



Stevenage World Forum for Ethnic Communities

Annual Review 2020-2021

Vision:

Support vibrant BME communities

Mission:

We exist to advocate equal access
to services for all



Background:

Stevenage World Forum (SWF) for Ethnic Communities was officially constituted at a public meeting held on 10 October 2000.

We are based in the Sherma Batson Centre in Bedwell, Stevenage, Hertfordshire. The building was converted from garages into a purpose-built centre with a grant from the Active Communities Unit and in partnership with Volunteer Centre Stevenage (VCS). The Centre has been managed by us since April 2006.

Why was the Forum Established?

- To give the ethnic communities a voice and act as a representative body in communicating with other organisations and consultative groups (statutory and voluntary) and ensure they are not left out of decision-making processes.
- To raise issues of concern and develop proposals and practical initiatives to make services more accessible in partnership with statutory and voluntary bodies.
- To encourage networking, amongst ethnic groups and share and celebrate cultural diversity.
- To develop projects to meet the needs of ethnic communities and mixed heritage families of Stevenage.
- To enable people to share knowledge and good practices.
- To break down barriers caused by ignorance and encourage mutual respect.
- To work towards establishing a multi-cultural centre for educational purposes, social activities, meetings or worship or fair access to existing community space.

Our charitable objects are:

- ❖ Exists to address the needs and aspirations of the minority ethnic communities of Stevenage, and surrounding areas and to support these communities to achieve their goals
- ❖ Aims to improve the quality of life, fulfil potential and enhance participation in the education, social, economic, and cultural life of the Borough
- ❖ Endeavours to achieve this by fostering understanding across all communities and by working in partnership with statutory providers and the voluntary sector

SWF shall be non-party in politics and non-sectarian in religion.

Our Values: *Respect, Equality, Open and inclusive*

What do we do?

We support ethnic community groups by building their capacity through provision of resources and assistance within the boundaries of our funding.

We do this by offering the following services:

- ☐ Administrative assistance (including photocopying)
- ☐ Contact/Mailing address (including fax, phone, email, website space)
- ☐ Meeting spaces
- ☐ Internet Access
- ☐ Assist other organisations to make their activities more accessible to members of Black and Minority Ethnic communities
- ☐ Manage accounts for member groups
- ☐ Provide training

As a Board: Code of Governance (Charity Commission)

- ☐ Training session on the seven principles was undertaken
- ☐ It was agreed that the best process for us, was that each Trustee would review the principles as an individual and the feedback would be collated and reviewed at a Board meeting
- ☐ The review has been delayed due to the health pandemic and capacity of the Trustees
- ☐ The Board will review the process in 2021/2022

Our story for 2020/2021

We were all suddenly plunged into another world of work due to the spread of Covid-19 and the impact it has had on our Black Asian Minority Ethnic communities across Stevenage. The Centre had to be closed with immediate effect, we had to learn how to manage the virus in our own family and friends' lives. We have had to learn new words of infection and how to be covid-secure.

Hands Face Space became our new mantra

The Board's decision to use the grant to employ a part time Community Connector = Naz Chowdhury, has helped us to scale up that we as a volunteer led charity, we simply could not have achieved. We used her terrific skill of social media, reaching out to young people and event management of our virtual webinars and production of promotional materials, was second to none.

Stevenage Legacy and Resilience:

Working in partnership with BeMe, Heights, Junction 7 Creatives, Mind-in-Mid Herts, and Stevenage Borough Council's Officers in Cultural, Health/Leisure and Museum, we were successful with our application to develop as a new partnership and run webinars between September and March 2021. However, with the problems of lockdowns, we negotiated an extension for another 3 months and the project ended in June 2021.

Each webinar was very well supported by health professionals and local people from the Black Asian Minority Ethnic groups. The topics covered and many instances were very sensitive, the impact of Covid-19, vaccine roll-out, support home schooling, mental health for all ages, taking care of special needs children during lockdown and sharing strategies for addressing race inequalities.

