

# Our Health in Our Hands



Case studies of  
voluntary groups  
working towards a  
healthier Redbridge

November 2016



RedbridgeCVS 

**NHS**  
**Redbridge**  
**Clinical Commissioning Group**

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# Introduction

Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations are usually established in response to an unmet need where public or private sector interventions have not fully understood or met the needs of local people. A recent review of the role of the VCS in health and social care says that

“The VCS sector has a consistent track record of working in that way: holistic, long term, relational and locally-rooted. With over 35,000 charities working in the health and social care sectors, plus at least 10,000 more social enterprises, and tens of thousands more unregistered community groups operating below the radar, the VCSE sector can reach the whole community, think whole person and act whole lifetime.”

VCS organisations in Redbridge contribute greatly towards improving the health and wellbeing of their members – as well as reducing health inequalities. The sector is known for its diversity and flexibility, and develops services to meet real needs. In addition, voluntary groups help in achieving public health targets by engaging communities on illness prevention and self-management of health conditions as well as adopting healthy lifestyles.

A recently completed research report commissioned by the Richmond Group of Charities shows that charities can add value to the health and care system in a range of ways and have a legitimate role in the transformation of the NHS and the wider health and care system in the coming years. The research showed that:

- Charities can deliver strong health and wellbeing outcomes for patients and do so in a way that is either more cost-effective to the system, incurs no additional cost or which helps the health and care system to run more smoothly.
- Charities are not just a mechanism for delivery, they can also make a powerful contribution to the way services and systems are designed.
- Charities not only help individuals through one-to-one relationships, but they also help systems to function more effectively by innovating and gifting new models and approaches, and integrating actors from across institutions, sectors and pathways.
- Charities live up to the promise of operating across institutional boundaries – helping people in settings ranging from village halls to hospitals, tackling a wide range of needs, and offering support to help people stay safe and healthy after discharge from hospital, to enabling people to stay out of hospital in the first place, to caring for people in a place of their choosing at the end of their lives.

I am delighted to present the fifth edition of *Our Health in Our Hands*, which gives inspiring examples of how local communities have taken ownership of promoting and maintaining a healthy lifestyle amongst their members. It includes case studies of nine Redbridge community and voluntary sector groups working on a range of issues and with different communities, including physical wellbeing, mental health, learning disability, physical disability, social isolation and carers.

The purpose of this document is to help Redbridge NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Public Health and Social Care professionals have a glimpse of some of the services offered by the voluntary and community sector in Redbridge and how they impact on improving the health and wellbeing of local communities. It will give them an opportunity to think more about ways they can work with the voluntary sector.

The last four editions of *Our Health in Our Hands* have been well received and generated a great deal of interest amongst NHS colleagues and GPs. Many of the groups have received visits from Redbridge Clinical Commissioning Group's Lay Member for Patient and Public Engagement, Patient and Public Engagement Advisor and/or their Clinical Director for Engagement. As a result of these visits, groups have been linked to strategic discussions on a range of health issues being undertaken by Redbridge CCG and Public Health Redbridge on diabetes, cancer, learning disabilities and mental health as well as work around the possible future development of a cross-borough "Accountable Care Organisation". I hope this document will lead to more joined-up working between Redbridge Clinical Commissioning Group and the voluntary sector to achieve the common goals of illness prevention, improvement in clinical outcomes and greater patient satisfaction.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ross Diamond', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**Ross Diamond**

Chief Executive Officer, RedbridgeCVS  
November 2016

**More information**

If you need any more information about the groups mentioned in this document or any of the hundreds of voluntary and community groups working on health in Redbridge, please email

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# AWAAZ (Voice of Women)

## Redbridge Education and Social Welfare Support Group

### Introduction and brief history

AWAAZ Redbridge Education AND Social Welfare Support Group is a registered charity founded in 2002 by Bushra Tahir. The founder set up AWAAZ from her own experience recovering from depression to help others in a similar situation. AWAAZ was set up because there was a need to provide support to women in the local community affected by domestic violence and social isolation.

Over the last 14 years, AWAAZ has implemented a range of different projects to support women of all ages and ethnic backgrounds.



Awaaz works in partnership with multiple agencies working on community safety and racial equality, including Redbridge Council, NHS Redbridge, Healthwatch Redbridge, carers and other community and voluntary groups in the borough.

### Description of the organisation's activities

#### ■ Parents Up

A social research project on understanding the perceptions of the parents on gang and knife crime. This project is in continuation of a previous exploratory study done by AWAAZ to understand young girls' perspectives on gang and knife crime.

#### ■ Mental Health

A community mobilisation project, which provides women with a safe space, support sessions and one to one counselling to understand and handle their mental health issues.

#### ■ Women's Health

A project that addresses the needs of women who have been victims of violence and require health and care services for immediate response to domestic violence.

#### ■ IT classes for Beginners

2 hour IT classes in the morning and afternoons are offered from Monday to Fridays

#### ■ Drop-in Sessions

Every Wednesday, drop-in sessions are offered to members who have a chance to socialise with each other and have lunch from 12pm to 3pm. Members are also involved in knitting as it helps them keep occupied and helps with movement of hands for those affected by arthritis.

#### ■ Keep Fit Classes

Every Saturday, members are offered Bollywood dance classes from 10.30am to 11.30am.

- **Information, Advice, Signposting**

Information, advice, guidance and signposting services are also offered to members

- **Outings for Service Users and their Families**

## What are the aims and objectives of the organisation?

To provide quality services and empower women from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities to help them improve their overall health and well-being.

### Benefits for service users

- AWAAZ provides support to its members affected by mental health, domestic violence and social isolation
- It enables members to meet other like-minded women and develop friendships
- Improved skills and knowledge
- Improved mental and health wellbeing
- Increased confidence and independence



### Benefits for NHS and social care services

AWAAZ promotes physical, mental and social wellbeing of its members thereby reducing pressure on local NHS and social care services.

## How does the organisation know that it is achieving its aim and objectives?

AWAAZ gathers feedback about its services from its members to ensure that it is meeting its aims and objectives. In addition, AWAAZ collects case studies of services users who have benefitted from its services.

