

Consultation Draft

Oxford City Council

Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Action Plan 2006 - 2009

Action point no.	What will we do?	When will we do it?	Who will take the lead?	How will we know if we have succeeded?
	Developing a better understanding of the housing situation, needs and aspirations of BME communities			
1	Act upon the findings from the sub-regional research on Gypsies/Travellers that are relevant to us.	Start in July 2006 when results will be available		Depends on what the research reveals – could be a completed project or a review of policy/procedures
2	Commission research on the housing circumstances and needs of BME communities	April –July 2006		Completed project with approved recommendations
3	Ensure that, where relevant, ethnic origin data is collected as part of ‘mainstream’ pieces of research so that the circumstances and opinions of different groups can be compared	Throughout the plan period		Completed projects that allow comparisons to be drawn and any necessary action to be taken
4	Find ways of increasing the number of BME tenants who respond to our tenants’ surveys	Throughout the plan period		Increased response rate so that statistically significant comparisons can be drawn
5	Analyse whether the reasons why BME households become homeless tend to be different from the reasons why households from the British White population become homeless	October-December 2006		A completed report, which may include recommendations for action
6	Use a number of ways in which to engage people from black and minority ethnic communities	Throughout the plan period		Increase in number and diversity of BME people being engaged
7	Use the option appraisal that is planned to determine the future of our sheltered housing as an opportunity to engage BME people	?????		Achieving engagement of BME people in the process
8	Review criteria for providing funding to tenants’ and residents’ associations	January -March 2007		Completed review
9	Seek to find out whether there are any particular factors that	Throughout the plan		Identification of factors and an action plan to

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	may be causing BME tenants to feel less satisfied with the services they receive	period		deal with them
	Ensuring equality of opportunity in services			
10	Provide assistance in the form of training and resource packs to voluntary and community organisations so that they are better equipped to deal with enquiries that arise	January – March 2007 and then keep updated		Pack prepared and distributed. Completed training programme
11	Expand the housing 'surgery' services we provide in community organisations	2007/08		Increase in the number of surgery sessions
12	Review our interpreting services to ensure that all staff are aware of the Languageline service and set out guidelines for when face-to-face interpreters should be provided	October-December 2006		Completed review and guidelines prepared and disseminated
13	Ensure that the relevant communities are aware that we carry out 'faith-based adaptations' to our homes	Include in different forms of publicity throughout the plan period		Completed publicity programme
14	Exploit all opportunities to provide social and other low cost housing in areas of traditional BME settlement. Ensure that social housing mix reflects the needs of the communities seeking to live in the areas.	Throughout the plan period		Completed schemes. Reduction and eventual elimination of the disparity applying to social housing lettings to particular BME groups
15	Expand housing association ownership in traditional settlement areas through supporting proposals for acquisition and refurbishment, including our own housing needing high cost work	Throughout the plan period		Completed schemes. Reduction and eventual elimination of the disparity applying to social housing lettings to particular BME groups
16	Evaluate a scheme to give incentives to tenants who under-occupy their homes to move to smaller accommodation	April-June 2007		Completed evaluation with approved recommendations
17	Together with colleagues and partners, implement a comprehensive strategy to open up new housing opportunities beyond traditional settlement areas	Develop strategy in 2007/08 and implement throughout the plan period		Completed strategy document with all partners committed to it
18	Provide more information about existing housing options in areas that are not those of traditional settlement	Include in different forms of publicity throughout the plan		Completed initiatives

