

2010

ANNUAL REPORT

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Aims & Objectives of Caxton House

We are committed to the goals of community development in which the people of the neighbourhood are responsibly involved in solving problems, rather than as recipients of services provided by others.

We are concerned with the fulfilment of individuals, the growth of self-confidence and the acceptance of responsibility. Caxton House will be autonomous

and have a variety of projects that cross-fertilise each other and involve all age groups of the community.

We shall be active in working and co-ordinating with other groups and agencies in the areas. We expect to be involved in looking ahead in planning to meet the needs of the people. We are determined to avoid concentrating on symptoms to the exclusion of causes.

Chair's Report

The last year has seen a number of new projects take space at Caxton House. We continue to be able to attract charitable groups whose objectives and ethos compare with our own and we have been particularly pleased with the way in which occupants have been able to work with and feed off each other, to their mutual advantage and to the benefit of the local community as a whole. Our best wishes go to all new arrivals.

We are also delighted that one of the most successful groups at Caxton House, the Islington & City Credit Union, has expanded to occupy the room vacated in 2009 by the closure of the Under Fives project. We very much hope that the Credit Union continues to prosper.

In addition we have adopted an environmental and sustainability policy within Caxton House. The damage caused to our environment by the way we all live is now well understood and at Caxton House we will be doing our bit to limit this damage as far as possible. The installation last year of solar paneling to generate our own electricity is just a beginning.

As the tenure of the previous Government moved to a close, funding became available for various other community initiatives and we had some success in attracting money to Caxton House. Following the election earlier this year, a rather different strategy is being pursued. There has been much talk about the establishment of a Big Society in which local people are empowered to take a more active role

in the running of affairs in their area. At Caxton House we can say with some justification that this is what we have always been about. However, we are acutely aware that notions held dear in high places are not always put into effect at ground level. Caxton House's core grant from Islington Council is to be reviewed later this year and already there is talk from the Council of a 25% cut. We appreciate that these are difficult times for publicly funded bodies but we hope that some consideration can be given to the work that we do with some of the most vulnerable people in the community.

I would like to thank Paul Furze, Sue Collins and the rest of the staff for their hard work over the last 12 months. In addition I wish to thank all those involved in running projects at Caxton House. Thanks also to Jeremy Corbyn MP for his unwavering support, to Islington Council and local Council members, to the charities who have helped us financially and to our auditors Crouch Chapman & Co.

I also want to thank members of the Management Committee for the time they give and the attention applied to the more difficult decisions we have had to take.

Finally, to all users of Caxton House, thank you for your support.

Eldon Pethybridge

Chair of Caxton House

Centre Manager

The past twelve months have been extremely positive for everyone involved in Caxton House. However, like many organisations across the Voluntary and Community sector, we face the daunting prospect of funding cuts to key services and therefore the past year could in many ways be viewed as the 'calm before the storm'. It is how we respond to these challenges that will determine our long-term sustainability and ensure that we are able to continue the important role we currently fulfill in delivering much needed services to local communities.

Among the many positive aspects that we can take from the past year has been our continuing partnership work with other Voluntary organisations and Islington Council. This includes the collaborative work we have undertaken with Octopus Community Network (OCN) where a number of excellent initiatives have been developed relating to generational worklessness, children and young people, elders and environmental sustainability. We have also worked successfully with Voluntary Action Islington (VAI) on their community buildings project which has seen us help promote cooperation between voluntary organisations, share information and resources and strive for greater cost effectiveness. Our representation on the Safer Islington Partnership theme group has enabled us to develop work with statutory bodies and provide a voice for the voluntary sector in the development of initiatives relating to health, education and crime. Over the course of the next few months, we will be looking to build upon and strengthen these partnerships as we aim to maximize resources and deliver a wider range of activities.

During the past year, we have been pleased to welcome into Caxton House, a number of new initiatives and organisations. These new groups, which have included The Green Firm, Choices and the Somali Women and Children Action Group, have enabled us to strengthen and enhance the range of services that we are able to provide to young people and families. These projects join a diverse portfolio of charities and organisations already based within the centre – details of which you will find elsewhere in this report -who continue to provide much needed and valuable services to the community.

With the uncertainty over future funding streams for our services, it is important that we continue to adopt a pro-active approach to fundraising and work towards the diversification of funding streams. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our local ward councillors who have supported a number of funding applications to the North Area Committee, thereby enabling our Out-of-School Club, Under 5's Drop-in and TimeBank projects to purchase additional resources and widen

the scope of activities that they are able to provide to their service users.

I am pleased to report that during the year we have developed and adopted an Environmental and Sustainability Policy for Caxton House. This forms an important part of our commitment towards reducing the 'carbon footprint' and encouraging local biodiversity and food growing projects. In addition, OCN's Wild Places initiative which has been developed in partnership with Islington's Ecology Centre and funded through Natural England, will give Islington communities the opportunity to learn more about biodiversity. As part of this initiative, we will be transforming the seating area at the front of the building into an urban-habitat area. Our Edible Islington funded garden project has seen the construction of a rainwater harvesting system and the development of a nature garden.

