

LAMBETH SUPPORTING PEOPLE

BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC STRATEGY ¹

With Salford Local Authority permission and help, we have extensively used the national research evidence, and the discussion in their paper 'Moving Beyond One Size Fits All' on the future direction for strategically planning for the housing support needs of BME groups

The ethnic diversity of our cities is continuously changing, and there is evidence of extensive need for local authority services amongst black and minority ethnic BME communities.

National studies suggest that many BME groups are highly disadvantaged, and experience high levels of poverty, unemployment, poor housing, ill health, crime and racial discrimination.

1. Key Priorities: making a difference

The Supporting People strategy objectives of investing resources targeted to local needs, and increasing fair access, will be met for the BME community through improvements in:

- Effective consultation mechanisms
- Accurate and inclusive information
- Culturally appropriate services



1.1 Inclusion and Information

Lambeth SP will ensure there is clear local information on the housing-related support needs of BME communities, and will involve users in identifying local needs.

Best quality data starts at the frontline. The Support, Needs, Assessment and Placement (SNAP) team will provide the basis for local information collection, and we will continuously update the ways we collect data. SP data collection will conform to local procedure and national legislation.

We will work with users, stakeholders and partners to develop best practice monitoring processes.² This includes:

- developing a profile of BME communities participating in consultation activities, compared with the profile of the community as a whole, and comparing rates of participation by different ethnic groups
- BME monitoring data that is comprehensive and consistent, and conforms to CRE standards.

1.2 Identity and the Individual

The BME label shares the same problems as labels such as 'Asian', in that it can disguise the diversity within groups. Ethnicity is complex, the Office of National Statistics notes in a commentary to the 2001 Census,

'The subjective multi-faceted and changing nature of ethnic identification makes it difficult to collect. With no consensus on what constitutes an 'ethnic group' and membership being subjectively meaningful to the person concerned – the terminology used to describe ethnic group has changed enormously. Basing ethnic identification on an objective and rigid classification isn't achievable.'

1.3 Lambeth's BME population

Presently figures based on the 2001 Census, ONS suggest that, White groups make up 62.4% of the total population, and BME groups 37.6%, of which:

- White Groups include: White British 49%; White Irish 3.3%, and White Other 9.6%

² Blackaby and Chahal, *Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Strategies*, Chartered Institute of Housing, 2000

- Black Groups total 25.8% (Black Caribbean 12.1%, Black African 11.6%, Other Black 2.1%); Asian groups make up 4.6%; Chinese/Other 4.8%; and Mixed Ethnic 2.4% of the total population.

Anecdotally Lambeth has one of the largest BME communities outside of Portugal. For in depth diversity analysis, see appendix 1.

1.4 Research on priorities for housing and support needs of BME communities

There is over-representation of BME users, and groups of BME users in all the client group needs areas in services for older people, mental health, HIV/Aids, offenders, and at risk or offending, teenage pregnancy, domestic violence, learning disabilities either now, or predicted in the future.³

Existing research shows the priorities below for developing strategic commissioning and delivery of improved housing support to the BME community:

1.4.1 Developing knowledge, awareness and competence in service delivery

- Removal of stereotypical assumptions about BME communities and about how services are best provided. For example in a report on BME demand for housing support services for Older People by London Borough of Southwark, it was reported that African-Caribbean non-users looked to mainstream sheltered accommodation for future housing support, rather than culturally specific schemes. Vietnamese-Chinese elders looked to family for their immediate support.⁴ This report gave evidence of demand for floating support to enable independence in the home especially in the private sector.
- Knowledgeable and sympathetic support workers & carers, providing culturally and personally appropriate services, in specialist services and in mainstream services to meet specific requirements of diet, culture, language and religion, and mutual support

³ Lambeth Supporting People Needs Analysis 2004

⁴ Southwark Borough Council: Supported Housing Needs of Older People Views of BME stakeholders 2003

1.4.2 Improving access to appropriate services for health, housing and support

- Improving access to services, for example property adaptations
- Provision of separate supported housing for women is appropriate for some BME groups. Lambeth has high provision of BME refuges, needs mapping will clarify whether there is demand for more mainstream provision in the longer term.
- Recognition of barriers to BME women accessing housing support services in relation to 'reputation', financial dependency, language, perceptions of housing support, and fear of racism.
- Development of responses to isolation, insecurity, fear, and complex needs experienced by refugees, through outreach, mutual support, and co-ordination of services.

