering telephone enquiries from people who wanted to find out more and Refugees, and for example, assisting local residents and/or project workers studying on the foundation degree in community development at Derby University.

Work with schools

During Refugee Week 2004, the project worked with Derwent Zambezi, a local refugee support group to do awareness raising in Derwent and Beaufort primary schools. The project staff liaised with the schools and Zambezi over the methods of delivery to younger children. Zambezi used songs and music from Africa to engage with children about differences in life between the UK and their home countries, with some geography of Africa as well as cultural difference between countries. As a result of these sessions Zambezi delivered a programme of drumming workshops with the Derwent Community School and also attended Beaufort School to answer questions of the older children. Derwent Community School have since been assisting Zambezi by providing rooms for rehearsals for the Zambezi Choir.

In the final year of the project, the team wrote to all Derwent Schools enquiring about working together to raise awareness of refugee issues during Refugee Week. The team was able to work with Derwent Community School to provide an information session on the difference between refugees and asylum seekers in law,

and the different support entitlements to all staff during their extended lunch break. The following week Zambezi members held a school assembly, which linked with the “Make Poverty History” campaign. Francis Glaze from the school commented that the Refugee Week input was “very successful”.

Following this, Da Vinci Community College asked Refugee Action to assist in facilitating refugee speakers to give a personal account of their flight to the UK within the PSHE curriculum being taught. Refugee speakers were booked and brought into the school for 4 sessions with all year 10 pupils as part of the PSHE and citizenship curriculum.

Mark Bellingall, Programme Leader for PSHE at Da Vinci reported that the visits of Ziggy and Cabdi (Refugees not resident in Derwent) “really made an impression on our students and have enhanced our unit of work about Human Rights”. As a result of these sessions, Mr Bellingall requested a further visit of Ziggy at the end of term with year 8 students as an incentive for good work. The project therefore arranged for a drumming workshop which was very well received with most pupils having a go at drumming or dancing!

Work with other agencies

In the second year of the project, the team visited Derbyshire Probation Service (March 2004) and Derwent Community Team (July 2004) Feedback from both these sessions was reported as positive.

The team also delivered a session to young people involved in the Princes Trust programme at Derby College to acknowledge their work on the garden at 17 St Marks Road. A session was also organised with Health Service staff from across the city.

There are plans for further sessions with DCT, Derby Homes and Youth Inclusion in the final weeks of the project.

Other initiatives

During the final phases of the project the team also planned, marketed and delivered open awareness raising sessions. For these sessions a leaflet was devised and circulated widely throughout Derwent. For each session a refugee speaker was employed, a buffet provided, and childcare was available to encourage local residents to attend as much as possible. The team also worked with “Valuing Experience” on the programme so that residents could gain an Open College Network credit in “Core Values and Group Work”. After the first session it was realised that more time was needed to assist people in completing the work sheets for the credit, and writing the witness statement of the person’s contribution to the session, to gain the credit. Valuing Experience therefore sent a learner advisor to each of the remaining sessions enabling the partnership to work much better and support the needs of the learners more effectively.

Valuing Experience worked closely with the project to support its needs in assisting people in accessing OCN credits for their participation in sessions

“I thought that this was a really good link that fitted quite well with where we are at with the project now... I think it’s been really interesting; it’s been nice because we were able to work with people from organisations which helped to raise awareness of the project but also residents within the community”

(Sarah Martin-Valuing Experience project).

Thanks to Cabdi Aakhiro, Patrick Effalo, Said Hagos, Farhad Negipoorhan, Zigashane Ntamelwa, Emilio Sanches Taveres for all their assistance with the awareness raising work and to Sarah Martin and Helen Gratton (Valuing Experience) for taking forward the work on accreditation.

	GREATLY	A LITTLE	NOT AT ALL		
Have your pinions changed from the start of the session ?	10	17	7		

	V. USEFUL	USEFUL	OK	NOT USEFUL	V. POOR
Was the information given useful ?	30	4			

	V. GOOD	GOOD	OK	POOR	V. POOR
Rate the session overall	28	6			

Additional Comments:

- > A very friendly and informal approach, it was very informative and interesting to hear from a refugee in their own words, their own story
- > Well presented, very informative
- > The presentation was very good
- > I felt better to understand what the refugees go through to get to Britain and what they actually run away from
- > I thought the first hand account of what a refugee goes through was very moving
- > Needed more time
- > True information is always good
- > Thank you, very enlightening
- > Well Done, lots of information given
- > It was very good and you are very knowledgeable about the subject
- > It was very important and meaningful to hear from Cabdi, spread the word to others
- > More handouts needed at point of delivery
- > Some items were slightly mis-represented
- > It is a shame that the racist members of Derwent didn't attend – it might have just altered their views
- > It made me have more understanding of what asylum seekers and refugees have to come up against to be “accepted” into the country

- > More first hand experiences from asylum seekers / refugees like Farhad
- > Interesting and useful session – thank you
- > Very informative
- > Would be good to discuss scenarios / case studies around particular family issues so we can know how we can help them.
- > This course really opened my eyes to the plight of asylum seekers some of whom I visit in their homes. Thank you for the training.
- > Changed my view completely about asylum seekers. This service needs to be more widely spread and closer to where the people are.
- > Useful to have similar project [to Derwent] locally.
- > This has made me more aware.
- > Much appreciated session – really helpful in my work with people seeking asylum and refugees.

C. Tackling racial harassment issues in Derwent

Persistent racial harassment had been one of the key reasons behind the need for a specific project to support refugees and asylum seekers in the Derwent area. The area had acquired a definite reputation as being hostile to minority communities.

In the initial stages of the project there were reports of racial harassment. However, the mechanisms for recording such incidents were not in place apart from reporting them directly to the Police, who could only offer support around taking forward prosecutions. Many residents were reluctant and afraid to take such action, (which in many cases, was against their neighbours). Similarly there was no history of agencies working together to provide solutions to these issues.

“The baseline was very high in terms of incidents. We tried to raise awareness and work towards the development of the project and this led to incident reports increasing by 600%, so caused concern across the city”

Carol Hardwick, Derwent Community Team

Forming the Racial Harassment Group

Within August 2003, just 2 months after the appointment of the Community Development Officer at Refugee Action, the first Racial Harassment Group meeting took place. Within this meeting agreement was made about the aims of these meetings and the procedure for reporting incidents between the group and offering support to victims of harassment. The initial group consisted only of Refugee Action, the Police and Derwent Community Team and

it took until November 2003 to gain wider involvement from Derby Homes and Refugee Housing Association. This therefore meant the earlier agreement had to be reiterated and reaffirmed in order to gain support of the new partners.

