



Barton Hill Asian Women's Group
Barton Hill Settlement
43 Ducie Rd.
Barton Hill
Bristol, BS5 0AX
Tel: (0117) 955 - 6971



Transport provided by the group is a lifeline to its members. Without it they would not be able to come, as for many reasons; poverty, disability, fear of racial harrassment, language problems, etc. users are often not able to use public transport.

Barton Hill Asian Women's Group



Annual Report 1995

Co-ordinator's Report

This has been a very difficult year for the group financially. The cut in our grant squeezed our resources substantially with the result that we were at times unable to meet the demands of the referrals. It was therefore unfortunate that we were unable to meet the needs of many Asian Women who continue to experience isolation, poverty and unemployment.

Despite managing on a shoestring, we were still able, thanks to our staff and volunteers, to maintain a high quality of service for our users. Financial reductions did not prevent the group from developing, enhancing and enriching the quality of life for our members. It is, therefore, pleasing to report that we offer an oasis of happiness for Asian women in this area. It is pleasing to remark upon the very welcoming atmosphere fostered within the group. This has been developed by people coming together voluntarily and serving on management committees, and by people speaking and volunteering on other projects within the group and securing employment both within and outside the group. We also give value for money in the services we provide.

One of our many targets has been to encourage women who were totally cut off from their families and isolated from their communities to attend. This has been attained through the continuation of our outreach work. Recognition is due for the hard work and commitment of the staff and, especially, volunteers involved. As we all recognise, this voluntary work is done out of love and support. It is unpaid, unseen, and unsung. Well done! There is still much to be done to meet the varied needs of the whole Asian community, although we aim to meet the needs of each individual within the group, there remains much to be done in order to fulfill the various requirements of our users and of the Asian community as a whole. We can only move forward if appropriate funding and support are forthcoming.

You will recall that last year the group set up a Sitting Service for Asian Carers caring for elderly relatives. I am happy to report that this service has been an unqualified success. The service is going from strength to strength. Furthermore this service is unique: We are the ONLY group providing such a service to Asian Carers in the whole of Bristol. This success has been achieved because of the full financial support of Avon (Central) Social Services.

Having reviewed all our projects, we have identified the pressing need for a counselling service within the group. We are in the process of developing this and are awaiting the outcome of our application for funding.

The most significant achievement in the group's organisation is the acquisition of its own office. Having secured a grant for office accommodation, we are at long last up and running. We have space for staff and volunteers to meet. We possess an information service and mini-library of resources within the office. This has provided the much required base for our ever-developing organisation.

Much of my time this year has been taken up with attending meetings concerned with the devolution of Avon into unitary authorities. Since Avon has been one of our main sources of funding, I am concerned to ascertain the consequences for our organisation of its dissolution. I have also been lobbying for funds and applying to trusts to cover the financial cutbacks we have sustained over the last three years. The climate of uncertainty, of which I spoke in my last report, remains unchanged. However we have achieved some success with our fundraising, and will continue in our endeavours to secure and maintain the crucial services we provide to our users.

We continue to network with other Asian, non-Asian, and mainstream service providers to ensure that the needs of our users are met appropriately.

I would like to thank all those who have contributed to and supported the work of the group during the year. A special thanks is extended to all the link officers from the local authority, especially to Jocelyn Mignott, Area Partnership Co-ordinator, Social Services. Jocelyn gave us much support and advice. I would also like to express my gratitude to all my staff and volunteers for their enthusiasm and commitment to their work in these financially uncertain times.. Their support has been invaluable in ensuring that the needs of all our users were met. Special thanks are also due to the Management Committee who have often given freely of their own time to support both myself and the group. Parveen Akhtar, our chairperson, deserves a special mention for her outstanding contribution to the group. Her position as chair will be a hard act to follow. I have found her advice, support and listening ear to be indispensable.

Finally, I extend my gratitude to all our users who have shown so much love and affection to me. I find this invigorating and motivating and will continue to ensure that the organisation will serve their interest in the best possible way.

Zehra Haq
Group Co-ordinator

Some comments from our users...

I am very happy with the Sitting Service. It gives a tremendous amount of support to my wife who is confined to a wheelchair. She benefits from the companionship and love which she receives from her sitter. This makes her forget all her worries and she doesn't feel sad anymore. Because it has this effect on her, I feel happy. Also, I am able to go out myself during those hours.

