

CADG: COMMUNITY ARCHIVES IMPACT STUDY

CASE STUDY NO. 5

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE BLACK HISTORY PROJECT and NORTHAMPTONSHIRE BLACK HISTORY ASSOCIATION

Based in: Northampton
Geographical remit: Northamptonshire

Project Summary	<p>The Northamptonshire Black History Project was founded to record and promote the histories and stories of Northamptonshire's Black communities and individuals over the past 500 years. To support these aims the Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Undertook historical research into sources held by external bodies• Encouraged black community groups to organise their records into archives and deposit them with the county record office• Recorded the life stories of Black people across Northamptonshire <p>The work of the Project has been carried on and developed by its successor, the Northamptonshire Black History Association</p>
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Project Exemplifies	<p>Key features of the Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of on-line database with catalogue of oral history collection and references to black people and organisations in a wide range of sources • Successfully encouraging seven black and ethnic minority organisations to deposit their archives at Northamptonshire Record Office, making this combined resource one of the best of its kind in the UK for any record office outside London. • Work with a wide range of groups and individuals on project work that has included film of an individual's experience of coming to Britain from Somalia, training young people in interviewing and oral history skills and producing a project exploring racism in sport through drama. • Partnering with Northamptonshire University to produce a new module on Black British History for the University's humanities BA course
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PROFILE

Project Name: Northamptonshire Black History Project 2002-2005 Northamptonshire Black History Association 2005-date	
Subject matter of archive	<p><i>Subject matter relates to:</i> X</p> <p><i>County of Northamptonshire</i></p> <p>A special interest:</p> <p><i>Promotion of the value of black History in Northamptonshire</i></p> <p>Black or minority ethnic community: X</p> <p><i>All ethnic minorities – but also Promotion of black history to all Ethnic groups.</i></p>
Location	Address: The Association, and the Project before it:: Doddridge Centre, 109 St James Lane, Northampton, NN5 5LD

	<p>Archives collected through the Project and Association are held by Northamptonshire Record Office, Wootton Hall Park Northampton NN4 8BQ</p> <p>Description of area:</p> <p>Northamptonshire has a population of 629,676 people of which 95% are white and 12% over the age of 65. The unemployment rate is 3%. There are four large towns in the county, Northampton, Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough. Northamptonshire is a nationally designated growth area under the Sustainable Communities plan, with 167,000 new homes and a projected 141,000 new jobs planned over the next thirty years.</p> <p>Within Northampton, where the Association is sited, the population in 2001 was 194,458 of which 91.6% were white and 13.6% over the age of 65. 71% were home owners and 70.3% were in good health.</p> <p>Northampton, where the project is based, had a population of 194,458 in 2001. 91.6% were white, compared with the regional average of 93.49% and the national average of 90.92%. Age profiles were broadly similar to national and regional figures, although the age group 20-44 was a higher percentage than both (37.96% compared to 34.32% regionally and 35.31% nationally) and there is a lower percentage of people aged 65 and over (13.64% compared to the regional and national averages of 16.07% and 15.89%).</p> <p>The two largest ethnic minority groups were Asian or Asian British at 3.27% and Black or Black British at 2.39%. Owner occupation at 24.73% is significantly lower than the regional figure of 30.8% and the national average of 29.19%.</p>
Dates	<p>Date project established: N.B.H.P 2002. N.B.H.A 2005</p> <p>Date project ended (if applicable) N.B.H.P. 2005</p>

1. ORIGINS

The Northamptonshire Black History Project grew out of research into black history in Northamptonshire by individuals in the 1980s. In the late 1990s a group came together

to set up a project under the auspices of the Wellingborough Race Equality Council (later the Northamptonshire Race Equality Council). The impetus for the project came from the communities concerned, not from the action of council or other official agencies. The principal aim of the project was to record and promote the histories and stories of Northamptonshire's Black communities and individuals over at least the past 500 years. The three main activities that supported these aims were

- Historical research into a range of sources held by external agencies
- Community archiving – identifying Black community groups and archives and encouraging them to deposit their records with Northamptonshire Record office
- Oral history interviewing- recording the life stories of Black people across Northamptonshire

The Project sought to use the collections it created or identified for project work, but had as one of its objectives placing black history sources alongside traditional archives to ensure that the contribution of black people to the history and culture of Northamptonshire could be easily studied.

