

ANGUS COUNCIL

Housing Committee – 26 August 2004

**MONITORING OF THE ETHNICITY OF ALLOCATIONS AND HOMELESSNESS SERVICE
USERS 2003 - 2004**

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

ABSTRACT

This report gives details of the ethnicity of users of the allocations and homelessness services provided by Angus Council over the period 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004.

1. Recommendation

It is recommended that Members note the contents of this report and agree that

- a. consultation should take place with representatives of the Asian community and individuals in Angus to agree how best to ensure access to Council housing for that group. Contact was made with interpreters, community leaders and individuals through the research which led to the publication of “An Assessment of the Housing Needs and Aspirations of Black and Minority Ethnic Communities Living in Angus and Dundee” by the University of Dundee, and it would be useful to consult with this group again.

2. Introduction

This report forms part of the Council’s continuing monitoring of functions and policies under the Race Equality Scheme.

Full data used to inform this analysis is contained in [Appendix 1](#) - Statistical Tables and Charts - Monitoring of Allocations by Ethnicity - Angus Council 2003-2004 (attached).

Population data is extracted from Census 2001 data. Housing and homeless applications data is extracted from First Housing using First Query View. The source data is entered into the Allocations module of First Housing from the housing and homeless application forms.

The data has been manipulated since the ethnicity question asked during the Census 2001 differs from the question asked on housing and homeless application forms (which is based on the CRE amended question for Scotland and is the corporate standard for Angus Council under the Race Equality Scheme). However it has been possible to combine the data from both sources into 5 broad ethnic groups:

Asian – this includes Indians, Pakistanis, Chinese and other Asian nationalities and also people who are not from those countries but describe their ethnicity as Asian, e.g. Asian-British

Black – this includes Africans, Caribbeans and also people who are not from those continents/areas but describe their ethnicity as Black, e.g. Black-British

Gypsy/Traveller

Mixed

White

In addition the categories of “Not known” and “Refused to answer” appear on the housing application form and the numbers recorded shown in Appendix 1: Tables 1 and 2.

3. Context

The research document, “An Assessment of the Housing Needs and Aspirations of Black and Minority Ethnic Communities Living in Angus and Dundee” which was carried out by Dundee University in 2003/4 commented:

“In 2001, Angus had 90 Indian, 208 Pakistani & South Asian, 229 Chinese and 327 ‘other’ BME [Black and Minority Ethnic] residents. These have been estimated to rise to 103 Indian, 257 Pakistani & South Asian, 255 Chinese and 380 ‘other’ by 2006”

These rises in population would take the BME population of Angus to around 1% from 0.8% in 2001. This would still constitute a very small minority of the population of Angus and as such it is important that the needs and aspirations of that population are not forgotten.

In analysing the data, care must be taken over conclusions since many of the figures are very small and correspond to one or two households. However, it is possible to make some very general comments about the data.

Comments on the data are by Ethnic Group since the impacts on each group differ.

4. Impact Assessment

a. Asian

Fewer applications for housing were received from Asian households in 2003/4 than in 2002/3. However, a rise in numbers of homeless applications from Asian households from one to four took place over the two-year period. Percentage housing allocations to this group remained the same over the period. Although difficult to draw conclusions from this, as one or two applications/allocations can make a large difference to the percentages, the crucial area would seem to be whether we are doing enough to raise awareness of our services with Asian people in Angus.

b. Black

One housing application was received from a black household in 2003/4, an increase from zero in 2002/3. However, no homeless applications were received from black households in 2003/4 compared with 3 in 2003/4.

c. Gypsies & Travellers

As the Census 2001 does not list this group as a possible answer to the ethnicity question, it is difficult to assess whether we are meeting the needs of this group. It is possible that those wishing to identify themselves as gypsy or traveller would have appeared in the "other" category of the Census 2001.

In 2003/4, only one application for housing was received from a Gypsy/Traveller household, the same as in 2002/3. No allocations were made to Gypsy or Traveller households and no homeless applications were received from them.

The research document, "An Assessment of the Housing Needs and Aspirations of Gypsy Travellers in Tayside" by Heriot-Watt University explores reasons why Gypsies and Travellers may not engage with Council housing services and these include issues around size, type and location of available accommodation, long waiting list times, fear of harassment and desire to travel.

d. Mixed

A rise in numbers and proportion of housing applications received from households who described their ethnicity as "Mixed" took place in 2003/4 - from 3 to 11. It will be interesting to see whether this is merely a "blip" or something we should be examining more closely in the future.

Proportions of allocations and homeless applications are more closely related to levels of population in Angus according to the 2001 Census.

e. White

The proportion of housing applications and allocations received from and made to white households in 2003/4 remains just below the level of population recorded in the Census 2001. The proportion of homeless applications from white households in 2003/4 is marginally above the level of population recorded in the Census. This is consistent with the figures for 2002/3.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The costs of implementing the recommendation in this report will depend on what required action the consultation exercise identifies.

6. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

It is considered that in following the recommendations in this report, the Council would not be acting in any way which is incompatible with Human Rights.

7. CONSULTATION

In preparing this report there has been consultation with the Chief Executive, Directors of Finance and Law and Administration.

8. CONCLUSION

While our policies and procedures are designed to be non-discriminatory, we must continue to check that they are also non-discriminatory in practice, and make the necessary efforts to ensure that all groups have fair access to our housing services. This report shows that we continue to monitor who are using our services and take action where there may be barriers to access.

Ron Ashton
Director of Housing

Note:- The following background papers, as defined by Section 5DD of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 were relied upon to a material extent in preparing this report:

“An Assessment of the Housing Needs and Aspirations of Black and Minority Ethnic Communities Living in Angus and Dundee”, Dundee University, 2004

“An Assessment of the Housing Needs and Aspirations of Gypsy Travellers in Tayside”, Heriot-Watt University, 2003