# FROM THE MARGINS TO THE CENTRE:

Our vision and system working offer to build a more cohesive Britain



By Gillian Kirkman Strategy Lead
The Flowhesion Foundation

**Empowering Minority Communities** 

Promoting Social Responsibility

Tackling Health Inequalities

**Enabling Systems Thinking** 













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# Forward by the strategy lead for The Flowhesion Foundation **Gillian Kirkman** Assistant Professor of Social work at The University of Bradford



I'm delighted to present to you our vision and system working offer to build a more cohesive Britain. We are seeing an unnecessary and extending widening of the gap in Britain between those who have and those who have not a lack of Cohesion has multi-faceted, multi-layered dynamics. Residential and institutional segregation and current political ideologies contribute to tensions; misunderstandings and conflict within communities also play a part. Building greater community cohesion, integration and understanding empowers local people and builds respect, enabling safer and vibrant neighbourhoods to exist. As an academic and researcher, I strongly feel that community is about shared visions, a recognition that those within a community should be celebrated for their difference, acknowledging that

all voices matter, that strengths need to be recognised and harnessed whilst problems need addressing together. We have a responsibility as a neighbour, as a community member to invest time, energy and resources into the communities the next generation and we live in.

Imagine living in a place where people embraced change, where difference was celebrated and not viewed suspiciously, where you didn't feel threatened by others, newcomers were welcomed and people built upon the many things that as human beings we have in common. How great would that be? It takes a community to come together and work to achieve it and here at Flowhesion we are rolling our sleeves up in our commitment to achieve it.

# Forward by the Executive Director of the Flowhesion Foundation Imam Abdul Hafeez Siddique



The Foundation is pleased to present its offer to work with the statutory and third sector in its pursuit of delivering high quality, cost effective, community-facing interventions. At the time of writing 5 local authorities have effectively 'declared bankruptcy', one being the largest in Europe, the majority of council's have lost as much as 50% central government funding in the past decade. This has inevitably led to many life line community services being reduced or cut altogether. It is now more important than ever for community and charity organisations to step-in and fill this void.

At Flowhesion I have long understood that such an uncertain fiscal landscape demands a re-imagining, re-tooling and re-aligning of our values and

resources. We are a trailblazing community organisation; I have always been open to working creatively and resourcefully with our partners to realise the potential of minority communities. That's why systems working is an important part of our delivery principals.

Investing In the third sector creates stronger, resilient and prosperous communities. In the long term it puts less pressure on statutory resources. Think of investing in vibrant youth programmes that give hope, role models and opportunity to our young people. In the long-term it places less pressure on police, the judiciary, prison and probation. Similarly, investing in community health hubs for our elderly where they can take part in a range of health activities and socialise in the long-term puts less pressure on our NHS. I have seen over the years hundreds of young people and adults proactively taking part and volunteering on our many initiatives. I have seen how statutory and third sector Investment in our grass-roots community programmes have brought those at the margins of their communities to the Centre, those who felt disenfranchised to become empowered. It starts with community and the 'The Flowhesion way' continues to engage, encourage and empower thousands of community members. I hope that we can continue this momentum for the decade ahead.







































































# Who we are, what we're about...

The Flowhesion Foundation is a charity (CIO: 1175170) established in October 2017 based in Bolton, Greater Manchester. We want everyone to live better, feel better and achieve more. We're about removing barriers amongst and within communities to make this happen.

We are always learning, adapting, optimising and retooling. This allows us to be ready to deliver services in an uncertain financial landscape. We work nationally but hold a strong delivery footprint in the North of England through our network of portfolio managers. We partner with statutory and third sector organisations delivering a range of high quality, cost effective, community facing interventions.

We are committed to systems working. This means that we will work innovatively across and within health, education, welfare, Justice etc to ensure that our joint work creates meaningful change with the communities we serve.



# Specialist Services

Over the past decade the demand for mentoring, counselling and probation work has soared. For this reason, we have appointed staff to lead on these specific strands. Under the Flowhesion umbrella we aim to ensure that these services are well resourced, staffed and sustained.