Although the impetus to create the Project came from the community, representatives from the County library, archive and museum service were involved from inception, and formed part of the Project's Management Committee. They provided advice and established the basis for a close working relationship between the project staff, volunteers and sessional workers and staff in record office, local studies library and museums.

The Northamptonshire Black History Association, formed in 2005, is a membership body, which seeks to carry on the aims of the Project through activities which include

- *Guardianship of the resources created by the Project*
- *Continuing historical research and oral history interviews*
- *Creating publications and regular newsletters*
- *Holding meetings with guest speakers*
- *Maintaining the Project website*
- *Creating resources that can be used to challenge racism through education and learning*

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Northampton Black History Project was established to record and promote the histories and stories of Northamptonshire's Black communities and individuals over at least the past 500 years. The three main activities that supported these aims were

- Historical research into a range of sources held by external agencies
- Community archiving – identifying Black community groups and encouraging them to deposit their records with Northamptonshire Record Office
- Oral history interviewing- recording the life stories of Black people across Northamptonshire

The sources they worked with included records held by Northamptonshire archives, libraries and museums, for references to black and ethnic minority people and groups.

The Project also set out to encourage BME groups and associations to deposit their records with Northamptonshire Record Office, to create new records in the form of oral history recordings, to encourage BME individuals and groups to use the record office, and to make use of the created and collected source material to promote the value and study of black history in and about Northamptonshire. This involved wide spread publicity and activities with a wide range of Northamptonshire community organisations.

Information to be collected on to an on-line database, providing descriptions of oral history interviews, deposited records, and references in collections held by existing agencies.

The Project employed sessional workers and used volunteers to collect information and work with groups. They provided training in ICT skills and oral history interviewing, and support/training for those undertaking research, and writing up information for the Project's on-line database.

3. NATURE OF PREMISES

Nature of premises:

The Project and the Association had and have a two room office in the Doddridge Centre, founded in 1995 in a former school to provide a wide range of facilities and support for community and voluntary groups. The building is not listed, though it may be of local historical interest.

The premises form a base for the Association, but the bulk of Project and Association activities take place at other venues. The premises themselves are not vital to the project, but place the project at the heart of those Northampton based community groups they are trying to work with. Archives collected or created by the Project and the Association are all held by Northamptonshire Record Office.

4. NATURE OF COLLECTION

4a) Is the collection digital or physical, or a mixture of both?

The collections created or located by the Project and the Association are mostly physical – there are very few electronic records. Newly created records, for example, the DVD of a visit to Northamptonshire Record Office, may be in electronic form.

4b) How much material do you have in your archive?

<i>Type of Measure</i>	<i>Quantity - indicate whether feet / metres and if estimate</i>
Cubic feet / metres of material	16.428cu m
Linear feet / metres of material	
Number of drawers in filing cabinet	
Other <i>Please specify:</i>	60 tapes – additions planned ; 7 deposited collections covering thirteen organisations at the record office, including the records of the Project [Record Office total of 8 organisations 9one including others and tapes etc comprising 37 boxes]; one collection at Northampton Central Library.

4c) Format(s) of material

<i>Format type</i>	<i>Mark X if applies</i>	<i>Format type</i>	<i>Mark X if applies</i>
Paper / parchment manuscripts	X	Books	X
Visual – film/ pictures etc		Pamphlets	X
Visual - photographs	X	Periodicals/Magazines	
Visual- Other		Electronic – e.g. c.d's / computer records etc.	X
Sound – oral history – planned campaigns; life stories [Collected by the Project]	X	Objects [Any objects collected were transferred to Northampton Museum or to local studies libraries.	X
Sound – recorded reminiscence sessions [Created by the Project]	X	Other (<i>please specify</i>)	

Note Electronic: Database on web site which includes 585 descriptive references to Northamptonshire black history sources.

