A Handbook and Guide for Agencies Working with Black and Minority Ethnic Communities in South Yorkshire

Part 1: The Handbook

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Contents

Introduction

This working manual is written largely from field work experience, focus group interviews and desk-top research. The intention is to develop an information pack relevant to the Environment Agency's (EA) operational and developmental work in the North East Region on how to engage Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities. The Agency commissioned this piece of work as part of measures to ascertain how it could pro-actively engage with BME communities by building up a database of contacts and the modes of consultation. This working manual will help the Agency develop established contacts with ethnic minority communities in order to:

- Improve its knowledge and understanding of outreach work into these communities,

- Assess the impact of its regulatory polices and services within these communities,

- Use the working manual as a vehicle to assist with the development of mechanisms for future consultation with these communities,

- Use it to assess the level of demand and capacity for environmental initiatives, activities and action that needs to be undertaken among ethnic minority communities,

- Use it to identify any unmet service needs and to improve opportunities for employment accordingly among BME communities.

These constitute some of the core aims of this consultative project between the EA of the North East Region and Sheffield Hallam University. The Agency sees itself more of a champion than a regulator and believes that a clean and healthy environment is vital for everyone's quality of life. However, while the overall quality of the environment may be improving, its quality varies between different areas and communities. BME communities who are classified as socially and economically disadvantaged often live in the worst physical environments. For example, these communities are classified in the Government's Multiple Deprivation Index (MDI, 2004) as experiencing the worst quality air, waste, risk to flooding, and less access to green spaces and inadequate housing among other indicators.

Even though the Agency acknowledges the fact that the causes for these inequalities are often complex and long-standing, nonetheless, improving the quality of these living physical environments will depend not only on Government funded initiatives for regeneration but more importantly on how people living in these environments are consulted and engaged to understand, appreciate and manage them for their own health and social wellbeing. The Agency believes that by pro-actively engaging BME communities, this will enable them to have a peace of mind from knowing about the type of environment they live in whether it is healthy or unhealthy, clean or polluted, and that this will motivate them to appreciate, use and care for it. They will be confident to act since the environment will be greatly valued and cared for as a resource rather than used as a dumping ground since it bears an impact on their quality of life and well-being.

Environmental responsibilities will be taken up seriously through an accessible community information system and education. As a necessary prerequisite since various commentators of environmental education argue that it is a portrayal of the process of recognising values and clarifying concepts in order to develop skills and attitudes necessary to understand and appreciate the inter-relatedness among man, his culture and bio-physical surroundings. It is also based on the premise that the multicultural nature of communities today necessitates the need to explore

peoples' understanding of what the environment means to them. Environmental education through positive pro-active outreach engagement with BME communities would therefore enable the Agency to understand the different lenses with which they view the natural, built and human environments.

"There is a history of the non-inclusion of the first generation of BME arrivals in environmental participation in the UK which creates an 'instant family tradition' of exclusion from contact with nature and environmental participation. This thus becomes a vicious circle."

Judy Ling Wong - Director, Black Environment Network

Eight steps to engage with local Black and Minority Ethnic community groups

Step 1: Find out the history of BME communities in the area,

Step 2: Identify where to engage with BME communities,

Step 3: What you need to be aware of/awareness,

Step 4: Common issues of diversity and migrant communities,

Step 5: Make it happen,

Step 6: Develop local initiatives in BME engagement,

 Step 7: Use diverse voluntary/community organisations,

 Step 8: Using the BME press/media to engage communities.

"Regeneration initiatives should encourage cross-cultural engagement and thematic rather than area-based approaches. It should aim to encourage the integration of different communities, instead of pitting them against one another in tackling issues across all communities such as the environment, poverty and deprivation."

Zahid Hamid, MOSAIC Project

Step 1: Find out about the Black and Minority Ethnic population in the area

History of Black and Minority Ethnic communities in South Yorkshire

It is important to recognise and to understand the nature of migration and the processes of social integration that take place and have taken place for millennia. Britain has been constantly absorbing new cultures and communities which gradually integrate into the whole, yet retain some degree of their own identity. It is against this backdrop that we must consider more recent racial and cultural groups in the region. Early colonists included Jews and Romanies, and then Dutch, French and Flemish settlers especially Huguenots in the lowland South Yorkshire Fens. They brought the expertise to drain bogs and to improve farmland. Germans brought important metal-working and smelting skills.

Throughout the period of two centuries since the Industrial Revolution, Sheffield and the wider South and West Yorkshire regions have received waves of workers migrating in to provide both specialist skills and necessary labour. Irish and Scottish workers provided much of the labour for early industries, and the Irish 'navvies' built canals and railways. Many lived and indeed died in cities like Sheffield. Welsh miners re-located to Askern in South Yorkshire in the early 1900s to man the coal mine. Further waves of settlers included Polish emigrants escaping Nazi persecution to fight in the Second World War and other East Europeans during the period of the Cold War. These communities have over time integrated into mainstream culture whilst at the same time adding a distinctive flavour to the people and the communities of the region. From an historian's point of view the processes that we witness today may have their unique and distinct characters, but they are part of this bigger and long-term process. If we ignore the rich diversity of peoples who settled and conquered Britain over time, almost all the groups who settled here suffered severe persecution and disadvantage during the early years.

In order to understand reasons for the non-inclusion of BME communities in the United Kingdom environment it is important to look at the genesis of the problem. The 1991 United Kingdom census for example, was the first time respondents were asked about their ethnic origin. Prior to this, they were requested to state their country of origin. Hence, it was difficult to provide a definitive account of the history of ethnic minority settlement within a given region. Moreover, it was difficult

to obtain data and studies that are specific to South Yorkshire. Therefore it is only possible to identify few trends concerning the settlement pattern of BME communities within the sub-region since the 1950s. The following are reasons behind the pattern for BME population distribution:

- South Yorkshire followed a national trend surrounding BME migration, with immigrants choosing to live in cities. This explains why Sheffield has the highest BME population compared with the other three districts.

- It also followed national trends with the first immigrants arriving from the Caribbean and then from Pakistan/India.

- The sub-region has experienced a notable level of immigration from refugees, although not necessarily from East Africa. Instead, refugees arrived from Chile following the military coup in 1973, as well as from Yemen during the 1950s and 1960s, and from Somalia as far back as the 1930s.

- Britain's Somali population dates back over a century in many areas, notably port cities such as Cardiff, East London, Bristol and Liverpool, where seamen often settled. Later, in the last century, many moved on to work in heavy industry in areas such as Birmingham, Sheffield and Derby. The population has grown with the arrival of women and children from the 1960 onwards and with the flow of individuals seeking sanctuary from violent civil unrest and conflict later in the twentieth century.

Ethnicity and Religion

In South Yorkshire, Pakistanis form the largest BME group (36%) followed by the mixed race (19.5%) and Black Caribbean (10.0%) groups. However, this definition of nationality is limited by census categories as local information in Sheffield at least, is that the majority of people classed as "Pakistani" are actually Kashmiri / Mirpuri in origin. People from India, represent 8.5% of the total BME population. The growth in South Yorkshire's BME population between 1991 and 2001 was largely accounted for by an increase of just less than 1% in the mixed race population.

Other groups not fully able to identify themselves in the census include Somalis and Yemenis, two of the other significant communities in South Yorkshire (these people may have categorised themselves as "Black African" for example). It is because of this limitation in terms of classification that community profiling research is currently being carried out in Sheffield. This exercise is meant to help enumerate the diverse make-up of communities which have been missed by the 2001 census.