As part of our commitment to providing high quality user-led services, we are working with VAI towards obtaining a VISIBLE quality standard mark for Caxton House. Through this we aim to promote quality and best practice, strive for continuous improvement in what we do and improve the way we manage and deliver our services and activities.

We have made significant strides in the provision of work-place opportunities in Caxton House, whether for volunteers, work placements for students from Islington and Haringey schools or engaging staff through the Future Jobs Fund scheme. In addition, we have been pleased to engage the services of a six month secondment from the Home Office who has worked with us on developing and implementing a fundraising strategy which has led to a number of successful applications, thereby widening the activities that we are able to provide.

Throughout the year we have maintained our role as a vibrant and multi-purpose community centre. We offer a focal point for the local community, a place where people can come together and engage in a varied range of educational, training and social activities. Our facilities continue to be well utilized as a community resource for a wide range of functions including conferences, sports activities, social events and community meetings.

Finally I would like to thank staff, Management Committee members and volunteers for all their hard work, support and dedication over the past year. I would also like to thank the many groups and users of the centre who have helped contribute to a very positive year.

Paul Furze, Centre Manager



Under Fives Drop-In and Toy Library

At Caxton House Drop-In we provide opportunities for children to grow, play and make a positive contribution. The Drop-In is a special place for children to grow and develop vital skills.

The Drop-In has still kept its warm and friendly atmosphere and parents and carers are always keen to get involved, from fund raising ideas or helping tidy up after a messy session to donating unwanted toys or books or even bringing along some fruit to share at the healthy snack table

Another year seems to have flown by, with lots of changes in the year ahead also lots of exciting things happening in the under fives.

Funding

We were firstly granted £500 from LBI Toy Library & Consultation Services, which was used to update our toy library stock as it was really out of date. The toy library has been going from strength to strength; lending toys to eager children and their parents, the toy library has come a long way in the last year.

We were also lucky in receiving £500 from the Douglas Scarff Trust, which we used to purchase a large rug for the babies to play on (which has been a real asset since our move into the cafe).

In addition to this we have just been awarded £1766.29 from North Area Committee grant July 2010. This is for a new book corner unit, some reading cushions and fold away tables, as the tables we are using are really difficult to store and heavy to move around each session. Most importantly we applied for some trips to visit farms and try fruit picking which will really benefit the children, who may never experience the pleasure of picking their own fruit or even seeing where it comes from. So the Drop-In is really looking forward to the coming year.

We were also lucky in receiving £150 from John Lewis which we put to good use in purchasing some new toys and safety gates for the cafe area.

Events

The Drop-In held its annual Christmas party with special guest Father Christmas and as you can imagine was a real treat for the children. We made party hats, decorations, Christmas crackers, danced around the Christmas tree and there were lots of smiles all round.

In May we had a visit from our local health visitors for a casual questions and answers session for parents who wanted some advice, which was a great success for many who attended.

At the end of May 2010 we moved from the nursery into the cafe area. As many were aware it was a move our community at the Drop-In was not looking forward to but I am pleased to tell you it has been most successful with our user base becoming stronger.

Placements

The Drop-In provided a student placement for their school work experience from a local school which was a great success. We also provided a placement to Emma winter from the future jobs fund for six months. Emma has been an asset to the Drop-In and will be really missed by myself and the children.

Training

Karen Doyle and Emma Winter attended a one day safeguarding and child protection briefing in April 2010.

Karen Doyle completed a two day paediatric first aid training course in May 2010.

Karen Doyle, Toy Library and Drop In Organiser



First aid class



Playscheme fun



Outsides the Emirates

Out of School Club

The Out-Of-School Club, running since the late seventies, continues to provide activities for children aged 5 to 13 years old. Another year has flown by and we are pleased that we're still able to continue to plan activities for the Out-Of-School-Club and the holiday playschemes. We have also reviewed and updated our policies and procedures.

Our aim has always been to make our programmes as educational, exciting, entertaining and stimulating as possible. This year there were a lot of sports activities going on through the club, including cricket, football, badminton coaching, rounders, table tennis and hall games. Also available were building-based activities such as candle making, painting, colouring, board games, computer games and other arts and crafts. When weather permits, we like to get out of the centre to visit our local parks for further sports activities. As mentioned, the playscheme, although still with lots of building-based activities, focused on a football and athletics theme this year. There were lots of multi-sports coaching activities, held in the local park, which were organized with the Access to Sports and the Kick2 project. Both of these proved to be extremely popular, with most of the children taking part in the multi-sports every day. The training and physical activities gave the children a chance to take part in a range of sports and gave them an opportunity to build up their strength, stamina and confidence. It also encouraged them to work together as a team and make new friends.