I like my sitter very much, we live in the same neighbourhood and are good friends.

I get a chance to talk about personal problems and stresses. Without the service I would surely go into depression. With the sitter I do not feel lonely any more.

I cannot tell you how much we appreciate the friendship and cheerful companionship of the sitter. This service has made such a difference to me and my family.

After attending the literacy group, I feel confident now to speak to my GP and also in answering the telephone.

The Group has been valuable to me, I have developed my skills and have found a paid job.

I meet new friends and we learn together. I feel more relaxed and confident.

I enjoyed the Health Workshop. I learned about how my body works, and especially about stress and menopause and now I understand all the things I am going through.



A Photography Course for the Young Mother's Group

Chairperson's Report

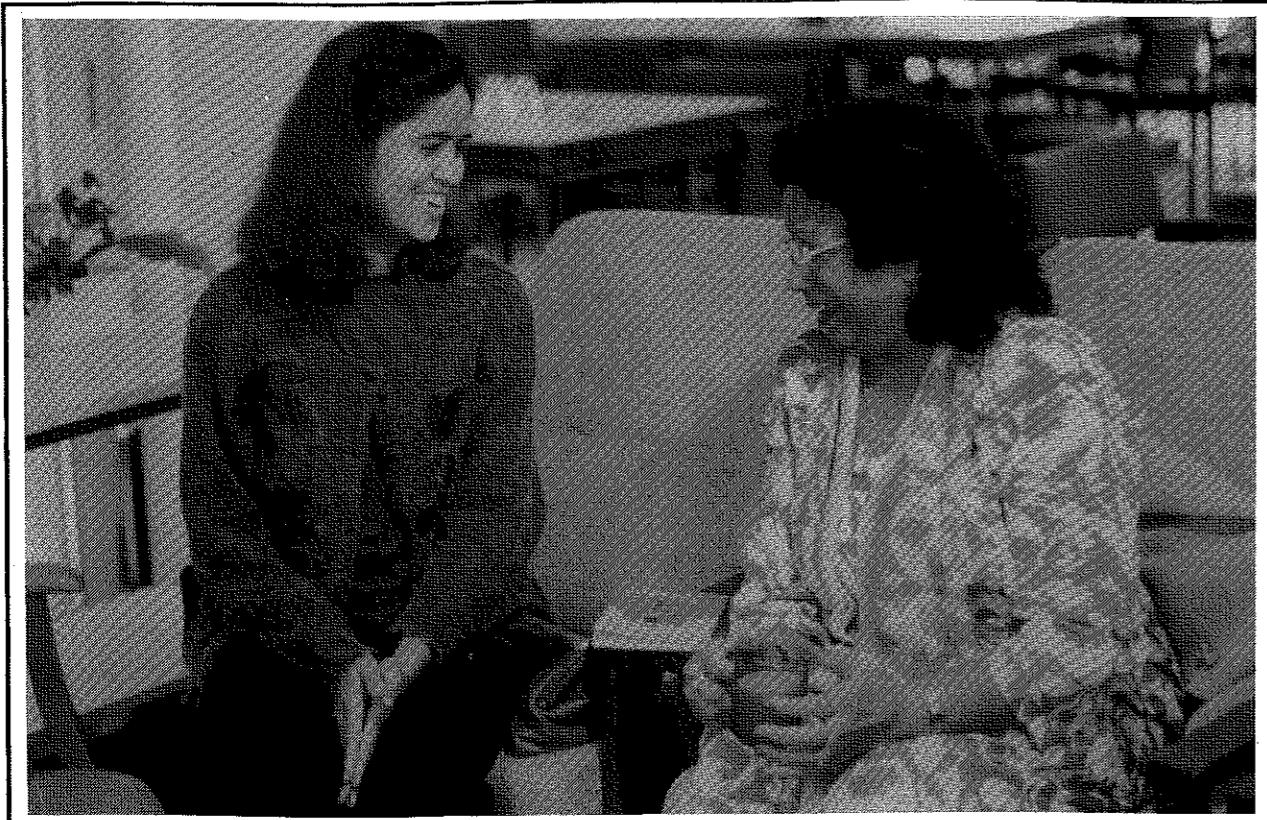
Despite the cutbacks in funding and the uncertainty created by the abolition of Avon, I sense a note of optimism and a feeling of buoyancy in the group. We have gone from strength to strength and we will continue to forge ahead.

