

## FROM BCDP TO CORE ~ FACING THE FUTURE

By Tesfu Gessesse

**Communities for Race Equality (CORE)** was launched by Mr Malcolm Chisholm, MSP for Edinburgh North and Leith on 27 November 2009, at an event that was attended by a diverse range of local people and national organisations. It has been established at a time of profound political, social and economic uncertainty in Scotland, the UK and globally. Some might ask why take a risk in changing the name of BCDP, which has been regarded as a successful organisation, in favour of establishing CORE in such an unstable social climate. Will this change make a difference?



CORE Chairperson Mr Fernando Almeida Diniz & Mr Malcolm Chisholm  
MSP for Edinburgh North & Leith.

This first issue is designed to inform the wider public about the new organisation. I start by sharing the reasons for the main changes that have been adopted, confirm the underlying principles that will continue to shape our grassroots community-based work and indicate the kinds of activities and strategies that CORE will develop in the future. We think it is important to explain that the critical strategic review of BCDP was conducted with the active engagement of local service users during 2009. Aspects of the debates to identify significant external pressures and potential areas for action have been widely reported (see, *BCDP Newsletters, 2009, Issues 1-4*). In what follows, we provide a synthesis of key themes that arose and the implications for CORE.

### Continued Focus on 'Race Equality'?

One of the first issues we considered was whether there was any need to retain a focus on race and antiracism, e.g., with the use of the term 'black' in the name of the organisation. This is pertinent given the recent transformation in the population makeup of our service users in Edinburgh; our data shows a marked shift in the 'minority ethnic' population in Pilton, with an increased presence of Africans, Eastern Europeans, Arabs/Middle-eastern, Latin Americans, in addition to Chinese and South Asians who have long settled here. The arrival of these recent migrants is at a time which is marked by a parallel shift in the British political debates about 'identity', 'anti-terrorism', 'illegal immigration', the 'economic crunch' and the rise of the BNP. It is not for us to look behind the complex reasons that are the causes of

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migration, nor to know the legal status of those who seek our services. That is the role of Government. But the fact is that BCDP has been dealing with the practical reality of directly supporting new and settled minorities and the equally critical matters of contributing towards wider social cohesion with indigenous communities, including conflict resolution. The volume of such activity is growing whilst our funding is decreasing.

In our discussions with interested parties, we expressed serious reservation concerning the dilution of race equality in the newly established EHRC and the failures by local authorities to meet their RES duties (see: BCDP Newsletters, 2009). The ongoing crisis in the direction of the EHRC and the continuing mixed messages in national policy about race equality and immigration have led us to reject the notion that we are in a ‘post-race Obama era’ in Britain. We have made a conscious decision to retain an explicit focus on ‘Race Equality’ in the title and remit of CORE. Whereas the term ‘black’ does not appear in our title, our acknowledgement of the gravity of racial discrimination experienced by the visible minority ethnic community remains the same.

## Grassroots Community Cohesion and Service Provision

BCDP has over 15 years earned a reputation as a positive force that works in partnership with a wide range of interests in developing more socially inclusive practice. Our model of community-based development has been applied with marginalised groups from diverse backgrounds and has been shown to be effective. We feel justified in claiming that we can continue our contribution to promoting positive practice with the local council(s) and other bodies in improving relations and services with minority ethnic communities. Partnership is a ‘two-way street’ requiring equity and transparency in seeking to understand what works, and doesn’t, why and how barriers can be minimised. In terms of CORE’s future

direction, it will continue working with all communities at grassroots level, i.e. the minority ethnic and indigenous white community, on the principles of community cohesion and social justice for all.

We consider Community Cohesion to be of vital importance and will engage with all partners in an open and joint effort to tackle the underlying barriers – some of which are related to issues of ‘ethnicity’ and ‘race’ – that are causing particular pressures in mainstream and minority ethnic urban communities, such as Pilton. History has taught us that it is unwise to assume that there is widespread understanding and support, within the ‘host’ community, for multicultural population changes in Scotland; Newsnight Scotland recently reported that 29% of respondents want a stop to immigration. Ignoring these views plays into the hands of the far-right. We have been here before and need more than measures to fire-fight racist incidents.

