



History of CasteWatchUK

CasteWatchUK as an organisation came into being in 2003, when successful people with a passion for community development and obviating inequality, who had been developing initiatives and implementing actions on their own, came together.

They very quickly realised the contributions each had been making and how much more powerful these contributions could be if they were co-ordinated and joined up.

Building on the momentum created by the BBC Radio 4 programme broadcast in April and again in May of 2003, called "Caste Divide in Great Britain", they developed a policy of making change from a perspective of inclusive working.

Actions taken include engaging community groups from communities in the UK, creating and agreeing a constitution, developing a membership base and holding elections for the committee, organising a National Conference on Caste Discrimination in the UK, lobbying 200 MPs to raise this issue higher up the political agenda (to sign Early Day Motion 346), seeking and obtaining the support of the Shri Guru Ravidass UK Sabha, the Bhagwan Valmik Central Sabha and the Dr Ambedkar International Mission and others.

Chair of CasteWatchUK, Pashori Lal, summed this up beautifully "We are a team of forward looking and thinking professionals who all share a dream - of a society which has no place for caste divisions or caste inequality, one where all achieve through the merit of their own ambitions and actions, where an active interest is taken in developing community and community spirit as well as the family unit and network. I am lucky to work with such people and learn from this community spirit every day."

During the period to May 2005 we:

- Had a historic first meeting with the Dept for Education and Skills in March 2005.
- Took part in the "Strength In Diversity Consultations" Home Office White Paper consultation in 2004 – the only Dalit organisation listed as doing so.
- Took part in a fringe meeting of the Labour Party Conference at Brighton in September 04
- Provided a key input into the DFID / DSN organised conference in October 04
- Sent letters to 200 MPs regarding the 2004 Early Day Motion 346, resulting in a sign-up increase of 12½%.
- Took part in a live radio discussion on Sangat Radio, whose topic was "Does Casteism have a place in Sikhism".
- Took part in the SOAS Conference on Caste and its impact on the Valmiki community.
- Built on the interest generated by the BBC Radio 4 programme "Caste-Divide in Great Britain" broadcast in April 2003 which highlighted the issue of caste.



- Engaged the Shri Guru Ravidass Central UK Sabha, Bhagwan Valmik Central UK Sabha and the Dr. Ambedkar Central UK Committee during the Dr Ambedkar celebrations in Birmingham on 9th May 04
- Obtained the full backing of the Shri Guru Ravidass Central UK Sabha and the Bhagwan Valmik Central UK Sabha for CasteWatchUK.
- Prepared our constitution, adopted it in April 04, and registered with the Charities Commission.
- Held a national conference and Launch at St. Marys Guildhall, Coventry, on 3rd July 2004

More achievements are captured on the web site and for an up to date understanding, please contact us.