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Race Equality Action Plan:
Community Engagement Analysis

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Report authors:

Llorenc O'Prey, Andy Parkinson, Sarah Usher, Sam Grunhut, Dyfan Powell, and Anna Burgess

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- Wales office: 21 Alban Square, Aberaeron, Ceredigion, SA46 0DB (registered office)
- West England office: 2-4 Park Street, Bristol, BS1 5HS
- North of England office: Milburn House, Dean Street, Newcastle, NE1 1LF
- London office: 52 Cecile Park, Crouch End, London, N8 9AS

Contact details:

Tel: 01545 571711

Email: wavehill@wavehill.com

Twitter: @wavehilltweets

Web: www.wavehill.com

Any questions in relation to this report should be directed in the first instance to Llorenc O'Prey (llorenc.oprey@wavehill.com)

Welsh Government contact: Hannah Fisher, Hannah.fisher@gov.wales

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Executive Summary

In order to ensure that the Race Equality Action Plan is grounded in the lived experience of racism and discrimination, the Welsh Government offered a grant scheme in late 2020 to small community groups and race-based organisations. They ran community engagement exercises with people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, including people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, across all parts of Wales. The grant recipients engaged with almost 2000 people and summarised their findings within written and video responses.

The community engagement work aimed to reach into communities to ensure that the voices of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals led and informed the development of the Race Equality Action Plan. The Action Plan aims to set out the Welsh Government's commitment to creating an anti-racist Wales. This report presents a summary of the themes and issues raised across each of the 23 responses provided through the community engagement exercise.

Racism and Discrimination

Drawing on the lived experiences described and outlined powerfully in responses, what is striking about racism and discrimination in Wales is that **many people experience it on a regular basis** across different aspects of their lives. In conversations with people and communities, responses highlight a huge variety of ways in which racial discrimination can operate, and the impact that it can have. This includes very specific instances or situations which impact on certain people or communities, as well as broader overarching trends that shape inequalities more broadly.

A key finding is **the range of different racial discrimination** people experience in day-to-day interactions across different aspects of their lives, including in engaging and participating in society, accessing public services, and in having their voices heard. This included overt and covert racial discrimination, from explicit verbal hostility through to micro-aggressions. Responses also highlighted experiences of statistical discrimination, profiling and institutional racism that shape interactions in the community, at work, and in accessing public services.

Together, the racial discrimination people experience **can have profound consequences**. Responses described instances where racism and discrimination had silenced people, created hostile environments, increased social isolation and undermined wellbeing. A key theme running through responses was the traumatic impact that racism and discrimination can have on people's sense of self-worth and their mental health. Responses also described the compounding impacts of racism and discrimination, including in accessing and sustaining employment, sustaining inequalities of opportunity and outcome, and for social mobility.

Key Themes

Responses also described experiences and perspectives raised by people and communities in the policy areas the Action Plan focuses on, including amongst others in education, employment and income, and health and social care.

As well as the racism and discrimination people and communities experience within specific settings and policy areas, responses also highlighted the **lack of cultural awareness**, both within individual interactions, and at an institutional or organisational level. Responses described instances where people were treated in ways that were not sensitive to their specific needs, cultural beliefs, or traditions.

Together, the racism, discrimination and cultural insensitivity and lack of acceptance people experience serves to **undermine trust and engagement** from people and communities, especially with services and support delivered through public institutions. This issue was compounded by the **lack of voice** people felt they had, both within broader democratic processes at the local and national level, as well as within the design and governance of public services.

Another key overarching theme relates to **lack of effective, meaningful dialogue and communication** between people and communities and institutions and organisations, both public and private. There was also a general sense of **frustration with efforts to address racism and broader inequalities**, with some highlighting limited progress on issues such as diversity, representation and persistent inequalities of opportunity and outcome. This served to further undermine trust in institutions to deliver tangible change and acted as a barrier to securing positive engagement from people and communities.

Responses also highlighted that the challenges and barriers presented by racism and discrimination **are compounded by other factors**, including a person's gender, where they live, and their socio-economic status. Parents, especially mothers, for example, highlighted that they experience specific challenges which impacted on their ability to participate in society, especially around accessing work, which served to compound the barriers they experienced due to their race or ethnicity.

Responses also raised themes or issues that impacted **on specific people and communities or substantive policy areas**. A common experience highlighted across responses, for example, was the overt racism and discrimination children and young people from many different backgrounds experience at school or in other education settings. For people and families where Welsh and English are second languages, a common theme was the language barriers they experienced which prevented them from engaging fully in society. These and other issues and themes are explored in more detail across the report.

Conclusions

Many responses **highlighted practical suggestions and recommendations** on how the Action Plan and government agencies more broadly could address racism and inequalities across Welsh society. This report does not seek to replicate these recommendations as we

understand that these have been considered as the Plan is developing. This report seeks to highlight the key themes arising across a combined analysis of all of the community engagement work, which include improving communication, engagement, and participation, improving the transparency of decision making, and in actively bringing about more tangible change to people's lives. There was also a focus within recommendations on the importance of education, both in celebrating and recognising diversity, addressing racism and discrimination, and in improving the opportunities available to young people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.

1 Introduction

In March 2020, the Deputy Minister and Chief Whip committed to bring forward a Race Equality Action Plan for Wales. Work on this plan accelerated as the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people became clear. The development of the Race Equality Action Plan aims to set out the Welsh Government's commitment to taking an anti-racist stance and to making the required changes to achieve racial equality in Wales. It will set out the Welsh Government's vision, values, intentions, and the practical actions it will take to address racial inequality.

Between September and November of 2020, the Welsh Government administered a short-term grant to fund direct engagement with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities across Wales to enable the sharing of lived experience with the Welsh Government. The purpose of the grant was to ensure insights, views, experiences and concerns are gathered and are reflected in the development of the Race Equality Action Plan for Wales.

In collaboration with community groups and grassroots organisations, the Welsh Government was interested in understanding how different forms of racism and discrimination, including structural and systemic racism, impact on people's lives. These organisations represent and support a diverse range of communities across Wales, including people who identify as Black or Asian, Gypsies, Roma and Traveller communities, and Syrian refugees, amongst others.

Groups and organisations sought to understand and communicate the experiences and perspectives drawing on a range of voices from within each community. In total, 24 organisations and groups from across Wales participated (3 of which provided a joint response), providing written submissions and video responses, each outlining the specific issues facing the community they represent. Just under 2,000 individuals were engaged across the groups. A summary of the organisations and groups that contributed responses, and the communities they work with, is provided in the [Appendix](#) of this report.

To support the development of the Action Plan, the Welsh Government set out to examine the issues and themes highlighted within and across responses. They commissioned Wavehill, as an independent research organisation, to prepare an overarching report on the issues and themes contained across the written and video submissions. This report presents the findings of this analysis. The subsequent sections of this report aim to aid the Welsh Government's understanding of the themes raised across responses, and to generate discussion and ideas on how the Action Plan could respond to the voices, priorities, and lived experiences of communities across Wales. Within the Action Plan, many of the quotes and lived experience analysis are provided by the community led reports.

Approach

To make sense of the perspectives and issues raised across the responses, the review team at Wavehill conducted a thematic analysis. This approach involved the systematic examination of each submission, highlighting the key themes, issues, and experiences that they raise.

These were then mapped against the policy areas highlighted by the Race Equality Action Plan, including:

- [arts, culture and heritage;](#)
- [crime and justice;](#)
- [education;](#)
- [employment and income;](#)
- [health and social care;](#)
- [housing and accommodation;](#) and
- [leadership and representation.](#)

A key focus of the analysis was to understand how race and ethnicity shapes and informs the lived experiences of people and communities across Wales. The analysis also sought to understand the impact that inequality, discrimination, and racism can have on people, including in shaping adverse outcomes. The analysis therefore sought to understand both experiences and outcomes highlighted in responses.

From an analytical perspective, the focus on lived experiences and perceptions is important in understanding how inequality, discrimination and racism can impact on different communities. It can also help to illuminate the role and dynamics of intersectionality,¹ including the ways in which race and ethnicity intersects with other factors such as socio-economic status, gender, and disability in shaping experiences and outcomes. From this perspective, Race is understood as multidimensional in nature and shaped by context, social and societal relations, and in institutional dynamics.

In terms of policy formation, this approach can serve to illuminate the ways in which policies, regulation, and public services can create or maintain racial inequalities. Lived experiences, such as those powerfully communicated throughout the responses, are important in considering the role and potential of government policy to support greater racial equity. This analysis draws on the views and perspectives of communities in considering the implications of lived experiences of discrimination and racial inequality in the development of the Action Plan.

The Structure of this Report

This report communicates the findings of the analysis. Firstly, the report highlights overarching themes and perspectives raised across responses. The report then goes onto examine the themes as they relate to the substantive policy areas highlighted within the Action Plan. In conclusion, the report considers some of the possible implications of the analysis for the development of the Action Plan, including areas that merit further exploration and inquiry.

¹ Intersectionality is an analytical framework for understanding how aspects of a person's social and political identities combine to create different modes of discrimination and privilege. Examples of these aspects are gender, sex, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, religion, and/or disability.

including in print, broadcast and social media. There was concern and anger around the language and stereotypes used to describe people's backgrounds or religious and religious identities:

No we have not seen any good news reports in the papers apart from the ones with sport personalities. We are always shown as bad people, but we are not. It's time that people showed us to be good.

I stay off Facebook and other sites because as soon as you hear of other Travellers you know Facebook will be full of racist stuff.

