

Muhammad Idrish



Speaking Bangla, Muhammad Idrish, who worked at the neighbouring Asian Resource Centre in the 1980s, offers memories of friends and colleagues in the Birmingham Industrial Language Training team (as well as the Dudley team), and their contribution to the anti-racism movement in the community, including the Muhammad Idrish Defence Campaign. Part of the "Multilingual Memories: Birmingham 1984" project.

My name is Muhammad Idrish. I worked at the Birmingham Asian Resource Centre in the 1980s.

Handsworth College had an Industrial Language Training Centre. Handsworth College was very close to the Asian Resource Centre. I can't say exactly what ILT taught to whom or how much I benefited from it. However, I was very friendly with many of the people who worked at ILT. Sardul Dhesi from Handsworth College and Gordon Wells were my close friends. Ingrid Widdows and Julie Frew from Dudley College were my close friends.

They were regular participants in local anti-racist campaigns. And I felt the Industrial Language Training Centre was closely involved with the local anti-racist movement.

When I was ordered out of England, a campaign called the Muhammad Idrish Defence Campaign was launched to keep me in this country. The teachers of ILT actively participated in various activities of this campaign. The secretary of this campaign was Ingrid Widdows of Dudley ILT, who contributed a lot to this campaign.

A public meeting was held in the local community in my support. At that meeting, Gordon Wells impressed everyone with a speech in Hindi. The day after I won my campaign, Gordon Wells organised a Muhammad Idrish victory party at his house. Many local people participated in it.

I have not seen Gordon Wells and Sardul Dhesi for a long time. I do not know who they are working with now and what they are doing. But I am grateful to them for the contribution they made to Handsworth community life in the 1980s. Thank you.