Ealing migrants hit the airwaves to tell their stories

26/01/2010

Welcome to Ealing will be run by BBA Media which manages Westside FM radio. It will focus on the stories of people from the South Asian, Somali, West Indian and Middle Eastern communities who have settled in the borough since the Second World War.

A team of volunteers will be recruited and trained in research, recording oral histories, radio interviewing, voiceovers and dramatisation. They will work with15 people from each of the four migrant communities. The results will include a series of live docu-dramas to be broadcast on Westside FM radio in February 2011.

To coincide with this an exhibition will be held at Ealing Town Hall showcasing the heritage of the various communities studied. The docu-dramas will also be put on CD, 250 copies of which will be distributed to local schools, colleges, migrant organisations, libraries, and community groups.

The topics covered by the project will include the circumstances that led the different communities to leave their homelands and the reasons for choosing Ealing as a place to settle in the UK. It will look at their experiences when they first arrived in the borough and race relations generally, including how they were perceived in the media.

For BBA Media, Amar Chadha, said: “This project is a fantastic opportunity for local communities to tell their story of how and why they chose to settle in Ealing. It will also educate the wider public about the plight of migrant communities, preserve their heritage and help encourage cohesion.”

Commenting for the Heritage Lottery Fund, Head of HLF London, Sue Bowers, said: “In raising awareness of the reasons why different migrant groups have settled in Ealing at different times this project will assist understanding and community cohesion as well as making a contribution to the history of the borough and helping to develop the skills of the volunteers taking part.”

Ealing is a priority borough for the HLF which has been encouraging local organisations to come forward with heritage projects.

Notes to editors

Ealing’s West Indian community was the first to settle in the borough arriving during the late 1940s. They were followed by Punjabi and Pakistani migrants from the 1950s, Somalis from the 1990s and Afghan, Iranian and Iraqi settlers from 2000 onwards.

Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported 33,900 projects, allocating £4.4billion across the UK.

Further information

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