

Nottingham community project celebrates its second birthday

A project that helps local people throughout Nottingham to set up their own community groups is celebrating its second birthday this week.

The Base Camp project is run by the Partnership Council charity in Hyson Green and since it started in July 2007, it's helped local people to raise over £100,000 in funding, enabling them to set up and run their own community projects.

Base Camp works with people from Nottingham's South Asian community, providing advice in Urdu, Mirpuri and Punjabi, as well as English.

Rukhsana Aziz from Base Camp explains:

"There's loads of people in Nottingham with brilliant ideas for helping others or improving their neighbourhoods, but it's often very daunting for people to know how to put their ideas into action, especially if English isn't their first language.

We help people to find funding for their ideas and help them fill out funding application forms for example. We also help them to set up their community groups so that they comply with legal and financial requirements for community groups. For instance, community groups should have a written Constitution, a Chairman and a Treasurer.

In addition, we offer community groups training in useful skills such as fund-raising, basic accounting, health and safety and food hygiene."

Base Camp also helps existing community groups, so they can improve the services they provide.

Base Camp is supporting more than 30 community groups, including Ujaala, which helps women who are victims of domestic abuse; Activ, which runs aerobics and international cookery classes for women and a homework club for children; Football for All, which runs football sessions for girls and Vital Steps, which offers young people the chance to learn different types of music.

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Rukhsana estimates that over 500 people are benefiting from the work being done by Base Camp-supported community groups.

She concludes:

“Base Camp has enabled local people to get their ideas off the ground and help others in their community, in turn this helps people to learn new skills, gain qualifications, find work, grow in confidence, make new friends and generally improve their quality of life.

For example, one young girl with cerebral palsy has been given the opportunity to play football through the Football for All community group, and according to her mum this has made a huge difference to her life.

The Base Camp project has inspired many stories like that and it’s a fantastic project to be involved with. Especially when you consider that our community groups are run by volunteers. The project is a great example of how much passion and enthusiasm there is in Nottingham, within every community.”

**To find out more about Base Camp please call
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www.partnershipcouncil.co.uk