Alongside the playscheme, all the children took part in Basic First Aid where they had the opportunity to learn about what signs and symptoms to look out for during an asthma attack, as well as the recovery position and dressing wounds/using slings for support etc. Team-building was also a part of our activities. As all the children are able to take part in our team-building games they got a chance to learn new games that would then translate into new skills. It helped build self-esteem, as well as trust amongst each other and it's just plain fun.

Healthy eating sessions were also a part of our activities; this enabled the children to participate in a group discussion about healthy foods, their nutrition, vitamins and minerals etc. The children enjoyed these sessions and paid good attention.

During the annual Black History Month, a number of activities were held throughout the borough, which a few of our members went to. To contribute, we decided to put on a display of black books and videos/DVD's for the children in the club. We also set up events to celebrate Halloween, Guy Fawkes Night and the annual Christmas play which was enjoyed by everyone who attended. Our members' meetings still continue, and everyone is encouraged to have their say, suggestion or criticism. Parents are also encouraged to have a say in planning the club and playscheme programmes.

Volunteers

This year, the Out-Of-School Club were very lucky to have a number of young people doing their work experience with us. Arshon Spencer from Highgate Wood School in April, Hafiza Mussammad from Mount Carmel, James Skinner and Hayden were all the students who joined us. They helped out with various admin duties in our upstairs office, as well as helping with hall activities in the Out-Of-School Club, learning how to work as part of a team and gaining experience for a future job.

I also had a chance to work alongside Christine Nickles, who was on a Home Office secondment to Caxton House for six months. Her business skills, which include marketing and fundraising, helped us to achieve two successful applications to Awards For All.

With another year coming to a close, we are aware of how many people have had a hand in making the club a success. We are grateful to all our funders for



Trip to the farm



Team building

their continued support and for the unstinting hard work of all our volunteers. I would also like to thank Hayley O'Connor from the Future Jobs Fund, Job Centre scheme, for all her hard work within the past six months. It was really nice working with her, and I wish her all the luck in the future.

Also Joanna James, who has been working in the Out-Of-School-Club for the past 15 years, has left us. I would like to give her a BIG thank you for her hard work and support, she was a very good team worker and we will all miss her and wish her good luck. Enjoy your rest!

A big thank you especially to the parents/carers and members for their support, and to the Caxton House Management Committee.

Celia Facey, Senior Playworker



Visiting a Hindu temple



Time Banking at Caxton House!



Social event with Time Bank members and Anand Mandal



Time Bank

Time Banking promotes and strengthens community cohesion through recognising everyone's skills & abilities equally. It also highlights our common interests both on an individual and community level.

Time Banking honors the unique gifts, talents and resources that each of us has to share, regardless of age, employment or ethnic background. Time Banking can also support individuals to put their own ideas into practice. Members are usually called participants and not volunteers because in a Time Bank, everyone becomes both a giver and a receiver.

At Caxton House Time Bank we have over 100 individual members and 18 organisational members offering help in a wide variety of areas. Participants have exchanged a range of skills, doing everything from befriending & social events to I.T training and music tutoring. A number of career development subjects like computer training, book-keeping, mentoring and life coaching have also been exchanged over this year. The concept of giving and receiving has been also put into practice through various activities like: environmental and intergenerational work, one to one and group exchanges, the swap shop, training opportunities, outings, coffee mornings and open days.

This summer, we organised a day trip to a Hindu temple run by Anoopam Mission UK in Middlesex. The trip took place in July and 16 participants came along. This was a very pleasant day-out which provided a positive contribution to the wellbeing of our members. This was possible due to funding provided from our Area Committee to organise Time Bank activities.

Our application to the AB Charitable Trust was successful and we've been awarded £5000 to deliver a mixture of practical craft sessions and "Money Matters" workshops.

We hold regular tea parties and social gatherings in conjunction with Anand Mandal (Asian Elderly Group). These are open to anyone who would like

to meet other participants, and also to find out more about Time Banking or volunteering opportunities in the area.

The Swap Shop initiative continues to be popular. An increasing number of people have benefited from this environmentally friendly Time Bank activity, trading a wealth of items and hours.

Caxton House volunteer Lidya Araya was presented with the Islington Volunteer of the Year Award last year. Lidya's work and dedication was recognised by Volunteering Action Islington. The award was in the long service achievement category for the year 2009/2010. These awards aim to reward volunteers for their individual efforts within our community.

Caxton House benefits from being part of the Islington Time Banks Network (ITBN) which is formed by seven Time Banks enabling its members to take up opportunities across Islington. ITBN currently offers over 150 different volunteering opportunities. These ranges from neighbourly support such as, shopping, gardening and cooking, to skills that are more directly linked to the labour market such as, IT, admin, proofreading, hairdressing and language support.

