

LANCASHIRE BME NETWORK

Leading change through empowerment



Yaadein (Memories)



October 2013-December 2014

Project Evaluation Report

CONTENTS

- Aims
- The Project
- Project Activities
- Analysis and Evaluation
- Photos
- Extracts form Oral History transcripts
- Partners & Stakeholders

Aims & Objectives

“To preserve and share the heritage, migration, cultural traditions, memories and experiences of South Asian women who arrived in the UK in the 1960’s/1970’s.”

Outcomes:

Heritage

- South Asian 1st generation migrant women’s heritage will be better understood, interpreted and explained
- South Asian 1st generation migrant women will have their experiences/journeys identified and recorded

People

- Women will have developed skills specifically; research, interview and design skills
- More communities will be aware of the heritage and journey of 1st generation migrant South Asian women
- The project will create a shift in attitudes towards the South Asian female elders
- Social interaction will increase and participants will have the rare opportunities for gathering without justification of a religious or cultural ceremony
- Volunteers and participants will have contributed their time and effort

Communities

- More people will have engaged in the heritage and journey of South Asian women who would normally not engage in this activity



The Project

Yaadein, a cultural heritage project, captured the stories of first generation South Asian women who migrated to East Lancashire in the 1960's and 1970's. The project was the first of its kind: capturing, preserving, celebrating and sharing women's stories and struggles in a way they had never been documented before.

The initial idea for the project came from the realisation that the first generation South Asian migrants were ageing and many had already passed away through illness and old age. First generation South Asian migrant women across Lancashire were part of this ageing population and with barriers such as; social isolation, poor health, disability and cultural barriers, it was vital that we capture their stories before they vanished forever.

Yaadein was delivered in; Pendle, Burnley, Rossendale, Hyndburn and Blackburn and delivered the following:

- Rapport building activities such as health and wellbeing workshops, arts and crafts and health/wellbeing activities.
- Initial reminiscence sessions
- Oral history training and research skills for volunteers
- One to one in depth history recording
- Group history recordings
- Celebration event
- Roadshow

All stories and pictures provided by the women were put together to create a book which along with a display board formed a roadshow that travelled to schools, museums, community centres and libraries across Lancashire to disseminate the book and celebrate the project.

Project Activities

Volunteer Recruitment/Training and Questionnaires

The project commenced with identifying volunteers who could support staff with the project. In total 6 volunteers were recruited from across Lancashire and were provided with training on the following topics:

- Community engagement
- Oral history recording
- Devising questionnaires
- Confidentiality
- Lone working
- Health & Safety
- Research skills
- Confidence building

The Oral History and research training was delivered in partnership with North West Sound Archives who trained staff and volunteers on how to use recording technology to record stories and also on questioning techniques to encourage dialogue. Training was delivered on the 8th of February 2014 in Accrington and the feedback was very positive. Other training was delivered in-house by LBN staff.

During the training LBN staff and the newly recruited volunteers devised a questionnaire which could be used when conducting the reminiscence sessions and during activities. The following questions were agreed on during the training sessions by staff and volunteers.

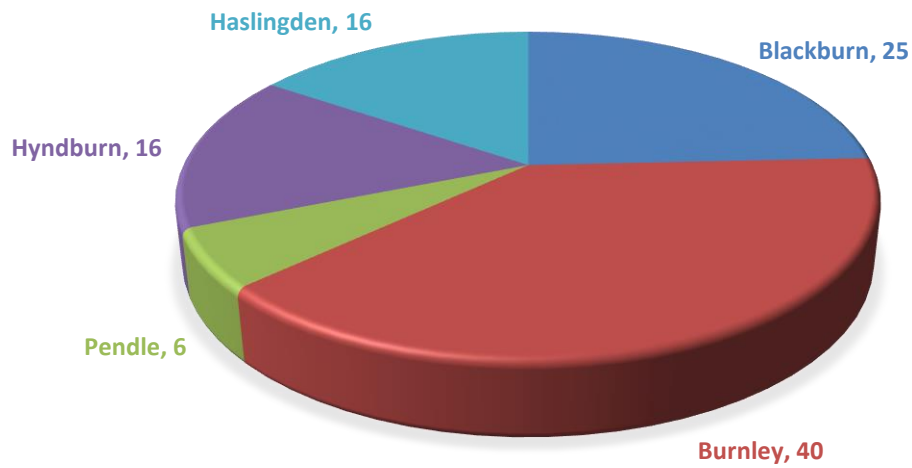
1. What is your name? (optional)
2. What is your date of birth or how old are you?
3. Which country did you come from?
4. Which year did you come in?
5. Which town did you come to?
6. Who did you come with?
7. Why did you migrate?
8. How did you manage to raise the money to pay for your travel?
9. Before migrating, how did you feel? What were your hopes & aspirations?
10. How was the journey on the aeroplane?
11. What was your first impression of England?
12. Was settling in the UK a culture shock?
13. How did you cope with the language barrier?
14. How did you adapt your lifestyle in terms of cooking & shopping? I.e. did you use same ingredients?
Who did the shopping?
15. What aspects of your cultural heritage did you struggle to hold onto?
16. Which aspects of your cultural heritage still exists today?
17. What have you passed onto your children and extended families?
18. What are your hopes for your future descendants?
19. In 100 years' time, which cultural aspects do you hope are still in place with your descendants?
20. What other difficulties did you face?
21. What were the good aspects?
22. If you had the chance to turn the clock back, would you still migrate?

