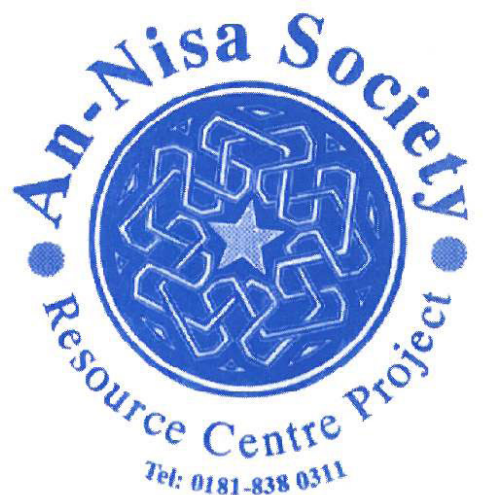




Action For Families
1985-1995

Ten Years Of An-Nisa Society



AN-NISA SOCIETY AND EALING ROAD
LIBRARY

present a

MUSLIM ARTS FESTIVAL



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

a celebration of Muslim Arts

Tuesday 30th May - Sunday 4th June 1995



Programme of events



BRENT
ARTS & LIBRARIES

AN-NISA SOCIETY

Tuesday 30th May

- *Tales from the Muslim World - storytelling for 5-15 year olds. 3-5pm.*

Wednesday 31st May

- *Arabic calligraphy workshop for over 8's. 3 - 5pm*
- *Islamic Art talks. 7 - 10pm*

Thursday 1st June

- *Zillij - Islamic tile making workshop for over 8's. 3 - 5pm.*
- *Poetry of the Muslim World. 7 - 10pm*

Friday 2nd June

- *Printing & Painting workshop for over 8's. 2 - 5pm*
- *Muslim rap evening. 7 - 10pm*

Saturday 3rd June

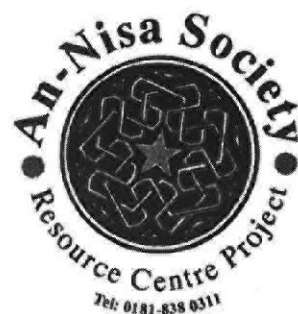
- *Drumming Workshop for over 8's. 3 - 5pm*
- *Nikah - Muslim wedding traditions. 7 - 10pm.*

Sunday 4th June

- *Arts & Crafts bazaar (jewellery, food, arts & crafts stalls, bouncy castle, Islamic photographic displays, book display, fashion display, woodcarving, carpet weaving, embroidery & tile-making demonstrations, book signing, Arabic computer software demonstration and lots more!!)*

Brent Council does not accept responsibility for the security of children at events

A Decade Of An-Nisa Society



Strange how time flies by. Ten years might be a short time in the process of community-building but it is still ten years. Those of us at An-Nisa are not in agreement on whether the time went "fast" or "slow." Or the extent we squandered the last 120 months. Really, man is a loser when it comes to time.

But we are unanimous in the fact that we tried and did our best under the circumstances. Writing this report made us wonder at two things: the variety and amount of activities and projects we have undertaken and accomplished during the period. And how, in retrospect, they all seem to be part and parcel of our very being. Each event we organised, each activity we planned and every plan we made seemed to reflect a particular phase each one of us was personally undergoing.

Yes, An-Nisa Society has evolved and developed into being one of the premier Muslim women organisation in the Western world. We have been fortunate to be both initiators and benefactors, agents of change and change itself.

While researching for this report we had to take a walk down memory lane. And what a pleasant stroll it was. Part of the exercise was to go through hundreds of pictures of our projects, events and gatherings. We were full of nostalgia as each old picture - as we all know, told its own special story. It was time to recall memories, some fond, some not-so-fond. It was time, well, we are women, to remember that we are no longer spring chickens. But what got us particularly excited is going through pictures of young people, mostly children, whom we have known over the years.

Their smiling happy faces either at the Supplementary Muslim School we run or at different places we took them for a trip were a joy to watch and instantly rinsed away any weariness or doubts we might have had over what we are doing.

We excitedly pointed out at kids we had not seen for a long time. But always there

was somebody who had the latest news of the whereabouts of a cheeky face or a freckled one. When the news was good "Oh, he/she is doing well at university," we felt good and a warm glow blazed inside each one of us. When the news was bad "Oh, he's at Wormwood Scrubs" we instinctively felt depressed.

When An-Nisa Society was launched in that fateful day in May 1985 nobody thought it was going to turn out like this. In those innocent heady days we thought we had an organisation to run. Today we are finding out we have a movement that is running us. A decade has transformed An-Nisa Society from a dream into a living reality.

Our main problem in conceiving this report has been what to include. To have incorporated each and every event would have led to several volumes being produced. And even then it would have been neither sufficient nor complete.

This is because the kind of work we have been involved in can never be fully appreciated or understood just by reading a report, however well-written. How can we transmit the moments of utter despair? Or those occasion of maddening frustration? How can we relate those moments of joy and happiness that bring tears to our eyes and thunder to our chests?

No. The story of An-Nisa Society is too sophisticated, too personal and too emotional to be told to bystanders. But for those for whom the struggle of building a dynamic, relevant and practical Islamic community is a daily, living reality our story is simple and clear.

For it is a story of blood, sweat and tears. And love, fulfilment and achievement.

Praise and thanks belong to God Who led us to this. We would never have been guided had He not guided us. (Quran: 7:43)

Jenny Abdullah, Chair

Saba Shah, Secretary

Kazmi Osmani, Treasurer

Khalida Khan, Co-ordinator

Local Context: Brent

The London Borough of Brent, where An-Nisa Society is based, is one of the most important borough for British Muslims. Islamia School, Britain's most-known Muslim school, is based in Brent. Also in the borough is the Al-Khoei Foundation, the headquarters and hostels of the Federation Of Student Islamic Societies in the UK (FOSIS) and Dr Syed Mutawalli ad-Darsh, President of the UK Islamic Shari'ah Council and one of Europe's most popular newspaper/television columnist.

Brent is among the most multi-faith, multi-cultural and multi-racial in Europe. It's



A Muslim girl walking in multi-cultural and multi-racial Willesden High Road, Brent.



BRENT TOWN HALL: Nerve-centre of one of the most important borough for British Muslims.

Muslim community is drawn from nearly 30 nationalities - from the Sub-continent, Africa, Europe and the Arab world. There are five mosques and scores of Muslim groups representing different interests most of which operate under the umbrella of the Brent Islamic Forum (BIF) to which An-Nisa also belongs.

Half of the population in the borough is non-white. According to the 1991 Census Brent has 243,025 residents, the eight largest of all the London boroughs. Of these 17.5% are Indians, 10.2% are Black Caribbean, 4.1% Black Africans and 3% Pakistani.

The exact number of the Muslim population is not known. But the community consists of all racial groups, the majority belonging to the visible minorities. However, using available statistics, it is estimated that there are at least 30,000 Muslims in the borough, about 11% of the population or, approximately, one out of every ten people.

Being based in multi-cultural and multi-racial Brent has proved to be both exciting and challenging for An-Nisa Society. This is because it has been able to harness and utilise the skills, experience and commitment from Muslim women of different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. As a result An-Nisa can claim to be one of the most multi-racial, multi-lingual and multi-cultural womens group in Britain.

It is with such credentials that An-Nisa pioneered, as far back as 1987, the campaign for the understanding and appreciation of the Muslim identity in service provision. To date the Society continues to be in the forefront of this now national campaign.

After years of campaigning there are now signs that there is a shift against service delivery based solely on racial categorisation. The realisation that many communities, the Muslims in particular, identify themselves on the basis of their faith from which their needs, values and way of life flow is guaranteed to facilitate services that are not only more relevant and practical but also cost-effective.