Our funding from the Islington Strategic Partnership Local Area Agreement runs out in March 2011. We are continuing to search for new sources of financial support and desperately hope that all the good work and achievements made in bringing the Time Banking concept to fruition in Islington will not go to waste. We hope to see the continued success of the Time Banking movement and look forward to sharing another exciting year. In the meantime, I'd like to thank Caxton House Management Committee, our participants & organisational members, the AB Charitable Trust and our Hillrise councillors for all their help and support.

John Garces, Time Bank Broker

CAXTON HOUSE



Connexions Elthorne, CEIAG (Connexions Education Information Advice Guidance) and Connexions Service in Islington is now delivered under the auspices of the Young Peoples Division, which is under the broader heading of Children's Services of Islington. It aims to increase opportunities in learning, work and training for young people in the Hillrise area of the borough.

Connexions Elthorne provides information, guidance and support to all young people aged 13-19 years, and up to the age of 25 if the person has learning or other difficulties, into adulthood and working life. As the personal advisor I am able to help, guide and support young people into education, training or employment in a confidential environment. I also try to support them through any problems that might prevent them from reaching their goals.

The service started in 2001 at Caxton House as a pilot scheme, which then developed into a mainstream service. Presently I am working with a multi-ethnic, multi-faith and multi-gendered active caseload, with a core group of 110 members. I have worked closely with some 57 young people this year, giving one-to-one support. Of this group, some 20 are receiving intensive support and most have gone back to education, received training, or are pursuing job opportunities.

The support and guidance is given in identifying work, training, college and university opportunities. After registering for the Connexions service, work is also done around CV assistance, writing application

forms, information given on benefits and housing needs and advice for those that are homeless. Advice is given to those with drug and anti-social problems (ABC's, ASBO's), going to court, to those who are already in prison and those who are permanently excluded from school.

The service also organizes opportunities to visit career days, have advice shops, conflict projects, consultation projects, health projects and personal development programs. Much of the above is done in conjunction with Caxton House, Elthorne Youth Club and Young Peoples Services.

Much of my work takes me outside of the centre itself, accompanying young people to appointments, job experience venues, court appearances, one-to-one visits in their own homes, etc. I make sure I'm always contactable and generally my time is flexible. Due to the current national political climate, Connexions Hillrise / Elthorne is going to be relocated. I would like to take the opportunity to thank Paul, Sue and the present and past members of staff for their contributions in giving an infrastructure over the last 10 years to deliver successful, meaningful and effective outcomes to hundreds of universal and NEET (Not in Employment Education or Training) young people in the area.

Keith La Rose & Wesley Cayenne,
Personal Advisors for the Hillrise and Elthorne area

Elthorne Connexions



Relaxing in the park



Market stalls at the festival



Quite a performance!



Fun on the pitch

Elthorne Regeneration

We started the New Year slightly better, by appointing a Fund Raiser/Project Co-ordinator. We reviewed and strengthened our aims and objectives, with these new objectives we sent out grants applications to different bodies and we were hopeful.

Events

Our network event went well, more organisations and more people in the community attended and the feedback was positive. A new group from the local estate, Tenants and Residents Association, who have organised and run a project called 'grow your own fruits and vegetables in your garden or in your green box' were also present and gave a presentation.

The annual park festival was also a big success despite the rain, the people still turned up to enjoy their exotic foods, music, steel pan and plethora of goods to buy at a reasonable price. The Islington play rangers were present and they did various activities with the children, the clown was in action all day, two bouncy castles were used this year; one for the younger children and one for the older children.

Finally the African dancers were in action all day, it was a thoroughly enjoyable day.

The Peace Garden

All our plans for the future were abandoned because of lack of success in getting new grants. Sadly Elthorne Regeneration was wound up in September 2010.

Our thanks go to our first elected chair of the director Carol Clinton, and the following directors: Mope Ogunlabi, Celia Facey, Tracey Willoughby, Ayten Orhon and Joanna Deutrom, for all their hard work and contributions. We also thank Ngoma Bishop for all his help and all those groups and organisations that have supported us over the years.

Last but not least, thanks to Islington Council who encouraged us and supported our ideas right from beginning to end.

Mope Ogunlabi, Director



Lunch Club event

Anand Mandal Asian Elderly Project

Anand Mandal has been running for 29 years for elderly people living in the borough of Islington. We have more than 140 members and operate three days a week i.e. Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. We have an average of 30 members coming to the centre.

On arrival they are offered tea, coffee or soft drinks along with biscuits. All the elderly men enjoy playing cards and other games. Every Wednesday we have organised chair based exercise and light yoga classes for all the members who attend on that day.

Anand Mandal also provides advice and information on health and welfare issues. Sometimes we arrange visits to local parks, temples and cultural festivals like "Diwali" which are celebrated in a traditional way.

Anand Mandal is very thankful to Caxton House Management and Time Bank for their support.

