



Annual Report 2008

Iraqi Association

www.iraqiassociation.org

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Company Number
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CONTENTS

Changing Lives for the Better	2
Providing Specialist Service and Support	3
Volunteerism	4
Helping Vulnerable People	5
Providing Settlement Service	6
Providing Information	7
Organising Community Activities	8
Raising Awareness	9
Adding Value Locally	10
IraqChild	11
Service Statistics	12
Financial Statement	13
Independent Auditor's Statement	15
Acknowledgements	16



Noaman Muna
Chairman

Changing Lives for the Better

Since our inception 20 years ago, Iraqi Association has been helping thousands of refugees and vulnerable people to settle and integrate successfully in this country. Our success has been due to the integration of services provision and community social and cultural activities, coupled with the dedication and hard work of the people involved in running the Association.

It has been a challenging time for us to ensure that those who fled persecution will receive the protection they are entitled to. We work in an area that regularly change, and this year was no exception. This uncertainty has not stopped Iraqi Association from continuing to deliver a wide range of specialist services and support to those who seek our help and protection.

In the past year Iraqi Association has continued to offer a range of services – employment guidance, education, training, housing, health, volunteerism, raising community's concern, and provide community projects to cater for the social and cultural need of the community. Almost 18 people a day pass through our office in west London. Others are assisted by telephone and outreach work.

Our charity is a non-sectarian independent organisation; we help all members of the community, regardless of their religious beliefs, gender, race, politics, or ethnic background. Our ongoing daily contact with people seeking protection gives us a unique insight into the issues of their concern, and gives credibility to our work and volunteerism. Iraqi refugees continue to settle down and build new lives. Many have brought valuable skills to our society; others contribute in a variety of ways to the life of the nation.

Let me end, by praising the staff, volunteers and my fellow trustees of the Iraqi Association for their invaluable contribution. I would also like to thank the funders and all the organisations which we work with for all their support.

We have much to do to maintain this country's tradition to offer sanctuary to victims of persecution.



Providing Specialist Service and Support



Jabbar Hasan
Director

We have had a very productive year again, although our achievements have not always come easily. Iraqi Association has successfully come through a period that has been difficult for many refugee community groups. Given the new emphasis on preventing victims of persecution entering the UK and on removals, it has been a difficult year for refugees and those who sought sanctuary at our shores. While changing funding patterns have led many small community groups to flounder.

Iraqi Association is continuing to play a vital role, our charity has managed to adapt to these changing circumstances in a way that matches its commitment to flexibility. In the course of the year, we assisted more than 3700 people using face to face or telephone methods. In addition to that, we have organised user-led workshops, group meetings and seminars, to address the needs and desire of our charity users. The activities were organised with and for our charity users, using their languages and with their full participation, to encourage less dependency and improve their living conditions and assist them with the integration process. The topics we covered were health, education, immigration, creative writing, unfolding events in Iraq, women and children needs and 'Know How' to access services. Over the years, we have built up huge experience and expertise, our charity users feel the benefit of that.

The Feedback in January to March this year showed that 93 per cent of our service users were either very or fairly satisfied with the help they received. Our Quality Mark accreditation and OISC were maintained through good internal procedures and regular monitoring of our work. In 2007/2008 we held 1938 advice sessions and helped clients complete 1400 applications for support. In total, we gave advice to clients in more than 2 languages. We manage and provide two elderly day centres in the London borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, and in Camden. Every week on average, we assist 60 vulnerable elderly people. This year we have strengthen our successful volunteerism, on average we have 9 active volunteers every week. We have set up a project in collaboration with local Primary Care Trust to provide health advice and promotion, targeting vulnerable members of the community. Our telephone advice lines received in excess of 3000 calls.

We regularly published our bimonthly community newsletter of 'Al-Muntada' in two languages, and maintained and updated our website in two languages. Our efforts with media have gained considerable profile in relation to the concerns of our community and domestic relevant policy issues. During the course of the year, we had over 100 media enquiries and interviews with local, national and international media sources. Each encouraging success story motivates us to continue this vital work. Thanks to our funders, supporters, trustees, volunteers and staff.



