

# African and Caribbean Support Organisation Northern Ireland (ACSONI)



**Livingstone Thompson**  
Chair

“ *The innovative strategy on a page (SOAP), which emerged accurately for an extensive process of engagement, activities and discussion showed the ability of the Caplor team to simplify the process of strategic planning. Their use of a team facilitation gave us an appreciation for the strength and depth in Caplor Horizons.* ”

“The African and Caribbean Support Organisation NI (ACSONI) is an autonomous community-based organisation formed in 2003. We have a commitment to targeting needs and facilitating belonging among individuals in Northern Ireland from the Black community, specifically anyone with roots in the continent of Africa and the Caribbean. We deliver programmes and services that improve the well-being of people from African and Caribbean traditions in Northern Ireland.

Having come through a difficult period, both in terms of finance and governance, we needed help to set a new direction for the organisation, cognisant of the fact that we had a virtually new board of trustees and a new staff team.

Caplor Horizons' name came forward among other recommendations and we sought from each a proposal of how our need for team building and a new direction could be met. The Board of trustees was unanimous in the selection of Caplor Horizons to lead us through this process.

We were impressed by the clarity with which Caplor Horizons detailed their strategy to lead us through the planning process. We had the sense that they were sensitive to the position in which ACSONI was and showed willingness to be flexible both in terms of time and budget.

Once the work got on the way, the Caplor team impressed us first with speed with which they grasped the ACSONI realities and their willingness to listen to the care and fears of the organisation. The team was generous in their time commitment and it didn't take us long to believe that we were going to get great value for our money.

We were fearful that beginning the face-to-face sessions towards the end of the day would have dampened enthusiasm. However, the Caplor team created an atmosphere of ease and accessibility, which whipped up expectation and excitement for the following day.

ACSONI colleagues still speak the language of the Caplor House, a foundational process that helped us gain a better understanding of each other and how we could take advantage of the strengths in our team.

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Caplor Horizons added significant value to our planning process by showing how we could benefit from deeper and wider community engagement. Caplor Horizons enabled this broader community input into the planning process, analysed the feedback and ensured that their perspective was inserted in the final plan.

ACSONI is now at a place, thanks to Caplor Horizon, where we: (a) feel we have a team that knows each other, (b) have a plan that gives confidence for the direction in which we will go in the next couple years, and (c) have the assurance of where to turn for advice and ongoing support as needs arise.”