

## WAITS CEO NEWS AND VIEWS -

---

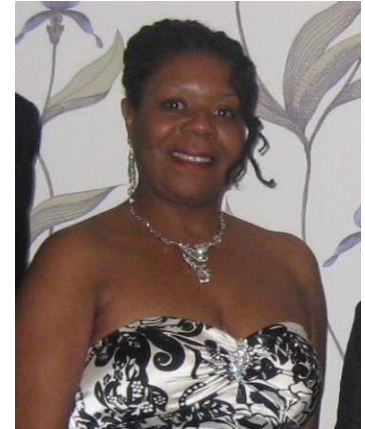
Welcome to my first news and views page, in 2010 we entered into a new decade & I felt this was the beginning of change.

As we entered into spring we waited with baited breath to see who would win the election.

The effect of the rescission had us all in the sector on tender hooks.

Even though there is a sense of uncertainty we at WAITS remain optimistic, and have cause for celebration as I look back at some of our events and celebrations of the year so far.

In April 2009 WAITS was selected as one of the Lord Mayor Councillor Wilkes chosen Charities, this was a most enjoyable and rewarding year. In January the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress joined us for our News Years Ball and fund Raiser at Birmingham Botanical Gardens. With our partner for the evening, Business Network International (BNI), we awarded the achievements of our members.



In the run up to the election WAITS partnership with the Women's Networking Hub held a Women's Hustings at Birmingham Council House.

I Chaired the event attended by 44 women representing women's groups around Birmingham. This event gave us the opportunity to hear from local Candidates from the major parties and some smaller parties on their vision of the future for women.

The question time style discussion led by the Monica Tolman -National Council of Women asked questions on Equal Pay, Birmingham's lap Dancing Trade and Violence against Women and Girls. The audience took the opportunity to join in the lively debate.

Soon after the election results came in I was invited to attend an intimate round table discussion with Nick Hurd MP, Minister for Decentralisation, the under Parliamentary Secretary and other Civil Servants to discuss the Big Society Agenda.

I took this opportunity to raise a point on the difficulties of working in a generalist society that does not take into account the needs of Women and minorities.

As the Big Society debates intensified I have participated in a number of consultations around the Big Society Agenda. As West Midlands Assembly NCO Rep I took part in their consultations that fed back to the Communities Minister through the National Equality Partnership (NEP), into the Office of the Third Sector and the BVSC 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Strategy.



At these meetings I strive to advocate for the need to support specialist groups and campaign for resources, ensuring that women are able to participate in today's society on an equal footing.

For the past 18 years WAITS has supported Women to take their place and voice their opinions around the Policy making table. We are delighted that members of the WAITS Policy Forum have had opportunities this year to influence Local, National and International Agendas.

As we move towards the latter half of 2010, I see the Big Society as a great opportunity for WAITS. WAITS is one of the earlier practitioners of Community Organising in England, delivering our services since 1992. I see the WAITS model of Empowering Women and providing holistic support, enabling Women to have a voice and develop their confidence and abilities, as been a great vehicle to enable Women to be Acting In Today's Society.

I hope you like the new website and I hope that you will use it as a resource in your life, work and community.