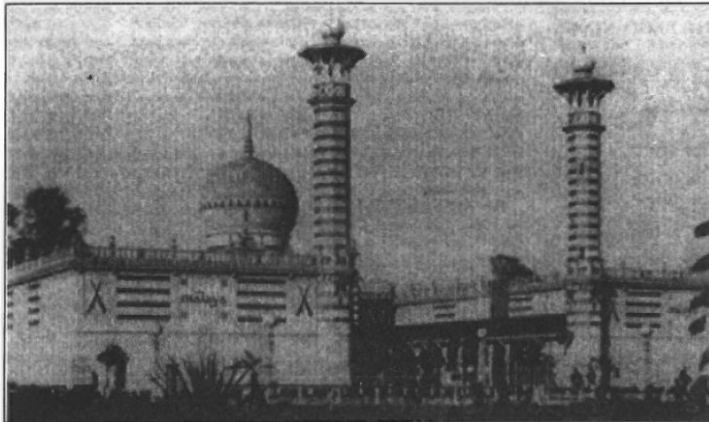
In Brent, there has been positive vibes on this matter particularly from the health service agencies such as the Brent & Harrow Health Authority and Parkside Health. The latest Childrens Care Plan and the Community Care Plan have acknowledged the existence of a substantial Muslim community in the borough and their needs. It must be pointed out, however, that only a small beginning has been made and there is a lot that still needs to be done.

Historical Context

Muslim culture reached Brent decades before the people. In 1924 and 1925 Wembley hosted the British Empire Exhibition. There were many exhibits and displays from the Muslim lands. The most spectacular were full sized models of the Taj Mahal reproducing the beauty of the original in Agra. It was flanked by minarets 110 feet high and the building was divided into 27 courts, each showing the growth and products of the provinces of India. The East Africa Pavilion was a copy of an Arab-Swahili building. Ivory, leather goods and woven baskets were on display and for sale. The domed Malaya building with tall minarets, a mosque design, was decorated in yellow, red and black decoration.

Palestine and Cyprus shared a pavilion in 1924. Among its exhibits Palestine introduced Jaffa oranges to London and established a new market for them.

It is sad that after the exhibition, many of the buildings were sold off or dismantled. Unfortunately, most of the Muslim structures were demolished and the materials sold as scrap - the India Pavilion consisted of 2,000



Brent's first minarets and dome: The Malaya Pavilion - British Empire Exhibition (circa 1924-25)

tons of timber and 1,000 tons of steel. The Palestine building became a Glasgow laundry!

If only they had left behind the mosque buildings we could have landed up with a custom-built mosque complete with minarets - no hassle over planning and most probably a controversy-free enlightened mosque committee.

National Statistics

Official estimates place the number of British Muslims at around 1.5 million. But the figure is likely to be a lot higher as it is difficult to identify Muslims from official statistics which lump together groups in racial or regional classifications. The figures also do not include the rapidly increasing number of converts who are indigenous and from other 'non-traditional Muslim' communities such as the Caribbeans etc. It would be revealing and highly relevant if studies and research were to be carried out on the Muslim community as a whole to identify their experiences.

Studies have, however, shown that Muslim peoples of differing races and nationalities groups display a remarkable similarity in their life-styles, customs and that there is a shared experience of deprivation and disadvantage. Clearly the best way to address the problems and needs of Muslims is to look at them collectively rather than lumping them together with other dissimilar communities. For example, an Asian Muslim and an Asian Hindu/Sikh may share a similar race but they have a different experience and aspirations as

the latest PSI Survey has highlighted.

The following are official estimates based on a study by Warwick University:

- ◆ Half of the 1.5 million Muslims in UK are Pakistani/Bangladeshi/Indian
- ◆ 25% are from Egypt, Malaysia, Morocco, Libya, Algeria, Tunisia and the Middle-East
- ◆ 23% are from the rest of Africa
- ◆ 60% of Muslims live in London
- ◆ 100,000 live in West Midlands
- ◆ 2% of Pakistanis/Bangladeshis are aged 65 and over compared to 17% of white
- ◆ 60% of Pakistanis/Bangladeshis are aged under 25 compared to 32% white
- ◆ Half of the British Muslim Pakistanis and a third of Bangladeshi have been born in England
- ◆ 80% of Muslim men are manual workers
- ◆ 11% are in Professional Management
- ◆ 24% Pakistanis and 19% Bangladeshis are self-employed
- ◆ 28.8% Pakistanis and 31.7% Bangladeshis are unemployed

To a large extent the national picture of Muslims reflects the experience of Muslims in Brent.

the story

Once Upon an An-Nisa...



DAY OUT FOR THE WOMEN: Trip to the British Museum to view exhibition Suleyman the Magnificent. (circa 1987)

converts. We hail from a variety of racial, social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

We are grandmothers, mothers, daughters, sisters and wives. But we are also individuals with the right to a fulfilled life. Our primary responsibility is to work towards creating a healthy environment in which (members of our) families can flourish and prosper.

We are a collection of minds and souls, cultures and races, skills and experiences, committed towards being of service to the community. We are relevant because we are products of the society in which we live in and therefore equipped to deal with the fundamental challenges it poses for our communities.

"Let there be from among you a nation who invite to goodness, enjoy beneficent acts, and forbid reprehensible ones. Such are they who are successful."

(Quran 3:104)

What We Are

An-Nisa Society was born out of necessity, thrives on being engaged in the process of change and is determined to make every challenge an opportunity. From the beginning we have had one clear and well-defined goal: to strive towards the creation of an ideal Muslim community in Brent - one that was full of dynamism, compassion, knowledge and tolerance. A multi-racial, multi-cultural, multi-lingual community that would be guided in its daily and collective dynamics by the teachings of Islam only.

We see ourselves not as an organisation or society in the traditional sense. If anything we perceive ourselves as agents of change dedicated towards enhancing the quality of our own lives, that of our families and communities and, indeed, the whole society.

"Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves"
(Quran 13:11)

Who We Are

An-Nisa Society consists of a free flowing collection of thinking and active-oriented group of women who are determined to make Islam a practical way of live for themselves and their families. Most of us are second generation British Muslims and



MUSLIM WOMEN AND THEIR CULTURE EXHIBITION: Set up for the Muslim women's cultural day. (circa 1987)

"We are in the midst of a struggle to locate ourselves within the community and society, in the process of seeking our context within our histories and experiences and engaged in the process of reclaiming our Islamic spiritual and cultural legacy."

Where We Are

Most of our work is undertaken in the north London Borough of Brent where most of us are based. But our call and reach is nationwide. And our struggle and aspiration is in the heart and soul of every conscious Muslim woman in the world.

We are in the midst of a struggle to locate ourselves within the community and society, in the process of seeking our context within our histories and experiences and engaged in the process of reclaiming our Islamic spiritual and cultural legacy.

More significantly, we are determined to utilise of what was glorious in our past to create an even more glorious future.

"Worship God, associate nothing with Him, behave with excellence toward parents, near kindred, orphans, the indigent, the neighbour who is of kin, and the neighbour who is not." (Quran 4:36)



MUSLIM WOMEN'S CULTURAL DAY: Speakers addressing more than 1,000 women who participated in the programme at Brent Town Hall. (circa 1987)

When Were We

The founding of An-Nisa was a spontaneous event that occurred ten years ago in May 1995. A group of Muslim women who felt they need to embark on a journey of self-discovery with the aim of instituting change in both their lives and that of the community decided to set up a group dedicated to being pro-active and relevant.

Initially the magnitude of the challenges involved, their multi-faceted manifestations and soul-destroying nature were never really obvious to us. But as we progressed we realised the importance of patience, consistency, effective planning and hard work.

An-Nisa was inspired by the desire to create an environment in which the Islamic ideals of justice, sharing, tolerance, cooperation, learning and compassion can be a living reality. For the last decade, though we have been involved in all sorts of activities, we have tried not to lose sight of our initial goal: that of creating a local community confident of its identity, aware of its inheritance and dedicated towards change.

"We shall try you with something of fear, hunger, and diminution of wealth, lives and fruits. And give good tidings to those who have patience, who when stricken by hardship say 'We belong to God, and to Him we shall return!'" God will send blessings and mercy on them, those are they who are guided.