One of the webinars covered inequalities in education, mental health system and the raising awareness of the new Equalities Commission in Stevenage. The health professionals from the Black Asian Minority Ethnic communities gave their stories and hard work to address not only health inequalities but their own personal stories on the barriers to access good healthcare.

Going forward into 2021/2022, we were successful with our application to have a Part Two to the Stevenage Legacy & Resilience project, where a workshop on Reminiscence from the Black Senior Pioneers not only living in Stevenage but who have moved back home to Trinidad and Barbados. This hybrid meeting (virtual and actual) was hosted by Stevenage Museum, and it was wonderful to learn more of our own organisation's history in the making.

First organisation was SWISS = Stevenage West Indian Sports and Social Club. The Club was for all local people in Stevenage. It was truly inclusive and although the main sporting activity was Cricket the Club was famous for the many social cultural functions, with several local villages challenging the cricket team!

The next phase became known as SCARFA = Stevenage Caribbean and Afro-Caribbean Association. Again, they held many special functions which was well supported by the many residents and the members enjoyed regular social gatherings in Bedwell Community Centre.

Then in October 2000, Stevenage World Forum for Ethnic Communities, under the stewardship and steerage of our dear departed Cllr Sherma Batson was established.



On behalf of the Board, I wish to thank the Trustees, for stepping in/up especially with the preparation and submission of many funding applications and the successful projects delivered in 2020/2021 and in 2021/2022. For a very small volunteer led charity, the commitment to supporting of our communities was fantastic call to action.

UKCF Infrastructure Grant: we were successful with our application to the National Body of Community Foundations, to help us with our development of community engagement and to contribute to the national report on how the health pandemic affected BAME led organisations. We reported on how the grant was spent, the groups that we worked with, the impact and the learning from the focus group sessions via zoom. The report is available on request.

Football Tournament: with true determination to support one of our annual

activities, we were successful with our application to Herts Community Foundation to run a one-day tournament held in Meadway Fields on Sunday 19th September. Six teams representing Zimbabwe, Zambia, South Africa, Namibia, Malawi and Kenya battled for the Mukuru COSAFA Cup UK, and it was won by Zimbabwe Legends.



Sadly, we were unable to produce our annual **Celebrate!!!** show due to the lockdown/s and uncertainly about social bubbles etc.

International Women's Day: This year, we conducted this event virtually in conjunction with SG1 Radio to celebrate International Women's Day, with the theme of Climate Change. We had guests working as environmental journalists, scientists, charity organisations and the local council. It was interesting to hear a varied response from the panel speakers who came from ethnically diverse backgrounds and age groups structured in a lively and interactive meeting. Our thanks to local Activist, Brenda Lowe, President of Inner Wheel, who convened the joint meeting with us.

Key message: we can all do something – small, medium, and large and join the movement to plant trees and involve the younger generation to problem solve.

Diwali 2021

This year we at SWF having been exploring having an event however it has not been possible to organise this face to face. The message of hope that Diwali brings couldn't be more welcomed, given all that has taken place since we have been in this pandemic.

There are many fantastic Diwali events taking place nationally and this celebration of triumph of light over darkness gives us all a chance to reflect on the past year and look forward with optimism to the

future. Happy Diwali to all those celebrating



Local partnerships:

- Healthy Stevenage Partnership
- Stevenage Equalities Commission
- Social Inclusion
- Older people's forum
- SBC Councillor John Garner for his insight and support

Social media has increased since July 2020, we have 427 followers on Facebook, 178 followers on Instagram and 66 followers on Twitter.

Finance report: our income was £40,270 and our expenditure was £26,722. Our unrestricted reserves are £4,305 and restricted reserves are £23,102.

The year has been full on and frantic!

As Chair of the Board, I am immensely proud of the work we managed to deliver and achieve as a volunteer led charity, writing funding applications, development and building relationships, development of project plans with partners from both local charities and Stevenage Borough Council.

