

BRADFORD RESOURCE CENTRE

information, research, duplicating, & campaigns

with trade union and community groups.

ISBN 0 948449 01 2

Price 50p (free to affiliates).

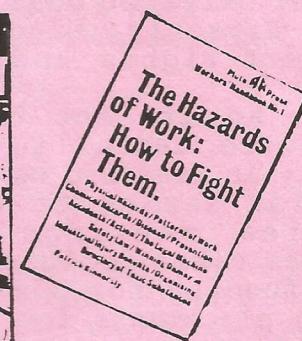
31 Manor Row
Bradford BD1 4PS
(0274) 725046

ANNUAL REPORT 1984-5

USE B.R.C.'s library!

In the library you'll find information on :

Employment Rights
Equal Opportunities
Health & Safety
at work
Women & Employment

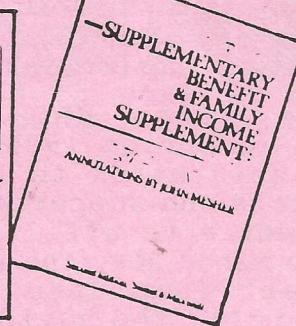
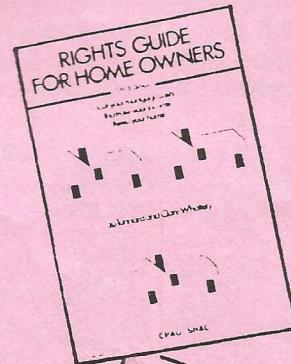


Housing

Local Government

Race

Trade Union Rights



Women's Health
Youth Training

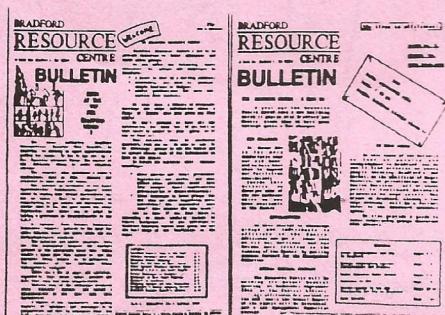
VDUs
Violence Against
Women
Welfare Rights

Review of the Year.

The period 1984/5 has seen many changes in the organisation, staffing and work of B.R.C. In March 1984 the Resource Centre became a company limited by guarantee and the previous Advisory Group was reconstituted as an Interim Management Committee. Despite the limitations of our old premises, in Little Horton Lane, we were able to provide space for the Asian Youth Movement (AYM) worker until the Saathi Centre was ready for occupation. We were also able to accommodate the Community Health Project. The lease on the Little Horton Lane building expired in August 1984. We applied for a grant for new premises, and were fortunate in finding suitable premises, jointly with Bradford Law Centre.

In June 1984 we moved to 31 Manor Row which is jointly owned by ourselves and BLC. This gave us more space and a much greater degree of comfort. The CHP moved with us. We have found sharing premises with the CHP and BLC very useful as we can refer detailed health resource queries directly, also queries on employment rights and potential libel!

In an attempt to make the centre more useful to the black community in Bradford we established a regular series of management committee meetings on race. Decisions taken included trying to obtain funding for black workers, offering placements for students on e.g. the Access to Bilingual Employment course, using translations and visiting black groups to consult and publicise the centre.



The first BRC bulletin appeared in spring 1985, together with an invitation to groups and individuals who supported the aims of the centre to affiliate. Since moving to Manor Row, the workers and Management Committee have been concerned that the building is not accessible. A ramp is to be built to give access to the ground floor,

but this has taken an incredibly long time, partly because the building is listed and permission has to be obtained.

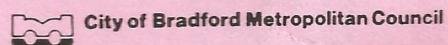
Staffing.

Until May 1984 the Centre's paid staff were Margaret Bransby, Mike Quiggin and Maura Wilson. From May, we were also able to employ George Pope, thanks to funding from Bradford Council's Unemployment Unit. We were extremely lucky to have Jane Walters, Lawrence Dodson and Sally Marlow on student placement from Bradford University and Bradford and Ilkley Community College, and without the assistance of volunteer and management committee member, Austin Dodds, we could never have accomplished the move to Manor Row.

Lawrence and Jane continued to be involved with the centre as volunteers in 1985. New volunteers Rory O'Neill, Gill Walters and Ann Singleton, together with student placements Pat Calver, Farhat Ilahi and Kath Libbert (shared with the CHP) made an invaluable contribution to the work of the centre during the year.