Developing a Welcome Pack & systems for reporting racial harassment

Work took place to develop a welcome pack, with information for residents on how to report an emergency as opposed to ongoing issues and by February 2004 formalising reporting between agencies and also the need for developing a service level agreement was being discussed. By April / May 2004 agencies within the group were attending the meetings regularly and reports were being taken on the agreed reporting form which was circulated through e-mail to all members. By circulating this information through e-mail all agencies were able to know of incidents in a timely manner and take forward any necessary action in order to support the client.

“We’re really grateful for your group setting up. It’s brought our attention to a lot of issues we didn’t know about”

Mike Cooper, Derbyshire Constabulary, March 2004

Devising a Service Level Agreement

The majority of the time within the racial harassment group meetings was spent on discussing operational issues relating to incidents and support to victims. Some time was then devoted to devising a Service Level Agreement for all agencies involved in the group to sign. However, soon after work began on this agreement, the Community Development Officer, Chris Seager left his post and there was a gap in staffing of the Derwent Project as a result.

When new staff were appointed they began work on taking forward this group. However, personnel in other agencies had also changed and it was difficult to build momentum to take forward what had been planned previously. This was also coupled with the fact there was an actual reduction in the number of reported incidents, which has remained the case for some time now. Below are details of the number of incidents reported to Refugee Action within the quarterly reporting periods of the project. These statistics show the number of reports increased, as we believe residents felt more confident in making reports due to the increased level of support offered as a result of the greater multi-agency working and then how these have declined, which may be a result of some families being moved from the area by Derby Homes as evidence was gathered about their treatment of neighbours.

QUARTER	DATE	TOTAL NUMBER OF INCIDENTS REPORTED
July – Sept 2003	18/08/03	1
Oct – Dec 2003	15/10/03	1
Jan – Mar 2004	07/01/04, 09/02/04, 12/03/04	3
April – June 2004	13/04/04, 18/04/04, 14/05/04 (2)	4
July – Sept 2004	02/09/04, 26/09/04	2
Oct – Dec 2004	12/11/04, 15/11/04	3
Jan – March 2005		
April – June 2005		
July – Sept 2005	22/08/05	1
Oct – Dec 2005		
Jan – March 2006		

Positive experiences of neighbours

What we need to also remember is that whilst a small number of individuals have treated newcomers to Derwent badly, our clients have also seen some very supportive and neighbourly behaviour that offers hope for the future. One client experienced harassment from three different “neighbours” yet when she sought help with the issues she was facing, a local family who lived close by brought an end to the harassment, through door knocking and letting the perpetrators know that what they were doing was unacceptable. This neighbour brought young people back to the house and made them clean the mess they had made and now the young people are friendly with the family concerned (see case-study below)

“The only thing I am scared of now, is not really much, not much at all”.

Client who was harassed by three neighbours

The change in staffing in agencies meant an awareness of the work done had to be built alongside trust in developing relationships once more. The wording of the Service Level Agreement took some time to finalise before all parties were happy with the content and able to sign off the document (as it is legally binding all parties had to be in complete agreement). Additionally some agencies needed to discuss with senior staff to agree who could sign the agreement on behalf of their organisation. A further delay in this agreement was actually getting all the parties together as this proves difficult with busy work schedules of all the staff involved. The team therefore did a “mini roadshow” – taking the document to the different organisations to ensure the document was signed off!

Anecdotal evidence suggests that more work still needs to be done to support people and that they are still likely to experience issues of this nature (the majority of incidents now involve name calling rather than physical threats

of violence and arson that was previously experienced), however good progress has been made to date.

“Things have improved and I feel that some families attitudes in the area have changed.”

Carol Hardwick, Derwent Community Team

*“There is a very big difference now”
[related to racial harassment in the area]*

Berna Djinaj, Refugee Housing Association.

Recently the group has been revitalised through its involvement in two city-wide initiatives to support victims and multi-agency work practices within this field. The project also has agreement with the Derby Community Safety Partnership to display self referral forms and posters within agencies in Derwent. This is an important step to help Derwent become more integrated with the support frameworks across the city and also enable the projects’ learning and experience to feed into and support city wide developments relating to support of victims and reporting of racial harassment incidents.

CASE-STUDY

Racial Harassment- A case-study about Sarah *- one persons experience in Derwent

(*fictitious name)

“They came on Saturday, throwing eggs, eggs, eggs, until they get tired...I left it and didn’t clean it for three months. If I clean it they will come again... So when they saw that I didn’t mind about the eggs they started throwing stones”

The above is part of an interview with a woman seeking asylum and housed in Derby in 2003. The following is a summary of the interview and captures her experiences and relationship with the Refugee Action project. This case-study is not intending to make the suggestion that this was a typical experience of all of the people who are seeking asylum and resident in Derwent but it was this type of incident that led to New Deal for Communities funding this project back in 2003.

The case-study has been written by Gersh Subhra but based on the transcript of an interview organised by Caron McLoughlin.

What types of incidents of racial harassment have occurred?

They started right at the beginning after we had been here about a week. My neighbour knocked on the door when I was crushing ginger in the kitchen. She shouted “you stop banging, what you doing, cos my baby can’t sleep”. So I started to explain and then she said “you black shit, what are you doing here?”

I closed the door and she shouted “open, why do you shut me out, open you black shit, why you are here?”

Another incident:

“sometimes a gang of boys were drinking so much and...they started shouting and throwing cans and cans and the rubbish. They would put the garbage, the food what they ate, everything and they put it right by the door.”

“They also collected 5 bags of rubbish and put it by the door”

The last incident:

“The people opposite started sending their children, throwing eggs on the window, so the window was all painted with the eggs. They come Saturday throwing eggs, eggs, eggs,, until they get tired and when they saw that I didn’t mind about the eggs, I left it and didn’t clean it, I left it for three months.

Chris (from Refugee Action) came and saw the eggs and I said if I clean they will come again, let it be there. So when they saw I didn’t mind about the eggs they started throwing stones. With the stones I couldn’t bear it”

“ I was very depressed and I used to see my doctor and he would write to Refugee Housing for me to relocate to another house”

We don’t talk to anybody, we don’t do anything we just come and lock ourselves in the house. We were locked in the house like prisoners and you imagine we were here just two weeks”

Throughout the interview Sarah talked of the support that she obtained from her doctor, the police, her church, Refugee Housing, Derby Homes, Zambezi and Refugee Action. She also described the support that she received from a neighbouring British family who spoke to many of the parents of the children involved in some

of the incidents. As a result, the children were instructed to clean up the mess that they had left on the windows and outside her door.

Sarah was particularly positive about the support that she had received from Refugee Action:

“If Chris was not there I don’t think we would have got through it. He was the one who suggested to go to the police and Chris also contacted police and they came and met me.... I know that if I have a problem I call Andrew, I call Caron.”