“ You can actually make a difference for people, and you are valued for who you are. ”

Salma, 21

Volunteerism

Iraqi Association service would not be able to continue without the support of nearly 8 volunteers every week who provide a vital role with our charity's users. Volunteering for Iraqi Association is a rewarding experience on several levels. The skills volunteers bring to the service are crucial to our work, and we provide induction, training and supervision that gives people the confidence to both build upon, and develop new skills. In 2007/08, 28 volunteers completed our placement in the field of administration, outreach work, elderly and youth projects and cultural and social events. One third of the volunteers who left us did so to take up education or paid employment. We feel encouraged by the knowledge that we are helping the community by sending trained and skilled people into the local workforce. We benefit from the skills offered by people of all ages and backgrounds. In the course of the year, we encouraged diversity within our volunteers, which assisted us to strengthen our links with local community and to help us to tailor our services accordingly. This means that we can reach more people, and more people can benefit from our services.

“My name is Eman, I will be forever grateful for the experience of volunteering with elderly day centre of Iraqi Association, as I feel it has helped to bridge the gap between incapacity and paid employment. By volunteering, I feel useful again and it gives me such a sense of achievement. It has helped with re-building my confidence in the workplace, and allowed me to focus on other people. I have made many new friends.”

“I am Basam, I left college recently and joined other volunteers at Iraqi Association, I just want to say that you don't notice a lot of the skills that you develop as you are using them everyday, they become normal.”



“A place, they were in touch with the right contacts who could get things done. They made my life better.”

Rafat, 78

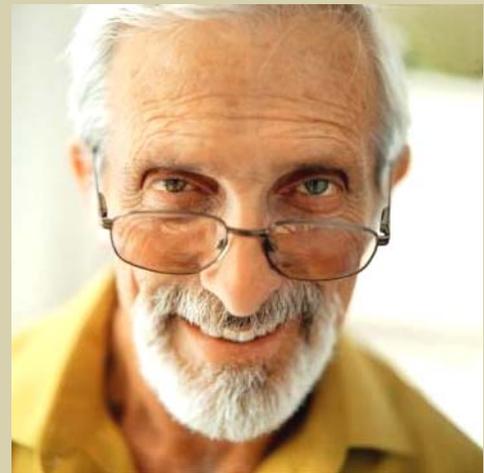
Helping Vulnerable People

In the last 12 months, we have assisted 765 vulnerable and socially excluded people. We have improved quality of life of vulnerable people by focusing on the following activities:

- Provided specialist advice in three languages.
- Organised social activities and social inclusion for vulnerable and older people.
- maximised income and benefits for vulnerable and older people to prevent poverty
- Offered better information in two languages, and coordinated our work across local and national concerned agencies
- Assisted independent living for vulnerable people
- Prevented avoidable injuries among older people
- Improved the employment and training prospects of disabled adults.

We all know that healthy individuals lead longer, happier lives. An active lifestyle broadens horizons and strengthens body and mind - our tailor made physical activities have improved the lives of our community members, particularly those who live alone and have no friends or relatives in this country.

During the course of the year, our elderly day centres in Hammersmith, west London and Camden, north London provided essential services to 65 clients every week. This included 24 sessions on healthy living, 75 sessions on vital advice and guidance, 80 sessions of group exercises, assisting with filling 120 forms, writing 60 letters on behalf of the day centre users, organised 16 outing and visiting 30 elderly clients' homes.





“I was a teacher and fled Iraq because of the war, here my skills were not so useful, but now I am training to be a plumber. Soon I will be able to earn a living and pay taxes like everyone else.”

Nori, 27

Providing Settlement Service

Many of our charity service users are qualified, with skills that this country needs. Others are eager to take up opportunities to study and develop new skills so that they can

“We are grateful for the help that we have been given, but no one wants to live on charity forever. It is a good feeling to be able to give something back at last.”

