Congratulations to BECON member organisations, staff and Trustees on our Second Birthday. Together we have developed a footprint with our solid, innovative and thoughtful initiatives and projects across the Region. For better or worse, our reputations and futures are linked. When one group does something bad, we all get the blame but when one group does something good we can all get the kudos. Our account in the Region is in credit thanks to all of our work.

The BECON staff and trustees have been focused on developing the Regional Infrastructure. We have worked to create connections and channels between existing members and forge new pathways for potential new members. We have been working on a structure for BECON staff to enable us to deliver on existing and future demands.

We need to leap into the future and think about our old age!! We all share a vision of a future where we feel valued and welcome, where everyone is healthy, education levels are high and crime levels are low. These are all signs of high levels of social capital.

The next phase for BECON is the task of growing the social capital of the Black Community. Social Capital being the glue that keeps us together. The first step in the process could be developing partnerships. Let’s put some energy into developing new, creative, radical partnerships. Let’s think the impossible and make it possible. Let’s share, work together, be joined up.

Finally, thank you to all the existing partners that have supported BECON member organisations and BECON’s programme. The numbers are too many to list but see appendix 1. I must mention Regeneration Exchange and in particular Betty Weallans for co-chairing this meeting and for all her support throughout the year.

Louise Evan-Wong