Initial Reminiscence Sessions & In-depth One to One Sessions

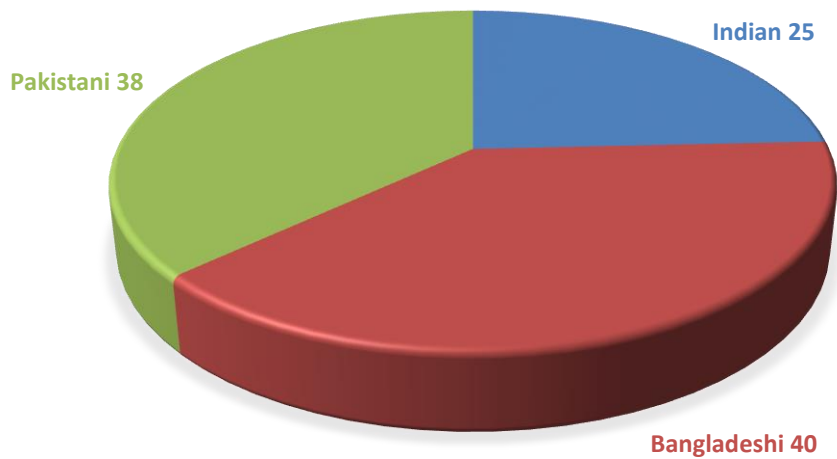
In order to develop trust with the project participants, LBN set up initial reminiscence sessions which included exercise, arts and crafts and other activities. These sessions enabled LBN to introduce the project to the women and encourage women to think about their migrant experiences. Artefacts were displayed during the sessions to encourage dialogue, these included ceramics/earthenware, fabrics and photos.

A total of 13 initial reminiscence sessions were delivered across Lancashire with over 100 women taking part.