Akram, 20

support themselves. No-one wants to live on state handouts. Iraqi Association often deals with local, educational institutions, employers and training organisations to provide careers guidance and support to our clients, to secure accreditation of overseas qualifications and ensure that our community members have full access to training opportunities. Last year we helped over 200 individuals to access education and training that will lead to new skills and eventual employment. Iraqi Association provides help and advice to settled community members here and those who have fled war and persecution, now seek safety in Britain. We work independently and in partnership with others to provide support to our new service users from their arrival to settlement and integration into British society. During the course of the year, we dealt with over 3800 requests for advice and support. This includes a wide range of issues including accessing legal services, housing, health, and immigration. We also helped people with more routine tasks such as form-filling, a task made more difficult when English is not a first language. Our Welfare service has provided over 1500 sessions on a range of issues, from filling forms to complex cases including family reunion, homelessness, racial harassment, fuel poverty and relocating to another area. A new client can expect anywhere from one to two hours face-to-face help and guidance depending upon the complexity of the case. We also dealt with over 2500 telephone inquiries. In the last 12 months, we have continued to concentrate on making volunteering at Iraqi association more accessible to all age groups. We have embarked on a major recruitment-drive to fill over 18 voluntary positions ranging from advocacy to administration and home visits. As part of our commitment to continuing improvement in quality of service, we have been trained, assessed and registered by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) and government's Quality Mark scheme.

“ I'm really amazed with your activities and the quality of your newsletter. It is something which made me proud and happy.”
Rafed, 34

Providing Information

One of Iraqi Association's key aims is to help its users and the community integrate into British society. Perhaps one of the most important ways to achieve this is through providing valuable, and community-led accessible information.

Al-Muntada newsletter is produced in two languages by volunteers of Iraqi Association. It reaches more than 4000 names by post, and has 10000 readerships. As a community-led publication, it's both honest and expert in its thought. Last year we have published 6 issues of Al-Muntada.

Iraqi Association website at www.iraqiassociation.org is our main channel of providing information in two languages to the public. In the last 12 months we had an average of 1700 successful visits to our website each month. We also added 200 new email addresses to our e-mail list. We undertook a survey of using online method and found that 80 per cent of the respondents surveyed found our website useful.

Throughout the year our database system was maintained and updated under the Data Protection Act 1998. Iraqi Association has the largest database of Iraqi names.

We promote our services and activities using our database and online methods, coupled with our valuable community networking.



“ I must congratulate you on your most forcefully and convincingly argued point of integration.”
*Best wishes
 Berhane Woldegabriel
 Eritrean Education & Publication Trust*



Organising Community Activities

As part of our commitment to engage members of the community and the public, we have organised a number of key activities to address the needs of the community by delivering a vibrant programme of activities and offering a varied selection of events for different age groups. In the last 12 months, Iraqi Association provided a series of events and activities for families and children, young and elderly people, and local residents. It includes meetings, seminars, networking activities, educational and training workshops, exhibitions and cultural events. Iraqi Association is a user-led organisation, we evolve and develop our activities with and for users of our charity.

“A place with lots going on”

Amal, 18



It is a function where a whole community comes together, not just people who need support in their daily lives. Our activities during the course of the year led to strong, active and inclusive community. We have organised 10 seminars on poetry, history, and social welfare, 5 away-days training on organisational development, 4 workshops on volunteerism, 4 youth-led meetings to facilitate their concerns,

2 exhibitions for local Iraqi artists, 5 networking sessions, 4 sessions on health promotion, 4 cultural events, 4 family and children events, 2 camping trips for young people and facilitate 3 sessions on the needs of families and children locally.

“I found your workshop on accessing local services to be very informative and useful”

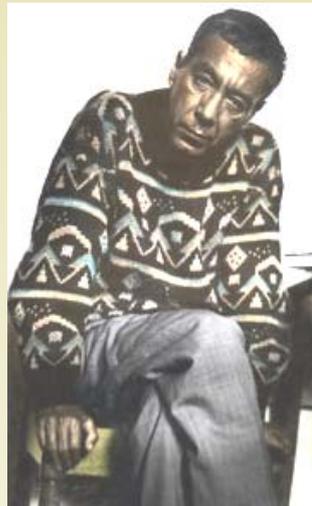
Shareef, 58

“At first glance, the spring scene in the community centre at the end of a cherry blossom-lined street in London could not be more convivial.” *BBC*

Raising Awareness

An important part of our work is promoting positive images of the success of the community and our charity users - both in the media and through public events. During the course of the year we had media inquiries about the unfolding events in Iraq and the plight of Iraqi children refugees fleeing the conflict. We have continued to work closely with the press to get positive, and balanced coverage of issues concerning our community and events in Iraq. We arranged 12 direct media interviews with our charity users. In the last 12 months, we issued 20 press releases, and conducted 15 TV and 8 radio interviews with domestic and International media agencies, and received over 100 media inquiries.