“Refugee Action has been the place we can run to if we have a problem”

The situation for Sarah seems to have improved significantly since the early harassment with:

- > Some of the neighbours (being) moved on
- > The new neighbours are much friendlier

“She’s really good...when it was Christmas she came to wish us a good Christmas and the lady opposite brought us a Christmas card.”

- > Her son has made friends at school and plays in a football team
- > She uses Refugee Action and is registered with Timebank as well as becoming a volunteer.

The quality of the inter-agency working in Derwent is evident in the support offered and the in most cases the speed of the response from many workers was praised by Sarah.

D. Derwent Zambezi

Due to the low number of asylum seekers housed in the Derwent area and the relatively low numbers of refugees living in the area it would have been difficult for any one nationality or ethnic group to form a refugee community organisation (RCO). A number of refugees and asylum seekers along with some African Caribbean residents living in the Derwent area decided to form a community group and made the group open to all residents rather than for a specific nationality or ethnic origin. This group was to become the Derwent Zambezi Association, named after the great river in Africa that flows through many countries and links people of different cultures together.

These individuals were aware of Refugee Action (either through home visits or public meetings in Derwent) and approached the project for help in setting up such a group. Because many of these residents were new to the area they did not know each other very well and therefore Refugee Action played an important role in facilitating and chairing early meetings for the group and helped practically by providing resources and a venue for these meetings.

“...the intervention of Refugee Action was crucial in playing the role of a neutral entity there because we were from different cultures, different nationalities, and we didn't know each other and there was a trust element that wasn't there. We needed time to build those relationships there and obviously Refugee Action, through ... offering the venue for meetings and occasionally chairing the meetings where necessary and appropriate, did help the group to get together and remain together and consolidate its relationship that was crucial to us.”

Emilio Tavares Sanches- Zambezi Chair

The idea of the group was to bring together different cultures and traditions through various social events and also to build bridges between those members who were not born in the UK and British born residents living in Derwent. This idea of allowing anyone to join the group meant that great in-roads were made in promoting the integration of the new non-British born residents and also in fostering a greater understanding within the local community around the issues of immigration and ethnic minorities.

When the group first starting it received assistance from Refugee Action and Derwent First Steps (a local community based CVS) in creating a constitution and organising a committee.

“When there was talk about the Zambezi Association setting up ... we spoke about how we would get them developed, how we would help them get a constitution and how we'd develop the group to increase their skills.”

Steven Tomlinson- Derwent First Steps

A number of Zambezi members have attended courses arranged by Derwent First Steps including role of the chair, role of the treasurer, and minute taking. The fact that the Refugee Action office was based in the local community played a vital role in the initial development of the Derwent Zambezi Association. Regular contact between the Zambezi committee and Refugee Action staff meant that what was a bold and somewhat brave idea of an all inclusive refugee community group got a very high level of support in its early stages.

“...when we first organised the group we got a lot of help from Refugee Action on the constitution, on how to organise ourselves, how to get funding.”

Said Hagos- Zambezi Treasurer

Over the first two years of Derwent Zambezi's existence the group has developed a number of activities including a very successful and in-demand choir and a number of football teams (which have recently merged with the local area team, Derwent FC) catering for young children right through to adults. Derwent Zambezi have organised parties and musical celebrations open to all Derwent residents, the aim of which has been to bring together the local community to share in the various different cultures of the group.

“ There was a noticeable difference from the first event Zambezi performed compared to the one in December 2005, where by everyone got really involved. They loved having them there. They wanted more! At the first event they (the Time Bank participants) were just sitting and watching rather than participating.”

**Nasreen Akhtar – Derwent Time Bank Manager
(talking about Derwent Zambezi performing
at the Time Bank social events)**

A number of Derwent Zambezi members have also been involved in awareness raising around asylum and refugee issues which included joint visits with Refugee Action to local schools during Refugee Week in both 2004 and 2005.

During 2004 Zambezi were successful in applying for funding from New Deal for Communities in Derwent. They were given £10,000 for costs of musical equipment and uniforms for the choir, rehearsal space, football kits and equipment and a video camera to document their activities. Zambezi have also made good links with other staff from Refugee Action, through meeting with Refugee Action's Director of Development & Integration and Chief Executive as well as two members attending Refugee Action's national

staff conferences, which included opportunities to develop knowledge and skills in workshops & plenary sessions and networking time. In order for Derwent Zambezi to remain sustainable they need to continue to apply for funding as the NDC money is almost spent. They are waiting for a decision on an application submitted to the Awards for All but this is a relatively small pot of money.

After further talks with Zambezi about their future they felt that it would be appropriate to look at funding for a paid worker in order to develop the group and create sustainability. The possible role of this worker could include administration duties along with fundraising and the development of new projects within the group. The committee recently met with Refugee Action Derwent Project staff and the Young People's Theme Group leader in order to develop this role and make an expression of interest to NDC for funding. A further possibility currently being explored with Zambezi is assistance from Derby Millennium Network (a city-wide organisation which supports the Black & minority voluntary sector) in securing match funding for the group and therefore strengthening their fundraising potential and likely sustainability for the future. In addition the group have been introduced to Refugee Action's regional Community Development Officer who is based in Leicester and has a remit to support RCOs and support groups operating within the East Midlands. They are now included on the regional data base and will receive regular updates and information with regard new opportunities and support in accessing training and funding.

It is very important that the Derwent Zambezi Association remains active in Derwent in order to build upon the good work that the group has already achieved. Zambezi not only provides a voice for the various ethnic minority groups living in Derwent but it helps to promote a positive image of these diverse cultures to the rest of the community, both of which are essential in creating community cohesion and integration.

E. Integration Work

A further aim of the project was to promote integration of refugee and asylum seeking clients within the wider community of Derwent. At the beginning of the project much work was done to find a more suitable office base and to identify people to whom the project could offer support and integration activities.

“I really enjoy mixing with people from different cultures and learning about their backgrounds. Hopefully we can help them to find out more about our backgrounds to, so we can learn from each other”

**Fran Vallely,
local resident and member of Derwent
Zambezi**

Refugee Week 2004

Refugee Week in 2004 was the first one to be marked in Derwent within the areas history so can be seen as an important landmark!

The project received positive news coverage in Derby Evening Telegraph “Fun Day out For Refugees” (17.06.04) to promote a week of events culminating in a refugee football match and picnic. Derwent Zambezi gave talks to children at Derwent Community School on life in different countries to build an understanding of the world we live in within Refugee Week.

Derwent Zambezi played a football match on the Sunday 20th June against the Normanton based Derby Farsi Association -the Zambezi Team won!

Project Launch

Once a new office base was found the team worked with Derwent Time Bank to hold a launch event which was held on Wednesday 29th September 2004 at the joint project offices at 17 St Marks Road.