It seems strange to recall that I was one of the original members of the group. There were only twelve of us when the group was formed in May 1986. I remember at that time feeling isolated, shy and lacking in confidence and self-esteem. I wouldn't have dreamed of taking any position, let alone being Chairperson of this organisation.

However, I have watched the group develop and grow and have strengthened with it. It has been similar to sewing a seed and watching it grow into a healthy, robust and vigorous tree with strong branches.

We will continue to branch out into the future with the support of Zehra Haq, our Co-ordinator, and all the other paid staff and volunteers in the different projects who continue to work hard and are appreciated, not only by ourselves, but also by our users.

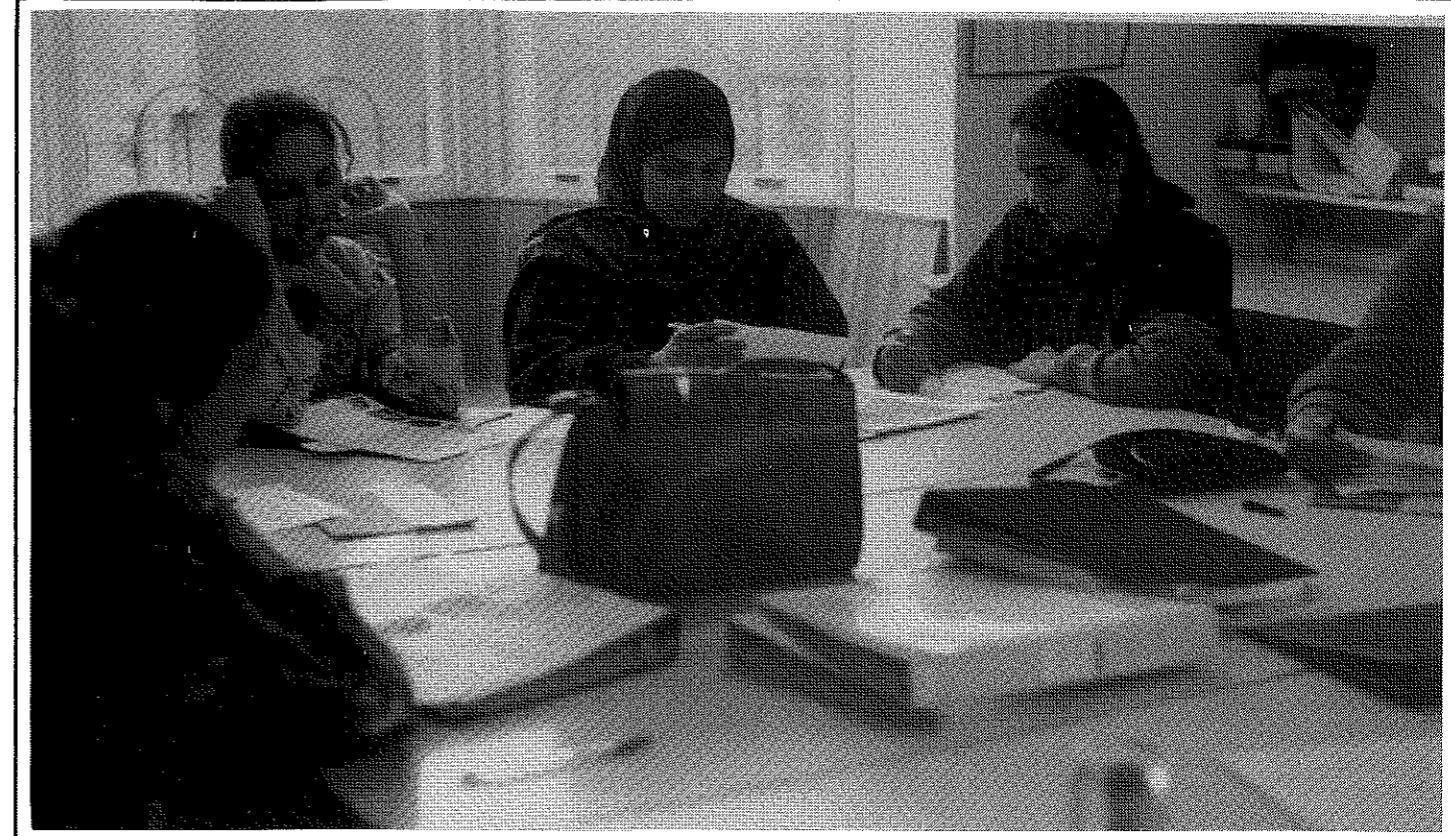
A volunteer chats with a Daycentre user



I feel that my main achievement as chairperson has been to foster and consolidate a good relationship with the users of all the projects. Speaking as one who has benefitted, and continues to benefit from the services that the group provides, I know how crucial it is to listen and foster good relationships with our users. Having enjoyed the challenge of eight years, the time is now right for me to step down. Rest assured that there are very skilled and able women ready to fill this position. I will give my successor every support and shall continue to watch over the welfare of the group with anxious affection.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my management committee, who have worked very hard this year, and all those who in one way or another have supported the group.

Parveen Akhtar
Chairperson



English Lessons for the Young Mothers Group

The Young Mother's Project

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00 - 3:00 pm
Creche available on request

This group provides a social, cultural and educational meeting place where young mothers can get together to share their experiences and to learn new skills. We are continuing to attract increasing numbers of young mothers to the group. It continues to provide the opportunity for quality training and support for the women. Indeed, we are proud to have introduced a new range of activities to compliment existing courses, such as Photography and D.I.Y.. These new courses include Keep Fit, Health and Hygiene, Childcare, Multi-lingual training in Information Technology, and discussions on topical and relevant issues. The users learn new skills and extend their abilities.

The Project also attracts Carers who are isolated from their community, and offers them the opportunity to meet and mix



and help boost their morale and confidence. It is pleasing to note that a number of our users have secured employment both within and outside of the organisation. The Project has developed a very stable identity in the face of funding cutbacks. We have had great fun with our fundraising activities which have deployed the skills of our users.