2. BLACK & MINORITY ETHNIC NEEDS MAPPING

2.1 The ODPM publication Policy into Practice acknowledges the importance of a clear definition of needs and costs in relation to delivering housing support services to the BME community:

- 'There are physical and mental health issues, that in combination with other factors contribute to a failure to provide services either at all, or services that address the specific needs of black and minority ethnic older people.
- Provision of services that will meet these objectives may have costs that are different to the average national costs e.g: in relation to diversity of language requiring additional training or interpreter costs; critical mass of service provision, e.g. small specialist units; and staffing costs.'

2.2 One of the four core objectives of the Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework is the promotion of fair access, diversity and inclusion, with performance objectives to ensure that providers of housing support have a framework for delivering services effectively to the BME community.⁵

2.3 Supporting People has carried out a Needs Analysis⁶, a Race Equality

⁵ For a summary of the core objective on diversity, see the Lambeth internet Race Equality Action Plan the Supporting People page on, www.lambeth.gov.uk/supportingpeople

⁶ Lambeth Supporting People Needs Analysis 2004

Impact Assessment⁷ and Consultation for the 5 Year Strategy of the four headline groups of Older People, People with Mental Health issues, People with Learning Difficulties and Homeless people.⁸

2.2 Future research & gap analysis

There is more research required for BME needs across the whole of the Supporting People programme, collating local information and promoting pan London and regional responses to gaps in service provision. In the following areas in particular the Lambeth Supporting People Needs Analysis January 2004, and the Lambeth Supporting People Race Equality Impact Assessment prioritised further research on BME needs for:

- Homelessness, rough sleeping, drug and alcohol abuse
- Care leavers, teenage pregnancy and women escaping domestic violence

2.3 Consultation, information and engagement

To perform well under Best Value and Corporate Performance Assessment inspection, audit inspection of the Supporting People programme in October 2006, and to bid effectively for government regeneration initiatives such as the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund Lambeth must show that it is strengthening the Local Authority community leadership role by:

- Talking to people about local services, involving all sections of the wider community, especially those smaller groups who remain untouched by consultation initiatives
- Recognising the barriers to effective participation that exist between institutions and BME communities, and developing methods of involving local people in a variety of ways

2.3.1 Supporting People has mapped services in Lambeth and found that the conclusions reached by national studies are mirrored locally, there is:

- A lack of knowledge about services among vulnerable groups in the BME population
- Ethnic record keeping and monitoring is poor in most services. There is no level of expected need against which to make comparisons, e.g. there is continuing resistance among providers to recognise the distinctiveness of the 'Irish' experience' in accessing services⁹

⁷ Lambeth Supporting People Shadow Strategy Race Equality Impact Assessment 2003

⁸ Lambeth Supporting People User Engagement Strategy 2004

⁹ 'Still Beyond the Pale' July, The Response of Social Landlords to the Housing and Related Needs of London's Irish Community Helen Cope 2001

2.3.2 A report on consultation methods by Sodhi, D & Lekhi, R (2002) found that while more attempts to consult with BME users are being made, existing methods were often inadequate:

- The over-use of postal surveys which are not always appropriate for all groups and subjects
- Few organisation take steps to ensure that BME people are adequately included in consultation samples, and few samples results are analysed by ethnicity
- Many agencies had a plethora of participation structures but there was little attempt made to ensure that these involved BME communities

2.4 Asking BME communities, & best practice on consultation and involvement

The report by Sodhi & Lekhi found that BME communities are keen to be involved in consultation but not necessarily through formal structures.

