



BSC Multicultural Services
Supporting over 50 nationalities



The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service

BSCMS
**SILVER
JUBILEE**

1998 - 2023

www.bscmulticulturalservices.org.uk



TRANSFORMING LIVES AND COMMUNITIES IN IPSWICH AND SUFFOLK

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Introductions



Boshor Ali
Chairperson

This organisation was established in 1998 by a group of local volunteers. The intention was to support and empower Ipswich and Suffolk's Black Ethnic Minority communities. Started with a grant of £250 from Suffolk County Council, we have never looked back! Renamed in 2019 as BSC Multicultural Services, the charity is now one of the most respected community organisations in Suffolk, with thousands of people of different backgrounds and nationalities benefiting from its projects and activities every year.

We faced many ups and downs, but through dedication and hard work BSCMS trustees, staff and volunteers have made a positive difference to the lives of thousands of disadvantaged and vulnerable people in Suffolk and beyond. Completion of 25 years is a great milestone and I am delighted that we are celebrating our achievements. BSCMS's success shows that it is possible to shine and make a positive contribution for the common good if we work diligently and collaboratively.

On a personal level, it has been a real honour and privilege for me to be recognised for my contribution to community work by the Lord-Lieutenant of Suffolk. Along with several other prominent Suffolk-based individuals, I was happy to receive the prestigious 'Suffolk Medal' from Lady Clare, who is HM King Charles III's representative in Suffolk. The ceremony took place at Framlingham Castle and I attended the event with my extended family members. It was a memorable day for us all!

I want to thank all our trustees, staff, funders, volunteers, partners, supporters, clients and well-wishers for making the last 25 years so memorable. No doubt, the next 25 years will be equally challenging, but we are looking forward to the future with hope and optimism.



Mahbub Alam
Treasurer

As one of the founders of BSCMS, I am delighted to have played my part in making Ipswich and Suffolk a good place to live, work and visit. We achieved this by promoting social integration, cultural understanding and educational improvement across Ipswich and Suffolk. From the very beginning we adopted a "hands-on" approach to community development and regeneration. The information contained in this brochure is a testament to this.

As a treasurer of BSCMS, it was also a great pleasure to see this small but active community organisation expand and plan and deliver so many different projects, both large and small, for the benefit of everyone. In the process, BSCMS has rightly received many awards and accolades for its contribution and achievements, not only in Suffolk but also at the national level.

In my role as a treasurer, I have seen how community organisations and charities struggled to secure sufficient funding to continue their work. BSCMS was no exception in this respect. But despite all the difficulties and challenges, this organisation continued to play its part in the communities for the last 25 years for the benefit of everyone.

Uniquely, BSCMS's trustees, staff and volunteers went out of their way to proactively engage with members of other communities. It was an honour and privilege to have been a part of this journey. I want to thank all BSCMS trustees, staff, volunteers, well-wishers and funders (both past and present) for helping us to reach this important milestone. Thank you.

Mojlum Khan

BA (Hons), PGCE, F.R.A.S.
Company Secretary

My journey with BSCMS goes back to its early days. A handful of local community influencers came together and established this organisation back in 1998. Soon afterwards I was appointed as Development Manager of the organisation. In that role, I worked closely with the trustees, especially the office-bearers, to develop a strategic vision for the organisation, coupled with a SMART business and operational plan to enable us to address the needs and requirements of the growing minority communities as well as the wider society in Ipswich and Suffolk.

The knowledge and skills that I had acquired during my undergraduate studies, coupled with many years of experience in youth and community work, public transport and retail management, proved to be invaluable during this formative period. Having also been brought up in the north of England, I witnessed first-hand how minority communities became segregated from the wider society in that part of the country, thus leading to considerable social, economic and political difficulties and challenges. Informed by this experience, we pursued a holistic and inclusive vision for the organisation.



It is true that the organisation was initially known as Bangladeshi Support Centre, but from my point of view, this was a historical 'accident' and we needed to transcend the name by adopting a proactive, inclusive and welcoming approach to community development and regeneration. By helping individuals and the growing diverse communities, we made Ipswich and Suffolk a better place for everyone, irrespective of their backgrounds. In the age of 'global village', this was the right thing to do.

In fact, during the last quarter of a century, we worked closely with both statutory and voluntary organisations, as well as other stakeholders, and thereby played a proactive and pivotal role in promoting social harmony, cultural co-existence, educational progress and economic development in a predominantly middle-class and rural English county. Thank you for helping us to play such an important role in this beautiful part of the country!

Current management committee members



Boshor Ali
Chairperson



Mahbub Alam
Treasurer



Julie Begum
Trustee



Manik Miah
Trustee



Howard Pugh
Trustee



Moshud Ali
Trustee



Koysor Miah
Trustee

Messages of support 1

On Suffolk Day last year it was my great privilege, as Lord-Lieutenant, to present Mr Boshor Ali, the Chair of your Board of Trustees, with The Suffolk Medal, the highest honour that this county can bestow on one of its own. The Medal was awarded for a lifetime of dedicated support to Multicultural Services in Suffolk, supporting over 50 nationalities.

It is an extraordinary story and one that we should all be very proud of.

BSC Multicultural Services breaks down barriers and brings whole communities together regardless of backgrounds in joyful celebration, and running like a thread of solid gold through all that enjoyment is the work that is done to improve lives for one and all.

In this, your very special 25th Anniversary year, I am delighted to send you very best wishes on behalf of HM King Charles III.

Clare, Countess of Euston
HM Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk



Being able to celebrate 25 years of active multi-culturalism in Ipswich, through BSC Multicultural Services, honours a landmark anniversary and is a reason to be proud of all our communities.

It is a source of pride that people who have come here from nations all over the world have been able to preserve their own cultures while fully engaging with other communities to become a vital and integral part of this town and indeed, of the UK.

As Mayor of Ipswich, I have been invited to many events that recognise the importance of our communities. I have enjoyed meeting so many people from all sorts of backgrounds and faiths, and while there are differences – and we celebrate those too – they all have one important thing in common. All of them want the best for this great town of ours: Ipswich.

I have lived here, raised my children here, worked here and now I choose to spend my grandma years in this town, because it is a wonderful place. And, with the support and involvement of our diverse communities, all of them working together, Ipswich can become an even better place to live.

This is not about one community reaching out, it is about all communities reaching out to one another, building on the heritage of the generations of people who have come to this town, forging cultural links. By respecting each other and offering the hands of friendship we can all progress together – in education, understanding, and creativity.

Ipswich Borough Council will always support inclusivity and its relationship with BSC Multicultural Services continues to develop as a strong force for good.

Over my years working as a local journalist, I was able to meet some of the pioneers of BSC and now, a quarter of a century later, they are just as passionate as they were in those early days. If anything, enthusiasm has grown as it embraces the diversity of the population, now supporting over 50 nationalities. At the heart of the organisation are many wonderful volunteers and a dedicated board of trustees which continues to ensure good governance.

Earlier in the year, I went along to the Pita festival BSC Multicultural services holds annually and helped to judge the global foods contest. From Spain to India to China and many cuisines between, families and friends went to extraordinary lengths to prepare food and present it to Masterchef standards. Rarely has my Sunday lunch been comprised of so many foods from across the world.

In addition, I was privileged to meet many outstanding school students and university graduates whose families live in Ipswich. Certificates of excellence and trophies were handed out... and I can say with certainty that I am in all the winners' photographs!

BSC Multicultural Services has grown over its 25 years and by listening to the voices of local people it meets challenges along the way, becoming a focus for positive change. It has rightly gained national recognition and awards for its work.

On behalf of the Borough of Ipswich, I therefore extend my warmest congratulations to BSC Multicultural Services on its Silver Anniversary. Thank you for all you do to make lives better.

Lynne Mortimer, Mayor of Ipswich





15-17 Russell Road
Ipswich Suffolk
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In my twelve years as Leader of Ipswich Borough Council it has been a constant pleasure and privilege to work closely with the team at BSCMS.

I am frequently amazed at the amount this small group of dedicated people is able to achieve. Of all the community groups in Ipswich, BSCMS is one of the most dynamic and innovative.

Their founding purpose of providing advice and support to the Bangladeshi community is still important but has expanded significantly over the years to become a service to the wider BME community in Ipswich and beyond.

Important as this core work is, it is the larger events that have got BSCMS noticed.

The BME Business Awards is an innovative project, helping to counter some of negative perceptions around migration by highlighting the contribution BME entrepreneurs are making to the Suffolk economy. The Borough Council has been a sponsor of this event since its inception.

But the project I'm proudest to have worked closely with BSCMS on is the One Big Multicultural Festival. The festival, now in its eleventh year, is an annual one-day event in Ipswich's Alexandra Park which attracts thousands of people. Its mission is to break down barriers between communities by using the universal human activities of sport, music, dance and food to demonstrate our similarities and celebrate our differences.

This would not happen without a huge amount of hard work from the many BSCMS volunteers but, from the outset, I was keen that the Council supported the Festival. At first in kind, and later with financial support, together we have made the One Big Multicultural Festival a permanent fixture in Ipswich's cultural calendar.

BSCMS have been on an incredible journey in their first 25 years. There is no doubt in my mind that Ipswich and Suffolk would be a much poorer place without them. They have rightly received the national recognition they deserve with The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

The team are full of ideas for future projects so I know that, whatever they have already achieved, the best is yet to come!

Regards,

Councillor David Ellesmere
Leader
Ipswich Borough Council



Dear Mojum

On behalf of Suffolk County Council, I am delighted that the BSC Multicultural Services (BSCMS) are celebrating their 25th anniversary. This important milestone reminds us that the diversity of Suffolk's communities is one of our county's great strengths.

A big thank you to the BSCMS and everyone that has given their time and energy to support the work, which brings people together, not just in Ipswich but across Suffolk. I hope everyone has a wonderful day and wish this event every success.

Kind regards

Cllr Matthew Hicks
Leader of Suffolk County Council

Dear Boshor

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you and all your colleagues at BSC Multicultural Services on reaching another significant milestone, 25 continuous years of outstanding support for the people of Suffolk is some achievement.

It has been my privilege and a joy, to witness the evolution of BSCMS, from the early days of helping Suffolk's Bangladeshi community through to the development of a truly multi-cultural service. A service that was recognised in 2022 by our late Queen Elizabeth II, with BSCMS receiving the most prestigious award available to a voluntary organisation, The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

Through your creativity, passion and energy, new services have been developed to meet increasing social need that help the individual but also the community at large. You have led by example, bringing people from all walks of life together, with skill and kindness. Enjoy this moment of reflection, as we look forward to the next 25 years.

With warmest regards

Stephen Singleton MBE DL
Executive Vice-Chair
Suffolk Community Foundation



I would like to congratulate and thank BSC Multicultural Services as they mark their 25th anniversary.

Since becoming Suffolk's Police & Crime Commissioner I have been privileged to see what BSCMS does at first hand with so many communities right across our county.

This secular organisation has an enormous impact on making Suffolk a much better place to live, work, travel and invest. It has been a pleasure to work with them. Without their continuing efforts, compassion and commitment, the county would be much worse off.

I look forward to continuing our work and friendship together over the coming years.

Very best wishes to all involved.

Tim Passmore
Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner
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Company Registration No. 5369725

Mr Boshor Ali

Chair of Board of Trustees

BSC Multicultural Services

Room 29, 19 Tower Street

Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 3BE

22nd May 2023

Dear Boshor,

BSCMS celebrating 25 years of success!

Congratulations to you and the team at BSC Multicultural Services for reaching the impressive milestone of 25 years! It's a remarkable and brilliant story, and as you say, one of great success.

You have built an organisation that is very important to so many people and communities across Suffolk, making an outstanding contribution. It is wonderful that BSC Multicultural Services has been recognised with the many awards it has received but in particular The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2022.

I know just how hard the whole team, the volunteers and the communities you support will all have worked over the years – and the hope, the courage, the vision, the belief you will have held as well. I would like to thank you Boshor for your leadership of BSC Multicultural Services and the part that you have personally played.

I am delighted to have the opportunity to celebrate with you later this year in September. On behalf of everyone here at Suffolk Community Foundation, we look forward to another 25 years supporting BSC Multicultural Services and seeing the positive impact you have on the whole Suffolk community.

With very best wishes

Melanie Craig

Melanie Craig

Chief Executive



Patrons
The Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk
The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich
The High Sheriff of Suffolk
Chief Constable, Suffolk Constabulary

 **UK COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS**
MEMBER
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Messages of support 1

I moved to Ipswich in 1992 and qualified as an Accountant and established my own business, Staines & Co, and settled in Ipswich with my family. Working with local businesses provided an opportunity to engage with various communities, providing financial advice and guidance.

However, I am very proud of my involvement with BSC Multicultural Services. As an award-winning community organisation, BSCMS has won respect and recognition at local, regional and national levels including the prestigious Queen's Award for Voluntary Services in 2022.