This was a full day family orientated event with James Lewis (Bamfords – Cash in the Attic for people to get valuations of antiques!). James officially opened the building for the community and events included opportunities for people to understand more about Tai Chi and to have a massage! Throughout the day music was played including a video of Derwent Zambezi’s Choir, there were face painters which went down a treat with the younger visitors and all this was accompanied by wholesome food & refreshments and a balloon race to end the day!

Refugee Action and Time Bank were interviewed for Radio Derby to promote the open day to the community. Over 100 people attended on the day and very positive feedback was received from residents as well as a good article in Derby Evening Telegraph “Community Event Hailed a Success” (30.09.04) and gaining front page news in Derwent Together (Oct 2004)

The day saw local residents mixing well with the projects’ clients which was seen as a very positive start to the shared building and working relationship between the projects.

“This event on Sunday is to get local people to come and mix and to promote a positive idea of refugees and what they can contribute to the area. There are a lot of people who have been very positive about refugees and supportive but there is a problem in the country about perceptions of refugees.”

**Chris Seager, Refugee
Action, quoted in Derby Evening Telegraph**

"The event was really wonderful"

Commented one Refugee Action client.

"Everyone seemed to really enjoy it. It was great to see people mixing"

Sarah Martin, Valuing Experience project

"There is a minority of black people in the area so we need to integrate and this brings people together and gets them involved in the community"

Anita Itutu, Resident

Summer Activities 2005

During the summer months of 2005 Refugee Action, in partnership with Derwent Time Bank organised a number of trips for their clients. The reason for the outings was to provide both project's clients with an opportunity to visit different places in the region, some of whom would not have been able to afford it otherwise but also to promote integration between Refugee Action clients and the Time Bank clients, the majority of whom are British born residents.

" The trips were really good and got people 'out there' socially. The way we organised it together was good. It came together well."

Nasreen Akhtar – Derwent Time Bank Manager

ARTICLE IN LOCAL PRESS

F. Refugee Week 2005

Derwent Celebrates Refugee Week!!

This year Refugee Week took place from 20th to 26th June and Derwent was very much involved in the celebrations. Refugee Week is an annual UK wide festival that celebrates the great contribution made by refugees to UK life and promotes understanding of why people become refugees.

Derwent Zambezi, a local Refugee Community Organisation made up of refugees, asylum seekers and local residents, in partnership with the charity Refugee Action (who's local office is based at 17 St Mark's Road) organised a number of events to celebrate this year's Refugee Week.

On Friday 24th June Derwent Zambezi visited Derwent Community School and gave the pupils a small talk and presentation on refugees, linking in with the Make Poverty History campaign (www.makepovertyhistory.org).

Derwent (Zambezi) FC, made up of residents and refugees living in the area, arranged a friendly match with the Derby Cameroon Football Team at Darley Fields. The game took place on Sunday 26th June and it was a great result for Derwent, who won 6-3!

Straight after the game there was an 'International BBQ' at the Refugee Action office, with various different dishes from around the world. It was a beautiful sunny day and the BBQ was very well attended, with nearly 40 people turning up over the afternoon.

Lots of fun was had by all and there was even a dance performance from some of the members of the Derwent Zambezi choir!! Refugee Action would like to give a big thanks to Belinda from Timebank for the use of her BBQ.

Taken from an article published in the Derwent Together Magazine (Sept 2005)

A trip to the countryside

Dovedale is a beautiful area in the Derbyshire Peak District and it was felt it would be a great place to explore what Derby has to offer on its doorstep! A mixed group of around 18 adults and children took a minibus to the very scenic area and spent the day walking by the river, playing games and having a picnic.

Children's Fun Day

The second trip incorporated fun for the family with an educational experience in the form of Conkers Education Centre in Leicestershire. It combines indoor and outdoor exhibits on nature and wildlife with adventure playgrounds, steam trains and live musical entertainment. It was a beautifully hot day and everybody seemed to have a great time.

The Seaside

What better place to take the family in the summer than the beach! A coach was hired and the team took around 70 people to sunny Skegness on the East coast where people spent the day making sand castles, paddling in the sea and experiencing the thrills and spills of the fairground rides! There were equal numbers of refugee and British born families on the trip and so it was a great opportunity for people to mix and get to know each other.

"...the trips were very enjoyable and we met a lot of new people... We had a nice time together and we were able to forget our worries and the depressed feeling, at least for a day or two it was gone. And that gave us happiness. Definitely it really works."

Refugee Action client

"Definitely it has had an impact in the Derwent area. It has made the local residents and refugees and asylum seekers to understand each other, to have a mutual understanding about their cultures, about their origins and their ethnic origins and all those things. To work together and especially to understand each other and work together and that way to build a good society in the future"

Refugee Action client

Buddying Scheme

In the final year of the project the team worked with Derwent Time Bank to develop a volunteer buddying scheme, whereby Time Bank members were trained to be matched to offer buddying support to Refugee Action clients.

As the scheme was developed quite late into the projects time span and most clients had been living in the area for some time, there wasn't as much need as first anticipated. Two partnerships were matched but only one really developed and offered much needed support to the client. However, now that the documentation and guidance about how to set up Buddying partners is written this idea can be taken forward by others working in the area. Discussions are being held with other partner agencies to see if this work can be located within another Derwent project.

CASE-STUDY

*Carine and her buddy, Diane.

In June 2005 Carine’s health visitor contacted Refugee Action as she was concerned that Carine was isolated and experiencing post-natal depression. Carine is a woman from Burundi (Africa), who was at home most of the time with her young baby. She has concerns over her stay in the UK as the Home Office have given a negative decision on her asylum claim, meaning she isn’t entitled to any housing or financial support, leaving her completely dependent on her partner.

The Refugee Action team contacted Carine and arranged to visit her at home the next day. Caron visited Carine and went through what support the project could offer her and also what the buddying scheme was. Carine signed up to the project and to the buddying scheme and later that week visited the projects Refugee Week BBQ at the office garden.

Carine was introduced to her buddy a few weeks later but then almost immediately, moved out of Derwent. As the project was still concerned about the level of isolation and post-natal depression, both the buddy and the project felt it would be best to keep an involvement in supporting the family. Within weeks of moving from the area Carine’s relationship with her baby’s father had broken down and the project alongside health service staff were able to get Social Services involved in supporting the family. Eventually this breakdown meant Carine couldn’t stay in their flat and needed to be provided with accommodation, she and her baby were then placed in B & B accommodation and then into a flat and given some money for food and clothing. Throughout this difficult time her buddy, Diane was meeting with her regularly and offering much needed pastoral & practical support.

“I get satisfaction, you know I made that person smile and she said Thank You, that means so much and I know she means it. Its not overpowering, she doesn’t need me everyday or even every week but she knows I’m going to call her.”