Where, when and how do BME groups wish to be communicated with? We will evolve methods that take into account the different circumstances of: established and newly arrived communities men and women¹⁰; the Life Event perspectives of different age groups, e.g. BME elders and youth; and religious and cultural perspectives. These methods will include collecting users views through:

- Questionnaires & feedback from advocacy schemes
- Forums on specific issues or for specific groups
- Quality assurance circles
- Interviews with all new services users
- Complaints and comments processes
- Collation of information from assessment records

2.5 Doing what works –engaging and consulting with BME groups

Organisations must continually improve engagement and consultation reviewing existing good practice and developing new methods of engagement, for example through:

- Focus groups, recruitment of ethnic specific community development workers, and capacity building in the community

Commission for Racial Equality 'Discrimination & the Irish Community in Britain' 1997

¹⁰ The 1999 national registered social landlord tenant survey data found that black women were the group who showed the highest interest in becoming involved in consultation. Black men had the lowest interest.

through lay assessors¹¹. Consultation is only the first stage of engagement, empowering BME groups to take advantage of consultation is an important second stage.

- Neighbourhood conferences, community surveys (carried out by BME people in their own communities) and the development of separate participatory structures enabling participation in the community rather than the council office.
- Agencies must begin to target the specialist BME media, community groups and forums and places of worship in order to disseminate information about services and service development.
- First contact is of utmost importance and must practically demonstrate the organizations aspiration to learn and adapt, not just to data trawl.
- Organisations should develop training for staff regarding the cultural background and implications of any work which might be undertaken for BME communities.
- Redefining education and training, so that learning and engagement can become symbiotic partners.
- Organisations should avoid working only with groups 'in the system'. This might mean by-passing 'representatives' to reach 'minorities within minorities'.¹²

2.6 Monitoring of BME participation and data on BME services

2.6.1 Supporting People has prioritised developing a good basis for local information collection on needs, through the Housing Support Needs Assessment and Placement SNAP team, and we will continuously update data collection methodology.

Best quality data starts at the 'front-line'. Those providing it and those collecting it need to feel reassured that providing data is not 'harmful' or a potential threat. This, however, is problematic in groups who are marginalized and alienated and for whom data collection is not value-neutral; it is part of a political process. Supporting People data collection will conform with local procedure and national legislation.

¹¹ Tomlins et al (2002) in a study of the Vietnamese community in London used what they describe as a 'social action approach', which entailed working with existing community workers to conduct the research. In the project, the community groups were paid to undertake research training prior to facilitating focus groups and producing focus group reports (for which they were also paid).

¹² Focus Housing Group had problems recruiting members of the Bangladeshi community into tenant participation. They approached a local community centre and facilitators were able to attend a sewing circle which became a forum for meeting Bangladeshi women.

2.6.2 Agencies and local authorities should also develop monitoring processes to increase involvement and ensure that strategies are working.¹³ These include:

- Developing a profile of BME communities participating in consultation activities compared with the profile of the community as a whole, and comparing of rates of participation by different ethnic groups
- Comparisons between the views of various ethnic groups about involvement
- BME monitoring data is that is comprehensive and consistent, and conforms with CRE standards
- BME data must include the language of participants to be of use for planning culturally appropriate services

2.6.3 To discover what constitutes an appropriate consultation for BME communities in the planning and development of housing and support services Supporting People will develop best practice with providers on:

- How BME status is recorded, and how data is categorised
- Are language and cultural needs recorded?
- Is there a specific BME focus in supported housing and in tenant participation?
- What evidence of BME supported housing needs have been discovered?
- Are unmet needs recorded according to ethnicity?