My company and I have been actively supporting the wonderful work of BSCMS. Ipswich is a much better place, thanks to the contribution and achievements of BSCMS. Since 1998, this organisation has promoted a culture of understanding, respect and tolerance across Ipswich and Suffolk.

Congratulations to BSCMS on reaching their 25th anniversary as well as the 11th year of the Multicultural Festival. I am delighted to be involved and contribute to this wonderful and much-needed work. Thank you.

M. M. Khan, F. M. A. A. T., A. C. P. A.
Managing Director
Staines and Co., Accountants



I have had the privilege of working with BSCMS as a grant maker for over 9 years. This committed team offer a service that meets individual needs and is tailored to support whatever challenges they are faced with. The support of the Board and local community is outstanding and the empathy and understanding of the ever-changing needs is incredible.

They adapted throughout the Covid pandemic and offered other "keep in touch" services as well as meeting unexpected demands. Throughout all of this they remained focused and supportive and ensured that they were resilient enough when they emerged the other side.

It is always a pleasure to work with them when they need grants, as they are adaptive to the needs of their community and ready to take advice and support.

To receive the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2022 was an incredible and very deserved recognition of their inclusive nature.

Good luck as you go for a further 25th years.

Andrea Pittock
Charity Manager
Local grant making trust



Tom Hunt MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

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Dear BSCMS

As your MP I have been proud to work with members of the BSCMS over the past years and wish to extend my sincere congratulations at the huge accomplishment of BSCMS celebrating its 25th anniversary.

Your many efforts have played a massive role in community development and regeneration and have broken down barriers to bring a whole community together. As an ambassador of BSCMS, together we have been able to participate in numerous events, such as the Orwell Challenge, in which we have been able to raise money to provide warm meals for those who are homeless and have fallen on tough times.

With our significant Bangladeshi community which contributes hugely, BSCMS has been a force for good in Ipswich. Given my link with the Ipswich based Bangladeshi community, I have been fortunate to visit this incredible country on several occasions and have witnessed these projects, such as the opening of new health clinics in the country, which has and will continue to transform the lives of many.

It has been my privilege to meet with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and other government officials to let them know of the impact BSCMS has had with their many charity projects. Together, we have also been fortunate to have visited Number 10 with BSMCS leaders, Boshor and Shami, to meet with the Minister for Charities and recognize BSCMS for their incredible charitable contributions across Ipswich.

BSCMS has provided many years of invaluable support to some of the most vulnerable across the Town, such as providing services during the pandemic in which emergency food packs, financial assistance, and advice was provided to those in need.

BSCMS continues with their incredible work through projects like befriending services for elderly residents, an effective language school, and highlighting the real positive force in promoting integration across the Town that all involved with the BSCMS contribute to.

The values that the BSCMS adds to our community in Ipswich is something to be proud of and I will continue to help support in any way I can. Thank you to BSC Multicultural Services for your continued support in our community and congratulations on celebrating your 25th anniversary.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Hunt
Member of Parliament for Ipswich
Email: tom.hunt.mp@parliament.uk

Messages of support 1

Ipswich Liberal Democrats want to join with BSC Multicultural Services as they celebrate another milestone in their journey to bring understanding care and support to Ipswich People and Communities who can offer so much to our Town, but could be marginalised by Cultural differences were it not for the support of Charities such as BSC Multicultural.

Liberal Democrats believe that sharing and valuing our differences brings strength to our common experience and helps to build a better society where everyone has the opportunity to live, work and thrive together, regardless of birth, disability, gender, race or belief.

The services that BSC Multicultural have developed speak for themselves and have rightly been celebrated with well-deserved awards.

As important is the relationship that has been built with Civic life in Ipswich. Councillor Inga Lockington remembers well the powerful engagement that was part of her experience as Mayor of Ipswich (in 2007) and included the local effort and support for Bangla-Desh during the cyclone that devastated the Country during her Mayoral year, connecting Ipswich with Communities in need.

Over the years that have followed we have greatly value BSC Multicultural's journey from serving Bangla-Deshi people in Ipswich to their work today, bringing learning, understanding and service to other Communities and helping to build those valuable connections with our Town's Business Social and Civic Life that are so important for the health and prosperity of our Town, as we move forward together.

WELL DONE and HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Cllr Inga Lockington
Cllr Dr Tim Lockington



I have had the pleasure in being involved with this great organisation for many years. During my time as Mayor of Felixstowe I was invited to many events. Always welcoming and friendly.

I can truly say I have made some lovely friends. The work they do is second to none. Passion is an understated word for the drive these individuals display every day. It has gone from strength to strength and I am sure we are all very proud to be associated with BSCMS.

Cllr Nick Barber
Former Mayor of Felixstowe



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Our Ref TB/rr

16th May 2023

Dear Colleague

The BSC Multicultural Services charity provides a crucial link between the numerous communities that call Ipswich and the wider Suffolk area home.

For 25 years, this incredible community asset has been helping people to integrate, to feel a sense of belonging and to find their place in the local area and without this work the community would be much poorer.

Run, almost exclusively by volunteer support, this charity has battled many hard financial pressures, as do all charities, however they have tremendous 'bouncebackability' and have always found a way to keep a smile on their faces at even the most worrying of times. They are survivors!

One of the most important success stories of this fantastic charity, is the work it has done to promote the true spirit of 'community' to the many and varied groups whose home is either in Ipswich or beyond. Breaking down barriers that are often in place due to a lack of understanding, this is done quietly and unassumingly within small groups. However, where BCC Multicultural Services have shouted very loudly about 'community' is by the creation of the '1 BIG Multicultural Festival'. This free event celebrates, among other things, music, food, and sport, has been a huge success and is firmly part of the Ipswich events calendar each year.

In recognition of this work and more, those who know this charity felt a real sense of pride to see it receive the Queen's Award for Voluntary Services in 2022. I can think of no better group of people to be recognised in this way and I know how much it meant to everyone involved.

So, 25 years completed and here is to the next 25 and beyond – Congratulations BSC Multicultural Services, great work, keep going but take a moment to enjoy this important milestone.

With my very best wishes to you all,

Terry Baxter
CEO

We believe in youth

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Congratulations to the BSC Multicultural Services for reaching the amazing milestone of 25 years of service, they are a fantastic organisation who do such great work within the community.



The Anglo-Chinese Cultural Exchange was established in 2008 and became a registered Charity in 2010, with the aim of promoting Chinese and British cultures by exchanging details and learning about the everyday lives of these two cultures. It is hoped that by engaging in the exchange of cultures and arts, a greater understanding between all will grow and strengthen. The ACCE provides a wide range of activities and services for people of all ages in Suffolk and other local residences, such as a lunch club, Chinese Community and Supplementary School, health and wellbeing activities (Tai Chi, Ba Duan Jun and Chinese community health checks and vaccinations). We have held an annual Chinese New Year Festival show since 2011, which has become a signature traditional Chinese Festival celebration event in Suffolk.

Over the last 15 years, we have worked very closely with BSCMS and had the pleasure of being involved in many of their events, including the Suffolk BME Business Award, 1 Big Multi Cultural Day, Pita Festival and Supplementary School Education Conferences. We just finished The King's Coronation Community Big Lunch on the 8th May 2023 as a partnership with BSCMS, which was a wonderful and successful event.

Our relationship with the BSCMS goes back well over a decade, mainly as a Founder and Chairperson to support their activities. Perhaps one of the most important aspects of the BSCMS is their open and welcoming approach, embracing and assisting people from all communities irrespective of culture or creed, which is one of the major reasons for their on-going success as community cohesion is so important for everyone's wellbeing.

We look forward to their continued success, and most importantly, wish to send our very best wishes for the next part of their important journey.

Lydia Tse, MBE

Founder and Chairperson of ACCE
Headteacher of ACCE Chinese Community and Supplementary School

BSCMS and Society Kurdish Society have been working together for many years now and the partnership has been mutually beneficiaries for both organisations. The Kurdish community in Suffolk is new and growing in numbers and there is need for more social, educational and recreational activities for the members of the community. Our work with BSCMS has helped us to explore how to meet our needs and requirements. For example, we have accessed some trainings and courses delivered by BSCMS and this has been of benefit to members of our community including First Aid course, Pita Festival and Mental Health and Wellbeing workshop, among other things.

Congratulations to BSCMS on their 25th anniversary and we look forward to working with them for many more years to come!

Ali Omar

Chairperson, Suffolk Kurdish Society



A THRIVING LOCAL GAME

**SUFFOLK COUNTY
FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION**

Dear Sirs,

We (Suffolk Football Association) sincerely congratulate BSC Multicultural Services on their 25th anniversary of outstanding service and support to the community of Ipswich and Suffolk.

The diversity of provision the charity offers, from Supplementary School to sports clubs, social inclusion initiatives to huge events like the One Big Multicultural Festival, Pita Festival, and BME Business Awards, provide vital support to so many.

We have forged a partnership with BSC Multicultural Services relatively recently within their 25 year history. Starting by assisting with the One Big Multicultural Festival, our relationship has since broadened to other projects including resurrecting the One Community Cup, all based on a shared desire to improve the lives of people of Suffolk.

Our experience with the team has BSC Multicultural Services has always been positive. Their ambition is infectious, as is their desire to spread happiness and fulfillment. They have an incredible gift of maximizing resources for optimum impact.

We look forward to continuing to work with BSC Multicultural Services, and wish them all the best for the next 25 years and beyond.

Yours sincerely

Richard Neal
Chief Executive Officer
Suffolk Football Association



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Messages of support 2

I am delighted to extend my warmest congratulations to BSCMS, celebrating your 25th anniversary. This remarkable milestone is a testament to your unwavering dedication and commitment to making a positive difference to the lives of those in need.

Over the past quarter of a century, your organisation has consistently exemplified the true meaning of compassion, providing essential support and hope to countless individuals and communities, locally and even worldwide. Your tireless efforts have not only transformed lives but also inspire others.

I have had the honour of attending many of your events/sporting competitions over the years' which have always raised community aspirations, empowering vulnerable populations and encouraging social cohesion. Year after year, your dedication has resulted in real impact, reminding us Londoners of some wonderful memories of Ipswich and Suffolk community.

It is essential to acknowledge the incredible team at BSCMS. Your staff, volunteers, and partners have personified selflessness and dedication, going above and beyond to accomplish meaningful outcomes. Together, you have formed a community bound by a shared vision, and your collaborative efforts have built a solid foundation for lasting change.

Congratulations and best wishes

Mesba Ahmed MBE
Founder and CEO
London Tigers



To whom it may concern,

I have worked closely with BSC Multicultural Services for many years and really value the work deliver in the community for both young and old; the hardworking team respond to the needs of the community always with good humour and enthusiasm.

As a VCFSE partner the BSCMS team are always helpful and supportive working together to meet the needs of the clients, and working with colleagues across the sector.

The past 3 years have been really tough for many households the Covid pandemic hit households hard, and now the cost of living impacts continue to cause difficulties. BSCMS's resilience to continue in such times is a tribute to each member of their team determined to support those in the greatest need.

I congratulate the organisation in reaching 25 years of delivery and wish them every best for the future for the next 25 years.

Nicky Willshire
Chief Officer,
Citizen's Advice Bureau Ipswich



Community Media & Training Ltd.

05 May 2023

Mr Boshor Ali
Chair of Board of Trustees
BSC Multicultural Services

Dear Boshor

Thank you for your recent email inviting me to contribute towards BSC Multicultural Services (BSCMS) 25th Anniversary celebration.

I have had the privilege of witnessing some of the very highly impressive and innovative work your organisation has done over the last 25 years to upskilling local people, improving their health and wellbeing, strengthening community relations and promoting better understanding between people of diverse background in Ipswich area.

I would like to pay tribute to the dynamic work of the dedicated staff, volunteers and the Trustees of BSC Multicultural Services and its beneficiaries it has helped over the last 25 years.

Your innovative and creative work with mainly the local Bangladeshi people ensured they have had opportunity to make a significant contribution to the local community, as well as the wider community and I applaud this.

Your endeavours form an excellent benchmark for others to follow providing a significant contribution towards creating a fairer Society.

I wish you continued success with your ground-breaking work.

Very best wishes for your celebration.

Yours sincerely

Ashuk Ahmed
Executive Director
Diverse FM Community Media & Training Ltd.



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Diverse FM Community Media & Training is a charitable company, limited by guarantee.
Company No: 5942509. Charity No: 1172543



Messages of support 2

On behalf of the Gambian Welfare Association of Suffolk and Norfolk (GWASN), I would like to congratulate BSC Multicultural Services on its 25th anniversary.

We have been privileged to have been working with you for the past 7 years during which you offered huge support to our association in the form of funding, advice and guidance. During the Covid-19 pandemic, BSCMS offered emergency food packs, hardship grants and arranged the delivery of vaccines to minority communities.



We have also accessed BSCMS trainings and workshops (such as safeguarding, food hygiene and organisational capacity building). Members of our association have also benefited from basic health checks, healthy walks, outings, football and boxing sessions. In addition to the above, we have continued to receive advice and guidance on how to plan community events and activities from the experienced BSCMS staff, which is very much appreciated. We should add that your staff and volunteers are very approachable and welcoming.