(Quran 2:55)



IT'S ALL SMILES: Pupils at the Supplementary Muslim School looking forward to another enjoyable session. (circa 1992)

It's Not What You Do But How You Do It



PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE: Infant class at the Supplementary Muslim School doing a presentation during an Eid ul-Fitr celebration assembly. (circa 1995)

At the end of the day An-Nisa Society is about doing. We are firm believers of the adage that "action speaks louder than words." Our decade of existence is splattered with projects and programmes that range from organising seminars and exhibitions to field trips and women socials. To date we have been involved in organising at least 4 major exhibitions, nearly fifty seminars and workshops, more than a dozen field trips for young Muslims (including mountain climbing for Muslim girls) and the running of one of the most dynamic Supplementary Muslim School in the country.

Our activities have not been limited to intellectual and recreational projects only. We provide an extensive array of social welfare support services including one-to-one counselling; advice on health, bereavement, housing, welfare benefits, legal matters and immigration. We provide training to our members and to professionals on different aspects of Muslim needs. We have always been committed to influencing policies which affect Muslims through representations, membership of policy-making and consultative bodies, and by generally participating and responding to consultative processes at both local and national levels.

Two factors have greatly limited the ability of An-Nisa Society to fully consolidate and expand its activities. One is the fact that it has no permanent centre from where it could con-

duct its work. Second is the lack of paid staff to further develop the numerous initiatives it has undertaken during its ten-year existence.

Our strategy of action has been focused on three broad aspects:

- ◆ to restore the family to its position as the nucleus of the community by making it sound and healthy - spiritually, morally, physically and economically.
- ◆ to cater for the needs of Muslim families, particularly women, children and young people.
- ◆ to educate service providers on Muslim needs and ensure that the Muslim dimension is appreciated in all policies formulated.

It is related that while on a journey, the Prophet ordered his companions to prepare a sheep for food.

One man said, "I will perform dhabh on it, Messenger of God."

Another said, "I will skin it."

Another said, "I will cook it."

And the Prophet said: "I will gather the firewood."

To this they all said, "Messenger of God, you don't need to work; we will do whatever is to be done."

"I know that you will do for me whatever is to be done," said the Prophet, "but I do not like to be set apart from you. God does not like to see His servant aloof from his companions."

They Seek It Here, They Seek It There

If information is power Muslim women must be the most helpless creatures on earth. Muslim women face a major problem in acquiring relevant information on basic services that directly affect their lives on a day-to-day basis simply because a substantial number do not speak or understand English.

This inability to communicate has implications across the whole spectrum of service provision. Muslim women who don't have access to information not only miss out on getting access to what is available but are also unable to take up complaints and give a feedback. Experience has shown that even well-written pamphlets - including translated ones - are by themselves inadequate to remedy the situation. What is required is a physical environment, that is, a centre, where people can go and have the information explained and given practical help in obtaining their rights.

Lack of appropriate Muslim centres in Brent, particularly ones that are sensitive to the needs of women and families, further exacerbate the problem. There is also a great demand for information and advice relating to every aspect of life from an Islamic perspective. There are always people seeking information on such matters as marriage, divorce, male circumcision, Quranic studies, bereavement, fostering and adoption, drug and alcohol abuse, and domestic violence.

An-Nisa Society provides advice and information to individuals and groups regardless of religion, gender and race. This it does through self-referrals, referrals from organisations and through seminars and training. Between April 1994-95 we received over a thousand inquiries. Outside referrals have come from social workers, health workers, race workers, teachers, community organisations such as The Muslim Women Helpline, The Muslim Education Trust, The Asian Women Resource Centre, and *Q-News* amongst others.

However, until now the work has been purely on a voluntary and informal basis. The great demand places stress on those who are providing the service. Consequently An-Nisa has been looking for some time to provide a formal advice and information service, open at set times, with workers who will not only give information but also assist in filling out forms, make enquiries on behalf of clients and even act as advocates. Currently, we are discussing the setting up of such a service in collaboration with the premier advice service in the area - the Citizens's Advice Bureau (CAB). In the first



instance this will be on a voluntary basis until we are able to obtain resources and a Centre from where the service can be delivered. Volunteers will be recruited - preferably from multi-lingual backgrounds - who, it is envisaged, will undergo extensive training by the CAB. We are looking at possible venues for the Service and yet again this is going to cause difficulties as there will be accessibility and cost implications. A volunteers recruitment drive is underway to identify those interested in delivering this vital service.

Apart from providing information on mainstream services, welfare benefits, housing, health services, etc. we hope to support people who suffer racial or anti-Muslim harassment or those involved in disputes. Also those having difficulties with parent/school liaison and such similar situations. Following the recent seminar of Muslim lawyers organised by *Q-News* we have expanded our access to potential legal advisers who can provide expert specialised legal help when that is needed.

Lastly we hope to build a community information database providing information on, for example, a list of Muslim childminders, nurseries where Muslim needs are accommodated, tutors, doctors who perform circumcision, where to find an Imam for a marriage ceremony or funeral rites, how to get an Islamic divorce, nearest Muslim cemeteries and ghusl facilities, college courses and so on. In the long term our hope is that we will be able to refer cases to our own services, when appropriate, to other services and to mainstream services where appropriate.

INFORMATION STALL (ABOVE): "Muslim women who don't have access to information not only miss out on getting access to what is available but are also unable to take up complaints and give a feedback." (circa 1994)

Building Bridges Of Harmony

One of the most challenging task facing the British Muslim community is in how to deal with the negative image of Islam and Muslims perpetuated particularly by the media. The direct consequences of this image is at best passive dislike and at worst harassment, attacks abuse and discrimination in schools, hospitals, clinics, social service departments, employment and wherever Muslims and non-Muslims interact. Another disastrous consequence of this vilification of Muslims and their faith is the alienations and marginalisation of young people from British society and life. An-Nisa Society is convinced that the best way to counteract the situation is to concentrate on the evolvement and development of healthy Islamic model communities. Nothing succeeds like success.

We believe that the fostering and maintaining of good intra- and inter-community relationship is a high priority. Therefore we have always been eager to make links and cooperate with Muslim organisations local, national or international. Also, throughout we have endeavoured to extend a hand of friendship and understanding to all kinds of groups involved in similar work regardless of religion, race or culture.

Our work has focused on dispelling negative stereotypes and in the promotion of accurate and positive images about Islam and Muslims. To this end we have conducted

AN-NISA SOCIETY PRESENTS
ISLAMIC CULTURE

FROM AFRICA TO THE CARIBBEAN

EXHIBITION AND TALKS
HARLESDEN LIBRARY
CRAVEN PARK ROAD,
LONDON N.W.10
27TH OCTOBER TO
1ST NOVEMBER 1988
11.00AM TO 9.30PM EVERY DAY

SLIDE SHOWS-VIDEOS-ARTIFACTS-BOOKS-REFRESHMENTS-MAPS/DISPLAYS

TALKS/DISCUSSIONS

MON 27-10-88 7.00pm-7.30pm REFRESHMENTS AND OPENING CEREMONY
7.30pm-8.30pm **HISTORY OF ISLAM AND ITS SPREAD TO AFRICA**
SHEKH SALEH JAMEN (Muslim Scholar)

TUE 28-10-88 7.00pm-8.00pm ISLAM AND IDENTIFICATION
SHEKH SALEH JAMEN (Muslim Scholar)

WED 29-10-88 7.00pm-8.00pm ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL LIFE IN THE CARIBBEAN
BY MURADADEEK (Muslim Scholar)

THUR 30-10-88 7.00pm-8.00pm SOCIAL LIFE AND THE FAMILY IN THE CARIBBEAN
SULAIMAN ABUSUMAIR (Muslim Scholar)

FRI 31-10-88 7.00pm-8.00pm PROMINENT MUSLIMS OF AFRICAN DESCENT
SHEKH SALEH JAMEN (Muslim Scholar)

SAT 1-11-88 7.00pm-8.00pm ISLAM ANSWER TO THE RACIAL PROBLEM
MURADADEEK (Muslim Scholar)

ORGANISED BY THE TRADE RELATIONS UNIT

FREE ADMISSION
ALL WELCOME

workshops and consultation exercises with teachers, social workers, health workers, etc. and visited schools with the specific aim of fostering better understanding and appreciation of Muslims and their way of life.