2.7 Development of inclusion and communication

The Supporting People User Network is an engine for change in engagement of providers and users, and for benchmarking best practice in inclusion and communication. Organisations must evaluate the issues of how to engage users and the best methods of addressing them:

- In supported housing, language is of paramount importance, for example for assessing needs or health status, or to help maintain social contacts. Independent translation services provide objectivity and privacy.
- Staff training in equal opportunities and recognising diversity is critical. Culturally specific information on service delivery should be collected. Organisations should begin new encounters with groups and new cultures by going to social gatherings and by engaging with men and women alike

¹³ Blackaby and Chahal (2000)

- Many organisations have the resources to promote participation and consultation (diversity officers, funding for research etc.) but as a provider pointed out, ‘agencies must look outside the ‘resource window’ and explore how they can engage on a small scale’.
- It is necessary for BME groups to perceive services as ‘approachable’. If agencies are to understand diversity in a wider context, they must remove the notion of ‘same services for all’, and replace it with a perspective, which provides different services for different needs, in order to provide the same level of service.
- The business case for diversity must be recognised and led from the top of organisations. There is often a fragmented approach to integrating business planning, Race Equality Action Plans, and BME strategy. Action plans must have responsibilities assigned to senior officers, targets, milestones, and monitoring.¹⁴

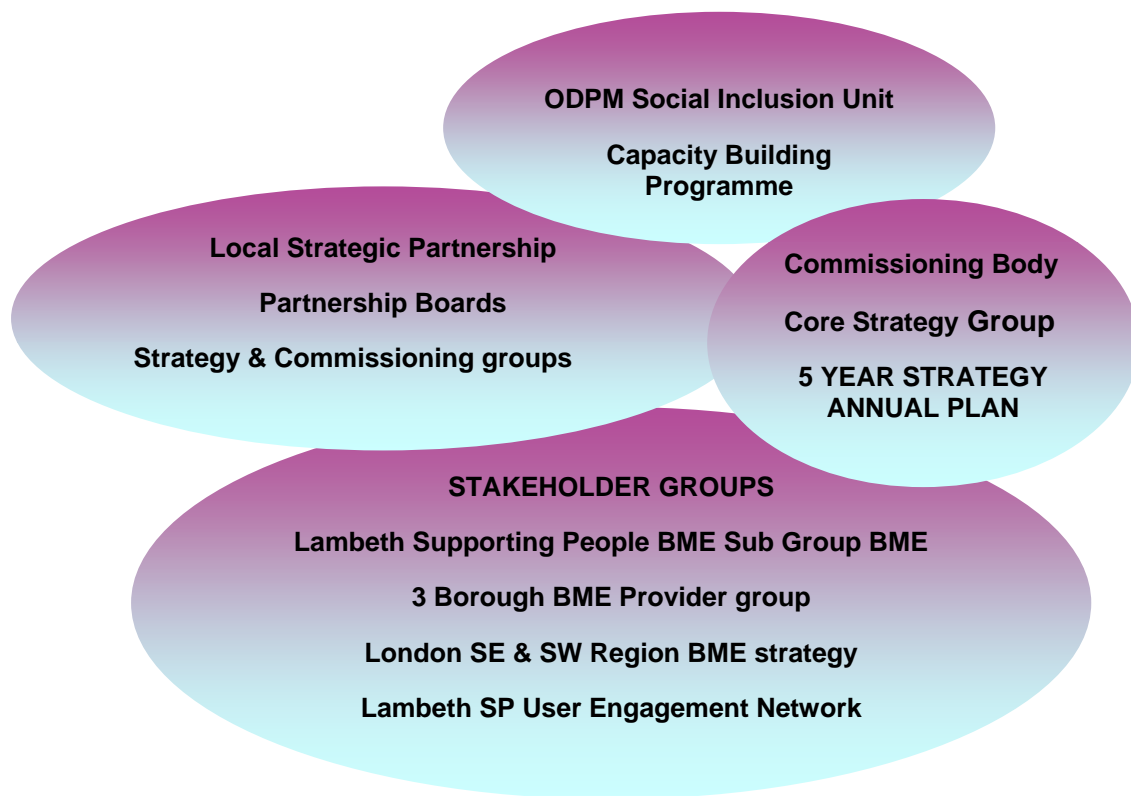
3. SUPPORTING PEOPLE BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC 5 YEAR STRATEGY – KEY PRIORITIES 2009