Once again, on behalf of GWASN, huge congratulations to BSCMS on your 25th anniversary and we look forward to working with you, now and in the future!

Mustafa Singateh,
Founder and Chairman, Gambian Welfare Association

At the time a handful of visionary Bangladeshi volunteers got together and secured a grant of £250 in 1998, Ipswich was very different to the Town it is today. About 6% of the population back then was represented by the Black and Asian communities. Fast track to 2023 and the diversity of our county Town's population has been further enriched, with the percentage nearing 16%.

Those humble beginnings of the Bangladeshi Support Centre could surely not have envisaged 25 years of helping, connecting, developing and entertaining literally tens of thousands of people. From large scale events through to supporting families in need, and delivering bespoke training and learning programmes, BSC Multicultural Services, as they later came to be known as, have left an indelible and proud mark on the lives of residents like me.

BSC Multicultural Services is celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2023 and I hope we will in the future be celebrating further milestone anniversaries for this charity that does so much for all our Town's communities, as evidenced by the incredibly diverse winners of past and present Suffolk BME Business Awards nights.



Andy Yacoub
CEO, Healthwatch Suffolk

ActivLives
Changes Lives

Dear Mr Boshor Ali,

Congratulations to BSC Multicultural Services on your 25th Anniversary from everyone at ActivLives.

ActivLives has delivered a wide range of preventative services to keep older adults active and connected for 17 years in Ipswich and East Suffolk. During this time we have worked in partnership with BSCMS to help Bangladeshi men and women improve their physical and mental health through gardening, inclusive sport, Well-being Walks and weekly Better Balance sessions.

Working with BSCMS has enable us to reach, deliver and engage with the Bangladeshi community, so that they can access our activities. Some of the people attending the Better Balance session, we have supported for many years and it's great that we have helped to keep people mobile and independent. We have also attended many very successful BSCMS community and information events and lovely picnics and walks in the local park.

Staff and volunteers at BSCMS have developed an amazing organisation supporting the Bangladeshi Community in Ipswich and Suffolk and now helping many more people from different backgrounds and communities with the advice and information service, multicultural events, support and social activity.

Everyone at ActivLives wishes you all the best for the future and that we will be able to continue our partnership with you for many years to come.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Stokes

Julie Stokes
ActivLives CEO



Historical Overview

25 years of BSCMS (1998 - 2023)

Early settlers from the subcontinent came to Ipswich after the Second World War to help rebuild the country. Many of these young men came from East Bengal but after the partition of India in 1947, it became known as East Pakistan. They lived in central Ipswich, working in local factories and the dockyard, and earned enough to survive and send some money back to their families.

Subsequently, they purchased their own homes with the intention of bringing their families from the subcontinent to settle permanently in Ipswich. As more and more families moved to Ipswich, the community gradually expanded, so much so that by the early 1980s the need for a permanent place for religious and cultural activities became a priority for the community leaders.

Whilst the establishment of Ipswich Mosque in the mid-1980s met the community's religious and spiritual needs, there was a gap in the social, educational, cultural and health-related activities. This prompted a group of committed volunteers from the community to set up a charity to cater for the diverse needs of the growing Black Minority Ethnic (BME) people in Ipswich and Suffolk. BSC Multicultural Services (BSCMS), previously known as Bangladeshi Support Centre (BSC), started operating in 1998 from two premises belonging to Ipswich and Shahjalal mosques. In 2000, it relocated to 19 Tower Street (Ipswich) which housed many other voluntary sector organisations including the Ipswich Citizens Advice Bureau.

Founder members of BSCMS included late Azizur Rahman (businessman and one of the founders of Ipswich Mosque), Syed Junab Robbani (businessman and one of the founders of Shahjalal Mosque), AKM Mahbubul Alam (former local government officer), Boshor Ali (businessman), Mahbub Alam Shamim (businessman), Moshud Ali (businessman) and late Jill Stewart (local government officer). Others who served on the management committee over the years included Abdul Momin Khan (Liton), Mohammed Moksood Ali, Sajjad Miah, Monwara Ali, Kohinoor Begum, Fotik Miah, Ian Burnett and Adrian Barney. The aims and objectives of the organisation were:

- To support people of BME communities in Ipswich and Suffolk, and engage them in social, cultural, educational and recreational activities by:
 - Advancing education and training
 - Empowering individuals and communities
 - Providing information, help and support in a culturally sensitive environment

BSCMS started with a grant of £250 from Suffolk County Council (SCC) and thereafter received other small amounts of funding from both SCC and Ipswich Borough Council. This enabled BSCMS to appoint a part-time Advice Officer, who provided information, advice and guidance to its clients in the form of a drop-in service.

Once BSCMS had secured sufficient funding, it was able to appoint a part-time Development Manager. The manager worked closely with the trustees (especially the office-bearers) to prepare both business and operational plans for the expansion of the organisation. Applications were submitted for additional funding from local, regional and national sources.

As the demand for BSCMS services increased and more funding was secured from a range of sources, the charity grew and expanded its services considerably. To meet the demand, more staff (both part-time and full-time) were recruited to deliver new projects and services. During the last 25 years, BSCMS planned and delivered many

innovative and transformative projects in order to empower, upskill and integrate Ipswich and Suffolk's BME people into the wider society (see section 7 for more details). Though BSCMS's journey over the last two and a half decades was not a plain sail, however the commitment, loyalty and dedication shown by its trustees, staff and volunteers enabled BSCMS to face all the challenges and difficulties with strength and fortitude. In recognition of its outstanding contribution and achievements, BSCMS received more than a dozen awards from local, regional and national organisations, both statutory and voluntary.



BSCMS started with a grant of £250 from Suffolk County Council (SCC) and thereafter received other small amounts of funding from both SCC and Ipswich Borough Council.

BSCMS

Key Milestones

- ▶ **1998** BSCMS established by local volunteers in Ipswich
- ▶ **1998** Organised First Annual Bangladeshi Community Celebration Day in Suffolk
- ▶ **2000** Moved to 19 Tower Street Ipswich
- ▶ **2001** Became a Registered Charity
- ▶ **2004** Delivered 3-year BME Training Project funded by LSC & European Social Fund
- ▶ **2004** Became a Company Limited by Guarantee
- ▶ **2005** ALL-INCLUSIVE FINALIST AWARD from National Learning and Skills Council in 2005
- ▶ **2007** Awarded MATRIX Quality Mark accreditation
- ▶ **2008** Featured in Annual Public Health Report by NHS Suffolk & Suffolk County Council
- ▶ **2009** Highlighted as 1 in 10 Beacon Partnership Projects in England
- ▶ **2010** Recognised by NHS as 1 of 3 OUTSTANDING Health Projects in the country
- ▶ **2010** Established 1 BIG Multicultural Festival, attracting more than 8000 people
- ▶ **2010** MATRIX Quality Mark accreditation successfully renewed
- ▶ **2011** Received 'BEST COMMUNITY ORGANISATION' award from Channel 5 (London)
- ▶ **2011** Recipient of Healthy Ambitions Suffolk 'Special Award'
- ▶ **2011** Inaugurated Pita Festival
- ▶ **2012** Attended HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebration at Sandringham Castle

- ▶ **2013** Awarded Bronze Quality Mark by National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education
- ▶ **2014** Awarded Silver Quality Mark by National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education
- ▶ **2016** Received 'Working Together Award' from VCS Suffolk Congress & Suffolk County Council
- ▶ **2016** Inaugurated the acclaimed 'Annual Suffolk BME Business Awards'
- ▶ **2017** Award received from the High Sheriff of Suffolk
- ▶ **2018** 'Working Together Award' from Suffolk Community Foundation & SCC
- ▶ **2018** HRH Prince Edward praised BSCMS's 'wonderful work' during his visit to Ipswich.
- ▶ **2019** 'Voluntary Organisation of the Year Award 2019' from High Sheriff of Suffolk
- ▶ **2019** Bangladeshi Support Centre became 'BSC Multicultural Services'
- ▶ **2020** BSCMS at the forefront of Covid-19 pandemic response
- ▶ **2021** 'Suffolk Award' from High Sheriff of Suffolk
- ▶ **2021** East Anglian Daily Times's 'Suffolk 100' individuals and organisations
- ▶ **2022** Winner of the prestigious Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (QAVS)
- ▶ **2022** Chair of BSCMS awarded 'The Suffolk Medal' from the Lord-Lieutenant of Suffolk
- ▶ **2023** BSCMS invited to Reception at 10 Downing Street by Prime Minister
- ▶ **2023** BSCMS invited to The King's Garden Party at Buckingham Palace
- ▶ **2023** BSCMS 25th anniversary celebration at Trinity Park Ipswich

Projects at a glance

Support Services Drop-in

The purpose of this project was to provide one-to-one guidance and support to disadvantaged and vulnerable people in Ipswich and Suffolk. The office was opened for a few hours a week but through word-of-mouth the number of people seeking help and support steadily increased. Once additional funding was secured, BSCMS's office hours were increased to 2 days a week. A few years later, this was increased to 3 days a week to meet the growing demand.

As more and more ethnic minority people moved to Ipswich, BSCMS naturally became the first point of contact for many growing Kurdish, Turkish, South Indian, African and Eastern European people. As a result, the number of people coming to BSCMS for help continued to increase and office was opened 4/5 days a week. Our Advice Officer's dealt with around 2000 cases annually with people of more than 50 different nationalities benefitting. In total, we have handled around 50,000 cases since BSCMS was established.

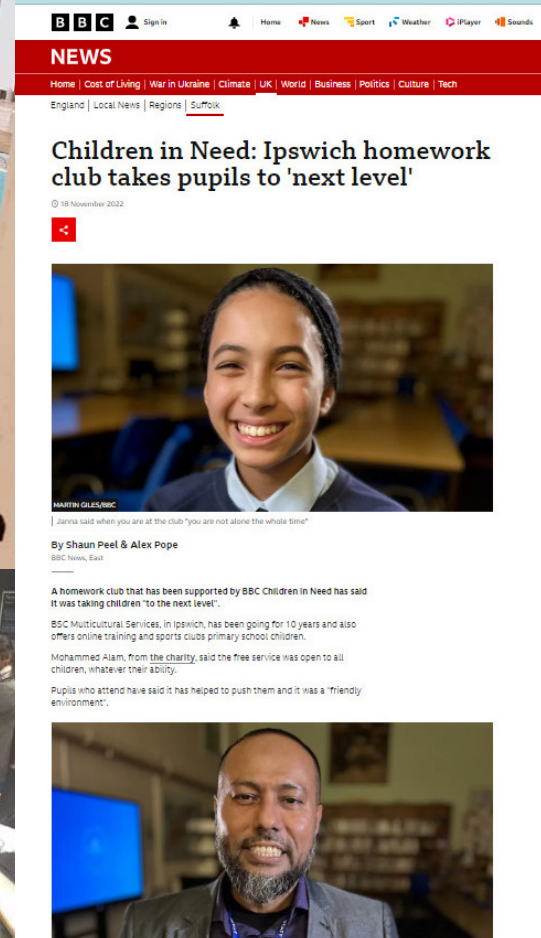


Befriending Scheme

This project was established in 2003 in partnership with Suffolk County Council to provide support to some of Suffolk's most disadvantaged and vulnerable BME elderly people to enable them to lead healthy and independent lives for as long as possible. Since its inception, the project regularly engaged elderly people in a range of activities (such as chair-based exercise, healthy walks in the park, winter health awareness events, etc) which the participants really valued and appreciated, not least because many of them experienced multiple barriers including language, cultural, gender and health problems.

In addition, the part-time Project Co-ordinators (male and female) made regular home visits to support the clients who could not visit our office due to disability or related issues. We had more than 100 clients on our contact list and Suffolk County Council's subsequent decision to cut funding for this project hampered our efforts, but the Lottery Community Fund deserves credit for sustaining this project for the benefit of our older client group.





Supplementary School

BSCMS Supplementary School was established in 2014 with the support of Lloyds TSB Foundation and Suffolk County Council. Currently it works with young people of more than 30 different nationalities who not only experience educational and economic disadvantage but also face social, cultural and language barriers. This project offers the following services:

- 1) 'Saturday School' and 'Homework Club' provides disadvantaged young people additional support in English, Maths and Science (led by qualified teachers, assistant tutors and volunteers). This helps children to improve their knowledge of core subjects, complete homework on time and thereby tackle academic underperformance at school.
- 2) 'Sports Days' enables young people to engage in recreational activities (eg, football, badminton, table tennis, fitness). Prior to this project, children spent their leisure time playing games on electronic devices or hanging around street corners. Now more than 200 young people and their families participate in constructive activities, tackling social isolation, promoting social integration and reducing incidents of anti-social behaviour.
- 3) This project has improved family relationship through parent-child activities (eg, boxing with dad, zumba with mum, various workshops, etc), thus encouraging parents and children to work as a team. Children and their parents also attend educational trips, trainings and outings organised by this project.