The work of AWAAZ has been recognised locally as well as nationally – the organisation has won the following awards:

- 2010: Women of the Year Award from University of East London
- 2011: Queen's Award for Voluntary service
- 2012: Redbridge Community Award (Community Stalwart category)
- 2013: Volunteer of the Year Award (PaVSP, RedbridgeCVS and Volunteer Centre Redbridge)
- 2013: Mayor of Redbridge Community Award (Caring Category)
- 2014: Volunteer of the Year Award (PaVSP, RedbridgeCVS and Volunteer Centre Redbridge)
- 2015: Mayor of Redbridge Community Award (Caring Category)



- 2016: Mayor of Redbridge Community Award (Make Redbridge Safer place to live)

## Way ahead

AWAAZ plans to continue providing a platform for the vulnerable and marginalised community towards a society that is free from discrimination and inequity.

## Contact details

### Address

Loxford Children's Centre  
136-138 Ilford Lane  
Ilford  
IG1 2LG

### Website

<http://awaaz.org.uk/>

# Lambourne End Centre

## Food for Thought Project

### Introduction and brief history

Lambourne End Centre is a fantastic 54 acre classroom offering a unique blend of activities, farm-based studies and environmental learning. The Centre helps young people to build confidence, raise self-esteem, generate a sense of achievement, develop team work and improve their communication skills. It has been in use since the 1930s and more recently saw Aston-Mansfield team up with Forest, City and Hornsey YMCAs to create Lambourne End Ltd.

The Food for Thought Project began in 2011 with a 3-year grant from the Lottery Fund. The money was used to physically build the garden areas. During this time the framework of the project was developed and awareness of it raised in the community. Since 2014 the project has grown and developed and now covers three large allotment-style areas which allows the project to provide gardening sessions for over 30 people each week.

### Description of the activities/projects

The Food for Thought project is a great opportunity for people with special educational needs, poor mental health or low confidence to develop their knowledge and skills in growing food. It is of particular value to people who need a supportive environment and it offers an alternative practical environment for people to gain confidence, skills and knowledge, enabling them to progress onto accredited courses, further training, independent volunteering or work. The focus is on food growing and using organic and permaculture principles, and we encourage discussions about healthy lifestyle and the pros and cons of different options. Food For Thought is a project working with and supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, helping them to learn new skills, keep fit and make friends. Participants usually attend 1-2 days a week. The project is open 50 weeks of the year.

### Need for setting up the project

Research by the National Care Farming Initiative shows horticultural activity is vital in providing well rounded care to people suffering from poor health and wellbeing. "Green Care" is recognised as a useful alternative therapy that supports healing by promoting happiness, peace and gratification. It is also helpful for relieving stress, and assisting in the general wellbeing of those suffering from physical and psychological disabilities. What's more, there is something to suit everyone no matter how young or old, big or small, fit or infirm.





## What are the aims and objectives of the project?

The project aims to engage people in meaningful activities such as nurturing plants, harvesting fruit and learning some simple cooking. It helps to teach people where their food comes from and encourages them to understand and manage their own physical and mental health. This improves their resilience and confidence to manage their life events and make appropriate choices. It helps people develop more confidence, self-worth, independence and pre-work life skills as well as aid general health and wellbeing. Participants are encouraged to take an active role in decision making which ultimately assists with their integration into society.

The Food for Thought Project addresses disadvantage due to:

- being NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training)
- being statemented due to a disability
- poverty
- poor mental health
- being social drug users
- having unstable backgrounds
- being a carer
- being overweight
- suffering bullying

This can lead to low achievement, challenging behaviour and lack of motivation, ultimately resulting in being excluded from school, lacking skills to gain meaningful employment or getting into trouble with the law. Those affected fall out of the system lacking confidence, self-belief and motivation.

## Benefits for service users

The project inspires vulnerable people to fulfil their potential and explore the way they view themselves and the world around them. Many of the people the project works with each year struggle in mainstream environments due to disability, special needs or poor educational achievement. The project moves them away from destructive behaviour and re-engages them with positive activities to raise their aspirations, inspire them to fulfil their potential and ultimately improve their life satisfaction.

Being active in the fresh air, learning about healthy foods and engaging in teamwork doing meaningful tasks boosts feelings of self-worth and improves general health – people feel good.

Participants will be equipped with skills to:

- feel good about themselves
- keep active through physical exercise of gardening
- tackle obesity
- understand about healthy eating
- have the motivation to achieve more
- communicate more effectively
- make their own, informed decisions
- reflect on and manage their behaviour
- deal with conflict in a more positive way

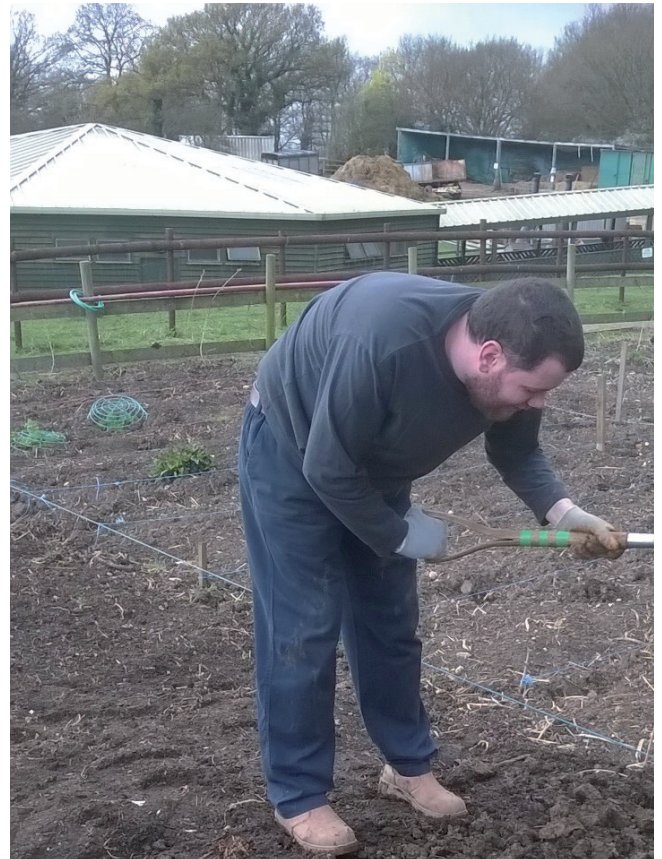
- cope better under stress
- take a more active part in family or community life

These benefits will become noticeable during their placement and continue throughout their lives, increasing their independence and influencing everyone they come into contact with. They will feel more able to achieve their potential, live a longer life and bring value to their communities

## Benefits for NHS and social care services

The project promotes physical, mental and social health.