We have produced exhibitions such as "Muslim Culture - From Africa to the Caribbean," "Muslim Women & Their Culture", are co-operating with the Grange Museum on its "Muslim Communities of Brent" Exhibition planned for September 1995 and worked in collaboration with departments such as Ealing Road Library to stage the Muslim Arts Festival.

"Do you know what the rights of neighbours are?" asked the noble Prophet, upon whom be blessings and peace. And he went on to give a list:

*"Help him if he asks your help.
Give him relief if he seeks your relief.
Lend him if he needs a loan.
Show him concern if he is distressed.
Nurse him when he is ill.
Attend his funeral if he dies
Congratulate him if he meets any good.
Sympathise with him if any calamity befall him."*

MORPETH SCHOOL

In association with
the An-Nisa Society
presents

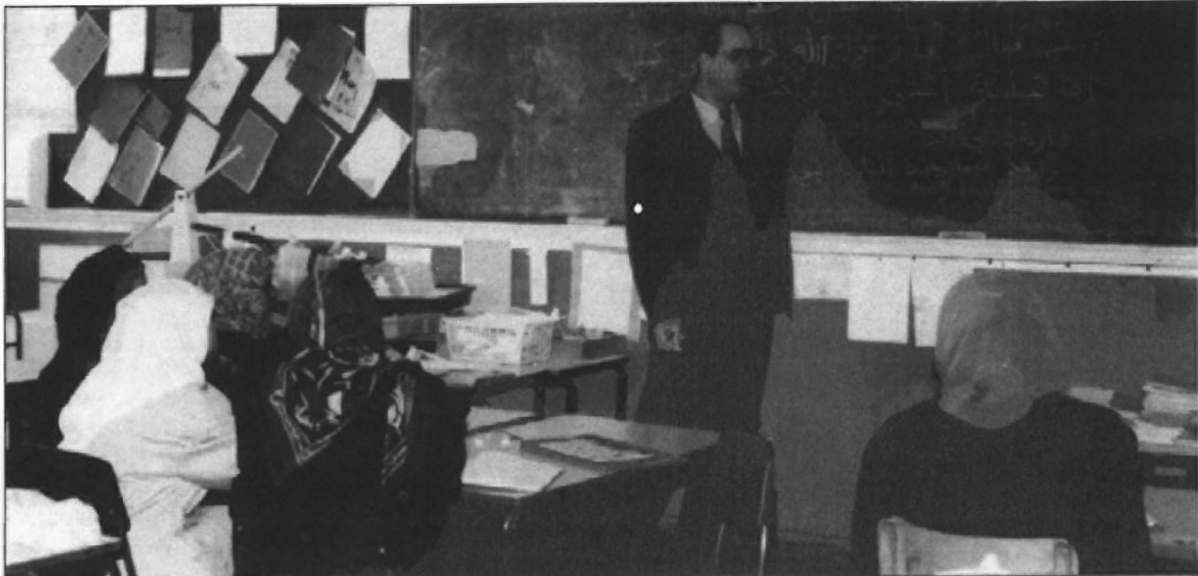
ISLAM AND THE CARIBBEAN

A historic view of the link between
the Asian and Black communities
in the Caribbean



Thursday 18th July 1987

From The Cradle To The Grave



Arabic Classes for Adults: An-Nisa Society has been conducting adult arabic classes in conjunction with the College of Northwest London. Most of the students are refugees and women.

Education is a passionate subject within the Muslim community. An-Nisa Society takes a holistic approach towards the process of acquiring knowledge and disseminating it. We believe that positive development is only possible if it is based or accompanied by a sound education strategy.

The education needs of the Muslim community are multiple. At one level, Muslim children need a lot of input in order to assist them to be competitive academically. We organise tutorial classes for teenagers about to take their GCSE and A-level exams. At another level there is a need for members of the community, young and old, men and women, to acquire essential knowledge about their faith, history, culture and Arabic language. To this end we have been running a Supplementary Muslim School for the last nine years.

An-Nisa Society also believes that the education of the wider community is crucial. Over the years An-Nisa Society has undertaken numerous projects and programmes aimed at providing education particularly for women. This has included adult literacy classes. One new initiative is a partnership between An-Nisa Society and the College of North-West London. At present, we are jointly running Arabic classes for adults. We hope to provide ESOL with the Arabic.

We have conducted an eight week course entitled "Learning Through Play" for women interested in a career in childcare and are

planning other similarly exciting and useful courses on such topics as Information Technology, Muslim Studies, Islamic Counselling, Muslim Womens Course, Muslim Nutrition and Cooking, PPA Course and others.

Once again, the lack of our own premises makes the provision of much-needed courses much harder. Dependence on outside facilities normally means settling for sub-standard premises (for instance, lacking in creche facilities) which might not always be conveniently situated or available on the right day and time.

Using both recent PSI Studies and the Labour Force reports it is estimated that:

- ◆ over 70% of Muslim women have no qualifications
- ◆ about 73% of Muslim women do not speak English well or at all
- ◆ out of all the minority groups in the country, Muslims are most likely to live in poor, overcrowded accommodation or be homeless
- ◆ Muslim refugee/asylum seekers are over-represented as homeless
- ◆ in some parts of the country Muslims have over 50% unemployment
- ◆ Muslim refugees experience 80% unemployment.

The above give a good overview of the entire British Muslim community.

Healthy Policies Healthy Communities



WINNING PARTNERS: A partnership of An-Nisa, Parkside Health and Brent & Harrow authority won the 1995 North Thames Regional Health Authority "healthy alliance award."

Social and economic deprivation have a direct bearing on health. The Muslim community is the worst off and is therefore most vulnerable to ill-health. Lack of understanding of health services and how to access them ensures that the community's health needs are not addressed adequately. The health services lack of understanding of Muslims and their needs as well as poor English are other barriers. One of the major activity we are involved in is trying to assist

Muslim refugees settle in. Women Muslim refugees have a particularly difficult time trying to adjust to a society that normally does not understand their faith and extent of their trauma. Within our limited resources we have attempted, whenever possible, to take up cases where we could act as community advocates.

An-Nisa Society has held training seminars for community, health and social workers on sexual abuse, sexual health and the Islamic perspective. It has consistently argued for the need for Islamic counselling to tackle the high levels of stress and depression within the community.

Over the last two years An-Nisa Society has developed good relationship with health providers within the borough and outside. It has argued for Muslim needs to be met so as to be sensitive to their faith and its values and this has begun to be accepted. This has resulted in a positive partnership with the health services leading to several innovative and pioneering projects.

An-Nisa Society is a member of several Joint Focus Groups, Drugs and Alcohol, Sexual Health, Children, Mental Health and Homelessness. An-Nisa Society attends the Race & Health Forums. In partnership with Parkside Health, Equal Access Project, Brent & Harrow Health Authority, An-Nisa Society organised an extremely successful seminar on the Nutrition Needs of Muslims. This project won a prize from the North Thames Healthy Alliances Award. Two projects on sexual health education are currently underway.



NO SMOKING PLEASE, WE ARE MUSLIMS!: Participants in a passive smoking workshop jointly organised with Brent & Harrow Health Information Unit.