4d) Heritage Value of Collection

The collections are currently unique in the range they span of BME organisations within a single county, presenting a different view of BME communities through their own words and views, rather than through their dealing with official bodies, like local

government. They also include the voices of individuals – spoken and in writing.

They are unrivalled within the East Midlands region and possibly nationally outside London. (View of JM, Public Services Manager, at Northamptonshire Record Office, almost certainly the case)

Records consist of:

- Northampton Association of Caribbean Organisations (including other organisations) 10 boxes
- Ghana Union 2 boxes
- Somali Association 1 box
- Liberian Association 1 box
- United Social Club 2 boxes
- Wellingborough Black Consortium 8 boxes
- Dostiyo (Asian Women and Girls Group) 2 boxes
- Northamptonshire Black History Project 3 boxes
- N.B.H.P oral history transcripts (5 boxes) and tapes/minidisks (3 boxes)

Limit on current use is that the collections mainly date from the 1980s, but will be of increased importance as a local regional and national source in years to come.

5. PROJECT ACTIVITIES

5a) Range of Activities

Note P= Project activities. A= Association activities

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Mark X if applies</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Mark X if applies</i>
Exhibitions / Displays	P.A. See Note 5	Community events, e.g. fairs.	P.A.
Workshops / meetings / Public lectures	P.A.	Publishing, e.g. local history, newsletters	See Note 3
Participating in campaigns about locally important issues	See Note 1 below	Collecting sessions, e.g. appeals for photographs / other materials, recording reminiscences, etc.	P.A.
Collecting oral history	P	Theatrical/drama events	P.A.
Outreach in Schools	P.A.	Outreach in community centres	P.A.
Outreach in Prisons	See Note 2.	Outreach in Nurseries, Play Groups	P.A.
Outreach in Women's Groups	P.A.	Other (<i>please specify</i>)	See Note 4

5a. Note 1. Participating in local campaigns was seen as being potentially divisive for both the Project and the Association, who seek to work with the widest range of community and other groups in Northamptonshire.

5a. Note 2. Planning for a prison project by the Association was well advanced at the time of the interview

5a. Note 3. Newsletter published quarterly by the Project, continued by the Association. The Project has also published a leaflet relating to the oral history archive (in English and four community languages) and a video. The Association produced a book which is in the course of publication.

5a. Note 4. Talks promoting the work of the Project and Association and on all aspects of Northamptonshire Black history have been given to a wide range of local groups – local history societies, Women's Institutes etc.

5a Note 5. Includes a travelling exhibition on Northamptonshire Black History completed in September 2005.

5b) Key Activities

Project

The key activities were the promotion of the value of black history in Northamptonshire through work with a wide range of community groups, schools etc, seeking to persuade local BME groups to deposit records with Northamptonshire Record Office and the creation of records through the Oral History Project. As a by-product of this, the Project employed sessional workers and volunteers providing them with new skills as detailed above.

Some of the groups with whom the Project has worked sent representatives to the Management Committee and are listed under (6c)

Association.

Change in emphasis from the Project to move to more work with schools, (Project worked equally if not more with older people) and the partnership with the University to produce a course on Black British history.. The Association has extended its publication activities.

Both Project and Association have worked with BME groups that had made little or no use of the Record Office in the past. The Project introduced a wide range of people from BME groups to the record offices, and brought new and existing users into working contact. Getting volunteers and sessional workers work in the record office was felt to be harder than comparative work in the library on newspaper research. New activities by the Association have included the production of a video tour of the record office, undertaken by the Project.

This part of the work of the Project highlighted barriers to access to the record office – principally location out of town on a main road which is difficult to cross by pedestrians, and with buzzer access. However the predominantly existing

user group (perceived as older or retired white middle class people) were in general supportive and friendly towards the new BME users).

Both Project and Association have engaged in a wide range of imaginative outreach, including the provision of source material for use in local theatre, work with women's groups and stalls etc at local fairs etc,

The proposed prison visit was seen by the interviewee as one of the more challenging things the Project and Association have tackled.

