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Chair's Report

I am very pleased to present this years Annual Report of the Watford African Caribbean Association's activities on behalf of the Executive. This is my first annual report as Chairperson and I would like to formally thank members of the Association for the opportunity to make a contribution in this capacity.

By African Caribbean, we refer to those people born in Africa, as well as those from the United Kingdom and the Caribbean of primarily African descent.

Last year has been our first full year, for many years, without David Lake as the Community Development Worker. It has also been the first for an even longer period without Mr Arthur McLean as the Chairperson of the Association. I take this opportunity to extend my personal thanks to both of them for their significant contributions to the development of the Association's work over the years. We have inherited a substantial legacy, TACEP, Supplementary School, Resource centre Project, Carers project and many other developments.

Over the last year we have taken on full responsibility for the staff employed by the organisation. Ademola Adeniji (Development Worker) and a full complement of staff have settled in to support the development of the Association's activities.

The last year has therefore been a year of transition in a variety of ways. However, it has also been a year of achievement. I would point to the following developments as indicators of our success:

- Hosting the Jamaica Governor General
- Successful Black History Month programme of events including an exhibition at the Watford Central Library and Educational Conference held in St Albans.
- Development of TACEP's activities including the annual lunch
- The continued success of the Supplementary School.
- Development of our website - www.watfordafricanib.org.uk
- Starting of our newsletter

The organisation has so far made substantial achievements as I have indicated above. However, there is much more to do and to continue our success we need to tap into the vast resources that exist in the community. This will enable the organisation to develop a range of services relevant to the community and also become an effective voice for the community.

Next year we celebrate 30 years of existence and I would like to go into it with the organisation in a vibrant state. A major determinant of our future success will be a developing and committed membership. The Association is our organisation and I urge you all to become members so that we can not only celebrate a successful 30 years of existence but also look forward to more of the same for many future years.

Before we get to celebrate the anniversary of the Association we have other achievements also to celebrate now. This year, 2005 marks the 10th anniversary of the formation of both TACEP and the Supplementary School. There will be a range of activities taking place to mark the occasion and I urge you all to support these activities and continue to spread the word about the good work that both these initiatives continue to do.

The African Caribbean Community is changing and the Association needs to reflect these changes. Over the coming year I would like to think that we can achieve the following:

- A better understanding of the needs of our evolving communities;
- Development of initiatives to meet community needs either by ourselves or by working with other agencies;
- Developing an educational initiative aimed at building on the success of the Supplementary School and responding to the continuing needs of the community in this area; and
- Increasing and diversifying the membership of the Association

The successful work of the Association is dependent on a number of factors:

- Financial support from other agencies
- Work of staff
- The work of the Executive and the general membership

I would like to extend our thanks to all those who have supported our activities financially. In particular I would like to extend our thanks to our major funders (Watford Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council) for their continued support. Thanks also to all other funders who have supported our activities in anyway over the last year.

Our staff have the capacity to make a significant contribution to developing the work of the Association and we acknowledge and value the work that they do. I would like to extend our thanks to Ademola and the staff for their contribution to a solid year of achievement.

The work done by the Executive and all our volunteers involved in developing and sustaining our projects such as TACEP has been central to the success of the Association and I would like to extend my personal thanks to all the individuals involved. I would like to thank every member of the Executive for the support that I have received over the last year. In my first year as Chair I have particularly appreciated the support of officer colleagues; Althea McLean (Vice Chair), Sandra Fullerton (Secretary) and Tom Jackson (Treasurer).

Finally, 2004/05 has been good, let us together make 2005/06 (our anniversary year) even better.

Clive Saunders

Chair

Secretary's Report

The past year has been an extremely busy, demanding and productive period in our Association's calendar and I am proud that throughout the year we have continued to perform to a high standard. We have, in fact, made significant progress in furthering the work for which our Association was established as we continue working in partnership with both statutory and voluntary agencies to deliver quality services which impact the social and educational lives of the Community.

Since the last AGM our Administrative team has increased, and with it our management responsibilities. It is to the credit of the Executive and the rest of the staff that the Association has continued to deal so well with its new and increased workload.

The past year has seen the following changes within the Association:

- **New Chair & Executive Members** – *Clive Saunders became our new Chair, along with Gwen Andrew and Cynthia Dixon as new members on the Executive Committee.*
- **Office Administration** - *This year we have successfully recruited and welcomed two new staff members to take up vacant administrative posts.*
- **Quality** – *We have achieved two areas in PQASSO (Practical Quality Assurance Systems for Small Organisations) namely Governance and Management. We are currently embarking on work to achieve in two further areas, namely **User Centred Services (Area 4)** and **Staff and Volunteers (Area 5)***
- **Funding** – *Our main source of funding is through Service Level Agreement with Watford Council. This increases the dependency and vulnerability of the Association and, therefore, we must continue to explore other funding opportunities in order to best deliver our services*
- **Socially** - *We had a busy and successful year. Our main event was our Black History Month celebrations. This was a highly successful project with some 500 people visiting our Exhibition at Watford Central Library, which culminated in a Cultural Heritage Evening in November.*

Working with local stakeholders like *Watford Women's Centre, CVS and Watford Council*, has enabled our Association to become more strategically focused over the past twelve months.

