



Project Report – Period: May to September 2012

The project was mainly centre based and provided information, advice and practical support to people from disadvantaged backgrounds on the issues that matter to them most. The nature of support provided was varied and some of the services provided were as follows:

- Employment support
- Housing and Council Tax
- Benefits query/reviews and appeals
- Arts and Crafts sessions for people with mental health conditions
- ESOL classes
- Open days and interactive sessions for residents
- Sign posting and referrals
- Volunteering /Placements
- Capacity building for community groups

Please see the breakdown of services in Appendix 1.

Appendix 1: Breakdown of Services

The services were provided to age group from 19 years to 75 years old – male and female. For the project purposes we delivered one to one support to 76 clients on variety of issues. The nature of assistance sought would overlap in most cases as a client would access variety of services.

Male: 45 Female: 31

Additionally 12 women also successfully attended and completed Level 1/Level 2 English and Citizenship courses at our centre and delivered by Lancashire Adult College.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS:

Unemployed: 48 Part-time: 18 Full-time: 10

The above categories include people on long term sickness, facing redundancies, housewives keen to enhance their skills, OAPs, Carers etc.

SERVICES:

Employment Support: **Number of people benefited: 33**

The support includes career advice, CV making, completing application form, action plans, interview techniques, job search etc.

Volunteering: **Number of people benefited: 6**

This reflects people who expressed interest to volunteer for Preston Muslim Forum. The appropriate opportunities were provided and as a result they contributed their time and skills ranging from 6 hours to 12 hours per week. Two volunteers were able to secure employment and one was referred to local disability organisation for further volunteering opportunities.

Two volunteers with extensive experience in advice and guidance have committed one day a week –each, to volunteer with PMF. This has enabled us to deliver advice and guidance especially on benefits and welfare issues in a more structured and sustained way.

Benefits/Entitlement: **Number of people benefited: 52**

This includes one off queries, forms filling, liaising with agencies/departments, advice on review and appeal, representation and so on. The benefits covered were Tax Credits, JSA, ESA, Pensions, Housing and Council Tax benefits etc.

Other Support: **Number of people benefited: 26**

This includes services such as empowering residents of community groups to contribute to local issues, immigration, translation, debt advice, domestic violence and miscll.

Capacity Building:

PMF continued to provide support to local groups in the following ways;

- Assisted Iqra Education Trust to launch Immigration surgeries and ESOL classes
- Set up NEW Women Coffee morning group – Wednesday mornings
- Meeting and governance support to Canaries Community Association
- Providing of facilities and support to Maa Bachcha group
- Women volunteers encouraged organising Arts and Crafts project.

Other Initiatives:

- Arts and Crafts session held in June-July 2012 for 8 weeks for women with mental health issues.
- PMF moved to Hamaara Centre at Castleton Road from Deepdale Road.
- Organised Open Day to announce new venue and also conducted resident consultation on the same day to capture resident's feedback on service provision of PMF and other agencies.
- Organised Guild Party.
- ESOL and citizenship classes. On-going 12 month project.(will report in next quarter)
- Cervical and Breast Cancer project – on-going. (will report in next quarter)
- Older people volunteers to launch Social Club from 5th November

Outcomes:

- *Increased opportunities for local people to receive practical support and access services that matters to them most.*

The project has enabled local people to access PMF for variety of services and especially those that matter to them. The absence of similar service provision in the area has enabled more people to access PMF services.

- *Increased opportunities for residents to respond to local needs through their involvement and participation in community based projects, consultations and regular feedback during drop-in services, in partnership with local authority.*

The residents have participated in variety of initiatives especially contributing to resident consultation to identify service provision in the area and way forward for the new centre. The residents have also been involved in cancer research project where they feedback useful information to Primary Care Trust. PMF also hosted Training events for BME forum at the centre in partnership with the City Council enabling residents to get involved.

- *Enhanced provision to gain new skills, qualifications and employment for people from disadvantaged backgrounds, through targeted support and in partnership with relevant providers*

The project through the employed staff and sessional workers plays pivotal role in providing information, advice and practical help in the areas of employment, training and education. The ESOL and citizenship classes are now held regularly at the centre.

- *Increased confidence of local residents enabling them to take ownership of their situation to improve their life style and make positive contribution to neighbourhood regeneration.*

The project is providing on-going capacity building support to local groups such as Canaries Community Association, Maa Bachcha group, Deepdale young starz and others and this has enabled residents to become active and aware of local issues. The residents now attend PACT meetings and raise issues with a view to resolve them.

- *Improved usage of community asset, through increased community activities at Hamaara Centre*

The new location at Castleton Road will bring added benefits as the Centre will now be used for all purposes, i.e. services, projects, training etc will be delivered from under one roof.