



## OBAC NEWSLETTER

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SPRING EDITION

July - October 2004

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Welcome to OBAC Newsletter latest edition. Information and updates on issues, activities local and regional.

### OBAC Annual General Meeting

The next AGM will be held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2004 Time: 1.30 p.m.  
Venue: *St Lukes Church Hall, Chandler Way (off Diamond Street, which is off Southampton Way SE15) (Peckham)*. The theme for this year's AGM is 'Tackling Poverty'. Poverty is one of OBAC's core areas of work and impacts on the lives of black and minority ethnic groups and specifically disabled people. We are inviting speakers to talk on poverty and also on the changing face of British immigration policy. We have are currently sending out invitation letters, booking form and a map of the venue. As usual we will have our annual social immediately after the business of the AGM. For further information please contact the administration team on 020 7735 3400.

### Membership Subscriptions

Again, we would like to inform members that at the last AGM the membership agreed to pay membership subscriptions. We have

sent out letters and membership forms to members to complete and

send their payment to the office. The management committee have agreed a sliding scale for subscriptions which is as follows:

- a) OBAC working members - £10.00
- b) Snr Citizens (Pensioners) - £6.00
- c) Members on low income (benefits) - £3.00
- d) Subscriptions from other organisations - £20.00

OBAC would like to thank members who have paid to their subscriptions. Again we would like to remind members of the benefits of being a paid member of OBAC:

- a) Apply to OBAC's Benevolent Fund
- b) To contribute to the development of OBAC.
- c) Elect and nominate members to d) OBAC's management committee and vote at the agm.

If you wish to discuss this further please contact the office on 020 7735 3400

### Update on OBAC Benevolent Fund

We organised a fundraising event in July. We would like to thank all members who attended and can confirm it was a great evening. The event was to Launch the Benevolent Fund and also organise

a Quiz Night to raise funds for the fund.

We are pleased to inform members that we raised over £350 on the day. A big thank you goes to the following members: Stella Best, Joseph Gay, Jennifer Eshalomi, Dafton Robinson, Patricia McCalla, Yetunde Oyediran, Joyce Williams, Francesca Osibo, Gwendolyn Walters, Isaac Akinbolaja and Phoenix.

It has been hard work ensuring that the fund meets the needs of our members; the management committee conducted a dummy run to ascertain that we are fully prepared for the task. The management committee had the task of assessing and recommending Dummy applications for grants; there was also an understanding why certain applications should be supported and some given a refusal. It was a very interesting training sessions. The first recipients of the grant will be announced in November. Subsequently, applications for the fund will be recommended 6 times a year if funds are available. For further information, please contact Mrs Bintu Barley - Information, Advice & Admin Coordinator. Or Henry Nicholson - Development Coordinator

### **OBAC Training Programmes**

The next registration for OBAC training will be in January 2004. If you are interested to improve your skills and move into work, self-employment, further education and training, please contact the office and talk to Pius Aigbogun - Basic Skills & Guidance Tutor/Coordinator. We are currently seeking additional funding to support the programme, which is funded by the Big Lottery (Community Fund) from the ALG ESF Co-financing, Learning

and Skills Council Central and London Development Agency. You will be informed of any additional funding.

As part of the development of our training programme, OBAC after a series of meetings with Shaw Trust, have developed a joint working agreement in relation to the establishment of a Job Club. The Shaw Trust will staff the Job Club with assistance from the OBAC training team and volunteers. The club will offer assisted job search using the Internet and local and pan London newspapers such as the Evening Standard, the Voice and the South London Press. Initially, the club will be taking place on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday in every month, commencing on the 7<sup>th</sup> December 2004. The club will primarily be targeted at those of our members who are living in the boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark and are actively seeking employment and considered job ready. We also offer this service jointly with Action for Blind People; members from other boroughs have access to. Access to the job club will be facilitated by an initial assessment and interview. If you are interested in accessing the service please contact Henry Nicholson - Development Coordinator on 020 7735 3400 Ext. 22.

We are pleased to announce to members that OBAC is now a qualified accredited training centre for OCR Clait Plus, in addition to OCR New Clait.

### **Community Empowerment Training**

We would like to thank members and service users who attended workshops/seminars on Community Empowerment and Participation. The events were well attended and feedbacks from the activities have indicated that they would want to have more sessions. For members who have not

attended any of the workshops/seminars we would like to inform that the main purpose of the seminars is to raise, increase the awareness and understanding of how to engage and participate within your local area for example a faith group, elderly group, user involvement, consultation meetings and any other information that will increase your understanding of Citizenship, Equality and Culture. Members/service users will be informed of future seminars in due course.

#### **Befriending & Reader Service**

Please contact the office to register your interest for the Befriending and Reader Service. The Befriending Service provides the following:

- Someone to talk
- Someone to read your correspondence and write letters on your behalf
- Information, Advice, Guidance and Advocacy
- Access to information on Health issues/workshops
- We carry out a Risk Assessment at your home
- Meet other blind or partially sighted Africans and Caribbeans who share similar interests through organised activities

OBAC is currently seeking to recruit volunteers for this project, we pay meal and travel allowance to volunteers. If you know anyone interested in volunteering, please call the admin team and ask for an application form.