This is an era of community cohesion, bringing with it integration and development of partnerships across all sectors. In Watford's multi racial population we need to celebrate diversity and demonstrate that we are inclusive, encouraging community cohesion in a way that will enable the Association to deliver on its targets which is of paramount importance. If we are going to be a sustainable, effective, and a strategically driven Association, we need to become more pragmatic in our approach, and more welcoming and inclusive in our membership.

FUTURE

- We need to ensure that we sit on local strategic groups and bodies to raise issues present within the African Caribbean community.
- We need to be more corporate in our thinking and by strengthening partnerships and alliances with other groups within the Voluntary and Community sectors we will become a driver for change.

I believe the Association needs to continue its journey as the strategic leader for African and African Caribbean interests in Watford and build upon the already high reputation held by the Association within the wider Statutory, Voluntary and Community sector. This achievement is due, primarily, to the hard work and commitment of our Executive, Staff and Volunteers.

The Executive has set strategic goals for the Association for 2005/6. They include:

- ✓ *Strengthening our infrastructure by reviewing our internal policies and Procedures. **PQASSO** (Practical Quality Assurance Systems for Small Organisations);*
- ✓ *Achieving four specific areas in **PQASSO**;*
- ✓ *Undertaking a skills audit on Executive Members and access appropriate training to further enhance the Committee's skills. This will make the Executive Team more proactive and thus better equipped to meet the objectives of our **PQASSO** lead business plan and reinforce their understanding of their roles and responsibilities;*
- ✓ *Vigorously researching alternative funding streams for the future;*
- ✓ *Increasing the Association's membership.*

For us to be more effective, we need to adapt to current changes – locally and nationally and in our working practices by ensuring that we align ourselves with other agencies both within the Statutory and Voluntary/Community sectors, so that we meet the diverse needs of African and Caribbean people in our community.

I think we can all be proud of the work that the Association has done and the achievements which have been made over the last year. The Association has made its presence felt in health, education, youth work and culture and we can be satisfied that ours is an Association which should continue to flourish and is well respected in the work that it undertakes.

We do not underestimate the work that is yet to be done. If we are seen to be united in our approach and both think and act collectively as a body, for me this automatically brings our strength to the fore. This strength enables and empowers us to develop and guide our community towards sustainability and greater effectiveness in an ever changing and challenging voluntary sector.

I would like to thank the Executive and Sub-Committees of the Association for their excellent attendance to meetings over the last year and for the continued support they have given me.

Such colleague support breathes life into the motto of Watford African Caribbean Association: ***“Together We Can Achieve”*** **More.**

Sandra Fullerton
Secretary

Treasurer's Report

Once again we have come to the end of another year. Looking back as a Treasurer I can say we have just broken even when we compare with last year. For me, that is not good enough. I had hoped that the year 2004 – 2005 would have seen us in a much better place than we are in now.

The membership has remained steady in the mid thirties; however, we all know that the goodwill towards our organisation extends far beyond that. With fifteen fully paid up fees and eighteen juniors and seniors, we collected £150 and £90, which give us a total of £240 in membership fees.

Once again, my thanks to the members of the Travel Club and the interest from their savings will be added to our account. The sum collect this year ending is £4.35p. This might not seem a lot but it all adds up. Let me remind you that the club is still ongoing and we are always looking for new members. Bearing in mind that you can deposit as much as you like and it can be taken out whenever you like. Your capital is secure, only the interest goes to the Association funds.

The only fundraising event during the year was the joint event with the Supplementary School which took place on the 29th January 2005 at the Bill Everett centre. Although the turnout was not as good as anticipated, however, this yielded a profit of approximately, £460.60, which will be shared jointly with the Supplementary School.

The Social committee wants to inform members, families and friends of the forthcoming end of year event which will take place on the 31st December 2005 at the Holywell Community Centre. Let us make this a memorable occasion.

Our main task as members is still to increase our membership and maintain our operating cash flow. The year 2005 – 2006 membership is now due and should be paid on or before the AGM.

Thanks to everyone who have worked with me during the year. My sympathy to families and friends of members who have had bereavement in their family during the past year.

I will be happy to be still part of the team if members so wishes.

Tom Jackson - Treasurer

Development Worker's Report

It is hard to believe that another year has passed so quickly. However, it has been a year full of activities, with its own difficulties and tribulations, but crowned with achievements and progress.

Initial constraints such as finding a full time Admin support worker has recently been resolved through a job share arrangement between Jan Westwood and Theresa Rynn, who between them have worked and contributed immensely to developing a more effective administrative unit.

The Association now has a functional website with details for our programmes and services. Additional office improvements since last year include Broadband internet connection which ensures access to information, and efficient communication network between the office, our project coordinators, other partner organisations and the community at large.

Since October 2004, a quarterly newsletter has been produced. Four separate newsletters have been produced to date. It is pleasing that community members have found the newsletter informative and engaging.

We have also completed two PQASSO quality areas, specifically on Governance and Management, which involved a complete review of our policies and procedures. We plan to begin work on two other quality areas before September 2005 as part of our quality assurance procedure. I owe Sandra, our Secretary immense gratitude for her work in this regard.

The road to self-sustainability has also begun although at a much slower pace than I had initially anticipated.

We have initiated an Ethnic Minority Business support scheme with Business Link and have been able to raise £250 through the initiative already.

