Open Day Report
Contents

Arooj - Open Day Initiative 3
Background 3
Who are Arooj 6
Why an Open Day 9
Target Audience 10
Aims of the Day 11
The Open Day - Programme 12
Summary - The Open Day Thursday 13th Nov 2008 13
Evaluation 13
Lessons to be learnt 15
The Way Forward 16
Acknowledgements and Thanks 16
Appendices 17
Arooj- Open Day Initiative

Purpose of the Report

The report presents an overview of the planning and delivery of Arooj’s Open Day initiative that was held on 13th November 2008 in partnership with HMP Kirkham.

A brief insight is provided into Arooj and background information in relation to the Open Day before a detailed analysis on the event is presented.

Background

It is important to acknowledge the contributions made by the many individuals and organisations that have been involved in assisting with the development and planning of the Open Day held at HMP Kirkham on 13th November 2008. The process commenced back in July 2007 with a meeting with the then Race Equality Officer (REO), Elsa Fairclough, at HMP Kirkham and Tariq Mahmood from the Lifeline Project.

The meeting had been convened to discuss concerns expressed by some Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) prisoners about the lack of engagement with the establishment from BME specific support services. The prisoners were in the main from the South Asian communities, with the majority belonging to the Muslim faith. They stated that other than input from the prison Imams they could not access or were not aware of any other support services, which catered for their non-religious specific needs, either during their sentence or upon release from Prison. The REO had initially approached an Asian heritage member of staff from the Lifeline CARATs team based at HMP Kirkham for further advice and guidance. The REO was advised to consult with T. Mahmood from the Lifeline Project, who had extensive experience of working in community settings on many projects with various groups throughout East Lancashire, an area with a large BME and predominantly Muslim population.

At the subsequent meeting convened between the two, it was agreed that due to the complexity of the issues involved and the need for allocation of additional resources to undertake any such developmental work, a more strategic and sustainable approach, with commitment from senior management of the establishment would be required. A further meeting to discuss the many issues and the way forward was then arranged with both the Deputy Governor of HMP Kirkham, Kevin Brown and Keith Owen a Senior Manager with the Lifeline Project. The meeting involved detailed discussions around the specific needs of the BME prisoners within the establishment as well as those difficulties that they would or were likely to encounter upon release from prison. The senior management of both organisations were wholly committed in attempting to address the issues concerned, but were also keen to avoid responses that may be deemed to be tokenistic.

It was felt that as there were many issues that needed addressing, the best way forward would be for HMP Kirkham to undertake further consultation with those groups that were most affected. This consultation would involve BME prisoners and voluntary and community organisations from the BME communities, including the faith sector.
It was decided that in the first instance HMP Kirkham would need to develop some form of engagement process with the BME communities and organisations in order to raise awareness of the establishment and its services. This would be modelled on a process, which was conducted successfully by Lifeline East Lancashire with their ‘Making Things Equal’ project. Lifeline agreed to provide assistance to HMP Kirkham to engage with the BME communities in the area. Lifeline’s reasoning behind this was that although there were numerous BME community groups and organisations in the areas of Preston, Blackburn and East Lancashire, there were very few, if any, that would have any experience of working directly with offenders or ex-offenders. The BME communities were, generally speaking ‘ignorant’ of the needs of this particular group as they did not have the knowledge, understanding or experience of working with them.

BME offenders and ex-offenders were largely a forgotten, isolated and vulnerable group who would not have access to support from within their communities or organisations. There was a clear need to raise awareness of the specific needs of BME offenders and ex-offenders amongst these communities in order to assist them to reintegrate back into society and to reduce the possibility of their re-offending.

The challenge for both HMP Kirkham and Lifeline was to find something that would create and leave a positive image of not just HMP Kirkham, but the prison service as a whole. This task was expected to be made more difficult due to the general lack of awareness of offender’s and ex-offenders needs and the negative perceptions of criminal justice agencies from members of the BME communities.

Lifeline agreed to take the lead in having informal discussions with members of the BME communities, professionals and organisations working with them in order to seek their views about and understanding of the criminal justice system and services. It was agreed that progress would be reported back by Lifeline to HMP Kirkham via the REAT group.

