



Issue 12

June 2009

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## Matched, Munched, Mingled! Brent Volunteer Centre celebrates

The start of Volunteers' Week saw over one hundred people coming to Chalkhill Community Centre to celebrate local volunteering. The "Match, Munch, Mingle!" event brought together current volunteers and would-be volunteers, and local organisations.



18 potential volunteers took part in "speed volunteering", which operates in a similar way to speed dating. The volunteers chatted to 12 organisations about their volunteer opportunities; a total of 162 introductions took place during the afternoon!

Stephanie (Elders Voice), Martha, Oxana and Maria (Brent Mind) and Sabrina (Loud and Clear) talked about their own experiences as volunteers. Local organisations also contributed to a large "thank you" wall, with pictures and quotes about local volunteers' achievements. The thank you wall will now go on display at BrAVA's office in Willesden.

The event also marked Brent Volunteer Centre's 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday. Brent Volunteer Centre's next big event will take place in November; more details will be available nearer the time.

**Contact Us**

- T. 020 8438 1520

- Brent Volunteer  
Centre,

3rd Floor ,

144-150 High Road,  
Willesden, NW10

2PT

- [volunteering@  
brava.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@brava.org.uk)

## Strength in Numbers' Sexual Health Awareness Training an Eye Opener!

# STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

On May 6-8<sup>th</sup>, 14 local young people attended 9 hours of training in Sexual Health Awareness. The training was provided by Community Health Action Trust (CHAT) at Moran House on Willesden High Road.

The participants learned about HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections, and the devastating consequences unsafe sex can have. The photos and images shown at the training were a real eye opener, and the young people had plenty of lively discussions about this hot topic!

The training was organised by the young volunteers of Strength in Numbers, who hope to take their learning forward and present what they learned to other local young people!

Do you know of any groups of young people who may benefit from such a presentation? Please contact Elizabeth Nash, Youth Volunteer Worker, on 0208 438 1528 for more information!

If you have any questions or concerns regarding sexual health, HIV/AIDS, and getting tested, please call CHAT on 020 8830 3392.

## Become a sports official



In the run up to the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic games we are looking to train people to become sports officials.

Plus... you could get financial support towards these training courses in a variety of sports.

- Over 16
- Live in London?
- Interested?

Visit [www.officialsports.org](http://www.officialsports.org)

Email [admin@officialsports.org](mailto:admin@officialsports.org)

Or call 020 7749 9173

Drop in voluntary advisory service at the Brent Volunteer Centre with Jack Mosse.

No need to make an appointment!!

Find out where you can volunteer!!

Anytime between 2pm-5pm on Friday 3rd July  
at :

3rd Floor, High Road, Willesden NW10 2PT

## Young People's Tea with Dawn Butler MP



At Strength in Numbers' Back to the Roots Pride Pageant held during Black History Month 2008, Richus Dominique and Tanielle Gardner were crowned Mr. and Ms. Brent in the talent competition. One of their prizes was a trip to the Houses of Parliament to have tea with Dawn Butler MP. What follows is Mr. Brent's account of this fantastic experience, which took place in March:

Richus- When I was actually invited to the Houses of Parliament, I was shocked at my luck but to meet Dawn Butler as well? *Jheeze!* I was feeling to buy a lottery ticket.

The place was HUGE. Now when I say HUGE I don't mean like Westfield huge, I mean Optimus Prime's back garden huge. Yes, that's huge. The walls were all covered in ornate designs with loads of statues of dead people who you know did something significant. And my goodness they had one massive chandelier – I'm getting one for my house later still.

Then we were taken through some more beautifully decorated halls into one very posh little tea shop/café area, where I began to feel

*really* underdressed in my Fila trainers and Primark top (we all know Primark is high class but it doesn't hold a candle to 10 Armani suits in one room). I imagined Dawn Butler MP to be one of those stern, upper-higher-ultra-class people wearing a sharp cut Prada suit with a handkerchief popping out, a grey curly wig that looked unbelievably itchy and a stare that would turn milk sour. Then, exactly that person walked in... and Dawn Butler was behind him.