According to the 2001 Census, over 75% of the South Yorkshire population classed themselves as Christian, and 2.5% as Muslim. However, almost 8% of respondents did not state their religion, with 13.7% people classifying themselves as having "no religion". Other significant minority religious beliefs in the local area include Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism. The most prevalent BME group in the Sheffield/Rotherham area is described by the Census 2001 as being of Pakistani origin (though as previously mentioned, these people are largely Kashmiri/Mirpuri). These communities are predominantly Muslim. As mentioned above (in 2.2 *Migration*) Sheffield (along with Bradford) is a popular destination in Yorkshire for immigrants coming to the United Kingdom from outside the country, especially from South Asia. Islam is also the main religion of many other significant BME communities, particularly in the Sheffield area, such as: Somalis, Yemenis and Iraqis. Given that it is predicted that most of South Yorkshire's population growth will come from BME communities, it seems likely that the proportion of Muslim people in the area will also increase (assuming that a significant proportion of children born and raised here continue to endorse their parents' religion).

Source : (Yorkshire Forward Diversity Data from 2001 Census)

Sheffield - the 2001 Census estimates the proportion of people in Sheffield from a BME community as being 8.78% although the actual proportion is probably closer to 11% - around 45,000 people. This represents an 80% increase over the 1991 Census figure. The largest single group is people from the Pakistani community at around 16,000 people. Health inequalities between BME communities and the rest of the population are well documented. A recent assessment of need in Sheffield highlighted in particular much higher levels of diabetes and coronary heart disease, greater levels of emergency admission to hospital and much lower uptake rates of key health screening and prevention services such as for cancer and flu immunisation.

Asylum Seekers and Refugees - Sheffield is host to around 1,460 asylum seekers. Figures for refugees are not made available by the Home Office but it is estimated that around 3,000 have settled in the city since the year 2000. In addition to the health problems experienced by established BME communities, such people also experience high levels of mental ill health often associated with extreme levels of stress and anxiety (in some cases this is linked to experiences of being tortured in their home country). Many also have serious physical disabilities and injuries (for example, if they are escaping war zones). In addition, we are now seeing more unaccompanied children and young people seeking asylum for whom specific packages of support are required.

Rotherham - has a population of just under 250,000 people and a detailed analysis of data from the 2001 census shows that Rotherham's Ethnic Minority Communities now comprise 3.1% of the total population. This is a 50% increase since the last census. Of these 0.5% described themselves as "Mixed" in the new category introduced in the 2001 census and 2.23% described themselves as Asian/Asian British. The numbers of Chinese and other groups was 512, approximately half of whom were Chinese, and the numbers of Black/Black British were 400. This gives a make up of BME communities in Rotherham that is mainly Muslim—Pakistani, particularly from the rural areas of Mirpur and Kashmir. There is a significant Yemeni group not directly recorded in the census data as "Yemeni" was not a category. This group lives mainly in and around the town centre. The Chinese community tends to be scattered through the Borough, and the Black community, many of whom are French speaking Black African refugees or Asylum Seekers live in and around the town centre. Thus many areas of Rotherham are predominantly White.

Doncaster - has a total population of 286,866. According to the 2001 Census (see table 1 below), 2.3% of the population are from a Black Minority Ethnic (BME)

Group. (This does not include White Irish people locally). The majority of people are White British representing 96.5% of the population.

The 2001 census did not record Gypsy or Irish Traveller as an ethnic group but it is widely recognised that Doncaster probably has the largest Gypsy and Traveller population in the country estimated to be up to 6,000 in number. This equates to approximately 2% of the population and the majority of this population are Romany Gypsies. On average, there are 35 authorised and unauthorised Gypsy Travellers sites in Doncaster and there are 7 winter bases for Showman families.

Doncaster has a rich and diverse multi-cultural range of communities, which are increasing and constantly changing. For example, with the recent membership of Poland into the European Union, the number of Polish people living in Doncaster as a result of economic migration, is now estimated to be at least 4000 in number. Doncaster is regarded as having the highest traveller's population in the country, and the town has been described as the largest transit site in Europe. The people of Doncaster speak around 82 different languages. Doncaster district ranks as the 40th most deprived district in England.

Barnsley - Barnsley is located in the Yorkshire and Humber region in the North of England. It has a population of 218,062 and is made up of a modern commercial centre, featuring shopping centres and a famous market, as well as 4 large country parks. At the time of the 2001 National Census, only 0.9% of the population was recorded as being of ethnic origin. During the last ten years, Barnsley's ethnic minority which comprised mainly of refugees and migrant workers has increased from 0.8% of the local population to over15% according to the 2001 Census. In 2002 South Yorkshire Police commissioned a report which estimated the Barnsley's minority community at 2.5% with this number continuing to rise" (BMBC, Supporting People Strategy 2005 -2010).

Gypsy and the New-Age Traveller Communities - In the UK, Gypsy Travellers mainly comprise English and Welsh Romany Gypsies, Irish Travellers and Scottish Travellers plus a growing number of European Romany Gypsies. Gypsy Travellers are not defined by travelling and living in caravans but by their ethnicity (Romanichal). It is not possible to obtain accurate estimates of numbers because of the absence of this group in Census data and when not all are known to statutory agencies. The health status of this community is amongst the worst in the country with significantly higher levels of anxiety and depression, bronchitis, asthma and Accident and Emergency attendances.

Nobody knows exactly how many 'New-Age Travellers' there are in South Yorkshire or nation-wide. However, estimates vary between 15-50,000. Of this

group, many are unemployed, homeless and desire to escape from the crumbling urban environment. They live in caravans, make their living in many ways and enjoy recycling waste and scrap which has now been made difficult by the 1990 Environment Protection Act (EPA), making it illegal to take such items from skips without a carrier licence. The illegal camping by Gypsies and the New-Age Travellers can affect the lives of whole communities. They are therefore often viewed as "Rural Terrorists" and tracking them is very difficult and requires constant surveillance.

Table 1 below provides a population breakdown by ethnic group in the districts of South Yorkshire

Table 1: Total Population and the proportion of the Total Population (2001)

	Barnsley	Doncaster	Rotherham	Sheffield	SYorks	Yorks/Humberside	E/W
All People	218,063	286,866	248,175	513,234	1,266,338	4,964,833	52,041,916
White	216,069	280,239	240,463	468,217	1,204,988	4,641,263	47,520,866
	99.1%	97.7%	96.9%	91.2%	95.2%	93.5%	91.3%
Mixed	756	1,759	1,210	8,228	11,953	44,995	661,034
	0.3%	0.6%	0.5%	1.6%	0.9%	0.9%	1.3%
Indian	412	1,247	497	3,030	5,186	51,493	1,036,807
	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%	0.6	0.4%	1.0%	2.0%
Pakistani	136	1,503	4,704	15,844	22,187	146,330	714,826
	0.1%	0.5%	1.9%	3.1%	1.8%	2.9%	1.4%
Bangladeshi	29	60	26	1,910	2,025	12,330	280,830
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.2%	0.2%	0.5%
Other Asian	99	262	303	2,598	3,262	12,333	241,274
	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.5%	0.3%	0.2%	0.5%
Black Caribbean	69	736	180	5,171	6,156	21,308	563,843
	0.0%	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%	0.5%	0.4%	1.1%
Black African	67	229	180	3,294	3,770	9,625	479,665
	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.6%	0.3%	0.2%	0.9%
Other Black	28	84	40	677	829	3,329	96,069
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
Chinese	246	523	303	2,201	3,273	12,340	226,948
	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.4%	0.3%	0.2%	0.4%
Other Ethnic Group	152	224	269	2,064	2,709	9,487	219,754
	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.4%	0.2%	0.2%	0.4%
EM total	1,994	6,627	7,712	45,017	61,350	323,570	4,521,050
	0.9%	2.3%	3.1%	8.8%	4.8%	6.5%	8.7%