Partnership working through involvement in the Information, Advice and guidance (IAG) course with the Women Centre has provided the Association £120 income through the provision of professional information and advice to clients who have come through our doors.

Our volunteering alliance with Millennium volunteers, which culminated in the three teenagers being awarded 100hrs Awards certificates on March 30, 2005, should begin to generate some income as we put more young adults through this scheme.

Some of the revenue generated through Volunteering activities is in fact being utilised to purchase training for these volunteers as an added value as a mutually beneficial scheme for the Association and the volunteers themselves.

I am grateful that we have also received a BT community connection computer grant from BT. This computer is set aside for members of the community who might be interested in typing out CV's, finding information or conducting job searches etc.

Last October, we had a most successfully Black History Month Festival, which featured a major Cultural Exhibition about Africa and the Caribbean at the Watford Library. The theme of the Exhibition was 'Celebrating Black Achievement.'

The Exhibition was so successful that it was extended to cover November and was attended by over 450 people.

Comments include:

"Really interesting and some beautiful art. Next time leave some leaflets with the recipes on, so that we can take them away!" S.J

Although I had a short time to look around, I thought it was a lovely exhibition, well planned and beautifully presented. Sarah B.

It was heart warming and emotional moving wondering around looking at the exhibits, although black History was not taught in my school days, I was able to absorb a great deal. Thanks. V. B

My inspiration in black history was re-fuelled by the novels of the most prolific writers like Steve Biko. Thanks to your Exhibition. E.G

Interesting, educational and informative.

Well done to everyone involved! I like the background music. S. L.

During the year, we initiated and started a Creative Minds project. The Creative Minds programme was begun as a result of funding which I obtained from UnLtd Awards last May.

Among other things, the project aims to provide a forum for the expression of African and Caribbean Arts through crafts, drama, dancing and creative writing.

I am pleased that the first set of manuscripts developed during the first series of Saturday creative writing workshops which began on November 6 2004 is now being compiled for publication in book form.

Three days of Artistic workshop were also held for children between Feb 17 -19 during the school half term.

The highly successful workshops featured Fabric Art, Sketching & Painting, Dance Drama, Bead craft as well as card making. There were over 22 children in attendance.

The Creative minds scheme was also extended to the Elders Project. Apart from Beadcraft, Ten TACEP members also participated in a series of Reminiscence writing. Their writing is currently being edited and would be collated into book form by summer.

The Association also featured at the Borehamwood community festival in March 2005, where we had a table display and sold some African food. The event was so successful that we have already received another invitation from the organisers for next year.

Our links with the University of Hertfordshire has been rekindled. We currently have a social work student on work placement with us.

Earlier in January, I also completed a Practice Teacher/Assessor Course at the University of Hertfordshire. This would enable us to take on additional students and thus add to our source of income generation

However, other challenges still remain:

There is a need to develop youth programmes not only to attract and infuse the Association with a new lease of life, which would ensure continuity and survival. This will become a focal point of the Outreach Worker's endeavour during this year.

Although, there has been a considerable number of increase in the African members of the community utilising our services. Indeed, of about two-thirds of the clients who visited the office in 2004 were Africans. Yet, there is a need to continually assess and meet the diverse needs of the growing number of African and Caribbean people especially in the West Watford area. It is my hope that the Ethnic Minority Forum of which the Association is part of would assist in addressing some of these issues on a community wide basis.

Indeed, our participation in the Ethnic Minority Forum has enabled us to enrol four community members on a free DIY training course - covering Plumbing, Plastering and Tiling between April - June 2005.

The unavailability of a permanent centre for the Association is still a menace. This continues to create an added difficulty in the coordination of our programmes. It also creates wastage each time we've had to rent premises to hold a seminar or workshop. Moreover, it does hinder our drive towards self sustainability, as a permanent centre remains pivotal to our self sustainability programme.

Finally, I would like to thank all our sponsors and partner organisations: without which all that has been achieved within the last year would never have been possible.

BT Community connection

Charities Aid Foundation

Cooperative Society

Cover - East of Region

Awards for All

Equal Access & Opportunities project

Hertfordshire Community Foundation

Heritage Lottery Fund

Nationwide

The Countryside Agency

Local Network Fund

Business Link

Hertfordshire County Council

Watford Borough Council

CVS Watford
Millennium Volunteers
Watford Women's Centre

University of Hertfordshire
Watford Library
Watford Racial Equality Council

Ademola Adeniji
Development Worker

Carers Support Worker's Report

In my last year's report, I said I was committed to developing support for African and Caribbean Carers in the community. This has been ongoing since last May. To ensure this is carried out, I have been working closely with Carers in Hertfordshire with the aim of providing legislative support to carers utilising Carers in Herts framework as a means of maintaining best practice.

To meet the diverse needs of carers, I have been networking with other BME (Black Minority Ethnic) organisations. This has helped towards delivering improved service to carers by providing a feedback about their concerns and aspirations at various seminars with PCT (Primary Care Trust) ACS (Adult Care Services) and other local statutory, voluntary and private organisations.

As a means of reaching out to unidentified carers, letters and leaflets were dispatched to GP surgeries in Watford. This has helped to increase the number of new carers utilising our services. This arrangement has been deemed successful as the PCT has now convinced some Practices to display a Carers Notice Board as part of the awareness drive.