Unfortunately, due to funding restrictions, the Project is unable to extend its service to meet the pressing demands of the women who need to join but are, unfortunately, living outside the catchment area. The problem of providing transport for such women has yet to be resolved. Family outings during the school holidays prove ever popular and are well supported. This year two outings were arranged; to The American Theme Park and to Drayton Manor Park.

Sitting Service for Carers

Mondays to Fridays, 9:00am - 6:00pm

This service goes from strength to strength. It is a very necessary and successful enterprise. Requests for the service are increasing from within and beyond our catchment area.

Carers constantly express their appreciation and gratitude for the way in which this service has transformed their lives. Ninety per cent of our users are women who feel stressed and the service offers them respite for a short time from the burden of their caring role. The Carers are now able to pursue their own interests and meet other Carers in similar circumstances, and share with them the experience of caring which helps reduce feelings of isolation and boosts their self-confidence. It is a self-support agency.

We still work closely with Social Services to meet the needs of those isolated male and female Carers who do not fall within our catchment area. Unfortunately our funding does not allow for these Carers to automatically benefit from this crucial service. It is nevertheless pleasing to note that the expansion of the service has enabled the recruitment of sitters from a range of Asian communities in Bristol to match the needs of the families.

This year there were consultation meetings with Carers at local authority level on Domiciliary Care, Carers' Needs on Housing, Healthcare, and other support services. The Care Forum have been an instrumental enabler of these meetings.

There is a clear social need for this service to be further developed and extended beyond the limited hours available. Therefore negotiations with Social Services concerning an increase in funding to meet this need are in the pipeline. This augurs well for the future.



The Daycentre for Elderly Women

(Joint Venture with the Barton Hill Daycentre)

Mondays 10:00 - 3:30 pm

The Project continues to make excellent daycare provisions despite the funding cutbacks. It meets once a week and is a friendly and sociable environment for clients who have special social and cultural needs. They take part in activities including crafts, gentle exercise, and talks on cultural and religious topics. The users also share stories about their home of origin and give personal narratives about their cultural history and ancestry.

Users arrive, chat informally, have lunch, and then enjoy a range of practical activities and entertainments during the afternoon. Speakers such as Occupational Therapists, Health Visitors, Social Workers and Specialist Asian Workers have addressed the women.