“Iraqi Association claims millions of dollars in oil revenue have been squandered rather than spent on improving infrastructure and welfare.”



From BBC- online
Far from home

On the fifth anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, millions of Iraqis are living in exile.

Maths teacher Khalid Bader (pictured) is among a number of UK-based Iraqi exiles photographed by fellow exile Koutaiba Al-Janabi.

The photographer and filmmaker has published the images in a book, Far from Baghdad, to help record the history of his people.

“Iraqi refugees forced to quit UK or end up destitute”

Ealing Gazette 21.03.2008



“the Iraqi Association, a UK-based charity that promotes the country’s diverse culture...” UK MSN News



“Iraqi Association, is leading the campaign to get more funding for community-based charities doing vital work with refugees in the UK.”

The Independent 27.10. 2007



Last Updated: Thursday, 20 March 2008, 09:21 GMT

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Printable version

UK Iraqis wait for silver lining

By Claire Heald
BBC News

Adding Value Locally



Iraqi Association is making a remarkable difference in the quality of life for its local users in the London borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. This includes, health promotion, educational and training guidance, organising cultural activity, offering volunteerism, build networking, dealing with housing needs, and assisting hard to reach community members locally. We have a significant interest of more that 1200 people locally. Last year we met special needs of our local users by providing activities, and services which were based on needs assessment of local people. During the course of the year, we have developed a three year health trainer project with the local Primary Care Trust. The aim of the project is to promote better health and wellbeing of the Hammersmith & Fulham population, targeting Iraqi and Arab speaking communities. The project deals with health inequalities, reducing smoking, increasing physical activity, encouraging healthy eating, improving oral health, leading healthy lifestyle, tackling obesity and providing effective and quality services. As a non-sectarian independent organisation, we value diversity, and are determined to ensure:

- ✿ that we treat all individuals fairly, with dignity and respect;
- ✿ that the opportunities we provide are open to all;
- ✿ that we provide a safe, supportive and welcoming environment.



IraqChild

Thousands of children lost mothers and fathers to bombs and sectarian shootings. Others fell into poverty after their main family wage-earner was kidnapped or killed. Throughout the year, many schools did not open regularly or overcrowded, local health centres were under-stocked and water supply is becoming a growing challenge. By the end of 2007, the number of Iraqis forced to flee their homes since 2006 reached 1.2 million, 50% of them children. Living with so much anxiety and loss took a heavy toll on children's psychological and social wellbeing. Against this background, Iraqi Association, in consultations with the community and concerned medical staff in Baghdad and Basra, started to develop IraqChild project. The project aims at providing help and assistance to children in Iraq, those who have been affected by war, violence and displacement. It delivers services, with local non-governmental organisation, to children regardless of their religious, gender, political, ethnic or political backgrounds. The project provides services through

- The creation of public awareness of the needs of children in Iraq.
- The establishment of support to provide emergency aid, welfare and medical programmes, and psychosocial treatment sessions.
- The development of children's activities to unite children, and to promote peace with and for children who have been driven apart because of the sectarian divide.

Abandoned to their Fate

Violent attack on childhood is continuing in Iraq. Together we can provide help and protection.