A considerable number of carers are now accessing their carers' break. We have been working closely with Crossroads who have been providing our carers with sitters once a week for three hours thereby allowing carers to have their desired break. Part of the success of this scheme is the result of an initial debriefing process with each sitter, where information regarding the needs of the 'African and Caribbean' cared for is clearly identified. Most of these 'cared for' have excellent praise for the services.

Here are some of the remarks from the cared for:

"I am satisfied and grateful to crossroads for their befriending scheme because my sitter is an excellent befriender. I hope all carers will use the service because if we don't we will be the losers. I don't know how I could have managed without it". Iris Lusack

"The sitter sent from Crossroads has been excellent as she came in and hit it off immediately with my partner. I was happy to go out for my three hours break assured that my partner was in good hands. We look forward to seeing her every week". D. S.

As part of the drive to ensure that carers take a break, I went on a trip to Peterborough with five carers at the beginning of December last year. It was an excellent opportunity to meet with some carers on a one to one basis and to spend time with them discussing issues in a much less stressed environment.

All the five carers in attendance thoroughly enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere that they have requested that such similar trips should be organised in the near future.

This is an excellent idea as group outing is a unique opportunity for carers who have been isolated to come out and have a tranquil and refreshing time. Future trips are however tied to available resources. I shall be working towards raising funds for such trips in the future.

Since March I have recently embarked on a one-to-one hourly break for carers by taking them away from their homes and going out to discuss any issues of concern. This is a new initiative, which I plan to extend to all carers that may require such attention.

We made a noteworthy contribution towards Hertfordshire County Council's application for the Beacon Status, which was appreciated, as six of our carers went along to the first Panel visit last December.

That visit has in effect produced a successful short listing from the original twenty two applications down to four selected. Hertfordshire County Council – Adult Care Services is one of the four counties short listed for the Beacon Status Award. We are presently waiting in anticipation that the Beacon Award would be confirmed soon. A Beacon Status is Government Award for Councils initiating excellence and service innovation

Our contribution as part of the carers network in the County has indeed been commended. We received a 'thank you' letter because the presence of BME carers was instrumental to the County being shortlisted.

We have had an increase in the number of new carers introduced to us. Two of the new carers are also affiliated with The Sickle Cell Society. These carers are being supported in collaboration with Carers in Hertfordshire and Children's Schools and Families.

Finally, this years' Carers Week featured between from 13th June to 19th June and the theme this year is "Work, Rest and Play". Our Association's theme for this year's Carers Week is "Health and Leisure".

On the whole, the Association's Carers Support Group has been very active in raising awareness on issues that affect the Africans and Caribbeans in the community and it is in this direction that we expect to concentrate our efforts during this present year.

Olabisi Onanuga
Carers Support Worker

Outreach Worker's Report

Time passes very quickly, has it has been almost 18 months since I took up the post of Outreach Worker on the 1st Dec 2003 in trying to pursue the association's objectives in the delivery of a range of community services, in line with the service level agreement set out by the Watford Borough Council.

Working in Partnership:

Information, Advice and Guidance training with the White Rose Training Consultancy, has given me the skills to help the Association bring in a paid professional advice fee for each episode completed with clients. The episodes generate revenue for the Association for each client that meets the criteria, i.e. those who are at Level 1 or under, or who have English Speaking or Other Languages needs. At the moment 7 such advice sessions have taken place on 1-2-1 sessions. I am currently halfway through I.A.G Advanced Level 4, which will mean a continuation of the paid professional advice fee for each episode as set out in the Next Step guidelines.

I.T. Taster Sessions:

The I.T. Taster Sessions came about because many clients expressed an interest in working with computers, but did not have the confidence to do an intense course at college or other learning establishments. The first of these sessions started February and ended in April. Some of the clients, who could not attend the Wednesday sessions, have been signposted or referred to other 'Here There and Everywhere' Learning Centres. I had an average of 3 people attending the sessions between Feb and March.

"I am now completing OCR level 2 Information Technology at West Herts College. Thanks to Watford African Caribbean Association and the Wednesday sessions I've been able to progress to West Herts College." S.O.A.

"Keep up with the same spirit of kind and generous help Thank you." E.W.

Information, Advice & Guidance:

Since the last AGM report in July 2004, a total of 58 clients from Watford and the surrounding areas, have accessed information advice or guidance from the office. Some of them were signposted to relevant voluntary and statutory bodies, bringing the total number of interventions to 89.

The figures can be summarised as follows: African 36, Caribbean 12, and Other 10. Of these figures 25 were males and 35 females. Twenty-nine people got to know about the organisation through word of mouth, while seventeen were self-referred. Another twelve people had heard about us from other organisations.

Millennium Volunteers:

Working with the Millennium Volunteers 16 – 24 has been greatly rewarding. It is envisaged that our partnership would bring in some revenue, which will help towards the cost of travel and other expenses incurred by the volunteers. Two volunteers have received awards for 100 hours of admin voluntary service, at the office and one has received the award of excellence for 200 hours of voluntary gardening at the Annual Millennium Volunteers awards ceremony held earlier in March 2005. In total we have 6 registered Millennium Volunteers.