Meetings were held with a variety of people and groups in Preston, Blackburn and East Lancashire as there was no identifiable BME organisation that had any expertise in this area of work. The result of these discussions was that a number of BME professional workers, who although somewhat surprised, welcomed the approach from Lifeline, especially as it was not a BME specific organisation nor did it belong to the criminal justice sector.

All those who took part in these discussions acknowledged that offending was on the increase within certain sections of the BME communities, particularly the South Asian communities and identified the need for more targeted preventative work with young people from these communities. Many also felt BME offenders and ex-offenders were generally left to their own devices, and were therefore isolated and excluded from their own communities as a result of their involvement in crime and would probably benefit from help and support of any sort. There were some concerns expressed at the increase in the number of BME young people coming into contact with criminal justice agencies, and that this fact could not continue to be ignored. There was consensus that the BME communities could not resolve these issues on their own, as they did not have the knowledge, understanding nor the expertise to deal with the many issues related to offending. They appreciated the importance of the BME communities and organisations working more closely with the criminal justice sector organisations in order to prevent or reduce offending.
After a number of meetings it became apparent that no one had mentioned any group or project working exclusively with BME Offenders or ex-offenders in the areas mentioned. It was therefore decided to invite those people involved in the initial discussions for a further meeting to feedback and discuss some of the preliminary findings. The question was asked whether they were aware of any local BME organisation, particularly South Asian that was addressing the issues that had been raised in previous discussions and whether or not there was a need for further action. As no-one was able to respond to the question about service provision they felt obliged to explore the issues raised further, as the need demanded a response and felt that perhaps the best way to do that was by establishing such a group and therefore decided to set up Arooj. The group comprised of individuals from across the area, and although they came from a range of different professions and backgrounds, they were very knowledgeable, experienced and understood the complexities involved in working and engaging with BME communities around criminal justice issues. They accepted that they would also encounter numerous challenges whilst attempting to engage with the BME offender group.

Arooj held their first meeting with HMP Kirkham and Lifeline in October 2007 to look at issues relating to offenders and community engagement in more detail from both within and outside the prison environment. The next section covers the aims and objectives of Arooj in more detail.

Initial consultations by Arooj revealed that there was a clear need to raise awareness of the prison system within the local communities as there was little or no understanding on how prisons operate unless people had personal experiences of contact with the criminal justice system either themselves or through a friend or relative. However, it was also appreciated that the views of those coming into contact with the criminal justice system, would probably be biased and in the main likely to be negative, due to their treatment or perceived treatment at the hands of these agencies. If we were to succeed in creating a positive image of the establishment and the prison service in general then we also needed to create dialogue with local BME communities, who had not been in contact with the criminal justice system in order to gauge how they perceived services.

This process was made somewhat easier in January 2008 when HMP Kirkham produced its Community Engagement Strategy, which had been embedded into its core business. The strategy document removed any need for HMP Kirkham, Arooj and Lifeline to justify their decision to attempt to engage with the BME communities as a key aim of the strategy was to create better dialogue with the communities it serves.
Who are Arooj?

At the outset we would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to the Lifeline Project Ltd for their advice, guidance and support throughout our conception, development and progression (see www.lifeline.org.uk website for further details about the work of Lifeline).

Arooj was founded in July 2007 in response to discussions with the Lifeline Project Ltd around the issues facing Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities and their involvement with the criminal justice sector. Arooj was set up to support and promote race equality and diversity interventions and provide a more collective approach to promoting and working towards social inclusion for the BME communities in Lancashire. The name ‘Arooj’ was chosen to represent the group’s overall vision and is derived from the Arabic word meaning ‘Ascent’.

Although we are a relatively new organisation, we have a great deal of expertise within our diverse membership across a range of different disciplines. Our dedicated core team has many years of expertise in the fields of regeneration; equality and diversity; community engagement and development; community safety and criminal justice; recruitment and retention; counselling; advice and guidance; social inclusion and community cohesion; health and social care; inter-faith relations, young people and gender specific issues; substance misuse; neighbourhood management; capacity building; strategic and policy direction and action planning.