CORE will revitalise its engagement with external stakeholders i.e. funders, policy makers, public service providers to efficiently use their scarce resources during the ongoing severe economic downturn. At local level, we already have well recognised and respected activities, such as the World Café, Youth and Children services and the cultural exchange day. CORE will continue focusing on responding to the needs of the minority ethnic communities in the area, but it will also be developing projects that brings all communities together.

As an organisation that works closely with grassroots, CORE will continue reflecting and highlighting the gaps that exist between Government policies and the actual living conditions of the people we work with. We will continue our critical but constructive comment on local and national policies and strategies. We will continue working with those who are willing to work with us. We will attempt to equip our democratically elected leaders i.e. Councillors, MSPs, MPs and MEPs with issues that

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affect our services users, so that our leaders can evaluate the effectiveness of existing policies and make an informed decision as well as evaluating the implications of these policies.

### What does the new name CORE mean?

The new name was chosen by local members and service users, taking account of the results of the critical review of BCDP's work and related current issues.

**Community:** because the former organisation BCDP was born from within the local community base and remains committed to working in active partnership at a grassroots level.

**Organisation:** to signal that CORE is not just one small isolated community of few individuals but is set up to connect with many organised groups with similar goals.

**Race:** to affirm that the former organisation's and CORE's focus will continue to be primarily on the issue of 'race/racism/anti-racism' in social life.

**Equality:** to affirm that the goal of 'equality and social justice for all' will underpin CORE's strategic direction.

### The Organisation's vision, aims and objectives as follows

#### Vision

To contribute to improving the quality of life and well-being of minority ethnic community and work towards social justice for all.

#### Specific Aims

a) To challenge racism and all other types of discrimination which prevent minority ethnic communities from achieving equality and human rights in mainstream society.

b) To equip individuals with appropriate advice, information and personal skills in order that they can

maximise their full potential and feel valued members of society.

c) To empower minority ethnic communities to actively engage in political, social and civic life so as to achieve social justice for all citizens.

d) To promote social inclusion, harmonisation and cohesion within and between diverse communities in society.

e) To work with a range of service agencies to advocate on issues that affect minority ethnic communities and to promote good institutional practice.

#### Objectives

a) Actively gather research intelligence on the various forms and impact of discrimination that are experienced by minority ethnic people

b) Provide accurate advice and information and one to one support on issues such as racial discrimination, benefits, housing, health, welfare, education, employment and others as identified by the users.

c) Provide group work opportunities for both adults/ children and young people.

d) Assist individuals to participate in local structures, groups and community planning procedures

e) To organise events, conferences, seminars and other similar opportunities that bring people together.

f) To highlight the experiences of Minority Ethnic community to local, city wide, national and international organisation to affect change in policies.

g) Identify causes of conflict amongst communities and create opportunities for minority and majority communities to come together to address differences and live in harmony.

h) To carry on any other activities which further any of the above aims and objectives.

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## WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AT CORE?

### CORE's Launch Event

CORE was officially launched at a ceremony held at the Muirhouse Millennium Centre on 27th November. Around 80 people came along on the day to hear speeches from CORE's Chair Person Fernando Almeida Diniz who explained the reasons behind the name change, Director Tesfu Gessesse who talked about the organisation's history and future and Hong Yan Xu who gave a speech about what CORE meant to her as a local person. Finishing off the proceedings was guest speaker Malcolm Chisholm, MSP for Edinburgh North and Leith who officially launched CORE by unveiling a plaque. Guests went on to network while enjoying a finger buffet and refreshments.

### Cross-cultural Social event

Our annual Cross-Cultural Winter Festival event took place on 11th December at North Edinburgh Arts Centre (NEAC). The aims of this event were to celebrate cultural festivities in North Edinburgh highlighting the cultural diversity of the area and enabling all people in the area to meet in a relaxed setting and learn about each other's cultures and traditions.

A lantern making workshop took place between 2.30 and 5.00pm. This was organised by NEAC providing an opportunity for our service users to try some 'hands-on' creative activities.

An evening party took place between 5.30 and 8pm. This was an evening of fun, multicultural food and live entertainment. It included a variety of live multicultural performances including live music by the 'Men from Sudan', live performance by 'Wounded Knee' and DJ World by Freddy.