Funding.

We are presently funded by Bradford Metropolitan District Council both directly, through the Unemployment Unit, and through Urban Programme, and West Yorkshire Metropolitan County Council. A bid to the European Social Fund by West Yorkshire on our behalf was unsuccessful.



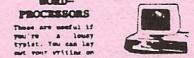
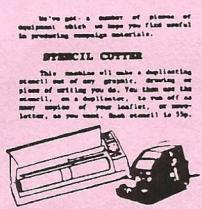
We are extremely concerned that the funding for all four posts is subject to review in April 1986; one due to the demise of West Yorkshire, another due to Urban Aid time expiry and the final two are funded by B.M.D.C. Unemployment Unit until April '86.

Resources.

During the year we were able to purchase a new stencil cutter and a new Apricot computer, thanks to grants from West Yorkshire and the

Urban Programme. These make the production of very high quality leaflets, newsletters etc possible. We were also able to buy a badge machine and find it is very well used by community groups, trade union groups and play schemes.

...MACHINES...MACHINES...MACH



The move to new premises made it possible for us to reorganise the library and hopefully make it more accessible. We now index all journals we receive. We have also established very good relationships with the Commerce Library and with CVS's information service.

Services to Other Groups.

We act as a mailbox for a wide variety of local groups including WAWAW, Airedale Women's Aid, One in Twelve, Rape Crisis and West Yorkshire Hazards Group.

Our meeting room facilities are also used by many groups. These include Bradford Women and Employment Group, West Yorkshire Hazards Group, the Health Visitors Action Group, CND, the Bradford Campaign Against Social Security Cuts, the Bangladeshi Youth Organisation Girls Newsletter Group, the Bradford Under Fives Group, and Bradford Health Emergency.

Use of the Resource Centre.

The centre is open to users from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. This allows us to index journals, clean the centre, update the newscuttings and other aspects of the library, prepare publications and have policy meetings on a Wednesday.



A recent three month (May to July) sample of users and usage of the centre follows:

USERS

Women's Groups	72
Black Groups	66
Trade Union groups	141
Community Groups	340
Other Campaigns	184
Education Providers	47
Local/National Government	66
Media	9
Individuals	116
Others	36
TOTAL	1,077

USAGE TYPE.

Photocopying	185
Typewriters	29
Word Processors	26
Stencil Cutter	48
Duplicator	39
Badge Machine	10
Information System	205
Teaching Inquiries	68
Group/Project Work	199
Information Collection	79
Bookings	36
Mail Collection	84
Other	69
TOTAL	1077

NOTE: (i) The amount of worker time taken up with supporting these activities obviously varies tremendously from negligible (e.g. with a group who are familiar with the photocopier and come in just to use it) to considerable (e.g. with a group who come in to use the "information system" i.e. the library, files and local and specialist knowledge of centre workers).

(ii) "Information Collection" refers to centre users coming in to give us information or useful literature.

(iii) Examples of people using the information system of the Resource Centre and of the sort of group/project work we undertake are given below.

Examples of Use of the Information System.

Below are examples of the information ~~we have been~~ asked for by a wide range of users from trade unionists to students, local journalists to women's groups; playwrights to fledgling community groups. In each month we give one or two examples.

March '84

Requests for information on:
self defence courses for women
contacts for the women's peace group
asbestos substitutes
trade unions in Bradford
chemical hazards
black workers in Bradford.

The library was used for research on:
transport in Bradford
women's refuges
equal opportunities and local authority responses
solvent abuse.

We were visited by Rochdale Resource Centre for advice on Resource Centre organisation.

April '84

Requests for information on:
redundancy rights
local unemployment
Thornton View hospital
single payments
the Listerhills development
the natural healing clinic
resources for women in Bradford.

The library was used for research on:
trade union responses to unemployment
employment rights
the local textile industry
local housing.

Keighley Disabled People's Council requested welfare rights training.

May '84

Requests for information on:
women's health groups in Bradford
occupational health projects in the region
local group addresses.

The library was used for research on:
new technology
unemployment in Bradford.

June '84

Requests for information on:
asbestos in airing cupboards
welding fumes
NHS laundry privatisation
housing benefit.

The library was used for research on:
race and education
privatisation.

July '84

Requests for information on:
YTS trainees rights
the address of the Wages Council Inspectorate
welfare rights and immigration
employment patterns in Bradford
the location of a decibel meter.