Funded by BBC Children in Need and supported by Northgate High School, St Helens Primary School, Goals Sports Centre, Ipswich Tigers, Suffolk County Council, Community Action Suffolk, Active Suffolk and Inspire Suffolk, among others, this project has transformed the lives of hundreds of children and their families for the better.



BME Social Prescribing Service

This service was established several years ago in partnership with NHS Suffolk and North East Essex Integrated Care Board (SNEE ICB) to support clients with non-medical issues (such as social, financial, employment and family problems) that are having a detrimental impact on their health and wellbeing. Through referrals from GP surgeries, health service providers as well as other stakeholders, we have been able to help hundreds of clients. The cases have been more complex and challenging, often requiring on-going work with clients to address their issues.

Led by a part-time Social Prescribing Service Manager and assisted by two part-time Social Prescribers, this service has also organised outreach events in Ipswich and Suffolk Coastal to raise awareness within the BME communities in rural locations.





Training Project

This project was established soon after the inauguration of BSCMS in 1998. Trustees, staff and volunteers of BSCMS were aware that there was an urgent need to organise a range of capacity building trainings and workshops in order to upskill BME people who were at the time working mainly in catering (restaurants and takeaways), retail (shops and markets) and manufacturing (local factories). One of the highlights was the GET IT ON Project which, although funded by European Social Fund and Learning and Skills Council, was delivered by BSCMS in partnership with several other organisations. This enabled BSCMS to set-up an IT Training Suite to deliver in-house trainings (basic, intermediate and advance levels). Other trainings and workshops delivered under the umbrella of this project included:

- ESOL Classes (for men and women)
- Basic IT and Internet
- Level 2 Food Hygiene Course
- Advance Food Hygiene Course
- Health and Safety Training
- Risk Assessment Training
- First Aid for Workplace
- Safeguarding Training
- Employability Training (CV Writing and Interview Techniques)
- Sewing Class for BME Women
- Taster Cooking Sessions
- Basic Motor Vehicle Maintenance
- Introduction to Plastering and Decorating
- Online Safety Training
- Mental Health Workshops
- BME Women's Health Seminars
- Winter Health Awareness Events

Thousands of people from across Suffolk have benefited from the training project including men, women, children and those with special learning needs.

Carers Project

This project was set up in partnership with Ipswich Borough Council to identify and support BME carers and their families. This one-year pilot enabled BSCMS to identify more than 30 BME carers and cared for in Ipswich, which subsequently enabled us to develop this project with further funding from Suffolk County Council via Suffolk Community Foundation. As a result, we were able to identify and support nearly 100 BME carers and cared for over the years including outreaching into Lowestoft, Bury St Edmunds, Newmarket, Sudbury and Suffolk Coastal.

The carers and their families really valued the respite breaks organised by this project including Healthy Walks in the Park, Pamper Days, Outings and Community Engagement Events aimed at carers and their families. We have also referred clients to Suffolk Family Carers for assessment and further support.



Health Awareness and Prevention Project

This project was developed in partnership with NHS Suffolk, SCC Public Health and National Social Marketing Centre (London) to raise awareness of health issues in the BME communities in Suffolk (especially Bangladeshi people). Through a series of health events, we highlighted issues that affected BME people focusing on preventing heart disease, diabetics, gastric and blood pressure. Hundreds of people attended the events and provided positive feedback.

This project was such a success that NHS England considered it as 1 of the 3 most interesting and innovative initiatives in the whole country. BSCMS was invited to London for the launch of the brochure which provided a detailed overview of our project. NSMC also featured our project in their 'Lighting the Beacon' booklet which was distributed nationally, thus providing more recognition for BSCMS. Then, towards the end of 2018, we linked up with Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG to continue this work and reinforce the message of health and wellbeing within the BME communities in Suffolk. This work has continued with closer partnership and collaboration with SNEE Integrated Care Board.



BSC MULTICULTURAL SERVICES



FREE BME HOUSING ADVICE AND SUPPORT SERVICE

We can help and support you with tenancy issues, rent arrears, housing benefits and other general support relating to your Council tenancy. Please contact us for more information:

For more information please contact:
Mr Tunu Miah, BME Support Officer 07855 540993
 or email tunu.miah@ipswich.gov.uk

Our FREE Advice & Support Service is open Monday - 8.00am to 2.00pm



BSC Multicultural Services
 Supporting over 50 nationalities
www.bscmulticulturalservices.org.uk
 Charity no. 1104502 Registered Company No. 508836







Tenant's Support Project

This project is a partnership between BSCMS and Ipswich Borough Council to provide direct support to IBC's BME tenants to reduce rent arrears, sort out repairs, deal with housing benefit and other related issues.

It was established more than 15 years ago and the Tenant's Support Officer has continued to work with this client group. There are currently more than 100 clients on our database and our staff, based at Grafton House, works closely with IBC officers and other relevant stakeholders to resolve housing related queries and questions.

BME Women’s Project

This project was set up in 2002 with the intention of proactively engaging socially isolated BME women in educational, social and cultural activities to empower them to become more assertive, independent and proactive members of our society. Thanks to funding from Co-op, Lloyds TSB Foundation and the local authorities, we employed a part-time Women’s Engagement Officer to outreach into the BME communities and engage women in a range of activities (such as Basic IT, Sewing Classes, Employability Skills and Educational Trips).

The project became really successful with more than 200 BME women on its contact list and over the 10 years of this project we supported hundreds of women in Ipswich and across Suffolk.



Curry and Culture Heritage Project

Funded by Lottery Heritage Fund and working in partnership with Ipswich Museum, Suffolk Record Office (now The Hold) and Northgate High School, this 3-year project collected information (both oral and written), photos and related memorabilia from the early Bengali settlers in Ipswich to record and preserve their stories of migration, settlement and contribution. Two part-time Project Co-ordinators interviewed more than 30 early settlers and their colleagues (both men and women). In so doing, they produced dozens of detailed and informative profiles.

The information collected through this project enabled BSCMS to produce a mobile exhibition along with photos, arts and artefacts, and we produced three educational brochures for use in citizenship, history and religious studies classes at local primary and secondary schools.

The end of the project was celebrated at Endeavour House, headquarters of Suffolk County Council, with more than 300 people of diverse background attending including many prominent guests and dignitaries. Since then, the mobile exhibition has been hosted by Ipswich Borough Council, Suffolk New College, Ipswich Museum, University of Suffolk, Kirklees Centre (Lowestoft) and BICO in Bury St Edmunds, among others. More than 10,000 people have benefitted from this project.

Sporting Citizenship

BSCMS worked on this unique one-year pilot project in partnership with Inspire Suffolk to engage young men of Asian and Eastern European background from the Norwich Road area in a series of sporting and citizenship activities to raise cultural awareness and promote social integration.

Funded by Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner, this project organised weekly sporting activities which attracted young men from 20 different nationalities. Learning and cultural awareness was raised through citizenship sessions, which were embedded into the recreational sessions (eg. football, badminton) to promote a sense of belonging and commonality, irrespective of background. This project took place from 2016 to 2017 and more than 100 young men benefitted from it.



Euro 2020 Legacy Project

This project was funded by Sports England and it was delivered in partnership with Suffolk FA. Like the Sporting Citizenship Project, it offered free football sessions to BME people to encourage them to stay fit, active and healthy. The weekly sessions took place at Suffolk New College Sports Centre on Sundays and more than 100 people of diverse backgrounds benefited.

The end of project was celebrated with a Community Cup in collaboration with Suffolk FA and many other stakeholders. Trophies were handed over to the winners by the Mayor of Ipswich.

Seeds for Change

This project was funded by local councils and other stakeholders to engage young men, especially from the Norwich Road area of Ipswich, in sporting and related constructive activities. We worked closely with Suffolk FA and our sessional workers engaged young men of many different nationalities to come together and play football at the Goals Sport Centre in Ipswich.

Overseen by a part-time project manager, the work was proactively promoted in Ipswich and the response has been overwhelming as hundreds of young men have benefited from this project since its launch after the Covid-19 pandemic.



BSC Multicultural Services
Supporting over 50 nationalities



SEEDS *for* CHANGE

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For further details, please contact: Mohammed Mainul Alam "Shahin"
07932 644466 or mohammed.alam@bscmulticulturalservices.org.uk
www.bscmulticulturalservices.org.uk



Registered Charity No. 1104502



Suffolk-wide Community Engagement Events

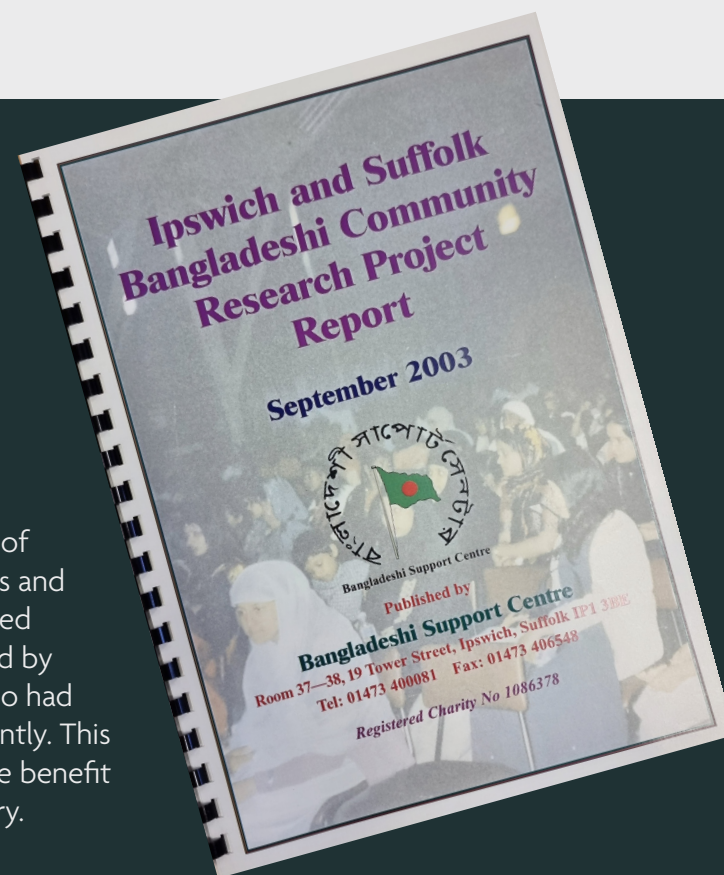
Although based in Ipswich, BSCMS is a Suffolk-wide organisation and over the last 25 years we proactively engaged with communities across the county to raise awareness of health and wellbeing, and promote social and cultural understanding especially in Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Woodbridge, Felixstowe, Brandon, Lowestoft and Sudbury.

During 2015 to 2017 alone, BSCMS worked with Waveney Bangladeshi Forum, Kirklees Centre in Lowestoft, Brandon International School, West Suffolk BME Women's Group, BICO in Bury St Edmunds and Waveney District Council, among others, to organise a series of Community Engagement Events across Suffolk which attracted hundreds of people of different backgrounds.

This was replicated in Ipswich during 2017 and, as a result, BSCMS organised three Community Engagements Events in partnership with Ipswich Borough Council. Again, the events attracted people of diverse backgrounds and it provided an opportunity for local people to highlight and discuss issues of concern to them and their neighbours with their local councillors and other officials.

Barriers to Learning and Employment for BME Communities (Research)

This was a one-year research project funded by the Learning and Skills Council. BSCMS explored and highlighted barriers to learning and employment within the BME communities in Suffolk. Using a range of research methods (including interviews, questionnaires and outreach visits to community centres), BSCMS collected information about the challenges and difficulties faced by ethnic minority people in Suffolk, especially those who had special needs, disabilities or did not speak English fluently. This research paper made several recommendations for the benefit of local service providers, both statutory and voluntary.



Annual Educational Trips and Outings

BSCMS projects and activities seek to break-down barriers, promote understanding and encourage positive engagement with the wider society. To achieve this, right from the outset, BSCMS organised annual trips and outings for socially isolated and marginalised members of society to become productive members. These trips and outings are aimed at young people, adults and elderly people, both male and female, and they are open to people of all backgrounds.

Annual Educational Awards

To inspire young people to achieve their full potential in life, BSCMS incorporated this event into the Annual Global Food and Pita Festival, which attracts around 1000 people at Suffolk New College. Now in its 12th year, this award recognises young people, both male and female, for their exceptional performance in GCSEs, A-levels, undergraduate and postgraduate degrees or related fields (eg, sports). Recognising high-achievers within the BME communities inspires others to aim high and pursue their dreams for the benefit of everyone. Up to 30 children and young adults are publically recognised each year.



Hate Crime Awareness Project

Working in partnership with Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner and Community Action Suffolk, this one-year project raised awareness of hate crime within the BME communities in Suffolk.

Through workshops, trainings and proactive outreach, BSCMS empowered ethnic minority people of diverse background to take hate crime more seriously and report such incidents to police or other appropriate authorities.