Source: Census 2001

Other sources of BME information

- Schools collect admissions data and achievement information with reference to standard ethnic information,

- Housing Associations keep ethnic data on tenants,

- Citizens bureau - Citizens Advice collect ethnic data,

- Employers and Service Providers - some employers keep ethnic data on their workforce and some service providers keep data for their service users *e.g.* Sheffield City Council keeps a profile of their staff from ethnic minority communities,

- BME Groups are either formal groups or are registered with Community Voluntary Service (CVS),

- Universities and colleges keep data on the number of ethnic minority students,

- Migrant workers are normally registered if they are coming from an EU country and accessed through the Employment Agencies.

Religion

The ***Religion*** section (see volume two) outlines the key characteristics of the main faith groups in Sheffield, including core beliefs, main religious festivals, and important points when visiting the home. The ***Country of Origin*** section (see volume two) gives information on different nationalities, including languages used and main religions, and customs and practices.

It is important to remember that there can be differences in the way people practise their religion, depending on their country of origin. However, religion, rituals and belief systems can often have a greater impact on the way in which people live their lives, and on their sense of identity, than their country of origin or nationality. ***Therefore, it is important to look in both sections for relevant information.***

There are many different communities living in Sheffield and this handbook is not intended to cover every one of them. It includes communities with either a significant population, or which we expect to grow in the near future.

In addition, within any group there will be a wide diversity of backgrounds and beliefs. It is impossible to describe this diversity within this document and so the characteristics described here will not apply to everyone from a particular ethnic, religious or cultural group. **It is up to individual people to choose how they wish to identify themselves; they do not have to adhere to a certain set of characteristics to be part of a certain group.**

New Communities

Sheffield has historically been home to a number of ethnic communities such as the Irish, African Caribbean, Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Somali and Yemeni. In recent years new communities have settled in Sheffield, often originally seeking asylum, and now with refugee status. This includes people from Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Albania and Kosovo.

Obviously these communities have diverse needs, and all need to be treated individually. However there are some points to bear in mind:

- Many of these individuals will have come from situations of conflict and persecution. Some may have been tortured. Therefore many may be very suspicious or fearful of authority. Local government in places where they come from may be corrupt or oppressive. It is important to be clear that you are there to help them, and give as much information as possible.

- New communities may have come from countries with almost no effective government. Wherever they have come from, it is important to realise that it will not have been the same as here. The way institutions work here are not always obvious to outsiders. Make sure that everything is clearly explained: tell people which section of the Council can deal with which issue – don't assume it will be obvious to everyone.

- Whilst they wait for a decision on their claim, asylum seekers face a life of anxiety and insecurity. They cannot plan for the future, because they do not know when or if they will be able to stay in the country. Decisions on asylum claims can take years. Even when they get a positive decision, many new communities may be very isolated, without community members to help them settle in.

- New arrivals from communities established in Sheffield are not necessarily the same as those who have lived here for some time. They may have stricter views on codes of religion and behaviour, and will have had less exposure to western culture. They may well have much less command of English and will not necessarily link into these established communities.

- It is important to note that although individuals may share a language or nationality there may be tensions between them. These may be due to differences of religion, ethnicity, political or tribal affiliation. For example, Turkish Kurds may be suspicious of Turkish nationals, and speak a different

dialect to Kurds from Iraq. There are also important political differences between Turkish and Iraqi Kurds.

The above points are not to cause extra confusion, but to highlight how people from other cultures and countries are as different as people from Britain. In this country we understand that there are differences of accent according to region, and that there may be regional stereotypes to overcome. These differences are the same for ethnic minorities also.

General Points to Remember

- Be sure to respect other people's beliefs and principles.

- Check that people are able to read letters before sending them out. Remember that people who do not speak English may not be able to read their own language either.

- Some languages can sound quite aggressive and abrupt, when the conversation taking place is actually quite friendly! This can also come across when people are speaking English. Remember this is usually not rudeness, but simply the manner of speech of that culture or language.

- In some communities, women may have less understanding of English. This may be because their traditional role in the family means that women are less exposed to English in everyday life.

- Older people may also have less understanding of English that younger people who have grown up in this country and have been educated here.

- The Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities in Sheffield are often identified with specific areas of the city. It is important to recognise that this may not be due to a preference for a particular area, but because policies and circumstances have brought this about.

- Younger people in many communities are developing new ideas which may differ from traditional views. For example, younger people may feel less of a need to live close to family, and may wish to move out of "traditional" areas.

- There has often been a stereotype of BME communities "looking after their own". However, changes in society mean we should not assume that support needs will be met by family members. Older and vulnerable people from BME communities may need information and advice on how to access support services.

- There has sometimes been an assumption that issues of racism only apply to people from Black racial groups. As is evident in this document, there are White minority ethnic groups, such as the Irish, Gypsy / Roma / Travellers, and some

refugee communities, who also experience discrimination. It is important to recognise that diversity and difference do not just relate to skin colour.

- As a service, it is important that we do not make assumptions about what people want, but recognise and respond to their needs.

Glossary

The following definitions are provided to help you to understand terms used within this handbook, and other terms you may have heard used in relation to this subject.

Race: '*Each of the major divisions of humanity having distinct physical characteristics.*' '*A group of people sharing the same culture, history, language etc., an ethnic group.*'

Ethnicity: '*The fact or state of belonging to a social group that has a common national or cultural tradition.*' '*Denoting origin by birth or descent rather than present nationality.*'

Culture: '*The attitudes and behaviour characteristic of a particular social group.*' '*The customs, arts, social institutions and achievements of a particular nation, people or other social group.*'

Source: Oxford English Dictionary

What is institutional racism? '*The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people.*'

Source: The Macpherson Report

Common issues

Several recent studies of Black and Minority Ethnic groups or communities in the North East have been conducted (see Prevatt Goldstein *et al,* 1991; WEA, 2001; BECON, 2003; Northern Rock Foundation, 2003). All these studies identified similar issues that have been constrained due to a focus on sub-regional areas with limited sample sizes and on BME communities as a whole rather than just voluntary or community activity. The Government's strategy to increase race equality and community cohesion summarises the overall challenges facing BME communities. The reasons for these disadvantages are complex and mutually reinforcing. High unemployment, low skills levels, income, housing, health, cultural factors and living in deprived areas all influence each other. However, as part of the Home Office's 10 year ChangeUP Strategy (2004 - 2014) to develop Voluntary & Community Sector Infrastructure in the UK, the South Yorkshire ChangeUP Programme was formed. The key aim is to build and develop voluntary and community groups to enable them to work better with local agencies to deliver public services and to meet the needs of people in their communities. The programme was assigned to the South Yorkshire Open Forum (SYOF) with its immediate priority to produce an 'Infrastructure Investment Plan' (IIP) based on the infrastructural development needs of South Yorkshire.