When I tell you this woman was cool, this woman was KOOL'N'DA GANG. Everyone in the place had suits on but Dawn just had a shirt and trousers and a relaxed face. She stood out for all the right reasons.

Dawn made us feel very welcome as she asked us about me and Tanielle's (Ms Brent's) lives as we sipped on Parliament's finest hot chocolate and sandwiches - trust me them hot chocolates and sandwiches were BANGIN'. And so after our great conversation, we went off to take a couple pictures (which we were not allowed to do, but Dawn made it all bless) and we left to take the train and possibly proclaim to everyone on our carriage that we just met the coolest MP in Parliament when – "which way you heading?" Dawn asked us. We told her, and she said "Come on in, I'm going that way too." So basically Dawn Butler and her equally cool chauffeur, 'Manny', gave us a lift home where we got to talk a bit more to this fascinating lady.

Turns out she comes from a musical family, and so Dawn made us give her a little example of the damage Mr and Ms Brent can buss on a microphone. Tanielle dropped a STUNNING rendition of 'No-One' by Alicia Keys and a lil somethin' somethin' she made herself, which nearly brought a tear to my eye, swear down. I gave a verse of one track I've been working on for my CD out by the end of this year holla at [www.myspace.com/seriouspotential](http://www.myspace.com/seriouspotential) for further details - I MEAN erm, yeah a verse of one track I've been working on, and gave her a chance to listen to one of my best beats on mp3. She was impressed, but of course this stuff is natural for us Brent-ians you know. Then we both got dropped off in front of our homes (Ms Brent calling Dawn to meet her mother and son of course) to tell this tale to you today.

If I could sum up the 'Dawn Butler Experience' into one word, I think it would be "EH???" as it was not what I expected at all – I was pleasantly surprised. Dawn Butler is a kind, calm individual, who really cares for her constituents and is easy to talk to. All MPs should take a note from her and 'modern up' that stale politics look. It was a truly great experience, and one I hope to happen again in the future.

By Richus Dominique, a young person from Brent

# Volunteer Opportunities

## Check out this month's latest opportunities!

To find out more about these opportunities and others, you can contact the Brent Volunteer Centre on 0208 4381520 or email [volunteering@brava.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@brava.org.uk)

### ESOL-IT Tutor

**What?** The aim is to get a group of women prepared for ESOL/IT qualification according to National Curriculum

**Who for?** Ethnic Minority Foundation

**When?** Tuesday and Wednesday mornings and afternoons

**You need:** Ideally you should be female. You need to be a fully qualified ESOL/IT teacher

### Irish Elders Support Volunteer

**What?** Assist the Irish Elders worker to run support groups for customers. The role involves preparing the room, serving tea and coffee and organizing games

**Who for?** CHC

**When?** Thursday and Friday afternoons and evenings

**You need:** Good people skills and the ability to work with a wide range of people. You need to have an understanding of confidentiality.

### Newsletter Administration Assistant

**What?** Assisting monthly newsletter compilation - requests for articles, case studies. Email distribution of newsletters and other office duties

**Who for?** SAMEC Trust

**When?** Office hours from Monday to Thursday—part time

**You need:** To be computer literate - must be able to use Excel, Word and the Internet. Good communication skills are a plus and the ability to work as part of a team.

### Football Players

**What?** The organization is setting up a new team and needs enthusiastic players

**Who for?** London Tigers

**When?** Thursday afternoons

**You need:** Players should be 16-25 years old and based in the Borough of Brent. No formal qualifications or experience is needed

### Gardener

**What?** Maintain the hospital garden by watering and weeding

**Who for?** Northwick Park Hospital

**When?** Any time of the day Monday to Friday

**You need:** To be someone who loves gardening and able to commit time every week to maintain the garden