- **Physical**  
increases range of motion, improves fine motor skills, tones under-used muscles, improves coordination and balance, increases muscular strength.
- **Mental**  
increases independence, self-esteem, observation skills, provides choices and ability to use problem solving skills, encourages creativity, provides outlet for stress, anger and emotions.
- **Social**  
opportunity to interact with others, commitment to a living thing, cooperation and team working skills, dealing with success and failure, provides an environment to learn and be inspired by others.



## How does the organisation know that it is achieving its aim and objectives?

Experience allows us to fine-tune the project to maximise learning, development and enjoyment at a level suitable for those taking part. The same staff members work with individuals each session to develop relationships where they can feel comfortable expressing themselves. This also develops social and communication skills. The project has a continuous cycle of feedback through photographs, diary writing and informal/formal meetings with individuals and family. This is recorded onto a database and analysed to provide monitoring information which can be distributed to families and funders.

We engage various stakeholders to identify needs and design the project to suit and continue to consult them at networking events to help evaluate the project and report on outcomes.

The project team are engaged in a partnership with Essex University and as such an independent Occupational Therapist is working with groups to monitor and evaluate progress, producing case studies with permission.

## Lessons Learnt and the Way Ahead

Gardening is good for the body and therapeutic for the soul. Creating a tranquil green space has a calming effect on the mind. Throughout the ages, gardens of all varieties

have been revered as places of tranquillity and peace where one can escape, reflect and rejuvenate. The Food for Thought Project works with people with that in mind.

Food for Thought is an attractive care option to enable participants to enjoy good health, wellbeing and healthier lifestyles. These benefits will continue throughout their lives, increasing their independence and influencing those around them. They will feel more able to achieve their potential, live a fulfilled life and bring value to their communities. The project has established great relationships with referral agencies and continues to grow in reputation. We are broadening the funding base and as such engaging more people weekly. As personal budgets become more widespread, the project will work towards becoming fully sustainable. The project also provides a stepping stone towards other opportunities both on- and off-site to which we can signpost. The Project now offers the opportunity to study for a Level 1 City and Guilds Land Based Studies qualification.

The variety of users also continues to diversify as we hold open garden sessions for the public. Our aspiration is to build a training café on-site run by supported volunteers using produce to prepare meals and in turn create more income.

## Contact

### Address

Manor Road  
Lambourne End  
RM4 1NB

### Phone

020 8500 3047

### Website

[www.lambourne-end.org.uk](http://www.lambourne-end.org.uk)



# Muslim Women's Welfare Association

## Background and history

The Muslim Women's Welfare Association (MWWA) was founded in 1987 by local women concerned about the lack of support available for Muslim women and their families in Redbridge and neighbouring areas. The issues which prompted the creation of MWWA remain equally relevant today. Many Asian women lead very isolated lives and have very few opportunities to develop and be included as a valued member of the community. MWWA's services are open to all women, regardless of faith, colour or creed. Services are used by women from a variety of faith groups.

MWWA has run a number of successful projects in the past which have included ESOL classes, dressmaking, computer classes, parenting skills programme, yoga and keep fit activities and many others. The organisation's current activities are run at several venues across East London to reach out women in their local areas. MWWA has also developed special projects to contribute towards greater inter-cultural understanding, building on skills and talents of our services users.

## Description of the organisation's activities and projects

- MWWA offers one-to-one support to the women and also signposts them to the relevant services.
- **Yoga Sessions**  
are organised at various venues as below:
  - Group 1: Cardinal Heenan Centre, Ilford every Tuesday from 11.00 -12.00
  - Group 2: St. John's Church Hall, Seven Kings every Monday from 1.30 – 2.30
- **Ladies Club**  
This club runs on every Tuesday after the yoga sessions. MWWA organises health talks on various diseases e.g. diabetes, strokes, breast cancer, bowel cancer, brain health, depression etc. every year from 12 noon to 1 pm as well as providing an opportunity to get involved in knitting and crocheting skills, embroidery, flower workshop and organising meals in the evening. MWWA offers ladies basic IT skills through computer classes. MWWA also serves hot and freshly prepared meals for the ladies at from 1-2 p.m.
- **Loxford Allotment**  
MWWA grows vegetables on their allotment plot. They harvest vegetables like courgettes, potatoes and runner beans and use the vegetables they grow to prepare hot meals for their members. MWWA's members are very pleased to eat freshly picked vegetable curry and it is cost effective.
- **Heritage Project (Coming Together)**  
"Coming Together" explores the



similarities and differences of culture and heritage between people of Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage who live in the London Borough of Redbridge. In the last ten years, Bangladeshis have moved from London's East End to Redbridge and now live alongside an established Pakistani community. Bangladesh was formed in 1971 after a war between West and East Pakistan and so the two communities have historic ties. MWWA plans to map the process of suburbanisation and discover the history of the two groups in the local area.



- In addition, MWWA also organises celebration of festivals like Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha and day trips for its members

## Aims of the Muslim Women's Welfare Association

- Assist women and their children in becoming more involved in the local community
- Relieve isolation and its effects on physical and mental health wellbeing
- Support women in expanding their networks of support
- Support women in building on existing talents and skills and in developing new ones
- Improve opportunities for employment and economic independence
- Assist women in making more informed decision-making in their lives
- Support women in becoming more self-reliant and independent and grow in confidence and self-esteem

## Benefits for users

- Improved physical and mental health well being
- Increase independent living skills
- Increased self-esteem and self-worth
- Reduced social isolation
- Service user makes changes that make a positive difference in their lives
- Service user learns new skills, basic IT skills, dressmaking, flower arrangement
- Service users' self-esteem and self-worth increases, which will make a positive change in their lives and would relieve them of depression and isolation



## Benefits for NHS and social care services

- Yoga sessions and keep fit sessions are reducing obesity, lessening the burden on NHS and helping local people to become healthier
- MWWA's Loxford allotment offers therapeutic sessions which enhances members' mental health

- Providing health talks for services users by inviting the relevant organisations brings savings to NHS resources as the project helps in early identification of symptoms that need further care or treatment

## How does the organisation know that it is achieving its aim and objectives?

MWWA seeks regular feedback from its members and partners. New members coming to join the organisation is a clear indicator that the organisation has a good reputation in the local community. MWWA's management committee is made of women from the community it serves.