In order to direct the delivery of the IIP a South Yorkshire ChangeUP Consortium, and a subsequent steering group was formed. The idea was to enable a representation of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities of South Yorkshire in its delivery. Four BME Infrastructure Support Organisations (ISO) of the sub-region were given membership in the consortium and seats on the steering groups; Barnsley Black and Ethnic Minority Initiative (BBEMI); Black Community Agency for Regeneration & Development (Black CARD), Sheffield; Doncaster Ethnic Minority Regeneration Partnership (DEMRP) and Rotherham Ethnic Minority Alliance (REMA). As such, the South Yorkshire BME Engagement & Participation Network (SYBEPN) was formed. The SYBEPN therefore recognises the need for a step change across the social economic and environmental spectrum of the South Yorkshire Community. One that involves, engages and supports the aspirations of the BME population.

Reasons identified for the problem includes lack of community cohesion; poverty and deprivation; the impact of cumulative disadvantages; under-achievement in

education and socio-economic status. Unfortunately, very little time and space have been given to building community cohesion and reducing alienation especially amongst young people and creating a more just, fair, equal, inclusive society free from fear, poverty, discrimination and extremist behaviour. People are therefore living in fear of anti-social behaviour, crime and violence, racism and poverty. Given the above it would appear that environmental initiatives and other community development - if properly implemented - could respond to the changes, challenges and opportunities identified in the various neighbourhood renewal programmes aimed at regenerating neighbourhoods and making them more inclusive, prosperous and cohesive. Training and development should therefore focus on issues associated with diversity, cultural awareness, religion and belief, discrimination, social exclusion, institutional racism, poverty and deprivation, inequality, social justice and alienation. The Agency must be able to understand the impact these issues have on the lives of people who have suffered because of their race, ethnicity, religion or belief, culture, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, class or status. Black and minority ethnic (BME) communities have suffered for generations due to the cumulative and historical impact of their racial and ethnic origins. Unfortunately, at a time when it would appear that anti-social behaviour and violent crimes are on the increase many local authorities are cutting back resources for youth and community development work. This must have a significant negative impact on tackling anti-social behaviour and crime.

Black and Minority Ethnic Community and the environment

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities in South Youth face the same environmental and social problems as the rest of the BME population nationwide. They are amongst the most deprived and discriminated against, disadvantaged communities in Britain. BME taken as a whole are more likely to be unemployed, living in poor housing and environment, experiencing gross inequality in health, suffering from the impact of crimes, being paid less and having less access to career opportunities. In many large towns and cities such as Sheffield, they often make up a sizeable proportion of the local population, and Pakistani, Bangladeshi and African Caribbean young people have been the lowest achievers in the education system for many years.

They have also been disproportionately represented in areas of poverty and deprivation, unemployment access to essential resources such as housing, and career opportunities.

In addition, only a few workers are sufficiently equipped with the knowledge, understanding, confidence, resources or ability to involve and support the diverse BME communities. It would take much more than environmental or community development initiatives to enable young BME people to break the cycle of deprivation, discrimination, exclusion and powerlessness. It will take much greater commitment and resources by central and local government to tackle the deep institutional, cultural and economic problems of people in the cycle of disadvantage and deprivation.

Most organisations sometimes tend to stereotype BME communities in terms of class, culture, religion and belief, lifestyles, class and needs. They often ignore the fact that the BME communities and the voluntary and community sectors, which support some of them, are very diverse and dynamic. BME communities are often marginalised from the decision making process even in areas where the Local Strategic Partnerships or public bodies have been awarded specific funding to tackle the obvious disadvantages being suffered disproportionately by BME communities. Ignorance, lack of awareness, stereotyping, tokenism or racism often play a large part in excluding BME from the decision making process and thereby perpetuates the cycle of exclusion and deprivation.

Racism is pervasive across Britain today and it is not restricted to urban or rural areas with high or low BME population density, nor is it restricted to gender, age, ability/disability, religion, belief, culture or class. It is deeply ingrained in our institutions, structures, processes and practices at national, regional and local levels. However, some sections of the BME communities such as those with disabilities, those living alone, the elderly and those who have difficulty with literacy and numeracy are particularly vulnerable to racism, bullying and harassment. People from other ethnic groups other than white can sometimes perpetuate harassment, bullying and denial of human rights against vulnerable BME individuals and groups. T

Some considerations for the Agency

In order to work strategically to promote equality and social inclusion, social justice and sustainable communities the Agency must work with local authorities to address the following issues:

- Provide more resources for tackling inequality and social exclusion,

- Acknowledge the many profound changes that have taken place in multi-racial/multi-cultural Britain during the last decade,

- Involve BME communities in all areas of decision making, identifying priorities and resources,

- Identify needs, concerns and issues associated with BME communities and involve them in all partnerships,

- Welcome, value, promote and demonstrate commitment to equality, diversity and cultural understanding,

- Challenge stereotyping, discrimination, prejudice and unfairness,

- Promote inclusion, diversity, respect and understanding between all ethnic groups and communities,

- Organise inter-cultural events and activities designed to reduce the isolation and alienation of particular cultural and religious groups and support social interaction,

- Assist and support BME communities in accessing resources and opportunities,

- Enable BME individuals and communities to access training opportunities and to work strategically to promote positive aspects of their culture and lifestyle,

- Support local communities to become inclusive and to tackle common concerns such as worklessness, poor housing and environment, crimes, anti-social behaviour, health inequality, poverty and disadvantages,

- Encourage BME individuals to become involved in mainstream activities and to fully participate in community development, skills for life learning, neighbourhood renewal and capacity building,

- Promote and support empowerment of everyone in the community,

- Identify and remove where possible barriers to social inclusion and community cohesion,

- Research and share good practice in community relations,

- Listen and learn from every community,

- Share information and good practice with all ethnic groups and stakeholders,

- Challenge your own prejudices and stereotypes and always try to be objective in all your work,

- Set good examples and show leadership, professionalism and commitment to diversity,

- Encourage interaction between various ethnic groups and assist in fostering trust and respect,

- Ensure that all literature, posters and material are free from any unacceptable racial or cultural concerns,

- Ensure appropriate use of language, presentation of information, communication of sensitive issues, use of venues, provision of food, use of artefacts and welcoming people,

- Respect diversity in language, food, dress, lifestyle, body language, customs, culture and preferences,

- Treat all others as you would wish to be treated.

Step 2: Identify where to engage with diverse communities

Because of the Data Protection Act, accessing BME communities or individuals can be difficult. Nonetheless, there are lots of organisations that are willing to provide information on BME communities. The Police and Health Authorities can sometimes provide information on figures, and some of the organisations that would readily provide information include:

- Councils for Voluntary Service *e.g.* Voluntary Action, Sheffield (VAS)

- District Council Community Services *e.g.* Open Forum for Economic Regeneration (OFFER) is the city-wide network for all of the voluntary, community and faith organisations in Sheffield (the VCF sector). OFFER exists to support VCF organisations and networks to work in partnership and strategically influence the creation of successful, inclusive communities in Sheffield.