Specific project work by the Project and the Association and which is innovative, has included;

'I feel like the Sun' .Project staff working with Esmahan Abdalla to produce a film about her experiences of coming to Northampton from Somalia. The film formed part of an exhibition in the Northampton Museum and Art Gallery in June 2003

Ferrers' Voices. Production of an exhibition and film made by the project staff and 11-15 year old pupils of Ferrers' Specialist Art College exploring the experiences of young people from different cultural backgrounds. The work included training the pupils in interview skills, undertaking oral history interviews and researching images. The exhibition and film toured county libraries and other venues.

Football, racism and cultural heritage project. Staff worked with Northampton Town Football Club from September 2004, delivering sessions to 20 primary schools and supplementary schools in the county. They explored themes of achievement, identity, prejudice and exclusion. Teachers developed the work further and produced work that was exhibited at the Football Club in December 2004

'Black is also British.' An investigation into the needs and opportunities for developing Black British History within the schools curriculum in Northamptonshire. Funded by Northamptonshire University's Widening Participation Scheme and presented to the Black and Asian Studies Conference held at Northampton in April 2005. Formed the basis of the partnership with the university which has led to courses in Black British history.

Sankofa. Reminiscence work with users of Sankofa, a black mental health group.

Race 2 Score. Year long project begun in September 2005 to develop and produce a performance exploring racism, particularly in sport. Race 2 Score draws on the resources created by the Project and is being conducted with young people from Springboard in Corby and groups from the Duston School, Unity College and Kingsthorpe Community College.

Oral history interviews are also cited on the Association's web site as an aid to develop students' communication, literacy language and negotiation skills, and

are likely to have been used as such by the Project.

6. STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

6a) Structure of Organisation

P=Project. A=Association

<i>Structure</i>	<i>Mark X if applies</i>
Registered charity/ Company limited by guarantee	A
Written constitution, not legally registered	
Informal – no written constitution	
Part of another organisation <i>Please specify:</i>	P see Note 1

6a. Note 1. Project formed under the auspices of the Wellingborough R.E.C. and operated under their constitution.

6b) Management and Governance

Project. Management Committee of about 40 people- not all attended every meeting!. No formal members of the Project, but an extensive mailing list.

Association. Company limited by guarantee, in the course of applying for registered charity status. Nine directors and an additional 6-7 committee members. The Association has between 150-200 members.

6c) Partnerships in which the Archive Participates

1. Project

Bodies represented on the Management committee over the period 2002 to 2005 included:

African Association
Bethel United Church
Council for Ethnic Minority Communities
Dostiyo Asian Women and Girls Centre
Ghana Union
Islamic Pakistani Community Centre
Liberian Association
Northamptonshire Racial Equality Council (lead agency)
Northamptonshire Somali Community
Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Kettering
Wellingborough Black Consortium
Wellingborough African Caribbean Association (WACA)
West Indian Parents Association

Other partners include:

Northamptonshire Libraries and Information Service
Northamptonshire Record Office
Northampton Museums and Art Gallery
University of Northampton

Representation on the Management Committee was informal. Relationships with the other partners were on a formal basis. There was a service level agreement with the County Council, intended as the basis for funding.

The Project worked with several parts of the County Council. These included the local education authority, Social Services

2. Association – and Project.

The Association now has a partnership agreement with the University of Northampton, which provides the framework for the production of accredited black history courses on offer for 2006/2007.

Additionally there have been individual partnerships with other bodies for the delivery of project work.

Partnership was to assist in the aims of the Project. For the BME groups concerned it brought about contact and awareness of the value of their resources, and their potential historical value in the context of the history of Northamptonshire and nationally.

The formal partners have gained support for meeting targets for new audiences, and specific programmes – for example the University of Northampton British Black history course.)