### Way ahead

- Increase number of members accessing MWWA's services by publicising through leaflets
- Increase self-sufficiency of the project by charging its service users a nominal fee
- Increase joint working approach with other health, social care services and other organisations.

## Contact details

### Project Manager

Shahida Sarwar

### Address

Cardinal Heenan Centre  
326 High Road  
Ilford  
IG1 1QP

### Office phone

020 8215 4949

### Website

[www.mwwa.co.uk](http://www.mwwa.co.uk)

# Redbridge Bengali Association

## Introduction and brief history

Redbridge Bengali Association (RBA) was set up in 1996 and was registered as a charity and company limited by guarantee in 1997. RBA's constitution provides a platform in the form of a social club for the people within the local community, especially those of Bangladeshi origin. Although the name RBA suggests the group is a Bengali organisation, the constitution allows membership from any and all ethnic groups. At one point, a little over 50 members from the Sri Lankan community joined the RBA yoga activities and then went on to create their own community group. Unfortunately, due to the social and employment structure within the UK, many younger members do not find the time to become fully involved with RBA. Nonetheless, past experience has shown that those with more time available to them were able to attend and to enjoy the facilities provided by the RBA in order to recharge their batteries.



AGM, 2016

RBA was initially activated with the support and help of National Lottery as well as Redbridge Council funding. Over the years, as it became difficult to obtain community funding, RBA restructured its financing and continued its activities on a more limited scale and was reliant on self-finance. As a self-financed community group, the RBA members pay £10 as a yearly membership fee, which contributes towards the organisation's management costs. The number of members varies from year to year, but largely remains between 150 and 170 people, of which 52 are life members at present. Life members have paid a set amount for the rest of their life and do not need to pay the annual membership fee.

RBA accepts associate members from any other boroughs within the UK as guest members. However, according to its constitution, only residents of the London Borough of Redbridge have a right to vote and elect the 13-member Executive Committee and make any amendments to the RBA's internal policy. RBA's Executive Committee members hold their posts for a two year term, and are responsible for holding the group's Annual General Meeting every year.

To secure its future, the RBA's current Executive Committee has created a reserve fund that cannot be used without the consent of the majority of RBA general members voting at the AGM or a Special GM. This shows the democratic nature of the group and the need for RBA general members to be in control when making decisions that affect the community.

## Description of the organisation's activities/projects

### ■ Shebaloy

This luncheon club is organised as a drop-in session every Thursday from 12 noon to 3pm at St George's Church, Woodford Avenue, Ilford, IG2 6XQ. The main purpose of Shebaloy is to have a centre where members, especially the older generation,



can socialise freely to maintain a social network which is essential for the health and well-being and to reduce social isolation amongst members. One of the key aims of Shebaloy is to encourage those who do not leave their homes very much to come out and engage with different people in a different setting. Members engage in talks, sharing local community information and personal news, reading newspapers, magazines, playing table games such as cards and board games, and taking part in various physical keep-fit tasks. These are followed by a hot meal, which is cooked on site, and currently served at a cost of £4 per meal.

#### ■ **Knowledge Forum**

Once a month Shebaloy extends for an extra hour to hold what is known as the Knowledge Forum, where speakers are invited from within and outside the community to give talks on various topics. This is organised with the aim of sharing knowledge and information on any topic such as health, social care, banking and financial management, inheritance and will making, religion, history or philosophy. Group interaction and questions to speakers are always encouraged. Members' engagement through the Knowledge Forum encourages their sense of curiosity and gaining knowledge.

#### ■ **Medical Seminars**

When possible, medical seminars have been held on topics of relevance and of interest to RBA members. In the past, topics covered are different type of cancers, dementia etc. and the seminars have been well attended. Unfortunately, a lack of funding has made it difficult to arrange similar seminars recently.

#### ■ **Celebration of Events**

RBA organises celebrations of cultural events such as the Bengali New Year, the Queen's 90th Birthday, Eid and RBA's annual dinner. Celebration of important events not only gives the community a source of recreation, but also strengthens community cohesion.

#### ■ **Fund Raising**

Although RBA itself is a charitable organisation, in autumn 2015 RBA fund-raised and donated a total of £880 to the Cumbria Flood Appeal in support of those affected by the floods.

#### ■ **Day Trips and Holidays**

RBA arranges day trips within the UK as well as overseas for its members. Some members of RBA are unable to visit such places without the framework of a group that arranges things for them and these trips are almost always over-subscribed.



Overseas trip to Jordan and Syria

## **What are the aims and objectives of the organisation?**

The main aim of RBA is to make a change and a real difference in the lives of the majority of its members in a way that will improve their quality of life.

RBA's objectives are:

- To improve the quality of the lives of Bengalis and others economically and socially through the advancement of education and research, and provision of assistance and resources both financial as well as advisory.
- To help provide the elderly and disadvantaged Bengali population and others with

community-based facilities such as care service, nursing facilities, day trips and outings, a luncheon/recreation club, advice on community health care facilities including day care centres geared to their specific culturally sensitive needs, and places of worship, including reducing social isolation so as to improve their quality of life.

## Benefits of the organisation for users

RBA as an organisation becomes a platform for the community, which enables members to highlight the community's needs so that these can be fulfilled.

- Members are able to socialise with other people from their community leading to reducing social isolation.
- Members are able to obtain useful information and advice on various topics.

