

# One Love Hackney

A WEEK OF CIVIC PRIDE

HIGHLIGHTS OF ONE LOVE HACKNEY  
- A WEEK OF CIVIC PRIDE INCLUDES:  
SUNDAY 9th SEPTEMBER  
11AM - ONE LOVE PEACE WALK - JOIN US AT 11AM AT GILLETTS  
SQUARE AND WALK FOR PEACE TO THE ONE LOVE FESTIVAL AT  
CLISSOLD PARK  
12PM - 6PM - THE ONE LOVE FESTIVAL - MUSIC FROM NATHAN  
NDUBBZ, TINY TEMP, AND MCCLERNON AND AN ARRAY  
OF LOCAL TALENT. MC SHIZZLE, DHOLOVO, UK CHAMP  
PERFORMANCES FROM BOLLYWOOD  
FOR A  
WWW

**Gary Francis**

A life in words & pictures



# Gary Francis

A life in words & pictures

I will miss Gary tremendously. He was, at all times, there when we were going through challenges, whether it be intellectual differences in opinion or practical obstacles to overcome. Gary was a fantastic source of support, always close by when I got overwhelmed with something and always a wise word to shake off any stress. He was forever positive and approached life with courage and a smile, and fought for solutions in the same way that he battled with his cancer - with bravery and dignity, never giving up throughout his illness.

Gary was so committed to young people and believed in their strengths and ability to develop as positive community members, no matter what their background or what challenges they might present. I admire and respect his genuineness and know that he has touched the lives of many young people, families, professionals and community leaders and indeed has deeply touched my life. His influence will carry on throughout my work and provision for young people in Hackney. God bless you Gary and a big hug from me.

**Florence Kroll, Assistant Director, Young Hackney**

*Gary led the development of the Hackney Families First lottery funded programme which will transform the lives of 210 black & ethnic minority families in crisis.*



# Gary Francis

A life in words & pictures

Gary was a familiar face at Hackney CVS. He was always very jolly and friendly. Just from hearing him talk in a couple of seminars it was clear that his motive was to better the lives of our younger generation.

## Dominy Roe, The Prince's Trust

He was an inspiring person who made an invaluable contribution to improving the lives of disadvantaged children and young people.

## Bekele Gessesse, Hackney CVS Trustee

It's a tribute to Gary's enthusiasm and commitment that I had no idea of the severity of his illness, as he was continuing to work so very hard in supporting Hackney's young people, which I know has and will continue to be really important for their futures.

## Jane Bell, Speak Out Administrator

*In his 6 years at Hackney CVS Gary secured nearly £2million for local community organisations for key programmes such as Youth Futures and Inspiring Young Hackney.*



# Gary Francis

A life in words & pictures

I was privileged to travel with Gary in his car to a police event in West London in early March. He'd replied instantly and positively to my invitation remarking on 'the wonders of iPhone'. He chose a great route to get to West Brompton along the Thames and a rather circuitous route to return via Vauxhall. He knew that area well and remarked on the many changes over the years. I was struck by the breadth of his experience and understanding of London and its diverse communities.

We talked all the way there and back about lots of things, not least his illness and his treatment regime. His openness in sharing his fears and hopes was conspicuous. The strength he imparted will act for me as a beacon when I experience difficult times or support others when life appears to be wholly stacked against them. Gary and I knew one another over a number of years through a range of projects and I, along with so many others, will miss him.

**Nicola Baboneau, Advisor to Hackney Community Engagement Board**

*Gary's work at the London Voluntary Service Council and Hackney Play Association is remembered by many people from a wide range of sectors and perspectives.*





# Gary Francis

A life in words & pictures

Over the past year or so, particularly around the Economic Development Network, I was privileged to work closely with Gary. I remember him as a remarkable and gifted man of great intellectual stature, but with a gentleness, humanity and sense of humour that seemed to frame both his thinking and his working relationships. I admired his deep understanding of the borough and what made it tick and his ability to place events and actions in a wider strategic context without for one moment forgetting the reality of those in need.

I will miss our conversations, the challenges he presented and his generous sharing of ideas. But above all, I will miss his friendship and wise counsel. In this of course I am not alone, for he was one of those rare human beings who managed to engender both respect and love in great measure.

**David Blagbrough, Director, Inspire**

*Gary was the voluntary sector's key representative on youth crime issues, helping to transform the Council's approach to youth crime, gangs and youth employment.*





# Gary Francis

A life in words & pictures

Inspiring, encouraging, and direct - these are the words I would like to use for Gary. I have known Gary for the past 10 years in and out of work - he has inspired our organisation and inspired me to believe that there is nothing in life you cannot achieve so long as you are doing it for the right reasons. When I was down Gary lifted me up and made me realise the true meaning of friendship. We were with Gary in times of ill health, yet he always remained positive. At first Gary did not understand why he had become ill but he was determined to fight it to the end which he did. He was really happy with all the love he was given which made him stronger and gave us all more time with him.

I would like everyone to take a leaf out of Gary's book and carry on the fight to encourage those that are disengaged from society to reach for the stars.

**Janette Collins, Manager, The Crib Project**

He was a true mate.