Whilst discussing the setting out of aims and objectives for the group, it became clear to us that even though we all came from different backgrounds and professions we had one thing very much in common. No, we were not just talking about our desire to help BME communities or as in this case, offenders/ex-offenders nor were we talking about our being of the same colour or ethnic group, gender or faith but that we all more or less had acted as ‘brokers’ at some stage in our working lives. This was usually done on an informal basis, for the so-called ‘good’ of the community and was between public sector service providers, practitioners and service users, particularly in relation to the engagement of and service delivery to BME communities. Whether formally or informally we have been and still are continually approached for assistance by researchers, consultants, service providers, practitioners from both the voluntary and statutory sector, all of who are seeking to utilise our knowledge, expertise, support, guidance and above all, access to our community networks.

These approaches for assistance highlight significant gaps in current service provision in certain sectors. Despite the existence of equality and diversity legislation and a host of policies, strategies, action plans etc most organisations struggle to implement these policies, particularly at an operational level where there is an alarming lack of awareness, knowledge and understanding of the culture and diversity of BME communities and hence their specific needs. Although we feel obliged to assist, we cannot continue to do so indefinitely or on an informal basis and without adequate resources, especially as these methods are usually only applied by providers in relation to the engagement of and delivery of equality and diversity interventions with certain vulnerable groups and BME communities. In addition, the difficulties associated with the delivery and uptake of services from BME communities is not helped by the continued practice by providers, of consulting the so called ‘community representatives’ or ‘leaders’ for assistance. This outdated practice is viewed as tokenistic by the recipients, as it fails to address the underlying issues, as so many of those consulted are not even themselves aware of or in touch with the issues or communities they supposedly serve or represent.
We do not believe that any one single person or organisation can truly represent the interests of any community, particularly the BME communities due to the complexities involved. We feel that the best way to work with these communities and for the benefit of all concerned parties would be to use approaches that incorporate ‘culture and/or faith-based interventions’ within a formalised multi-agency/partnership arrangement. We would be better able to serve both the providers and recipients by using this approach and by utilising our knowledge, experience and understanding of the cultures and needs of both parties. We believe that by formalising our involvement and acting as intermediaries between providers and recipients, and by further developing our role as ‘brokers’ we can benefit both the communities and those organisations that are genuinely committed to addressing equality issues by assisting them to develop their strategic aims and objectives and to achieve satisfactory outcomes for all concerned.

We believe that we have developed a unique concept in partnership working by drawing upon our understanding, learning and experiences gained in our respective roles as ‘brokers’ and will brand Arooj not just as a voluntary, community or third sector organisation, but as a ‘Community Broker’, after all, this is what we have done and done well for many years.

**The Way Arooj Works**

Arooj is an organisation that prides itself on its infrastructure, extensive networks and its comprehensive knowledge and understanding of BME communities and their specific needs in relation to a wide range of issues. From its inception in July 2007, Arooj members were given specific responsibilities that reflected their key qualities. It has in a very short space of time become an organisation that is leading the way in addressing the needs of BME communities within Lancashire on issues relating particularly to the Criminal Justice sector. We are currently developing a number of proposals with a range of partners that will address the specific needs of BME offenders/ex-offenders and their partners, families and carers as well as those organisations working or attempting to engage with them.

In order to improve the quality of life and well being of local communities we aim to provide a service that is culturally specific and sensitive to the needs of the individual, and in particular for the benefit of the BME communities and those disadvantaged and marginalised groups who are excluded from or do not currently engage with or access mainstream services and provision. We will promote social inclusion and encourage community cohesion and also aim to ensure by working more closely with service providers, that equal access and opportunities are afforded to these certain groups and communities. This will be done by utilising our extensive community networks and through effective consultation, engagement, involvement, development, delivery and implementation of initiatives/programmes at a grass roots level.

**We will do this by:**

Arooj has developed a unique concept in partnership working and this is aimed at addressing the specific needs of both the service provider and the end user. In order to achieve this, we will, where necessary, act as a ‘Community Broker’, by providing access to our extensive community networks, knowledge, skills and expertise, including signposting to all relevant services.
To enable an overall positive interaction for all concerned parties, we will take on the role of the ‘broker’ and initiate and facilitate negotiations. We will encourage and promote dialogue between the relevant parties to create a greater understanding and acceptance of each other’s ‘culture’. This will be necessary in order to ensure more effective delivery of services and will also address issues of under-representation by aiming to increase the uptake of services from socially excluded or marginalised groups. We will attempt to achieve this by ensuring that a ‘bottom-up’ approach is used at all times and that delivery is to the appropriate recipients within the community.