#### **Access and Legislation**

*Launch of the DWP (Department of Works and Pension) Disability & Carers Service*

The DWP Disability and Carers Service will be officially launched on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2004, as a department in it's own right. It will have responsibility for the administration of disability benefits to disabled people and their carers. However, in saying this it must be noted that the service is being launched with serious budgetary constraints and that there is already talk of rationalisation and job cuts, which in our view has a serious implications for the level of service provision and access.

It is therefore imperative that the OBAC membership is aware of these forthcoming changes and how they may impact on their individual lives. Obviously, with the launch of a new service there will be many teething problems in the initial stages, but it is anticipated that the overall operation will very much proceed as planned. From the OBAC perspective it is important that members are prepared to relate their experiences of accessing the service, in particular with a view to ensuring that the service provision is adequate and is able to in some ways, meet their needs, there are facilities in place for the membership to comment on their experiences of the new service and this can be done either through contacting OBAC, or the DWP on their website for those who have access to the internet, [www.dwp.org.uk](http://www.dwp.org.uk). You can also write to the Director John Sumner at the Disability and Carers Service, Room A314, Warbeck House, Warbeck Hill Road, Blackpool FY2 0YE.

**Directgov**

Directgov is the new all government public website, which aims to provide users with a single point of online access to all government services and information. A disabled people and carers section has been established and can be accessed via their website, [www.direct.gov.uk/disability](http://www.direct.gov.uk/disability). The service is interested in your comments as to how accessible the site is, so we are encouraging all members who have Internet access to visit the site and see how good it is. The site offers information on benefits, rights, 'disability policy', health, employment, education and travel.

### **New TV Guide for People with Sight Difficulty**

The Big TV Guide is making a Big difference to visually impaired people, by helping them to see what is on television and radio. The Big TV Guide is a 36 page weekly television guide published in A3 format, about the same size as a daily tabloid newspaper, but with a 14 point typeface, that is twice the size of standard print found in newspapers or television magazines.

The Big TV Guide provides TV listings for BBC, ITV and Channel 4 and 5, and the Freeview digital channels BBC4, UKTV History and ITV 2, plus Radio 4 and Classic fm. The Big TV Guide also publishes VideoPlus numbers in bold text, to make programming your video easier.

There is a guide to all the 'soaps', a review of forthcoming programmes in 'Must See TV', plus find out what's in the stars for you with Tony Hyland's weekly horoscope, test your knowledge with the Big crossword, and discover more with lifestyle features such as travel, gardening, and food and drink.

One of the attractions of the Big TV Guide is 'Try Before You Buy', where subscribers can claim a free copy without obligation. To obtain a free copy you are invited to call a free phone number – 0800 781 8003 or apply via the Website: [www.bigtvguide.co.uk](http://www.bigtvguide.co.uk)

### **Articles/Events**

**Anglo-Nigerian Welfare Association for the Blind** - The Director, Danlami Basharu is appealing for financial support from Nigerians for the organisation. The organisation produces a newsletter, which will be transcribed and circulated to members. You can contact the Chairman, John Bush 020 8693 9707.

*Are you looking for a holiday? Well Weston Super-mare is the place.*



*How about a spacious, modern two-bedroom apartment, situated within walking distance of the beach, pier and town shopping centre.*

Public transport is just round the corner and very frequent. Week(s) or long/short weekends to suit at an affordable price.

For booking and further details contact Patricia McCalla-MRS Consultancy 01992 711492 or 07944661275

Why not take advantage of advertising your products or services in OBAC Newsletter, for further information contact Bintu Barley - Information, Advice & Admin Coordinator on 020 7735 3400 Ext. 22

### **OBAC NEWSLETTER**

**©Produced & Edited By Editorial Team**

**Ibukun Olashore –Director**

**Henry Nicholson – Development Coordinator**

**Bintu Barley - Information, Advice & Admin Coordinator**



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OBAC exists to ensure blind and partially sighted African and Caribbeans access relevant services, influence decision and policy makers, to enable them to overcome barriers that prevent them becoming active members of the community.

### **Staff Team:**

#### **Management & Administration**

*Ibukun Olashore-Director*

*John Gakpe- Resources Coordinator*

*Bintu Barley-Information Advice Coordinator*

*Grace Foster – Membership Officer*

#### **Volunteers**

*Alfred Bowen*

*Joseph Gay*

*Verna Hill*

*Yinka Yemi-Tijanee*

*Thomas Abraham*

*Frances Anthony*

*Diella Uka*

#### **Supported Services**

*Henry Nicholson – Development Coordinator*

*Amal Jama –Befriending Coordinator*

*Francisca Akanya – Support Service Worker*

#### **Training**

*Pius Aigbogun – Basic Skills &*

*Guidance Tutor*

*Petrit Jaka – Key Skills Tutor*

**Office hours 9.30 am – 5.30 pm**

### **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

Should any member/user wish to make a complaint concerning any aspect of the organisation work, she/he should approach a member of staff. If the complainant remains unsatisfied the matter should be raised with the Director. Or if this is not appropriate she/he may raise this matter with the Chair of the Management Committee. A full copy of the Complaints Procedure can be obtained from OBAC.

OBAC is funded by Association of London Government, Community Fund, European Social Fund, London Borough Southwark, London Borough Lambeth, Dept of Works and Pension, Dept of Health Section 64, South East London Foundation and other charitable Trusts.