“I suppose I was like a lot of other people thinking they come here and get everything and I thought

it was a small amount of people who were left out and didn’t get things. Now I can see it is entirely the opposite way round, they struggle for everything, nothing is given freely and yes they need support”

Diane-buddying scheme volunteer

The flat that was provided to Carine and her baby, was a great help to her as it gave her a safe place to be. However the flat lacked many basic essentials, and some equipment was so dirty that it had to be disposed of. This meant living without equipment necessary to feed themselves well. Diane went out into the Derwent community and used her links with people through Time Bank to collect items that would make Carine’s flat much more comfortable and so they could refrigerate food and cook properly again.

Refugee Action are “very supportive, even when there is nothing they can do, they come just to give me that warm support and a smile... that support is very helpful because myself, I have lost all hope in life but I have started trying to fight because I have found or met people that are caring for me and giving me hope”

Carine, beneficiary of buddying scheme

The project did not want to bring the buddying to an end as it is working well and Carine’s situation is still difficult, at the end of the Derwent Project. Therefore, it has been arranged for the Nottingham Office of Refugee Action to provide the support needed so that Carine and Diane can continue working together.

Carine’s future in the UK is still in doubt, however the support she has received has meant that she knows people care about her and this has given her some hope for the future.

***N.B. Names have been changed to protect identities.**

Sharing an office with Time Bank has had a direct impact on the integration work in that participants involved in Time Bank have informally come into contact with refugee community members and as a result have built trust with the staff and felt comfortable in asking questions to enable rumours and myths about asylum seekers to be resolved easily.

“If you had been in another office they [Time Bank participants] might never have had contact with refugees or asylum seekers”.

Nasreen Akhtar, Time Bank

G. Building local sustainability - The Community Link Worker post

The Community Link worker's post is integral to the way NDC wanted to promote sustainability in the area. NDC, as a funder, was keen for the project to employ and support a local resident who would have the opportunity to learn and develop by being part of the project, but also part of a national and well respected refugee agency. In addition, Refugee Action were keen to work in partnership with a local neighbourhood programme which would provide an opportunity to work more locally as opposed to the generic regional community development work that it has historically been involved in with refugee community organisations.

It was agreed, with this in mind that Refugee Action would employ a local resident to work alongside a Community Development Officer. There was not the expectation that the person would bring particular skills or experience related to working with refugee communities but that their key attribute would be the wealth of local knowledge, enthusiasm and an ability

to raise awareness among the host population about the issues affecting refugees and asylum seekers from an informed position.

Hayley Collinson was appointed as the Community Link Worker for the project in September 2003. She was originally employed on a full time basis but due to personal reasons reduced her hours to p/t in the last year of the project. Refugee Action supported Hayley to identify her learning needs and access support from the Dyslexia Association and supported her to attend various short courses in-house and externally, as well as to access regular sessions at the Dyslexia Association and to start a course of learning at Derby University.

At the start of the project Hayley was brimming with enthusiasm but not particularly confident about her abilities. She had not travelled outside of Derby but through her induction, and on going work she was given the opportunity to visit London and some of Refugee Action's other regional offices to talk to other project workers. She has had the opportunity of working in an office environment, having previously been engaged in care work and shop work, and has learnt much about the workings of a national agency. Hayley's IT knowledge has increased ten-fold – prior to being employed she was not at all confident of using a computer.

Unfortunately, due to personal problems Hayley had to stop attending her sessions at the Dyslexia Association and has postponed her studies at Derby University but she is confident that she will be able to resume her studies later on. Prior to being employed on this project she had only dreamed of actually going to University, as she, like many others in Derwent had not had a particularly positive experience of learning in primary or secondary education.

Work with Volunteers

When the Derwent Refugee Community Development Support Project began it was intended that the project would develop a pool of volunteers to support the work and to provide personal development opportunities for some clients and local residents. This was delayed as the projects’ original office did not have enough space for volunteers or clients to visit the premises and wasn’t practically viable until the project moved to St Marks Road.

Once the project moved, the option to recruit and train volunteers became viable and the staff team started to work on possible roles. The first roles to be identified were that of Admin Support Volunteer and Drop-In Volunteer. These role descriptions were developed alongside a flyer to promote the opportunities and then open recruitment took place. Anne Herbert was recruited as Administrative Volunteer and Said Hagos as Drop-In volunteer, both of whom were also active members of Derwent Zambezi.

When the project changed staffing in 2005 the drop-in was closed for some time and despite efforts to revitalise this session to residents, it was found that clients were accessing the project at different times of the week and therefore there wasn’t the need for the Drop-in volunteer role to continue. Said however, remained involved in the project and worked with the Libraries Development Worker to purchase books according to clients’ needs and set up a system for loaning books to clients. The team was also able to refer Said to Citizens Advice Bureau for volunteer advisor training, which he completed at the end of 2005.

Anne worked with the project until the summer of 2005, although this was restricted to minute taking at steering group meetings. Anne was successful in gaining paid employment with the Toy Library in Derwent and is no longer involved in the project.

Mid 2005 the staff team also took forward a partnership with Time Bank to train volunteers as be-frienders and one person was recruited

to this role. The project did aim to have more partnerships but this was not successful. The volunteer has now been referred to Refugee Action Nottingham so that her buddying can continue after the end of the Derwent Project.

The project team would like to extend their thanks and gratitude to all the volunteers who gave their time, energy and commitment so freely to support our work and clients.

CASE STUDY

Introduction to Hayleys' Personal Development Flower - a personal statement

I grew up in Derwent and have lived here for most of my life. Derwent has always had a reputation and has had a lot of bad press in the past. What people do not see are the lots of good people in Derwent that work extremely hard and are committed to making it a better community.

Working on the Refugee Action project has given me the opportunity to help people from different cultures to settle and become part of the community here in Derwent. I have had a first hand insight to what people seeking asylum have to go through and the challenges they have to overcome. Because of this I am now able to challenge people's perceptions of asylum seekers.

Also because I live in Derwent I have been very privileged to have made a lot of new friends in my own community from different cultures as well as working on the project.