REMINISCENCE SESSIONS ENGAGEMENT



ETHNICITY OF PARTICIPANTS OF REMINISCENCE SESSIONS

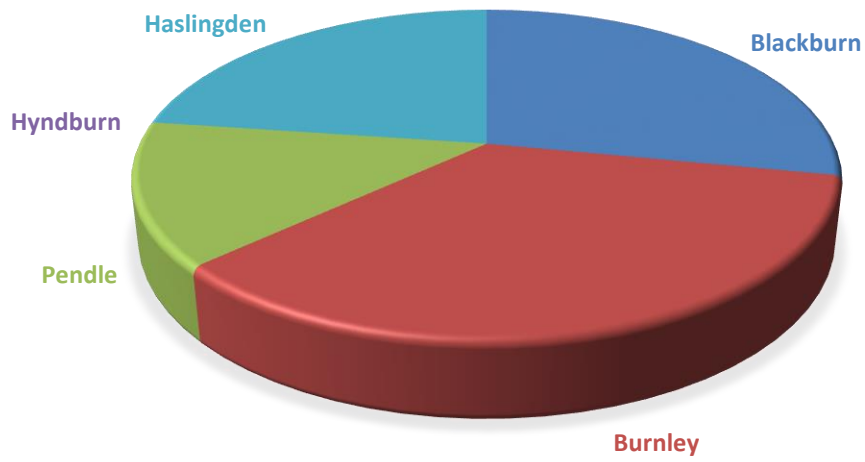


Trust building

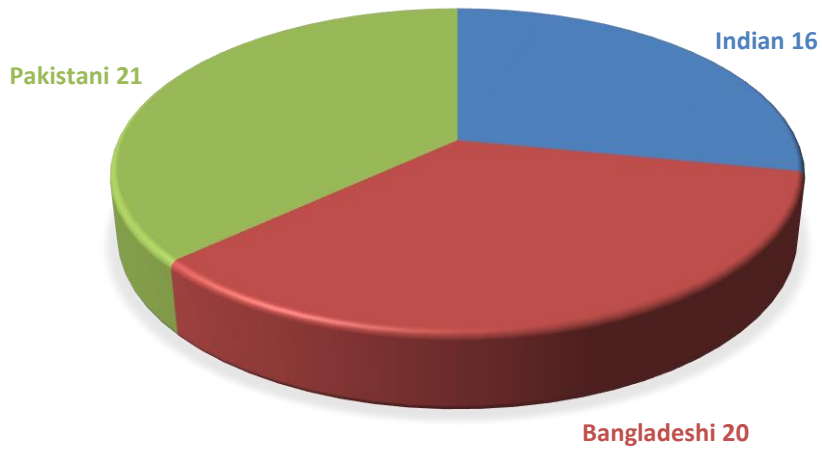
The initial reaction to the reminiscence sessions was one of suspicion. Participants questioned LBNs motives for asking questions about their past. It was apparent that further work would be needed to be carried out to build up enough trust for the women to start divulging what were in some cases, very sensitive and painful stories. During the sessions LBN staff and volunteers identified women who would be happy to provide more information and get involved in 1-1 in depth interviews either at community centres or in their homes. In total, 57 women agreed to provide their stories and talk about their life when they first migrated to the UK. All the stories were captured on mobile audio recording equipment. The oral recordings were then transferred to a secure hard drive at LBNs base and the temporary recordings deleted from the mobile equipment. Participants were encouraged to bring in their own artefacts that were significant to them in terms of their life abroad and of when they first came to the UK. Many participants brought along items to display and show to their peers. Consent forms allowed LBN to photograph some of the items.

LBN were keen to ensure that the project achieved its outcomes and in order to do this, trust building activities took place, one of which was an outing to Bradford Bazaar. This was an excursion that included educational and recreational elements. A total of 77 participants visited Bradford Bazaar in Yorkshire where they were able to look at products and materials that were reminiscent of their past. This was the first time that the project participants from different parts of East Lancashire met and discussed the project. Women reported that this was the first time they had been part of a mixed group in terms of ethnicity, as they normally spent time with friends who were of the same country of origin as themselves.

IN DEPTH ORAL HISTORY ENGAGEMENT



ETHNICITY OF THOSE ENGAGING IN IN DEPTH ORAL HISTORY SESSIONS



Yaadein Book and Roadshow

All the stories and pictures captured during the reminiscence sessions were put together to create a book. The book was distributed during our roadshow in venues across Lancashire, enabling readers to imagine the thoughts and feelings of these migrant women. The feedback from project participants was excellent and they were happy with the final article. The materials for the roadshow have been showcased in:

- Nelson Library
- Burnley Library
- Townley Hall Museum, Burnley
- Community Link, Haslingden
- Shahi Qila, Blackburn (At LBN's Launch Event)
- Accrington Library
- Bangor Street Community Centre, Blackburn
- Springhill Community Centre, Accrington
- HLF Celebration Event

The roadshow was advertised via our social media pages.

An article also featured the Lancashire Telegraph, which generated a significant amount of interest in the project.

Copy and paste link into browser

http://www.lancashiretelegraph.co.uk/news/11618935.South_Asian_women_tell_their___fantastic___story_in_new_exhibition/

Feedback from the roadshow has been fantastic and LBN have been inundated with requests for it to continue touring, therefore in early 2015 the roadshow will continue to tour community venues and schools to give it longevity and reach as wide an audience as possible.

Celebration Event

To mark the end of the project, stakeholders and project participants were invited to a celebratory event held on the 23rd November 2014. The event took place at Waheeds Banqueting hall in Blackburn and was an evening full of song, dance and awards.

LBN staff and board members delivered a presentation to the attendees showcasing the successes of the project. Over 140 attended including project participants and their children/grandchildren making it an intergenerational event.

The feedback from the event was fantastic with many stating how much they had enjoyed being part of the project and they felt saddened that it had come to an end. All the project participants received awards for their involvement and many reported that this was the first time they had ever won an award and they felt proud of their achievement. It was noticeable that during the

presentation the audience fell silent, when the experience of migration and the commonalities between memories and experiences were discussed, to many this was an emotional moment. The event further reinforced that no matter what the country of origin was of the first generation migrant women, they had very much in common in terms of feelings of loss and isolation.

Steering group

The projects action plan was to develop a steering group, which would meet quarterly during the life of the project. Unfortunately due to work commitments it became apparent that the group would struggle to attend meetings. Therefore LBN created a virtual steering group who were provided with quarterly updates and were able to feed into the project any issues and provide direction. The steering group included representatives from the Library service, archives service and cultural services.