TGP Cymru

A key feature of this theme were the limitations of classification systems in understanding and reflecting on identity and experience. From these perspectives, the use of prescriptive definitions, including Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME), served to confine communities and limit self-expression:

People with protected characteristics (race) have often reported that the acronym 'BAME' does not describe their ethnic identity.

Black Lives Matter

There were concerns that terms such as BAME did not reflect diversity of experience, including different ethnicities, identities, and religions, but also as individuals within communities. From these perspectives, race and ethnicity are not homogenous or monolithic, but diverse and multifaceted. Classifications such as BAME afford little opportunity to identify more specifically to a person's ancestral or cultural heritage:

When my son started secondary school they asked for his ethnicity but there was no 'British Pakistani'. In high school it feels we've been treated differently even though I'm British born.

Women Connect First, Hayaat Women's Trust and Henna Foundation

Concerns were also raised that established classifications and definitions of ethnicity may also serve to embed or perpetuate more nuanced forms of racism and discrimination. From these perspectives, it was felt that classifications such as BAME can result in adverse racist and discriminatory consequences in the form of statistical discrimination or profiling. This is where perceived group characteristics are assumed to apply to an individual:

Get rid of the equal opportunities monitoring form. Writing your name, declaring your ethnicity, can negatively affect recruitment.

Race Council Cymru (Swansea)

At an institutional level, statistical discrimination and profiling can lead to insensitive responses that conflate issues affecting particular people or communities. Some reports

The majority of participants have had experience of health and social care in Wales with the majority expressing that they had had a good experience, and felt that they didn't face any barriers or difficulties.

Race Council Cymru (Cardiff and Vale)

Beyond specific examples of public services people had received which they found positive and supportive, responses also highlighted experiences and perspectives of engaging with the broader community that they found positive:

Our work has also very pleasantly revealed from the experiences of the BAME Community that the people of Wales are very friendly, inclusive, diverse, equitable and there is good community spirit. People in general have found Wales more accepting of other cultures. There is also a comment that Wales is a very progressive country with a progressive generation demanding equal rights for all people.

Hindu Cultural Association Wales

There were also other examples of respondents highlighting that they felt Wales was more tolerant and inclusive than other countries in which they had lived or experienced:

The majority of people we spoke to were really positive about living in Wales as a whole or living in their part of Wales (especially the countryside) with some people feeling that Wales was a safer and more tolerant place to live than England with better integration and opportunities.

TGP Cymru

2.12 Priorities and Recommendations

Across responses, recommendations are offered on how the Action Plan and government agencies more broadly could address racism, discrimination, and inequality of access and outcome in Welsh society. They were diverse in nature, with recommendations ranging from specific suggestions for changes to certain services or support, through to broader policy, economic and societal changes that were required to support greater equality.

A key theme raised across responses, for example, was the importance of education. From these perspectives, education is a route to improved cultural awareness and sensitivity, and that this can lead to greater understanding and less discrimination and racism. Suggestions and recommendations included greater cultural diversity training and education to support public servants and others in leadership positions to understand and engage with all people and communities. Responses also highlighted the importance of celebrating diversity and culture amongst children and young people at school. This was often seen as important in addressing racism and discrimination, including for future generations.

Improving the education outcomes of young people from different backgrounds was also seen as important in addressing some of the other factors that can disproportionately impact

on certain communities. From these perspectives, poverty, social exclusion, and social mobility, for example, could be addressed, at least in part, through improved education opportunities and outcomes for these communities. For some, including refugees, this included an expansion of learning opportunities for people to learn English which would enable them to participate more fully in society.

The report now turns to outlining the themes relating to specific policy areas highlighted in the Action Plan.

3 Arts, Culture and Heritage

This section outlines issues and themes raised throughout responses in relation to arts, culture and heritage.

3.1 Experiences

Cultural Representation

There is a belief in ethnic minority communities that there is a lack of cultural representation in wider Welsh culture. This absence of appreciation for the plurality of modern Welsh culture has been linked back to colonialism as well as, the systemic creation of 'the other' with regards to migrants and those of differing faiths, traditions, and histories:

Very disheartening is the fact that many people do not feel that their culture and community is represented in Wales. Interestingly, this has not prevented people from engaging with Welsh culture and heritage and many report having a good understanding of it. "Very well. As is the consequence of colonialism. The subject understands the master and the master knows nothing of the people apart from the false knowledge of their barbarity that 'needs' to be dealt with using a heavy hand.

Black Lives Matter

There were also concerns that where representations did exist in modern Welsh culture, these tended to be infused with prejudicial and racist narratives. This issue extended to most people and communities represented in responses, including by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, including Gypsies, Roma and Travellers:

I feel like my culture and community is represented as hateful, violent and uneducated.

Race Council Cymru (Newport)

Multiculturalism and cultural differences in Wales and Britain are not celebrated and respected with one participant stating that "you can't be Welsh and Black"

Sub-Sahara Advisory Panel

This issue extend to spaces and opportunities for people to express themselves through creative practice and expression:

There's no public space for dance, hip hop and breaking. People really depend on it and there's no availability. There needs to be more jams and dance competitions, it would bring more people to Wales.

Avant Cymru

Cultural Engagement

In addition to lack of cultural representation and celebration, engagement with diverse cultures and traditions from the broader Welsh community was perceived as an issue. Some responses for example highlighted that they felt marginalised, that their tradition and way of life were rejected:

Most felt that their culture and traditions took second place to other groups in Wales who were seen to have support through special events to highlight and be proud of their culture; some wanted it taught in school and others were more cautious as many traditions are private; young people talked about lots of the settled community 'wanting to act like Gypsies and that is annoying' especially when they themselves don't feel its valued by others.

TGP Cymru

Others outlined that there was positive engagement by broader communities in understanding and engaging with different perspectives, communities, and identities:

The survey asked participants if they felt their culture and community is understood in Wales. 55% said yes and this was due to their local grassroots communities where they have held events which showcase their culture as well as creating partners with other local grassroots communities of different ethnicities, sharing their culture and heritage.

Race Council Cymru (North Wales)

Lack of Cultural Acceptance

Within reports there was the sense that some communities were not generally accepted by broader society. This impacted and shaped broader societies engagement with certain communities, and influence the discrimination and racism that they experience in their day-to-day interactions. This was strongly felt by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities:

Everyone spoke with pride and positivity about their families, culture, traditions, Gypsies and Travellers represented in sports - almost no-one thought that Gypsy and Travellers cultures were either understood, respected, valued or supported in Wales either by the Government or by settled people.

TGP Cymru

3.2 Outcomes

Loss of Cultural Identity

There were concerns that lack of engagement with, and acceptance around, certain cultures and perspectives, contributed to a loss of cultural identity within those communities:

We were told that some of the BAME people who participated in this survey felt detached from their own history and culture and do not live in an environment where they can re-connect. In rural settings there is more of a need to showcase local cultural diversity.

Race Council Cymru (West Wales)

Legal and Policy Implications

Some responses highlighted that the consequences of a lack of cultural representation and awareness fed into broader legal and institutional responses. This served to formalise, institutionalise, and perpetuate racial discrimination and inequalities across Welsh society:

A high proportion of respondents [to our survey] (88.3%), also said that the gap was widened by historical laws and policies, which “do not reflect the current diverse community we are living in”. For example, regulations towards BAME groups demanding prohibitive money for health surcharge during visa application.

North Wales Africa Society

3.3 Additional Themes

What can be done?

The showcasing of the variety of cultures that now inhabit Wales is seen as being crucial to ensuring that all cultures and backgrounds are accepted and understood. It is worth noting that this must be done carefully and that utilising the arts and performance to do this should be done in a way that is respectful and genuine.

Under no circumstances should a genuine approach to resolving this issue involve organisations or individuals that do not have a track record of uplifting these communities regularly. This work would need to be authentic and help build the economic strength of these communities that would be helping to create cohesive race relations in Wales. Furthermore, it will emphasise the importance of Black people telling Black stories, returning the power of the narrative to the rightful owners of the narrative.

Black Lives Matter

4 Crime and Justice

4.1 Experiences

Hate Crimes

Reports raised incidences of respondents being victims of hate crimes. Responses often highlighted the impact that these crimes can have on people, including increasing anxieties both around the event itself and within the experiences and procedures following it. These crimes can often go unpunished due to a lack of reporting (either due to being unsure how to report or having a lack of trust in the police) or due to the shortcomings of the systems in place to prosecute individuals:

One time I was on the bus, I was going to go to get an outfit in town and an old man was getting on the bus. I was looking down at my phone and didn't notice him, when I realised the old man was next to me it was very tight so I couldn't get up to give him my seat. This woman told me to get up and let him sit down. Then she started saying - 'These people are so rude...these immigrants don't have any manners... I bet you don't even have a passport...you have bad manners'. Then the woman was bad mouthing Muslims. I wanted to defend myself but my mum didn't want to make a fuss. No one else got involved, everyone stayed quiet".

Women Connect First, Hayaat Women's Trust and Henna Foundation

Children have featured in responses as those who have been reported to have [experienced] racist behaviour. That is a loud cry for a need for change. Overwhelmingly, those who responded that they have endured a hate crime, have also reported that they either did not report it for lack of trust in the system, or did report it and were not satisfied with the outcome.

Black Lives Matter

I have never reported it because I always feel that there is nothing that can be done. I Usually get racist comments said to me while in town or shopping... when I have reported it I was told by others you are playing the race card.