Voices at The Grassroots

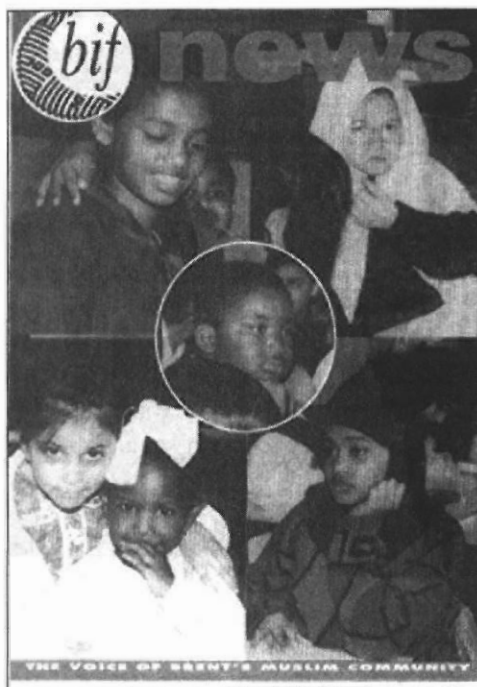


Representing a Muslim perspective, and particularly a Muslim women's perspective, on policies, practice, legislation and so on is vital. An-Nisa Society does this on a local level by participating in various groups and forums which meet regularly, such as the Joint Focus Groups, the Race and Health Forum, Refugee and Health Forum, the Brent Refugee Welfare Association and many more others. We provide information to consultation exercises such as the setting up of a new Race Equality Council, Community Care plan, Childrens Plan, Drugs and Alcohol Needs Assessment, Care of the Dying report etc. and respond to consultation meetings and papers.

We co-operate with and support Brent Islamic Forum which is an umbrella organisation for Brent Muslim groups. Through this forum we work with other Muslims groups on common issues and concerns, such as the "Informed Muslim Participation in the Local Elections Campaign 1994" and assisted in satisfactorily resolving an incident in a local secondary school where anti-Muslim material was used for an 'A' Level course.

On a national and European level we respond through papers, meetings and talks on issues which affect Muslims in the UK and Europe. For example, An-Nisa submitted a response to the Second Review of the Race Relations Act 1976 conducted by the CRE in 1991 and called for religious discrimination to be made unlawful in the UK. We have held discussions with the Department of Health on the proposed changes to the Adoption Law and

PUBLIC MEETING: organised by BIF during the local 1994 elections that enabled the community to question the party leader on their policies. BELOW: copy of newspaper by BIF.



have provided other governmental bodies and voluntary organisations with an Islamic input. During the last three years we have collaborate with Britain's and Europe's only Muslim weekly newspaper, Q-News, in producing seminars and in raising issues which matter to the community.



A Time For This And A Time For That



EID RAP: Popular rap group Cash Crew performing during an Eid Fair at Wembley High School. (circa 1994)

Abu Bakr, may God be pleased with him, said to the noble Prophet, upon whom be blessings and peace: "O Messenger of God, when we are with you, you talk about the Fire and the Garden until it is as if we see them. Then we go out and play with our wives and children and deal with our properties and we forget much." The Messenger of God, upon whom be blessings and peace, then said: "By Him, in whose hand is my soul... there is a time for this and a time for that."

Aisha, may God be pleased with her, said: "I raced with the Prophet, upon whom be blessings and peace, and beat him in the race. Later when I had put on some weight, we raced again and he won. Then he said: "This cancels that," referring to the previous occasion."

Sayyidat Aisha related that when a woman was married to an Ansari man the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Aisha, did they have any entertainment? The Ansari are fond of entertainment."

Leisure, sports and entertainment are as necessary to a good quality of life as are housing, food and other necessities. Ali ibn Talib, may God be pleased with him, has said: "Minds get tired from time to time, as do bod-

ies, so treat them with humour." Abu al-Darda, may God be pleased with him, another famous companion, said: "I entertain my heart with something trivial in order to make it stronger in the service of truth"

Despite the acknowledgement and encouragement in Islam that entertainment and recreation are important aspects for the life of a human being, opportunities for Muslims to partake of these sort of activities are few and far between. All sorts of barriers and boundaries exist which exclude us from healthy leisure activities. On one level the problem lies with the leisure services providers who - like most other departments - tend to be insensitive and therefore irrelevant in catering for Muslim needs and requirements. Sometimes such instances border on the ridiculous: a Brent swimming pool thought it was doing the right thing by holding a women's only session once a week. But no Muslim woman turned up because they continued to keep a male lifeguard.

The lack of Muslim youth and community centres means that the community is unable to provide for itself. At another level the issue of entertainment and leisure are not even on the agenda. This is simply because most members of the community are caught in the vicious circle of poverty, racism and marginalisation.

As a result young people grow up uncomfortable with the idea of fun: for a faith in which even a smile is counted as charity most of our people have forgotten to exercise even the muscles in their faces through smiling. The lack of even wholesome recreational and entertainment programmes for the children, young people and the elderly - particularly women, is greatly contributing towards the health of the entire community depreciating at an alarming rate. Recent statistics indicate high levels of such medical problems as diabetes, obesity, high blood pressure and heart conditions within the community.

The loss in not being able to participate in full in leisure and recreation activities is not only limited to falling health standards. Entertainment venues and occasions also provide critical opportunities for the development and refinement of social skills and in enhancing one's chances of making new acquaintance and therefore give relief to a life of isolation and loneliness.^a

Therefore it is crucial that the entertainment and leisure needs of the community are appreciated and taken into consideration at all levels

continued next page

Investing In Our Young Ones

The British Muslim community has the youngest population in the country. It has been estimated that by the beginning of the twenty-first century 60 percent of the Muslim community in Britain will be under the age of twenty-one. Statistics show that 50 percent of the Muslim community is under 16 years of age. The majority of these young people are third and fourth generation British-born Muslims. This community of young Muslims are represented by all races and nationalities and a significant number is from mixed racial and cultural background.

The majority of Muslim youths face tremendous problems. Most come from extremely underprivileged socioeconomic background and can claim little or no support at all from the family. Their alienation from society is made complete through resistance by service providers to provide meaningful and relevant programmes and facilities

Among the issues confronting our young are:

- lack access to genuine and user-friendly sources of Islamic teachings
- inability to distinguish between culture, tradition and Islam
 - ◆ victims of anti-Islamic diatribe
 - ◆ lack of positive and relevant role models
 - ◆ lack of clear tangible and attainable roles within the community and society at large
 - ◆ lack of forums and facilities enabling the development of community relations, personal development and family enrichment

An-Nisa Society considers the plight of young Muslims, especially of women, as serious. At a certain point in their development young people need as much input as possible. In our society such needs include reassurance of one's self-esteem, sense of identity and historical context. Most Muslim families are unable to provide such an input. Therefore, An-Nisa Society has always prioritise any activities geared towards young people and has, through the Supplementary Muslim School

continued from next page

of community work. An-Nisa Society has always emphasised the need to organise and facilitate programmes that take care of this aspect of life. Over the years we have organised numerous sporting activities, youth club meetings, swimming, mountain climbing, playschemes, social evenings for women, sports days, arts and cultural events, Eid Festivals and field trips for those who are inter-



SUMMER PLAYScheme TRIP TO WOBURN SAFARI PARK: At a certain point in their development young people need as much input as possible. In our society such needs include reassurance of one's self-esteem, sense of identity and historical context. (circa 1994)

and numerous seminars and gatherings, made an effort to deal with the problem of growing up being young, Muslim and British.

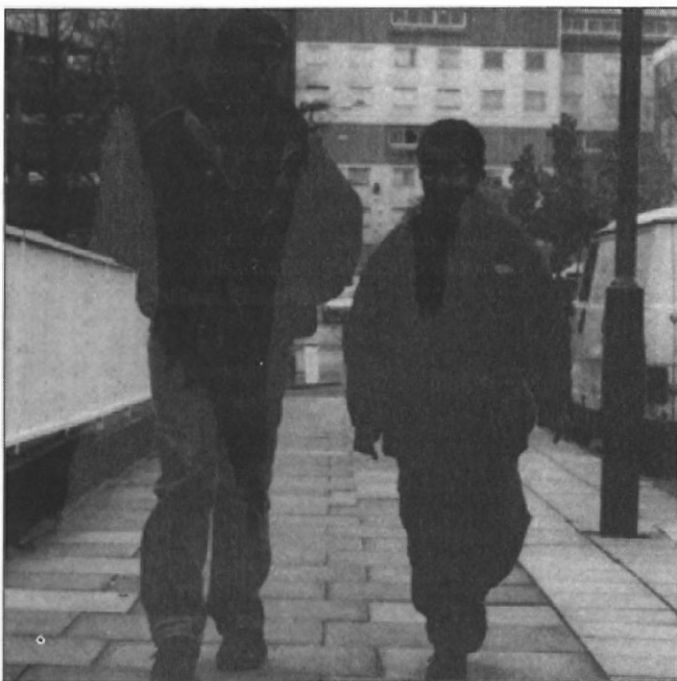
We provide advice and counselling on sex education, careers, coping with peer pressures, bullying at school and even on marriage and dealing with difficult parents. We also educate young people on the dangers of drug abuse. Most important of all we attempt to inculcate in young people pride in their Muslim identity and encourage them to trace their glorious past so that they can be in a better position to cope with the future. Our intention is that our young people grow up appreciating the benefits of having a healthy family-oriented community and that they strengthen and further enrich our lives and their lives when they take their turn to lead society.