Analysis and Evaluation

Yaadein has been a hugely successful project. In many ways it has;

- Achieved its aims and objectives
- Over achieved on the original engagement targets
- Established new partnerships
- Preserved the history and memories of a socially excluded and ageing group
- Reduced social isolation
- Increased engagement in community activities by a group who shy away from community activities due to age, health, low confidence and cultural barriers
- Built social capital as women from different geographical areas came together and interacted.

Yaadein has given LBN an opportunity to work with an age group that we have not engaged with on this level previously. LBN have been able to build trust and relationships with women who rarely, if ever took part in community/group activities. Many of the women reported that they had not been out without their families before and they felt energised and happy being able to go out with their friends and peers.

Not only have we been able to preserve the history and stories of this group but we have also been able to engage them in other activities post project, due to the relationships we have built. LBN feel privileged to have had the opportunity to work with a group who have so much to offer yet have never been actively encouraged to get involved in any community activity. Participants reported that they felt they had been given value and that they had felt recognised for their contribution to the UK communities. Many had never experienced gratitude or acknowledgement for their contribution and struggled to accept the enormity of their contribution to the lives of 2nd and 3rd generation South Asian migrants.

The social value of the work is immense as the impact is much greater than preserving histories. The project has impacted on many aspects of the participants lives, ranging from, improved confidence levels, improved health and wellbeing and a reduction in social isolation. In monetary terms the impact is immeasurable but significant.

LBN would like to thank all its partners and especially the Heritage Lottery fund for allowing us to work on such a special project. The project has not only enlightened our service users but also the wider communities on the struggles and achievements of a group who until now have not disclosed their stories and memories.

Promotional material

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are delivering an exciting project which will work with South Asian women who migrated to the UK in the 1960's and 1970's.

The aim of the project is to capture the stories, memories and experiences of these women who are now living in East Lancashire.

LWN is looking for volunteers who can support the delivery of the project.

Full training provided!

For more information please call;

01254 392974

Email: office@lancashirewomensnetwork.org.uk

WOMEN ONLY



Yaadein

LANCASHIRE
WOMEN'S
NETWORK

Supported by
The National Lottery
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



Charity no: 1088125

FREE

Coffee Morning

Want to build confidence or gain new skills?

Looking for activities which will improve your health & wellbeing?

Want to meet other women and share interesting experiences, stories and memories?

**Tuesday 7th January 2014
10:30am
Stoneyholme Primary School**

For more information or to reserve your place please call:

Rupali: 01282 437190

Email: office@lancashirewomensnetwork.org.uk

BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL DUE TO LIMITED SPACES.
WOMEN ONLY

(Please note: Terms & Conditions Apply)



FREE COFFEE MORNING



Lancashire
County Council



LANCASHIRE
WOMEN'S
NETWORK



Supported by
The National Lottery
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



Photos







Extracts from oral histories

“Before we started planning to come over here we thought we don’t know anyone there, strange country, always heard bad things and thought this is not a good country for us. I cried all night before we set off, before we set off my mum made me a cup of tea but I couldn’t drink it I was so upset. When we landed in the UK we came to Blackburn as we had relatives there. My husband got a job straight away. We had 2 daughters we brought with us it was very scary. We lived in a nice house, it was a terrace and had one room and we shared with our relatives. We shared bedrooms and the kitchen. The bedroom had a leak but we lived with it.....”

“I came with my husband and 2 daughters in 1974, I didn’t want to leave my country. My husband didn’t have a job but then he got one and he never stopped working.....”

“It was cold and I thought oh my god how will I get used to this. People were friendly, especially the white people and that helped.....”

“I had lots of hopes but I never wanted to come to this country. I had no choice, I was married and had to go with my husband. I wanted to stay in Africa and become a teacher but I wasn’t to do anything but be a housewife. I was shocked when I came to the UK the small houses and the weather. I still remember the snow. My parents used to send me money because my husband didn’t have a good job and I wasn’t allowed to work as my father in-law was very strict.”

“I was so sad when I left my family behind, I dint know anyone except my husband, it was a very very tough experience. I don’t want to remember those memories they were very tough days. I had 2 friends who helped me through the hard times, without them I wouldn’t have survived. (Lady breaks down in tears)”

Partners and stakeholders

Northwest Sound Archives

Pendle Womens Forum

Stoney Holme Primary School

Sir John Thursby Community College

Haslingden Community Link

Library service

Museum Service

Lancashire Archiving

Lancashire Cultural service

Bangor St Community Centre

Springhill Community Centre

Milan Ladies Group

Carers Link

Age UK

Bowel Cancer Screening Service



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