## Benefits for NHS and social care services

RBA activities help in reducing the burden on the local NHS and Social Services by providing physical and mental health wellbeing activities as well as information about prevention of health problems and how to access local services when needed. The vast majority of the work done by the RBA is aimed at reducing social isolation, which makes a real difference in the lives of growing elderly population.

## How does the organisation know that it is achieving its aims and objectives?

Members are able to give their feedback about services offered by the RBA through the Executive Committee as well as the AGM. Members make suggestions about future activities and information they would like to have provided, and these are incorporated in RBA's activities when possible. In fact, the RBA has sustained itself for 20 years with little external funding and has grown in membership with people not only from Redbridge but people from other boroughs becoming members. This clearly indicates that its members really value the services offered by the group.

### Lessons learnt

- The RBA always needs to be transparent and fair to all its members (maintaining equality to all and privilege to none) and obtain continuous feedback to update its services.
- RBA has shown itself capable of handling large sums of funding, and understands the importance of good and transparent financial management.
- RBA is a young organisation and needs to be forward-thinking to improve and develop the quality of services it offers to its members.



Group members with Wes Streeting MP

## Way ahead and future plans

- RBA hopes to increase the hours and days of present weekly service provided to members through Shebaloy.
- RBA hopes to promote and establish a Community Day Care Service of its own to

serve the increasing ageing population in partnership with external support and social funding groups.

- RBA hopes to find ways to obtain a centrally-accessible centre of its own with parking facilities (through social/community lease) where it can provide services for its members based on their needs.

## Contact details

### Key Contact Person

Mr. Jehangir Alam – Chairperson Redbridge Bengali Association

### Address

St George's Church  
Woodford Avenue  
Ilford  
IG2 6XQ

### Email

j.alam500@yahoo.co.uk

### Contact number

07708 140206



# Redbridge Gujarati Welfare Association

## Introduction and brief history

Redbridge Gujarati Welfare Association (RGWA) is a registered charity for predominantly Gujarati-speaking Asian elders. Initially known as Redbridge Gujarati Welfare Centre, it was started in 1993 by a small group of friends who came from East Africa. They used to meet at each other's houses for tea and to play cards to pass the time. As time passed by, more elderly people joined in and soon they were looking for a larger venue to accommodate increasing number of members. In 1995 they successfully applied for a Council grant and were established as a charity in their current format. With the aid of a grant they were able to rent a church hall on Ilford Lane where they are currently based.

As the Centre became more popular, another association of Gujarati-speaking elderly people (the Gujarati Senior Citizen Welfare Association) requested to join with them. On 10 March 2004 the two groups merged under the new name Redbridge Gujarati Welfare Association, as the group is currently known.

RGWA is hugely popular within the Gujarati community of Redbridge and neighbouring boroughs and has steadily grown over the years from a few members to 570. Like any other charity, RGWA is governed by the rules and regulations set by the Charity Commission.



Exercise group

## Description of the organisation's activities

Members of RGWA meet three times a week on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays between 12 noon to 3pm at a rented hall in Methodist Church, Ilford Lane, Ilford for meetings and various cultural activities. The programme commences with prayers followed by religious hymns and songs which is supported by background music using harmonium and tabla (Indian musical instruments). This is followed by pre-arranged talks or presentations from invited speakers from different organisations like the Council, Age UK, RedbridgeCVS, NHS, the Metropolitan Police Service and various other groups. These cover wide range of topics like dementia, mental health, diabetes, hypertension, misuse of alcohol and drugs, effects of smoking on health, and safety and security. On occasions there are debates on various topics affecting the lives of RGWA's members: these topics are selected by its members. There is also a card club for members who prefer to come and pass their time playing cards. Every Wednesdays RGWA has an hourly session of yoga classes to help improve the health of its members. To supplement this they also have a session of exercise classes on Fridays in the form of Bhangra dances which has proved very popular with members. Every year RGWA organises a number of outings and trips for its members.

## Need for the organisation

Redbridge is a multicultural borough with a large Asian population from East Africa and the Indian subcontinent. It was realised earlier on that large number of Gujarati-speaking

senior citizens who predominantly arrived from East Africa did not have a place where they could socialise and freely discuss any problems or issues they may have. RGWA provides a meeting place for elderly Asian people to socialise and gives them an opportunity to learn and benefit from various topics relating to their health, safety, security and wellbeing in general in the language they can understand and in which they feel confident to discuss issues.



Yoga

## What are the aims and objectives of the organisation?

- To provide a day centre and recreational facilities to elderly Asian, predominantly Gujarati people in the borough of Redbridge
- To provide social stimulation, interaction, general information and advice to users meeting their linguistic, social, emotional and practical needs with particular regard to those having physical and sensory disabilities
- To facilitate the communication, interpretation and translation needs of the members
- To enable Gujarati community elders to lead as full and active life as possible and to enable them to make friends

## Benefits of the organisation for the users

RGWA provides a wide range of activities and support services to meet the needs of Gujarati speaking elders in Redbridge and neighbouring boroughs. These elders, who would otherwise feel trapped indoors, have a social meeting place and a place to come and discuss in confidence any issues relating their general wellbeing.

- RGWA meets three times a week at a location in the heart of Ilford, hence providing easy access to most members.
- RGWA provides hot meals to the users after the programme, a huge benefit to those members who are unable to cook for themselves.
- RGWA removes language barriers as the organisation can provide members with support in the language they need.
- RGWA provides service users with a venue to come and socialise and make new friends.
- RGWA undertakes visits to hospitals or care homes to meet members who have been unfortunate enough to have been in these institutions for long periods.
- RGWA regularly invites speakers from the Council, NHS and other voluntary organisations covering a wide range of topics affecting members' wellbeing. This hugely benefits the members, helping them clarify their understanding and giving them an opportunity to ask questions in the language they can understand.

## Benefits for the NHS and social care services

RGWA regularly invites guest speakers from the NHS and Redbridge voluntary sector like RedbridgeCVS and Age UK, providing users with vital information on health and safety. Large numbers of elderly people are affected by conditions like diabetes and blood pressure.

Making the group's users aware of the symptoms of these dangerous conditions helps them to change and improve their lifestyle, and in turn improve their health and general wellbeing. This in turn helps to reduce pressure on NHS and social services.

