

## **Innovation into Action !**

### **Moulsecoomb Inclusion Project, Brighton**

The need for engagement with isolated women from Bangladeshi families in Moulsecoomb was identified as part of the East Brighton NDC programme. This led to PEP being commissioned by Brighton and Hove City Council to work in the community and set up a small team of two community workers and an interpreter.

They made contact with about 20 women through a combination of door-knocking, working through the local school and word of mouth. This enabled them to work with the women to identify their needs and the best means of coming together. Through close links with other agencies such as the Friend's Centre and the Healthy Living Centre, the project was able to offer the women access to ESOL classes and also help with their 'Life in the UK' test. They also undertook first aid training, tailoring, exercise and swimming classes; the latter with support from the local Council pool when it agreed to have women-only sessions.

The initial aim was to gain the confidence of the women, then to help them feel confident about working together as a group, to overcome their isolation. They have now reached the point where they hold lunchtime meetings in Moulsecoomb Primary School's community room. The women cook lunch and meet with local services including ones with the Police, drugs awareness workers, an established women's group from Southwark, and another with housing officers.

PEP feels that they have successfully supported a very isolated and deprived community to better engage with agencies in the neighbourhood, although there is concern that without longer term funding activities may not be able to continue.

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