

Racial Equality Group: Quarterly Briefing 1, May 2021



Welcome to the first edition of the quarterly briefings produced by the Racial Equality Group. The Racial Equality Group is supported by [the Centre for Excellence in Community Investment](#), and is made up of a diverse cross-sector network of housing professionals who are committed to conversation and action around racial inequality within our sector and the communities we serve.

We also want to encourage social landlords to take action towards racial equality, especially with regard to how they deliver services and support their black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.

This briefing will be a quarterly update of news, reports and projects about race, housing and communities. It will include national news as well as updates from within the social housing and community investment world. Where possible, we will include a contact for the items we include in the briefing, so readers can start more conversations and develop their practice.

Sewell Report

On 31 March 2021, the government published [The Report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities](#), commissioned in 2020 amid the resurgent Black Lives Matter movement. The report is a state of the nation analysis into racial disparities in the UK, and has proved controversial since its publication. This is largely because of its conclusion that “claims the country is still institutionally racist is not borne out by the evidence”, which the Racial Equality Group rejects. The report is a significant and potentially divisive moment in the ongoing discussion about race in this country, which is still unfolding. We have collected together a range of links about the report.

- Guardian article into the [key findings](#) of the report, and an article from a range of commentators giving [their verdict](#) on the report
- The [statement from BME National](#), the collective voice for housing associations for black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, on the report. BME London Landlords also have a [statement](#).
- The response to the report from the [Runnymede Trust](#), which includes their statement, a video recording of a webinar discussing the report, and a petition.
- A blog from [Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#), discussing what the data on racial equality tells us about the existence of institutional racism.
- [Google news](#) shows articles from a wide range of sources to keep up with the story as it unfolds.

Nottingham Community Housing Association

Nottingham Community Housing Association (NCHA) recently announced a [new funding agreement](#), which ties a lower interest rate in part to increasing the number of Black, Asian and minority ethnic colleagues they have on their management team.

NCHA also publish their equality and diversity documents on their [website](#). This includes a [Role Models](#) booklet, showcasing the diversity they have across their organisation including at board.

They have also published their [Equality Diversity And Inclusion Strategy 2020-21](#), which includes a list of KPIs on page 10 by which they will measure how successful they have been in promoting diversity and equality through their work with residents and communities.

Laura Jones, HR Partner at NCHA said:

“Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion panel are focused on the under-representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups and women in our people manager roles. We’re aiming to increase BAME representation in our management team to 13% by 2025, from our current position of 10%.

In our work with residents and communities, we will use data we have on protected characteristics, to ensure there is no under or over representation to our services for all of our customers including those from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups. If disproportionate representation is identified, then the relevant service areas will work on plans to find out what can be done to improve access to services, or reduce negative impacts.

This is a key priority for NCHA and through our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion plan, we’re committed to driving positive change and demonstrating we mean business.”

If you would like to speak to Laura about NCHA’s work, you can contact her at Laura.Jones@ncha.org.uk

Places We’re Proud Of report

The National Policy Advisory Panel on Gypsy and Traveller Housing is a group of housing providers committed to extending provision and raising standards in sites for gypsy and traveller communities. In March, they published [Places We’re Proud Of](#), which shares some key lessons for providing good quality sites. Some of the insights within the report about building trust through meaningful engagement with minority communities could be applied to much work which is about advancing racial equality.

Rachel Pinchin is Deputy Chief Executive of Elim Housing, who sit on the panel. Rachel said:

“Our vision at Elim is to meet housing need and deliver homes that change people’s lives. The homes and services we provide for the Gypsy and Traveller communities clearly demonstrate the life changing impact of a good quality, affordable home. We want to encourage housing associations to help address the shortfall in good quality housing.

Collaboration and ongoing effective communication with current and prospective residents and trusted community representatives is at the heart of the successful site delivery and future management. Through positive and transparent site design, informed by the people who live there, and a consistent management approach, we are proud to have been able to dispel neighbourhood concerns and demonstrate how housing for Gypsies and Travellers can fit well and work alongside, and as part of, local communities.”

If you would like to speak to Rachel, you can contact her at R.Pinchin@elimhousing.co.uk

Articles and resources

A selection of recent articles relating to racial equality:

- NHF have produced a tool which allows housing associations to [compare the demographics of their workforce to their local community](#). This follows their report into [Equality, diversity and inclusion in housing association staff in England](#), in November 2020.
- Simetrica-Jacobs have a new report on [Anti-Asian Racism and what we can do about it](#)
- [Sharon Lee](#), CEO of Aelwyd Housing, talks about [their approach to tackling racial inequality](#), as part of Tai Pawb’s [Deeds Not Words](#) pledge .
- Inside Housing cover housing sector responses to BLM in their article [“how to talk about race”](#)
- Inside Housing profile MTVH and their [history of providing housing for the Windrush generation](#).
- Nesta Foundation have a new [EDI strategy](#), which has a good amount of detail about how they will measure progress to ensure they reach their goals.

Past resources

In each briefing, we will include links to resources which have come out before the previous quarter between briefings.

- [Forty Years of Struggle: A Window on Race and Housing, Disadvantage and Exclusion](#), BME National and Human City Institute, 2016.
- The Centre's [BAME communities and Covid-19 briefing](#), 2020