The library was used for research on:
the local dysentery outbreak
statistics on black unemployment
well-women campaigns.

We were visited by a group hoping to set up a resource centre in Oldham.

August '84

Requests for information on:
homeworkers in Bradford
lead poisoning
the composition of a basic welfare rights library to back up advice work
attendance allowances.

The library was used for research on:
housing in Bradford
company information
timber-framed housing
multi cultural education.

September '84

Requests for information on:
damp meters
safe removal of asbestos
police intimidation
quality circles
new benefit rates
how to set up an advice centre.

The library was used for research on:
tranquilliser withdrawal
days lost through sickness
YTS and new technology.

The centre was visited by the Islamic Youth Group

October '84

Requests for information on:
Local media contacts
TUC women's courses
funding
Unemployment benefit

The library was used for research on:
Equal opportunity policies
Use of management consultants
Private old people's homes
Local companies - Grattans and Empire Stores

November '84.

Requests for information on:
Homeworkers campaign groups
Local groups in Calderdale
Quality circles
Well women facilities
Medical appeals
Pension and war gratuities
TVEI

The library was used for research on:
Social Security cuts
Statistics on women's employment
Chemical hazards
Training opportunities for women
Maternity rights
Women in trade unions

Jan '85

Enquiries at the centre about:
Union recruitment of MSC Community Programme workers
Legislation protecting part time workers
Location of ESL courses
Bradford Council's race relations policy.

Request to speak to voluntary/statutory liaison group on the elderly about the sex equality working party.

Feb '85

Enquiries at the centre about:
Health and safety in the print industry
Local solicitors operating legal aid
New technology hazards in offices
National Insurance tribunals
Under fives provision in Bradford
Race and employment.

March '85

Enquiries at the centre about:
Privatisation in the NHS
Address of the baker's union
Women in Prison
Community programme and voluntary groups
Rehearsal halls for theatre group.

A YTS course used the library for work on racism. Information on the NHS was used for a play commissioned by COHSE.

April '85

Enquiries at the centre about:
Local media
Carers
Cheap holidays for the unemployed
Changes in laundry allowances
Asbestos in garages
Bradford Met's corporate plan

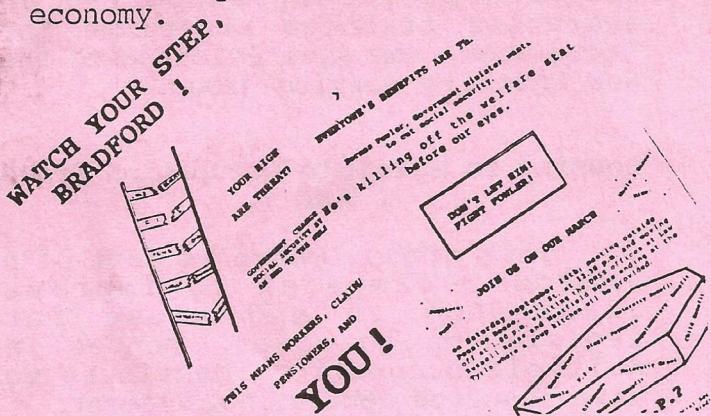
point or view. We assisted in the development of a questionnaire to survey the provision of YTS schemes locally, together with trade union involvement. A briefing on YTS in Bradford was produced by the Resource Centre and used to publicise weekly advice sessions run at Bradford Centre Against Unemployment.

Advice Centres Group.

Our ongoing involvement has included responding to discussions on training needs, providing information to participating centres, servicing the telephone tree and helping to set up the campaign against social security cuts.

Bradford Campaign Against Social Security Cuts (BCASSC)

The resource centre, together with other community and trade union groups, helped to establish the campaign, which is part of a national campaign. Our contribution has been to provide a base, support the preparation of publicity and events to inform local people of the extent of the proposed changes, and to demonstrate the detrimental effect they will have on the local economy.



Unemployed Groups Network.

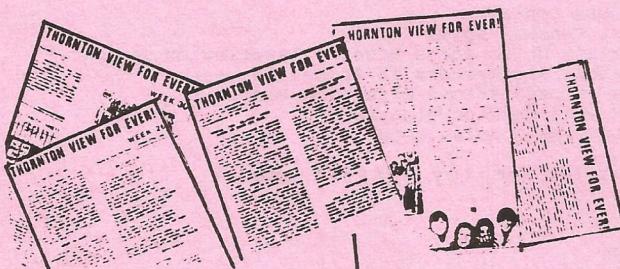
We continued to maintain an involvement in this group which brings together groups concerned with unemployment, and helped to plan a proposed conference.