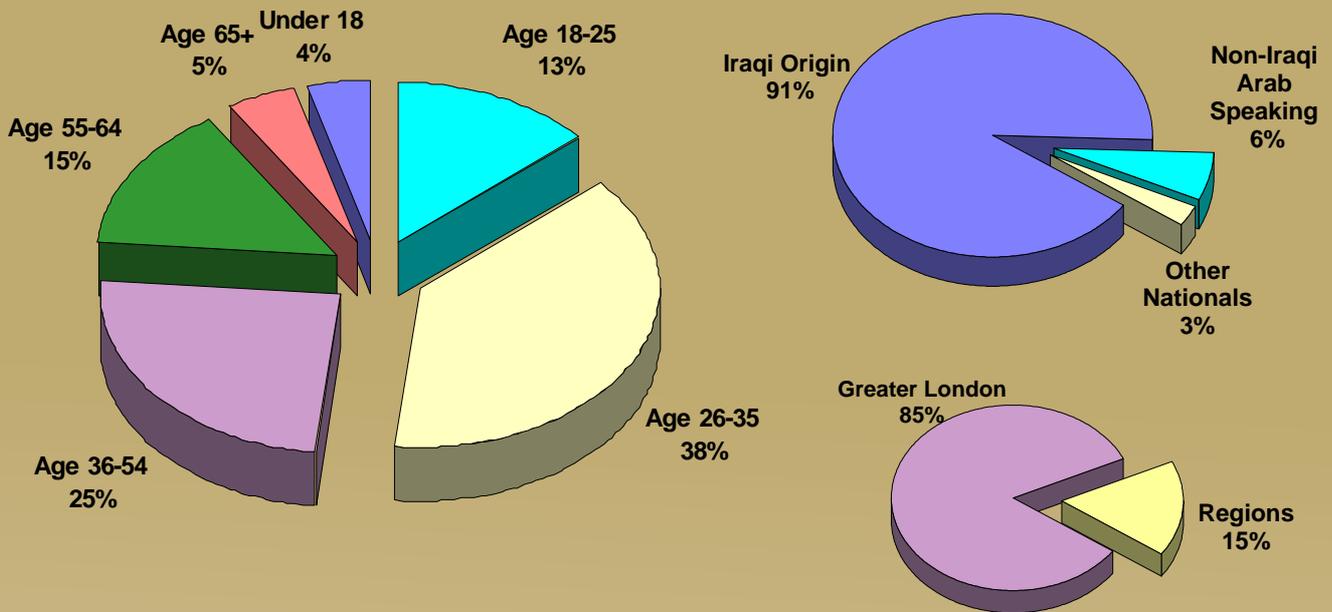
You can donate online www.iraqiassociation.org or post to: IraqChild, Freepost NAT21599 London W6 9BR

Charity no. 110110909



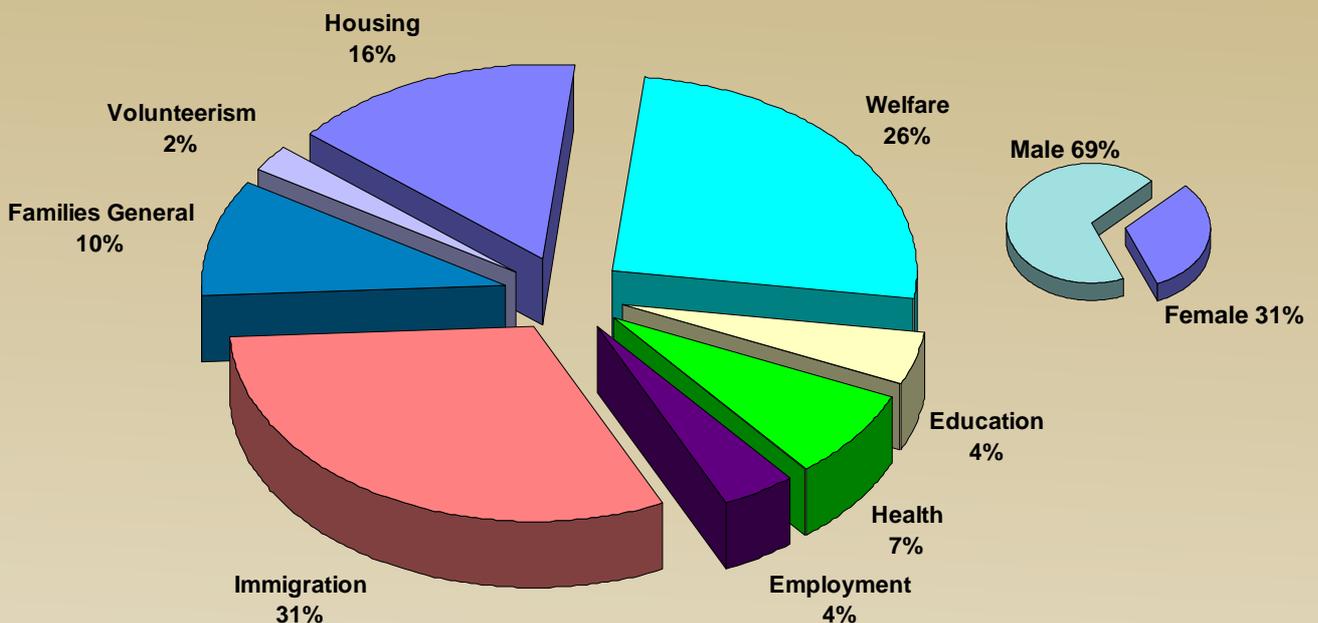
Service Statistics

In the last 12 months, We served more than 5500 people. Iraqi Association received 2,600 new clients, compared with 2,200 in the previous year. The following data represents our charity users and the services which we provided for the period between 01.08.2007- 31.08.2008. This includes methods of face-to-face, telephone, letter writing, online enquiries, workshops, seminars and client-led meetings.



