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Reducing racial inequality in York

Community Newsletter
July 2020



Rita Sanderson passed away on 2nd February 2020, eight months after being diagnosed with cancer.

The announcement of her death was received with stunned surprise and numbed sadness by those who knew her and particularly by those who worked closely with her.

Rita Sanderson spent eighteen years of her life as Director of the York Racial Equality Network. During that time, Rita nurtured YREN through its fledgling years to what it has now become - *the* credible Black and Minority Ethnic organisation qualified to address matters pertinent to the BAME communities of York and North Yorkshire.

Rita's commitment to YREN is unquestionable. She spent her time, talent and energies promoting the aims of the organisation i.e. working towards the elimination of racism: promoting equality for all: bringing communities together but most of all seeking to empower our BAME communities as rightful citizens of York so that together we may all be contributors in creating a city that is safe, culturally aware; a city that embraces and celebrates diversity - a city that is truly inclusive.

Her total commitment to the cause of YREN is immeasurable and it is evidenced by the boundless energy and professionalism she employed to benefit the organisation even up to her final hours.

The tributes from YREN members, statutory and non-statutory partners demonstrate the enormous impact Rita had on those with whom she developed networks. It is fair to say that to some the name Rita Sanderson became synonymous with YREN.

Fred Ring (YREN Chair)



YREN is still working during Covid-19 restrictions

We are still here to help you! If you have experienced any racial discrimination, harassment or a



Your Voice BME Residents Open Forum

Saturday 25th July 2020 11am - 12.30pm

The next Open Forum meeting will be held via Zoom. All YREN members will receive a

support then please send us an email or give us a call.

We are not in the office every day but your message will be picked up and we will get back to you.

Rachel Maskell MP and a representative from North Yorkshire Police have been invited to attend.

If you are unable to attend and would like to make a comment or raise an issue please email us at info@yren.co.uk

The main points for discussion will relate to: the impact of Covid 19; hate crime; priority work areas for YREN.

We hope you can join us and we look forward to a productive discussion.



"George Floyd's voice can no longer be silenced.

His final utterances have shaken up the world to recognising the evils of systemic racism and injustice..

May his voice continue to shake up the world until the eradication of racism, intolerance, injustice, and inequality can be fully achieved."

Fred Ring Chair of YREN.

How you can help YREN

Take part in the YREN Supporter Survey

and encourage your friends and family to do the same.

We are a 'user-led' charity so we actively listen to our members and supporters, taking their views and opinions to help us shape our work.

Whether you are a long-standing member or a re a new supporter of YREN we would be interested to hear your views!

Click the link to be taken to the survey <http://www.sogosurvey.com/>

Make a donation

This is a difficult time for individuals, businesses and charities as so many people are unable to go about their daily lives normally or carry out their normal activities.

At YREN we usually hold fundraising concerts and events throughout the year, but are unable to do so at the present time.



Please consider donating to us through CAF donate - <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/13492>



Renew your YREN membership

The support you give by renewing your membership is very important to us. It demonstrates that we have local supporters who care about our organisation, and also your financial contribution goes to supporting our work.

As a member, you will also have voting rights so you can have a say in how YREN is run. You will also receive regular newsletters and updates about YREN.

Please do renew your subscription this year, and please ask your friends and family to consider joining as new members.



A word from YREN's Chair:



Or you could hold a birthday or other celebration fundraiser on a platform such as facebook and ask for donations to support the work of YREN.

However you choose to make a donation, all your contributions will be gratefully received and will go towards making York a fairer and more equal place to live.

Create the YREN that you want to see!

We are currently recruiting for new trustees to join us and help to shape the future of YREN. Trustee meetings are held once a month on Saturday mornings, all other time commitments are flexible to suit you. No previous experience is necessary as a full trustee induction will be given.

We are looking for people to help us with:

- setting up outreach locations in York and providing legal help and support
- marketing the organisation to reach a wider population
- developing links with statutory bodies such as the police and local authority in order to ensure consultation of the BME population takes place

If you have enthusiasm for the field of race equality and a willingness to suggest and try new ideas then we would like to hear from you!

To express an interest or to arrange an informal discussion about the trustee role please get in touch via the office.

I, Fred Ring hold the chairperson's position and Lisa Mayer the Secretary. Daryoush Mazloum and Mahendra Verma are very long-standing Trustees of the organisation. Grace Helliwell joined the Trustees in 2017 and Ian Timmins has recently been co-opted to the Board.

Each member on the Trustee board adheres to the core principles of YREN as laid down in the YREN constitution i.e. the elimination of race discrimination and the advancement of equality for all.

Trustees meet regularly to evaluate, plan and consider strategies to strengthen the organisation.

Our Trustees are also equipped to engage with those who require YREN support. We furthermore provide a presence for the Black and Ethnic communities of York on forums where local decisions are made.

We now have on board a coordinator (Jane Greenwood) and fundraiser (Ruth Batty) who joined the team at the start of the year. Their work and passion to support and advance YREN deserve every bit of our gratitude. Lisa Evens supports our work by competently running the YREN office and assisting with the Friendship Project.

As mentioned earlier many of our Trustees have served the organisation for a long time, some for more than two decades. We are now looking for additional support from individuals with talent, time and enthusiasm to carry YREN through to its future.

Friendship Project News



During the first few months of the year, Friendship Project members enjoyed dancing with Diddi Dance, learning about Chinese New Year through crafts and food, celebrating World Book Day with a dressing up session and making friendship bracelets. A Swap Shop for books, clothes and toys also started and proved popular.



Since the lockdown, our sessions at St Aelreds, Tang Hall have been replaced with online activities and we are currently running an art competition on our facebook page. More online activities will be held during the Summer, so please like the page to get the latest updates!



YREN's Future Plans

Later in the year we plan to move to a smaller, more central office base, to reduce our costs and to make it easier for people to visit us. If you know of any suitable city centre locations or any organisations who have a small office space they wish to rent out then please do let us know.

Keep up to date with YREN

website: <https://yren.co.uk/>

facebook: York Racial Equality Network

twitter: @YorkRacial



Spotlight on...

each edition, we highlight the services provided by a York organisation



Ensuring the older people of
York have their voices heard

OCAI is a small local charity.

We work to help people over the age of 50 by:

Providing a free and independent advocacy service

Helping you to have a voice in the issues that concern you

Advocates aim to help you achieve an outcome which will have a positive effect
on your wellbeing.

Advocacy simply means supporting people to speak up for themselves when
there is something they want to say. Advocacy is a way of making sure a
person's voice is heard when issues affect their lives.

Advocates are skilled staff and volunteers trained to assist with everyday
issues. They will not tell you what to do.

You may need advocacy because you feel:

- No one is listening to you
- You've got important decisions to make
- You can't get the help you need
- You don't agree with decisions that are being made about you

An advocate can help you by:

- Helping you choose a way forward
- Finding out information and who to contact
 - Telling you about your rights
- Making sure your rights are being respected
- Helping you to access health and social care services
 - Going to meetings and appointments with you
 - Helping you to write letters and fill in forms
- Challenging decisions that you do not agree with
 - Helping you make a complaint

**WE ARE STILL OPEN working from home DUE TO CORONAVIRUS If you
need help, please ring the following numbers.**

Ruth Potter, Charity Manager: 07715099498

Dan Brittan, Lead Advocate: 07715099500

Kayleigh Fox, Charity Support Assistant: 07715099493



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