# Umeed Counselling

The Umeed counselling service provides culturally appropriate counselling for bereavement, loss, anxiety, stress and related life issues to south-asian male and female clients. We have a pool of bilingual qualified BACP registered counsellors that work around the needs of our cli-ents. This means sessions are booked over the phone at a time to suit clients with in-person sessions offered upon request. For more information contact:

Aisha Khan Umeed Counselling Hub Co-Ordinator

E: aisha.khan@flowhesionfoundation.org.uk

T: 01204275106 M: 07878989613

## Spark Mentoring

A strength- based 1-1 and group mentoring programme for young people aged 11-17. Using activities, discussion, reflection, and education to bring out the best in young people For more information contact:

Omar Issa Principal Youth Worker

E: omar.issa@flowhesionfoundation.org.uk

T: 01204275106 M: 07305011786

## New Horizons

We work with the National Probation Service approved premises across Greater Manchester that total 8. Approved Premises (APs) are premises approved under Section 13 of the Offender Management Act 2007. They provide intensive supervision for those who present a high or very high risk of serious harm. They are mostly used for people on licence, but they also ac-commodate small numbers of people on bail or community sentences. Approved Premises play a role in monitoring and managing the risk of their residents. They also provide key work-ers and a programme of purposeful activity that is intended to help with reducing re-offending and reintegration into society. The Programme offers advocacy, counselling, buddying, setting up bank accounts, support at key meetings for residents. For more information contact:

Imam Shoaib Vaka New Horizons Programme Manager

E: Shoaib.vaka@flowhesionfoundation.org.uk

T: 01204275106 M: 07735658827



A FLOWHESION SERVICE



# What we have done so far: 2017-2024 in Numbers













Consultancy

We have taken part in over 1,504 hours of consulting with our local, regional and national partners.































## TRAINING

We have delivered over 295 bespoke workshops to 5,221 participants from across 48 Local Authorities.

healthwatch

















































26 research projects, 8 of which were in Bolton. We also took part/attended 23 conferences nationally on community cohesion and integration.







Foundation,,















Lancashire County Council













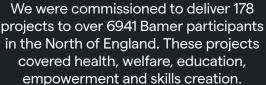
















Age











































# What our clients and commissioners say.



"Robina's communication style & sensitive approach with Females from the South Asian community in North Manchester was highly effective. She created the right environment for service users putting them at ease, asking them to share their barriers to accessing diag-nostic tests".

**Hana Iqbal** Senior Community Care Diagnostics Navigator. Manchester Foundation Trust NHS



"Working with Flowhesion has been an eye-opening journey. Watching them support projects within our most impoverished communities has been nothing short of inspiring. Their commitment to enhancing community projects and bringing tangible, positive changes to those who need it most is a testament to their dedication and heart".

Yusuf Atcha Bolton Council



"I am looking forward to working with Flowhesion Foundation in 2024. I think the partnership will be an impactful one."

Katrina Fletcher Project Co-ordinator: Bolton Together

census 2021 "I continually hear great things about Flowhesion, thank you for providing essential barner support for the 2021 census in Bolton, Rochdale and Salford." Elaine Boyle Census 2021



"Everyone enjoyed the training. It was a good refresher with lots of creative and interactive discussion."

Rebecca Cremin Area Manager, Greater Places Housing





"Abdul delivered an amazing workshop on cultural and religious experiences of UAM's and Trauma to all of our Independent Reviewing Officers here at Portsmouth. Abdul's insightful approach to delivery, theory to practice and quality of toolkits and content were excellent. Hope to see him in March for a follow up session".

Sue Sairobuy IRO Quality Team



"The foundation is delivering a much-needed holistic rehabilitation and re-entry programme in conjunction with Greater Manchester Approved premises, The service is professional and culturally sensitive".

**Geri-Byrne Thompson** Area Manager, NPS



"What an incredibly insightful and inspiring day! I think everyone in the room was challenged in some way to rethink their practice. Thank you."

Matt Clayton Edge of care, Coventry City Council



"Flowhesion have been helping us cascade covid19 messages through videos, community insight and engagement. Great working with a professional organisation."

Nichola Onley Comms and Engagement



"I enjoyed the manner in which the sensitive topic was professionally tackled. I got a better understanding of how to engage with specific communities and how culture and Islam can become intertwined."

Alison Madden Manager Child Sexual Exploitation Team, Lancashire County Council

# Our Approach

# The four pillars demonstrate the outcomes we seek

#### **BUILD**

Community
members proactively
engage in civic
life, contribute
to democratic
structures, are
concerned about
the development
of their area and
progression of local
institutions and the
local economy.

## **BELONG**

Community members
feel part and
parcel of the wider
fabric, culture and
workings of their
town/city. They are
not defined solely
by their ethnic and
religious composition
and focus on
shared interests
and understand
the importance of
integration.