The successful event was attended by over 60 adults and 25 children from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds.



Cross Cultural Winter Festival

### BME Men's Weekly Football Sessions

Weekly football sessions have been running since October 2009. The aims of this activity are to provide new opportunities for the local BME community to participate in physical activities in an organised fashion and to help promote and strengthen community cohesion and social inclusion in North Edinburgh.

Following the Christmas holiday, the weekly football sessions restarted on Saturday 23rd January and will continue to take place every Saturday between 4.30 and 6pm at Spartans Community Football Academy.

### Multicultural Football Tournament

*'Football has the ability unseen in most areas of human activity to bring together people from very different communities and cultures. In doing so it is a very valuable tool for developing social inclusion and common understanding.'*

Based on the above notion, we hosted a 7-a-side multicultural football competition at Spartans Community Football Academy on Saturday 31st October 2009 to mark this year's Fortnight of Action Against Racism'. This event was funded by Show Racism the Red Card (SRtRC).

Seven multi ethnic teams (over 70 players from different ethnic backgrounds including African, Asian, Chinese and Scottish) took the opportunity to kick racism out of football. As the whistles blew the spirited teams

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CORE Launch

in a vast array of kits, nationalities and ages, from Edinburgh and Glasgow, took to the field and did battle. 'Meadows United' won the tournament beating rival side 'Meadows Aging Footballers in Action' in the final. Other participating teams include Glasgow Ansar, Sudanese team, Glory & Dismay and CORE's own football teams.

'The day was a great success. I just wanted to say a big thank you to the CORE for organising the tournament. It was thoroughly enjoyed by all our team. The organisation was excellent and the mixture of teams was encouraging' commented one of the competing team leaders.



Show Racism The Red Card Football Tournament

### **Working With Difference Programme (WWDP)**

Through the WWDP, we aim to create opportunities to enable North Edinburgh based BME groups to benefit from outdoor activities such as walking, growing food, visits to woodlands, community gardening, volunteering and countryside conservation demonstrating that working with and enjoying outdoor spaces can enhance BME people's lives and bring BME community groups together.

To achieve this, we work in partnership with other

BME organisations and outdoor activity providers such as Forestry Commission, Venture Scotland, Historic Scotland, Rangers Service and FEVA (Forum for Environmental Volunteering Activity).

We have recently secured funding to organise outdoor activities for our service users. The activities, which will start in April 2010, will include walks and visits to woodlands as well as other outdoor activities to increase opportunities for the local BME groups in the field of environmental and outdoor activities. Please contact Adil Ibrahim for more details.

### **The ESF Black Community Skills Project**

In 2009, we ran a wide range of courses and groups including 'Information Technology and Literacy', 'Employability Skills' and 'Informal Learning' groups. A total 46 beneficiaries benefited from these learning opportunities.

A new 8-week Skills Project programme will commence soon. The programme is for unemployed people from the BME community resident in Edinburgh and will include English for Speakers of Other languages (ESOL), Literacy and Employability Skills all cited as the main barriers to BME people accessing sustainable employment. There is also a possibility to run a short multimedia course locally.

The Skills Project offers an agreed learning plan, childcare support, travel and subsistence allowance and a £50 one off payment on completion of the course. Please contact Adil Ibrahim for more details and to register your interest in taking part.

### **Family Networking Group (FNG)**

The FNG took part in a variety of different activities towards the end of 2009, these included a visit to the fascinating People's Story Museum and some outdoor fun at Redhall Walled Garden where they were given a presentation from the Forestry Commission. Other

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Working With Difference Programme

programmed activities included a presentation by the Child Poverty Action Group and health checks by Keepwell and massage therapy by Maggi Scott.

The FNG restarted on Tuesday 2nd February at North Edinburgh Arts Centre from 11.30am to 2.30pm and runs every fortnight. Please contact Adil Ibrahim for more details.



Family Networking Group visit to Redhall Walled Garden

## Minority Ethnic Mums' Support Group in collaboration with Circle - Haven

The mum's group had a busy winter term with a number of different activities taking place such as First Aid, family photo album project, outing to Ravelston Woods, BCDP rebranding launch and Xmas and Eid Celebrations. The group is continuing to grow and develop with new members joining. We are delighted with the continuation of this project for a further year following the success of our funding application to Lloyds TSB and Circles continued kind offer to support the running of the Group. All minority ethnic women with children under 5 living in North Edinburgh are encouraged to come along. Other minority women who think they might benefit from meeting other women are also welcome. This group now meets every Wednesday from 11.30am to 1.30pm.