7. FUNDING

7a) Funding Received

P=Project. PA= Project and Association. A= Association

Type of funding	X if applies	Amount received	Period Covered	What Funding Was For
Heritage Lottery Fund	X	1. P. £365,000 2. P £25,000 3. A £249,000	1. P 2002-2005 2. P.2002-2005	1. P. To provide core funding for the Project 2. Young Roots 3. Shaping the Future – project work by the Association
Big Lottery Fund				
Local Heritage Initiative				
Local Authority	1.P 2.P	Under £5,000 £11,500	C2002-2003 To add	1. To support core project 2. Match for Shaping the Future project
Government	P. Home Office	£60,000	2002-2005 (rec 2004)	For Connecting Communities (core project work).
Charity / Trust (please specify)				
Donations				
Subscriptions	A	£ 5 per member	On-going	
Earned Income, e.g. from sales, from fees, etc.	A	Unspecifie d	Planned	Income from book sales, talks (expenses) school visits,
Other (please specify)	P:Lloyds TSB	c£10-15,000	2002-2003	Supplement core funding

7b) Funding Applied For (include details of applications to be submitted in near future)

Type of funding	X if applies	Amount Sought	When Applied	What Funding Is For
Heritage Lottery Fund				

Big Lottery Fund				
Local Heritage Initiative				
Local Authority				
Government	A. Home Office	£10,000	2006 (for 2007)	<i>Connecting Communities Plus (for a book on community work in black history & inclusiveness work.</i>
Charity / Trust (<i>please specify</i>)				
Other (<i>please specify</i>)				

7c) Other Sources of Funding

<i>Type of funding</i>	<i>X if applies</i>	<i>Target for Amount Sought</i>	<i>Timescale</i>
Donations			
Subscriptions			
Earned Income, e.g. from sales, from fees, etc			

8. SUSTAINABILITY

Interviewer to describe and assess:

Funding for the Project was specific for the period 2002-2005 and when it ended the Project closed. Funding for the Association has a broader base, as in addition to grant aid from HLF, there are member subscriptions, expected income from sales of publications, including curriculum resource packs.

Funding is secure to 2008, and is based on the Associations' Business Plan, which covers the period 2005-2008. This includes a risk assessment covering eventualities in the event of funding not being obtained [not seen by interviewer] Part of the remit of the director of the Association (when appointed) will be to look at funding beyond 2008.

Any business planning for the Association that looks beyond the life-time of the organisation will cover project activity, and the future of copyrights in oral history interviews, publications etc. Collected records will be unaffected as all costs associated with collection management, storage and access are met by the Record Office.

9 USERS/ACCESS

9a) Accessibility

Interviewer describe accessibility

The collections are all housed at Northamptonshire Record Office, are available for access during the published hours of the Record Office and under their standard terms and conditions. Detailed lists of the records were made by the Project prior to deposit – providing more detail than the Record Office would normally produce, and these form the finding aids for the collections.

Publicity and information on these is available via Northamptonshire County Council's web site and via all the usual means of record office publicity. There is protection under the terms of Data Protection legislation, and additional protection for interviewees. Permission for access to oral history interviews has to be given by the Association and access is only to edited transcripts (which have been approved by the interviewee. Proposed use of the transcripts is also monitored via the Record Office.

9b) Rate of Usage

Visitors in person	<i>Number:</i>	Remote contacts, e.g. website users	<i>Number:</i>
Of which how many are 'members' ?	26	Total number of users ?	26
See 9b note below		See 9b note below	

9.b) Note. The Association give 2-3 talks per month to a variety of bodies, including the Northamptonshire Record Society and these may involve the use of records. Otherwise usage of the records is monitored through Northamptonshire Record Office. The Record Office has no separate statistics for users of the collections. The oral history collections were monitored using forms produced by the project. Five forms were returned, all of which came from people who had heard about the material from the Project.

Additionally one student has done extended dissertation work on the BME collections as a whole in 2005-2006.

Students undertaking the Northamptonshire University Humanities BA have used the oral history material in the academic year 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 and this is expected to continue, or grow with the new course on Black British history. The Record Office has estimated the total number using the oral history archive as 20 and other users as 6, producing the total above for the years 2004-2006.