TGP Cymru

Lack of Support from People of Authority

In terms of the people speaking out against racism and discrimination, another issue that has raised in responses was a lack of support from those in positions of authority in places like schools, businesses, and communities. It is this lack of support that feeds into the narrative that the system is broken which leads to more and more people who are victims of hate crimes not coming forward as they distrust that their complaints would be taken seriously. This suggests that racism and discrimination may be under-reported:

Of the participants that had experienced a Hate Crime and reported only 1 participant said they were happy with the outcome. Those who did report a crime felt that the police either were not that interested or failed to follow up sufficiently. Some participants told us they felt police were not trained properly to understand the impact of hate crime and had been bias.

National BAME Youth Forum

Institutional Racism

Reports highlighted that some communities and groups view the police as a service that is institutionally racist, citing for example practices such as racial profiling, an indifference towards victims of crime, and a reluctance to engage and process hate crimes. This can negatively impact on people's perceptions of the police force:

Stop and search more frequent than that of the white populations. This low level racism runs through out so much of the CJS. Certainly not all officers are racist but those who are disinterested or have fixed racist ideas somehow overshadow the majority. Thirty two of 66 respondents [to our survey] (49 percent) thought that the criminal justice system in Wales stigmatises BME youth rather than safeguarding them, and only 9 percent thought this was not the case at all. Fifty two percent believe strongly that racial stereotypes are found in police culture and only 3 percent (two people out of 67) thought this was not at all the case. Nearly all respondents wanted to see improvements in the criminal justice system and 'training' on issues of importance to the BME population featured in many comments.

North Wales Regional Equality Network

[Our] survey asked the participants if they had been a victim of Hate Crime. Over 60% of participants who answered this question said no. Of the participants that had experienced a Hate Crime and reported it, 50% said they were happy with the outcome. The other 50% who did report felt that the police either were not that interested or failed to follow up sufficiently. Some participants told us they do not report incidents to the police as it is verbal abuse which they are used to and have been suffering all their lives; confidence in the police is low.

Race Council Cymru (West Wales)

Immigration System Flaws

Alongside institutional racism within the police force, some reports also highlighted institutional racism people experience within the immigration system:

I think that the immigration system in UK is discriminatory it is very slow and difficult to find out what is happening. When you are seeking protection having to wait for four years or longer for some people to find out if you can stay is very stressful and does not seem to be a fair or humanitarian system. The only experience I have had of the police is having my fingerprints taken.

TGP Cymru

4.2 Outcomes

Public Safety

There were concerns that hate crimes were getting worse and more prevalent. As mentioned previously, incidents including overt racism, including islamophobia, were becoming more common. More broadly in terms of other forms of crime, other reports highlighted that there was a general sense that people felt safe in their community from a crime perspective:

When asked if they felt safe in in the community that they live in, an overwhelming amount of respondents [to our survey] stated that they felt safe (75%), with only 8% feeling that they were unsafe or very unsafe. Encouragingly, 90% of respondents felt safe enough to go out in the community alone.

Neath Port Talbot Black Minority Ethnic Community Association

5 Education

5.1 Experiences

Racist Abuse and Bullying

A key theme across responses was the explicit racist abuse experienced by children and young people in school settings. Responses highlighted that they can be environments in which people from minority racial and religious backgrounds can be subjected to a range of overt and unconscious discrimination. In addition to the submissions report that institutional racism exhibited through practices such as by-standing and negative stereotyping have exacerbated the impact of the abuse than individuals have faced:

It was reported by participants that there is a lot of ignorance, inappropriate jokes and verbal racism, "My teacher at school made me run around the room and pretend to be a monkey whilst making monkey noises", "I was labelled as "aggressive" when trying to express myself", "He would call me inappropriate names that insulted the colour of skin". The students reported these were by students and teachers alike causing the discrimination.

National BAME Youth Forum

The impact of racism and bullying could have profound consequences:

[These kids] are bullied and called everything, this is why they can't go to high school. Because what they gets is 'You are a smelly Gypsy'. They used to take my sons clothes and shoes, he had to come out of school at 7. Lots of kids had to do the same whatever they do they get the blame. If they get beat up and they hit back the Gypsy kids are in the wrong, this is why they don't get anywhere. They when they try to fit in you are not allowed to fit in. They start getting bullied this is why they have to come out. It's not for us. This is the reality; they say water and oil don't mix. It's not for the sake of it, it's what happens no one sees, no one wants to know what is going on, as long as they have someone to blame.

TGP Cymru

Issues of racism and bullying extended right across different settings, including early years and through to university, and in Welsh-medium and English-medium settings. Through engagement with parents and care workers across Wales, for example, Mudiad Meithrin outlined experiences of bullying and racist slurs and name-calling in early years settings.

Treated Differently

Responses also highlighted that it was commonplace for children and young people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds to be treated differently to other pupils and students. For example, people often express their heritage through their hair style, how they dress, and language usage, and how these were perceived or treated differently by other

pupils and staff. This treatment was often felt to be disproportionate, insensitive, and at times discriminatory:

It is well known that Black students report experiences of being punished for their hairstyles, cultural expressions of frustration (i.e. Kissing of teeth), and that they are disproportionately excluded and academically awarded much lower grades than their white counterparts.'

Black Lives Matter

The Role of Teachers and Staff

A reason that was commonly cited for the differential treatment of certain pupils and students was the important role teachers, lecturers and institutions have in supporting inclusive environments. From these perspectives, implicitly respondents felt that teachers and staff were not always creating inclusive environments, and that their actions including in engaging with pupils, in the content of teaching and learning were contributing to differential treatment.

Teachers can be unaware or unsure how to deal with race issues generally and specifically. A further nine responses were directed to the need for appropriate training for teachers (and, presumably, other school staff) on similar issues but, in addition, how to handle racism, racist behaviour and bullying in the school. Two comments noted the special problems of teachers in rural schools serving small monocultural populations.

North Wales Regional Equality Network

There were also instances where prejudices were impacting and shaping engagement between teachers and children and young people. These negative stereotypes influenced teachers' behaviours, and served to impact negatively on pupils, including in undermining confidence:

One time my son handed in an assignment, he was accused of copying from the internet. Why? They said it was too good, they wouldn't believe that he wrote it. He was given bad predicted grades. They put the boys down. They label them naughty, then they lose confidence.

Women Connect First, Hayaat Women's Trust and Henna Foundation

Lack of Diversity in the Education Profession

A key factor contributing to inequalities in education highlighted by some reports was the apparent lack of diversity within the teaching profession, including those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds. This has several implications for respondents, including in creating and sustaining inclusive environments, both in the treatment of all people and communities, and in delivering a curriculum that is wide-ranging and sensitive to different cultural and historical traditions:

The participants reported that there are very few BAME teachers or head teachers in their schools. A proactive drive to recruit teachers from BAME communities encouraging paid training support for all subject matter teachers including the arts is required.

Race Council Cymru (West Wales)

Lack of Diversity in the Curriculum

Another key theme was the perceived lack of celebration and teaching of difference, including the range of cultures and traditions within Welsh society. From these perspectives, this would promote greater understanding amongst children and young people. It would also support and promote mutual respect across different communities, and work to address the discrimination and racism within education settings and broader society:

The education system in Wales should be revised with the following subjects of colonialism, slavery, and migration history in Wales being included in the new curriculum. Essentially, the history of Wales and Britain should be taught to include minorities and migrants.

Sub-Sahara Advisory Panel

The participants feel that there is a lack of cultural activities and feel that there is no black/colonial history in the curriculum.

Race Council Cymru (West Wales)

Education and training, in the broadest sense from professional development to the curriculum, was repeatedly raised as a potential solution to the challenges of discrimination and inequality faced by participants. While some educational and training provision already exist, a more transformative approach would be to embed the values of equality, fairness, anti-racism, and religious freedom into mainstream training and education, rather than as an additional element of existing frameworks.

Centre for Islamic Studies and Muslim Council of Wales

English Language Education

There was dissatisfaction within some reports surrounding the level and standard of English language lessons that are available. This is not just referring how this is taught in school environments but also for adult learners who are looking to develop their English skills so that they can better access services and potentially find employment:

For adults who have arrived in Wales education to help them learn the English language has not been sufficient enough for them to become more independent or to secure employment on the whole. There is significant dissatisfaction about the progress they have made to learn English. The main reason for this is that when they attend ESOL lessons, the tutors do not speak Arabic, so that the extra support and tuition they may need is not available to them

at the time they are learning. This has impacted their ability to gain work and has meant that they are still reliant on support workers to provide support with issues such as healthcare, housing, benefits and other such things.

Antur Cymru

Good standards of teaching

Some highlighted the support and help that they had received from teachers and schools. This included refugee communities who felt that their children and young people were being very well supported:

There is a very high level of satisfaction with the education that their children and young people are receiving to provide them with a good foundation upon which to build their longer-term career prospects. In fact, the feeling is that Syrian children are doing much better in Wales than anywhere else these families have lived in terms of Education.

Antur Cymru

5.2 Outcomes

Educational Attainment

Reports highlighted lower educational attainment of children and young people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds than their peers. This was felt to undermine their life-chances, including in supporting successful transitions into adult life and exacerbating and perpetuating inequalities across a range of measures:

The Welsh Government must work to raise educational attainment among those ethnic groups that are under-performing in order to support and increase successful transitions from education to employment.

Sub-Sahara Advisory Panel

Isolation

The manifestation of many of the issues that have been highlighted in this section, including the racism children and young people experience, is an increased sense of isolation. From this perspective, racism and discrimination are the outward expressions which define the boundaries of a particular community. To be continuously excluded from a community, both in terms of interpersonal interactions and institutional and collective responses, can lead to a sense of isolation that is profound:

Besides comment on the racial discrimination of staff members, a general feeling of not belonging takes root in individuals who perceive their isolation as being imposed on them systemically in the form of segregation. "During my college and university...I struggled and [I] fight to belong as I always feel segregated." There were poignant reports ranging from

the perceived inadequacies of teacher training to the need to supplement education of students who belong to marginalised communities (free of charge). Though this sense of isolation can differ between individuals dependent on when they first engaged with Education in Wales.