Mum's Group Mask Making

## World Café

The World Café has been taking place regularly every last Friday of the month and has continued to provide a delicious Buffet meal every month. The customers continue to compliment the food prepared by the volunteers who also relish the opportunity to interact with the wider community and get recognised for their skills.

Some customers provided the following comments after attending the October/November Cafe:

*Best meal I've had in a long time. Definitely coming back next month.* Anna Roberston

*Great to see so many faces - old and regular - food excellent as always - everybody so friendly - look forward to a food cook book.* Joyce and Sinclair

*Fantastic food and beautiful people, what a combination!!!* Johanna

The World Café is a unique community gathering opportunity which breaks down barriers between different communities in a friendly and informal way. Furthermore it provides opportunities for volunteers, customers, staff

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World Café

and organisations to create a harmonious community spirit. For future World Cafes' please check dates in Current CORE programme.

North Edinburgh Art Centre now also provides freshly made homemade South Asian food on Tuesday and Wednesday from 12noon to 3pm made by one of CORE's service users. The food is delicious and reasonably priced. It's another opportunity for local people and World Café customers to try food from another culture.

## **Club4 us – Youth and Children's Clubs**

### **Mini Stars (5-7 year olds – Monday 5-6.30pm)**

Mini Stars have been developing well with 15 children participating including some new children. The club now takes place at West Pilton Neighbourhood Centre which has been well received by the young people, particularly due to its additional space for physical play, music, drama and art activities. It also provides more opportunities for integration.

The children have enjoyed the winter programme which included activities such as storytelling, drama, music and movement based on 'The Dreaming Tree' theme about caring for the environment. This theme was followed up with a further 4 weeks by 'The Growing Project' following which the children presented their work and learning to their parents at a presentation event. The Mini Stars is a busy and active group hence a number of activities around play, games, baking, Xmas party etc. were incorporated into the programme.

### **Junior Stars – (8-12 year olds – Friday 2-4pm)**

Junior Stars is a lively group with a lot of enthusiasm and energy. It is attended by 15 young people. This group undertook a 'News Project' which they found very interesting including its links to visiting outdoor places. The children enjoyed the background to Halloween through a storytelling session, visited Treasured Exhibition

at the Royal Museum, visited Gallery of Modern Art, a trip to Edinburgh Botanic Gardens, trip to Trampoline Centre and Ice Skating. All the outdoor activities were enjoyed by the young people.

### **Young Stars - (12-16 year olds- Wednesday 5-6.30pm)**

Young Stars club is attended by 14 young people and they have had a number of fun activities as well as some educational input from other organisations. The young people enjoyed the fun activities such as drama, bowling, making pizza, visit to Winter Wonderland, St Andrews' Day Celebration but also benefited from sessions on Anti-social behaviour, Lyric writing workshop and Drugs and Alcohol. Cooking sessions were particularly requested by the young people to continue into the new programme.



Mini Stars Growing Project

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## Youth and Children's Link Work

### Basketball Club in partnership with PYCP

The Basketball Club partnership with Pilton Youth and Children's Project recommenced in October 2009. The club is aimed at 10-18 year olds in Greater Pilton, and provides weekly Basketball coaching, participatory and peer education on equalities issues, and opportunities for gaining accredited sports qualifications. From October to December 2009, an average of 16 young people attended every Thursday evening session of which 11 were from minority ethnic backgrounds. Young people also had the opportunity to explore issues of Equality, Sexism and Racism during their education input. Combination of both the basketball with Education forum has proved to be very successful with young people. The Club continued again from January 2010.



