

## **Aberdeen for a Fairer World (AFW): the story so far**

On October 1<sup>st</sup> 2014 the *Third World Centre* (TWC) changed its name to *Aberdeen for a Fairer World* (AFW).

For some time the management committee has been aware that the term *Third World Centre* was not seen as very attractive, partly because the terminology of 'third world' is now seen as outdated with connotations of colonialism and first/third comparisons, whereas we want to emphasise the idea of partnership and of our simply contributing in Aberdeen to making the world a fairer place.

This isn't merely a name change but comes at a time when our activities are undergoing some change and there is currently a lively programme of work.

The *Third World Centre* was formally set up in 1988. The Kirk of St Nicholas had been persuaded in 1983 to provide the St Mary's Chapel for a very modest rent as a basis for the sale of Fair Trade goods and this became the Third World Shop which continued to operate from there until 2009 when the redevelopment at St Nicholas took place. Meantime shortly after the TWC was formally set up, another aspect of work to promote understanding of the interests of people in poor countries was developed, namely the provision of development education.

This became known as the Montgomery Development Education Centre (MDEC) in tribute to one of the early education workers; it had several different premises over the years, but has for a long time been housed in Queen Street Church.

A third wing of the TWC's work was the development of Fair Trade more widely in the city, and in March 2004, during Fairtrade Fortnight, Aberdeen became joint first city in Scotland, along with Dundee, to achieve the title of Fairtrade City. This status needs continual renewal and a Fair Trade Steering Group, some of whose members are from the TWC, is responsible for this and promoting further commitment to Fair Trade in public institutions and businesses in the city.

For two years following the redevelopment of the Kirk of St Nicholas, the shop continued at 101 George Street, but the much higher rent combined with the recession meant we could not continue that operation after 2011. However the TWC/AFW is keen to start up another retail outlet, should a viable opportunity arise, and believes that a city with Fair Trade status really ought to have a dedicated Fair Trade outlet.

The main activity of AFW currently centres on the MDEC, which has recently increased staffing capacity. The team consists of Global Learning Co-ordinators, whose chief role is to train, support and advise teachers as they develop their Global Teaching and Learning for Sustainability across their schools, an Administration Officer and a Business Development Officer who is identifying ways of developing further the activities and funding of the organisation.

This level of activity is higher than for some time as the Centre has recently secured two major sources of funding - from the UK Department for International Development (DfID) and from the Scottish Government. Both finance streams were achieved through Scotland-wide co-operation with the five other Development Education Centres, as part of IDEAS (The International Development Education Association of Scotland).

Over and above our work with schools we continue to ensure that our library and advice service are kept-up-to-date and available to any organisation or individual within the wider community. We can support you with materials, such as posters, photo-packs, young people's fiction and background reading which explore issues including Fair Trade, Sustainable Development, Citizenship, Overseas Partnerships, Rights and Justice. Further details can be found on our website [www.montgomerydec.org.uk](http://www.montgomerydec.org.uk).

We are proud that AFW has over the last few years become a major player in reinvigorating Aberdeen's involvement in One World Week. Much of the impetus behind this and for the name change came from our dynamic chair of the last three years John Forster, who sadly died suddenly in July this year.

We are pleased to mark his memory by instituting the **John Forster Memorial Lecture**. The first of these lectures is being given by **Martin Rhodes, the Director of the Scottish Fair Trade Forum** at our AGM on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

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