- District Local Authorities and Metropolitan Boroughs *e.g.* Rotherham, Barnsley and Doncaster

- Faith Centres/Groups *e.g.* Sheffield Faiths Forum

- GP surgeries and hospitals

- Primary Health Trusts

- Libraries

- Local/Community Newspapers and Newsletters

- Schools, colleges and universities

- Town and Parish councils

- Refugees and Asylum Seekers Support Groups

- BME Voluntary Organisations *e.g.* know ethnic make-up and diversity of the community where you operate

- Education Services *e.g.* Ethnic Minority Achievement Services (EMAS) and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

Action Points

In order to make contact and engage:

1 Use the CVS's membership database to identify established groups,

2 Check with local sources as to what already exists,

3 Check with local sources about new population trends.

Step 3: What one needs to be aware of / awareness

Being Culturally Sensitive

An enthusiastic member of a specific BME community, especially if they are bi-lingual, can prove very helpful. Someone who has good interpersonal skills (particularly active listening skills) and knowledge of different cultures and religions can develop links with black and minority ethnic individuals and groups leading to increased trust and useful discussion.

When approaching a new group, try to learn a little about their culture and customs beforehand - polite method of greeting, eating, etiquette, role of women, *etc*. But also beware of stereotypical images and be guided by your own identity as a tool in your work.

Being aware of racial discrimination

The legal definition is that discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than others because of his/her race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin. Discrimination may be overt or covert, and varies from attitude through verbal taunts to physical abuse. BME people are very sensitive about racism and are therefore very conscious and observant about the way they are approached, *e.g.* spoken to, looked at or treated.

'There is a perception, for example, that there may be a racist attitude towards Pakistanis in sectors that are dominated by White British staff.'

Sheffield Islamic Network for the Environment (SHINE)

Diversity awareness in working with BME voluntary and community organisations

The role of any voluntary or community organisation includes widening participation and involving and embracing people from different cultures and addressing their needs. This leads to inclusive and greater experience and

awareness. In order to work with BME voluntary or community organisations the EA will have to bench-mark itself against the following:

- Its Equal Opportunities policies and other policies,

- Its equality schemes and standards,

- Its knowledge of baseline equalities information,

- Management and staff commitment to diversity and how to drive this forward,

- Attitude of staff towards other ethnic minority staff,

- Level of priority given to institutional culture,

- Initiatives to reach out to ethnic minority groups,

- Some knowledge of local statistics on equalities,

- Knowledge of issues affecting BME communities not considered priority by *e.g.* a local authority,

- Ethnic monitoring information,

- Formal commitment to the equality agenda beyond statutory obligations,

- Highly developed monitoring systems informing policy and clear links between operations and policy.

"It is not enough to stimulate participation by ethic minority communities, but the enabling is just as much about making it possible for personnel from environmental organisations to acquire the skills and awareness to work with different cultures. After all, if you were the only project worker going out to visit an ethnic minority group, being the only white person, the position is suddenly reversed - you may find yourself having the intimidating experience of feeling that you are now the ethnic minority person among a group of people who share views and ways that you do not fully understand."

Judy Ling Wong - Director, Black Environment Network

Action Points

Equality & Diversity:

1 Identify lead persons in the Agency's various departments to handle diversity issues,

2 Raise staff awareness about cultural and diversity issues - by providing equality and diversity training,

3 Ensure that planning processes at all levels of the directorates within the EA include race equality as part of mainstream actions and initiatives,

4 Empathise with comments that might arise during engagement with BME individuals,

5 Learn basic definitions of racial harassment to offer support in the right context when these issues arise,

6 Refer to the RACE Equalities Toolkit, Commission for Racial Equality publications, and diversity project reports.

Mainstreaming:

1 Continued profile raising of equality work amongst Agency staff, stakeholders and the public,

2 Carry out equality impact assessments on new and existing policies and work to identify and remedy gaps in service provision for BME communities,

3 Improve monitoring and feedback by identifying whether or not services meet different needs of diverse BME communities,

4 Improve consultation and share information across all the EA's directorates,

5 Explore low/no cost engagement opportunities with BME communities.

Step 4: Identify common issues faced by BME communities

"Sustainable communities are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all."

(ODM 2004)

Research shows that BME communities are disproportionately located in the more deprived areas of the sub-region. This deprivation is measured at the local level by the Multiple Deprivation Index (MDI). The index is based on a number of indicators, across a number of domains (including employment, crime, living environment), and measures deprivation at the level of lower Super Output Areas (SOAs).

By ranking the SOAs of South Yorkshire it is possible to work out the proportionate ethnicity of the most and least deprived areas of the sub-region. Statistical data clearly illustrates that the most deprived SOAs within the sub-region have a higher proportion of BME individuals than the least deprived. In addition to this, the 5% and 1% most deprived SOAs have a higher proportion of BME individuals than the 25% most deprived wards. Suggesting that not only are BME individuals more likely to live in more deprived areas, they are also more likely to live in areas of highest deprivation. The Government's own Action-Plan reveals that 70% of people from BME communities live in the 88 most deprived local authority districts compared to 40% of the general population (Social Exclusion Unit, 2004).

The Government's response to tackling disadvantage, social exclusion and urban deprivation led to local initiatives of regeneration. Few of these initiatives are targeted exclusively or specifically at BME communities. These include the New Deal for Communities (NDC), Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) and Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders. There are two NDC schemes in South

Yorkshire (Burngreave in Sheffield and Doncaster Central) each received £50 million over 10 years. New Deal focuses on a wide range of issues including creating jobs and training opportunities as well as improving educational achievements. The Doncaster NDC Equalities group seeks partnership with agencies representing ethnic minority groups and also ensures that equalities are mainstreamed. The NDC's goals are around crime, community, education, employment, health and the environment. In Barnsley, the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder initiative is in the Kendray area and in Rotherham in Eastwood and Springwell Gardens. One of the aims of this initiative is to lead on community cohesion to reduce tensions within and between minority ethnic and other communities. This was particularly significant in Rotherham where nearly a fifth of residents in the Pathfinder area belong to ethnic groups.

Following these interventions, the Black CARD Economic Development Theme (BET), and the Sheffield Black Communities Alliance organised a meeting at Forum House in Sheffield on 20th July 2007 to examine the extent of impact but also to launch the BME Economic Development Strategy for South Yorkshire

The meeting outlined a strategy and the representation required on behalf of all BME communities in South Yorkshire, and asked the following questions directed to:

- Linda Mc Evan, MEP for Yorkshire and Humber and Chair of the South Yorkshire Partnership Board, to state how they intend to engage the BME sector in the major economic plans of the City's Regional Strategy as a major economic development plan,

- Helen Thompson, Head of Communities, Yorkshire Forward on how the BME communities will benefit from and have access to the strategic funding of Yorkshire Forward.

This followed Black CARD's Economic Development seminar in November 2006 at the Sheffield African- Caribbean Community Development Association (SADACCA) in which membership of the BME Economic Theme (BET) was set up. At the seminar, community organisations asked for representation and development of infrastructure support to enable their organisations survive, to become active service delivery agents as well as to resource community facilities for socially and economically inclusive activities for BME communities.