More than 200 people benefited from this project, especially taxi drivers, shopkeepers and catering staff, and our work also led to Suffolk Constabulary appointing a Hate Crime Officer. A report was subsequently compiled and shared with Suffolk Community Foundation.



Online Safety Training for BME Communities

Aimed at children, young people and their families, this project raised awareness of the risks or dangers of using the internet, thus offering tips on how to stay safe online using safety tools and parental control. Training sessions were delivered at BSCMS Supplementary School, Homework Club, and other suitable venues in Ipswich and across Suffolk. More than 300 people benefited from this work.



Healthwatch Suffolk Consultation with BME Communities

Working in partnership with Healthwatch Suffolk, BSCMS consulted nearly 200 BME people from Ipswich and Suffolk Coastal regarding the quality of local health and social services. This took place through 1) a series of consultation events and 2) a questionnaire. More than 150 people attended the consultations and more than 100 people completed the questionnaire. Based on participants' verbal and written feedback, BSCMS compiled a detailed report for Healthwatch Suffolk incorporating recommendations for further improvement.



Diversity Training for Service Providers

Since its inception, BSCMS played a proactive role in raising awareness of cultural diversity in Ipswich and Suffolk. BSCMS believes in only one race, namely the human race. Therefore, colour, language, faith, gender and background enrich our common humanity. Such an integrated approach to human commonality enabled BSCMS to plan and deliver Diversity trainings and workshops for the benefit of people working in the statutory and voluntary organisations in Suffolk.

BSCMS's Diversity trainings are unique because they are based on our learning and experience acquired over quarter of a century. Local doctors, nurses, social workers, police officers, teachers, council staff and elected officials, amongst others, who participate in BSCMS's practical and problem-solving approach find it more interesting than a largely theoretical view detached from the realities of life.



Supporting Good Causes

As a charity and grassroots-based organisation, BSCMS believes in supporting good causes, both locally and nationally. Over the last 25 years, we organised fundraising activities in support of BBC Children in Need, St. Elizabeth Hospice, Ipswich Soup Kitchen, Orwell Challenge and even victims of flooding and other natural disasters in Bangladesh. Thousands of pounds were raised to help such good causes, thanks to the commitment and dedication of our Management Committee members, staff, volunteers, clients and well-wishers.



Sporting and Recreational Activities

BSCMS has played an active role in promoting sports and recreational activities in our communities during the last 25 years. This was underpinned by our desire to encourage people to lead a healthy lifestyle but not at the expense of fun and enjoyment. Thus, we have encouraged hundreds, if not thousands of local BME people to become physically active and healthier. Working in partnership with local stakeholders (such as Ipswich and East Suffolk CCG, Ipswich Borough Council, Goals Sports Centre, Northgate Sports Centre, Suffolk FA and Ipswich Tigers), we have organised many sports tournaments and recreational activities including:

- One Community Cup
- Annual Sports Days
- Taster Swimming for Men
- Taster Swimming for Women
- Football tournaments at Multicultural Festival
- Sport Clubs at Northgate Sports Centre
- Sport Club at Inspire Suffolk
- Boxing for Fitness
- Self-Defence Classes
- Zumba with Mum
- Ladies Fitness Sessions
- Women's Away Days
- Healthy Walks in the Park
- Taster Bowls Sessions
- Introduction to Archery
- Kabaddi Competition
- Taster Cricket
- Boccia
- Curling



SAI Proud to Support BSCMS 25th Anniversary Celebration 2023



It has been a pleasure to work with BSC Multicultural Services over the years. I would like to congratulate BSCMS on their 25th Anniversary and wish them the best for the future.

Being a local businessman I am passionate to improve our local communities.

- Supporting local businesses to thrive
- Connecting businesses to the council and government
- Connecting businesses to universities
- Working with local charities to achieve their goals



Email: sachinkaraleipswich@yahoo.com

   Dr Sachin Karale Ipswich

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Proud to support BSCMS' 25th Anniversary Celebration!



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Only by visiting Westerfield House can you truly appreciate this wonderful setting

Covid-19 pandemic was a global crisis. The virus was first identified in China in December 2019 and it soon spread across the world. A month later, the World Health Organisation declared a public health emergency and in March 2020 it was classified as a global pandemic. Like elsewhere, here in the UK, the virus spread quickly and the NHS was on the brink of being overwhelmed. To prevent this, the whole country went into lockdown on 23 March 2020 and for over a year a series of measures were put in place by the government to protect lives and livelihoods.

During this period of unprecedented crisis, BSCMS showed its true colours. As the emergency services (paramedics, ambulance service, hospitals) struggled to cope, BSCMS prepared and distributed thousands of foods, sanitary and winter packs as well as hardship funds to the vulnerable people in Ipswich and Suffolk. We also provided meals to the homeless in Ipswich. Many people had lost their jobs or had no income (especially the self-employed). Supermarkets also struggled to cope. BSCMS filled the gap by sending food parcels directly to people's homes (prioritising elderly, disabled, lone parents and families with children). BSCMS was also responsible for promoting the vaccination programme within BME communities.

BSCMS Covid-19 Response



Staff and Volunteers Reflections

BSCMS has been served very well by its staff and volunteers. Without their commitment and dedication, this organisation would not have been able to plan and deliver its numerous projects and activities. We are delighted to acknowledge all our staff and volunteers, past and present, for their invaluable contribution and achievements.



“

I started working part-time for BSC Multicultural Services in 2004 as a Befriending Project Co-ordinator. Over the years I have held several positions within the organisation and oversaw various projects. Currently I have 3 part time roles one of which is as the Senior Advisor providing support with issues such as benefits, housing, debt, finance and much more. I am registered with the Office of Immigration Services Commission to provide immigration advice at level 1.

I also manage the BME Social Prescribing Service (see section 7 for more details). My third role is as Joint Centre Manager (Strategic) where I work closely with my colleagues Mohammed Mainul Alam, Mojlum Khan, as well as the office-bearers. Over the years we have faced many challenges (such as funding cuts and Covid-19 pandemic), however we work at our best when challenged, supporting our clients through difficult times. Challenges and difficulties aside, we have had many successes. The biggest success has been the diversity of communities we support and the delivery of BME Business Awards, Suffolk Global Food and Pita Festival and the One Big Multicultural Festival.

On a more personal level, over the years I have seen a change in the attitude of the women in the community who were otherwise difficult to engage but have grown in confidence and are now seeking out support when they need it. I hope this is partly due to my work here at BSCMS which has helped to shape not only BSCMS to what it is today but the community as a whole. In 2018, I was nominated as one of the most inspirational women in Suffolk which was a very proud moment for me and my family.

I would like to take this opportunity to pass on my congratulations to BSCMS on reaching 25 years! From our humble beginnings, we have gone through many good times and many turbulent moments but have managed to hang on when many a great charity had closed their doors.

”

Shayra Begum

Centre Manager (Strategic)



“

I have been working for BSC Multicultural Services for most of my adult life, being the second person to be employed by the organisation. I used to juggle my time between the two mosques in Ipswich (Ipswich and Shahjalal mosques), providing face-to-face support to clients three days a week. The work was very challenging as we did not have any computers or internet. However, having access to a telephone helped to speak with service providers directly and resolve most of the issues to the satisfaction of our clients.

I am proud to be part of the team that has helped BSCMS expand and become one of the most prominent community organisations in Ipswich and Suffolk from such humble beginnings. I have worked on and managed many projects including the biggest project to be overseen by BSCMS, the Get It On! project, which was a £350,000 project in partnership with Suffolk ACRE, SAVO and CSV Media. Being the lead partner was a challenge as we had to support the other organisations to make it a great success.

The people who work at BSCMS are wonderful to work with, especially the other two Managers, namely Mojlum Khan and Shayra Begum. I do not think the organisation would have come this far without the commitment and dedication of our first Chairperson, AKM Mahbubul Alam, and our Management Committee, especially the current office-bearers (Boshor Ali and Mahbub Alam Shamim).

I have really enjoyed my time at BSCMS and it has been an honour to work with such amazing people. The staff and trustees are second to none and every day is different but wonderful, with everyone supporting each other, constantly going beyond the call of duty to make all the projects, events and activities a great success. Thank you.

”

Mohammed Mainul Alam

Centre Manager (Operational)



“

Congratulations to BSC Multicultural Services for achieving its 25th silver anniversary! Being part of this organisation for over 15 years, I have had the chance to experience and witness how important it is to have organisations like ours to support and empower the community. It's been an honour for me to be involved in serving the community in so many different ways. BSCMS has evolved hugely since it first started back in 1998 and has gone through various motions of tough times such as COVID and precious times such as receiving the astounding late Queen's award.

Surviving and accomplishing these achievements were only possible due to our supporters, funders, volunteers, especially our clients, staff and management committee. We are very fortunate to have a team with diverse skills and abilities to enable us to pull together as a whole to make things happen and to achieve what we have achieved so far. My best wishes for BSCMS for another 25 years of serving the people in Suffolk. I am looking forward to what the future brings.

Tina Ali

Finance Officer / Office Administrator

”



“

It has been a wonderful 15 years working with BSCMS. Starting in 2009 as a Befriending Scheme co-ordinator, I am constantly given the opportunity to develop close ties with the community, meeting and befriending people of different cultures and backgrounds.

Working with my colleagues is highly impactful, both at the individual and community level, and it gives me great satisfaction. We have achieved many successes such as running large projects like the Pita and Multicultural Festivals to raise awareness as well as initiatives to support carers; promote mental health and wellbeing, and trips and outings for our clients. I hope there will be many more years to come!

Noman Siddiqui

Outreach Officer

”



“

I have been involved with BSCMS over 20 years, the late Azizur Rahman encouraged me to be active with community work. I have sat in committee meetings and helped out with interviews during this time. Since 2020, I have been working at BSCMS as a Carers Project Officer. In my role, I have direct contact with clients of all backgrounds providing support to the carers and their loved ones. The opportunity enables me to experience all different cultures, to pick up new languages and understand different faiths.

I find my role extremely rewarding as I feel we are giving back to the community. It is an absolute pleasure being involved with BSCMS, working with such wonderful colleagues in a fulfilling job that offers so much to wider Suffolk. I feel enriched working with a community which is so diverse yet so warm and welcoming, and I am proud to be part of BSCMS.

Kohinoor Bibi

Carers Project Officer

”



“

I have been working for BSC Multicultural Services for 18 years as a Housing Support Officer. Working with Ipswich Borough Council (IBC) tenancy service to provide BME tenants with all their housing needs. This includes dealing with language barrier, rent arrears, housing benefit and the relevant changes to housing regulations. Keeping tenants in touch with changes.

BSCMS is a wonderful community organisation, and I am pleased to be part of it. It has a great understanding and vision of the community and people it serves, and is a forward thinking and creative charity, always looking at ways how to better serve its clients. I am pleased and honoured to be working with such a great organisation and serving the community to meet their needs.

Tunu Miah

Tenants Support Officer

”



“

I have been with BSC Multicultural Services for just over two years now. I am employed as a ‘Social Prescriber’ - one of the newest projects to support those of the community with non-medical issues. It has been fun establishing the service during a difficult time. We started the service during the Covid lockdown, during which we were working from home. Witnessing the support BSC Multicultural Services continued to offer the community during a time when other services were happy to put their feet up has been a privilege to have been a part of. The team feels more like a family!

Everyone has been so welcoming and they were eager to get back to the office to re-establish that physical connection. Having worked for BSC Multicultural Services - I have an inside understanding as to why the organisation has been so successful and won so many awards, including the prestigious Queen’s Award. The establishment and growth of this charity has been an inspiration, likewise working with those that make it feel like family and home!

”

Paul Manhertz

Social Prescriber



“

I joined BSCMS during the pandemic and my role is to support clients with non-medical issues through the Social Prescribing Service. It is a very rewarding work. The working environment at BSCMS is very open, friendly and warm.

“Everybody works with dedication and commitment towards society which inspires and motivates me to work even more. The whole team is absolutely fantastic, helpful, sensitive and caring towards each other. 25 years of service deserves nothing but huge admiration for achieving so much success. Congratulations to BSCMS on this special journey!

”

Shilpa Desai

Social Prescriber



“

I have always wanted to help the local community and feel as if I am a part of positive change; working at the BSC Multicultural Services has ticked those boxes and more. Tuesdays are my favourite as that is the day I am at the BSCMS. Within just a 5-hour shift, I can meet over a dozen people who come with their own stories, puzzles, problems and they all require the same attention but different resolutions.

With each new client, my brain has to shift to align with what it is that they need from me and how can I make our time count, making this one of the most challenging but rewarding roles I have ever done. I am honoured to be trusted so deeply by many - often the most vulnerable members - in our community. I have also been astounded by the hard work of my colleagues whose dedication to serving the community is profound and inspiring.