Black Lives Matter

6 Employment and Income

6.1 Experiences

Lack of Appropriate Employment Opportunities

A lack of employment opportunities in respondent's local community was highlighted as a key barrier across responses. This included apparent lack of stable, well-paying jobs available for people to apply to:

Also, those in rural areas feel that there are less employment opportunities than in urban areas. Access to transport is an issue as many Syrian families have no access to their own transport and rely upon public transport, which in rural areas would be a barrier to getting to and from work.

Antur Cymru

Whilst this issue was raised across responses and for all people and communities represented in responses, there were specific people and communities for whom this issue was particularly pressing. This included asylum seekers, for example, where securing employment was a key barrier with a range of consequences, including an inability to participate and integrate fully into society.

Securing Employment

There were also reports of individuals from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds finding it hard to secure and maintain employment. Reports cited factors such as a candidate's ethnicity as influencing hiring decisions and making it more difficult to find employment. With regards to maintaining employment, reports cited either being released or not having contracts renewed, or on the other hand dealing with issues that lead to constructive dismissal.

'I know so many young Muslim men and women with degrees and good qualifications who struggle to get jobs. I've faced it myself too. There are so many promotions I've been overlooked for and so many job interviews I've been unsuccessful at that you start seeing a pattern. I also found out recently that a colleague who started at the same time as me but with less experience was being paid more. I had to dig around to find out why and apparently when they hired him, they made a simple decision that he should have been on the higher point of the pay scale whereas I was left on the lower end. We both do the same job, and I came in with more experience, but he was judged to be worth more.'

Islam UK Centre and the Muslim Council of Wales

Within this theme there was also the perception that qualifications and experience held by people with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds were not considered fairly in the recruitment process:

The lack of opportunities is one reason but, in most cases, respondents reported that it is because the skills and qualifications, even extensive, are deemed to not match the post. The three top employment barriers [by respondents] are considered to be race, immigration status and discriminatory advertisement and recruitment process. In summary, the evidence from the respondents shows that BAME applicants are looked down in high earning job vacancies or are reconsidered after having been offered a job.

North Wales Africa Society

Practical barriers to employment were significant for some, including lack of public transport connections in more rural communities. A key barrier for some communities, especially those people for whom English and Welsh are second languages, was access to good quality English and Welsh language learning opportunities, including English as a Second Language (ESOL) courses.

Maintaining Employment

Racism and discrimination also impacted on people once they were in work. These included instances of discrimination that led to people losing their jobs:

When they built [the shopping centre], I went in as front-of-house. The CEO... rang. They wanted someone one bi-lingual, I spoke to him very nicely and professional. The next day he came to Cardiff. I lost my job that day. There was three of us in the office, him, the office manager and me. I had a call from the agency and asked if I could come over. The agency worker said 'the CEO thought you weren't right for the job, they wanted someone older'. She said 'when you think of front of office you think of someone older in a pencil skirt and a bit different'. Well I said 'that is discrimination and ageism, and the real reason is my colour isn't it?' She just shifted 'I can't say anything and jeopardise my job'. I lost my job, I left it as it is that level of acceptance. Choose your battles. I didn't care too much about that job however that's my day to day life. This is what I expect going into an interview. They are looking at my colour first.

Women Connect First, Hayaat Women's Trust and Henna Foundation

Lack of Cultural Awareness

Linked to the challenges some people and communities experience in maintaining employment, some responses outlined the lack of cultural awareness in the workplace that can impact negatively on them. This manifested themselves in many ways, such as a lack of dietary options when organisations put on events, making comments that may be unacceptable, ignorant and offensive, and a lack of space or understanding to practice their chosen religion, for example being unable to work on certain days or holidays:

Many of the research participants who are Muslims have cited that social activities in British workplaces usually involve drinking alcohol, but due to their religious beliefs are unable to participate, and that this in their view contributes to feelings of isolation in the workplace.

Sub-Sahara Advisory Panel

Workplace Bullying and Racism

Further, there were experiences of more explicit forms of discrimination. Workplace bullying and racism were also highlighted as a major issue in some workplaces. Responses highlighted experiences of different forms of discrimination, including more overt racism through to sustained microaggressions within the workplace:

Yes, I am often racially abused {in professional capacity} at weddings and events. In the past I was not given promotions based on race (clear even if not stipulated) and I was overqualified for the position.

North Wales Regional Equality Network

This can have a profound impact on people, including in increasing levels of anxiety at work:

You have to neutralise the black culture within us in order to get through your profession. Black people are bright and very passionate about something when we talk, we believe it. They think we're loud. When I'm in work mode I switch, my friends say they would have thought I was a Welsh person if they didn't know me. I put on a posh voice and say hello how are you when I answer the phone. My whole demeanour, my actions, pitch of my voice all go into work mode. Being a black girl going to a Welsh school you kind of become and learn what works and what gets noticed. In order for them to take me seriously I have to put on an act all day at work...I have to act a certain way. I have to dress a certain way. I can't relax. I'm acting all day at work.

Women Connect First, Hayaat Women's Trust and Henna Foundation

It was also mentioned that a lack of cultural awareness and sensitivity was an issue, and companies not previously having to accommodate the needs of people of different faiths and backgrounds. In some instances, there were challenges to reporting racist behaviour in the workplace, and also a fear that it would be dismissed or impact their ability to engage and flourish in work and community life:

Those Participants who did not report a hate incident or crime, told us the incidents happened at their workplace or in their neighbourhood they chose not to report as they were worried it would affect their employment or affect their home life.

Race Council Cymru (North Wales)

Workplace racism and bullying were highlighted as a regular feature of work across the private and public sectors:

Almost 60% of the respondents taking part in our survey are employed in the Public Sector such as the NHS, Council etc and our survey has revealed that 68% of the respondents have more than likely experienced racism at their place of work. The majority of the respondents were concerned about the impact of racism at their place of work and almost 40% disagreed that all employees had an equal opportunity for career progression/promotion at their workplace.

Hindu Cultural Association Wales

Lack of Representation in Authority Positions

Responses also highlighted the lack of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic figures in positions of power and in other higher positions within the organisation in which they work. Some voiced frustration with feeling like they cannot progress upwards, whereas others are more frustrated with the lack of diversity of people within leadership positions to act as role models and provide support:

The participants were asked if they felt their ethnicity is represented at senior level in their place of work. The majority of participants said no however, we were told this does not affect their place of work on a day to day basis. "no role models exist therefore we have to manage our aspirations and the level of understanding about different backgrounds at senior level is low". "All top management are white and have no lived experience of racism so cannot empathise and are often guilty of unconscious bias."

Race Council Cymru (West Wales)

6.2 Outcomes

Under-Employment

Due to the difficulties in securing and sustaining employment opportunities, many individuals reported that they found themselves settling for lower skilled or lower paid work than their experience and skills would qualify them for:

Many BAME members are unable to get employment in service sectors, especially in public sectors like Council, Assembly etc. As a result of this situation, many ethnic people who have graduated from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, are either driving taxis or working in low paid jobs. On one occasion, an Indian person who had done an MBA from a UK University had been denied employment by a Cardiff employer because he has an accent.

KIRAN

Wage Discrepancies

A key theme across reports was the role and impact of wage discrepancies within the labour market. Individuals reported that they believe they find themselves being paid unfairly in

comparison to colleagues who do the same jobs. Reports cited examples of people being passed up for pay rises, being paid the same as more junior and less experienced colleagues, and being offered to start a job at a lower salary than expected:

There was some reports of salaries not being adequate and participants doing work beyond their duties “The salary is not appropriate for the work load”, “Good paying jobs are very hard to get if you’re BAME, lack of opportunities”, “I have been treated fairly however salaries are not always proportionate to the job that I do”.

National BAME Youth Forum

Social Exclusion

Securing employment was seen as an important part of active and meaningful participation in society. Barriers and challenges in securing and maintaining employment exacerbated social exclusion, including reducing the financial and social resources that are required to engage in community life. This was especially apparent for groups that were actively excluded from the labour market within government policy, including asylum seeker and refugee communities:

Asylum support is a very small sum for a family or individual to live on and I believe this should be increased. I also think that asylum-seekers should be allowed to work in wales and in UK so that they can contribute to the community and support their family and give them the opportunity to be respected. Some people do not know that asylum-seekers are not allowed to work and they think they are lazy or they shouldn’t be here and they are taking money and food from other people. Not being allowed to work is bad for people’s mental health and integration.

TGP Cymru

The longer they remain on benefits the harder it will be for them to progress into employment or self-employment. Meaningful employment allows Syrians to integrate more with society in general, improves self-esteem, confidence and motivation and has positive benefits for the entire family.

Antur Cymru

Self-Employment

Some individuals reported that they had resorted to pursuing self-employment due to reasons such as an inability to secure work, and the dissatisfaction and discrimination they experienced within the workplace:

It is very hard to get a job, most are self-employed... Roofer, gardener scrap men and their children will take on their profession when they are done. They want to keep doing this because they like being their own boss and sticking to their cultural ways. I think that if they stayed in school that people would be able to get a better job and better income. The girls will often get a different job like cleaning and office work. The men would talk about others who aren’t doing jobs that are typical Gypsy jobs, for instance if one was a gardener

another a scrappy and one in a factory then the man would talk bad about the man in the factory.