It led to a strategic organisation, the South Yorkshire BME Engagement & Participation Network (SYBEPN), lobbying the City Council, Yorkshire Forward and the South Yorkshire Partnership to begin the process of including BME

communities and organisations in the economic development and regeneration initiatives of the region including requesting their inclusion in the allocation of funding and other resources. Research findings on BME Economic Development and needs presented at the last seminar were used to prepare a strategic document for BME communities based upon the consultation and participation of the communities. The following were the common issues still being faced by BME and migrant communities despite the NDC and NRF interventions:

- All the respondents indicated that there was a great and increasing need for more engagement and participation in activities,

- Respondents cited 'lack of money' as the main barrier to engaging with the local statutory and non-statutory organisations, due to the limits it places on the activities that they could undertake or engage in,

- The lack of money and permanent staff and over reliance were also identified as prominent barriers to engaging with agencies, and service providers,

- Lack of resources to adequately train workers was also cited (*e.g.* leadership, financial management *etc*),

- The importance of BME Infrastructure Support Organisations (ISOs) was unanimously and unquestionably highlighted by respondents who claimed that their non-development would result in great detriment to future engagement and participation of the sub-region's BME communities,

- The absence of a 'recognised home' or office space was suggested as a barrier to engagement,

- The issue of a 'language barrier' was highlighted as a key problem to communities accessing public services,

- The quality of information available from public service providers was cited as a barrier to engaging BME communities,

- Education, mental health and employment were also identified as areas where specific work needed to be done to engage BME communities with mainstream service providers.

Action Points

Consultation:

1 Identify appropriate champions/structures to articulate and deliver BME environmental/economic developments,

2 Enhance the capacity of intermediaries to undertake outreach work into BME communities and consider how to mainstream agencies that can support BME organisations to increase their environmental sustainability,

3 Enhance the capacity of Ethnic Minority Businesses (EMBs), especially SMEs, voluntary/community sector organisations to take up public/environmental contracts through procurement,

4 Support EMBs to increase their understanding of current business support and use of products with regards to their impact on the environment,

5 Consider offering partnership working to share knowledge, information and good practice to BME environmental voluntary/ community groups,

6 Encourage representatives from the different departments of the Agency to visit BME groups to explain their services and operations with regards to the environment.

Pro-active engagement:

1 Encourage and support representatives from local BME groups to join forums, committees, steering groups, management committees, trustee boards *etc*,

2 Offer apprenticeship schemes, volunteering, work-shadowing opportunities to BME individuals to elicit their interest in the environment,

3 Facilitate inter-cultural events in BME communities and set up road shows,

4 Facilitate the Agency's presence at community information fairs and multicultural festivals,

5 Facilitate the use and enjoyment of nature reserves, activities within an outdoor setting, parkland, inner city nature reserves, canals and waterways, by introducing small but vital elements which keep urban communities symbolically linked to nature.

Step 5: Make it happen

"There are literally hundreds of thousands of people who are unlikely to contribute to the care of nature, whether it is working for the survival of plants and animals, or for the quality of the air they breathe. They have no access to the enjoyment of the wider environment. They have no information or resources for action. They have no influence over the qualities of the immediate environment in which they live. As a consequence of living in some of the worst local environments, we should note that many of our ethnic communities retain an untapped drive to improve the quality of the environment"

Judy Ling Wong -Director, Black Environment Network

Being pro-active in outreach services

Some members of BME communities find entering formal advice centres daunting whereas others are quite happy to find out information themselves. Some are prevented by religious and cultural reasons and some due to problems with English. Some do not know what services are available or may distrust authorities. Although BME communities have the same rights to services, accessing them, however, is difficult unless an organisation takes the initiative to engage with them. The EA's staff would need skills in community development to meet and understand how to undertake this form of engagement. This will put BME communities in touch with the environment at large and through an experience which enables them to take up their rightful ownership of the environment, and create an entry point for their engagement with the conservation, preservation and development of the natural environment.

"The Qur'an and Shariah encourage people to protect the environment and to also engage in examining aspects of the Shariah that relate to conservation practices"

Eco-Islam, September 2006, Issue no. 2 www.ifees.org.uk

Community development initiatives

Many BME people are very reluctant to talk about their issues and concerns about living in predominantly white British communities. Some, for example, refugees, feel they may be criticising the country which is giving them shelter or is their adopted homeland. As a result of this fear it is important to identify individuals within the various diverse BME communities who are champions and work with them to determine the issues and needs and to find out ways of addressing them. Showing appreciation for what they do and helping them and others build skills will go a long way to promote and build good relations.

"Respondents from Eastern Europe in Sheffield disclosed that English people are helpful and smile a lot, but are not 'open' and instruction in English is often described as vague; while respondents from Africa and Asia commented that local people are often not sociable and can be unfriendly at times, making them feel excluded"

Focus group interviews 20/07/07 - Maxwell Ayamba

Social events

Social events are one of the best occasions to make BME people feel relaxed enough to talk about issues and concerns affecting them. These are the best times to come to terms with what diverse BME communities or people think about their environments and also good ways to celebrate diversity. Word of mouth via BME community centres, churches, mosques, social meetings is a very helpful 'recruitment' tool to encourage attendance and participation to the Agency's events. Look out for social events taking place within BME communities, festivals and cultural displays. Create a social event where cultural activities are important, for example mini-carnival, dance, and music from different countries and ask some

members from BME communities to join and invite friends and families. Create activities with children *e.g.* what does a child in Africa do on a farm, or a Chinese child think about a dragon *etc.*

Actively promote awareness of diversity to local communities

Spread information about different cultures, for example about religious festivals and where to find food and activities related to other countries. Explain the basic information about other religions and when people might be fasting *e.g.* Ramadan, to staff. Bring pictures and activities of local diverse communities into the Agency's literature and events. Find out how different cultures are or get involved in voluntary activities, as formal volunteering is often part of everyday life within BME communities, not necessarily the organised activity that takes place within an organisation.

Be supportive in setting up local forums or networks if appropriate

An environmental forum where BME communities could have their say about the local environment would enable them to contribute to and participate in local decision-making process. The Agency will gain first hand information about their perception of their local environments and how to get involved from diverse BME communities since there may be many different concerns related to their different specific religious and cultural beliefs and practices about the environment. These must be considered and smaller networks may provide valuable support.

"With Ethnic Minorities who have left behind a rural background when they migrated to the United Kingdom there is an intense sense of re-union with nature of coming home when they have access to the environment. Nature to them is always the same, the familiarity with grass is always recognised as grass, a tree is always a tree, beyond that there is no landscape that is completely unique, some BME groups are extremely touched by the similarity of micro-landscapes that remind them about aspects of their country of origin".

Sheffield Black & Ethnic Minority Environmental Network (SHEBEEN)

Action Points

1 Different cultures offer unique perspectives on the environment. Engaging with them will help the EA to find out about their perceptions,

2 Emphasising the central idea of the global evolving nature of the British landscape and environment as well as the movement of plants and being sensitive to how the terms alien and native species are used will go a long way to avoid misunderstanding,

3 Encouraging marginalised and BME communities to improve their local environments by providing them with opportunities that will enable them to do so through culturally and socially appropriate ways.

Step 6: Develop local initiatives of engagement

"Much of the infrastructure for achieving environmental management is composed of regulations, standards and centrally determined programmes. BME societies are more complex with more diverse range of family, social, cultural, employment, housing and other aspirations. Individuals increasingly want services and their wider environment to reflect their diversity and ethnicity. Understanding of perceptions and needs of BME communities could lead to local actions that would result in environmental stewardship"

Focus Group interview (July 2007) - Maxwell A. Ayamba

6.1 Building Trust

Ideally a project worker should be familiar with working with people from BME communities otherwise the services of a bilingual project worker would help to enlist peoples' interest to participate.