We are on the verge of launching a new service offering counselling and reconciliation services which would particularly focus on ensuring that the welfare of children and young people are maintained and protected.

Major activities we have organised in the past have included a "Muslim Womens Cultural Day" in 1987, an Eid Fair in 1994 and a Muslim Arts Festival jointly organised with Ealing Road Library in May/June 1995.

The Festival encapsulates our conviction that a large part of our community-building work has to be focused in getting our people introduced and interested in their history, arts and culture. For only by appreciating their past can they effectively plan for the future.

No Home Away From Home



BRENT'S MUSLIM REFUGEES: helpless unless local Muslim community is properly facilitated and resourced.



REFUGEE SEMINAR 94: Ken Ritchie (Refugee Council) with Bosnian Muslim refugees.

"She survived grenades and sniper fire [in Bosnia] that harmed her but could not destroy her. But life in the safe haven of Britain succeeded where Bosnia failed - in crushing her spirit." The Guardian commenting on the suicide of Layla Ibrahimovic, a 39 year-old Bosnian Muslim mother of two.

Recent estimated suggest that there are about 16,000 refugees in Brent and Harrow; of these 12,000 are in Brent. Sadly many of the world's conflicts are in Muslim countries, consequently the vast majority of Brent and Harrow refugees are Muslim. The Muslim refugees have their origins in over 16 countries from Kashmir, Palestine, Bosnia and Kurdistan to Iraq, India, Algeria, Afghanistan and Somalia. Unless their needs as Muslims are appreciated any programme or project aimed at assisting refugees is bound to be only partially successful if not a total failure.

The situation of Muslim refugees has been made even worse because of the deprivation and marginalisation of the British Muslim community which is mostly the result of being by-passed by race-oriented service providers.

One major outcome of the influx of Muslim refugees in Brent has been to exert even more pressure on the already under-resourced and disadvantaged local community. Brent

Muslims have no centres, youth clubs or any worthwhile faith-friendly facilities where the new arrivals could tap into and get support, friendship and help. This means that the transition to life in this country is made that much harder: a disenfranchised and alienated community is not exactly in a position to assist those so severely traumatised even if the intention and will is there.

During the last couple of years An-Nisa Society has seen the numbers of Muslim refugees seeking its services and assistance rise dramatically. We have done the best we can under the circumstances but are extremely concerned about the lack of a holistic and sensible approach towards the problem about issues of policy and good practice.

Recently, however, partly due to our campaigning, there have been several positive signs indicating that there is some effort being made towards meeting the needs of the Muslim community and Muslim refugees. For example, the Peer Education Project for Muslims and refugees, in partnership with Brent and Harrow Health Authority, Brent and Harrow Health Information Unit, Brent Islamic Forum and a Somali refugee group in Harrow has been successful in a bid to the NHS Ethnic Health Unit. An-Nisa Society has always argued for the provision of counselling from an Islamic perspective, as depression and post-traumatic stress are a serious issue among Muslim refugees.

But the fact of the matter is that unless the local Muslim community is facilitated and resourced no policy adopted and implemented for Muslim refugees is ever likely to be fully realised and succeed.

Talking With Jenny Abdullah

The An-Nisa Society is one of Britain's pioneer organisations. Because it is run by women, its contribution has not been fully appreciated by the community's male-dominated establishment. But during its ten-year existence, this Wembley-based group has proved itself to be one of the most dynamic and relevant Muslim organisations in Britain. Below Fuad Nahdi discusses An-Nisa's history, achievements and vision with Jenny Abdullah, convert and mother of two, who is its Chairperson.



JENNY ABDULLAH: "We see the business of community-building as a sophisticated process; definitely not something you learn from some kind of idealistic text-book. When we talk about community building and community work we are talking about dealing with people, all kinds of people. Our motto, if we have one, is that: from our Islamic legacy, "Inspiration", from our fellow Muslims, "Perspiration"!"

.....
other when the need arises.

Hence for me the act of embracing Islam enhanced directly the quality of my life. Within An-Nisa I found, immediately, new friends, new companions and a new, dynamic and satisfying purpose in life. It is these aspects that I personally cherish the most and it is these same aspects that have guided and inspired An-Nisa Society during the last decade.

What, in your opinion, makes An-Nisa Society different?

Our priority is to build a community. We see the business of community-building as a sophisticated process; definitely not something you learn from some kind of idealistic text-book. When we talk about community building and community work we are talking about dealing with people, all kinds of people. Our motto, if we have one, is that: from our Islamic legacy, "Inspiration", from our fellow Muslims, "Perspiration"!

The fact that we are a women's only group adds to our strength. We have chosen this way of operating because it is convenient for us. When we meet as Muslim women we reduce many points of friction that afflict other gatherings. We are more relaxed and our communication tends to be more direct and decipher-

Tell us about yourself.

My story, in a way, is the story of An-Nisa Society. I come from a West Indian Christian background. Around eight and a half years ago, I embraced Islam. As any convert (or revert, as you prefer) would tell you, the real struggle begins not in the converting but when you have become a Muslim. It is very important for a 'new Muslim' to be put into a context, for this will greatly determine what kind of Muslim she or he turns out to be.

What has An-Nisa done for you personally?

Well I was lucky that the organisation existed when I became a Muslimah. It made the crucial transitional period a 'new Muslim' undergoes less traumatic and relatively pleasant. Immediately after I became a Muslim I was plugged into a group of Muslimahs who could instinctively relate to what I was going through.

Let me take this opportunity to point out one important feature of An-Nisa. It is not a da'wah organisation in the way the term is used among contemporary Muslims. You will never see members of An-Nisa going around distributing pamphlets or giving talks about how great Islam or Muslims are. But the Society is involved in what I would call a higher form of da'wah and that is to try and facilitate and practice Islam. As a new Muslim, I was thoroughly impressed by An-Nisa. I thought, "Wow, this is exactly what I imagine Islam to be like,"; that is, people working together in an atmosphere of tolerance, taking each other for what they are and never being judgmental - and, very importantly, being there for each

.....
continued on page 18

"We are a confident, assertive and intelligent group because this is what Islam and our situation demands of us. Anybody who has the idea that Muslim women are feeble, submissive and without much grey matter is bound to get a shock if they ever come across any of our members."

continued from page 17

able. We find on our own we tend to be more honest and more productive.

However, we believe that the ideal way forward is for everybody to work together. The task of community-building belongs to all; men and women, the old and the young, scholars and the students. But it will be a long time before we reach this idealistic state. So in the meantime Muslim women, arguably the most frustrated and dynamic component of the community, have to take the lead.

This is because no other sector of the society has a deeper and profound understanding of the value of having a healthy community.

Whatever people say, the responsibilities of bringing up the next generation rests on the shoulders of women. In the event, the least that men can do is to empower the women to perform this enormous task. Unfortunately this is not the case in most instances.

Overall, what has been the response of mainstream Muslim organisations?

It has been mixed. But now it is mostly positive and accommodating. What needs, perhaps, to be pointed out is our relationship with non-Muslim organisations. Here we have no reservations in saying that we have played a very crucial role in the way key institutions at both local authority and central government level perceives Islam and particularly Muslim women. From day one of An-Nisa we have had to deal with the stereotype held about Muslim women and their role in the community.

We can say that we have done more in challenging stereotypes of Muslim women held by many local and central government bodies than any other group in the country.