#### **ASPIRE**

Community
members do well
and want to see
others do well. They
work to empower
themselves to
become contributing
members of
society committing
themselves to Life
long learning and to
become self-reliant
in a rapidly advancing
world.

## **VALUE**

Community members understand the importance of treating people equally across all spectrums. Difference is seen as strength, British values, the rule of law and democratic institutions are respected. Debate is seen as central to societal progress.

# Our systems working principals

Accept that, due to funding limitations
Local Authorities and public sector bodies no longer have the financial capacity to deliver community development activities as they once did. In this context aim to deliver high quality, cost effective, innovative community development projects and programmes on their behalf.

Strive to be open, honest and transparent with our partners/ commissioners and held accountable for the work that we do. In our relationship with partners / commissioners see feedback as a positive mechanism that ultimately allows for the improvement of service delivery to the community.

programme delivery incorporates 'The Flowhesion Way'. This means that projects are co-designed and co-produced with communities, trusted local community assets are utilized and staff/volunteers are up-skilled to allow the project to continue in some shape or form after funding ends.



# Our vision and partnership offer to build a more cohesive Britain

Across our four strands of work i.e. programme delivery, training, research and consultancy we realise the strength and potential of true partnership working and are whole-heartedly committed to it. Our vision is to see us work with our partners holistically, sharing expertise and building strong, trusted relationships to ultimately ensure that our efforts develop communities in positive and sustainable ways.

# 01. Our Programme Delivery Offer

In a landscape of public sector cuts and financial uncertainty we understand the importance of pooling resources and finding realistic, sustainable ways of working. For this reason, we are committed to working with our partners and commissioners across the public sector in a manner that ensures meaningful impact, positive empowerment and lasting change to communities across Britain.

## 'The Flowhesion Way' for programme delivery.

We strongly believe that the answer to cohesive communities lay firstly with communities themselves. We will work 'with' communities to achieve goals not 'on' them. Our delivery experience to date tell us that communities have untapped reservoirs of potential, a wealth of experience and know the specific challenges they face. We have also learnt through experience that one size does not fit all. Therefore we will ensure that we co-design and co-produce (where possible) Programme delivery to suit the needs of our participants. Secondly we strongly believe drawing upon local community assets i.e. its people, organisations, facilities and experiences as an essential part of successful project delivery. Therefore we will endeavor to map out these assets and strive to take their expertise and advice on board at programme delivery stage.

Finally, We firmly feel that community development begins and ends with developing and empowering people. Successful programmes can be maintained in some shape or form, further developed after funding expires if people have been up skilled. Therefore we will ensure for every programme we deliver that we develop, up skill staff and volunteers who can in-turn keep programmes running in some manner after funding ends.





# The Flowhesion Way in Practice

#### CASE STUDY 1: WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT WORK

We at the Flowhesion foundation feel it is important that women and children of bamer communities stay socially connected to the outside world whilst keeping fit. We are creating many opportunities for women and children to do this. After a thorough co-design and co-production process a number of projects and programmes were delivered including walks, mindfulness sessions and domestic violence work.

We have monthly walk and talk sessions that are led by qualified counsellors and ramblers. These sessions are for bamer women and children wanting to better their mental and physical health and who may need culturally appropriate provision that is not available in the mainstream.

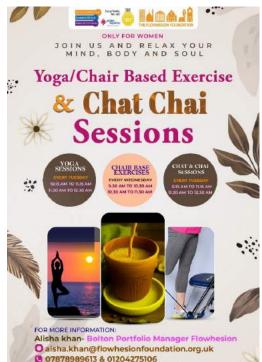
Our mind, body and soul sessions are delivered both online and face to face for females to learn how to manage low level stress and anxiety. We always use local, trusted venues to deliver these sessions. These sessions are delivered by experienced bi-lingual mental health practitioners. The sessions are aimed at South Asian women who are struggling with alienation, exhaustion, burnout and signs of reduced performance. These sessions help them to recognise and manage these emotions as well as creating self-care strategies, harnessing skills and strategies to maintain their wellbeing.

We believe that domestic violence has no place in our society, that's why we have a dedicated DV worker who ran a series of workshops to set people talking and raising awareness around this taboo issue. We also hosted a much-needed mini conference in Bolton. It brought together members of the BME community, professionals, DV survivors and religious leaders to talk, reflect and give guidance on tackling this pertinent social issue. The conference consisted of talks, group discussions and reflections by participants who attended our dv workshop earlier in the year. Our bilingual female dv worker is available to assist and support our communities on DV/DA issues over the course of the year. We have also trained a number of DV/DA champions to raise awareness of the issue.