Publicity:

The newsletter WACA News was launched last October 2004 and the response from the community regarding the Watford African Caribbean Association Newsletter has been very encouraging, and we look forward to continual progress and contribution from the Association's members and friends. I will be looking to improve the distribution of the Association's information and newsletter. The newsletter is usually sent out to the community via post and by hand, and plans are being explored to have it also, in the future, downloadable from the WACA website at: www.watfordafricarib.org.uk.

The Association's publicity leaflets are also being sent out in the post as well as during the week by hand especially during market day on Fridays.

Black History Month:

The Exhibition at the Watford Central Library was a huge success with the exhibition being extended by another month from October through November 2004. A series of interactive craft workshops was also held alongside the family Quiz Night, Heritage Night at the Beechen Grove Baptist Church Hall, Youth Night at the Holywell Community Centre and the Grande Finale when we had music and a comedian for the night, held at the Bill Everett Centre, Leggatts Way. I would also like to thank the Management and staff at the Bill Everett Centre for donating the premises for free on the night.

This year we will be looking to hold another session of successful events in and around Watford, after the success of the exhibition and workshops at the Watford Central Library.

Future events:

Volunteers Week in early June will celebrate the year of the volunteer. Last year was a nice and sunny day attended by honorary guests The Mayor of Three Rivers and The Mayor of Watford. We set up a publicity stall, offered traditional food, both Africa and Caribbean delights to anyone who expressed an interest, and all volunteers on the day dressed in traditional dress.

The U project based at the YMCA to help those children in year 11 that are considered neither in education, employment or training (otherwise known as the NEET group), is to run activities for a week starting at the beginning of July. This will help Year 11 students who are unsure of their future to decide on their next steps in a positive way. The week long activities are designed to engage this group and to set them on their way to a brighter future and a better understanding of what they will want to do in life. I will also be looking to work in partnership with the Millennium Volunteers and Watford Area Youth Services in putting on a showcase event for the young talented youths in the Watford area around the time of Black History Month.

T.J. Edwards**Outreach Worker**

Administration Report

I joined the Watford African Caribbean Association in July 2004, to help out! I am still helping out eleven months later. I was born in London and attended a secondary school for my education. I was part of a 'normal' white British environment and moved to Watford in 1970.

I have grown to appreciate different cultures over the years and really enjoy meeting members and friends of the Association. I have helped to promote the Association by producing quarterly Newsletters, compiling a data base, sending out material to Watford Council and other organisations in and around the Watford area.

We have a new computer which is much faster and includes use of the Internet, where I have been able to access information such as Gift Aid for the Association. Additionally, a new fax machine and laser printer has been acquired by Ademola, Development Worker to make office tasks easier.

We have also purchased new filing cabinets and have sorted out old and out-dated information and filed away documentations that may be useful in the future. This is still ongoing and we aim to have a comprehensive index available in the near future, to assist anyone to find information they might be looking for. Theresa and I have also introduced new finance recording and keep track of all incoming invoices/credits, etc. making it much easier to keep budget control.

Last July, I was involved in preparing for the visit from the Governor General of Jamaica and this involved communicating with dignitaries such as The Mayor of Watford - Dorothy Thornhill; the Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire - The Police and Fire Brigade, Transco Gas, along with various Councillors and Committee Members, as well as members and friends of the Association. I acquired and developed skills that were new to me, gained confidence and liaised successfully with all parties to achieve a very successful and interesting occasion.

During Black History Month, in October 2004, I assisted with setting up the display in Watford Library, produced membership application forms, listed and labelled artefacts, manned the Exhibition and assisted at the Workshops during October Half Term.

A Cultural Evening was also held at which I attended with my husband Richard, we both appreciated the warm welcome received from everyone present at the evening. We also hosted a Grande Finale evening at the Bill Everett Centre on 30th October, 2004, for which the Hall was donated, free of charge, through my liaison with the Watford Borough Council.

I volunteered and worked during Black History month at the Exhibition held at Watford Central Library. I met a wide section of the community and heard so many constructive comments. It was really encouraging to see its effect on people and was so popular that Watford Library extended it until the end of November .It gave the Association a positive and encouraging profile.

I thoroughly enjoyed the voluntary and employed hours that I spent during this time and learnt a great deal about the culture, music, food and history surrounding Africa; The Caribbean and other countries.

In December I applied for the post of Administrator and was successful. I decided to Job-Share and in February Theresa Rynn joined me as joint Administrator.

A fund-raising evening was held at the end of January which I assisted in promoting, and achieved the sum of approximately £460 for the Association.

On March 1st, 2005, a lunch was held at TACEP, organised by Enid Saunders, which I prepared invitations for, delivering several by hand to ensure that sufficient notice of the event was given. This again raised over £250 towards the TACEP project.

I am looking forward to projects and events in 2005/06, working with Theresa to support the Supplementary School; strengthening links with the Executive Committee; obtaining more information on Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia. I have to thank Ademola for his encouragement over the months I've worked here and we will continue to support all his hard work in seeking funding, events and aid to develop the Association further in the future.

Jan Westwood and Theresa Rynn
Admin Support Workers

Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia Support Group Report

2004 – 2005 can best be described as consolidating what has gone before, looking to the future and sorting out priorities; what as a small group committed to the cause of Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia is feasible and how it fits in with other calls on limited time and resources.