TGP Cymru

7 Health and Social Care

7.1 Experiences

Lack of Cultural Awareness

A key theme across the submitted reports was the perceived lack of cultural awareness by some health and social care staff. Lack of cultural awareness served to shape interactions with staff in ways that left people and communities feeling like they were being treated differently. In certain situations, a perceived lack of cultural awareness also extended to the treatments that were offered to people and communities. These included, for example, people being offered treatments that contain trace amounts of alcohol or animal products that contradict specific religious or cultural beliefs:

My surgery only offers nasal vaccine for flu jab and it contains pork galenite (sic) which is not permissible in Islam. I tried hard but the surgery staff or pharmacies don't cooperate.

North Wales Regional Equality Network

The lack of cultural awareness affected all communities represented within responses, but that the form and implications varied across different groups. As highlighted in the example, some responses highlighted concerns surrounding cultural awareness that relate to specific beliefs, traditions or cultural practices. As highlighted earlier in the report, this extended to supporting people in social care settings:

We were told that some have experienced poor personal care – “Afro hair is normally cut short to bald as white staff members are unable to look after it”.

Race Council Cymru (Cardiff and Vale)

Animosity and Racism from Staff

Several organisations reported that the groups they had talked to had experienced animosity or racism from staff working in the health and social care sector. These experiences ranged from a lack of respect and being looked at and treated differently, through to being ignored altogether due to factors such as the way that they look and the way that they speak:

I was very well treated and supported by most medical staff, except one consultant who was very condescending because I am a foreign woman. As he was foreign himself, he followed his country's tradition to speak to the husband of the woman-patient rather than to the woman herself.

Race Council Cymru (Swansea)

Both the old and the young in their communities are treated less fairly than these groups in majority, Welsh society; are convinced that public services need to be more aware of racial and ethnic differences and receive better training.

Romani Cultural & Arts Company

Again, this issue affected all communities represented in responses, including members of Traveller, Roma and Gypsy communities as well as people from other backgrounds.

Language Barriers

For certain communities, language barriers were identified as another key barrier that limits access to, and the effectiveness of, health and social care services. Language barriers were highlighted as impacting on the ability to book appointments, and in communicating with staff. This could have profound consequences, including the inability to describe symptoms and in determining the correct diagnoses, and confusion surrounding how to take prescribed medication:

Language was reported as the biggest barrier; Participants whose first language was not English told us, that not having interpreters at the first point of contact, has led to misdiagnosis or the patient not being able to understand the diagnosis and treatment.

Race Council Cymru (North Wales)

This particularly affected those that have recently moved to live in Wales, including people for whom English and Welsh are second languages such as refugees and asylum seekers.

Inadequate Care

Reports also highlighted concerns around the quality-of-care that people and communities receive. This was expressed in different ways, including the consequences derived from the lack of cultural awareness, animosity from staff, and language barriers that people experienced. This was also apparent in understanding, anticipating, and responding to health issues that predominantly or are more likely to affect certain groups or communities:

With regards to barriers and difficulties, there was a theme of patients who did not feel that doctors were very well educated on health issues that predominantly affect people of African descent such as sickle cell anaemia.

Black Lives Matter

There is a high incidence of disability among the Syrian population due in some part to injuries sustained in the Syrian conflict, and lack of access to specialist care has been affected. There is also the feeling that whilst medication is prescribed, not enough time goes into investigating the root causes of health issues so that appropriate corrective interventions can take place.

Antur Cymru

The consequences of inadequate care highlighted in responses may be poorer health outcomes that can serve to further marginalise certain groups and communities. This relates back to the issue of intersectionality and the compounding impacts of poor health on a person's ability to participate in society.

Access and Waiting Times

There were also general concerns around extended waiting times. These often centred on accessing primary health care services, including GP appointments. This was particularly an issue for individuals who have not received or may have only recently secured settled status and recourse to public funds. It was also raised as a compounding barrier for those who require a translator or other forms of support to attend a medical appointment, which could delay appointments and treatment:

One of the participants felt there was an issue with delayed diagnosis "My mother waited over four years for an accurate diagnosis. In this time, she was made bankrupt" and another participant who reported that they faced discrimination commented "They found it difficult to diagnose me because of my skin colour".

National BAME Youth Forum

Refusal of Service

Some responses also reported that individuals they had surveyed had been refused service by health and social care organisations. This included refusal due to a lack of a fixed address, reportedly being refused service by staff after hearing their accent, not being believed, or taken seriously, or having no recourse to public funds due to immigration status despite needing urgent attention:

Speaking in a foreign accent results in turning down appointments over the phone and have seen others get appointments after us, when we were refused even at the front of the queue at [named GP practice].

North Wales Regional Equality Network

This issue was reflected across responses and for different groups. The consequences could be profound, as with inadequate care, refusal of support could serve to further marginalise certain groups and communities through poorer health and wellbeing outcomes.

Lack of Understanding of Health and Social Care Services

Other responses also highlighted that a lack of understanding was a barrier to effectively navigating and accessing support that is available. Closely related to language barriers that can impact on a person's ability to understand communications from health and social care professionals. Responses also raised the importance of familiarity with how things work, including in navigating and accessing support:

I came to Wales on my own and I have had support from social care, but only now talking to my Advocate I am beginning to understand the different people who help me and who they work for. I think that it would help to have more information explained early on with an interpreter because when you do not speak English it is difficult to know who is who and how they can help you. The people where I live are helpful and very positive and supportive. When I arrived in Wales I was on my own and very anxious and frightened. The social workers I met did not explain where I was or help me understand properly who they were. I know now that they did not have experience helping asylum seeking children and for a long time I was kept isolated but now things are changing and I understand more about how to be involved in decisions about my life. Things need to change so that professionals know how to help people.

TGP Cymru

The Importance of other forms of Support

In responding to health and welfare issues, responses also talked about the importance of other forms of support, including family, the broader community and third sector organisations. This was partly due to issues surrounding the lack of trust and cultural sensitivity offered by public services:

Older participants noted that their primary needs were met by their religious community and family. They did not feel comfortable accessing mainstream services for older people.

Centre for Islamic Studies and Muslim Council of Wales

This particularly affected communities that felt that provision was lacking, including around mental health provision and support, including people with Black backgrounds.

Positive Experiences of Health and Social Care

Another theme across reports was the positive experiences of people accessing health and social care and support. This included in the quality and conscientiousness of the care and attention that people had received:

Most of the participants reported a good experience of the health service and have not experienced many barriers or difficulties while accessing or using the NHS, as it is very culturally diverse.

Race Council Cymru (West Wales)

7.2 Outcomes

Poor health and wellbeing

Because of the additional barriers and constraints people face in accessing services, and the negative experiences of support and care they receive, responses also highlighted the negative impact that they had on health and wellbeing. This theme also included references to COVID-19 and how the negative impacts of the pandemic have affected some communities particularly acutely and disproportionately, including those of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.

Unable to afford to eat healthily, which will worsen as COVID affects BAME more greatly. 55% of the respondents cannot afford to eat healthily, 50% do not feel healthy and 24% do not have enough money to feed themselves and their children.

Horn Development Association

Isolation

Respondents also talked of the challenges of social isolation and loneliness within their communities. It was not always possible to determine the extent to which this was a consequence of health and social care provision, as most references to this theme referred to sense of isolation from the wider community. There was also reference to current circumstances surrounding COVID-19 as exacerbating the situation, especially for older members of the community.

Mental Health Impacts

Compromised mental health was a key concern across responses. There were strong concerns surrounding the adverse impact that discrimination and isolation experienced by people and communities across their lives:

Moreover, this study has found that 71% of participants claim that their mental health has worsened during the pandemic. Additionally, research participants have often raised the matter of mental health and the significant impact racism has had on their mental health. They have argued for improved mental health services in Wales and for increased numbers of counsellors from similar ethnic backgrounds.

Sub-Sahara Advisory Panel

Responses also raised a variety of mental health challenges facing people and communities, including in the issues that they face and in accessing mental health provision. There was a general sense across reports that mental health provision was lacking, and that existing provision was not always effective:

Additionally, research participants have often raised the matter of mental health and the significant impact racism has had on their mental health. They have argued for improved mental health services in Wales and for increased numbers of counsellors from similar ethnic backgrounds.

Sub-Sahara Advisory Panel

Another issue with regards to the mental health is that certain communities may have specific needs, or are more likely to present with certain mental health issues. Refugees and asylum seekers, for example, may have experienced significant trauma in their past which impact their mental health. It was noted by several sources that they felt that mental health services were not able to support or address the specific issues they were experiencing:

Similarly, some participants had experiences of mental health services and support not being appropriate or not meeting their needs. They felt services do not know what they are going through, and do not facilitate groups where people can meet others with similar experiences, which would reassure them they are not alone.

Diverse Cymru

7.3 Additional Themes

What can be done?

Responses identified what they see as being the necessary steps that should be undertaken to tackle inequality within health and social care. There are calls for a shift in culture amongst health and social care staff whereby they can appreciate the range of issues that people of all ethnicities may present with and that they engage them with cultural sensitivity and respect. There are also calls for an increasing diversity across the health and social care workforce to contribute to efforts to improve experiences and outcomes for those accessing services:

Understandably, the suggestions made [across responses] point to the culture of the medical professionals that needs to change. There is a need for medical professionals to be better trained to specifically tackle any likelihood that they will be discriminatory and racist. There needs to be a clear expectation that they do not discriminate against individuals and be properly disciplined when found to have reports of patients who report racism, systemic or otherwise.