Basketball Club

### Multicultural Children's Club for 5-8 year olds in partnership with Forthview Primary School

Multicultural children's club in partnership with Forthview Primary school was piloted over 5 weeks during November and December 2009 with the aim of exploring identity, equality, prejudice and global citizenship at an age-appropriate level, and bring children together from all cultural backgrounds. The Club ran weekly on Thursday after school from 3.15pm to 5pm at Forthview Primary School. An average of 11 children attended, 6 of whom were minority ethnic. There was overwhelming interest in the Club from parents with additional 50 places requested, unfortunately only 12 places were on offer. This pilot club proved to be a huge success with increased demand for continuation. CORE is pleased to note that the club has now restarted for another 8 weeks of sessions.

### Advice and Information Work

Young people have been supported on a range of issues such as physical and verbal racist attacks, bullying, behavioural issues, social isolation, and disciplinary proceedings in school, to further education funding, help finding employment and wanting information about recreational activities.

Progress is continuing in this area of work although further awareness amongst young people, local agencies and schools is continuously required for young people to use the service.

Linkwork established over the last year would not have been possible without the support from BBC Children in Need and additional support from Fairer Scotland Fund for some aspects of the work. We are delighted with the success of our funding application to continue the work for a further 2 years.

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Multicultural Club

## UPCOMING PROJECTS AND EVENTS

### Global Awareness Project

Would you like to develop new skills to take positive actions towards eliminating global poverty, build capacity and acquire skills to question and challenge injustices globally?

As we informed you in our last newsletter, CORE will be starting new Global Awareness groups aimed at promoting knowledge, awareness and understanding of global development issues and poverty reduction agenda amongst North Edinburgh BME communities and equipping members of these communities with skills to take positive actions/change behaviour towards eliminating global poverty, including changes in their own actions.

Each group will meet weekly over a period of 6 months (the first group will start in mid February 2010 - day and time to be agreed). Group sessions will include discussions, activities, reflection, outings, art work etc.

Please contact CORE to find out more information about this new project.

### Finance Matters Project

Our 'Finance Matters' project aims to provide financial advice and training to BME people who are aged 50 years and over who live in any part of Edinburgh. This project offers confidential and practical advice about benefits, benefits check (which may indicate other benefits you may be entitled to) and help with applying and filling in forms. Group training sessions and confidential one to one advice available see the current CORE programme

at the end of the newsletter for dates, to make an appointment contact Adil.

### BME Forum

The aim of the forum is to assist members of the minority ethnic communities to participate in the local decision making process through engagement in Community Planning.

Commencing on the 26th February 2010, the forum will support members of the local BME community to play an active role within the local decision making structures and to effectively articulate their 'collective' issues. It will aim to empower the local BME community by offering opportunities for training, research and campaigning on issues that affect their lives including learning, health, well being and community participation. Moreover, the forum will encourage local BME people to become more involved in their local communities and remove the tendency to accepting 'reality' as something objective and 'out there' and will provide the local BME community with opportunities for experiential learning, networking and giving something back to the wider community.

If you would like to become involved in this and would like more details, please contact Adil Ibrahim.

### Staff Changes

We wish Zaki -El -Salahi, Ayisha Hamid, Jacque McWilliams and Nathalie Nogues all the best in their new chosen paths and welcome Alyson Ross as the new Youth and Children's Development/Link Worker who commenced her employment in January 2010. Thank you also to Morna Baxter who covered as Temp Youth and Children's Development worker but remains with the organisation as Senior Youth Worker.

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## CURRENT CORE PROGRAMME

### Bme Skills Project

Opportunity for black minority ethnic individuals to gain new skills leading to employment and further training. New courses starting soon.

For more details on how to join this programme contact Adil.

### English Language Classes

If you are looking for a suitable English language class for yourself or for a member of your family, then CORE can direct you to the right provider. Classes are currently running at Telford College, Stevenson College or in the community through Community Learning and Development. Please contact Adil for more information.

### Family Networking Group

Sessions include information sharing, outings and visits to interesting places, informal presentations and a range of other exciting activities.

The group meets at North Edinburgh Arts Centre 11:30 to 2.30 on Tuesdays every fortnight.

Contact Adil for more details or just come along

### Women's Keep Fit Class

Free fitness class for women only and for all levels of fitness.

Thursday's 12:15 – 1:15pm  
at Muirhouse Millennium Centre.

Contact Caroline for more details or just go along

### Minority Ethnic Mum's Support Group

Meets every Wednesday at 11:30 to 1:30pm, for mums with children under 5 years old.

