



**EDGBASTON**  
**FOR EVERYONE**

**INCLUSION ADVISORY BOARD  
MEMBER PROFILES 2024**

# TOYIN HIGGS



Welcome to the Warwickshire IAB.

I truly believe that Edgbaston should be for everyone, it's the aspiration of this group, the club and its members. In launching the Inclusion Advisory Board we are able to put our good intentions into meaningful actions by supporting the clubs developments. We are committed to ensuring that Cricket in Warwickshire lives and breathes inclusivity. We held our first meeting in May 2022 and recognise that this is the start of a journey to achieving positive outcomes in Cricket for all. We welcome challenge, different perspectives and the opportunity to make meaningful change way beyond the involvement of any of us as individuals in this group. We want to be brave and bold in our aspirations and ensure that we lead on this agenda by being effective as ambassadors of cricket and our communities.

I'm really looking forward to working with you all and seeing you at future meetings.

Welcome to the Inclusion Advisory Board.

Toyin

# AMRICK

# SINGH



Amrick Singh was Centre Director of the Nishkam Centre for 15 years and now heads up Civic Engagement & Partnerships on behalf of the Nishkam Group. The Nishkam Centre is a faith inspired, third sector civic organisation that merges spirituality and secularity creating a seamless fusion of values, ethics and justice for the common good of all humanity.

He is driven by the interplay between the voluntary sector / faith-based organisations and civil society per se. His vast professional background is diverse and varied; an innovative, forward thinking Organisational Development / Business Transformation Consultant with experience in a variety of challenging arenas. His previous roles have included high profile, prestigious organisations like Shell (UK and Holland), British Gas, Bosal International, Thyssen Krupp Group, Jaguar, Rolls Royce and Ford. He was privileged to receive expert tutelage from Japanese Masters at Toyota and Honda whilst he was Head of Operations Improvement within the Automotive Industry.

As a Sikh, a Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute, the Institute of Leadership Management, Lunar Society and RSA, he is passionate about growing and developing the capacity of those around him to excel. Amrick's other roles include several Boards, Advisory and Steering Group responsibilities supporting business change, community engagement, cohesion and social development.

# ANDREW

# SMITH



Canon Dr Andrew Smith – Director of interfaith Relations for the Bishop of Birmingham.

Andrew has lived in Birmingham since he came here as a youth worker in Nechells in 1988. Since then he has lived and worked in many different areas of Birmingham. He has been engaged in interfaith work since the mid 1990's and in 2009 founded the youth charity The Feast that brings together young people from different faiths and cultures to form friendships and build understanding.

He is involved in a number of interfaith projects including the Birmingham Faith Leaders' Group and the Faithful Friends project in Smethwick. He is on the advisory board of KAICIID (The King Abdullah Abdul Aziz Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue) based in Lisbon, Portugal as well as national interfaith programmes for the Archbishop of Canterbury.

He works with civic leaders advising on interfaith matters both locally and nationally and has written a number of articles and books on interfaith matters.

# BENITA

# WISEHART

Benita is part of the Jewish community in Birmingham, serving on the Council for Birmingham Progressive Synagogue, the “shul” she attended in her childhood. She is the lead for the synagogue’s membership of Citizens UK Birmingham and involved in Nisa Nashim which seeks to build friendships between Muslim and Jewish women. She’s currently co-chair of the West Midlands Faith Strategic Partnership Group working group on homelessness. Above all, she loves to celebrate the diversity of the city, and seeks to build bridges with different communities.

Benita is a Research and Evaluation Lead at BVSC, a key infrastructure organisation for the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) sector in Birmingham. Her primary role is to support the city council’s Prevention First strategy through being a link between Adult Social Care and a number of commissioned VCFSE organisations across the city. Through lockdown Benita was often the first point of contact in the VCFSE sector for those wanting to know who to connect with, how to get help or funding and to share what was going well and what the challenges were. From this overview she observed, first hand, the resilience and ingenuity of the sector and the importance of digital accessibility and ability to organisations and citizens.

Prior to this she spent 14 years working in Birmingham City Council on both a major community regeneration programme and in Scrutiny, supporting elected members with policy reviews on a wide range of issues.





# GULFRAZ

# RIAZ

I currently am the Cricket Development Manager for the Club Cricket Conference, a position I have held since 2012.

One of the main roles for me at the start was to reach out and work with less represented members of the cricketing community that play outside the traditional set up in the South East. I initiated and formed in the first few years the South Asian Cricket Development Group, working mainly with Essex CB & Surrey CF. At the same time, I reached out to understand, help, support and founded the African Caribbean Cricket Association which is based around South London.

After the initial work in the South East I commenced reaching out and connecting with the South Asian Cricketing Community on a national platform and from 2013 and over a period of 4 years I formed and currently Chair the National Asian Cricket Council, a body that acts in an advisory capacity to the ECB, first class and non-first-class counties and a number of key cricketing stakeholders.