”

Rupa Ahmed

Trainee Support Officer



“

BSC Multicultural Services support so many communities within our community. It is lovely to be a small cog in that helping wheel. I have been able to use my previously gained knowledge of reduced-cost software sources to provide up-to-date IT facilities. I also put together and now maintain the website.

The three major events: Suffolk Pita Festival, One Big Multicultural Festival, and Suffolk BME Business Awards provide plenty of website content. It is great to be part of the team and I was really chuffed that BSCMS won the Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service for 2022. Happy 25th Anniversary and Floreat BSCMS.

”

David Davies

IT and Internet Technician

“



Working tirelessly this small team bring communities together making a real and positive difference to thousands of people every year. Touching the lives of individuals and families from over 50 nationalities with no barriers to race, colour or religion, they are a small team with a huge heart.

Joining the family as volunteers is a real pleasure and an honour. Doing what little we can, we have found companionship and a sense of purpose. Our time invested is multiplied x100 by the team making what we can contribute feel valued and impactful. If you are considering giving some of your time and talents to the benefit of others then look no further. Become a friend of the organisation you won't regret it.

”



Steve Favell

Business Consultant
and Volunteer

Stephanie MacKentyre

BBC Radio Suffolk Presenter
and Volunteer

“



I was one of the first to be employed by BSCMS in 1998 and worked as a Support Officer helping clients with their queries and questions, and other related paperwork. At the time, BSCMS was based in Ipswich and Shahjalal mosques before it moved to 19 Tower Street Ipswich. I worked 2 hours at each venue but the demand for the service soon increased and I was struggling to see everyone within the time allocated. However, we made a huge difference to people's lives!

I also attended the trustee's meetings to help out with administrative tasks and also promoted the new organisation within the BME communities in Ipswich. This was undertaken through distribution of flyers and by word-of-mouth. We also organised luncheon club for the elderly and several community events, in addition to raising funds for the victims of flooding in Bangladesh. Looking back, I thoroughly enjoyed my time at BSCMS. Thereafter, I went onto set up my own catering business!

”

Akhtar Miah

Volunteer (formerly Support Officer)

Others who had worked at BSCMS in various capacities during the last 25 years include:

Noor Miah

Rehana Malik

Lubna Chowdhury

Rofik Miah

Bilkis Ali

Rabina Hassan

Chowkina Chowdhury

Motin Khan

Fotik Miah

Shofik Miah

Juma Hoque

Rubi Begum

Monju Hussain

Moshud Ali

Julie Begum

Some of BSCMS's sessional staff, past and present volunteers and contacts include:

Steve Favell

Stephanie MacKentyre

Iftekhar Alam (Lowestoft)

Abdul Shahid (Sudbury)

Ali Mohammed (Newmarket)

Roushnara Begum

Jim Hunt

Swathi

Iftekhar Alam (Lubed)

Ali al-Hamadi

Taz Hussain

Shahriar Chowdhury (Joglu)

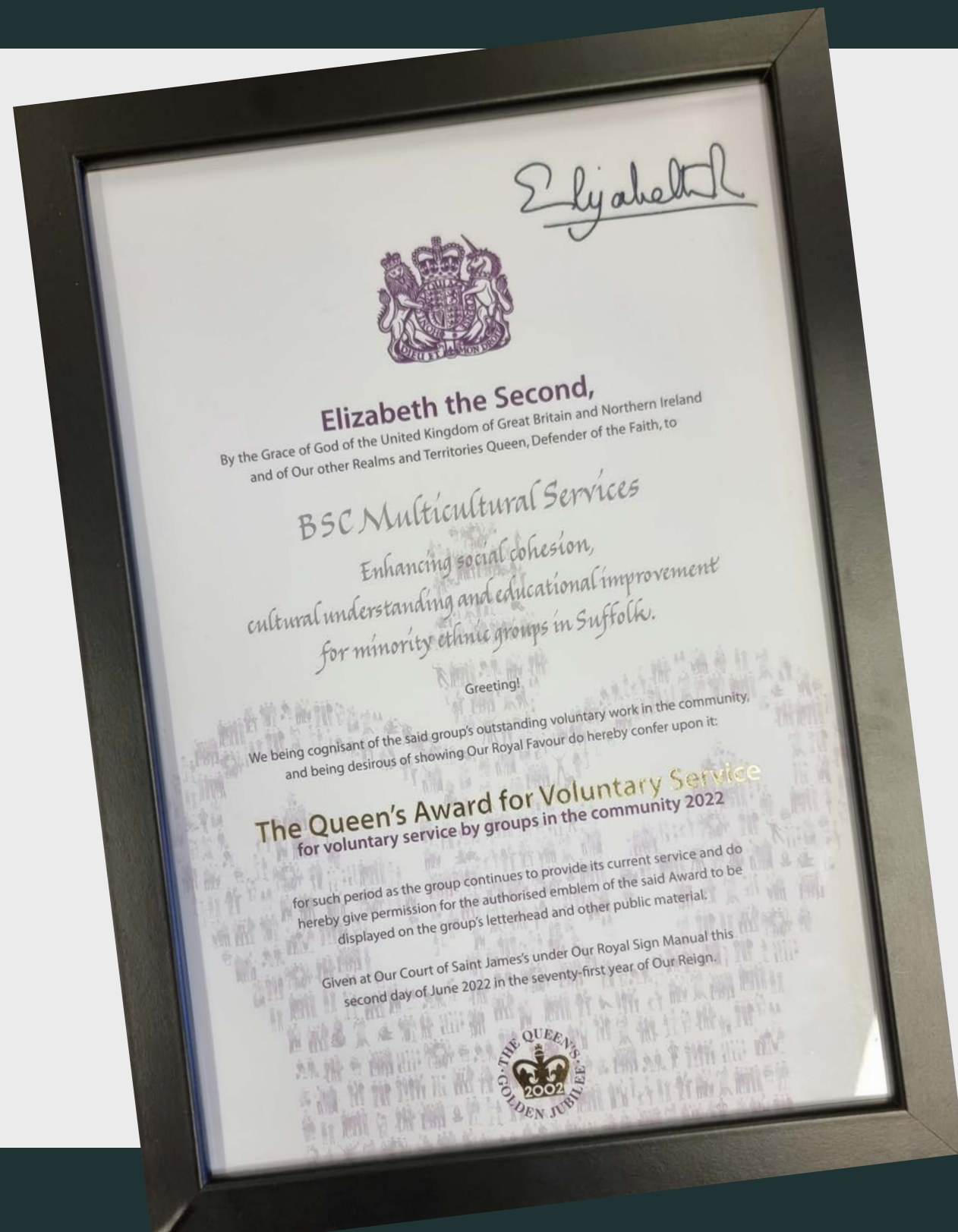
Angur Ali

Foyjul Islam

Idris Ali (Soyful)

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

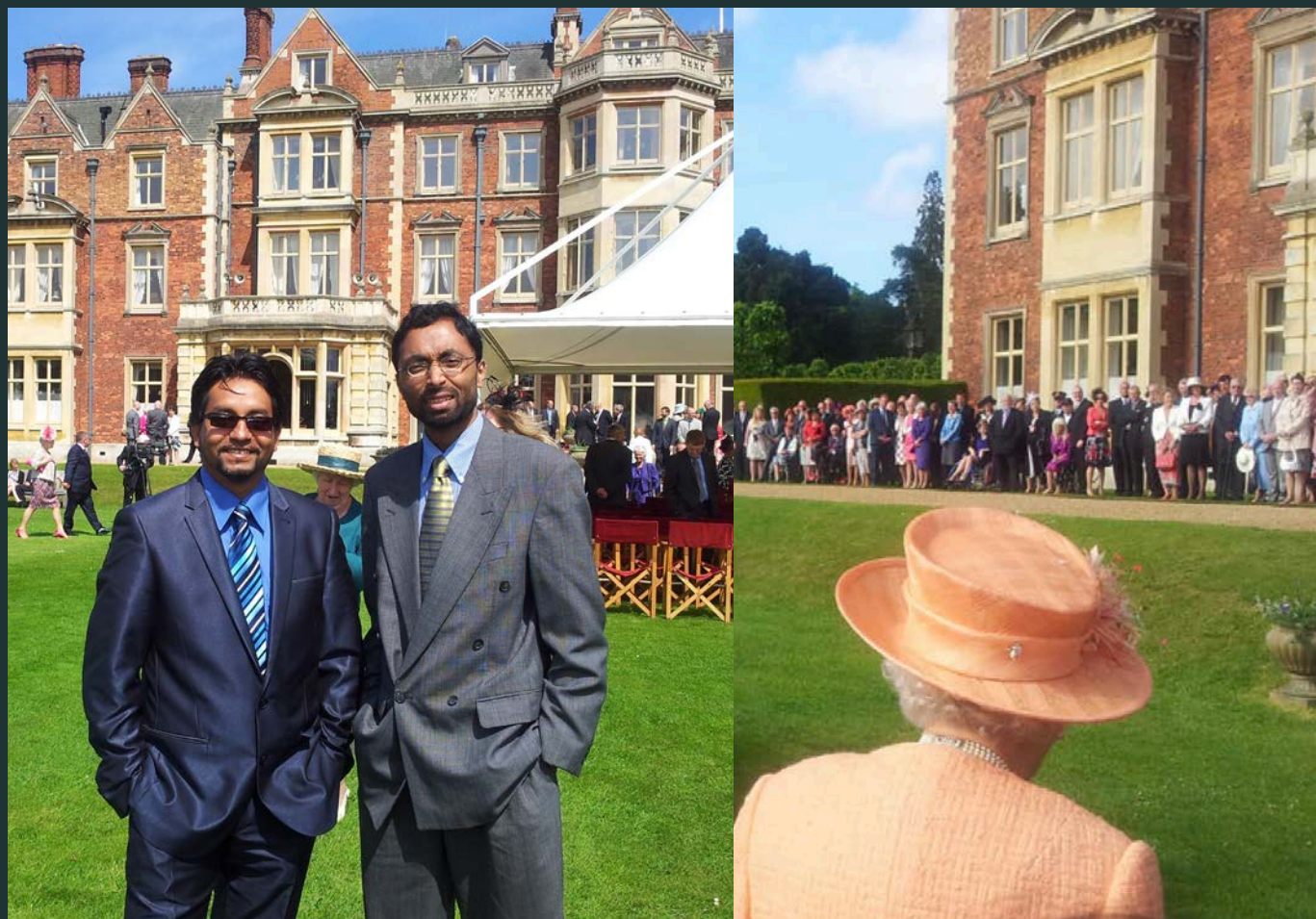
To acknowledge and recognise BSCMS's contribution to Ipswich and Suffolk over two decades, it was nominated for the above award by its supporters and well-wishers. Independent assessors then visited our offices and thoroughly reviewed our work. Several months later, we received a letter from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport informing us that HM The Queen was desirous of showing Royal Favour upon BSCMS by conferring the prestigious Queen's Award for Voluntary Service for 2022. We were of course delighted, being one of the last organisation's to be recognised by Her Majesty before her death in September 2022. The award was handed over to BSCMS by a deputy lieutenant of Suffolk on behalf of HM King's Charles III in January 2023.



BSCMS at Queen's Garden Party

📍 Sandringham Castle

The year 2012 marked the Diamond Jubilee of Elizabeth II being the 60th anniversary of her accession on 6 February 1952. The only diamond jubilee celebration for any of Elizabeth's predecessors was in 1897, for the 60th anniversary of the accession of Queen Victoria. To mark this special occasion, HM the Queen invited BSCMS to a Garden Party at Sandringham Castle. Boshor Ali, Chairperson, and Mojlum Khan, Company Secretary, attended the event on behalf of BSCMS. It was an interesting and memorable occasion for both of our colleagues.



BSCMS at King's Garden Party

📍 Buckingham Palace

Established during the reign of Queen Victoria, Garden Parties are an important way for members of the Royal Family to speak to a broad range of people from all walks of life, all of whom have made a positive impact in their community. On the day of the Garden Party, the Palace gates are open from around 3pm. The Party officially begins when Members of the Royal Family enter the garden at 4pm, when the National Anthem is played by one of the two military bands present.

While the bands continue to play a selection of music, Members of the Royal Family circulate among the guests through 'lanes'. Each takes a different route and random presentations are made so that everyone has an equal chance of speaking to a Member of the Royal Family. Members of the Royal family then arrive at the Royal Tea Tent, where they meet further guests. Guests are free to eat, drink and stroll around the beautiful Palace gardens. Boshor Ali, Chairperson, and Mahbub Alam Shamim, Treasurer, attended the Garden Party at Buckingham Palace on behalf of BSCMS on 3rd May 2023.



The Suffolk Medal

The Suffolk Medal is the highest award that can be made by Suffolk to an individual from Suffolk. The purpose of the Medal is to recognise, reward and champion the exceptional contributions of Suffolk people that have made a fundamental and lasting difference to the county of Suffolk and its people. Recipients come from all areas of county life in the public, private and voluntary sectors, and across all activities of historic and future importance to the county.