Young Persons Survival Guide Group

The group asked for our assistance in the production of a guide for young people living independently.

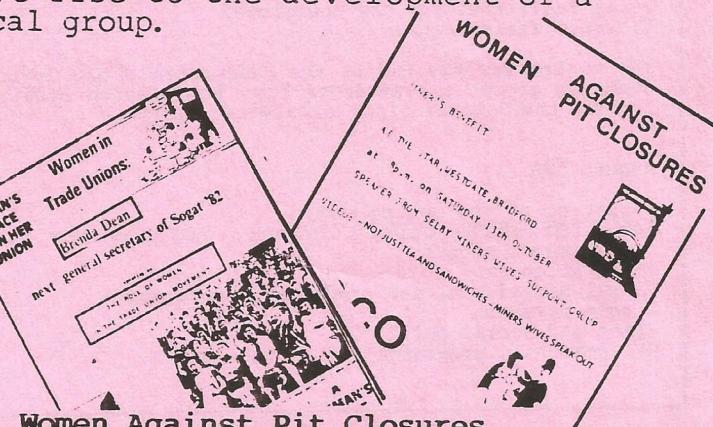
Thornton View Hospital Occupation Committee.

The occupation committee used the resource centre as a meeting place and to produce their newsletters and leaflets. BRC provided organisational resources and undertook workshops for staff on welfare rights in relation to redundancy.



Trades Council Women's sub committee.

We assisted the women's committee in surveying local trade unions on the extent of women members participation at shop steward and branch level. The group organised two major meetings over the last year; one, in conjunction with SOGAT, was on women's participation in trade unions and was addressed by SOGAT President Brenda Dean. The other was on Miners' wives support groups and gave rise to the development of a local group.



Women Against Pit Closures.

BRC provided a base for this group which organised fund raising events for miners families and made links with local miners families suffering hardship.

Advisory Panel on Training.

We participated in the panel which allocates small funds to voluntary sector groups for training.

Community Technical Aid Steering Group.

This is a project to make available to community groups technical aid services such as surveying and architectural advice specifically tailored to and under the control of the voluntary sector. We have been coordinating the group since Rod Yeoman left CVS and will continue to participate.

Bradford in Danger.

The resource centre is one of the contact points for the campaign to reinstate the Department of the Environment funding denied to Bradford voluntary sector projects in 1985, the loss of which has serious implications for voluntary sector jobs and services.

Welfare Rights Advice Sessions.

We were involved, with Leeds TUCRIC, in redundancy advice sessions at United Glass in Castleford where the entire workforce was made redundant.

The Thornton View Occupation committee approached us to ask for advice sessions on the effects of redundancy on workers with very different lengths of service, hours of work and personal circumstances. We feel that this is a very important area of work and were also involved, in conjunction with NUPE, in trying to look at the effects of redundancy on workers affected by privatisation plans.

In August, we ran advice and training sessions for shop stewards from Silentnight, where a long dispute is causing serious hardship.

General.

We continued to be involved in the Network of Resource Centres and gave information on BRC for inclusion in a guide to the work of resource centres. We have also participated in the organisation of a new body linking resource centres, Trade Union Resource Centres Ltd. The main concern of this body at present is to secure alternative funding for resource centres affected by the Met counties abolition.

We also continue to maintain strong links with the Trade Union Studies Centre at Bradford and Ilkley Community College.

As a result of attending a conference on Community development in Easterhouse, we organised a session on trade unions and community development, addressed by Tony Novak from Bradford University.

Our links with the University will hopefully be strengthened by ongoing liaison with the Centre for Research on Women (CROW).

As a project within the voluntary sector, we have been asked to participate in various council committees, mainly, but not exclusively, concerned with funding. These include:

Mise a Niveau Core Group

The core group makes recommendations to members on the distribution of European Community funding for courses aimed at increasing the employability of disadvantaged groups.

Bradford Community Programme Area Groups.....Sex Equality and Unemployment/Economy.

Together with many other voluntary sector projects, we were involved in helping to assess and prioritise new and continuing projects, both voluntary and statutory sector, which were applying for funding from the 1985/86 urban programme.

Sex Equality Working Party

We were co-opted onto a sub committee of the working party whose brief was to organise a conference for women in Bradford on equal opportunities. As well as assisting with the determination of the general structure of the conference, we organised and led a workshop on women and employment.