Whenever we get the opportunity we challenge the kind of negative images people have of Muslims and particularly Muslim women.

We are a confident, assertive and intelligent group because this is what Islam and our situation demands of us. Anybody who has the idea that Muslim women are feeble, submissive and without much grey matter is bound to get a shock if they ever come across any of our members.

Tell us about your major activities.

During the decade we have existed, we have embarked on a variety of projects and programmes. Some have been seasonal and others perennial. The Sunday Supplementary

School we have been running for the last eight years or so forms the backbone of our activities. The School is more than just another Sunday school. In essence it is the meeting point of the community and encapsulates our philosophy of prioritising education and community-building. Students attending the school, nearly 120 of them, have been getting one of the most consistent Islamic educations in the country. It is our intention to give them basic Arabic language skills, teach them the Quran, Islamic history and culture. We try to do all this in all kinds of innovative and interesting ways. The focus is to make Islam a practical aspect of their lives, to make them confident about their faith, identity and history. Our students don't spend all their time in classrooms. We have made madrassahs out of woods and museums. Our Eid parties are something that the whole community eagerly looks forward to.

The children - particularly mine - love going to school every Sunday because this is where they make Muslim friends and where they learn something useful and have fun at the same time. I enjoy, like other parents, taking my children to the school because it gives me a chance to catch up on friends, have a relaxed cup of coffee and, well, find out the latest halal gossip.

Running the school is hard work and sister Aisha Khan who does it deserves a medal. But it is a very rewarding activity and we are all proud of our work and what it has done for our children. Such work at the social and community level is very, very important and it is what makes An-Nisa different.

Over the years, we have also organised several exhibitions and women's socials. We have also been involved in several seminars - some of them, such as "The Family," "Mind, Body and Soul", "Towards Understanding Child Sexual Abuse Within the Muslim Community" and "Fostering And Adoption" have been in conjunction with *Q-News*. We have provided countless counselling sessions to all kinds of people from different backgrounds and with different problems ranging from mental health to housing and welfare benefits.

An-Nisa has been in the forefront in the struggle for Muslim identity. We were campaigning for the race laws to be changed a long time before it became fashionable among Muslim groups. When the CRE asked in 1991 for submissions to amendments of the 1976 Race Act we produced the most comprehensive report.

"The emergence of a healthy artistic tradition within our society would be the best manifestation of our maturity and relevance. Throughout history Islamic art has been the prism through which others have viewed our civilisation. We have always been the best in this, and there is no reason why we shouldn't retain our status. The implications for such a development in terms of both how we are perceived by others and in terms of da'wah is mind-blowing."



JENNY WITH HUSBAND ASLAM AND CHILDREN AMAN (4) AND REHAN (6): "My children love going to school every Sunday because this is where they make Muslim friends and where they learn something useful and have fun at the same time."

An-Nisa has also been involved in providing training and advice to several bodies on such things as sexual health needs of Muslim women to Muslim dietary requirements. We have held many very successful women's socials where the emphasis has been on just meeting as Muslimahs, so that we can let down our hair and just have fun. This event is very popular particularly among the younger sisters who normally have nothing else organised for them with this in mind.

All our activities have been held in an environment of openness and welcome. Our support work has been available to everybody. We treat everybody who comes to us equally, regardless of race, colour or even religion. To us the priority is to help and assist whoever we can.

What is the purpose behind An-Nisa's involvement in the Muslim Arts Festival?

The same as everything else we do. We hope the Festival would be an event of pride for the local community. We hope it would enlighten the local community on the greatness of Islamic civilisation, its depth, variety and glamour. We hope people will come and be impressed about what they see and return home appreciating that Muslims are multi-dimensional human beings - not boring one-dimensional political animals good only at shouting slogans. We want the Festival to be a source of inspiration for our young who are inclined towards the creative arts. This is important because it is time that British Muslims got themselves engaged in the exciting process of creating forms of British Islamic art. The emergence of a healthy artistic tradition within our society would be the best manifestation of our maturity and relevance. Throughout history Islamic art has been the

prism through which others have viewed our civilisation. We have always been the best in this, and there is no reason why we shouldn't retain our status. The implications for such a development in terms of both how we are perceived by others and in terms of da'wah is mind-blowing.

We also feel that the overall trend within what passes by as 'art' within society is appalling, and people seem to have lost their senses with all kinds of horrible things being masqueraded as art. In our small way we hope to show what real beauty is, and encourage our young people to take part in producing it.

The Festival has given us an opportunity to improve the information needs of Muslims. For instance, Ealing Road Library, where the Festival is being held, has bought £1000 worth of Muslim books and will subscribe to things like Muslim newspaper and other publications. On Sunday 4 June Library staff will be available to talk to Muslim users about their needs and requirements.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of the Festival is that it is an event that officially marks the beginning of a series of programme we plan to undertake to celebrate the tenth anniversary of An-Nisa Society. The main focus of our programmes would be to first highlight the activities we have so far undertaken and to try and solicit funds for a resource centre. We believe that a permanent centre would not only enhance our activities but increase them in both quantity and quality. A dynamic centre run by women for families would be of great benefit for both the local communities and Muslim women everywhere in the country.

This interview was first published in Q-News issue 165, 26 May-2 June. We appreciate permission to reprint the article.

the vision

Action For Families, By Women



THE DREAM: We yearn to establish a community that is sensitive, enlightened and vibrant; one that cares and respects all its members - the young and the old, the able and the disabled, women and men.

We have a dream. We have a vision of a community consisting of strong family units which sacrifice for each other, which share with each other and which work in harmony with each other. We yearn to establish a community that is sensitive, enlightened and vibrant; one that cares and respects all its members - the young and the old, the able and the disabled, women and men.

A community beautiful in its diversity; a halal rainbow coalition consisting of all colours, languages and cultures. United together not because of narrow self-interest and need but committed to the Quranic call to strive to be "the best community - commanding the good, forbidding evil and believing in God."

The community of our dreams is the one described by the Prophet, peace be upon him: one that is based on mutual support and compassion and acting like "a single body - when one part of which is afflicted, the other parts feel pain and fever."

It is the conviction and pursuit of these vision that has guided us in our first ten years. And it is with the same dream that we embark on the next ten. We recognise that we are perhaps as far away from our target as when we began. But to us that is not so important as being aware that we are heading in the right direction.

In our journey so far we had to cross many difficult terrains, some full of thorny issues others full of blind alleys. We were, perhaps, never correct all the time but were always focused in our intention and in the pursuit of our goal. Herein, we believe, lie the basis of any success we might have achieved.

An-Nisa Society has always believed and remains convinced that small and local is best, that action for families is the primary priority in the process of community-building and that we have a duty and responsibility to our young to ensure that we maintain an unpolluted ecology in our humanity, faith and relationships.

We see the next decade as an opportunity to consolidate the work we have so far undertaken and to re-evaluate and re-dedicate ourselves towards the creation and betterment of our local community.

Briefly our priorities are:

- ◆ to restore the family to its position as the nucleus of the community by making it sound and healthy, physically, spiritually, morally and economically.

- ◆ to cater for the needs of Muslim families, in particular women, children and young people.

- ◆ to act as a resource and advise on the needs of Muslims to service providers such as Housing, Education and Social Services, Health Services.

A Place We Can Call Our Own

Our main project at the moment is establishing a multi-purpose Centre for Muslim women in the London Borough of Brent. The An-Nisa Society Resource Centre Project is our most ambitious and comprehensive. We hope such a facility would contribute towards enhancing the quality of life for the entire community.

The benefits of having a place where the needs of families can be met in an environment which is familiar, sympathetic and secure cannot be exaggerated. Such a venue would be invaluable in facilitating access to advice, support and information particularly to young people and women. It would also be ideal in providing direct services and as a point of getting, directly, crucial feedback so essential in improving the access and relevancy of mainstream service provision to the Muslim community.