**Darren Reid, Friend and Carer**

*Always focussed on what mattered to young people, Gary helped 100s of young people to gain qualifications they may not otherwise have achieved.*



# Gary Francis

A life in words & pictures

Gary made a really significant contribution to the success of the Local Strategic Partnership in Hackney. He was the Community Empowerment Network representative on the Youth Crime Reduction Partnership and through this he influenced the youth crime reduction strategy and the development of commissioned activity in this area.

He was keenly aware of the greater benefits to be gained from working in partnership. This can be seen from his work pioneering the development of the Youth Crime Network, which was key to the commissioning of work aimed at engaging with young people and reducing crime.

I was so sad to hear of Gary's passing but it's great to know that his legacy will live on through the many projects he helped initiate and support.

**Ian Lewis, Assistant Chief Executive, Hackney Council**

*Gary worked closely with the Council to develop the Young Hackney Service which brought the Youth Offending Team and youth advice under one roof.*



# Gary Francis

A life in words & pictures

He took me out of the dark and showed me the light. He believed in me when I never believed in myself. He opened the door and watched me walk through. He treated me like a son and I looked at him like a dad. He was my role model.

## Dean Wallace, Co-founder, Hold it Down

In his role as Director of Kente (c.1995-6), Gary worked with the local Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee communities, giving one to one advice sessions to groups applying for lottery funding. It was all very new and quite challenging for the groups at the time, but his good advice resulted in a number of successful applications.

What stands out is that Gary was truly dedicated to his work and to helping these groups, always making time even though he had a million and one other priorities - he always had a great sense of humour.

## Susan Westman, Freelance Consultant

*Gary led the Economic Development Network in Hackney as a key forum for organisations working to create more jobs and tackle worklessness.*





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A life in words & pictures

I first met Gary in 1994 whilst working on White City Estate. In his role as Director of Kente, he sat amongst the residents and community workers invited to public consultation meetings about community regeneration. I remember Gary as the person in meetings who listened carefully and absorbed the mood and temperature. He noted the issues and concerns echoed by residents who wanted more investment in social regeneration.

Gary had a unique way of waiting patiently for residents' questions to be addressed, before entering the dialogue. He would then direct questions to the speaker in such a manner it reflected the residents' sentiments, effortlessly and without malice. Gary got straight answers for residents in 1994 and continued to champion the voiceless in his work in Hackney.

I will miss our many conversations about reading the 'meeting temperature' and his laughter in the office. Thanks to Gary's work young people will have their views and voices heard in the young people/police partnership. A great legacy.

**Kristine Wellington, Hackney CVS**

*Gary mentored dozens of disadvantaged young people - often saving them from the danger of criminal gang activity.*



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We will miss his humour.

**Thomas Bubi, on behalf of Hackney Francophone Community**

Gary was an inspiration to young people in Hackney and greatly respected by all the partners. Gary was a great guy who will be sadly missed.

**Steve Bending, Detective Chief Superintendent, Central Gangs Unit**

Gary was a very genuine and kind person.

**Christian Brown, Resource Centre Project Manager**

Gary gave me some great advice about making films with young people.

**Katy Palmer, Marketing Co-ordinator, FILMCLUB**

*After the August 2011 riots, Gary established the young people's Stop and Search Monitoring Group to improve relationships between the police and young people.*





# Gary Francis

A life in words & pictures

I remember first meeting Gaz, almost ten years ago. We immediately became friends and within a short space of time our friendship felt like one that had existed for many years. Recalling the many exploits that Gaz and I had over the years, I remember the countless meetings, especially those we attended whilst developing the One Love Hackney Festival. I recall Gaz being at his happiest delivering these events because he could see young people that had so little feeling valued and considered. Gary's ability to think outside conventional lines ensured that his programmes were completely focused on supporting and developing young people. The greatest thing that Gaz taught me was that we can make a difference as long as we continue to believe in the young people of today. Gaz, I will always cherish our time we shared and the countless number of occasions that you inspired me to be better. Most of all I will miss our conversations over how well Arsenal have played or why the West Indies cricket board continuously fail to pick the correct eleven! To me Gaz was more than a colleague, he was my mentor, advisor, liming partner, tennis buddy, best man but above all my closest friend and brother. You will always be in my heart and thoughts.

**Dave Ramdial, Director, Hold it Down**

*Gary established Hold it Down, a youth led organisation which continues to engage 1000s of local young people in positive activities.*





WETHERSPOON  
BAXTER'S  
COURT

FULL MENU  
AVAILABLE ALL DAY

BEER



# Gary Francis

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Gary is an absolute one off. From the moment he started work at Hackney CVS I knew he would bring wisdom and professionalism to our organisation. Through his immense knowledge of so many topics not only did Gary make his mark in the local voluntary and community sector, but he also was at heart of real change in the Borough, politically and strategically.

He made a huge difference to the lives of thousands of young people who are often downtrodden by society. To say he will be missed is an understatement.  
Gary – you changed so many lives for the better – you are irreplaceable.

**Jake Ferguson, Chief Executive, Hackney CVS**

*Gary led One Love Hackney youth music festival in 2006  
which attracted 10,000 Hackney young people.*





# The Gary Francis Memorial Fund



The Gary Francis Memorial Fund will provide awards to Hackney young people in hardship and will help young people to develop their enterprise ideas as a route into employment.

If you would like to make a donation or to find out more please visit our website:

[www.hcvs.org.uk](http://www.hcvs.org.uk)

**hackney** #FairerHackney  
**CVS**