



## **DORCHESTER ONE WORLD FESTIVAL 2010**

### **REPORT**

The second Dorchester One World Festival took place on the Kings Road Playing Field on Sunday 8 August 2010. The Festival is a multi culture community event – led by the community, for the community, celebrating diversity - and was based around sports, food and cultural activities/specialities from around the world. It ran from 11.00 – 16.00 and was attended by approximately 2983 people. ‘Visitors Books’ were taken round the event by two volunteers so that attendees could sign and leave messages or suggestions about the Festival if they wished. 108 comments, messages and ideas were recorded, a quarter made by children - all positive, but with a couple of questions and suggestions. This opportunity enabled the volunteers to engage people in more detailed conversation from time to time so they were able to establish Countries of origin , find out where people came from locally and what they thought about the event – see the Monitoring of Visitors data with comments and feedback suggestions and organisers responses (in *italics* marked \*)

The Festival was the idea of local Bangladeshi resident Khalique Miah, who wanted to encourage networking and socialising with ethnic minority groups and the community after he had experienced a racist attack. He felt there weren’t enough opportunities for people who weren’t born or brought up in Britain, to interact and socialise with the community in general. He said many of them were shy, lacked confidence and did not have the language skills to face people and they frequently experience racial comments so were reluctant to draw attention to themselves. He wanted something good to come from his bad experience. He approached Dorset Community Action in early 2009 for help – and ‘Speak Easy Dorchester’ was set up to enable ethnic minority residents to access English speaking sessions in an informal atmosphere, at a time and place convenient to them. From the sessions the attendees gained confidence and English speaking skills and expressed a desire to help Khalique with his idea of hosting a Festival in the town. People were invited to attend a launch event on 4 October 2009 of the ‘One World Festival’ to watch, or take part in the activities – or to perform music, dance or song, or form a team to take part in some of the organised games of Kabaddi and Tug of war, with trophies for the winners.

For 2010, teams registered from the Ghurkha Army base in Blandford, Dorset Police, Dorset Fire & Rescue Service, River of Life Church and local Bangladeshi restaurants, and those who came on the day. The Kabaddi matches were refereed by a visitor to the event from Cheshire, Pradeep Verma – who proved to be an outstanding referee! – with the Ghurkha soldiers winning both the Kabaddi Trophy and the Tug of War Plaque. The other sports were supervised by West Dorset Sports Development Team and volunteers. Local groups and performers showcased their specialist acts - belly dancing, Egyptian dance, contemporary dance, Chinese Lion Dance with drumming, cheerleading, ballet, street dance, a Sari dressing workshop presented by Unity in Vision from Bournemouth, and 12 year old Dorchester based Rapper Lil' Dreads performed his own material .

Thirty local organisations showcased their activities – including the Bridport Bagladies support of Townships in South Africa, Dorset Race Equality Council, the National Trust, the SW Dorset Multi Culture Network, Children of Fiji Charity and local Thomas Hardy school pupils fundraising to take part in a community project in 2011 in Kenya. Food from around the world was on offer, from Nepalese delights provided by the ladies of the Ghurkha community, Yankee Pankee (American food), a Bangladeshi banquet stall - a collaboration of 2 local food outlets, Thai specialities, and Chinese food with a craft table at which children could make things. The WDDC Action Van provided a bouncy castle, circus skills and many other fun sports for children to try, and - for the more adventurous - a climbing wall, archery, boxing and a coconut shy. A large marquee housed a refreshment area managed by Age Concern and a 'Round the World Exhibition' facilitated by local volunteers Fred and Lou Wild – which 33 countries had provided resources for- as well as 'safe play' and activities for under 5's in the Dorset Dumplings tent. A raffle was held to raise funds towards a future event and donations were taken for the recent Pakistan Flood Appeal, for which £100 was raised.

Over 43 volunteers supported the event, and were themselves supported by Dorset Volunteer Centre and Dorset 'V'. Dorset Community Action supported the Speak Easy Group to host and manage the event, the Organisers tent and activities. The men from the Ghurkha Regiment also provided their manpower – carrying gazebos and the porta-loos from A to B on the field with boundless enthusiasm and humour!

This year's event tripled in size from its launch event, and doubled in cost from £2,500 to over £5,000. The new, major expense was the hiring of a marquee and stage and flooring, and extra porta-loos – but all were very beneficial additions. Funding was constantly being sourced to keep pace with the rising budget, but some items such as the banners, bunting, a small tent, urn and metal posts for marking out will not need to be funded again as they will remain as a resource for future use.

The future of the event now rests with the community – it has proved to be so popular that it has outgrown the capabilities of the small band of people with the big idea – it now needs other organisations to work together to act as a steering group so that the ethos of the event – community – is kept in everyone’s sights. The original group fear it being taken over by statutory bodies or larger organisations, becoming ‘logos’ and losing its identity. An appeal is now to be launched in the community, for people and organisations to come forward and offer to take on various elements of the event. Already an offer to provide the staging, sound system and DJs (for free) has been made for a future event.

**If you would like to comment, help or need any further information please contact:**

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## **SPECIAL THANKS – PARTNERS, SPONSORS AND VOLUNTEERS**

Without the support of our partners, sponsors and valued volunteers, the Dorchester One World Festival 2010 could not take place. Our heartfelt thanks are extended to:

**Abu Bakar, the Spice Centre Restaurant**

**Dorchester Town Council**

**Dorset Police**

**Dorset Race Equality Council**

**Magna Housing Association**

**NHS Dorset**

**Patrons of the ‘West meets East’ Fundraising night**

**South West Foundation**

**West Dorset District Council – Small Arts Grant, Community Safety Grant  
and Social Inclusion Fund**

### **VOLUNTEERS:**

**Richard DJ**

**Dorset Community Action staff**

**Dorset Police – Safer Neighbourhood Team, Dorchester**

**Dorset Volunteer Centre**

**Dorset ‘V’**

**Dorset Youth Association**

**The Ghurkha Community, Blandford  
and Toby, Linda, Steven and Elaine**