Key Objectives:

1. To develop and maintain a ‘culturally specific’ advice and support service for BME communities in relation to criminal justice, health and social care issues in Lancashire.

2. To act as a ‘Community Broker’ between BME communities and service providers (predominately Statutory Services) so they are better able to engage with each other.

3. To act as a reference point for service provision for BME communities and the wider community in the areas of criminal justice, health and social care.

4. To create, develop, support and facilitate learning, training and development opportunities and programmes for BME communities through effective partnership working.

5. To act as ‘Champions’ in promoting the social inclusion agenda, and to actively engage with providers on behalf of service users on issues relating to: Criminal Justice, Housing, Health and Social Care, Employment, Education, Enterprise/Training.

6. To promote equality of opportunity and assist with the delivery of culturally specific interventions to ensure equal access for BME communities.

7. To raise the profile of Arooj, Service Providers and individuals in promoting best practice.
Why an Open Day?

Arooj was fully aware that in order to succeed with its engagement process it needed to be innovative and do something different. Especially, in view of the complexities involved in attempting to engage with and raise awareness (in a positive manner) of a criminal justice sector organisation amongst a target audience that is increasingly over-represented within prisons and the criminal justice system. This over-representation of BME groups would make the task of engagement and building trust even more difficult. However, all concerned, agreed that the issue of under-representation of BME staff throughout the prison service could actually prove positive in that it could be used to entice people into the establishment. If this could be achieved then it would provide us with a platform to promote a positive image of the service as a whole.

Comments received in consultations:

- None of the participants had ever considered the Prison Service as a career.
- No one who took part had ever seen any advertisements for Prison Officers.
- There was a low level of awareness about the full range of work undertaken by Prison Officers.
- The Prison Service has a much lower profile than the Police who are perceived as being more “up front” about equality and of making greater efforts to recruit a more diverse and representative workforce.
- The level of under-representation raised questions about recruitment practices. One participant pointed out that ethnic minorities are employed in significantly higher numbers in security occupations, which was seen as a comparable job.

In view of feedback received from community consultations, we decided to focus our engagement process on recruitment issues in order to then raise a general awareness of the Prison Service. Also, rather than going down the conventional route of holding a conference or seminar we decided to organise an ‘Open Day’ aimed mainly but not exclusively at the BME communities. The ‘Open Day’ would be one of our major engagement tools to develop links with the BME communities.

The purpose of the day would be to highlight the different career opportunities within the prison service. There would be an opportunity to look around the establishment and to speak with staff about their roles and responsibilities. This would also be an ideal opportunity to talk about the different types of prisons, the general work of the establishment HMP Kirkham and the prisons service in general. All delegates would be given detailed packs containing information on the above.

A dress rehearsal was undertaken by Arooj members to ensure that they were comfortable with the format and content of the ‘Open Day’ and any difficulties be addressed before the actual event.
**Target Audience**

Black and Minority Ethnic groups commonly experience poorer access to employment, poorer working environments, fewer training opportunities, less likelihood of promotion and under-representation in the workforce, especially in senior management positions.

Services are not delivered equitably to minority groups, delivery may be less favourable, and the experience of receiving the service poorer. Usually, the problem is one of under-representation among recipients; however, sometimes groups are over-represented in services, as is the case within the criminal justice system.

Services and employment strategies have an imbalance to redress. This is not about treating everybody in the same way, but about acting to address evident disadvantage and diverse needs – levelling the playing field.

In view of the issues related to the over-representation within the prison population and their under-representation amongst the workforce, it was decided that the initial target group would be the BME communities. In October 2007 the BME prison population of HMP Kirkham was above 12% as stated in the Community Engagement Strategy. We have included the following demographic data for Lancashire:

- Lancashire as a whole has a low BME population and a higher percentage of people from a white ethnic background (94.7%) than is the average for the whole of England (91.3%). At the sub-Lancashire level, eight of the 14 local authorities record very small percentages on non-white populations, and it is only in Preston and five of the East Lancashire districts where there is a noticeable combined percentage of people in the non-white group.

- A number of wards in Lancashire have high proportions of ethnic minorities. In broad terms local ethnic minority populations are highest in wards in Preston, Blackburn, Accrington, Nelson and Burnley. In comparison, the Fylde coast, Lancaster, Morecambe and the West Lancashire area contain relatively small percentages of ethnic minorities.