We will:

- Involve the BME community as the key stakeholder in developing our BME strategy for mainstream and specialist services
- Ensure that the diversity business case is driven from the top of organisations
- Develop effective local consultation mechanisms and robust information sources on need
- Develop benchmarks from national research where we have gaps in information on needs
- Develop culturally appropriate services that diverse BME communities will want to use
- Drive an improvement agenda on equal opportunities in Supporting People services
- Develop a diverse, work force with the competencies for delivering culturally specific Supporting People services

3.1 Supporting People is committed to ensuring stakeholder involvement in the 5 Year Strategy and Annual Plan. There is an Supporting People BME sub group, a three borough BME provider group including Lambeth Lewisham & Southwark, which both meet quarterly, and BME SE & SW London regional strategy in development. BME strategy within the 5 Year Strategy will be developed through these groups, the User Network and the User Engagement Strategy.

¹⁴ The Audit Commission Diversity Scheme Building an Inclusive Organisation 2002



3.2 Legislation, policy and performance

Housing and support providers are required to address inequalities experienced by BME groups, key legislative and policy documents are:

The Report of the Lawrence Inquiry 1999

The development of Supporting People 1998

The Race Relation Amendment Act 2000, which placed enforceable duties on housing providers to promote racial equality

The Race and Housing Challenge Report 2000, requiring housing providers to strive for continuous improvement in race equality work

The Housing Policy Statement 2000 and the Urban White paper 2000, call on providers to provide equality of opportunity within mission statements

The Commission for Racial Equality 1991 Code of Practice in Rented Housing sets down the obligations on providers for strategies incorporating best practice

The Audit Commission Best Value Performance Indicators, requiring evidence of adherence to the CRE code of practice, and new indicators to measure BME group's satisfaction with consultation opportunities

The Housing Corporation Review of Performance Standards 2001 requires housing associations to provide annual improvement plans

The National Housing Federation report Race Equality in Access to Housing Services 1998 on meeting housing needs, accessing housing, tenant participation and ethnic monitoring.

ODPM guidance documents:

'Reflecting the needs and concerns of black and minority ethnic communities 2002'

'A guide to user involvement for organisations providing housing related support services 2003', are key documents in developing the Supporting People Black and Minority Ethnic BME strategy in Lambeth.

Appendix 1

Supporting People 5 Year Strategy Lambeth Diversity Profile

Section 3.2 of the strategy is reproduced here to show the diversity profile of the Lambeth population.

See also the following sections of the strategy:

- 3.1 Population
- 3.3 Housing and Household Composition
- 3.4 Multiple Deprivation in Lambeth

Lambeth SP 5 Year Strategy can be found on the council website Supporting People page www.lambeth.gov.uk/supportingpeople

There is a 3 page summary of the SP BME Strategy within the 5 Year Strategy.

3.2 Diversity

Lambeth is a very diverse borough. White British people making up 49% of Lambeth's population. Black groups total 26% of the population, compared to an average of 16% in Inner London. This is made up of Black Caribbean (12% of total population), Black African (12%), and Other Black (2%). Asian people make up 5% of the population, but this level is much lower in comparison with other outer London boroughs.

Different groups tend to be clustered in certain areas within the borough. For example, White British people are concentrated around the Clapham, Streatham and Norwood town centres. Black African people are more likely to live in Brixton, Stockwell and North Lambeth, whilst a higher number of Black Caribbean people are living in the wards around Brixton, especially Vassall and Coldharbour.

Anecdotally, Lambeth has the largest Portuguese community outside of Portugal; however, it is difficult to determine exact numbers as Census data reports this group in the 'White Other' ethnic category.

The Black African population has the largest growth rate compared with any other ethnic group in the borough from 1991–2001 (6% to 12%). Conversely, the percentage of White people resident in Lambeth has decreased from 70% in 1991 to 62% in 2001 – a reduction of 7%. This is similarly the case in comparisons with London as a whole.

The proportion of BME residents in the borough will increase noticeably over the next 10 years, particularly in the adults and older persons age groups.