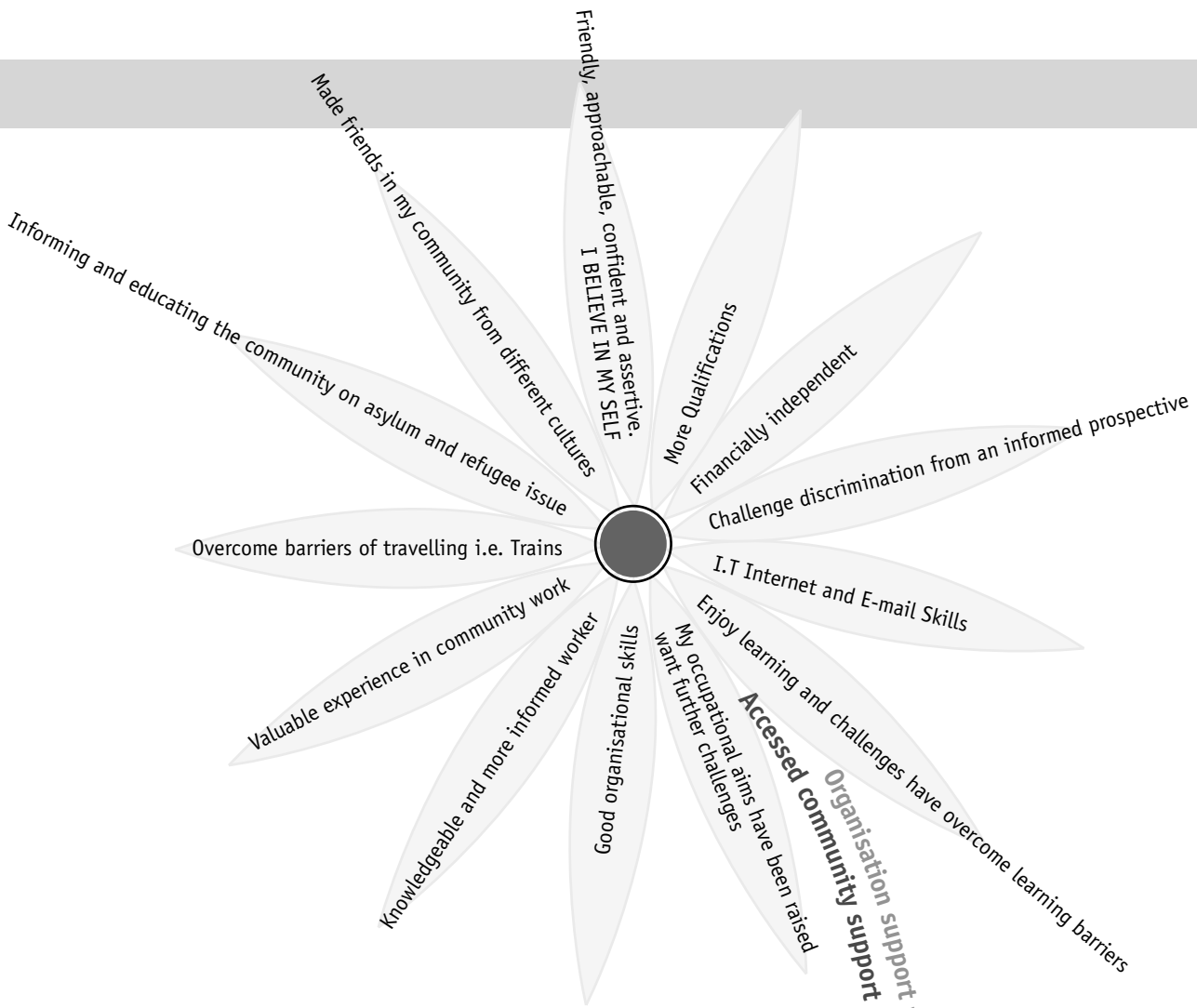
I have had a lot of barriers to overcome myself working on the project to enable me to do my role. I was found to have Dyslexia at the beginning of the project and was supported with classes at the Dyslexia institute, where I learnt to put coping mechanisms in place to help me overcome the learning barriers. This has given me the skills to do my job and at the same time given me a new found confidence in myself.

I have learnt a lot of new skills along the way such as IT, Internet and e-mail just to name a few. I have done a lot of training and have also gained qualifications. But most of all I have gained confidence and a belief in myself.

Community work is not just about working with the community but about working in partnership with other organisations and building good working relationships. For example, one of the skills I have learnt is to be diplomatic.

I have really enjoyed doing community work and the many challenges that go alongside it. I only hope that I will have the opportunity to carry on working within a community role in the future.

Hayley Collinson



I am a people person. I was a carer. I was aware of discrimination and wanted a role were I could change and make a difference in my community.

Had family values passed on from my parents. Fairness, everyone equal and was a people person.

I got support from the Empowerment team to fill in the application form. Was successful at the interview and started in post September 2003

Saw advert for the post in the Derwent newsletter. Contacted N.D.C to find out more

External feedback about the Refugee Action project

A. Summary of the mid-term evaluation

The mid-term evaluation was carried out in November 2004 and consisted of 11 questionnaires and telephone interviews with local agencies as well as 9 responses from clients accessing the Refugee project. At this point the feedback was overwhelmingly positive and the project had been received enthusiastically into the area. Progress had been made on racial harassment issues with agencies working much more closely together, in particular the police.

The early work with Zambezi has had a real impact and the partnership is resulting in many opportunities to raise awareness and change negative attitudes about minority communities. The projects resources of IT access, library, photocopying were welcome and interest in volunteering was being shown by the interviewees.

B. Summary of focus group discussion

Summary of issues emerging from a focus group held on 13.2.2006 with representatives of Zambezi, Timebank project, Derby Racial Equality Council, Refugee Housing Association and the Derwent Community Team.

The focus group was facilitated by Teresa Flower and Gersh Subhra –Evaluation consultants, University of Derby

The structure of this summary will follow the questions used to facilitate the discussion in the group:

1. How have you worked with the project? What issues have led you to work with the Refugee Community Development Project?

The focus group participants were all either residents or representatives of agencies that had worked to develop and/or worked alongside the Refugee Community Development Support project. The work has given them a clear insight into the range and quality of work undertaken and enabled them to provide open and honest feedback about the achievements of the project.

Participants were candid about where they felt the project had not made sufficient impact as well as being generous in their praise of the key achievements.

2. How clearly do you understand what the core objectives of the project were?

There was a good overall understanding of all objectives of the project.

3. Has additional taken the project in different or new directions?

The group did not identify any new objectives that had been added to the original ones but felt that some had been emphasised over and above the others. This will be explored further in this summary.