We have assessed how we can meet demands on time and decided that we would meet bi-monthly, and so far this has worked well. Key activities for 2004 were The Awareness Event in July when the younger group members set up a stall under the flyover, distributed leaflets, spoke with people, answered questions and generally spread the word about Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia. In October we had a very successful bazaar at the Henderson Hall in Abbots Langley. Members will be aware that this is our only fundraising event, so it is with some sadness I have to report that for a variety of reasons this will be our last such event, implication being that we will have to look for other ways to raise funds.

Focus for 2005 will be the Annual Meeting and Awareness Event at the Holywell Community centre on Wednesday 6th July 12.30pm – 4.30pm.

For a number of years we were fortunate to have the services of two trained Sickle Cell Counsellors who gave a sterling service both to people in Watford but also provided information on request to a much wider area, to Sicklers and their families, students including a grateful trainee midwife in Northampton, alas with the passage of time both ladies have signalled that they are no longer able to continue. The search is now on to find two people willing and able to train and to date we are cautiously optimistic. I therefore must record our sincere thanks to both ladies for their time, expertise and commitment and wish them well for the future. We are also grateful to the Primary Care Trust for agreeing to meet the cost of training the two new counsellors.

We have never lost sight of the reason the Sickle Cell Group (later Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia) was set up, that is to support Sicklers and their families and that remains the case. In recent months we have been in contact with at least two families with children having the condition and who are now receiving information and support.

This year we are able to refer one youngster to the Sickle Cell Society in London for their holiday scheme and hope he will enjoy the benefits of spending a week with others with a similar illness.

We continue to be an important resource to those with Sickle Cell, their families and carers providing support and information and where appropriate a listening ear. Our plan for the coming year is to redouble our efforts to re-establish meaningful dialogue with our local hospital and other health professionals, and so enhance the services we are able to provide.

Althea McLean O.B.E.

Chair Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia Support Group

Social Work Student Placement Report

I am a second year student from the University of Hertfordshire studying a BSc (Hons) Social Work Degree. As part of my course I must complete 100 days placement in order to progress to the third and final year. This would enable me to gain valuable experience about what I have learnt in lectures and how these can be applied in a work setting and to get an insight into the work of organisations and their role with service users.

I started this placement in October 2004, and it took me a while to get settled into the routine of what the Association does for the community of Watford. Staff at the Association have embraced me into their work and have made me feel very welcome and part of their team.

At the office I have helped staff with admin work such as photocopying, answering the phone, taking down messages, filing, posting letters and writing out letters to other organisations.

I am placed under the supervision of Enid Saunders who is my Practice Assessor. Together we carry out initial assessments and she guides me through my work and keeps me updated on any news and outstanding work that I have to complete. She has helped me a lot through my time, during the placement, and I am grateful for her time and effort she has put into me

I have spent the majority of my time getting to know the members of TACEP at the Luncheon club on Tuesdays and I have built a close relationship with them. There I enjoy helping out with lunchtime duty and I feel as though the members rely on me to carry out certain tasks and help them. The members are lovely people and really do appreciate hard work and dedication that Enid Saunders and other staff do to make sure that their needs are being met.

Being a member of TACEP allows the members to interact with new people, be part of conferences, gives them a voice to state how they feel and allows them to go on trips around the country. It gives the members empowerment and independence.

At the office the staff keep regular updates on what each person is doing by having a staff meeting every Monday. This helps the process of effective communication, which is good as it allows each person to express their problems and inform the Development Worker of any issues they have.

My placement ends in June 2005 and I will be sad to leave but I am very grateful for the experience of working with the elderly and seeing the difficulties voluntary organisations go through in order to provide a service to their users.

With the experience I have gained during my time at the placement I should be able to apply new skills and a greater understanding of the importance of service users feedback to my next placement

It takes hard work and determination to produce a change and this Association has made considerable strides in the involvement of its service users into shaping services provided.

Ashleigh Williams
Placement Student

The African Caribbean Elders Project

The African Caribbean Elders Project (TACEP) now in its tenth year continues to provide consistent culturally sensitive care services to its members and friends. Its functions are increasing and membership is growing. However over the last six months numbers have dropped significantly due to long term illness. Social events organised are enjoyed by all. This includes various networking working opportunities and partnerships with other organisations.

Dominoes remain the main attraction especially for the men and cheerful banter and competition is always present.

One of the main activities this year was the recording of experiences gained in this country over the last 50 years. This reminiscence writing will be published later this year. This was made possible by a grant from Community Foundation and Awards For All. The project was initiated by Ademola, the Development Worker, and coordinated by the well known Grenadian Writer and author Jean Buffong.

The yearly outing to Bournemouth was very successful and we were able to take two coach loads. Keep fit and Tai Chi sessions remain very popular and members continually speak highly of the benefits. All staff continue to make the sessions worthwhile and members are very appreciative.

As part of partnership working we have students on placements from the University of Hertfordshire. This is our sixth year and this year the placement has increased from fifty to a hundred days. This vital link is for Social Work students to gain first hand experience of issues affecting voluntary sector as service providers. This scheme also provided us the opportunity to meet with a tutor from a Polish University who is trying to run a similar course.