Also making people feel comfortable with the interviewer is crucial according to diverse BME community members consulted. It is an indication that the interviewer has understanding and enjoys things about other cultures and this brings an empathetic response from people. One-to-one interviews can be more frank, but a small group may also be helpful when language is a problem and can provoke more ideas. The use of bi-lingual project workers or those with cultural ties with the relevant BME community groups will help to build the trust necessary for open dialogue.

6.2 Suitable environment

Each culture has its particular aspects of social interaction in BME communities. Good consultation can occur when the environment allows for a feeling of being comfortable with other people, without stress of time limitation or lack of confidentiality. In some Muslim cultures for instance men are not allowed to undertake any form of consultation, meeting or discussion with women. So it helps

to meet with a community member first to discuss the best way of consultation with their group.

6.3 Methods of conducting consultation:

6.3.a Interviews - with BME groups one-to-one interviews whether formal or informal are considered important to gather peoples' views and ideas.

6.3b Semi-structured interviews - provide a basis for similar questions with options to expand when an interesting point is raised. They can be very useful in finding out the real stories behind people's comments. They may be harder to quantify but can be influential as real stories and anecdotes.

6.3c Questionnaires - provide people with the opportunity to voice their opinions in private and the answers are quantifiable. However in order to solicit good feedback through questionnaires then they need to be carefully structured, designed and analysed and may need sometimes to be translated into the appropriate languages.

6.3d Literature - such as leaflets, newsletters, posters, and other consultative material can be very useful to advertise a project, but generally community members respond better to being given a leaflet with some explanation. Members of a BME group may be able to distribute

leaflets and this can lead to making contacts with other groups or individuals. Use of diverse pictures or images as well as stories can help to get a message across. Preparation of culturally sensitive literature that include references to other cultures and beliefs where deemed relevant could go a long way to help some of the first generation of ethnic minorities who struggle with English as a second language *e.g.* Citizens Advice Bureaux could be useful.

6.3e Group discussions - such as focus groups, taster days, field trips, meetings, workshops, conferences are very important in attracting BME people. However these need to be arranged at convenient times and venues for the group. It is important to be clear about the purpose of a meeting or focus group. If a group has participated in a consultation exercise, they can then be invited to an information event where some of the issues raised can be addressed. It is important to them to see that progress is being made rather than the meeting being seen as just another consultation exercise. Also the role of a facilitator is crucial to maintaining the discussion in order to bring productive conclusions.

6.3f Networking with local BME environmental and voluntary groups - will provide them with the form of support needed to help the Agency find out what the main environmental issues or problems are in particular BME communities and arrange for representatives from the relevant departments to visit them and offer advice and support. They could also play a major part in providing access and contacts into communities classified as 'hard to reach'.

"Adopt equal opportunities policies that ensure members of the organisation have the awareness and skills to reach out and network with ethnic minority communities and organisations through cross-cultural training. This would lead to sharing of experience and information that could inform policy formulation"

Step 7: Using diverse voluntary / community organisations

Diverse voluntary/community organisations are where service users, employees, volunteers and trustees differ in terms of their ethnicity, age, gender, disability *etc.* The ethnicity of BME communities is just one element of diversity, because within BME communities there will be further diversity in terms of older generations of BME individuals whose views and attitudes are very different to the customs and practices of the younger generations in a community. Using a blanket approach to engage BME communities in the environment is therefore not possible because they are not homogenous. Working with diverse voluntary/community organisations will enable the Agency to understand and respond effectively to the needs of diverse local groups. It could also lead to new service users, customers, staff and a greater pool of potential volunteers. This would above all, lead to the Agency receiving fresh ideas and approaches from people from different backgrounds, cultures, genders, ages and outlooks.

"Ethnic communities are an integral part of the community in a multi-cultural Britain. There is an essential and significant missing contribution yet to be made by ethnic communities, especially in the context of globally and locally relevant actions. As British citizens, members of ethnic communities have the right to access and enjoyment of the environment. They have a right to be empowered to influence the quality of their living environments, which are often poor. They care about communities and are committed to their well-being. Environmental action has social and cultural meanings which are significant to ethnic communities"

Judy Ling Wong - Director, BEN

Action Points

Culture and diversity awareness:

1 Need for an Equality and Diversity policy to be fundamental to the way the Agency operates,

2 Need for equal opportunities and diversity training to be an integral part of induction along with ongoing training for staff, volunteers, and committee members,

3 Set up a process where service users, volunteers and some members of the BME public will have the opportunity to explain how their customs might influence the way they use or can get involved with the Agency,

4 The Agency should take into account needs of volunteers, paid staff and committee members relating to faith and culture *e.g.* breaks for prayers, same gender training, specific dietary needs, accessibility of written and verbal communication, creating less formal settings *etc.,*

5 Agency to involve minority groups in policy making and recruitment initiatives,

6 Agency to be aware of the diverse religious and other festivals as well as holidays when arranging events or contacting groups.

Step 8: Using BME press/media to engage communities

The experience and history of Black and Ethnic Minority Community groups and their relationship with the British press/media is quite mixed. According to a number of community groups interviewed, this lack of good relationship with the media is two-fold. First no efforts have been made by ethnic groups to undertake face to face meetings with the mainstream press/media to address this imbalance and therefore community groups do not understand how the press/media work. Secondly the press/media, apart from the BBC, have no firm commitment to hiring greater number of minority staff. BBC Radio Sheffield for example, has a remit to do community broadcasting which has led to ethnic minority individuals being involved as reporters or journalists in community radio broadcasting. The print media on its part has not made any pro-active attempts to address the lack of minority staff or to meet up with ethnic community groups to explore how they could work together.

This situation has led to negative or bad press at times and a distasteful feeling among ethnic community groups that the media is either right wing or biased in its reportage and also fail to cover minority stories. Ethnic community groups argue that issues of race go straight to the heart of the UK media. Britain's newsrooms - print, radio, television and the internet - lag far behind on recruitment of ethnic staff. This 'blind-to-blacks' syndrome they argue threatens to undermine claims of objectivity in the nation's press corps. Some of the local press/media are therefore insensitive to ethnic minority issues and culture.

Provincial newspapers especially are reported to have a particularly dismal track record. The ethnic community groups interviewed said that showing that diversity can work will offer the media an opportunity to expand its audience and meet new consumer needs. "Diversity need not be viewed as a 'problem' they stated, but an opportunity to practice good journalism". Diversity improves the product - the news - and by so doing helps improve democracy. Nonetheless, there is also

overwhelming evidence that the best way to engage diverse BME communities about the Agency's operational and regulatory duties with regards to the environment should be through the various BME local/community newspapers and pirate radio stations.

Using BME Press/Media to promote the EA environmental regulatory issues/messages

The above findings were gathered from face-face meetings and phone interviews with some local BME community groups as to how to the Environment Agency can use the press/media to engage them in environmental stewardship. However their response was negative since nothing good about BME communities and the environment has been produced by the press/media. It was important, therefore, to explore how a local press/media model would play a part to engage BME community groups in Sheffield, Doncaster, Rotherham and Barnsley.

The model developed is basically an elaborate 'to do' list designed to help the Agency think through exactly what needs to be done, who's going to do it, when, and how:

- Identify BME press/media such as community newspapers or newsletters and pirate radio stations in a particular BME community or area,

- Think about what the main message is - can you explain it in a simple and clear way to the understanding of BME communities?