4. Key achievements of the project?

- > Helping to establish Zambezi, initiating a wide range of cross-cultural/community work and help with accessing funding. Role of Refugee project staff crucial in being the neutral chair-person and bringing different communities together
- > Establishing a welcoming and well known office base
- > Joint social trips and coffee mornings encouraged contact between people of different communities and helped with integration and awareness raising
- > The example of Buddying between refugees and host community worked really well
- > Getting agencies to come together and work on practical strategies to tackle racial harassment-Refugee Action staff were integral to creating a momentum and follow up work
- > Lots of evidence that agencies changed their approach and methods of working in relation to racial harassment
- > A close relationship between the Refugee Project Steering Group and the Racial Harassment Steering Group meant that issues highlighted were acted upon quickly
- > Getting agencies to sign up to a Service Level Agreement was a long process but a real achievement
- > This groundwork led to a sharp rise in racial harassment complaints and was indicative of the increased confidence of community to complain
- > Lots of evidence that refugee families are feeling more confident of becoming visible in community activities, for instance attending social events, Timebank, environmental project-making hanging baskets,

- > Zambezi participants now feel a lot less threatened about holding cultural events, even in venues like the Blue Boy which at one time may have been a `no-go venue`
- > These cultural events involve people of different communities working together and this sends a powerful message to those who may be critical of multi-cultural work
- > The Refugee Support project has given not only Derwent residents but also people from across the city access to high quality advice about asylum claims and other related issues.
- > There was the feeling that a platform had been built through the work of the project and Zambezi and this now needed to be used as a spring-board for further development

The unique approach of the Refugee project seemed to centre on it being local and having the dual focus of working with both refugee families and wider communities and agencies.

5. What things have not been achieved as much or at all. What could the project have done more of?

The group were specific and constructive in the criticisms made about the project and these centred on:

- > A loss of momentum when a key staff member left in December 2004 and the gap between new staff coming in, although unavoidable, damaged a lot of the early groundwork and momentum
- > A casualty of the staff change was a perceived shift in emphasis of the project. The perception of the group was that case-work with the small refugee community took precedence over and at the expense of the wider developmental and cross-community work

- > Given that this was a community development work project, there did not seem to be much evidence of this in the final year
- > Much of the cross-community work seemed to have been `delegated` to Zambezi, although the focus group recognised that recent work had been done on awareness raising in various settings.
- > The work that Zambezi has undertaken with the project and the wider community shows clearly that there is a demand and positive reception to it. This should have been a signal to the project to accelerate this type of work during the final year.
- > The potential to reach and work with the wider community had not been reached yet at the same time the 3 residents in the focus group all felt that Derwent is a very different and much more positive place to live than before
- > The difficulty of a local project trying to meet a local agenda and at the same time be part of a national organisation was raised . Has this triple accountability to community, New Deal and Refugee Action and the time demands this makes had an impact on what has been achieved?
- > Disappointment at so few buddying partnerships (only 2)-this could have been a key achievement and reached into the wider community as well as getting to the point where refugees were buddying other refugees
- > The final year of the project seemed to be dominated by the exit strategy, evaluation report and a feeling of winding down for most of 2005
- > The wider impact of decreasing numbers of refugee families in the area, cessation of dispersal to Derby has had an impact on the project but the feeling was that this should have created the space for much more work with the wider community

6. How do you see the work of the project being taken forward?

There are clear and specific aspects of the projects work that need to be continued and dovetailed into the work of other agencies:

- > Support for Zambezi as a new and growing organisation
- > Continuation of the cross-community work
- > Sign-posting people to advice points as people are still coming to Timebank if project staff are not around
- > Feeding lessons learned/good practice into strategic bodies such as Derby City Partnership & Derby Homes
- > Who is going to pick up racial harassment cases?

It is clear that the focus group participants have specific ideas and concerns about how the components of the Refugee projects work is to be continued. The exit/sustainability strategy needs to be pulled together in one document as part of a `hand-over document` so that the transition is as seamless as possible.

C. Summary of key achievements

Client Work

The project has built good relationships with service users and worked in an empowering manner to support their needs with advice, advocacy and integration support.

The number of referrals to other agencies (outside Derwent) was predicted to be 95 through the project cycle, actual numbers were 162.

The number of people accessing orientation was predicted to be 35 throughout the life of the project, however only 32 people accessed this kind of support. This is likely to be a reflection of the dispersal programme to Derby ceasing and people needing less orientation support when they have been settled in an area for some time.

The number of residents and their increasing participation with local agencies (within Derwent) was predicted to be 35, whereas the project actually supported 71 referrals to local agencies during our work in Derwent.

Awareness Raising

The number of awareness raising sessions and people reached with such training has far surpassed that predicted in the targets set with DCT. The project aimed to reach 60 people throughout the life of the project, however we actually recorded 333 people receiving such sessions. These numbers also do not include the young people involved in sessions during Refugee Week 2004 (at least 300 young people) or the 100 plus students involved during 2005 at Da Vinci College (the figures had not been received in time to add in to the monitoring report. Additionally the team is still planning sessions with DCT, Youth Inclusion and Derby Homes which will add at least another 50 people to these figures.

In the final year of the project the team also began using an evaluation form for each individual attending awareness training and the results of these evaluations were very positive indicating that the sessions were aimed at the right level and provided useful information to participants.

Racial Harassment Group

The key achievements were establishing the Racial Harassment Group, improvements in multi-agency working to support victims, increased reporting as a result of increased confidence in the system by clients. This work has led to evictions of some families and removal of some of the perpetrators which acted as a warning to others. This has all seemed to lead to a reduction in racial harassment. Hopefully Derwent will no longer be seen as an area where BME communities should not go. Agencies signed Service Level Agreement thus setting standards in service within this arena for the first time. Derby Community Safety Partnership and Race Equality Council are working together to continue raising profile of need to report and supporting victims.

The Racial Harassment Group was not part of the original project application and grew out of an identified need from working with clients early on in the project development

Integration Activities

The number of activities increased towards the end of the project with, for example, the summer trips organised with Time Bank during 2005 (Dove Dale, Conkers and Skegness). Such trips were a great success in bringing together clients with participants involved in the Time Bank project.

The project also worked with Time Bank on training some participants to work with its clients as volunteer buddies. Whilst for most of the clients this came too late in the project when the level of need was much lower than

when they first arrived, for one client this has proved an invaluable source of emotional and practical support.

Whilst integration is a key aspect and theme flowing throughout the project the team did not have funding set aside within our budget for such activities and had to ask NDC for permission to run these activities.

Derwent Zambezi

By far the most significant development of the Projects work is the mixed nationality community group Zambezi. Zambezi has achieved independent funding for some activities and has developed a choir who performs at many local events and four football teams. Zambezi are at an exciting stage in their development now and the project has been supporting the group to apply for funding to employ a worker and develop further community led activities. This work is likely to take on a citywide focus and highlights the potential and importance of this type of cross-community work.

Zambezi is a central and core aspect of the work of the project, however again it was not envisaged at the start of the project and therefore no outcomes relate to this development.

D. Lessons learnt – what would we have done differently?

As already outlined there have been various challenges to this project, many of which have been unavoidable. The punitive and often hostile environment in which asylum seekers and refugees live in the UK mean that the staff are often positioned in a place where they have to defend their client group or counter negativity and myths. Fortunately, Derwent has been in the main very welcoming.