The Resource Centre is much needed as a base from where we can better initiate, implement and monitor our wide range of activities and services. This will include:

- ◆ providing health education, advice, health services and the promotion of an holistic health programme in tune with the Islamic perspective of well-being

- ◆ organising sports, exercise and recreation activities for Muslim women, young people and children. This will also include keep-fit classes, martial arts, relaxation classes, playschemes, outings and trips

- ◆ setting up support groups, for example, children with special need such as Downs Syndrome, congenital disabilities etc.

- ◆ setting up an under-fives Playgroup

- ◆ operating a Homework Club/Reference Library

- ◆ provide Supplementary Education in subjects such as Maths, English, Science and Careers Advice

- ◆ linking with schools and colleges in Brent for the benefit of Muslim pupils and to create better understanding between Muslim parents and schools

- ◆ to set up a Muslim women and girls Employment Scheme



- ◆ lifeskills and job hunting project for unemployed Muslim adults and youths

- ◆ teaching of Arabic, Islamic Studies and Islamic history and heritage

- ◆ sports and leisure including playschemes, outings, trips etc.

- ◆ reconciliation services based on the principles of Islamic counselling

- ◆ providing advice and information service on housing, health, social services, welfare rights, legal and religious matters

- ◆ to establish a volunteering project in order to recruit, train and place volunteers in An-Nisa projects

- ◆ to engage in research in order to produce information and guidelines on Muslims and their needs

- ◆ to keep the community abreast of new developments which have a bearing on their daily lives

- ◆ to provide accurate information on Muslim needs

- ◆ to represent the interests of the Muslim community particularly women, children and young people

- ◆ to support and facilitate an easy transition for the Muslim refugee groups to life in Brent.

acknowledgements

Below we list people and organisations who have provided us with support, encouragement and inspiration during the last ten years. The list is by no means complete. Our apologies to anybody (or organisation) that we have missed out.

May the Almighty bless us all with a clearer vision of our duties and the strength to perform them. *Amin.*

Ambala Sweet Centre
Kevin Batchelor, Director Ealing Rd
Library
Bestways Charitable Foundation
Brent and Harrow Health Authority
Brent and Harrow Health Information
Unit
Brent Islamic Forum
Brent Voluntary Sector Team
Brian Caine, Headteacher, Park Lane
JMI School
Chicken Cottage
College of North West London
Community Dietitians
Dr Syed ad-Darsh
Equal Access Project
IIFSO
IIT, particularly Dr Anas Ali Al-Shaikh
Yusuf Islam
Islamic Relief, particularly Mr Fadi
Iqra Trust, particularly Mr Faisal Osman
Jeans West
Kadiris Restaurants
Lahore Karahi
Mohammed Mlamali Adam
Muslim Aid
Naim Ahmed & Co (Accountants)
Kingsbury
Parkside Health
Q-News, particularly Fuad Nahdi
Raja & Partners (Solicitors) Southall
Royal Sweets
Sylvia Laundries
Teachers & Volunteers SMS
Youth & Community Service
A Zubairi & Co (Accountants) Ealing
Road

Organisations to which An-Nisa Society is affiliated:

Brent Community Transport
Brent Islamic Forum
Brent Refugee Welfare Association
London Union of Youth Clubs
Youth and Community Service

Special thanks to all those associated with our Supplementary Muslim School:

Dr Awad
Hazim Abbas
Muhammad Abu Bakr Bashua'ib
Abdul Aziz Ahmed
Yasmine Ansari
Khadijah Esau
Yusuf Fulat
Abdul Ghani Mereh
Aliya Haji
Tanya Hasan
Mr Jawad
Faiza Juma
Abdul Rehman Kahiye
Kamaria Kazmi
Mubashir Khan
Tohid Mehar & Family
Fatima Muhammad
Omar Osman
Hasan Radwan
Hafiz Senada
Amina Wilson

**And a very, very special thanks to
AISHA KHAN, co-ordinator of the
Supplementary Muslim School.**

Special thanks to all our members and supporters in particular:

Muhammad Bulale
Fatima El-Guenuni
Imran Hussain
Tanveer and Khalid Jali
Imran Juma
Saba Khalid
Farida Khan
Rabia Nahas
Humaira-Sofia Khan
Humera Khan
Shabana Khan
Halima Krausen
Tahir Shah
Tariq Khan
Abdul Karim Shariff
Angie Shariff
Laila Shariff
Salma Sheikh

Success is from God; we seek His help, depend on Him entirely, and ask Him to grant us success in being correct in our intentions and deeds. He is Guardian of this and Able; He is our sufficiency, and He is the Best of Patrons.

The Management and Staff of **Q-News** congratulates An-Nisa Society on its tenth anniversary and wishes it success for the future.
Q-News. The family-friendly Muslim newspaper.

The Guardian
 Wednesday 30 November 1994



For Lewis the most promising for the future is the arrival of Q-News, a national Muslim weekly written in English, launched in March 1992. Q-News sponsors forums for Muslims under 21 with provocative titles such as: "Beyond beards, scarves and halal meat: Is there a British Muslim identity in the 21st century?"

"Q-News deals with all the issues confronting the young," Lewis said. "There is a wide range of discussion. There is some of the paranoia, but that is just a proper reflection of the problems of the community which they are now willing to frankly discuss."

Once in a while a new idea changes the way we see and evaluate the world.

This is one such occasion. Introducing Q-News. A high-impact Muslim newspaper and the result of a ground-breaking collaboration between revelation and intellect.

The brief... to produce a newspaper of outstanding style, appeal and relevance.

The result... a pioneering new concept in print journalism. A breakthrough in responsible journalism and entertaining writing. And the perfect vehicle for discourse on the challenges of creating a dynamic Muslim community in the West.

The News section is the most comprehensive archive of major developments taking place within the British Muslim community.

The Helpline page every fortnight by David-Darsh is a trail-blazer in the evolution and development of a modern and pertinent fiqh.

The Media pages are an educated discussion on the products of the day, in context and effect.

The Conversation page provides a professional insight into the people who make our community.

Our pages are intended to inspire, inform, think and act.

For more ring 071 734 4887

Get a free sample issue in 12-gripping demonstrations to show you are Europe's most exciting weekly.

Yes! Please ensure that a copy of **Q-News** is delivered to my door every Friday.

NAME:

ADDRESS:

Postcode:

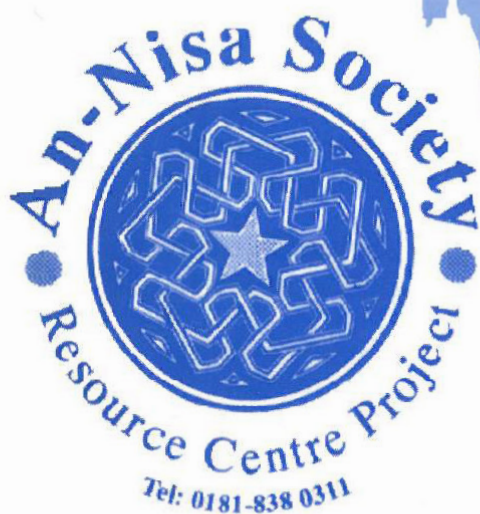
TEL:

THE RATES	UK postage inc.	EUROPE postage inc.	ZONE 1 postage inc.	ZONE 2 postage inc.
1/2 YEAR (26 issues)	£18.00	£27.00	£39.00	£42.00
1 YEAR (52 issues)	£29.00	£54.00	£78.00	£84.00
1-1/2 YEAR (78 issues)	£39.00	£81.00	£117.00	£126.00
2 YEAR (104 issues)	£45.00	£108.00	£156.00	£168.00
1 YEAR STUDENTS	£22.00	Special Offer		

New sub. Renewal Old Sub.No.
 Q-News International Ltd., Washington House, First Floor, 40/41 Conduit Street,
 London W1R 9FB Tel: 071 734 4887 Fax: 071 734 4891

note:

- Pay by cheque or postal order to Q-News [DO NOT SEND CASH]
- Students please enclose evidence of status with subscription
- Overseas subscribers please contact Q-News for correct postage rate



An-Nisa Society

can be contacted at:
Bestways Complex
2 Abbey Road
Park Royal
London NW10 7BW
Tel: 0181-838 0311