- Will an action make a good photo? Think about the exact moment of the photo opportunity - will it convey your message in an eye-catching way to BME communities?

- Invite relevant high profile BME people to the Agency's events and activities,

- Contact a local/pirate radio station and newspaper, community/church newspapers in advance, and find out how far in advance they need a press release,

- Draw up a simple timeline for writing releases and sending them out to BME press/media

e.g. **Sample Timeline - Local/Community Newspapers**

Date	Task	Who
	Contact all local newspapers and BME community newspapers to get names of editors, journalists, reporters, photographers and volunteer correspondents plus free lance journalists. Get correct phone numbers and e-mail addresses plus dates they need for press releases and their deadline for submission of stories or articles	

Action Points

Promote good media/public relations:

1 The EA to liaise with the local press/media and compile a data base of the type of medium, names, addresses, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses of editors, reporters, journalists, producers and presenters *etc.*,

2 Liaise with community newspapers and newsletters or magazines and compile a data base of the type of medium, names, addresses, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses of editors, reporters, journalists and volunteers,

3 Liaise with BME voluntary environmental organisations and groups regarding joint issues of press releases and other issues of media interest during events or activities,

4 Identify important environmental activities and events across BME localities and establish important links with BME press/media,

5 Publicise in BME press/media its diary of environmental week of events and activities,

6 Carefully check everything the BME press/media wants, including how they want a press release written and deadlines *etc.*,

7 Monitor the local press/media especially the BME press/media in order to know what is going on and to keep up to date with events in the local area*.*

BME useful contact list

Barnsley

Barnsley Black & Ethnic Minority Initiative

4 Burleigh Court,

Burleigh Street,

Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S70 1XY

Phone: 01226 284477

Fax: 01226 284499

Email: Info@BBEMI.org

Website: www.bbemi.org

Immigration Advisory Service (Barnsley Outreach)

1 Shambles Street,

Barnsley, S70 2SQ .

IAS run a surgery at Barnsley Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) on Wednesdays from 10.00 - 12.30. To make an appointment, please ring Barnsley CAB direct on 01226 206 492

website: www.iasuk.org

Gypsies and Traveller site

Smithies Lane Gypsy and Traveller site,

Berneslai Homes

Tel: 01226772779

Fax: 01226772799

E-Mail - sarahHopwood@barnsley.gov.uk

Doncaster

Doncaster Chinese Learning & Resource Centre

37 Bennetthorpe, Doncaster, DN2 6AA

Tel: (01302) 768830

Email: **enquiries@doncasterchinese.com**

Website: **www.doncasterchinese.com**

Doncaster Women's Aid

Doncaster Women's Aid - Asian Women's Advice Service

Asian Women's Advice Service, face to face or over the telephone.Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Mirpuri and Pahari spoken

Advice helpline - 01302 340063, Tuesday 10am - 12 noon and Thursday 1pm - 3pm

Website: **www.doncaster-womens-aid.co.uk**

The Guildhall Advice Centre
Old Guildhall Yard
Doncaster, DN1 1QW

Ethnic Minority Welfare Rights Unit
Tel: (01302) 735281

Doncaster Interpretation Translation Unit

Kings Mews, 64-66 East Laith Gate,

Doncaster, DN1 1JD.

Doncaster Interpretation Translation Unit has a range of qualified interpreters who can provide both face-to-face and telephone interpretation, and we can arrange for written translation to be undertaken.

Tel: 01302 862038 |

Fax: 01302 862025

E Mail: **ditu@doncaster.gov.uk**

Rotherham

United Multicultural Centre (UMCC)

UMCC Ltd, Centre One

59-63 Carlisle St,

Rotherham, S65 1HA

Tel: 01709 360036

Tel: 01709 820907

Website: **www.umcc.org.uk**

Tassibee

Education, Training and Social Activity for Asian women

Tenants Resource Centre

Broom Valley Road

Rotherham, S60 3AE

Tel: 01709 829797,

Fax 01709 377750

Email: **tassibee@btconnect.com**

Website: **www.tassibee.co.uk**

Rotherham Ethnic Minority Alliance (REMA)

REMA is the umbrella body for Rotherham's Ethnic minority communities. Providing support to communities, communication with local decision makers and service providers and high quality projects..

Elmfield House

Alma Road

Rotherham, S60 2HZ

Tel: 01709 720744

Fax: 01709 720 831

Email: **team@rema-online.org.uk**

Website: **www.rema-online.org.uk**

Sheffield

For a full list of voluntary, community and statutory organizations in Sheffield go to The online Sheffield City Council guide to voluntary, community and statutory organizations in Sheffield - Help Yourself Directory

www.sheffieldhelpyourself.org.uk

Tel: 01142734761

Other BME contacts

Asylum Support Info - Links

Great site full of useful links, well worth a look

www.asylumsupport.info

Immigration Advisory Service (IAS)

IAS, Lower Ground Floor, Cloister House, West Riverside, New Bailey Street,

Salford, Manchester, M3 5AG.

Advice Telephone Number: 0161 2144310

E mail: Manchester@:ias.org

Website: www.iasuk.org

Northern Refugee Centre

Improving services and opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers in the Yorkshire and Humber region.

Scotia Works, Leadmill Road, Sheffield S1 4SE

Tel: (General): 0114 241 2780

Fax: 0114 241 2744

E-mail: (general) info@nrcentre.org.uk

www.nrcentre.org.uk

Refugee Access

Website for asylum seekers, refugees and agencies working in Yorkshire, Humberside and Information in a number of languages

www.refugeeaccess.info

Refugee Council

Advice line: 0113 386 2210, available Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays 9.00am to 4.00pm (closed Wednesdays)

Refugee Council Yorkshire & Humberside office

Ground Floor, Hurley House

1 Dewsbury Road, Leeds LS11 5DQ

Tel: 0113 244 9404

Fax: 0113 246 5229

www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

Useful BME Environmental reports by the Black Environment Network (BEN)

Useful BME Environmental reports by the Black Environment Network (BEN)
http://www.ben-network.org.uk/resources/publs.aspx

Ethnic Identity and Integration in Action.	download here
People and Environment in Multi-cultural Britain.	download here
People and Environment in Multi-cultural Britain.	download here
The World in your Garden.	download here
Involving Urban Communities in the Environment.	download here
All Colours Green.	download here
Multi-cultural Aspects of Developing Urban School grounds.	download here

Ethnic Environmental Participation. Volume 2. - *Key articles and papers. Judy Ling Wong.*

Ethnic Community Environmental Participation.	download here
The Cultural and Social Values of Plants and Landscapes.	download here
The Great Outdoors belongs to us too!.	download here
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`Visits to National Parks' is produced for members of ethnic communities to stimulate their interest in visiting National Parks. shares ideas about a range of activities and gives basic informati how to plan a trip and where to get support. It is one of the resou produced by Mosaic, a three year pilot partnership project (2001-led by the Council for National Parks and the Black Environment Network.

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The Engagement of BME Communities in Community Planning in the context of Environment (Cardiff, Newport & Swansea)

To assess the degree to which black and minority ethnic (BME) communities have been involved in the community planning process in the context of environment, and to use this to inform future action by local authorities and the possible role of Black Environment Network (BEN) to promote meaningful consultation and engagement.

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