Refugee Action made a conscious effort at the start of the project to be very low key but to also inform the community about their presence, and their work by quite literally knocking on doors to let the local community know what was going on. This has worked very well and to date there has been no hostility or aggression against project staff or clients visiting the project.

The team has learnt that it is always advisable to have project management for at least the day-to-day running of the project, and the supervision of staff on-site rather than remotely. This seems rather obvious and of course when the resources are available this is always preferable but its importance cannot be stated enough.

Staff continuity will always have an effect on the project, and the fact that the Community Link Worker, and to a lesser extent the Project Manager have been a constant presence throughout has been very positive in retaining that history and project memory. The experience of the project has reiterated to the team the importance of partnership working with funders, and other agencies and organizations in the area, and in the city, and with working with host communities and refugees and asylum seekers themselves. Without this partnership approach the project would not have achieved its aims.

By communicating with stakeholders and having the opportunity for them to advise the team at their quarterly steering group meetings, it has been possible to find out how the project is perceived on the ground, and therefore become knowledgeable about what it could be doing better. The project has learnt of the importance of being flexible in approach and having the ability to respond to changes and needs.

Originally the team did not envisage the energy and time that would be involved in setting up the racial harassment steering group, or the capacity building work that it would do with Derwent Zambezi to assist them develop and grow, or the support to the external consultant, and the steering group, to undertake mapping research in Derby as part of the project’s exit strategy. The team also felt it was important to ensure they evaluated the project not only at the end but at least part way through so they could listen to what their clients and stakeholders were saying about the project and respond in enough time to make a difference. The team feels it has done this but the process has been challenging, balancing the need to deliver project services with the need to capture what has been achieved and to disseminate this as widely as possible to benefit others.

Setting up a project from scratch, staff changes and issues within the staff team, problems with securing office space, delivering a project that is not only new to the area but a new way of working for an established organization with standard policies and procedures has been challenging but also exciting and rewarding. The project team has learnt how to work better with host communities, learnt how to balance the needs of the project with the wider needs of the team and the agency. Yes some things probably would have been done differently but then it would not have been so much fun!

Future Projects of this kind should ensure that:

- > The criteria for employing the Community Link Worker is a lot tighter without being overly restrictive. I.e there needs to be a baseline at which candidates must be able to demonstrate their ability to carry out the tasks required, and be able to undertake a period of study and learning with the necessary support. This is crucial for the post holder to be able to progress sufficiently in a relatively short period of time.
- > There needs to be better communication between the funder and Refugee Action at the start of the project in terms of financial requirements, and this needs to be ongoing preferably with face-to-face meetings at suitable intervals so project managers and staff are aware of their responsibilities and any issues or problems can be forecasted and dealt with swiftly. This is often difficult with complex arrangements for payments and recharges which not only involve NDC and Refugee Action, but Derby City Council as well.
- > Internally project managers and staff need to communicate better with the finance team at Refugee Action’s head office with perhaps one person in the finance team having overall knowledge of the funder’s requirements, and the needs of the project rather than the responsibility being shared among a staff team, many of whom do not have the authority or knowledge of the project to make decisions.
- > The project team must appoint one person who can take responsibility for the project and make day to day decisions who is based on site. This person should also have supervisory responsibility for the other staff and volunteers.

E. Summary of Recommendations for future work in Derby city

Refugee Action, in partnership with Refugee Housing Association, commissioned an external consultant, Sheila Fox, to carry out a piece of research mapping the availability of services for Refugees and asylum seekers in Derby as part of this projects' exit strategy. The full report will be launched in Derby in February 2006 and the report will be available from Refugee Action's office in Stockwell and Refugee Housing Association's office in Derby.

The main findings were as follows:

1. **A one Stop Service for Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Derby providing advice, capacity building and signposting.**
2. **A full-time advice service as a priority with additional projects later, subject to resources. Stand-alone, neighbourhood-based projects only address some of the issues and are able to support a minority of people and can in fact cause resentment.**
3. **Capacity building support for the new and emerging RCO's in the city.**
4. **Support for new Refugees in accessing and maintaining local authority and private accommodation.**
5. **Accessing external funds additional to core Home Office funds and exploring the possibility of developing social enterprises with RCO's and other support groups, and other area based regeneration schemes.**
6. **Development of a specific Refugee Women's project in partnership with others already providing services on the ground.**
7. **A response to addressing the issue of destitution among failed Asylum Seekers in Derby.**
8. **An information project to disseminate information to individuals and agencies with an interest in Refugee and Asylum Seeking issues**
9. **A co ordinated awareness raising project including training to voluntary and statutory staff**

Contact details

Refugee Action Offices

Nottingham Office

for advice and support to asylum seekers and access to the Refugee Awareness Project

Refugee Action
Albion House
3rd floor, 5-13 Canal Street
Nottingham, NG1 7EG
Tel: 0115 941 8552
Fax: 0115 950 9980

Leicester Office

Contact details for Community Development Officer for East Midlands, **Mo Odifa**, and Development and Integration Manager, **Gail Pringle** (Project Manager)

Refugee Action
Chancery House
Millstone Lane
Leicester, LE1 5JN
Tel: 0116 261 6200
Fax: 0116 261 6226

London Office

For further copies of this report and copies of "Filling the Gaps", please contact the Refugee Action Stockwell office

Refugee Action
240a Clapham Road
London, SW9 0PZ
Tel: 0207 735 5361
Fax: 0207 587 3676

Other

Gersh Subhra has been involved in the community and youth work field for over 25 years and taught Community and Youth Work Studies at the University of Derby since 1993. He can be contacted at:

Faculty of Education, Health and Sciences
University of Derby
Chevin Ave
Mickleover
Derby
DE3 5GX

01332 592156/592009
v.subhra@derby.ac.uk

Derwent Zambezi Launch Party

By Emille Thomas

On Saturday 28th December over 30 local residents and agency members came together for the launch party of the Derwent Zambezi Association. The event took place at St Adams Church Hall and people from across the community had a fantastic time, that included dancing to African music and sampling African cuisine.

Time Bank and Refugee Action promote

The night was an excellent opportunity to discover different cultures in Derwent and was the first of a series of events planned for November. The Laophis Swatch this year will be held on...

The night was an excellent opportunity to discover different cultures in Derwent and was the first of a series of events planned for November. The Laophis Swatch this year will be held on...

Community event celebrates our

Fun day out for refugees

A COMMUNITY
group is hosting a special event this weekend to celebrate the culture of refugees and anyone who wishes to...

by Katie Sandell



REFUGEE ACTION DERWENT PROJECT



Getting in Touch

If you would like to join please contact FMOU

Alternatively you can
Mailbox on 01238 7433

Derwent Zambezi
110 Derwent Road
11 St Marks Road
Derwent, DERB

Everyone is