- The most significant BME population in Lancashire (4.1%) is the Asian or Asian British classification with the majority of these declaring themselves as of Pakistani descent. East Lancashire contains the highest proportion of ethnic minorities, representing 11.8% of the total population of the area, whilst in comparison the proportion in North Lancashire is 1.6%. (Source: Census 2001)

Although as a comparison it would have been useful to include data in relation to economic activity amongst the BME communities and their involvement with criminal justice agencies, it has not been possible to collate this information for Lancashire and at sub-regional level. It is however, well documented that the employment rates for BME communities at a national level, particularly amongst the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities are considerably lower in comparison to the indigenous ‘white’ communities.
It has been stated in a recent report 'Less Equal than Others – ethnic minorities and the criminal justice system' by the Race for Justice coalition (November 2008), that “BME groups account for 26% of the prison population, even though they constitute only 8% of the overall population in England and Wales. Similar patterns of disproportionality are apparent at all stages of the criminal justice process. Statistics and research verify that black people are seven times more likely (and Asian people twice as likely) as white people to be stopped and searched. People from BME groups are also more likely than their white counterparts to be arrested, less likely to be cautioned, more likely to be prosecuted, less likely to get bail and more likely to receive longer prison sentences for similar offences. For BME groups caught up in the CJS, this reality exacerbates their economic vulnerability and further contributes to their social marginalization”.

Aims of the Open Day

The purpose of hosting an Open Day at HMP Kirkham was to:

- To raise awareness, particularly amongst the BME communities of the different types of employment and career progression opportunities within the prison service.
- To enable the local communities to gain a better understanding of how a prison operates.
- To use the Open Day to engage the local communities to build a positive image of the establishment.

Role of HMP Kirkham:

1. To host the event and provide suitable venues within the establishment.
2. To involve Senior Management in welcoming the guests.
3. To provide Packs that contain information on the following:
   - (a) What is an Open Prison and how does it differ from other category Prisons.
   - (b) Roles of Operational Staff i.e., Prison Officers
   - (c) Roles and responsibilities of non-operational staff i.e., Finance, HR, etc.
   - (d) Career Progression.
4. To provide and involve staff for clarification and discussion purposes with delegates.
5. To arrange a tour of the establishment – within security parameters (as per discussions with Arooj).
6. To provide refreshments and Lunch together with prayer facilities.

Role of Arooj:

1. To design publicity material relating to the event.
2. To arrange for the promotion and publicity of the event within the BME communities via Arooj networks (including engagement with sections of the BME media).
3. To aim for a maximum of 50 delegates to attend the event.
4. To ensure that all delegates are made aware of and adhere to the relevant security issues as requested by HMP Kirkham.
5. To provide a list of all delegates expressing an interest in attending the Open Day one week prior to the event.
6. To make necessary arrangements for those requiring transport and to ensure that HMP Kirkham are made aware of any issues related to disability and/or access.
7. To provide Arooj members on the day to accompany the delegates and to support the event.
8. To compile a report detailing the background, development and planning of the event, including an evaluation and recommendations for further development.
10. To develop a database of those individuals or organisations expressing an interest in attending the event and who may subsequently be interested in either joining or working in partnership with HMP Kirkham.
11. To utilise the database for the distribution of information in relation to vacancies and general information within either HMP Kirkham and/or the prison service.

The Open Day - Programme

9:30 - 10:00  Registration

10:00 - 10:10  Welcome & Introductions -
John Hewitson Governor HMP Kirkham

10:10 – 10:20  REAG - Flo Herbert

10:20 – 10:25  Arooj - Amer Bokhari

10:25 – 10:30  RESPECT -

10:30 - 12:00  Morning tour begins.

12.00 - 13:00  Buffet Lunch & Networking

13:00 - 14:30  Afternoon tour begins

14:30 – 15:15  Refreshments - Meet & greet and Governor’s closing remarks.
Organisers closing remarks – Amer Bokhari
Yousuf Motala – Chair Arooj NW

15:15  Close

Due to operational logistics with the numbers involved, delegates were divided into 2 groups for both the morning and afternoon tours to various departments within the Prison.
Summary - The Open Day – Thursday 13th November 2008

HMP Kirkham hosted the Open Day event in partnership with Arooj and was held on Thursday 13th November 2008. There were more than 40 people attending from all over Lancashire with a good cross section of the communities in terms of age, gender and ethnicity.