In the summer, outings were arranged to local parks, a garden centre, Bristol Airport, Chew Valley Lake, and Broadmead Shopping Centre. Each month a special shopping expedition is arranged. Breast screening advice and the subject of Ageism have been innovations this year.

The users enjoy the companionship and support offered and meet women of other races and work together on issues identified which are specific to their needs which helps to break down barriers and develop confidence and understanding. It is a place where they find out information about local services and simply drop in to chat and chew the fat about this and that. The Project offers a warm and welcoming climate for frail and disabled elderly women who would otherwise be isolated and unstimulated.

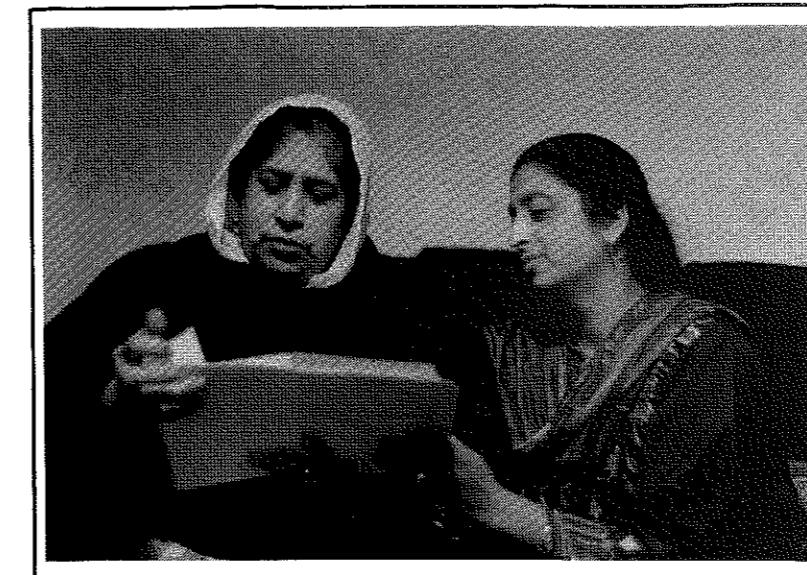
Youth Project

Sundays, 1:00 - 3:00 pm

This lively, ever popular forum for Asian girls attracts its members from inner city areas. The club offers a wide range of activities including self-defence, needlework, cookery, games and sports. We also offer access to information and advice in a safe and relaxed environment. We hold discussions on a wide range of topical issues such as drugs, arranged marriages, employment, health, and social care. The club promotes friendship between unmarried young women of similar cultural backgrounds who are between the ages of eleven and twenty-two. The club also provides a respite from studies and daily chores.

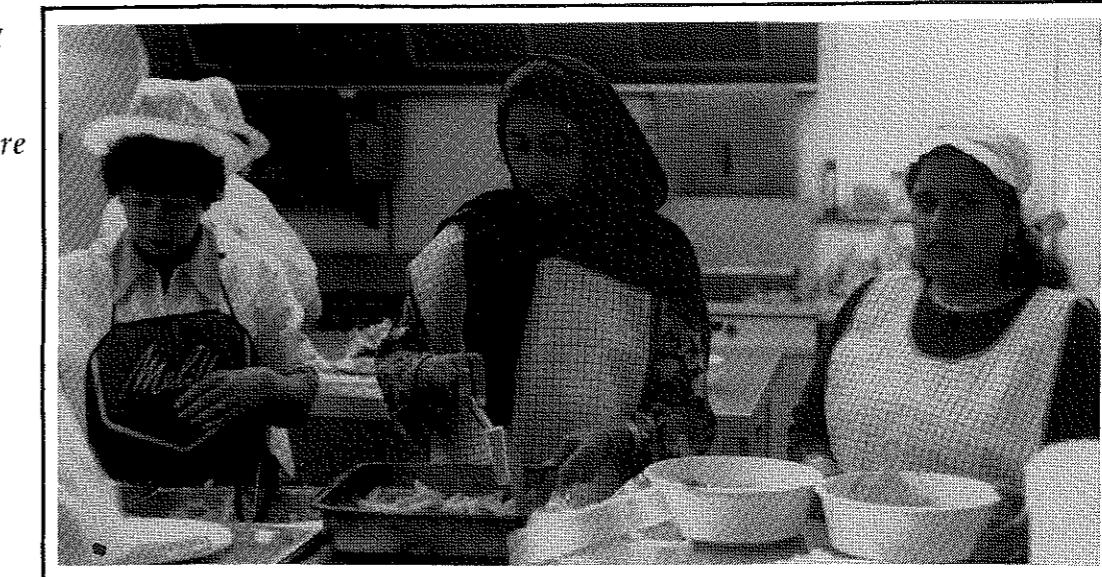
Despite being hit by a reduction in funding, the project continues to thrive and provide essential support for these girls. It has been particularly successful in its outreach work to families reluctant to allow their daughters to attend, and to those experiencing hardship and cultural conflict due to the experience of living with two diverse cultures.

