

ANGUS COUNCIL

Housing Committee – 3 June 2004

BLACK & MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS RESEARCH PROJECT REPORT

REPORT by DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

ABSTRACT

This report relates to the research carried out into the housing needs and aspirations of Black & Minority Ethnic groups in Angus and Dundee from July 2003 to January 2004.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Members note the contents of this Report.

2. BACKGROUND

This research project was commissioned to address the lack of knowledge of the current housing needs and aspirations of Black & Minority Ethnic groups in Angus and Dundee and a need to develop an action plan to ensure that the needs of Black & Minority Ethnic groups are met in the future as part of the Local Housing Strategy.

Given that lack of knowledge of the housing needs of Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) groups was identified as a problem in both Angus and Dundee, a joint research project was considered to be the best option for the carrying out of the research. Angus Council's partners in the research process are Communities Scotland and Dundee City Council. It should be stressed that each of the local authority areas have been assessed individually by the consultants.

A joint research brief was drafted in the spring of 2003, tenders were issued in April of that year and the University of Dundee's Centre for Applied Population Research was selected to carry out the research process. The aims of the research, as set down in the research brief are as follows:

- a. To identify locality of BME populations across each local authority area.
- b. To assess whether present locality and housing type matches aspirations.
- c. To quantify housing need in both numbers, tenure, size and type.
- d. To identify what housing options are available to different groups.
- e. To identify any constraints on housing options of BME communities.

f. To identify effective approaches to Local Housing Strategy consultation with BME communities.

3. OUTCOMES

The research process has now been completed and the consultant's final report received. The research process itself consisted of four separate strands. These were analysis of data from the 1991 and 2001 Census's, interviews with BME community groups, a survey of BME households in Angus and Dundee, and a community workshop event. Full details of the research process can be found in the report document, which is available in the members lounge. The key findings of the research process are summarised below, under appropriate headings.

Demographic Characteristics

- BME groups accounted for only 2.0% of Scotland's population, and 0.8% of Angus's population in 2001. This reflects the concentration of BME groups in Scotland's cities.
- All BME groups experienced strong population and household growth between 1991 and 2001 in Angus and in Scotland as a whole.
- BME households are on average considerably larger than white households, although average household size fell for all groups between 1991 and 2001.
- The proportion of all BME groups aged over 70 years is rising rapidly.

Housing Characteristics

- All BME groups have a low uptake of social housing, although the proportion of most BME groups renting from a Housing Association is rising.
- The housing aspirations of most BME communities are ultimately broadly similar to those of the white population, i.e. a preference for suburban living and owner occupation. At present these aspirations are only being met to a significant degree by some members of the Bangladeshi and Indian communities in Angus.
- BME homeless people are unlikely to seek assistance from the local authority due to the stigmatisation this would bring within their own community.
- Current hostel and temporary single unit homeless accommodation are both highly unsuitable for many BME homeless people, particularly Asian women.

Barriers & Constraints

- Fear of racial harassment means that certain areas and tenures become "off-limits", restricting housing availability.
- Language is a significant deterrent to members of BME communities communicating with "officialdom", be it in the voluntary or state sectors.
- There is a degree of stigmatisation within BME communities associated with raising issues with "officialdom" through fear of provoking racial harassment by appearing to be seeking undue assistance.

Consultation & Representation

- Communication and trust are key if meaningful consultation is to be developed with BME communities in the long term.
- Verbal communication should be used as much as possible, with all written communication being translated into community languages.
- Consultation should be decentralised and utilise pre-existing community groups and networks.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct human rights implications arising from this report.

6. CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, and the Directors of Education, Finance, Law & Administration and Social Work & Health Liaison have all been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7. CONCLUSION

With the completion of this research project, Angus Council, in conjunction with its research partners, has addressed the previous lack of knowledge of the housing needs and aspirations of BME groups in Angus. Appropriate action can now be investigated as part of the development of the Local Housing Strategy to address any deficiencies identified in housing provision for BME groups in Angus.

Ron Ashton
Director of Housing.

Note: - The following background paper, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act (1973) (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), was relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report:

- **“An Assessment of the Housing Needs and Aspirations of Black and Minority Ethnic Communities living in Angus and Dundee”, University of Dundee, Department of Geography, Centre for Applied Population Research 2004.**