An extract from one tape is used on all group tours of the Record Office

9c) Details about the users

In general those using the Association will include more BME people than the overall composition of the population as a whole, but no data was available at the time of interview. The Record Office does not keep separate statistics for users of the collections deposited by the Project.

9d) Have the numbers of users, or the type of people using the archive changed over time?

No separate data kept by Record Office on use of collections since deposit

9e) Numbers of staff, volunteers and members involved in the archive

1. Project

<u>Staff (count only staff employed by the archive project)</u>		<u>Number of volunteers (i.e. actively helping the archive at least once a year)</u>	<u>No. Up to</u> 42	<u>Number of members (paying subscriptions, etc: members who also volunteer should be shown in both columns)</u>	<u>No</u> .
<i>Full time</i>	<i>No:3</i>				
<i>Part time</i>	<i>No:1</i>				
		Project did not have formal membership			

2. Association

<u>Staff (count only staff employed by the archive project)</u>		<u>Number of volunteers (i.e. actively helping the archive at least once a year)</u>	No.	<u>Number of members (paying subscriptions, etc: members who also volunteer should be shown in both columns)</u> <i>Project did not have formal membership</i>	No 150-200.
Full time	No:3				
Part time	No:				

9f) Details of staff, volunteers and members

Project staff : Director Caroline Abel; Oral history Officer, Julia Drake, Community Research Officer Nikki Taylor. Administration Officer: Eric Asumang. Nikki Taylor continued to be employed up to the end of September 2006. Recruitment was by advertisement and interview.

Director was in overall charge. Job duties included management, fund raising, partnerships etc. Oral history officer was in charge of oral history project work. Community research officer work included talks, outreach, work with schools and a wide range of community groups.

Original intention was to employ an archivist, but problems in recruitment led to the job description being revised to community research.

There were up to 42 sessional staff employed. Ages ranged from 16 to over 80 **Check about recruitment.**

Association

Staff in course of recruitment. There are three posts which are in the course of being recruited to (August 2006). Director (2 year contract), Community Learning Officer (18 months), Administrator (18 months).

Management Committee includes nine directors and six to seven other members.

Project staff, volunteers and sessional workers were given induction training, job specific training, e.g. in oral history and in carrying out research. Staff were given ICT training if needed.

10. EVALUATION & IMPACT

10a) Has any monitoring and evaluation been carried out by the project/organisation ?

Project: Evaluation for Heritage Lottery Fund. No records available to interviewer.

Association. Active since September 2005, producing newsletters, attending events and running courses in partnership with the University and other bodies. Shaping the Future project started on 1 October (after interview) No evaluation records available to researcher.

No formal monitoring by the Record Office, but as staff refer enquiries to Jenny Moran (the senior archivist principally involved with the Project). Figures for use based on this source.

10b) Overall Assessment

1. Project.

Aims in broad measure achieved. Successful operational database of information and records available on the Association's web site. Successful project work and wide range of documented publicity activities and project work. Cited nationally and won awards – example the CILIP award for innovative and exciting work in libraries in 2005.

The Project did not set out to be permanent, but during its existence established the value of its work and programmes promoting the value of Black History in Northamptonshire, and this led directly to the establishment of the Association in 2005.

Two quotations:

“The Northamptonshire Black History Project is a great example of what the world needs now. If we leave it to other people in power to write our history we should not complain when we are presented negatively, but if we begin to record and write our own history we may have a clearer vision of our future. I think this project is great; as I go on my travels I shall let the world know that history is being made in Northamptonshire” Benjamin Zephaniah.

“This project is a fantastic example of how libraries can partner community-led initiatives and serves as a model which can be replicated in libraries across the country. Northamptonshire's Black History Project is proving how vision and commitment has changed and enhanced the lives of individuals whose history has been forgotten and unacknowledged for years” Neil Thomas, Chair of CILIP judges panel.

The Project engaged in a wider range of groups than had been thought possible at the beginning – reaching out to mainstream white community bodies as well as BME organisations and groups.

2. Association

Too early to assess, but has already achieved funding and established the British Black history course with the University of Northampton.