Black Lives Matter

8 Housing and Accommodation

8.1 Experiences

Housing Availability and Affordability

There was a general sense that there were shortages across all forms of accommodation and tenure, including rented and owned. This presented a significant barrier for people and communities in securing good quality accommodation. This was apparent, for example, amongst Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities:

There is not enough accommodation for all the Gypsy and Travellers in Wales, There are lots of Gypsies in Wales that now live in houses but wish they could live in a Trailer. There needs more sites built in the whole of Wales. I have been involved in the Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs assessment and steering groups and unfortunately we as a community are always the last to find out what is happening. The council need to talk to us more and get our opinions.

TGP Cymru

There were also concerns relating to the availability and affordability of housing, including social housing. Some responses raised the issue that low pay and under-employment that is prevalent within many communities limited the choice of housing and accommodation that they could secure. Low pay and unemployment, for example, increased the risks of people being faced with eviction, a situation made worse by COVID-19. More broadly, lack of suitable housing could have profound consequences for people and communities, including experiences of homelessness:

I was homeless for years living with no toilet and shower, and then had my children and struggled with the children. I was living in a trailer on people's drives and couldn't even get water all the time. X council were discriminating against me, because of my culture I was forced into a house as that was the only way I could get a toilet and bath for my children. There is no homeless system for Gypsies and Travellers.

TGP Cymru

Living in Shared Accommodation

For those living in rented accommodation, shared spaces were said to pose its own challenges for individuals from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds. The issues surrounding shared accommodation include minority groups being subject to discriminatory behaviour, including being targeted due to their race or ethnicity:

The responses highlight that shared accommodation comes with the burden of "antisocial behaviour" that includes "discrimination".

Black Lives Matter

Dealing with Landlords

Living in rented accommodation also presented challenges with regards to dealing with landlords, both in the private and social housing sectors. Many individuals report issues with their landlords with regards to ensuring that maintenance and repairs are carried out, an issue that is said to have become an even bigger since the COVID-19 pandemic where people are spending more time at home. Some felt that the issues or problems with housing they raised were ignored. Others reported that they experienced racism and discrimination from landlords:

They have repeatedly reported racist incidents to their housing association, but these have been dismissed and not taken seriously at all. In one case the housing association lied and threatened to evict the participant for anti-social behaviour after they defended themselves against racism.

Diverse Cymru

Community Discrimination

More broadly within the communities that people live, reports highlighted the prevalence of discrimination and racism people experienced. This negatively impacted on their ability to engage and participate within their local communities, potentially exacerbating social exclusion and isolation that they experience:

[One] participant has experienced discrimination and hate incidents with their neighbours. They did not identify the non-stop issues with their neighbours as discrimination or a negative experience. In conclusion, almost all participants had negative experiences. The main causes they identified for these experiences were systemic discrimination, lack of cultural awareness or understanding, stereotypes, and prejudice. The woman was still going on and on and on. And nobody said anything. Clearly she said "I have to paint myself black to get a free bus pass". So, you got all these, sometimes a car will pass you, they call you "terrorist" or "go back home" and all that stuff. So, you get used to it. For the rest of your life, you are living here, you get used to and then you think it's normal, you know.

Diverse Cymru

8.2 Outcomes

Poor Housing Conditions

A key concern related to the poor-quality housing conditions many experienced. Issues such as damp or accommodation being in a general state of disrepair were highlighted. Some also highlighted a lack of furniture in rented accommodation or social housing as being an issue.

Some families with small children are living in one bedroom flats. Houses are dilapidated and 'Everything is broken'. The standard of asylum seeker's housing and maintenance needs vast improvement. For those that rent, housing is often over-crowded and leaves no space for the children to study. Asylum seekers who reported maintenance issues in their accommodation have had to call Migrant Help to force their housing manager to address the issues.

Race Council Cymru (Swansea)

Overcrowding

Overcrowding was a key consideration and theme raised across responses. The small size of much of the available and affordable accommodation, coupled with potentially large numbers of people required to live in that space, was seen as a key concern, especially in light of the challenges of COVID-19. There were also examples, for example, where overcrowding was a consequence of intergenerational housing, especially within social housing settings.

The main issue reported, was the acknowledgment of multigenerational housing. When accessing social housing this was not taken into consideration, often leaving tenants in overcrowded houses that did not suit their needs.

Race Council Cymru (Newport)

Whilst the majority of reports highlighted an issue with overcrowding, one submission did suggest that this may not be the case within the more rural communities:

Overall, there is little to suggest that our respondents live in overcrowded accommodation, as might be expected in metropolitan areas or areas of BME settlement in the old industrial towns of northern England.

North Wales Regional Equality Network

Inability to Afford Homes

A key concern surrounding housing was the inability of many people and communities, including those with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, to access and participate in the housing market. From these perspectives, low pay, poverty, and broader systemic discrimination meant that certain groups were less able to secure finance and purchase their own homes. From these perspectives, inequalities of opportunity and outcome, particularly

around education, employment and income, impact on people's ability to achieve financial security through asset accumulation. This may in turn serve to perpetuate and entrench inequalities within society:

Because of their low income, temporary nature of their jobs, many BAME people are not able to qualify for mortgages or get onto the property ladder. As a result, they remained in tenanted accommodation for the whole of their lives.

Black Lives Matter

9 Leadership and Representation

9.1 Experiences

Need for More Diverse Leadership

The importance of reflecting and representing the diversity of voices and backgrounds of people and communities across Wales within leadership was highlighted across the responses. This was both from a perspective of ensuring that these voices are considered within decision making, but also in providing more meaningful participation for these groups in society. From these perspectives, there was both implicit and explicit recognition that leadership was not representative of the full diversity of the people of Wales, both in the makeup of legislatures and institutions, and incorporating views and perspectives in policy formation.

BLM Wales supporters expressed a resounding 'yes' to having more diverse leadership to support a better understanding of the needs of people in Wales. Issues with communication were forecast to be overcome with such a move and the creation of more opportunities for people to share their perspectives.

Black Lives Matter

Lack of Knowledge of Welsh Government

A key barrier to engaging in the public sphere raised across responses was knowledge and understanding of the remit of the Welsh Government, how decisions are made, and how people and communities engage in policy making:

Our survey has clearly indicated that there are many Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller people who are unaware of their rights; have little or no knowledge of the Welsh government's strategies, action plans and policies on equalities and race; believe that the Welsh government does not recognise and respect Romani and Traveller rights and needs; experience local government officers who have no understanding of Romani and Traveller cultures nor any respect for either.

Romani Cultural & Arts Company

All Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Shortlists

Another theme explored across reports was the role of all Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic shortlists for certain leadership posts, including for political appointments. Where this theme was raised, there appeared to be support for the approach in ensuring that leadership is more representative of different people and communities:

The survey then asked if there should be a cross-party agreement for an all BAME shortlist to ensure more diversity in political representation in Wales. The majority of participants said yes. "It would be wonderful to have all communities represented".

Race Council Cymru (North Wales)

9.2 Outcomes

Improving engagement and participation

Across responses, it was felt that more diverse leadership would support increased engagement and participation from minority communities across Wales. Implicitly within these perspectives was the sense that a lack of diversity is a barrier to meaningful participation and engagement:

There is hope that more diversity [in leadership] would help people to thrive, to achieve, for leaders to be relatable and accessible, to have greater opportunity to consult with leaders and fashion role models for future generations. There is a great sense that individuals would feel a lot more valued and be better able to contribute positively to Wales. Deeply, there is a sense that with better representation, stories will not be "forgotten or ignored".

Black Lives Matter

10 Conclusions

Together, organisations engaged almost 2,000 people from across Wales in understanding their lived experiences of racism and discrimination. They include voices from a range of communities, backgrounds, and traditions, highlighting the diversity within contemporary Welsh society. Responses provide powerful and moving testimony on the nature and implications of living with racism and discrimination.

The lived experiences and perspectives of people and communities is important in understanding and responding to racism, discrimination, and inequality. It helps to illuminate the role and dynamics of intersectionality, including the ways in which race and ethnicity intersects with other factors such as socio-economic status, gender, religious belief and disability in shaping experiences and outcomes. Alongside broader quantitative data that illustrates the extent of inequalities experienced by people and communities, lived experiences serves to highlight the nature of racism, how it operates, and the impact that it can have. Understanding and analysing narrative accounts of racism and the impact that it can have presents an important evidence base on which to respond to the issues they raise, including through the development of the Race Equality Action Plan.

Racism and Discrimination

In conversations with people and communities, responses highlight a huge variety of ways in which racial discrimination can operate, and the impact that it can have. This includes both overt racism, such as hate crimes and verbal racist abuse, as well as covert racism, such as microaggressions and unconscious biases that shape interactions. Responses also describe institutional racism, including statistical discrimination and profiling, that lead to the differential treatment of people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds from both public and private institutions and organisations.

Responses also highlighted very specific instances or situations which impact on certain people or communities, as well as overarching trends that shape inequalities more broadly. This including specific discrimination certain communities experienced, such as the Welsh Muslim communities and islamophobia. Other responses raised general racism and discrimination that people experience across many aspects of their lives, including people with Black or mixed-raced heritage.

The exclusionary effects of racism and discrimination can be profound. Responses outline how racism can serve to marginalise people and communities in ways that silence them and perpetuate and entrench inequalities, including across opportunity and outcome. At an individual level, experiences of racism and discrimination can also cause trauma, increase social isolation and undermine wellbeing, particularly around people's mental health.

Potential Implications for the Action Plan

As well as the racism and discrimination people and communities experience within specific settings and policy areas, responses also highlighted the lack of cultural awareness, both within individual interactions, and at an institutional or organisational level. Responses described instances where people were treated in ways that were not sensitive to their specific needs, cultural beliefs, or traditions.