At the Haven Project, Craigroyston Primary School

Creche for kids

CORE working in partnership with Haven / Circle Scotland

Contact Khalida for more information or just come along.

### World Café

Cultural food buffet evening

Last Friday of the Month (except December)  
at North Edinburgh Arts Centre.

Time: 5:30pm – 7pm

Buffet price £5 adults & £2.50 kids

Forthcoming World Café dates:

Friday 26th February

Friday 26th March

Contact CORE to make a booking or just come along

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## 'Finance Matters'

Support and information for over 50's on managing your finances, debt and benefits.

Confidential one to one advice and group training sessions available at the following times, contact Adil to make an appointment:

Friday 12th February	10 – 12 noon
Thursday 4th March	5 – 7pm
Wednesday 17th March	5 – 7pm
Friday 9th April	10 – 12 noon
Thursday 22nd April	5 – 7pm
Group Training Sessions:	
Tuesday 11th May 2009	5 – 7pm
Thursday 27th May 2009	10am – 12noon

## Youth & Children's Services

Mini Stars Club (5-7yrs)

Mondays 5pm-6:30pm at West Pilton Neighbourhood Centre

Junior Stars Club (8-12yrs)

Fridays 2-4pm at Fet Lor Youth Club

Young Stars Club (12-16yrs)

Wednesdays 5-6:30pm at Fet Lor Youth Club

Contact: Alyson for more details, new members very welcome.

## Multicultural Children's Club

Thursday's 3-5pm at Forthview Primary School

Contact Alyson for more details.

## Basketball Club 10-18 Year Olds

Every Thursday at PYCP

7pm to 9pm

Contact Alyson

## Advice & Support For Children & Young People

Help with bullying, problems at school or in neighbourhood, racism,

Prejudice or general support then contact Alyson Ross on

0131 467 7990 or text 07854566407 anytime between Monday to

Friday from 9am to 5pm. Appointment necessary.

## North Edinburgh Black & Minority Ethnic Forum

Starts on Friday 26th February.

2.30pm to 5.20pm at North Edinburgh Arts Centre

First session will explore 'Health & Wellbeing'.

Contact Adil for more information.

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### Swap Access Programmes

Prepare adults for entry to higher education and can guarantee you a place at college or university on an HN or degree programme.

SWAP Programmes available in Edinburgh at:

Edinburgh's Telford College: Built Environment, Digital Media Computing, Engineering, Nursing.

Stevenson College: Biological Sciences, Humanities, Landscape Architecture, Languages, Nursing, Physical Science.

Jewel & Esk College: Community Education, Humanities, Nursing, Primary Education.

To find out more, call freephone 0800 7310949 or email: swapeast@ed.ac.uk

### New Evening Classes At Craigroyston Community High School

Classes take place during the day and in the evening and range from Fabric & Dress Making, Arts & Crafts, Web Design, Woodwork, Tai-Chi, Swimming, Mother & Daughter Self Defence, Fitness Spanish and Pilates.

For a full list of classes, more information or to book call 0131 538 7285.

Craigroyston Community High School, 67 Pennywell Road.

### Childcare Academy

Want to work with children?

Recruiting now! Starts Monday 15 March 2010

The Childcare Academy provides the opportunity to:

- Free training.
- Gain experience of working with children.
- Gain childcare qualifications.
- Gain employment in childcare sector.

If you are unemployed, aged 16+ and would like to find out more, contact Barbara Webster, Training Co-ordinator on 0131 311 6926 or email: Barbara.webster@northedinburghchildcare.co.uk

### The Welcoming

'New Futures' Programme – course designed to help people become more employable, learn more about life/living in Scotland and UK, and help them improve their health and well-being. This course offers intensive English programme, adult learning courses, education and employment guidance, access to training for work courses, work experience and opportunities to help develop and participate in community based multi-cultural social events.

To find out more contact Jon Busby or Susan Kesson on 0131 221 9756 or email: thewelcoming2006@hotmail.co.uk

The Welcoming also runs a wide programme of activities and events including art workshops, cinema club, English language groups.

### Curries Galore at North Edinburgh Art Centre

South Asian lunch by Yasra Syed

Weekly –Tuesday and Wednesday

12noon to 3pm

Delicious wholesome lunch



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