Projects.

Computer Usage in Bradford Schools with Particular Reference to the Participation of Girls.

A questionnaire survey, supplemented by school visits, was carried out by Jane Walters over the 1984 summer term, of all Bradford schools with access to a computer. The survey showed that boys and girls participated equally in first schools, but in middle schools a gap between boys and girls

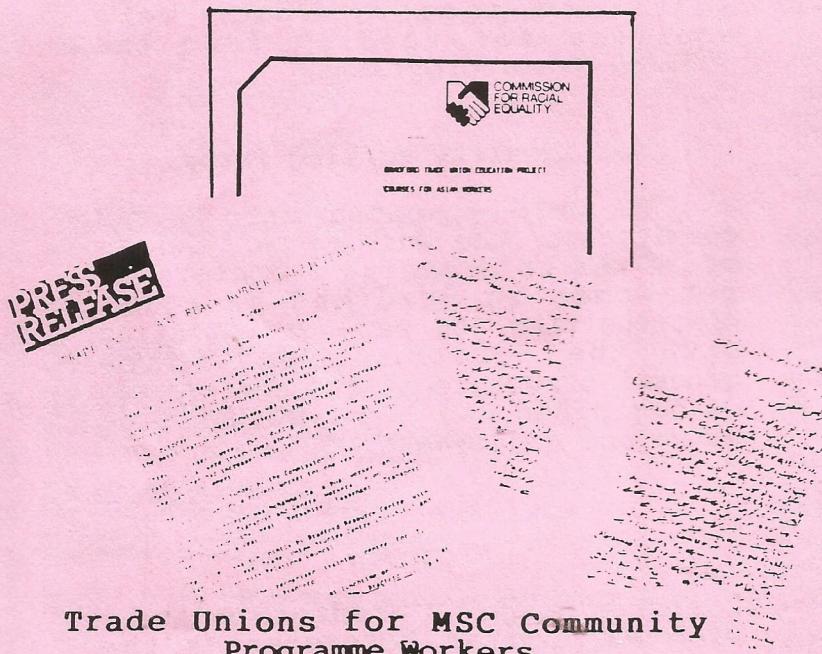
opened up, which increased in upper schools. It was also established that the numbers of female staff responsible for computer related work was significantly less than the number of male staff. It is hoped that the results of the survey will shortly be available in pamphlet form.

Marginal Owner Occupation in the Bradford Area.

A study of the problems of low income owner occupiers in the Bradford area was undertaken by Lawrence Dodson over 1984/5. It was based around research on mortgage repossession during the period, and has led to work on the relationship between mortgage default and homelessness in Leeds for use by the Association of Metropolitan Councils.

Bradford Trade Union Education Project.

This project aimed to develop education materials and run bridging courses for Asian trade unionists. We provided administrative and organisational backup and participated in the writing and press releasing of the project report, which is available from Leeds Commission for Racial Equality.



Trade Unions for MSC Community Programme Workers.

We are in the process of completing a survey of local trade unions recruiting MSC CP workers which can be used by workers and sponsors concerned to contact the relevant union.

Library Survey.

As part of rationalising and improving our information system, we surveyed community projects and specialist libraries to ascertain which areas they had information/journals/newscuttings on, and which areas they would find it useful for us to cover. We are in the process of putting this together as a pamphlet.

Conferences/Training courses attended.

Over the past year, all workers have attended race awareness training run by Bradford Met and found it useful. Other courses attended include counselling, disability rights and race and welfare rights.

Conferences we have participated in include:

- * The role of the Met counties in voluntary sector funding.
- * Rate Capping and the effect on Services.
- * Community development in Easterhouse.
- * Strategy for health.
- * Social security cuts fightback.
- * YTS and the area manpower boards.
- * A trade union response to MSC community programme.
- * Positive action for women in Europe.
- * The trade union health and safety movement: the first ten years.

As well as attending specific conferences on aspects of welfare rights, we regularly attend the meetings of the national Welfare Rights Officers Group.

General work/centre usage.

In addition to projects specifically mentioned, we were consulted by various agencies, in connection with pieces of work, some of which did not achieve their stated aims. One such project was the homeworkers campaign, initiated by the policy unit together with West Bowling Advice Centre. A great deal of planning and research went into this but it was defeated by lack of funding.

Another was the proposal to run courses for unemployed centre workers and users, initiated by the TUC regional education officer, which was deferred.