10 c-j) ANALYSE THE PROJECT'S IMPACTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN TERMS OF:

10c) Citizenship

In general much of what the Project did – training volunteers and sessional workers, working with schools etc helped empower people – through creating historical sources through being interviewed or interviewing and through the recognition of their own identity within a specific BME community and in the wider context of Northamptonshire.

The Project brought together BME and white users at the Record office who may not have met ordinarily and also brought a wide range of groups together within the Project, and subsequently the Association.

The Project improved knowledge in users and BME community groups of what as archive was – important for communities who place more importance on oral than written traditions, as it helped them recognise the value of preserving documents.

In general the interviewee felt that the Project had widened participants' contacts and encouraged people to help others – though some of this was as a by product of other activity, for example the help given by existing record office users to new users brought in by the Project.

10d) Community Empowerment / Participation / Improving routes to other services

The Project and the Association have encouraged greater use of the Record Office, and of the library and local museum. Neither were campaigning groups and have not actively promoted membership of other groups.

In that the aims of the Project were about ensuring that sources for local BME history held by a mainstream body – the record office – were improved, then the archive will contribute to people knowing more about the area in which they live. It was a specific

Project aim that BME records be held alongside mainstream and traditional archives to ensure that local Black history is available for study alongside traditional archives and not held as a separate resource.

10 e) Improved Community Cohesion / Breaking down boundaries

The principle barrier the Project encountered was language. Four leaflets translating the principle aims of the Oral History Archive and Association have been produced in three Indian sub-continent languages and Somali.

10f) Improved liveability of area

Neither the Project nor the Association have been involved in any regeneration project, or have monitored users to see if any aspects of their perception of safety within their physical communities has changed.

However there was one anecdotal example to support the general assertion that participants had become more empowered as a result of taking part in Project activities. One mother reported that her daughter had tackled an adult who had made a racist remark in her presence, when she would formerly have simply tried to ignore it. Her mother felt that the increased confidence her daughter displayed had been as a direct result of her part in Project work.

10 g) Acquisition by individuals of new skills and experience (and outcomes, e.g. going on the formal training, etc.)

The Project trained people in interviewing skills. Those involved on the Management committee and were involved in fund raising acquired knowledge and skills, including negotiation skills.

There was no evidence of what volunteers and sessional workers had gone on to do after the end of the Project.

10 h) Health Benefits - Physical, mental and community

Project included work Sankofa, a Black mental health group.
Project also had a volunteer who needed to use a wheelchair and had sight impairment. The Project worked with her to ensure proper access to Northampton Central Library and its facilities (microfilm readers, toilets etc).

10 j) What personal benefits do participants say that they have got out of being involved in this project or these activities?

No direct evidence of personal benefits was available though evaluation of project activities may pick this up. In general participants who served as volunteers will have gained training and confidence, plus interviewing skills. See also (10f) for one example of confidence building.

11. ACHIEVEMENTS, LESSONS & ACTION POINTS

- **What has project done well**

From Interviewee. Community cohesion, assisted by the process of setting up the Project Management Committee. Engagement with groups across the community. Providing volunteers and sessional workers with new skills and interests. Empowering a wide range of people. In general the sessional work as a whole.

- **Problems, how tackled, things would do differently**

The approach to archives – based on an assumption that all groups would be happy to deposit. This was not the case as some wished to retain their own records. The principle of deposit had to be re-thought. The Project was quick to adapt and take a more flexible approach, encouraging deposit, but not expecting all groups to do so.

- **Advice would give others**

Keep talking to individuals and groups, and continue to make time to listen to the views of those groups and individuals.

ADDRESS, CONTACT DETAILS, REFERENCES AND DOCUMENTS:

Project Address: Northamptonshire Black History Association, Doddridge Association, 109 St James Road, Northampton	
Post Code: NN5 5LD	
Telephone:	01604 590967
Email:	admin@northants-black-history.org.uk
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References:	
Documents Attached:	

Date of research. Interview conducted on 23 August 2006 with Nikki Taylor; Additional interview with Jenny Moran, 6 September 2006.