Recipients will have gone above and beyond expectations in making a significant individual contribution or made a similar impact on the Suffolk of today. Last year, Boshor Ali, Chair of Board of Trustees of BSCMS, received this award from Lady Clare, Lord-Lieutenant of Suffolk, for his more than two decades of community work in Suffolk.



Reception at 10 Downing Street

A reception was held at Number 10 Downing Street to celebrate the work of Community Champions in constituencies across the UK. Community champions are members of the community who make constituencies a better place to live and work. It was an opportunity to celebrate and thank these champions.

Tom Hunt, MP for Ipswich, welcomed the members of BSC Multicultural Services, Boshor Ali and Mahbub Alam Shamim, to the reception in April 2023. It was hosted by Rt Hon Stuart Andrew MP on behalf of the Prime Minister. The MPs are invited to nominate a local charity champion, with Mr Hunt choosing BSC Multicultural Services. He said, "As an ambassador for BSC Multicultural Services, I've seen close at hand the positive difference the charity makes supporting some of the most vulnerable across the town."



Multicultural Festival

BSCMS never missed an opportunity to highlight and celebrate the diverse cultures and traditions that existed in Ipswich and Suffolk. With more than 60 different languages currently being spoken in Ipswich and more than 120 across Suffolk, this county is very diverse as it is vibrant. Being aware of such diversity, BSCMS became one of the first organisations to plan and organise large community festivals in Ipswich as early as 1998. Three of its major annual events are:

The Annual Community Day moved outdoors in 2000 and became known as 1 BIG Multicultural Festival; it is one of Ipswich and Suffolk's largest and most diverse community festivals with an attendance of over 8000 people of more than 50 different nationalities. Organised in partnership with Ipswich Borough Council and funded by the Arts Council England, other supporters include Suffolk Community Foundation, Belvoir Estate Agents, Staines and Co., PMG Plumbing, Suffolk County Council, Town 102 FM, Ipswich Star, BBC Radio Suffolk and SAI Estates.

Through music, sports and food, this event brings our communities together to celebrate our cultures, diversity and shared values in Alexandra Park, Ipswich. Being one of the largest and most inclusive annual community events in Suffolk, it attracts local, national and international artists including Raxstar, Kanda Bongo Man, Baghdaddies, Rajasthan Heritage Band, Kodjovi Kush and Afrospot All Star, and Samboomba Samba Band. In addition, food from around the world and sports competitions are the key attractions each year including five-a-side football tournament and Kabaddi competition. There is a separate 'health marquee' providing free basic health checks and other preventative services to enable people to stay healthy and active for longer.



Global Food and Pita Festival

Like the Annual Community Day, this festival revolves around a traditional theme. Pitas are sweets and savouries made from flour, sugar, coconut powder and similar ingredients from rural Bangladesh. This festival, held annually at Suffolk New College since 2012, provides both men and women an opportunity to showcase their culinary skills by preparing different types of pitas for a competition. A panel of independent judges select the winners based on taste and design of the entries. Winners are announced on stage and prizes are distributed accordingly. Subsequently it became known as Global Food and Pita Festival, thus being more open and inclusive.

More than 1000 people of diverse background attend this interesting and attractive event every April with visitors coming from as far as London, Norwich, Cambridge, Lowestoft, Luton and Southend-on-Sea. Local businesses and organisations book stalls to promote their products and services at this event.



Orwell Challenge

The Orwell Challenge was first held in 1976 as a healthy challenge in our wonderful Suffolk countryside to raise funds through sponsorship for charities or good causes. In its early days, it was only a walk, and it followed a very similar route, from Ipswich to Felixstowe along the banks of the River Orwell and back, which became the Orwell 25 Walk that we still have today. The Orwell Walk proved an immediate success. In recent years, it has added marathon and half-marathon trail runs to the event, so it really is a day out for all. Now known as The Orwell Challenge, the walk element still remains at the heart of the event.

2023 was the 46th year of the event, and over the years' participants have raised well over £3.2 million for their charities and organisations. BSCMS has been participating in this event for many years raising funds for its projects. This year Tom Hunt, Ipswich MP, joined BSCMS and he walked 10 miles to raise money for its Hardship Fund. The Hardship Fund offers hot meals to homeless people in Ipswich who have fallen on tough times.



Sports Days

Now in its eleventh year, BSCMS Supplementary School has grown over the years and has expanded its activities, helping hundreds of children of diverse backgrounds to achieve their full potential in life. Along with its Saturday School and Homework Club, this project also organises sports days on a regular basis. A variety of sports are on offer including football, table tennis, basketball and badminton, among other things.

The purpose of the sports days is to promote physical activity, encourage healthy lifestyle and keep children and young people busy with useful and constructive activities, thereby reducing community tension and anti-social behaviour. Each sports day attract more than 200 children, young people and their families of diverse backgrounds at the Goals Sports Centre in Ipswich.



Annual Community Day

First held in 1998 at the Wolsey Theatre in Ipswich, this annual event was an in-door celebration of Asian cultures (focusing on Bangladesh) with music, dance, drama and food being the main attraction. With more than 300 people attending, this event was a collaborative effort between several organisations including BSCMS, Ipswich Borough Council, Ipswich Bangladeshi Cultural Group, Wolsey Theatre and Suffolk County Council, amongst others.

One of the highlights of this event was the drama performed by Ipswich Bangladeshi Cultural Group. The drama was based around a theme from rural Bangladesh, which always generated considerable interest in the communities. This event continued to be held at Wolsey Theatre for about 11 years before it moved to a local park.



BSCMS' Impact Through case studies

BSCMS has worked in partnership with both statutory and voluntary organisations in Ipswich and Suffolk to improve local people's quality of life. Our collaboration and co-operation were underpinned by our organisational ethos of maximising output with minimal funding. In so doing, we have had a lasting impact on many people's lives. We achieved this by using our limited resources (human and financial) wisely and also by sharing expertise and reducing duplication through collaboration and synergy. This enabled BSCMS to make a significant contribution to promoting a culture of commonality between people of diverse background over the last 25 years. The following case studies highlight BSCMS's positive impact on people's lives

Case Study - 1



Mr A arrived in the UK as a refugee from the Middle East. He has a wife and 4 young children. He cannot work due to a disability and was facing financial difficulties. As Mr A had 4 young children in the house, they did not have a TV to keep the children entertained or money to take them out. He also needed bedding, school uniform and winter clothing for the children and was stressed about providing these as well as paying for heating. BSCMS provided Mr A with 2 sets of new bedding, food vouchers and applied for help from the Surviving Winter Funds. BSCMS also secured funding for a television, uniform and winter clothing for the children. This has made a huge difference to the whole family.



Case Study - 2



Mrs D is from Romania and worked various jobs via agencies. She worked with a temporary National Insurance Number and did not apply for pre-settled or settled status. She stopped work in June due to ill health and was not paid SSP as she was on zero-hour contract. Mrs D applied for a NINO in the last few months but the documents were lost in the post. She did not receive a NINO either. BSCMS applied for Universal Credits, but the claim was cancelled. BSCMS applied a second time but she failed her habitual residence test as an interpreter was not provided. Mrs D had no income and her rent was in arrears. BSCMS contacted the landlord and applied for charitable help. She was awarded £400. BSCMS helped her to apply for a new NINO. Also applied for Discretionary Housing Allowance but this was rejected. BSCMS asked for this decision to be reconsidered. Then Mrs D had to leave her flat as it was deemed unsafe by the fire service and the landlord denied her rehousing until she cleared the rent arrears. BSCMS spoke with the parties involved and arranged for accommodation for Mrs D and also provided her food vouchers, bedding and heating for the new flat as well as toiletries.

Case Study - 3



Mr U is of Asian background and had been living with pain and health issues for a number of years. He works long hours, 6 days a week, and often finds it difficult to cope with the stress of work. He became unhappy and very worried, to the extent that his doctor was very concerned.

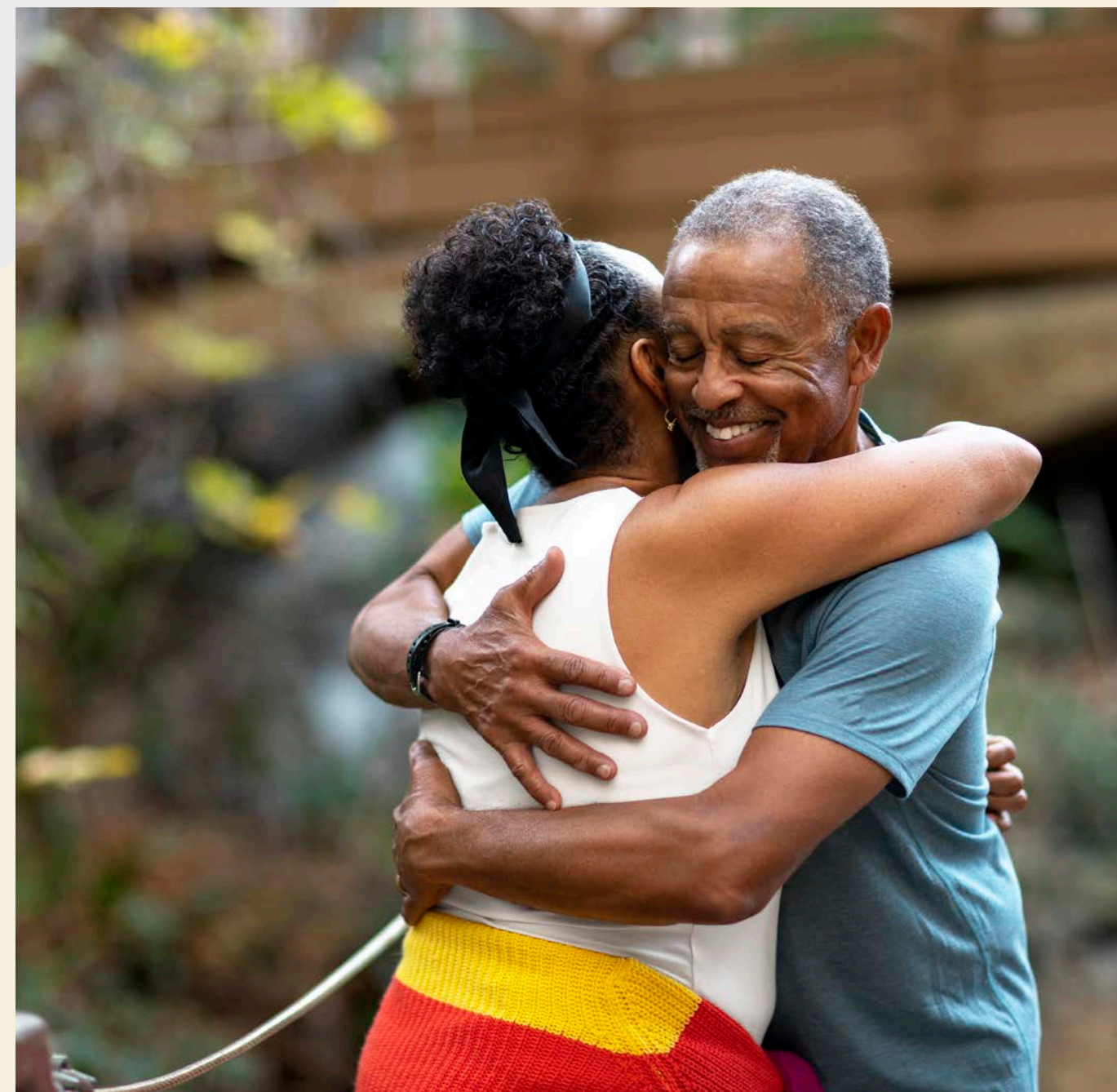
He attended one of BSCMS's health events and we suggested that he should join our swimming sessions, which he did, and only a few weeks later he felt a lot better and happier. It was as if a huge weight had been lifted from his shoulders. Also, now he feels a lot energetic and has made many new friends.

Case Study - 4



Ms D is a White (English) lone parent of 5 young children. She was experiencing financial difficulties during the COVID crisis and even struggling to feed her children. She came across our organisation via social media and contacted us for urgent help and support. We provided her family with emergency food and winter packs, and this meant that Ms D was able to feed her children during a very challenging and difficult time for her family.

We kept in touch and provided further food packs and a one-off small grant from the Hardship Fund to help them cope during the COVID crisis. The family is very grateful for the help and support they have received so far.



Case Study - 5



Mr and Mrs W are of Caribbean background and both of them are elderly and unwell with multiple health issues including dementia. They live alone and were struggling during the COVID crisis but as soon as their difficulties were brought to our attention, we provided them with regular food packs, winter packs, carers packs and since then we have kept in touch with them to ensure they were safe and well, in addition to offering on-going support through our BME Carers Project as both Mr and Mrs W are vulnerable.

As a result of our intervention, they are now accessing other relevant services and provisions, which they were not aware of, and this has significantly improved their social, financial and health conditions, thus making a real difference to their quality of life for which the couple are most grateful to BSC Multicultural Services, its staff, volunteers and funders alike.