I wish to thank everyone involved, especially the Trustees who have worked hard with the submission of funding applications, namely Charanjit Kang and Juddy Otti. As volunteers, working with new partners, maintaining and sustaining the connections, engagement, and determination to support and assist in our small steps to achieve what we have done despite our capacity. And of course, to our Community Connector, Naz Chowdhury.

Kate Belinis DL
Chair



BIG thanks to

Friends of SWF for their kind donations and time
 Hertfordshire Community Foundation
 Hertfordshire County Council: Adult Care Services
 Stevenage Legacy & Resilience Partnership
 Irish Network Stevenage
 Members of SWF
 Stevenage Borough Councillors for their grants
 Stevenage Borough Council Officers
 Volunteers

Board of Trustees:

Chair

Treasurer

Secretary

Trustees

Kate Belinis DL
 Luke Donovan
 Charanjit Kang
 Elaine Connolly
 Gosia Poczatek
 Jasbir Jhaggi
 Juddy Otti
 Peggy Lyons
 John Gardner

SBC Councillor

Charity No. 1112069

**Stevenage World Forum
For Ethnic Communities**

Financial Statements For The Year
Ended 31st March 2021

Stevenage World Forum For Ethnic Communities
Statement Of Financial Activities For The Year 2020/2021

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 20/21 £
Income			
Grants & Donations			
SBC Business Support Fund		10000	10000
HCF Coronavirus Relief Fund		10,000	10000
UKCF BAME Infrastructure Fund		6,590	6590
HCF IT Fund		3,500	3500
Rent in Kind	7,434		7434
Other Grants & Donations	95		95
	<u>7,529</u>	<u>30,090</u>	<u>37,619</u>
Charges for Services			
Room Hire, Telephone & Copying Charges	2,632		2,632
Fundraising			
Fundraising Events Proceeds	20		20
Total Income	<u>10,181</u>	<u>30,090</u>	<u>40,271.25</u>
Expenditure			
Direct Charitable Expenditure			
Professional Fees	50	9,887	9,937
Rent & Rates	7,434		7,434
IT Costs	0	1,999	1,999
Sundry Items	220		220
Maintenance, Repairs & Replacements	2,484		2,484
Events & Catering	146	89	235
Room Hire	22		22
Insurance	633		633
Bank Charges	72		72
Photocopier	0	90	90
Telephone & Utilities	3,430		3,430
Volunteers	166		166
Total Expenditure	<u>14,657</u>	<u>12,065</u>	<u>26,721.83</u>
Net Income Before Transfers	-4,476	18,025	13,549
Transfers	18	-18	0
Funds Brought Forward	8,763	23,102	31,865
Total Funds Carried Forward	<u>4,305</u>	<u>41,109</u>	<u>45,414</u>

Stevenage World Forum For Ethnic Communities
Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2021

	31.3.2021	31.3.2020
Current Assets		
Bank	45,276	31741.28
Petty Cash	138	123.33
Current Liabilities		
Creditors	0	0
Total Assets	45,414	31,865
Represented By		
Unrestricted Fund		
Stevenage World Forum	9,885	14,343
	9,885	14,343
Restricted Funds		
Designated Building Fund	15,000	15,000
Coronavirus Support Funds	18,114	0
Celebrate	2,030	2,119
Interfaith Forum	385	385
International Womens Day	0	18
	35,529	17,522
Total Funds	45,414	31,865

Approved by the trustees on 01 June 2021

and signed on its behalf by

Signature KM Solunz Name KATE BELINIS

Signature LM Lencore Name LURE D. m. 2021

Approved by the independent examiner on

Signature S Hudson Name Susan Hudson

Independent examiner's report on the accounts



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Stevenage World Forum

On accounts for the year
ended

31st March 2021

Charity no
(if any)

1112069

Set out on pages

1

Respective
responsibilities of
trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Charities Act") and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent
examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent
examiner's statement

- In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention
1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or
 2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Date:

14/05/2021

Name:

Susan Hudson

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

AAT

Address:

2b Victoria Road, Shefford, Beds SG17 5AL

Charity No. 1112069

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