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19	Consider the re-introduction of schemes to provide more larger council homes through loft conversion and extensions	Review options and make budgetary provision October-December 2006		Completed review with agreed recommendations
20	Exploit opportunities to redress imbalances in the existing stock by housing association new build	Throughout the plan period		Reduction and eventual elimination of the disparity applying to social housing lettings to particular BME groups
21	Work with housing association partners, to consider 'group lettings' arrangements when new build schemes are let. This will involve making introductions to new tenants at pre letting stage of new or refurbished developments.	Link to action point 17 – strategy to be developed in 2007/08		Completed evaluation of the scheme with all partners committed to recommendations
22	Make post-move visit to new tenants moving away from traditional settlement areas to make sure that they are settling in alright and providing on-going support where needed	Link to action point 17 – strategy to be developed in 2007/08		Scheme introduced
23	Consider funding community organisations that provide local support services, tying funding in to the development of support initiatives for new arrivals in an area	Link to action point 17 – strategy to be developed in 2007/08		Completed review with agreed recommendations
24	Work with tenants' and residents' associations to ensure they are welcoming to newcomers	Link to action point 17 – strategy to be developed in 2007/08		Associations' demonstrating that they are doing this
25	Conduct a comprehensive review of the services we provide for homeless people from BME communities	September 2007-March 2008		Completed review with all partners committed to the recommendations
26	Work with the County Council on further homelessness prevention measures for previously unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who have leave to remain and have reached age 18	January-March 2007		Prevention measures in place
27	Introduce an initiative to provide information and access to networks for victims of forced marriage	January-March 2007		Initiative in place
28	Develop a comprehensive homelessness information and publicity service for the community	Include in different forms of publicity throughout the plan		Service established

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29	Develop an information sharing protocol with NASS to provide early notification of people at risk of homelessness	January-March 2007		Protocol in place
30	Ensure that the choice based lettings scheme takes account of the potential dangers/issues outlined in the BME strategy	Throughout the cbl development phase		Scheme takes account of the needs of BME communities
31	Make our sheltered housing schemes and other services for older people more accessible to people from BME communities, including: networking with community organisations, ensuring scheme-based staff receive race equality training, building links between particular sheltered schemes with local community organisations, holding open days, continuing efforts to recruit people from BME backgrounds to work in sheltered schemes, including the creation of development opportunities	Work to start in October 2006		Increasing levels of take-up of services by BME communities
32	Consider, with our housing association partners, the need for joint promotional activities of services for older people	December 2006		Decision made about whether joint activities needed. If they are, existence of a programme of joint activities
33	Monitor the profile of lettings at John Kallie Court.	Throughout the plan period		Completed monitoring reports
34	Evaluate the guidance and good practice that is available on culturally sensitive design and, in consultation, consider whether we should lay down some basic principles to be adopted for all new social housing	April-June 2007		Report setting out evaluation with agreed recommendations
	Working with partners to ensure that communities are harmonious places in which to live			
35	Carry out a thorough review of our approach to tackling racial harassment	October-December 2006		Completed review and new procedures
36	Ensure that we are represented at a senior level at the multi-agency panel. Encourage housing associations and other appropriate agencies to attend its meetings.	Throughout the plan period		Completed review and partners are happy with the level of representation
37	Work with the Oxford Race Equality Council to ensure that comprehensive statistics on housing-related racial harassment	Throughout the plan period		Regular and comprehensive statistics compiled and circulated to interested

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	are kept and disseminated.			organisations
38	Make a particular officer specifically responsible for 'myth busting' work	January 2007		Officer identified and widely known
39	In partnership, develop programmes of social, cultural and sporting activities in our estates to foster involvement of all sections of the community	Throughout the plan period		Programmes established
40	In partnership, develop contingency plans to deal with the heightening of racial tensions brought about by such events as wars or serious terrorist attacks	January-March 2007		Plans drawn up and widely known
	Underpinning activities			
41	Mount a race equality training programme, which all staff will be required to attend. Managers and front line staff will be prioritised for the training.	January-December 2007		All relevant staff trained. Programme for new staff in place
42	Provide race equality training for the leaders of tenants' and residents' associations and for those involved in service user forums	January-December 2007		All relevant tenants/service users trained.
43	Carry out a review of ethnic monitoring, including giving consideration to the service areas where monitoring should be carried out; methods of, and responsibilities for, analysis and who should receive reports and how often	April-June 2007		Completed review. Regular monitoring reports produces and circulated
44	Improve our learning from others, including arranging for race equality issues to be discussed on a more regular basis with our partner organisations, taking steps to ensure that relevant issues are discussed at regional and sub regional forums we are represented, considering joining benchmarking and good practice clubs, making it a responsibility of particular officers to identify and share good practice both within and outside the Council	Throughout the plan period		'Race' items appearing regularly on agendas. Good practice being shared and acted upon