Liaison work with schools and other youth clubs is also encouragingly successful and continues apace. Such liaison proves a good strategy to reaching out to users who need our support. We ensure that work on this project does compliment the mainstream education of the girls.



The Youth Project

The Sitting Service



Cooking lunch at the Daycentre

Children's Playscheme

The playscheme sessions were held this year during the school holidays. These proved exceptionally popular with the Asian children who were given the unique opportunity to have their cultural needs met. The children participated in creative and physical activities as well as taking a number of local outings. Three trips were also organised which proved very popular as they provided the children with a change of environment and helped to widen their experience.

The playschemes are staffed by people from the children's cultural background who have specialist skills and knowledge, and also parents who rotate as volunteers.

Future Objectives

As you know it has always been our objective to have a user led service. This we have achieved, and will continue to maintain, by encouraging users of all our projects to serve on the management committee.

We are also setting in train plans for a counseling service within the Group. A growing need for this service has been identified.

We hope to secure funding for the employment of a Volunteer Support Worker who will provide practical and training support for volunteers on all the projects.

Barton Hill Asian Women's Group would like to thank...

Bristol City Council Equalities and Community Development Committee
 Avon County Council Social Services, Community Resources, and Community Education Committees
 Bristol and District Health Authority
 Bristol Holiday Playscheme
 Worker's Educational Association - Women's Branch
 Greater Bristol Foundation
 Barton Hill Settlement
 Asian Women's Network
 Progress
 Bristol Black Voluntary Sector

We would also like to thank the following individuals...

Jocelyn Mignott - Area Partnerships Co-ordinator, Social Services
 Ralph Hoyte - Community Liaison, Bristol City ENCD
 Lyn Porter - Principal Community Liaison, Bristol City ENCD
 Simi Chowdhry - SCEP
 Carol Watson - Project Manager, The Carers' Centre
 Mavis Zutchi - WEA
 Fanda Lodhi - In Your Own Words
 Ejaz Ahmed - Job Link
 Kate Cole - English Tutor
 Agatha Palmer - Trainer
 Carrie Hitchcock - Trainer
 Maria Clarke - Computer Tutor
 Louise Way - Admin support

Audited Accounts

Statement of Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 1995

Income	1994/95 £	1993/94 £
Young Mum's Group	14,333	14,022
Elderly Women's Group	5,572	6,752
Young Women's Group	5,113	5,708
Sitting Service	21,627	12,725
Total Income	46,645	39,207
Expenditure		
Young Mum's Group	14,450	13,129
Elderly Women's Group	6,106	7,300
Young Women's Group	5,288	5,505
Sitting Service	21,627	12,725
Total Expenditure	47,471	38,659
Net Surplus (Deficit)		
Young Mum's Group	(117)	(893)
Elderly Women's Group	(534)	(549)
Young Women's Group	(175)	203
Sitting Service	-	-
Total Net Surplus (Deficit)	(826)	548

BALANCE SHEET

as at 31 March 1995	1994/95 £	1993/94 £
Cash at Bank and Hand	5,076	547
Cash on Deposit	7,442	7,074
	12,518	7,621
Add Debtors	142	1,023
	12,660	8,621
Less Creditors (falling due within one year)	11,199 1,461	6,357 2,287
Represented by Surplus Brought Forward	2,287	1,739
This Year's (Deficit)	(826)	548
	1,461	2,287

Income includes the following grants:

Bristol City Equalities and Community Development Committee	£10,000
Avon Social Services	£24,547
Avon Community Leisure	£ 6,213
Bristol and District Health	£ 800