## How does the organisation know that it is achieving its aim and objectives ?

- RGWA carries out a feedback survey of its members to ensure that it meets their expectations and invite suggestions for future improvements.
- Talks on health issues like dementia, diabetes and hypertension are arranged on regular basis with speakers from the Council and NHS with a view to improve awareness amongst our members. This has helped number of RGWA's members in changing their lifestyle to prevent onset of these health conditions.
- Presentation on Bowel Cancer Screening twice this year has led to RGWA members responding positively to completing bowel cancer screening tests thereby supporting NHS in achieving its targets.
- Information and advice from guest speakers on various welfare benefits and pension benefits has helped number of RGWA members in understanding issues and becoming aware of help available in resolving problems if any.

### Lessons Learnt

Over its 23 year history, RGWA has grown from an occasional gathering of few friends to a large Community Organisation with current membership of 570 members and still growing. RGWA endeavours to make improvements to the operation of the organisation's activities by continually listening to the interest of its members and making relevant changes. This includes organising frequent outings during summer season, introduction of exercise classes for all members and inviting guest speakers from NHS and other voluntary organisations that provides valuable information on wellbeing of our members.

### Way Ahead

In addition to its current activities, RGWA plans to increase the exercise classes from one day to possibly two days as this has proved quite popular with the members and invite more guest speakers covering health topics. The organisation will also explore opportunities to raise funds to meet increasing costs.



### Contact details

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# Redbridge Music Lounge

## Introduction and brief history

The Redbridge Music Lounge (RML) was set up in 2010 and registered as a charity in March 2013. Our charitable objectives are: to promote maintain, improve and advance the education and appreciation of the public in the art of music. Redbridge Music Lounge was set up by retired teacher Chris Wyatt because he noticed there was nowhere for adults to get together to play and enjoy music

## Services offered

The core of our activity is a weekly network session where musicians and singers get together to play sing and enjoy music. These sessions take place at our base at the Cranbrook Centre, Melbourne Fields which is just inside Valentines Park.

RML's musicians and singers perform, on request, at community locations such as residential and sheltered homes for older people and also people with a wide variety of physical and mental disabilities. They also run sessions for isolated elders at RML's premises as well as in their own homes.



Rehearsal at the Cranbrook Centre

## Need for the project

Music provision for younger people is generally provided within the school environment and by the Redbridge Music School. However until recently there was nowhere for adults to get together and play and enjoy music. Lots of people played music in school and then put their instruments away, gathering dust. Many of those who attend the Redbridge Music Lounge have picked up their instruments again, often in their retirement, because the RML network sessions give them the opportunity to play and sing in a no-pressure environment with like-minded individuals. Redbridge Music Lounge also takes music into the community, providing people with an opportunity to enjoy music that they would not otherwise have.

## Aims of the organisation

The aim is to provide an environment for musicians and singers to come together to enjoy music and to improve their skills in a supportive and friendly environment, and also to bring music to the wider community through music performances in community locations and at festivals.

## Benefits for users

Above all else being involved with the Redbridge Music Lounge is fun, it provides members with a non pressurised environment to sing and play, enjoy themselves and improve their skills. Members are more engaged with their community, less isolated and enjoy better physical and mental health.

## Benefits for health and social care services

Keeping people engaged with their community reduces isolation which in turn helps to prevent depression. RML's performances in care homes improve the clients' mental and physical well being which reduces demand on health and social care services. Those attending RML's network sessions regain self-esteem and self-confidence which improves their sense of well being and in some cases has helped people to re-enter the job market.



Performing outside Redbridge Town Hall

## How does the organisation know that it is achieving its aims and objectives?

There is an opportunity for members to contribute to the way each network session is run both in terms of the musical content but also via a suggestion box. In terms of delivering music in community homes and festivals RML has a high number of requests for performances which means that people like engaging with music offered by RML.

## Lessons Learned and Way Ahead

The Redbridge Music Lounge sessions have considerable benefits for the health and welfare of those who attend. RML has learnt to facilitate the development of new performance groups who ultimately can operate outside the environment of RML but who also enrich the culture of the borough. RML has acquired its own premises, which provides members with the opportunity to have sessions more specifically tailored to their individual needs. The way ahead will be diverse but will be driven by members of RML.

## Contact Details

### Contact person

Chris Wyatt

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# Redbridge Respite Care Association

## Introduction and brief history

Redbridge Respite Care Association (RRCA) was set up as a charity in 1990 in order to provide support to people with mental health issues and their carers living in the London Borough of Redbridge. RRCA employs fully trained support workers who provide care and information tailored to people's needs, which includes support at home and a day centre for people living with dementia.

## Description of the organisation's activities

RRCA provides day care service for people with dementia and support at home for people with mental health issues and dementia for carers.

### Day Centre

- Open Monday to Saturday
- Opening times are 10am-4pm
- Caters for 8-9 people per day
- 2:1 staff ratio
- Nutritious food served daily
- Activities include games, quizzes, armchair exercises and walks to the local lake. Music, song and dance. Reminiscence, Cognitive Stimulation Therapy. Art and crafts.
- RRCA takes service users and carers to local restaurants
- Day trips to places of interest
- Monthly carers group to give extra support for carers



### Support at Home

- Following an initial assessment, support workers visit families at home to provide emotional and practical support
- RRCA promotes independence, health and well-being
- Support to access college courses, volunteering opportunities and paid work
- Information on welfare benefits
- Support to attend appointments
- As social inclusion is a high priority, RRCA encourages people to resume, or take up hobbies and interests

## Need for setting up the organisation

It is estimated by 2020 that Redbridge will have over 3000 people diagnosed with dementia. There is clearly a need for services in Redbridge to carry on giving support to people living with dementia and their carers.

## What are the aims and objectives of the organisation?

RRCA delivers a high quality service that is focused on increasing the choice, independence, health and wellbeing of carers and people they care for by providing flexible, responsive and person-centred support which meets the needs and wishes of each individual.



