



Peaceworks Quarterly Newsletter – Christmas 2008

At last we have navigated our way through Autumn – that bit between our oh so wet Summer and the rather chilly short days we are now experiencing. For us in Peaceworks, this season was about as manic as we have ever known it. We hope you enjoy our news: it comes with our thanks and appreciation for your support in finance, friendship, prayer and/or solidarity.

Staff Changes

One of the reasons that things have felt so busy is because of our current staffing



situation. Of the six members of the education team photographed in November 2007 only three now remain. David Pickersgill (pictured far right) moved in the Summer to Reading in Royal Berkshire to pursue his ministerial training. He is missed but we are pleased that he intends to take his experience in peer mediation with him.

Anita Martin (third from the right) has also had to conclude her work with us because of her church commitments but is a good local advocate for our work. Finally, Jona Meyer (pictured far left) will leave a very large hole as he returns to Munich, Germany after Christmas. Jona has worked with us as an intern since September 2006 and has played a crucial role not only as a peer mediation educator, but also latterly as a senior mediator and a mediation trainer on our courses. On top of all this, Jona was a great support in a number of key projects: most notably the revision of our website and Arun Peace Week.

In addition to the gaps in our Education Team, Tony Wood's three-year appointment as mediation administrator came to an end in September. We offer our thanks to Tony and all staff members who have helped us become what we are now. At the time of writing we look forward to staff interviews later this month to replenish our Education Team and to bolster our office-based capacity. As you receive this, **please pray** for good appointments and watch this space for information.

Arun Peace Week

November saw a novel project for this area which Peaceworks took the lead in organising. The first Arun Peace Week was inspired by similar events in the urban centres of Britain like Leeds, Manchester and London. These festivals aim to foster community cohesion and resist ethnic and generational conflict. We thought it would be a worthy effort to try something similar West Sussex, notwithstanding the lower levels of violent crime in our part of the world. In the end, 18 events were held in an 8 day period





including serious things like peer mediation awareness days and inter-generational debates but also fun ways to meet others across the community. Pictured above are some young people enjoying a 'Taste of Africa 'n' Asia.' This was a favourite among those who attended from Peaceworks' team!

Overall, the week was adjudged a success with over 1,600 people involved and many new friendships and contacts being built. **Please pray** that these good foundations will be built upon in Arun and throughout our region.



Peaceworks Mediation Skills Training

Since the last newsletter, we have held another of our regular twice-yearly accredited training courses in Bognor Regis, this time at our new location of the Beachcroft Hotel, Felpham. We enjoyed this venue and will be returning there in January. It's not too late to book in for this course so please note the dates – **26th-30th January 2009** – and consider coming along or passing the information to a friend. The team have also presented a range of training courses to YWAM in Harpenden, to Health Centre professionals in Bognor Regis and to District Councillors in Littlehampton. In addition, we helped to launch a pilot peer mediation scheme at the University of Chichester. We are currently monitoring this project and hoping to see the flames of enthusiasm in the volunteer mediators fanned into life. **Please pray** for this scheme and also for the right delegates to come onto our January course.

Peer Mediation in Schools – more new challenges

Apart from the pressures of our currently small and shrinking Education Team, things have generally gone very well with our schools work. As with Autumn Term every year, this is the key time for launching new peer mediation schemes and this year was no exception with new schemes launched in Felpham, Chichester and in Worthing. On top of that we have seen three new developments in our schools' work: i) locality-wide working (and funding) has been secured in one of partner localities in West Sussex – i.e we will be in every school from Reception to Sixth Form; ii) lesson-based Year 7 material as part of a competency curriculum (sorry if that sounds like jargon, but it simply means bringing conflict resolution and mediation into the heart of secondary school learning); iii) peer mediation awareness days – days of input to help schools where have already launched peer mediation to sustain their work more effectively. **Please do pray for us – for our team, for on-going funding streams and for new education team members.**



Finally, big thanks for your support – this really is a team effort!

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