(A participant of the sessions)

"Important & much needed work with young girls around resilience building."













#### CASE STUDY 2: BOYS AND GIRLS SPORT AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

In consultation with our young people we have co-produced and co-designed a number of culturally appropriate sports activities. Alongside this the Foundation works with a range of partners to provide social enrichment opportunities to ensure that our young people are connected to civic society, understand British Values and are able to contribute to their communities. These activities have included; magazine club, homework club, visits to Houses of Parliament, away days, visit to Manchester United football club and a number of educational establishments.





























#### CASE STUDY 3: OUR WORK WITH NATIONAL PROBATION SERVICE

In 2020 the foundation was asked to deliver services within the National Probation Service. We have a strong team of qualified, experienced prison Imams working on the programme, backed by a strong vision and leadership from the Flowhesion senior management team. The support being delivered includes professional counselling, befriending service, linking with cultural/religious organisations as well as a range of advocacy and representation services.

The Approved Premises programme is supporting residents of Greater Manchester and has received many referrals. We have supported many ex-offenders' rehabilitation and re-entry to communities in order to prepare them for the future. The prison Imams have worked with the ex-offenders in securing their future helping them in matters such as: Housing, education, employment and representing them at their welfare, housing meetings etc. The service was formed to tackle social isolation that ex-offenders were increasingly experiencing due to the covid19 pandemic.











Imam Shoaib Vaka, Flowhesion NHP lead with probation staff.



# 02. Our Training offer

In the community arena skill sets and knowledge bases require constant refreshing. For this reason we pride our-selves on delivering high-quality, bespoke workshops and training for both frontline professionals and the VCSF sector. Our training products can be tailored to meet the needs of your workforce. All training packages are academically reviewed and individually designed by one of our expert associates. We specialize in the delivery of workshops building community cohesion in to practice: strategies for frontline professionals, integration, counter-extremism and more



generally social issues that face South Asian Muslim communities.

These include; Tackling forced marriage, sensitives, toolkits and best practice when engaging with BAME communities. Exploring gangs and youth violence, honour-based violence, drugs and alcohol abuse, culture vs. religion etc.

We also deliver workshops on how to reduce barriers and engage South Asian communities on many complex social issues. Such as Practical approaches to tackling Islamophobia in the public sector and how to deal with difficult conversations: Differentiating Islam, Culture and Extremism (DICE) across the health economy and secure estate.

We are proud of our links to local authorities and delivering comprehensive community cohesion training to frontline professionals. Our Beacon Centre status and award recognises the hardwork front line practitioners do in building bridges and bettering cohesion in their communities.











# 03. Our Research Offer

Remaining research active remains a priority for the Foundation; that is why we established the Flowhesion centre for BAMER research in early 2021. Led by established academics, the centre specializes in researching social issues and phenomena that affect marginalized and vulnerable bamer communities.



We deliver a wide-range of bespoke research pieces with particular interests in South Asian communities, community cohesion, integration, barriers to engaging Bamer groups, on the most pressing of social issues. Our research approach is based upon triangulated methodologies i.e. using qualitative and quantitative research designs to ensure that phenomena are thoroughly investigated and explored.

Having many years of collective academic research experience between them, centre staff thus ensure high quality; outcome focused pieces that push society forward.





#### Healthwatch-2021

We were commissioned by Healthwatch Bolton to interview barner people who have had covid19 bereavement within their families and friends to assert their experiences and level of support they received from services.

#### How we get along?

We held a research seminar in 2021, hosted by centre associates looking at what the largest study of Diversity in the UK meant for community cohesion.



# 04. Our Consultancy Offer

We offer a bespoke consultancy service for the public and third sector. In particular we can advise on issues relating to community cohesion, complex social issues affecting bamer communities and how to engage, hard to reach communities on a range of important issues. With many years of academic and fieldwork experience; Flowhesion associates will be able to offer independent, neutral advice on issues that the public and VCSF sector have to grapple with when engaging with Britain's diverse communities.





#### Contact us:

For more information on any of our strands or to discuss any requirements you may have kindly contact us on via any of the channels below:

#### **Julie Vining**

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Phone: 01204275106 Mobile: 07878989451

Post: The Flowhesion Foundation, All souls, Astley street, Bolton BL18EY