Celebrating Bradford's cultural heritage

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Changing Bradford will explore the way that South Asian culture, business, religion and arts has shaped the city of Bradford since the end of the Second World War.

The project has a strong intergenerational focus and will recruit and train a group of young people as oral history interviewers. They will interview a wide range of older South Asian residents, from retired factory workers and community workers to successful politicians, business leaders and artists, documenting the themes of immigration, built heritage and community achievement. Assisted by an experienced photographer and designer, the young people will produce a high quality publication and exhibition display, to be launched at Bradford's prestigious Impressions Gallery in this autumn.

COEMO's Chief Executive, Dr Mohammed Salam, believes the project has huge potential to promote a positive image of Bradford: "The idea for this project came out of consultation with some of Bradford's older South Asian residents, many of whom came to live and work in the city in the 1950s and 60s. Life in Bradford has changed dramatically since then. They have seen considerable changes in the city and it became clear that there is a danger that the stories and experiences of the older generation will be lost if they are not recorded. We are very excited about this project and very grateful for our project partners joining with us to make it happen."

Dr Salam added: "Bradford is rightly famous as the 'curry capital" of Britain but is too often perceived in a negative light, with the focus on racial and religious tensions and economic problems. In reality, migrant workers coming to the city since the 1950s have helped to create a rich and diverse cultural heritage and a thriving South Asian business economy, reflected in Bradford's arts centres, mosques, Gurdwaras, temples, shops and famous restaurants. The Changing Bradford project will investigate and record the experiences of South Asian workers, businesses, and cultural and political leaders, celebrating how they have shaped key aspects of Bradford's economic, social and cultural life."

Notes to editors

The Consortia of Ethnic Minority Organisations (COEMO) was established in 2000 as an umbrella body for Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) organisations and groups in Bradford and District. COEMO is a registered charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee.

COEMO's role is to support BME community groups and voluntary sector organisations, helping them to engage more effectively in mainstream activities and services in Bradford. Services include advice, training, information, advocacy and support networks.

COEMO's strategic role is to help build an infrastructure for the black and ethnic minority voluntary sector and to help individuals, groups and communities in a changing and challenging environment.

COEMO aims to empower ethnic minority organisations to be more participative and more effective in mainstream activities in Bradford and beyond, and to influence the perceptions of funders towards ethnic minority led organisations.

Further information

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