The Open Day was a huge success with all of the 50 allocated places being booked in advance. A total of 65 persons had expressed an interest in attending. This was due to extensive promotional work that was carried out by Arooj, including the use of BME Media and community networks. There were logistical issues, such as transport and timing of the event that hindered the attendance on the day as a few people were left behind, due to not being at the designated meeting place at the agreed time. These were mainly from the East Lancashire area.

We believe that the ‘Open Day’ was a unique event as it was the first time that a prison had opened its doors to members of the general public, with an opportunity to look around the establishment. There was a great deal of planning and co-ordination involved in organising the event. The task was made easier by working very closely with community contacts and organisations that drew on skills and resources such as promotion of the event by word of mouth and arranging a Mini-Bus and allocated timings in order to pick people up from different locations.

Evaluation of the Open Day

Each delegate who attended the Open Day was requested to complete a Evaluation Form in order for Arooj to gauge the level of interest in the event and also to identify areas of concern.

The results are as follows for the first part of the evaluation (based on the return of 3 Evaluation Forms):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate the following questions</th>
<th>(1 Very Poor – 5 Excellent)</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Were the objectives of the event clearly defined?</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 How appropriate was the level/pace of the event?</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 How would you rate: The delivery materials</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 The Handouts</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Duration of the event</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Opportunity to participate</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Your understanding of the content</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 The refreshments/buffet</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Overall organisation of the event</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The evaluation form also looked at 3 other key questions that are always paramount in making any event a success or failure, these questions are:

What did you enjoy about the event?

What was the least useful part of the event for you and why?

Did the event meet your expectations?

The responses to these questions were as follows:

1. What did you enjoy about the event?

“A well-organised and informative event”

“The fact that it was held within a Prison, and the ability to ask questions and advice from Prison staff”

“It was very information and gave an excellent insight to professional opportunities within the service”

“The food and meeting prisoners”

“I enjoyed meeting new people and talking to the prisoners and the prison guards about the role of a guard”

“The opportunity to visit a Prison and communicate with both the prisoners and the Officers”

“To gain an understanding of the different positions”

“Learning more about career objectives in Police and Prison Officer – meeting officers and prisoners”

2. What was the least useful part of the event for you and why?

“Rain”

“The food no desert”

“The rain, it made my hair go curly”
3. Did the event meet your expectations?

Everyone who attended the event unanimously agreed that the event met their expectations, in fact, the majority of the delegates actually said that the event was way above what they expected it to be.

Lessons to be learnt

The Open Day as a whole was a success, however there have been certain minor issues that have been highlighted during the course of organising the event that need to be raised.

These concerns are treated as a learning curve in order to develop the work done even further.

The issues are:

1. The changing of the date of the Open Day on several occasions caused some members of the public to lose interest, as it was initially scheduled for July 2008 and then the dates were moved on 2 further occasions. Arooj had already done a considerable amount of initial Community Engagement work to raise the profile of the Open Day.

2. Timing of further event needs to be looked at as it caused an issue for people travelling from the East of the county. A 09.30am start was difficult due to traffic issues and logistically getting people to meeting points where the mini-bus was picking up from. As a result of this Arooj lost a few people on the day, who were very keen to attend the event.

3. Thursday 13th November 2008, was a cold and wet day and as with any event regardless of the weather conditions it is always nice to have tea and coffee at the Registration. Unfortunately on this occasion none was provided and the delegates felt a bit disillusioned as the beginning of the event seemed too clinical. Comments received as delegates walked in where to the effect that it seemed as they were “entering prison for real.”

4. Due to staff unavailability, the marketing of the event from a Prison perspective could have been improved further, as opportunities were lost to engage with the local Radio Stations that were on air during the month of Ramadan.
The Way Forward

The Open Day event can be summed as a huge success and an important milestone being achieved with regards to engaging with the BME communities in Lancashire. It has been heralded as success with regards to partnership working between 3 very distinctive partners that is Arooj, Lifeline and HMP Kirkham. Each partner organisation played a vital role in making the event a success; however after achieving this it is important to look at how we can utilise the links built to further promote the work of organisations like HMP Kirkham within the local communities.