We were involved in the attempts by Trade Union Studies Centre to establish successful courses for women trade unionists. These eventually bore fruit.

Two hopefully successful projects which we had some involvement in were the proposed women's technology workshop and the attempt to increase childcare provision at Bradford and Ilkley Community College.

Welfare Rights Training Programme.

We aim to offer a basic and an appeals course each term, together with such other courses as are seen as priority. We have tried to operate positive discrimination towards black groups in recruitment and selection for courses. We feel that this has been reasonably successful, as can be seen from an examination of participants.

1984

Course Title.	Held at:	No. of Students:	StudentsBackground:	Length:
1. Basic Course	Keighley Gingerbread	12	Centre workers and volunteers, Women's Aid and Keighley Disabled Peoples Council.	36 hours
2. Basic Course for Advice workers	Shipley Town Hall	23	Benefit Shop, all three CAUs, Advice Centres, DIAL, BLC, Karmand Centre, Bangladeshi Peoples Association, CHAS.	36 hours
3. Tribunal Training for Advice workers.	BRIC	16	Benefit Shops, CAUs, Keighley Kiddicare, CRC, DIAL, Bierley, Buttershaw.	18 hours
4. Signposting Training.	Council for Mosques	32	Council for Mosques workers	18 hours
5. Basic Course.	Asian Women's Centre	11	Centre workers and volunteers.	20 hours

1985

1. Basic Course for Advice workers.	BRIC	12	Benefit Shops, CAUs, Women's centre, CRC, Council for Mosques Advice Centres.	36 hours
2. Basic Course.	GingerALE	12	Volunteers	36 hours
3. Discussion Leaders course.	BRIC	10	Benefit Shop, CRC, Gingerbread, CAB, BASC.	30 hours
4. N.I. briefing.	BRIC	6	Benefit Shop staff.	1 day
5. Basic Course.	BRIC	12	CHAS, BYO, Council for Mosques, Bierley, Ravenscliffe, N.E. Windhill, Lower Grange.	

7. Tribunal training was offered but did not recruit sufficiently well and has been postponed.

Notes:

Basic courses are aimed at new advice workers, or people interested in becoming advice workers and cover all the main benefits in the social security system.

Appeals courses are aimed at more experienced advice workers who want to be able to represent clients at Social Security Appeals tribunals.

The discussion leaders course was aimed at people interested in organising training sessions, either within, or external to, their own projects. We receive so many requests for welfare rights courses from organisations that we are unable to meet them from within our own resources.

We hope to build up a pool of welfare rights tutors who can be referred to.

Signposting courses are designed to give workers an outline of the benefits system and a thorough knowledge of agencies they should be referring particular types of problems to.

In conjunction with the signposting courses we have run, we have also produced a flowchart guide to Welfare State Benefits which is available from the Resource Centre.

Affiliations.

This is the first time in the Resource Centre's history that it has been possible to affiliate. We are still developing the system, and feel that it is extremely important as it allows us to be accountable to our users. Affiliates receive a quarterly bulletin and reduced rates on equipment. Affiliates are also allowed to nominate representatives to be members of BRC Ltd and to stand for election to the management committee.

Breakdown of affiliates at September '85

Individuals	19
Trade unions	12
Women's/community groups	41
TOTAL	72

Membership of the Interim Management Committee.

Bridget Maguire	Gingerbread worker
Sarah Martin	Women's Centre worker
Austin Dodds	Hindles striker
Pete Latache	Trade Union Studies tutor
Barry Clark	FSU worker
Jean Gardiner	Leeds University extra mural tutor
Nirmal Gill	Asian Youth movement
Gerry Sutcliffe	SOGAT
Alan Speck	West Yorkshire County Council
Chris Vincenzi	Huddersfield Poly Law department

We are all very grateful for the support, advice and sheer hard work of the IMC during a period of what seems to have been continual change and growth for BRC. We really do appreciate you!

Future Plans.

We have identified a need for black issues workers to enable us to serve the black community in Bradford and will continue to seek funding for these posts. We did make a successful bid to Bradford's Community Programme but it was turned down by the Department of the Environment.

We hope to have an involvement in the proposed West Yorkshire Low Pay campaign.

We aim to continue to develop the other work of the centre, in welfare rights training and in providing support and resources to local groups. We intend to expand our information provision by producing a series of briefing papers, expanding on bulletin articles. The first two in the planned series will be on privatisation and on school leavers.

Another planned development is a discussion series, around issues of major importance to Bradford.