Chandu Dhupelia, Project Worker
Saroj Purohit, Chair Person



Tea party with Time Bank



Home Ownership Event

Bahay Kubo Housing Association

Bahay Kubo is a non-profit organization established in 1989 in response to the housing needs of Filipinos in the UK. Its primary objective is to assist Filipinos in the UK gain access to quality and affordable homes.

Bahay Kubo Housing Association Ltd organized a Home Ownership Event held in Stratford, East London, in partnership with East Homes. The event provided a free one stop service to assist Filipinos find affordable government funded homes to buy or rent.

The event was well attended by Bahay Kubo Tenants and other Filipinos who learnt about affordable housing schemes. The Housing Option's representative provided information on the housing options available across London. The mortgage advisor talked through the process of home ownership, eligibility and criteria. Solicitors were also available for those who want to find out the process of buying a home in this country.

Emma Bibal, Co-ordinator



Bahay Kubo members attending the event



Kurdish and Middle Eastern Women's Organisation

The last twelve months were a very successful period for the Kurdish and Middle Eastern Women's Organisation. In our last report we did mention that we were about to launch a DVD on honour based violence, Forced marriages and FGM, which was a collaborative project between KMEWO and Eighteen & Under from Scotland. The launch took place earlier this year at the Amnesty International Centre and was deemed to be a tremendous success by all the attendees. As a result, the Nationwide Foundation, who funded the project, has requested that the launch be replicated in six other regional cities. Arrangements are currently in hand for these to be done between now and March of next year. The launch at the Amnesty International Centre was attended by over one hundred delegates, including representatives from the police, local authorities, Nationwide foundation, CPF, Women's Organisation and Members of Parliament.

The staff have all been brilliant, not only have they reached their targets, they have exceeded these in most instances. Both the Volunteer Project Co-ordinator and the Development Worker worked tirelessly in developing relationships with local

mosques and supplementary schools, which has enabled us to reach a number of women that might otherwise not be possible.

They organised several trips to the Houses of Parliament for the women, and in partnership with the British Red Cross run a series of First Aid Courses. Their interaction with the leaders and members of the Kurdish and Middle Eastern community is indeed very positive and their initiatives in setting up the English Conversational Group deserve special acknowledgement.

I would like to conclude by confirming that the Kurdish and Middle Eastern Women Organisation Limited (KMEWO) is now a registered charity (Registration No.1137055) replacing the previously unincorporated Kurdistan Refugee Women's Organisation. As a charitable company we will gain two important benefits. The organisation can now enter into contractual relationships in its own name; previously this had to be done on its behalf by one of the trustees. It also means that the risk to the trustees is significantly reduced.

Sawsan Salim, Director



Islington and City Credit Union

Another year of growth for the Credit Union

Since the credit union took up residence at Caxton House, membership has grown more than four fold and we continue to help an increasing number of local residents from Archway and beyond, who are struggling to manage their finances. Our members' savings have just passed the one million pound mark. We have moved to larger offices on the ground floor of Caxton House in order to be able to provide services for our ever increasing number of members. This also means we have better access for parents with prams and members with mobility difficulties.

We continue to improve our services to members. This year we introduced BACS payments for withdrawals and we have introduced money management sessions for members who want to make the most of their income. We have several new payroll savings schemes, including one for anyone who works at the Whittington Hospital. We have just reached our year end and are preparing the financial figures for the AGM. For the last two years we have made a good surplus which has enabled us to pay a dividend of 1% on savings and 2% rebate on loan interest paid. This makes our loans even better value for our members.

The Credit Union offers secure savings and low cost loans service to anyone living or working in Islington or the City of London. Excitingly this year we have been working with Haringey Council to extend our services into Haringey. This means that as soon as we receive regulatory approval, people who live further up the hill will also be able to benefit from Credit Union services. It also means that with economies of scale we will be able to improve and extend our services to existing members.

Credit unions are not-for-profit savings and loans cooperatives that exist to encourage people to save rather than borrow, but at the same time offer good value, responsible loans. They help their members to manage their money and deal with debts.

Any profit made on loans is returned to members either as a dividend or a loan interest rebate. In addition the Credit Union pays life insurance premiums for all its members - savers and borrowers - a service other organisations would charge for.

We are regulated by the Financial Services Authority and our membership of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme ensures that members' savings are safe. The Credit Union pools the savings and members can borrow from this pool in times of need or to pay off high interest credit cards and other loans. We look at the member's ability to repay rather than their credit history in issuing loans and we encourage members to save while they pay back their loan, so that next time they need money they are less likely to have to borrow.

We also operate Young Savers Schemes to encourage children to get into the savings habit early in life. This year we have also started working in Pentonville prison as evidence shows that prisoners with savings and bank accounts are less likely to reoffend on release. The credit union offers an excellent secure home for your savings. It is also a safe, ethical investment which helps others to escape the cycle of debt.

