



Report for Improving Reach Project -work with Eastern European Migrant Workers in Burnley (and Rossendale)

The project has now been developing for 13 months with four forums having taken place in Burnley and two in Rossendale to discuss and address the issues faced by the EU migrant workers and attended by a steady 12 members representing

The provision of English for beginners and levels 1 and 2 for the EU community has been highlighted throughout as a key area to be addressed for the adults of new families who have come to East Lancashire and for established families who cannot access ESOL classes, due to work commitments, cost or lack of provision.

Action was taken to partner with the Workers Education Authority to conduct an assessment for ESOL classes in September. 30 people, all Polish, came for the assessment and two classes were established from this with the WEA.

Another class in partnership with Burnley library and run by a private ESOL tutor now takes place on Saturday afternoons.

Burnley college have also agreed to offer a beginners class for mums at the Surestart childrens centre where childcare will be provided by New Era. Five Polish young mothers attended the assessment for this and a group will begin in December.

Payment for this class will be means assessed and the childcare will be funded by Burnley college.

From a coffee morning in July, where 30 people attended from Poland and Lithuania, a newly constituted group (presently called the Magnets) have met in August and October to discuss issues ,funding for training, resources and future community events.

The committee have attended training on their roles and responsibilities as a committee at PCN (10 people attended) and the need identified for further support and advice in how to conduct meetings and make funding applications will be met by the development officers at Burnley CVS, Peter Sweetmore and Christine Blythe.

The chairperson, Ewa Kopacka has been offered a lot of individual support and advice about organization, roles and responsibilities,

challenges presenting from understanding of British protocol which are unfamiliar in the Polish culture.

At the most recent meeting in October, 21 people attended. One Polish volunteer with the police in Burnley, directed a Polish mother and her daughter to speak to the PCSO who attended about an issue she had. This volunteer hopes to begin a Pact meeting in Burnley in the near future.

One Polish member attended an interview with the Citizens Advice Bureau and has agreed to volunteer for them as well as undergo their training programme.

3 Polish volunteers who came to CVS to ask for volunteering opportunities applied for posts as community advocates created from the MIF fund and in partnership with Migrant workers North West, to run drop-in sessions offering advice and information to EU migrant workers. Two were successful and are now in post and will be working closely with us in the Improving Reach project.

This service (The Iris Project) will meet a need in all the areas of Pennine Lancashire for people arriving in Lancashire who need help and advice. They will also signpost to agencies who can help.

Approximately 15 Polish people, including 4 young people, attended the Burnley Community festival, two in traditional Polish dress, and participated in a short film launched by Matthew Pacowski from LCC face to Face project to raise awareness about the Polish community in Lancashire.

Four Polish residents attended workshops organized by the BBC for residents of Burnley to tell their 'stories' about their lives here in the UK.

Two members of the EU community have attended the forum in Burnley.

A coffee morning was held in Bacup on September 19th and 10 people attended, 6 Polish and 4 from the Czech republic.

The group showed interest in English classes and Sports activities. Martin Kay from the Rossendale leisure trust came to a second meeting to give information about facilities in the area and there was a general interest in establishing a committee and make applications for funding.

Future Work

Support will be given to the developing groups to organize events which will encourage community cohesion ie an International Day for all communities, in Burnley and Rossendale.

Support will be given to empower the groups to apply for funding for training, particularly in ESOL at lower and higher levels, expenses, resources and events.

Community members who are not in work are encouraged to apply to be volunteers.

Partnerships with schools will be developed, to help raise awareness of cultural diversity in Burnley and Rossendale schools.

Forums will continue in different community venues meeting quarterly in Burnley and Rossendale.

The new Communities committees will be encouraged to attend PQASSO training.