I currently am on the Board of Directors with Hertfordshire Cricket and a Trustee with Berkshire Cricket Foundation.

As an ECB Level 2 Cricket Coach, I am a Bedfordshire County Age Group Coach as well as coaching and mentoring within Hertfordshire County Age Group.



**KEITH**

**FRASER**



In January 2018, Keith Fraser was appointed as a member of the Youth Justice Board and chair of the Board in April 2020. Keith was recently appointed as chair of Local Partnerships. Keith is also the Non-Executive Director/Trustee at The WorkForce Development Trust Limited, Advisor for the National Police Chiefs Council Digital Engagement Project for Young People, and a Patron of Employability UK. Keith was made a Commissioner for the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities on 16 July 2020.

Prior to this, Keith was a Superintendent and Chief Inspector in the West Midlands Police, having joined as a Constable, during which time he produced the 2016-19 Preventing Gang Involvement and Youth Violence strategy.

Keith also produced the business plan for City of Wolverhampton council where he was the Chair of the authority's statutory Youth Offending Management Board. He led an innovative preventative project, targeting over 7,000 children and young adults, working with Sport England and was the Strategic Police Lead for the Princes Trust across the West Midlands.

**MATT**

**DANIELS**



Matt Daniels has held leadership positions across the charity sector for over twenty years, working predominantly with marginalised communities and groups.

He is a former Chair of the Board for Birmingham LGBT, and currently a principal trainer for the charity, as well as an advocate and leader across the national LGBTQ+ sector.

Through his consultancy he provides specialist consultation, support and training across the charity and public sectors, additionally holding the position of Head of Development & Partnerships for Age UK Birmingham and Age UK Sandwell, working with a broad range of partners to develop services and support people over the age of 50 across these communities.



# PARESH

# PARMAR



I have been in business since 2000, which has allowed me to develop a vast network of connections & associates in both business & the community. I have focused on developing long lasting relationships, using my business acumen & experience to help those around me.

Over the last 20 years I have amassed around 14 different businesses, ranging from Care to Property, Digital Marketing to an Investment fund. My involvement is focused on working on the business, specialising in building teams and creating synergies that allow all stakeholders to blossom and benefit both commercially and ethically. I am part of the Hindu/Indian community in Birmingham & Solihull, getting involved with a number of Temples and supporting many religious festivals.

I have the ability to deal with stakeholders; allowing me to develop strategies that create sustainable partnerships. I have a vast network of contacts that will support and create opportunities for any team that I'm involved in, with a vision for bringing inspiration to the project.



I run CVS Financial, a Corporate Finance company with offices in Edgbaston, London & Dubai. We deal with a range of clients from your small limited company to the very large multinationals managing their lending requirements.



Cricket has been a passion from a very early age, travelling the world to watch various matches. Over the years I've been involved with Midlands Cricket Academy (head coach) arranging cricket tours to Dubai and more recently to Pakistan.

I have a lot of inside knowledge on Warwickshire CCC as my son was involved from the age of U13-U19. A number of the players he played with are currently with the 1st or 2nd XI.

I am often travelling to watch various matches around the country gaining an understanding of players & parents thought processes as well as keeping an eye on performances and talent.

# SAMARA

# AFZA



I am Dr Samara Afzal, and I am full time NHS GP working in Birmingham.

I have represented Warwickshire Ladies between 2003-2005 as a medium pace bowler and have played cricket for Walmley CC for many years, and have this year signed up and played a game for West Bromwich Dartmouth Ladies. I am also a Level 1 cricket coach.

I am a Non Executive Director at Cricket Wales since last year. I have won the 'Raise the Bat' ECB award for my work during the pandemic, and I also have been awarded as being in the top 5 females in the West Midlands for my work for the BAME community during the pandemic by ITV Central.

I have worked with the National Asian Cricket Council (NACC) educating the BAME community on health and sport, as well as teaching CPR and how to use a defibrillator. I also worked with the NACC in a pilot project where I got female patients of mine from a BAME background to play cricket in an 8 week course.

# SHAJAIT

# ALI



Having played cricket for over 20 years and been heavily involved since a young age, I am determined to see really sustainable and long-term change through action!

We've had numerous occasions to reset, but this is the time for a positive change. I recently spoke about my experiences on ITV along with the potential for change and I'm determined to be a part of the solution.

In my professional life, I've worked for large multinationals in a finance/strategic capacity and so my passion for change is replicated there too!

# SHANI

# DHANDA



Shani Dhanda is a multi-award-winning inclusion specialist and social entrepreneur listed as one of the UK's most influential disabled people by the Shaw Trust and BBC's 100 Women List 2020.

As a keynote speaker and practitioner for inclusion across business, government, non-profit and wider society, Shani helps organisations break barriers and integrate inclusion into their business frameworks.

As an influential woman in leadership, Shani has taken change into her own hands and founded numerous organisations to improve representation and challenge social inequality globally - [Diversability](#), [Asian Woman Festival](#), and [Asian Disability Network](#).



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