## Benefits for users

- Provides service users and carers with confidence
- Promotes activities which may reduce or delay the effects of dementia
- Improved health and wellbeing
- Promotes independence
- Support to overcome isolation and promoting friendships
- Improved quality of life

“Having a small group gives everyone attention and the staff are so lovely, listen without judgement and provide a wonderful atmosphere at events like Chinese New Year or Valentine’s Day, where everyone is involved in making decorations. It brings some normality to a confused world. The entire package is a light in a dark tunnel. Love the food too!”

**Carer, 2014**

“Your service really do provide respite for me, and a cheerful encounter for a lonely old man with dementia.”

**Service User 2014**

## How does the organisation know that it is achieving its aims and objectives?

RRCA ensures that all its activities and procedures are focused on achieving outcomes for carers and the cared-for people. This is achieved through continued use of a person-centred approach to deliver personalised services. Carers and cared for people are fully able to participate in the delivery of the service and are supported to make choices about how the service will best meet their needs and wishes.

RRCA has always operated a person-centred service which starts with an assessment where families are actively encouraged to describe what they want from the service. RRCA calls it the “magic wand” process. Families are told about the activities that RRCA can provide



whilst maintaining dignity, providing motivation, stimulation and promoting independence. Personal Care plans are created with carers and cared for people. These are regularly reviewed with service users so that RRCA can ensure that the service they provide is meeting their needs and wishes and is enabling carers and cared for people to achieve their identified outcomes.

RRCA has over 40 service users that attends the daycentre weekly and it supports over 35 carers and service users in the community weekly.

## **Lessons learnt and the way ahead**

Caring for someone who is dealing with dementia or mental health problems can be very challenging and stressful. The needs of the cared-for often come before those of their carer – it's vital that RRCA works in partnership with both voluntary and statutory organisations, so that carers and service users receive the best possible care.

RRCA was recently awarded additional funding from London Borough of Redbridge to provide extra days for the day centre to be open, this has helped RRCA a lot in reducing its waiting list. Carers really appreciate the extra support; this helps them carry on their everyday life.

## **Contact Details**

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### **Website**

<http://redbridgerespitecare.co.uk/>

# Richmond Fellowship

## Introduction and brief history

Richmond Fellowship provides mental health recovery services for local authorities throughout the UK. In Redbridge, Richmond Fellowship have been at the forefront of change since 2010, modernising service provision to ensure that people have the best opportunities to make positive choices about the way they live their lives in the best way they can.

Richmond Fellowship's services in Redbridge consist of an Employment Team, helping people gain paid employment; Supported Housing projects, helping people gain the skills to live more independently; and Community Options, helping people to identify and achieve recovery. All services are based in the local community and are dedicated to developing and maintaining strong relationships with community partners.

## Description of projects

### Employment

Employment advisors holding an NVQ4 in Advice and Guidance, or equivalent, support clients on a one-to-one basis to stay in work or find new employment. The service offers:

- Vocational advice and guidance
- Support with job finding skills, CV writing, interview techniques
- Solution-based action planning
- Assessment of possible adaptations to the work place
- Guidance and information on mental health issues
- Information about benefits, or referral to relevant agencies
- Specialist information on employment legislation including the Equality Act
- Support for client/employee regarding their workplace – problem solving
- Signposting to other appropriate specialist agencies
- Vocational assessment, including training needs and availability
- Support in finding volunteering placements, if appropriate
- Advice and guidance for employers



Sailing training

Richmond Fellowship believes that its clients will have improved life chances by maintaining or finding employment, increasing their ability to address and reduce the impact their mental health issues have on their life.

The organisation works with local mental health services, health professionals, Volunteer Centres, JobCentre Plus, Citizens Advice Bureaux and any other relevant local agencies to ensure that each person who uses the service has support and opportunities tailored to meet their individual goals and requirements.

The service supports people to develop their independence and confidence – allowing them to explore their vocational potential, respecting their right to determine their own direction. Richmond Fellowship provides person-centred support that focuses on

solutions – working in partnership with clients to identify and develop skills and talents, making choices that improve their vocational opportunities. At all times the organisation acknowledges the individual’s capacity to direct their own growth and development.

## Supported Housing

Recovery Workers key-work individual clients, identify their individual support needs through a need assessment meeting and then work towards achieving set short and long term goals during regular one-to-one support sessions. They aim to promote independence, prompt individual clients to attend CPA meetings, provide support around medication and GP appointments, maintain boundaries, engage in activities in the community and develop a move on plan, etc.

Individuals co-produce move-on plans in conjunction with support plans. These familiarise individuals with the idea of living independently and ensure they have realistic expectations. Richmond Fellowship will support individuals to move on within two years with a move-on plan which:

- includes achievable steps to the transition to independent living
- has support hours that flexibly decrease over time
- identifies and addresses where there are any gaps in maintaining a tenancy
- involves the skilling for life activity programme e.g. tenant and landlord rights/responsibilities, dealing with rent arrears and paying bills
- supports people to build wider networks ensuring they have access to support in their community following move-on
- addresses all needs including substance use for example by linking in with specialist agencies such as Redbridge Drug and Alcohol service



Exchange event, July 2014

Another key to successful move-on will be access to personal budgets and grants such as Family Action’s Open Door Grant programme. This provides money for things such as study courses, suits for interviews, and tools for trade work.

In order for individuals to develop and maintain skills required to achieve successful move-on and increased independence, Richmond Fellowship supports people to:

- manage their mental health
- make and attend appointments independently
- self medicate
- eat healthily
- maintain physical health
- access education/employment/volunteering opportunities
- maintain tenancy
- re/build social and family networks
- access mainstream community

## Community Options

### ■ Link working

One-to-one support to help people identify recovery goals and the steps required

to achieve them. Emphasis is put on recognising the strengths and skills people have to help them gain independence. Help is given with developing confidence in using community resources to promote social inclusion. Regular meetings help with identifying and overcoming barriers to recovery.

#### ■ **Co-produced social activities**

- Women's group: a social meet up for women. Based at Community Options but with scope to visit community resources.
- Men's group: based at a local sports centre, a space offering men a chance to unwind and build social relationships
- Hearing voices group: peer led support group for people who hear voices and want to develop their understanding of their experience.