Homelessness trends for Lambeth for 2003/04 indicate that BME groups accounted for 73% of homelessness decisions made in 2003/04. This is considered a significant number, given that BME groups accounted for 38% of the borough's population during the same period.

SP Client Records for Lambeth show White British (46%) as the most represented client group. However, there are more Black Caribbean service users in Lambeth (16%) compared to London (12%), whilst Black African service users in Lambeth (11%) are fewer in comparison to London (15%).

For people fleeing unrest in their home countries, Lambeth has a disproportionately high level of asylum seekers in comparison with other London boroughs.

Appendix 2

EQUALITY & HUMAN RIGHTS

SP 5 Year Strategy development will reflect the impact of recent and forthcoming legislation and government policies on equalities and human rights, in particular:

1. The Government White Paper Fairness For All: A New Commission For Equalities and Human Rights July 2004

The White Paper contains proposals to establish a single equality body named the Commission For Equality and Human Rights (CEHR), that has a role in overseeing the development of a human rights culture. The CEHR will bring together the Commission For Racial Equality, Disability Rights Commission, and Equal Opportunities. The new Commission will include disabled commissioners.

It includes a duty on all public bodies to promote gender equality and eliminate discrimination between women and men. It will also deal with equality of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation, as well as human rights issues.

The CEHR will promote:

- An understanding of the links between various types of discrimination e.g. how pensioner poverty affects women in particular
- The way in which discrimination of any kind affects and demeans all members of society
- The benefits to society of tackling discrimination

The rights proposed are for:

- Race, disability and gender – rights to – employment, education and goods and services
- Faith, sexuality and gender – rights to - employment and vocational training

2. Other legislation and policy

The Disability Discrimination Act and the Age Discrimination legislation will impact on how services are provided and the kind of services provided. The Supporting People programme will develop strategic commissioning of services that reflect these changes.

a. Disability Discrimination Act 2005

Whether it is based on prejudicial treatment or fundamental misunderstanding, discrimination related to a person's disability is unacceptable. The Disability Discrimination Act ensures that in a modern, competitive society, which embraces diversity, all citizens are able to take advantage of the widest possible range of services, facilities and jobs without artificial barriers being placed in their way. Disabled people, in particular, often have to overcome more persistent forms of discrimination than other people.

The Disability Discrimination Act is the next step toward achieving that framework. It builds on important changes already in place. These include:

- Setting up, in April 2000, the Disability Rights Commission as an independent voice for disabled people.
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against disabled people seeking access to education.
- Bringing into effect, from October 2004, the final phase of Part 3 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), which requires service providers to look at making reasonable adjustments to physical barriers.

- Regulations earlier this year which end almost all the current employment and occupational exemptions in the DDA, bringing over 1 million additional small employers and a further 7 million jobs into the scope of the Act.

Furthermore the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 proposes taking forward other new measures that would enhance disabled people's civil rights and break down institutional barriers. It would strengthen existing DDA rights in the definition of disability. It would also introduce a new duty on public bodies to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

b. Age Discrimination Legislation

- In 2004, the Departments of Trade and Industry and Work and Pensions, announced how legislation outlawing age discrimination in the workplace would approach the issue of employers' mandatory retirement ages. Following extensive consultation the Government has concluded that this legislation should:
 - Set a default retirement age of 65, but also create a right for employees to request working beyond a compulsory retirement age, which employers will have a duty to consider
 - Ensure close monitoring of the retirement age provisions so that evidence is available for a formal review of age discrimination five years from implementation
 - Allow employers to objectively justify earlier retirement ages if they can show it is appropriate and necessary.

In 2005, the Department of Trade and Industry will be consulting on draft age legislation covering this and the remaining areas outlawing age discrimination in employment and vocational training as highlighted in last year's *Age Matters* consultation. The legislation is scheduled to come into force on 1 October 2006.

c. Previous equalities legislation

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Race Relations Act 1995 and Amendment Act 2000
- Sex Discrimination Act