I would like to thank all members of TACEP, the Executive Committee, the staff and Holywell staff for their continued support, time and energy throughout the year. I would especially like to thank our funders Adult Care Services for the continued financial support.

Enid Saunders

Luncheon Club Co-ordinator

Watford African Caribbean Supplementary School Report

This year Watford African Caribbean Supplementary School (WACCS) celebrates its 10th Anniversary.

WACSS was the brainchild of The Watford African Caribbean Association under the leadership of the then Community Development Worker Kerwin Doctrove. Kerwin left soon after and it was David Lake with the commitment of a small band of volunteers who brought the dream to fruition. Three of those original volunteers have remained in the vanguard of the school ever since, Marcia Johnson, Clive Saunders and Valerie Osborne. Ademola Adeniji has taken over from David Lake and we hope to have many positive years working with him.

We are extremely proud of the fact that the School has now been contributing to the educational, cultural and social development of African Caribbean origin young people in Watford for the last 10 years. Its main aims and objectives are deep seated in the founding members' words:

"The African Caribbean Supplementary School is a black voluntary project whose aim is to assist in maximizing the educational, cultural and physical development of our youth so that their passage through school and into adulthood can be a successful one"

The School complements the work done by young people in their mainstream, schools. It started off in Holywell JMI School but after a few years relocated to Westfield Community School where it has remained ever since. We continue to open every Saturday during term time between 10.00am and 1.00pm.

When it opened on 29th April 1995, the School had two qualified teachers, a student teacher, an ex teacher and a handful of pupils and although the teaching staff numbers of have not risen significantly over the years – there are three qualified teachers, some dedicated volunteers and teaching assistance on an ad hoc basis from MECSS - the number of children on our books has risen and stands at around sixty-five. The dedication of the teaching staff and volunteers indicates their loyalty and commitment to improving the educational standard of our children.

Our achievements over the years have now been well documented. Young people who have remained with the school over the long term have done significantly better than the average for African Caribbean origin young people at GCSE level. Our young people tell us of the value of their time at the school. One ex student, Gemma Johnson, has become a volunteer classroom assistant and can be found helping in the classroom most Saturdays. Her contribution is most appreciated and she is to be applauded for her commitment.

Like most charitable organizations, we have challenges that have to be met head on to maintain the School at its current standard, none more so than publicising our existence. We would very much appreciate every one of you spreading the word to family, friends and acquaintances about the work we do. We welcome visitors to the School to discuss any aspects of what is on offer.

Our other main challenge is to maintain funding. Financial stability will enable us to continue to provide sufficiently good quality teaching staff, creative, artistic and educational activities and ensure the long term future of the School. We exist purely on, small contributions from funders such as Hertfordshire County Council, occasional donations, fund raising events and the small fee paid by pupils. We particularly welcome your support at our fund raising events or as volunteers in a range of capacities. We would love to hear from anyone who could help.

We currently have our highest level of participation of children for many years and we would like to keep it that way with your support.

We have already indicated something of our progress over the last ten years. The last year has itself been one of significance. Over the year our achievements have included:

- Organising a successful family social evening
- Two quiz nights
- Attendance at the London & the Black Child Conference, hosted by Diane Abbot, MP
- Participation in the Rainbow Festival
- A visit to the African Village which as usual proved to be very enjoyable
- Participation in the making of the Aiming High Video concerning our children's education with Hertfordshire County Council's African Caribbean Achievement Team
- Attendance at Westfield's Healthy Fun Day & World Day
- A short arts production with the SNAP theatre company

- Participation in the Educational Forum supported by MECSS
- Co-ordinating, with St Albans and Stevenage Supplementary Schools, the Black History Month Education Conference held in St Albans in October 2004;
- A trip to the Hackney Empire to see Aladdin
- Our own successful Christmas concert and play
- Organisation of a social event in January 2005 with the Association
- Supported events held by Supplementary Schools in St. Albans and Stevenage

We continue to explore opportunities to develop the range of activities that the school is engaged in and for our anniversary year we have identified a number of activities such as:

- An Open Day
- Sponsored walk
- Bowling
- Quiz night
- Children's Disco etc

We have also identified Science as our theme for 2005. This is fitting as it is also Einstein's 100th birthday. Should we be successful in our bid for funding, we plan to hold a series of science events later this year. Science is an important factor in all of our lives but particularly our children's lives. It's an area that warrants our focus. So along with our Black History, Maths and English lessons, Science will play a particularly important part in the School during the coming months

We hope to secure maximum engagement from the community in all these activities.

The future of our children's education remains one that requires us to maintain focus. We are concerned that the reduction of funding for MECSS could have an adverse effect on the valued support that is provided for us by the ACAT staff. We will continue to press the County to retain this support.

The school is maintained significantly by the dedication of the small committee consisting of:

Marcia Johnson

Nicki Simpson Gray

Clive Saunders

Grace West

Valerie Osborne

We thank them all for their work in co-ordinating the range of activities that have taken place and those currently being organised. With their effort and wider support the work of the school continues to go from strength to strength. However, we have a continuing need for more people and we extend an open invitation for others to join us in developing the school.

We also extend our thanks to all those who have supported our activities over the last year. In particular the Association's Executive Committee members and in addition Sue Reynolds of Reynolds Coaches for transporting us free of charge to the Hackney Empire at Christmas.