We feel privileged to link up with other community groups and users of Caxton House Community Centre and we look forward to continuing the relationship for years to come. We also gratefully acknowledge the continuing support of Islington Council, DWP and local housing associations as well as our new relationship with Haringey Council.

Helen Barron
Trustee, Islington and City Credit Union
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Octopus Community Network

Octopus, like many organisations across the Voluntary and Community sector has become increasingly aware of the sustainability challenges the Voluntary and Community sector will face – to be realistic we may need to ‘ride the storm’ for the next two to three years. So, the focus of the Network is now survivability. We expect that this will be achieved by working together to maximise resources, collaborate on joint projects, and join our fundraising efforts where we can. On a positive note, we strongly believe that this will enhance and diversify the activities and services the large multi-purpose community centres involved in the Network, and will continue to support their ever-increasing user groups. Our highlights over the past year include securing Infrastructure Funding through Islington Council, which underpins our work to sustain, build a strong foundation and structure a future for Octopus.

Career Orienteer

Our Career Orienteer project has had a fantastic year, achieving excellent results in getting people into further education, learning and into jobs. We have also secured funding from the Migration Fund to develop, pilot and roll-out out a whole new range of targeted programmes, which assists those most in need of help steer a clear pathway to a job and a career.

Children and Young People

Significant time has also been invested in building strong relationships across Islington, which has seen the successful delivery of the Peace Bags Project with the Islington Faiths Forum. Over 200 children across the Network were involved in this project which took place during Peace Week. All the children displayed their creativity and produced some fantastic peace designs on bags that were given away during the Islington Peace Week final event.

Commitment to Older People

A major activity this year has been to tackle the on-going need to develop opportunities to engage a wider range of older people across the Network. Our ‘Inspiring Older People’ project, we are proud to say, has resulted in the creation of a Network-wide Older People’s forum, helping older people to connect, share ideas, and influence services delivered. Through this project we have also developed good links with the Almeida Theatre, and this relationship will be developed further next year.

Commitment to Quality

Quality assurance is driving a step-change across the Voluntary and Community Sector, and this is no bad thing! Octopus is committed to providing high-quality user-led services and our challenge this year has been to map out and explore the plethora of quality marks available and align these to the wide-ranging services that the community centres involved in Octopus deliver. As a consequence of this exercise, we are now working closely with Islington Voluntary Action Council (IVAC) to steer towards and enable Octopus members to work towards the VISIBLE and PQASSO quality standards.

Our focus on going ‘green’

Over the past year Octopus has made a significant commitment to reducing ‘carbon footprint’ and encouraging local bio-diversity, and food-growing projects. Octopus and some of its members have benefited immensely through the ‘Inspiring Green Community Centres’, which was funded through the City Bridges Trust. As a result, Octopus now has an Environmental Management Framework and tools to help manage and report their carbon footprint. Many of the community centres involved in Octopus now have solar panels, more efficient boilers and are actively engaging in Reuse, Recycle and Renew, and Food Growing initiatives in partnership with Edible Islington.

Our newly funded Wild Places project will be a flagship project for the Network. Funded by Natural England, Wild Places not only helps Octopus implement its Environmental Sustainability Strategy, it will give Islington residents a fantastic opportunity to get out into ‘the great outdoors’, learn more about bio-diversity through exciting experiential learning excursions, and developing their own urban bio-diversity spaces. On this project, we work closely with Islington’s Ecology Centre, the Environmental Education Teams, and the Friends of Whittington Park. Wild Places is just getting off the ground, so ‘watch this space’!

Julie Parish, Development Manager

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Mobile Repair Service

If you are disabled or an older person living in Islington, whether it’s putting up that new curtain rail, plumbing in a washing machine or repairing your cooker, MRS can help you.

MRS:

- Has been carrying out repairs and adaptations for over 25 years.
- Provides support and access to technical expertise to disabled and older people living independently.
- Is an independent local charity directly employing its own engineers who are all qualified in their trade, have had enhanced police checks and carry an ID card.
- Is able to carry out gas, heating, electrical, plumbing, appliance and general home repairs.
- Charges the price of materials and £4-5 per half hour.
- Gives priority to people with support needs
- Will arrange appointments at times to meet your needs and those of your carers.

- Provides a QuickFix service and send someone within 48 hours to do any non-specialist job taking less than 20 minutes. Charge is £3. Ideal for taking down/putting up curtains, battery changes, inaccessible light fittings needing new bulbs.

- Fits most internal and external rails, lever taps, installs half-steps and ramps as well as other small aids.

- Provides services in Camden, Hackney and the City of London too.

Ring 0845 4500 410: 9.30am-1pm, 2pm-4.30pm
or email services@mobilerepairservice.org.uk.
If you think we might be able to help, just give us a call.