#### ■ **Confidence building activities**

- Sailing Project: based at Fairlop Waters, the sailing project offers people the opportunity to try something new that will challenge them but also build confidence and self-reliance.

#### ■ **Community opportunities**

- Community Options has developed strong links with local facilities such as Redbridge Institute, Positive East, British Heart Foundation and Vision in order to help people access activities and services that can help them in recovery
- Voluntary work

#### ■ **Peer support**

- One to one support from a peer with experience of personal recovery from mental health issues.

## **Need for organisation**

In 2011 an independent review of Redbridge Mental Health Day Services identified the need for change to the then current provision. Two main findings from the review were that “supported pathways from day services to mainstream services are underdeveloped” and that “day services should be focused on individual support that enables people to participate in community life and achieve their personal goals.”

## **Aims of the organisation**

To assist people in achieving wellbeing in their lives through promoting social inclusion, work/life balance, personal development and peer support.

Richmond Fellowship benefits from:

- over 50 years' experience in providing services
- diverse, well qualified staff
- diverse, experienced, multi-talented service users
- dedication to co-production and peer support

## **Benefits for Users**

- improved self-esteem and confidence
- improved social networks
- independence from mental health services

- opportunities to develop skills and confidence
- opportunities to try new education, recreational, cultural and social activities

## Benefits for NHS and Social Care Services

- Mental health providers know they have a reliable community based recovery service to which they can refer

## How does the organisation know its achieving its aim and objectives?

- The service is monitored by LBR through the submission of quarterly reports quantifying the outcomes achieved.
- Regular user consultation and feedback.
- An annual “Exchange” event to garner feedback, ideas and suggestions from community stakeholders, such as NELFT, Redbridge Institute, Vision and Run-Up.

## Lessons Learnt

- Collaboration with “experts by experience” provides the best outcomes.

## Way ahead

To continue making co-production the core of the service.

## Contact details:

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# Scope

## Face 2 Face Project

### Introduction and brief history

Scope is the national disability charity that runs many services and campaigns across the country to help disabled people and their families. One of these services is called Face 2 Face and it runs across Redbridge and Waltham Forest, giving free and confidential emotional support to parents who have children with disabilities and additional needs, irrespective of the diagnosis, or indeed if there is no diagnosis.

### Description of the organisation's activities

Scope offers emotional support in the form of one-to-one befriending. All of its befrienders are trained volunteers who are themselves parents of children with disabilities/ additional needs. Befriending takes place at times and places which suit the parents and the relationship is very much a two-way street: parents who need support receive this from someone who knows and understands, and parents who want to give support feel like they are doing something rewarding and meaningful.

Scope runs training courses twice a year for parents who want to become volunteers. In addition to the training, all its volunteers receive ongoing training and support and are DBS cleared.

Because Scope's volunteers come from across the local area, it is able to provide one-to-one befriending in many community languages such as Urdu, Punjabi, French, German and Tamil.

As well as the one-to-one support, Scope runs various family and parent events throughout the year. For example, earlier this year it had a couple of trips to the pantomime, as well as a parents dinner, an information day on challenging behaviour and a concert outing. Scope currently have a parent's creative writing course underway, and in the second half of 2016 it has lots of things happening including a mums-only spa day, a dads-only white water rafting event, a parents laughter workshop, an information day on "how to find a good carer for your child/help through transition" and a circus trip.



### Need for the organisation

Scope receives funding from the Big Lottery for this project. Research was done before funding was received on the need for this service which exists to "fill in the gaps" in current services for parents.

### What are the aims and objectives of the organisation?

Everything Scope does as an organisation is aimed at supporting parents of children with disabilities/special needs to be more resilient, more confident and less isolated.



## Benefits of the organisation for users

Scope is a national organisation delivering different kinds services to disabled people and their families, including special needs schools and colleges, day centre opportunities, life skills, residential care and supported living services, and information and advice. Scope also raises awareness of disability issues via media campaigns and lobbying the government. Scope's work promotes the Social Model of Disability, which says that disability is caused by the way society is organised, rather than by a person's impairment or difference. Benefits for users include Increased socialisation, increased resilience, wider access to information and support. Also the benefits of belonging to a national organisation while simultaneously being part of a local service that is well run and well funded. Opportunity for parents to shape the service as all events are arranged in consultation with parents who tell what they would like Scope to provide.

## Benefits for NHS and social care services

- More effective relationships with families who have disabled children
- Fewer family breakdowns
- Fewer visits to GPs and prescriptions for anti-depressants and/or referrals to counselling

## How does the organisation know that it is achieving its aims and objectives?

Scope constantly monitors and evaluates the work it does by collecting feedback and evidencing that they deliver on their objectives of increasing resilience and confidence with parents and families of disabled children.

### Lessons Learnt

- That matching befrienders and befriendeds from different cultures promotes trust and a wider perspective
- That parents of disabled children feel that they continue to fight, despite the changes in SEN law
- That something as simple as befriending can be completely transformational
- That some local organisations can be uncooperative because of fear that Scope is competing for funding, or for parental participation



## Way ahead

More befriending, more promoting our service, more events.

Our funding period comes to an end after three years in October 2017 so we have just over a year left to really make a lasting impact. Part of our work in our last year will be to deliver a legacy that will continue to support parents once the funding finishes.



## Contact details

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Face 2 Face Coordinator, Redbridge & Waltham Forest

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### Address

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### Website

<https://www.scope.org.uk/Support/services-directory/Face-2-Face-emotional-support-for-parents-in-Redbr>

Below are links to two short films about Face 2 Face parent support:

- [What befriending can do for you](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bG21-Ch-SSA&feature=youtu.be)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bG21-Ch-SSA&feature=youtu.be>
- [Becoming a parent befriender](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rsm_t1VQ_6E&feature=youtu.be)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rsm\\_t1VQ\\_6E&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rsm_t1VQ_6E&feature=youtu.be)

# Credits

## About us

RedbridgeCVS is an umbrella body that works with hundreds of voluntary and community organisations in the London Borough of Redbridge.

## Mission

Our mission is to promote a strong, effective and independent voluntary and community sector in Redbridge.

## Funders



## Contact Us

For more information about voluntary and community groups providing health and care services in Redbridge, contact:

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