Disable clients represents 9% of our service users, we also referred out 1.5% and received 1% referrals to and from other specialist agencies.

Service Data August 07-August 08



Summarised statement of financial activities

For the Year Ended 31 March 2008

	£	£	2008 £	2007 £
	Restricted Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Total	
Incoming resources				
Grants	102,491	-	102,491	143,206
Membership and donations	-	11,949	11,949	21,107
Iraq child appeal	-	9,731	9,731	-
Bank interest	-	9,697	9,697	8,800
Total incoming resources	102,491	31,377	133,868	173,113
Resources expended				
Direct charitable expenditure				
Activities	83,270	-	83,270	102,327
Support costs	14,802	21,813	36,615	15,542
Communication and publicity	-	23,331	23,331	43,559
Management and administration	-	5,938	5,938	10,464
Total resources expended	98,072	51,082	149,154	171,892
Net income for the year	4,419	(19,705)	(15,286)	1,221
Transfer between funds	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds for the year	4,419	(19,705)	(15,286)	1,221
Funds brought forward	199,836	74,645	274,481	273,260
Funds carried forward	204,255	54,940	259,195	274,481

Balance sheet as at 31 March 2008

	2008 £	2007 £
Fixed assets	3,800	4,655
Current assets		
Debtors	439	9,093
Cash at bank and in hand	261,430	264,865
	261,869	273,958
Creditors - amounts falling due within one year:	(6,474)	(4,132)
Net current assets	255,395	269,826
Net assets	259,195	274,481
Funds		
Restricted funds	204,255	199,836
Unrestricted funds	54,940	74,645
Total funds	259,195	274,481

The summarised financial statements set out on pages 13 to 14 have been extracted from the full annual accounts prepared in accordance with The Companies Act 1985, which were approved by the Board of Trustees on 12 August 2008.

The full annual accounts have been audited and the auditors' opinion was unqualified; and will be delivered to the Registrar of Companies and the Charity Commission.

Noaman Muna, Chairman

Independent auditor's statement

We have audited the financial statement of the Iraqi Community Association (commonly called Iraqi Association). This statement is made solely to the trustees, as a body in accordance with the terms of our engagement. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to the trustees those matters we have agreed to state to them in this statement and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the trustees as a body, for our work, for this statement, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and auditors

The trustees are responsible for preparing the summarised financial statements in accordance with the recommendations of the Charities SORP. Our responsibility is to report to you our opinion on the consistency of the summarised financial statements with the full financial statements and trustees' report. We also read the other information contained in the summarised annual report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the summarised financial statements.

BASIS OF OPINION

We conducted our work in accordance with Bulletin 1999/6 'The auditors' statement on the summary financial statement' issued by the Auditing Practices Board for use in the United Kingdom. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the directors in the preparation of the financial statements, and whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the company's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

Opinion

In our opinion the summarised financial statements are consistent with the full financial statements and the trustees' report of the Iraqi Community Association for the year ended 31 March 2008 and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 1993.

Auditors
CHAPMANS
Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors
3 Coombe Road
London
NW10 0EB

20 July 2008

Acknowledgements

Iraqi Association would like to thank the following funders for their support:

London Councils
The Scarman Trust
Lloyds TSB Foundation
Hammersmith and Fulham PCT
Awards For All
London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
City Bridge Trust
BBC Children in Need
The Taylour Foundation
Age Concern
Sport Relief

We would also like to thank:

- All the individual donors for their generosity;
- All the people who gave up their time for free as Iraqi Association Volunteers;
- All those who participated in sponsored events and school fundraising.



**Iraqi
Association
exists to help
its service
users to
integrate
successfully
and make a
positive
contribution
to this
country.**



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**Charity Number
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المنتدى العراقي