Conversely, responses also highlighted experiences and gratitude for services and support that were positive and culturally sensitive. This suggests that improving cultural awareness within and across public services could be a valuable route to improving trust and engagement. Greater training around cultural awareness was raised in responses as holding the potential for addressing insensitivity as well as general attitudes and perceptions of people and communities.

Together, the racism, discrimination and cultural insensitivity and lack of acceptance people experience serves to undermine trust and engagement from people and communities, especially with services and support delivered through public institutions. This issue was compounded by the lack of voice and representation, both within broader democratic processes at the local and national level, as well as within the design and governance of public services. Another key overarching theme relates to lack of effective, meaningful dialogue and communication between people and communities and institutions and organisations, both public and private.

This suggests that improved communication coupled with more meaningful participation could help to foster more positive relationships and trust between institutions and people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. This includes greater engagement and participation in decision making and policy formation, as well as better communication from public services. The approach to community engagement from groups and organisations that has informed the development of the Action Plan represents how this can be achieved.

There was also a general sense of frustration with efforts to address racism and broader inequalities, with some highlighting limited progress on issues such as diversity, representation and persistent inequalities of opportunity and outcome. There were also concerns within some responses that some consultation and engagement did not lead to progress. This served to further undermine trust in institutions to deliver tangible change and acted as a barrier to securing positive engagement from people and communities.

In responding to these concerns in policy formation, it may be important to find opportunities and mechanisms within the policy levers available to Government that will deliver more immediate, tangible changes to people's lives. The complex, historical and embedded nature of racism and prejudicial views held by some in society can serve to limit the effectiveness and speed with which policy can shift individual and collective attitudes and prejudices that underscore racist tendencies. Policy may be at its most effective when creating a more inclusive environment, one which promotes tolerance and challenges intolerance at an institutional level. Ensuring that all policy levers are working towards these goals, including

through representation, regulation, funding, advocacy and partnerships, may make policy responses more effective and deliver more tangible progress to people and communities.

Responses also highlighted that the challenges and barriers presented by racism and discrimination are compounded by other factors, including a person's gender, where they live, and their socio-economic status. Parents, especially mothers, for example, highlighted that they experience specific challenges which impacted on their ability to participate in society, especially around accessing work, which served to compound the barriers they experienced due to their ethnicity.

This suggests that coherent policy responses across substantive areas of Government may be required to address inequalities. Responses raised the health inequalities experienced by people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, which may also be linked to inequalities around disparities in employment and income. Therefore, solutions that seek to address one without the other may be less effective in achieving greater equality, including in outcomes.

A key implication for the Action Plan is addressing the underlying racism and discrimination that shapes people's experiences highlighted across responses. They often highlighted that racism they experience comes from a position of lack of understanding and empathy, as well as from prejudicial viewpoints and biases. From these perspectives, promoting and celebrating diversity and different cultures and traditions was important; raising their profile and challenging negative and prejudicial narratives and stereotypes. It also could serve to improve understanding and knowledge of different cultures, an important starting point for changing perceptions and attitudes.

Education more broadly was seen across responses as particularly important. This included delivering a more diverse and inclusive curriculum, one that enabled all children and young people to explore and understand difference. From these perspectives, education could work to bring about long-term changes to how people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities are perceived and treated in society. Education was also seen as the basis of addressing other issues people and communities experienced, including in addressing lack of opportunity and poverty. From these perspectives, improving education opportunities and addressing inequalities of outcome in education was an important starting point for promoting greater equality across Wales.

Appendix 1: Responses

This section outlines the organisations that supported and facilitated community engagement. It also describes, where possible, the communities that they engaged in understanding the lived experiences of communities across Wales.

Antur Cymru

Antur Cymru is a community owned social enterprise that works with communities to promote growth and economic activity. It offers a range of support and advice that encourages, fosters and promotes successful businesses working within communities.

As part of community engagement, Antur Cymru engaged women who are part of the Syrian Refugee communities across Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Powys. Through a range of engagement methods, including a general questionnaire and a number of online group workshops, Antur Cymru sought the views and experiences of these women with regards to the thematic areas outlined in the Action Plan. In total, Antur spoke with 65 women from across the community.

Avant Cymru

Avant Cymru are a forward-thinking theatre company from the South Wales Valleys. Creating relevant, distinctive theatre, dance, Hip Hop and artistic activity with and for the community and championing this work at home and afar. Their aims are to enrich and inspire people and achieve community celebration, preservation and regeneration.

Avant submitted a video response that draw on voices from within and across the theatre company. They explored a range of issues surrounding arts, culture and heritage, including opportunities to explore, develop and share artistic practice, particularly around dance. Avant's response can be found through the following [link](#).

Black Lives Matter Wales

Black Lives Matter (BLM) Wales is a movement led by individuals who stand together against racial injustices experienced by black people in Wales and globally. Its aim is to bring together the network of regional BLM protest leaders to work together collectively to drive forward the key demands of the BLM Wales Manifesto, which has been jointly produced by all its members across Wales.

In engaging communities, BLM Wales shared the Race Equality Action Plan questionnaire devised by Race Council Cymru. The aim of the questionnaire was to focus in on the lived experiences of people with protected characteristics (race). Together, 113 participants contributed their views. People shared their experiences of Education, Health and Social Care, Employment and Income, Housing, Crime and Justice, Culture, Heritage and Tourism, Leadership and Representation in Wales.

Centre for the Study of Islam and Muslim Council of Wales

The Centre for the Study of Islam in the UK at Cardiff University with support from the Muslim Council of Wales, engaged Muslim communities across Wales. The Centre for the Study of Islam in the UK is a multidisciplinary research centre focusing on exploring the lives of Muslim communities across Britain. The Muslim Council Wales is an affiliate of Muslim Council Britain and a broad-based umbrella organisation to serve the needs of the Muslim community across Wales.

Through a range of engagement methods, including discussion groups and an online survey, the research sought to understand on the community's experiences of equality, racism, Islamophobia, and discrimination. The research engaged 51 Welsh Muslims of diverse ages, gender, age, backgrounds, and ethnicity. The online survey, for example, engaged 24 respondents. Of these, 62.5 percent of respondents were male, while 37.5 percent were female. There was a broad age range from nineteen to over sixty, with 41.7 percent of responses coming from the 19-29 age band. The ethnic background of respondents follows the same pattern as the discussion groups with Asian backgrounds being most represented, Pakistani (19.2 percent) and Bangladeshi (25 percent). Other respondents were from Arab (8.3 percent), White (8.3 percent), Mixed (8.3 percent) and African ethnic origin (4.2 percent).

Diverse Cymru

Diverse Cymru is a Welsh charity committed to supporting people faced with inequality and discrimination due to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Diverse Cymru seeks to empower people and communities through a range of support, including advice and advocacy, direct payments, and the provision of mental health services.

In drawing on voices from within the community, Diverse Cymru sought to understand a range of aspects of people's lives. This included positive and negative experiences, including around discrimination. They also explored what matters most to people, and what would make their lives better. In understanding the experiences of people and communities, Diverse Cymru engaged with Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic adults and young people. The majority of participants self-defined as Black.

Hindu Cultural Association Wales

Hindu Cultural Association is a charitable trust run by Indian Community in Wales whose aim is to facilitate seamless integration of the Indian Community to the wider local community. The Association provides opportunities and resources for the Indian and local communities from all backgrounds, including providing a sense of identity for the pan-Indian community in South Wales. The aim of the Association is to develop and celebrate Indian culture, values and traditions through education, training and social and cultural activities, and promote integration, harmony, diversity and equality.

In engaging with communities, the Association focussed on people's experiences at their workplace, and their health and wellbeing needs and experiences of accessing support, both positive and negative. Through conversations it highlighted important aspects such as racism and mental health challenges facing people and communities. Through an online survey, the Association engaged 137 people from across a diverse range of ages, communities and backgrounds. The Association engaged people with African, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, and Filipino heritage, amongst others.

Horn Development Association

Horn Development Association provides a diverse range of support to communities living across Cardiff, including within Butetown, Grangetown and Riverside. The Association seeks to provide a diverse range of services and support to the community, including opportunities for communities to come together around music, food and sport. The Association also provides non-formal learning opportunities, including training and qualifications. The HDA Association wants to give as many people as possible the chance to gain confidence, motivation and opportunities to improve their lives.

In engaging communities living across Cardiff, the Association distributed an online and hard copy questionnaire. In total, the Association engaged 256 families that identify as Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic. They sought the views and perspectives of people across the different thematic areas highlighted by the Action Plan, including employment, health, and community engagement. The Association did not seek to record the racial or cultural identities of respondents (such as Indian or Somali), instead seeking to ensure the forms were completed by BAME people and their families. This was due to the apparent limitations of more common classifications of race and ethnicity that do not accurately reflect identity and experience, especially those families that may see themselves as mixed race.

KIRAN

The Knowledge-based Intercommunity Relationship and Awareness Network (KIRAN) is a non-profit organisation based in the United Kingdom. KIRAN was established to promote community engagement on an informed basis. It seeks to foster knowledge-based acceptance of different cultures, heritage and traditions prevalent among various communities in the UK. KIRAN primarily works for people living in Cardiff and its surrounding areas. It organises many programmes on a weekly and monthly basis in order to engage community members and reduce social isolation. All of its programmes are for local communities, by local communities.

In engaging with communities, KIRAN prepared a survey questionnaire (with open-ended questions) to capture views about race equalities in our communities. The survey was distributed through a range of channels, including through Facebook, WhatsApp and Email. They also held online forums, and in-depth interviews. In total, 352 people from different families responded anonymously, with no personal data, e.g. name, address, photographs, was not collected.