Alistair Wallace, Director

Funded by **ISLINGTON COUNCIL**

Choices

Choices is a newly registered Community Interest Company (C.I.C).

C.I.C is a new type of company, designed for social enterprises that want to use their profits and assets for the public good. As a social enterprise Choices aims to maximise the positive impact we will have on the communities that we will work in.

Choices is dedicated to changing the lives of our youth involved or affected by gang violence and want to provide a service aimed at reducing the level of death, fear and harm caused by gangs, guns and weapons over the short, medium and long term in the London area.

Our vision is to put young people at the centre of everything, inspire social friendships, strong interpersonal skills, instil a sense of hope for the

future and challenge and encourage young people to make a difference to their lives and the lives of those around them in their communities.

Choices is a program that is in direct response to the growing number of young people that are either not engaging in school activity and or also getting into trouble with the police primarily in relation to gang violence. Our goal is to identify youths who we consider may have a turbulent transition to adulthood and offer a positive support system. The focus is slightly different at each level but the goal remains the same, to empower the young person to make changes in his or her life.



Sheri Lawal, Director



First seedlings

The Green Firm CIC

The Green Firm CIC is a landscape garden company, established back in 2003, specialising in working in community and public spaces.

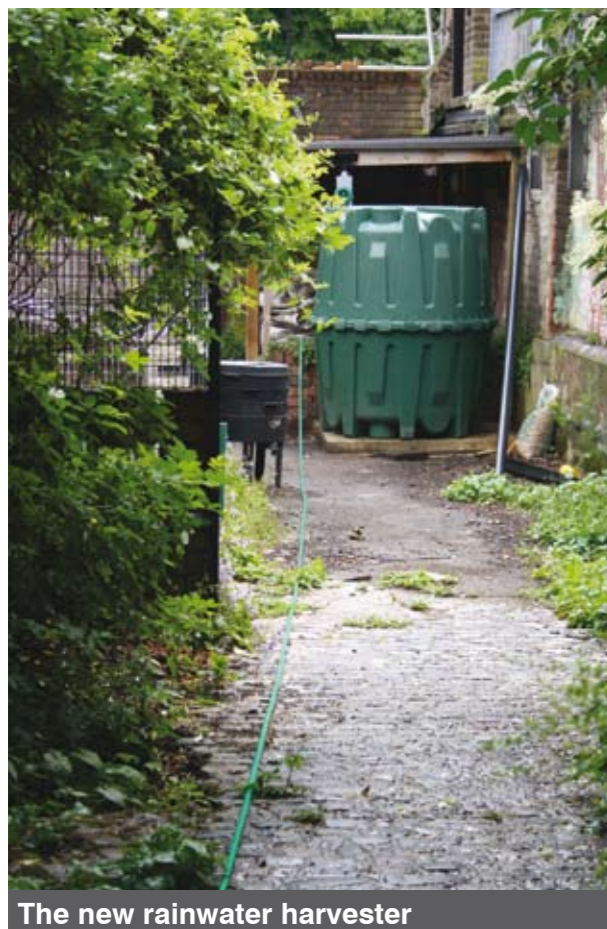
We have worked on a variety of projects; from large street planting schemes, allotment regeneration projects, designing and building food growing areas, to park maintenance, container planting in shopping areas and creative planting schemes for estate garden clubs.

We now deliver services to the local community from our office based at Caxton House, having joined in May 2010. We've been working alongside Caxton on their Edible Islington project and were asked to clear part of their old nursery outdoor space, install a rain-water harvester, and create raised beds, etc. This was a very successful project that continues to work with other projects and user groups at the centre.

Other organisations that we've worked with and clients include:

- Islington Greenspace
- Haringey Council
- Homes for Islington
- Hyde Housing
- Tufnell and Torriano Primary schools
- Friends Of Landseer Gardens
- Little Angel Theatre
- Highbury Quadrant Garden Club

Maria Papoui & Yvonne Say, The Green Firm



The new rainwater harvester



Still wild



Ready to be moved



Work in progress



May Construction



Finance

This year at Caxton House we have continued to work towards becoming more effective and efficient, making further changes to ensure our survival. Fundraising continues to play a major part in our future sustainability and we were fortunate to have a second 6-month Secondment from the Home Office, whose efforts again resulted in funding being achieved for our Under 5s Drop-In, the Out-Of-School Club, our Time Bank and Anand Mandal, the Asian elderly project based here.

We have streamlined the finance and book-keeping services and I am now producing budgets and operating statements for in-house groups as well as the Management and Finance & General Purposes Committees. This has proved to be successful in reducing accounting costs.

Following a strong marketing campaign last year, we have continued to keep premises hire stable and have increased office lettings. The closure of the nursery last year left us looking for a group to take over the space they vacated. The Islington & City Credit Union (ICCU) was expanding and has taken over the space, moving out of their first floor office. We have three new groups taking office space on the first floor; a youth group, Choices CIC, which took over ICCU's old office,

The Green Firm CIC, who have worked on a gardening project with funding from Edible Islington and The Somali Women & Children's Action Group.