The recommendations are:

1. To devise a database of all the delegates who attended the Open Day (also to include those who had expressed an initial interest but were unable to do so at the last minute), in order to monitor their progression into Public Services and also to keep them informed of future developments.

2. To maintain regular contact with the delegates who attended the event and make them aware of what is happening within the Prisons with regards to Vacancies, forthcoming events and issues that effect then as members of the public.

3. To raise awareness of the Open Day that took place and gauge the perception of the local communities as to how they feel events like this could broaden their horizons in respect of career opportunities.

4. To engage with community groups to hold surgeries so the work of HMP Kirkham can be highlighted within a community environment.

5. To organise workshops and seminars in order to seek out the right calibre of people to join the Prison Service.

6. To assist the Training and Development Unit at HMP Kirkham to organise events within the community that will allow their staff to better understand how the local communities function in their own surrounding.

Acknowledgement and Thanks

The event would not have been possible without the support provided by Arooj members, colleagues and the following individuals and organisations:

HMP Kirkham – Senior Management and Staff
Keith Owen – Lifeline Project
Tariq Mahmood – Lifeline Project
Mashuq Hussain – Marsden Heights Community College
Babar Ali & Mohammed Arshad – Lancashire County Council – Youth Service – Pendle District
Shoaib Khan – Asian Image
Appendices
 Profiles of Partners Involved in the Open Day Initiative.

Lifeline Project

Lifeline Project Ltd is a charitable organisation working in a range of settings to help people who use drugs and to help the families of those who use drugs. Since its foundation in 1971 Lifeline has grown and developed in response to the ever-increasing problems associated with drug use faced by individuals, families and communities. Lifeline’s purpose is to relieve poverty, sickness and distress among those persons affected by addiction to drugs of any kind, and to educate the public on matters relating to drug misuse. The principle activities of Lifeline are to assist persons and their families and dependents affected by the misuse of drugs and to provide a training and advisory service to persons and organisations who deal with the misuse of drugs and sexually transmitted diseases.

There is clear recognition over many years that there is widespread inequality in the drug treatment sector. There are also clearly differential impacts in terms of access to and delivery of drug treatment for different groups. Models of Care (National Treatment Agency) and other key documents highlight the need to recognise the different needs of certain groups of service users, including young people, women and Black and minority ethnic (BME) groups. There is a gap in the provision of services for BME drug users generally both internally and externally.

Lifeline is committed to action to ensure equal access to relevant and appropriate drug treatment services for the whole population; the eradication of unlawful discrimination and the promotion of equal opportunities with respect to ethnicity, age, culture, gender, sexuality, mental ability, mental health, geographical location, offending background, physical ability, political beliefs, religion, health or status or any other specific factors which result in discrimination.

Lifeline provides a wide range of community based services in Lancashire, Greater Manchester, the North East, West Yorkshire and the South that includes day care programmes; detoxification in the community; prescribing services; specialist young persons services; and services for parents and carers. For further details about the breadth of our work please refer to the latest Annual Report, available on line at http://www.lifeline.org.uk.

All of Lifeline’s work is informed by extensive research and this research also informs the development and production of our innovative range of publications.

Lifeline has been involved in the delivery of drug services in prison for many years. Lifeline has delivered CARAT (Care Assessment Referral Advice Through care) services in prison since their inception in 1999. Lifeline employs over 150 CARATs workers in 26 prisons across the North West, Yorkshire & Humberside and the North East. Many of Lifeline’s prison staff work alongside specialist Prison Officers, in a number of prisons, to deliver the CARATs service. Lifeline Team Leaders and Managers work closely with Prison Officers, Prison Service senior managers; Governors and Area Drug Coordinators to ensure that all those prisoners requiring treatment, care and support access a range of innovative and effective drug services whilst in custody. It is our shared view that CARATs provides the foundation of the HM Prison Service drug treatment framework and offers a consistent means of working with prisoners with drug problems.
HMP Kirkham

Kirkham is a category D training prison occupying the site of a former RAF technical training centre. The facility was taken over by the Home Office in the early 1960's and has been in use as a prison since 1962. With few exceptions the infrastructure and services, together with the buildings, are of World War II vintage, though prisoner accommodation is relatively new.