As we close this year's 10th Anniversary Report, there is one more person we must convey our heartfelt thanks and that is Enid Saunders. Throughout the history of the School Enid has provided unwavering support in many ways. Every Saturday morning, without fail Enid has provided healthy food for the School tuck shop. We can never repay here for her help but we hope our acknowledgement and thanks will go some way to let her see how grateful we are for her continued contribution and support.

Finally, we have completed ten years of making a positive contribution to our children's education and development and with your help and support we hope to complete many more.

School Committee

South Area African Caribbean Team

Team Members; Yemi Dede Noah Kaindima Fay Lindo Michelle Penny Adwoa Djan

In September 2004, Noah and Fay joined the team to replace Janet Dodds and Beverley Hughes who left at the end of July 2004. Madeleine Lake is on secondment to Central MECCS for the year. At the moment the team has two full time teachers, two learning mentors and one bi-cultural teaching assistant/learning mentor.

Restructuring of ACA Team

The team has been going through a process of restructuring this year. The name *The African Caribbean Project* has been changed to *The African Caribbean Team*.

As a result of the changes taking place our work in schools has been fragmented and some teachers have been in more than three schools during the year.

Next year ACAT will be working mainly in secondary schools in line with the government's "Aiming High" Document. The new African Caribbean Team will be working across Hertfordshire and not just in the south of the county. As development teachers we will be working with schools to develop whole school initiatives and strategies that will help raise the achievement of black children for the long-term. This means that ACAT staff will not be working in classrooms with individual pupils although personal contact with pupils will be maintained in activities like homework club and pupils' focus groups. There will be a time schedule for ACAT work in schools.

One major event this year was the making and launching of the "Listening we're Aiming High Video" by the African Caribbean Networking Group in South Hertfordshire. Pupils from Bushey Hall, Bushey Meads, Mount Grace, Queens, WACA Supplementary School and Westfield schools took part in focus groups' discussions in their respective schools. Some were selected to take part in the video, which was filmed at St Michael's School. The launching of the Video on March 8th 2005 was a successful event attended by Mr John Harris, Director of "Children, Schools and Families, schools and the community.

ACAT would like to express their appreciation to all the pupils, staff and schools who took part in the preparation and filming of the video. Our sincere thanks to St Michael's school for allowing us to use their facilities for the filming and launching of the video.

The team together with Madeleine Lake and Sue Boulter is in the process of developing a timeline on the presence of Black people in Britain from 1500 to the present on exhibition boards. It is hoped that the boards together with the teaching resources currently being developed by the team, will be used in schools to celebrate Black history in schools. The resources can be used across the curriculum.

South Area Ethnic Minority Achievement Centre Report

2004/5 has been a challenging year for the African Caribbean Achievement Team (ACAT) in South area. As has been indicated above the re-organisation of ACAT across Hertfordshire has had implications for staffing levels and for support for schools. The re-organisation is now complete. The ACA Team has undertaken extensive training led by Paulette Wisdom, a DfES Aiming High consultant. The revised way of working with schools is taking shape. 2005/6 will see the ACA Team working in partnership with secondary schools across Hertfordshire, who understand the issues for schools, and are willing to work with the 'Aiming High' model.

This model looks at five criteria, which research has shown, are important in raising the educational achievement levels of black and minority ethnic pupils. They are:

- Strong leadership
- Effective teaching and learning
- High expectations and the use of data
- An ethos of respect with a clear approach to racism and bad behaviour
- Parental and community involvement

The Head of the ACA Team in Hertfordshire, Tim Clarke, has identified, through data analysis, those schools that would benefit from the Team working with them. In South area approaches are currently being made to Francis Combe School. (Other schools being approached across Hertfordshire are: John F. Kennedy RC School, Francis Bacon School (West Area), and The Priory School (North Area).

Achievement Data for Hertfordshire

	<u>White British</u>	<u>Black Caribbean</u>	<u>White & Black Caribbean</u>
<u>% Achieving Level 4+ in Key Stage 2 SATs:</u>			
English	82%	75%	77%
Maths	78%	71%	72%
Science	89%	89%	85%
<u>% Achieving Level 5+ in Key Stage 3 SATs</u>			
English	77%	70%	79%
Maths	79%	68%	74%
Science	75%	61%	70%
<u>% Achieving 5* A-C GCSEs</u>			
All pupils	52%	41%	52%
Girls	56%	52%	63%
Boys	45%	41%	28%

It is felt by MECSS and by the ACA Team that working together with schools on ‘whole school’ issues, will contribute to raising the educational achievement levels of African Caribbean origin pupils.

To end on a personal note, I will be retiring at the end of the Summer Term. Due to the MECSS restructuring process, this Centre will become what MECSS has termed an ‘oasis’. It will not have a manager. However, we all feel that the strong links built up by Madeleine Lake and Hugh South, with the African Caribbean Association should be continued after the restructuring is complete. We intend to ensure that the link is built into the new MECSS structure.

MECSS will keep you updated with restructuring information.

Adwoa mentioned the Black History Exhibition Boards which is currently in development. When they are completed you will be invited to a launch event.

Best wishes to you all for the coming year.

SUSAN BOULTER

Acting Head of South Area Ethnic Minority Achievement Centre