In addition to fundraising, marketing and streamlining, we have made staff changes, including reducing hours for some staff, as well as securing four workers from The Future Jobs Fund. This scheme, designed to help young people back to work, provided us with an Under 5s Drop-In worker, an admin worker, an elder worker and an Out-Of-School Club worker. Their contribution was very welcome and allowed us an additional 100 staff hours per week. Unfortunately, the scheme only runs for 26 weeks.

With a change of government there will inevitably be many changes ahead. We have a small but strong and committed staff team and a dedicated Management Committee who will continue to face future challenges with confidence that we can adapt to the future as we have in the past.

Sue Collins, Book-keeper

Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31st March 2010

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the trustee in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the charitable company's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also

evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view, in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, of the state of the Charity's affairs as at 31st March 2010 and of its incoming resources and application of resources in the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 1993.

Crouch Chapman
Chartered Accountants,
62 Wilson Street,
London EC2A 2BU

	Notes	Unrestricted Fund £	Restricted Fund £	Total 2010 £	Total 2009 £
Incoming Resources					
Incoming resources from generated funds					
Grants and other donations			114,554	114,554	172,398
Other Income		115	-	115	1,989
Income Resources from Charitable Activities					
Income from services provided		96,088	-	96,088	108,386
Net Incoming Resources available for charitable distribution		96,203	114,554	210,757	282,773
Resources Expended					
Charitable activities					
Social amenities	2	80,429	95,035	175,464	217,769
Governance costs	4	22,792	20,400	43,192	42,853
Total Resources Expended		103,221	115,435	218,656	260,622
Net (Outgoing)/Incoming Resources		(7,018)	(881)	(7,899)	22,151
Unrealised gain/(loss) in investment		(87)	-	(87)	25
Transfer of funds		-	-	-	-
Net Movement in Funds		(7,105)	(881)	(7,986)	22,176
Balance Brought Forward 1 st April 2009		163,485	43,163	206,648	184,472
Balance Carried Forward 31 st March 2010		156,380	42,282	198,662	206,648

Staff and Management

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

ELECTED MEMBERS

Eldon Pethybridge Treasurer

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Eldon Pethybridge Chair
 Sheila Camp Vice Chair
 Mary Chirou Hon. Secretary
 Dorothy Cantrell

USER GROUP REPRESENTATIVES

Saroj Purohit Anand Mandal Asian
 Elderly Project
 Alistair Wallace Mobile Repair Service
 Sawsan Salim Kurdish & Middle Eastern
 Women's Org.
 (formerly KRWO)
 Helen Baron Islington & City Credit Union
 Sue Collins Staff

TRUSTEES

Eldon Pethybridge

AUDITORS

Crouch Chapman Chartered Accountants

STAFF

MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION

Paul Furze Centre Manager
 Sue Collins Book-keeper

BUILDING MAINTENANCE

Ken Jobber Assistant Caretaker
 Joanna James Cleaning Staff

OUT-OF-SCHOOL CLUB

Celia Facey Senior Playworker
 Joanna James Sessional Worker
 Melissa Facey Sessional Worker
 Peter Doyle Sessional Worker
 Jewell Camps Sessional Worker

UNDER FIVES

Karen Doyle Toy Library & Drop In
 Organiser

MANAGED PROJECTS

John Garces Caxton House Time Bank

VOLUNTEERS

Anna Mayer, Anthony Nolan, Tony Das,
 Lisa Williams, Val Dunmow, Lidya Araya,
 Rose Collins, James Collins, Amy Collins

FUTURE JOBS FUND STAFF

Amina Omar Admin Worker
 Hayley O'Connor OOSC Worker
 Wendy Stubbs Elder Worker
 Emma Winter Drop In Worker

FREELANCE

David Hopson IT Consultant
 Rose Collins Admin Support
 James Collins Caretaking Support

SECONDMENT

Christine Nickles Home Office Secondment

SCHOOL WORK-PLACEMENT

James Collins (May 2009)
 James Skinner (Mar 2010)

How to get to Caxton House



Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the receipt of funding, donations and gifts from the following supporters:

Awards For All
Douglas Scarff
Edible Islington
London Borough of Islington
Early Years Childcare Development Partnership
Education & Regeneration Department
Interim Childcare Grant
Islington Strategic Partnership
Library & Consultation Service
North Area Committee
Young People's Services
Livingstone Trust
The AB Charitable Trust
The Morris Charitable Trust
Voluntary Action Islington

Compiled by Rose Collins

Designed by Dave McTaggart

Photographs courtesy of Emma Bibal,
 Celia Facey, John Garces, Mope Ogunlabi,
 Maria Papoui, Sawsen Salim, Yvonne Say

Printed by City Printing