

4.3 Moulsecoomb Bangladeshi Women's Group

“The training and support from Money in Mind has helped the group with more effective decision making and we feel more confident about how we are spending our money.”

The group: Moulsecoomb Bangladeshi Women's Group is run by women for women and provides social opportunities for Bangladeshi Women, many of whom are Muslim, living in Moulsecoomb. It runs activities such as swimming, yoga and lunches, and an annual day trip which includes children. These activities offer social contact and support and prevent social isolation, particularly as many of the women do not speak much English. There are around 20 members and a management committee of 8.

The situation: Moulsecoomb Bangladeshi Women's Group was receiving external help with their finances, but due to language barriers most of the committee members didn't understand the accounts and were worried that the money was being mis-spent. The Co-ordinator, Mishruna, who is bi-lingual, had already done some book-keeping in the past. She realised that some refresher training would enable her to understand the accounts better and she could then explain the finances to the other committee members in Bengali. So, she went to the Money in Mind project for help.

Support received: Kate from the Resource Centre offered Mishruna an intensive refresher book-keeping session, with on-going support over the following months. Mishruna quickly built her confidence and felt able to do the book-keeping on her own. Because she could understand the financial situation, she was then able to explain the finances to the committee members. She could also explain what funding opportunities were available and what information was needed for the application forms.

Benefits: Moulsecoomb Bangladeshi Women's Group now feels better informed and more secure about its financial situation. The committee members are confident that the accounts are up-to-date, they know how the money has been spent, and how much money there is left in the financial year. So, they are now able to make more effective decisions about how to spend the money, such as whether they can afford to pay travel costs to the swimming pool on one day or two days per week. This new-found confidence also helped them to make an application to Big Lottery Fund 'Awards for All', for funding to support their meetings and activities. The application was successful, and Mishruna believes it was because their accounts were up-to-date and they could fill in the forms in the knowledge that the figures were accurate.