In June 2006 it was announced that Kirkham was one of the two prisons awarded most improved prison for 2005/06. The pace of change at the prison remains healthy and our move towards improving resettlement opportunities for offenders is progressing well.

**Operational capacity:** 590 as of 5th August 2008

**Reception criteria:** Normal reception arrangements. Kirkham is a category D prison and accepts all suitable prisoners who fit Kirkham's criteria (all are category D prisoners who can reasonably be trusted to serve their sentence in open conditions).

**Accommodation:** A new block was built and opened in January 2004 to house up to 39 offenders sentenced to Intermittent Custody. This innovative approach allowed offenders in employment to remain so, and the unemployed to maintain family contact while acquiring training and skills to become employable.

In 2007 it was decided that the Intermittent Custody Programme would be closed. The new unit was then re-rolled as a Next Steps Centre.

This houses offenders who are life sentenced and long-term prisoners. These offenders all work in the community in a wide range of employment. They receive a wage from the employer 40% of which must go into a savings scheme for the individuals release. The offenders are encouraged to experience independent living whilst in custody in that they purchase and prepare their own food stuffs and undertake all domestic chores i.e. laundry, cleaning etc. The objective is the achievement of coping skills and self-sufficiency in preparation for release.

**Kirkham Enterprises - Garden Enterprises**

The Kirkham Estate totals an area of 180 acres, of which the vast majority is made up of agricultural and horticultural land. This land is all farmed in such a way that meets all the cross compliance regulations and good agricultural and environmental conditions. The department is currently staffed with experienced craftsmen and employs in excess of 100 prisoners.

Over 65 acres of this land is farmed on a commercial basis, including 50 acres of grassland for our livestock and a 10-acre vegetable plot producing a variety of crops such as calabrese, cauliflower, swede, onions, leeks, carrots and potatoes. Tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, chillies, lettuce, and aubergines are also harvested from our 5 acres of protected cropping. These crops are then used for the prison kitchen and sold in our farm shop with all surplus supplies making their way out into the local wholesale market.
A 25-acre conservation area, which is of local biodiversity significance, is managed in such a way to encourage as much wildlife as possible. Curlew, lapwings, and oystercatchers nest in the spring.

In conjunction with the conservation projects we have a herd of rare-breed Longhorn suckler cattle. These animals are looked after by the longer term prisoners and they do have a very positive effect on their behaviour, confidence and sense of responsibility. Our cattle are shown each year by the prisoners at The Royal, Royal Lancs., and Garstang shows. A number of our stock are sold each year at the Melton Mowbray annual rare breed show and sale. The traditionally reared beef can be purchased through our farm shop.

The amenity areas around the camp comprise of over 40 acres of ornamental gardens that are of very high standard and which are maintained for the benefit of both staff and prisoners. Each year we put ourselves forward for the Windlesham Trophy, a competition that puts us up against every other prison in the country and in recent years have twice made it through to the last four.

The waste management unit has recently been set up and recycles around fifty percent of the waste created by the prison, including cardboard, plastic, tin, glass, paper, metal, wood and clothing. This unit plays a major part in ensuring our prison sustainable development and biodiversity action plan is achieved and ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems maintained.

Kirkham's Shop

Our farm shop offers for sale a large variety of home grown produce, annual bedding plants, shrubs and many seasonal items such as Christmas trees, again grown here at Kirkham. We also have our own range of garden furniture, wooden buildings and garden accessories.

Woodwork Enterprises

Kirkham Enterprises is probably best known locally for its timber workshop. With a reputation for innovation within the Prison Service, Kirkham produces a range of high quality Iroko garden furniture. Garden furniture is only a small part of the range of timber products manufactured at Kirkham. Our timber-grading workshop is accredited to British Standard ISO 9002.

Laundry Enterprises

Kirkham Laundry started washing for private customers in 1995. The laundry washes over 16,000 items a week and caters for a wide range of washing, specialising in flat bed work (namely table and bed linen).

Multi Skills Enterprises

The Multi-skills workshop is a relatively new venture for Kirkham, taking on work from various businesses. The work is mainly assembling, unpacking, re-packaging and labelling of customers own materials or products and is proving to be very successful in its first years.
For Further Information about the Arooj Open Day or any other initiatives, please contact:-

Amer Bokhari
Development Manager
Arooj North West
Email: aroojnw@hotmail.co.uk
Tel: 07968 005575.