

FESTIVAL OF DIVERSITY 2005

A) Background

The Festival of Diversity is a community-led Festival aiming at bringing communities and cultures together, creating the space for understanding, sharing a cultural heritage and respecting diversity through social and cultural activities. It was created in 2003, when 10 agencies from the voluntary and public sector organized a range of events around arts, food, dance, sports and music aimed at communities in various areas of the Borough. The first edition was such a success that the Festival of Diversity carried on in 2004, over a period of 2 weeks this time, and involving 29 agencies and organizations. A steering group was also created to oversee the organization of the Festival, work alongside and support the events organizers.

B) Festival of Diversity 2005

This year, it took place between 9th July and 6th August with events happening almost every day across the Borough. About 7,000 people attended the 38 events held (7 more than in 2004).

New events this year included the first Oldham Pride, in which 700 people took part, and the Diversity @ School day, an awareness raising time for pupils from primary schools in the Borough to learn more about other cultures. New partnerships also emerged: Bluefire, the new project from Kino Film in Manchester, put a showcase of short-films made by Asian and Black directors; Shaw & Royton Area committee supported activities in both areas.

The Festival is also a major joint-project where 38 organizations and agencies from the voluntary, public and faith sectors all celebrate diversity in their own way. Some organisations did not receive financial support from the Festival of Diversity* but did participate and found it beneficial in terms of profile raising eg the Women's Network or Community Links. The £12,000 budget allocated for the Festival enabled community and voluntary groups to organize an event as part of the Festival and build their capacity. One of the particularities of the Festival of Diversity is its location: the events were held all around the Borough, enabling organizing groups and agencies and communities across the Borough to feel part of the bigger picture.

Thanks to the success of the Festival and the way it has grown, the Festival's steering group felt that there was a need to appoint a dedicated Co-ordinator. Supported by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund through the Oldham Partnership, the purpose of the post is to develop, co-ordinate and deliver the Festival of Diversity but also look at the strategic links between the Community Festivals in the Borough (explore joint funding bids, marketing initiatives or opportunities to develop audiences, etc.)

C) Next steps

The Festivals Co-ordinator is currently re-organizing the internal structure of the Festival, in order for the Festival of Diversity to eventually become an independent voluntary structure. Roles of the steering group as a potential board of trustees working alongside the events organizers – the delivery group, all facilitated by the Festivals Co-ordinator

are being developed. Also being planned is next year's programme: increasing the capacity building of various groups by emphasizing on area-based projects/ events, organizing a big final celebration bringing communities together and showcasing all the work created prior to the Festival, increasing the partnerships with other regional agencies (Kino-Films, the African Festival UK, Community Arts Network – CAN-, etc.). Various funding streams are also being considered and applications for grants being completed in order to ensure the sustainability of the Festival of Diversity in the medium to longer term.

* The Festival of Diversity is supported by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund through the Oldham Partnership.

D) Additional documents

Outputs of the Festival of Diversity 2004 – 2005

Output Code - Description	Outputs 2004	Outputs 2005
1J No of people gaining benefit from projects to promote personal&social devt	2494	3248
7A(ii) No of local people given access to new sports opportunities or facilities	0	309
7A(iii) No of local people given access to new cultural opportunities or facilities	6317	5128
8A(i) No of voluntary organizations supported	16	8
8A(ii) No of community organizations supported	42	11
8C No of individuals involved in voluntary work	160	134
8F No of community capacity building initiatives	0	3
20A No of performances held	34	45
21A No of local people involved in decision making	127	145
22A No of Festivals held	1	1
23A No of women only activities	1	1

Significant figures

- 38 events across the Borough (out of which the FoD financially supported 15)
- About 7,000 participants
- 39 partners / organisers of which
 - 23 are from the voluntary sector
 - 4 are public organisations
 - 12 are from the local authority
- 5 schools involved in the Diversity @ school Day
- 5 workplaces involved in the Diversity @ work Day
- 26 press releases / articles in the local papers or publications*
- Grants offered from the Festival of Diversity varied from around £200 to £1,000. In average, the FoD offered £500 support per community / voluntary organisations.

RESULTS OF THE FESTIVAL OF DIVERSITY PARTICIPANTS' EVALUATION