Case Study - 6

Mrs B went into hospital to deliver her baby; however, it was decided by the surgeons that she needed an emergency caesarean. Something went wrong during the procedure that meant Mrs B was bleeding internally afterwards and had to have a further 3 procedures. This left her and her family deeply traumatised and in distress. The family came to BSCMS as they felt the surgeon did not communicate very well and his attitude was poor and indifferent.

BSCMS staff talked with the family and helped them to understand what went on during the entire process and explained that some of the issues they raised were unavoidable due to the emergency nature of the procedure. BSCMS staff helped to calm the family down and also wrote a letter of complaint as requested. Mother and baby subsequently returned home and are doing well. The family members were grateful to BSCMS for the understanding, help and support provided by our staff during such a difficult time for them and their whole family.

Case Study - 7

Mr M and his family, who are of South Indian background, have been running a local off license for many years. The business opens very early in the morning (before 6am) and stays open until the early hours at night. Over the years they had faced many problems with anti-social behaviour, hate crime and racism in general but they had not received any support from either the police or any other agencies. BSCMS visited the business and received detailed feedback from the owner and his colleagues. The family wanted practical support to address and overcome their difficulties and challenges.

We followed-up our earlier consultation with another visit and we offered Mr M and his colleagues a hate crime resource pack consisting of 1) a personal alarm, 2) 'Say No to Hate' crime posters, 3) hate crime reporting card, 4) stress ball and other relevant items. They were delighted to receive the pack and thanked BSCMS for doing something practical to improve their situation. Mr M and his family are now running a successful business without having to face regular incidents of anti-social behaviour, verbal abuse and hate crime.



Case Study - 8

Ms Ali was a quiet and shy girl, your average student, lacking confidence and getting by, but she and her friend were encouraged to join BSCMS's Homework Club by their teachers at Northgate High School. Since then, Ms Ali and her friend have made a huge improvement in their academic studies, confidence and health and well-being.

Ms Ali used to be worried and anxious, which she said was stopping her from relaxing and enjoying life to the fullest, however since joining the Homework Club she has been able to relax a lot more, not worried about her school or homework or even chores at home, thanks to help provided by teachers and peers at the Homework Club. Now she is able to cope and manage her workload, having improved her interpersonal skills and self-confidence.

Conclusion

Over the last 25 years, BSCMS rarely discussed or debated multiculturalism in public. Instead, we focused all our attention, efforts and energy to the realisation of multiculturalism in action, aiming at involving people of different origin and background to make Ipswich and Suffolk a better place for everyone to live and work. We believe that cultural knowledge and sensibility provide the basis for ending social isolation and cultural marginalisation, which we endeavoured to achieve by:

- 1. Fostering a culture of commonality and partnership among different ethnic communities,**
- 2. Facilitating mutual empowerment through provision of relevant services and activities, valuing diversity and intercultural experiences, and**
- 3. Championing health, wellbeing, training and educational upskilling, and participation in sports and recreational activities, both at individual and societal levels.**

These actions created more soft-power than we realised, thus contributing to making Ipswich and Suffolk a safe, prosperous and tolerant place for everyone, irrespective of their background. Long may this continue!



BSCMS in the news

During the last 25 years, BSCMS's projects and activities have been covered extensively in local and national media especially in the Ipswich Star, East Anglian Daily Times, Channel 5 Television, NTV, BBC Look East, and BBC Radio Suffolk. Below are some of the newspaper cuttings:

Profile: BSCMS, an award-winning Suffolk-based charity

Mojum Khan, funding and development manager at BSC Multicultural Services (BSCMS), considers how his organisation is well-placed to help Suffolk businesses improve their competitiveness through greater cultural awareness and balance.

As the UK enters into a set of new relationships with both the EU and other nations, it is imperative that Suffolk businesses are as culturally aware and agile as possible to stay competitive. BSCMS can help achieve that competitive edge.

BSC Multicultural Services (BSCMS), a new member of Suffolk Chamber of Commerce, is a multi-award-winning charity and community organisation. It was established in 1996 by a group of dedicated community volunteers aiming to improve the lives and well-being of the growing BME (Black Minority Ethnic) population in Ipswich and Suffolk.

accessing its services, training and other activities, including Moroccan, Portuguese, Urdu, Vietnamese, Pakistani, Indian, White, Chinese, African-Caribbean, White American, Senegalese, Italian, German, Sri Lankan, Ethiopian, Chinese, Kurdish and mixed ethnicity.

BSCMS is known for its innovative, grassroots-based and community-led approach to community development and regeneration in order to address and respond to a range of inequalities, including the BME Business Awards, Big Multicultural Festival and the Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk, Clare, Countess of Euston, who is the Queen's representative in the county, said: "These four marvellous and varied groups reflect the depth and breadth of the BME community in Suffolk."

Ipswich organisation is one of only four in Suffolk to win prestigious Queen's Award

Four organisations in Suffolk that support thousands of people have won the prestigious Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, it has been announced.

The honour is the equivalent of an MBE, and is the highest award a voluntary group in the UK can receive.

The local recipients in the Queen's Platinum Jubilee year are BSC Multicultural Services based in Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds Rickshaw, Halesworth Volunteers and Suffolk Lowland Search and Rescue.

The Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk, Clare, Countess of Euston, who is the Queen's representative in the county, said: "These four marvellous and varied groups reflect the depth and breadth of the BME community in Suffolk."

BRAD JONES
brad.jones@archant.co.uk

always on the anniversary of Her Majesty's coronation, 20 years after it was created, is especially significant in her Platinum Jubilee Year and at the height of our Festival of Suffolk, making it all the more memorable for them all."

BSC Multicultural Services provides essential support services to Suffolk's growing minority ethnic communities. It also delivers cultural events to bring together people from all backgrounds and promote mutual understanding – like the One Big Multicultural Festival and Suffolk BME Business Awards.

this summer. Two volunteers from each organisation will be invited to attend a garden party at Buckingham Palace next year. Boshor Ali, chairman of BSCMS, said: "For more than 24 years now, BSCMS has been serving our communities with dedication and commitment and I am very happy that this has been recognised. Well done to all my colleagues and let's keep up the good work."

Mahbub Alam "Shamim", BSCMS treasurer, added: "Over the last two decades, BSCMS trustees, part-time staff and volunteers have worked so hard to make Ipswich and Suffolk an inclusive, tolerant and prosperous place for everyone to live and work."

To nominate a group, visit qavs.culture.gov.uk/ or for more support visit suffolk-liautenancy.org.uk/queens-award-for-voluntary-service



The BSC Multicultural Services team outside their base in Tower Street, Ipswich. Picture: BSC MULTICULTURAL SERVICES

'Whole world' represented at park festival

Celebration of music, food and sport

TOM CARR
tom.carr@ipswichstar.co.uk

Thousands took to an Ipswich park to celebrate the return of the One Big Multicultural Festival.

The One Big Multicultural Festival returns to Alexandra Park, for a day full of live music, food, sport and fun. The festival is a celebration of the diverse communities in Ipswich and Suffolk, and is a chance for people to come together and enjoy a day of fun and entertainment.

Lynne Harrison, Mayor of Ipswich, said: "It is an absolutely fantastic celebration of our diverse communities in Ipswich."

"This is just part of the fantastic Ipswich summer, with so many free events, and everyone is so happy."

She said: "This event really showcases the amazing variety and richness of our diverse communities in Ipswich."

There was a great atmosphere in the park, with people of all ages enjoying the day.



enjoyed by crowds



Crowds will be treated to dancing, food and singing from across the globe. Picture: ARCHANT



This will be Ipswich's 10th multicultural festival. Picture: CHARLOTTE BOND



The One Big Multicultural Festival is set to return to Alexandra Park this Sunday after a two-year absence. Picture: SHARON LUCKY BROWN

Town 'buzzing' for return of One Big Multicultural Festival this Sunday

Excitement is building for Ipswich's 10th multicultural festival this weekend.

The One Big Multicultural Festival returns to Alexandra Park this Sunday after a two-year absence.

"There's a huge buzz going on in the town, and everyone is excited to see the festival return," said one of the festival organisers, Shayra Begum.

Hosted by the BSC Multicultural Services, the day will be packed with food from around the world, live music, dancing and games for all the family.

"This will be the tenth festival to hit Ipswich, and BSC Multicultural Services are celebrating bringing it together people from all walks of life for over a decade."

"We always have a balance of local performers and bigger acts," said Shyara. "We have to give smaller performers a chance as well, and we've got a great

Thousands converge on town as festival voted a massive success



Thousands of people from across the East of England descended on Ipswich for the tenth annual multicultural festival this weekend.



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CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF BSC

We're proud to be supporting BSC Multicultural Services on their 20th Anniversary.

67 FOXHALL ROAD, IPSWICH, SUFFOLK, IP3 8JX

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With over 20 years of experience, Bella Napoli showcases traditional Italian cooking using freshly sourced ingredients of the highest standards.

We provide an extensive choice of foods which include pizza, pasta, risotto and specialities for all the family and for every occasion. Bella Napoli ensures a great experience with a great choice at the best price, along with a friendly and likable Italian ambience.

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www.bellanapoli-ipswich.com

BSCMS a Pictorial Guide

Given the scale and diversity of work undertaken by BSCMS over the last two and a half decades, we have been able to collect thousands of pictures/photos of our activities in the form of an archive including dozens of videos, films and footage of our events. We are happy to share selected photos of our projects and activities below:







Prince Edward Visit



Community Engagement



High Sheriff Award



AGM



10 Downing Street



High Sheriff Award



Hot Meals for Homeless



Kings Garden Party



Hate Crime Campaign - Taxi



Hate Crime Campaign - Quality Kebab



Educational Awards



Befriending Project - Tea Club



Sports Day



Working with Ipswich Museum



Orwell Challenge



Suffolk 100



Suffolk Medal



100 Women



Homework Club - Health Living Pack



Global Food and Pita Festival

Acknowledgements

BSCMS is grateful to everyone (individuals, community groups, partner organisations and statutory bodies) and especially our funders for their much-needed advice, guidance and support over the last 25 years. It would not be possible to name everyone; however, we would like to single out the following organisations/individuals for their sustained support and co-operation over many years. Thank you.

Organisations

Ipswich Borough Council	BBC Radio Suffolk
Suffolk Community Foundation	Healthwatch Suffolk
BBC Children in Need	Peppery Productions
NHS Suffolk and North East Essex ICB	Staines and Co. Accountants
Lottery Community Fund	Suffolk FA
Suffolk County Council	Ipswich Tigers
Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner	Suffolk New College Sports Centre
Arts Council England	Lovewell Blake LLP
Henry Smith Charity	Kerseys Solicitors
SAI Estates	Suffolk New College
Rope Trust	High Sheriff of Suffolk
University of Suffolk	Active Suffolk
Inspire Suffolk	ActivLives
Northgate High School	Anglo-Chinese Cultural Exchange
St Helens Primary School	Phoebe
Community Action Suffolk	Westerfield House
Ipswich Star	London Tigers
East Anglian Daily Times	Diverse Community Media & Training (Luton)

Individuals

Cllr David Ellesmere, former leader of IBC	Cllr Debbie Richards
Cllr Neil MacDonald, leader of IBC	Cllr Paul West
Stephen Singleton, Executive Vice-Chair, Suffolk Community Foundation	Stephanie MacKentyre, presenter BBC Radio Suffolk
Melanie Craig, CEO of Suffolk Community Foundation	Steve Favell, business consultant Cllr Inga Lockington
Louise Hardwick, Deputy Director of Partnerships, NHS Suffolk & NE Essex ICB	Cllr Julian Gibbs
Cllr David Goldsmith	Jack Abbott, Labour Party PC for Ipswich
Tom Hunt, Ipswich MP	Terry Hunt, former editor of Ipswich Star
Terry Baxter, CEO of Inspire Suffolk	Cllr Liz Harsant
Jatinder Purewal, Funding Manager, Lottery Community Fund	Russell Williams, former CEO of IBC
Andrea Pittock, Manager of Rope Trust	Matthew Hicks, leader of SCC
Dr Sachin Karale, MD of SAI Estates	Dr Imaad Khalid, GP
Clarissa Place, news editor of EADT and Ipswich Star	Richard Neal, CEO of Suffolk FA
Cllr John Cook, Communities portfolio-holder, IBC	Andy Yacoub, CEO of Healthwatch Suffolk
Wayne Bavin, presenter BBC Radio Suffolk	Nicky Willshire, CEO of CAB Ipswich
Kyle Smith, Lovewell Blake LLP	Sally Samson, formerly of Northgate High School
Mac Khan, MD of Staines & Co	Claire Flintoff, formerly of St Helens Primary School
Cllr Sandy Martin	Daba Chowdhury, former Associate Professor, University of Suffolk
Cllr Tim Lockington	Will Thomas, Associate Professor, University of Suffolk



The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service

BSCMS SILVER JUBILEE

1998 - 2023

www.bscmulticulturalservices.org.uk



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Community
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