Mudiad Meithrin

Mudiad Meithrin is a registered charity specializing in early years childcare and education. They aim to give every young child in Wales regardless of background the opportunity to access early years' services and experiences through the medium of Welsh. Mudiad Meithrin offer a range of services and support, including 'Cymraeg for Kids' groups, Cylchoedd Ti a Fi, Cylchoedd Meithrin and Day Nurseries, and promoting Welsh-medium education with the aim of creating more young Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050.

In engaging people and communities, Mudiad Meithrin spoke to 16 individuals. Each participant gave detailed narrative accounts, either in written or personal testimony, of their experiences of accessing and working in child care settings. All participants had either chosen Welsh-medium childcare or education for their own children; had themselves been through Welsh-medium childcare or education; had learnt Welsh as adults; had worked in Welsh-medium childcare or education, had wanted to learn Welsh, or had experienced a combination of these.

National Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Youth Forum

The National BAME Youth Forum seeks to highlight and advance the voices of young people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds aged from 11 to 25 years old. The Youth Forum aims to address issues of concern young people and their families, and to develop programmes and advocacy tools to respond to young people's needs. The Forum also aims to meet with decision makers within Welsh Government and other agencies to feedback on the issues faced by young people in Wales.

The Youth Forum mobilised committee members to engage with young people from across Wales. Drawing on the survey developed by the Race Council Cymru, the Forum engaged young people through a variety of methods, including an online survey, over the phone, and through online focus groups. The research explored the experiences of young people across the different policy areas highlighted by the Action Plan. Together, the Youth Forum spoke to 65 participants across Wales. Participants were asked to self-identify their own ethnicities, 21 ethnicities were recorded.

Neath Port Talbot Black Minority Ethnic Community Association

The Neath Port Talbot Black Minority Ethnic Community Association seeks to represent the vision and voice of communities across Neath Port Talbot (NPT) and beyond. Through a variety of activities and support, the Association seeks promote equality and diversity for the benefit of the community. The Association seeks to celebrate cultural diversity, and promote community cohesion. It also seeks to empower members of ethnic minority communities to participate more fully in society through education and training. It also seeks to provide a voice and be representative of BME communities in Neath Port Talbot.

People with minority ethnic backgrounds, including Gypsy, Roma and Travellers from across Neath Port Talbot (NPT) were invited to share their experiences of living in NPT in an online survey. The Association worked in partnership with the NPT Community Safety Team and the

Vulnerable Learner's Service (VLS), to produce two surveys, one aimed at adults, the other at young people. The aim of the survey was to gain an insight into the lived experiences of BAME people in NPT, focusing on housing, Community Cohesion, education and employment. In total, 143 people took the time to complete the survey, including young people and adults from a diverse range of communities living in NPT.

North Wales Africa Society

The North Wales Africa Society (NWAS) is a friendship and community organisation based in Gwynedd. NWAS is a collective of members of the African diaspora community, and people who have interest in Africa. It seeks a vibrant and inclusive society that supports, integrates and sustains our diverse community. In achieving its vision, it offers a diverse range of support, including the provision of culturally appropriate food parcels and shopping support, and advice on other services and support that people can access.

The NWAS sought to gather the views of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic student community living in North Wales. They set out to explore student life in general and other aspects related to security, mental health, and possible barriers that BAME students are facing in their daily lives in North Wales. To support the development of the survey, short audio and video records were initially gathered from students to draw the major lines to be explored within the survey. The survey was then distributed through a range of channels, Afro-Caribbean Society- Bangor (association of Black students at Bangor University) and other social media handles such as Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. Together, 35 people completed the survey. They belonged to different ethnic backgrounds, including Black African and Caribbean (91.5 percent), Asian (5.7 percent), Black British (2.9 percent) descents. Overall, 88 percent of respondents were international students.

North Wales Regional Equality Network

North Wales Regional Equality Network (NWREN) promotes equality, opposing racism, prejudice and discrimination. They offer a range of services and support, including research, activities, training and advice for communities across North Wales. They facilitate minority populations to have their voices listened to through community outreach projects and by engaging with the public sector. NWREN is consulted on race equality issues by public bodies and offers advice and support to local authorities, education services, the health board and the police across and beyond the region. They have considerable experience in developing and implementing consultation in their own work and in enabling public bodies to consult effectively.

Based on peer reviewed papers NWREN designed a questionnaire that could be administered online. The survey collected both demographic data and narrative accounts of the issues and barriers the respondents faced. In total NWREN received 129 responses of which 90 valid responses were analysed, these included people from a diverse (20+) range of ethnicities. The report ran to 52 pages which included 24 pages of narrative comments.

Race Council Cymru (Cardiff and Vale)

Race Council Cymru (RCC) was established by ethnic minority grassroots communities as an overarching umbrella body with the mission to bring together key organisations to combat racial prejudice and racial discrimination. RCC supports and represents over 250 Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic organisations across Wales to promote integration, champion justice and racial equality. RCC engages with grassroots communities and works directly with the local authority, governing bodies and businesses to promote awareness of race inequality. We work to establish and facilitate channels of communication with minority ethnic and grassroots communities throughout Wales in conjunction with and on behalf of Primary Stakeholders, Welsh Government, Local Authorities and other such private and public bodies.

In understanding the views and experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people in the City and County of Cardiff and the Vales, the RCC distributed a survey across a range of local networks and on social media. The survey was developed in consultation with grassroots community leaders, and explored issues relating to the policy areas outlined in the Action Plan, including Education, Health and Social Care, and Employment and Income, Housing, Crime and Justice, Culture, Heritage and Tourism and Leadership and Representation. The survey included a mix of quantitative and qualitative questions, and participants were asked to self-identify their ethnicity. In total, 106 people kindly took the time to complete the survey, including people of mixed race, Black, Black and White Caribbean, Indian, Asian and African heritage.

Race Council Cymru (City and County of Newport)

The RCC also sought the views and experiences of people living in the City and County of Newport. Drawing on the survey developed by the RCC in collaboration with grassroots community leaders, the RCC secured partnership agreements with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic grassroots communities, organisations and individuals, who are part of RCC's Newport Multi-Cultural hub. In total, 97 people completed the survey. Participants in the survey were asked to self-identify their own ethnicities, 8 different ethnicities were recorded.

Race Council Cymru (North Wales)

In understanding the views and experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people living in North Wales, the RCC worked with local grassroots communities, organisations and individuals. They distributed the survey through a range of networks, including through the RCC's North Wales' Multi-Cultural hub. In total, 44 people completed the survey. Participants were asked to self-identify their own ethnicity, 14 ethnicities were recorded.

Race Council Cymru (City and County of Swansea)

The RCC also sought the views and experiences of people living in the City and County of Swansea. Drawing on the survey developed by the RCC in collaboration with grassroots community leaders, the RCC secured partnership agreements with BAME grassroots communities, organisations and individuals, who are part of RCC's Swansea Multi-Cultural

hub. In total, 109 people completed the survey. Participants were asked to self-identify their own ethnicity, 25 ethnicities were recorded.

Race Council Cymru (West Wales)

In understanding the views and experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people living in West Wales, the RCC worked with local grassroots communities, organisations and individuals. They distributed the survey through a range of networks, including through the RCC's Carmarthenshire and West Wales Multi-Cultural hub. In total, 44 people completed the survey, including people of British Asian, Indian Hindu, Polish, and Caribbean British Mixed heritage.

Romani Cultural & Arts Company

The Romani Cultural Arts Company (RCAC) is the leading Romani and Traveller community-based organisation in Wales. It draws on arts and culture as a vehicle for advocacy and empowerment amongst the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. The RCAC also supports individuals to become "Community Champions", as actors and agents of change in their own communities, making a difference for themselves and the wider society.

In gathering the views of Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities in Wales, the RCAC developed and distributed a survey. The survey explored people's experiences and opinions regarding equalities, policies and action plans, representation and other matters, related to the Welsh Government's Action Plan. Together, 60 people contributed their views and reflections from across the Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities in Wales.

Sub-Sahara Advisory Panel

The Sub-Sahara Advisory Panel seeks to promote and strengthen the voices of African diaspora communities living in Wales. Through a range of activities, the Panel seeks to consider and pursue the needs of Diaspora Groups in their international development work, and to facilitate the knowledge and skills of Diaspora Groups in Wales to be used to advice and support indigenous Welsh International Development Organisations.

The Panel set out to explore the views and perspectives of ethnic minorities with a particular focus on experiences of securing and sustaining work, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to assess the impact of COVID-19 on the employment and income of minorities and migrants in Wales I have concentrated on four economic activity indicators: change in employment status, change in working hours, difficulty with paying bills, and self-reported financial situation during the pandemic. The Panel engaging communities through in-depth interviews, focus groups and a follow-up survey. A total of 19 interviews and 2 focus groups were conducted. The questionnaire was provided to and completed by all interview and focus group participants, which explored in more detail a range of issues they face.

TGP Cymru

Tros Gynnal Plant Cymru (TGP Cymru) is a Wales-wide charity working with children, young people and families providing a range of support including advocacy services for children looked after, youth homeless support, and restorative practices with veterans. TGP Cymru also runs specific services supporting Gypsy Roma and Traveller children and families as well as young people who have asylum seeker or refugees status.

Community views were gathered primarily through individual interviews and conversations which were recorded and written up; these were carried out by project staff who also facilitated a few small group discussions/focus groups specifically with young people using various on-line platforms. Overall, TGP Cymru gathered the views of over 70 people spanning 6 – 70 years of age and across the whole of Wales; we spoke to 40 girls/women and 31 boys/men.

Women Connect First, Hayaat Women's Trust and Henna Foundation

Women Connect First, Hayaat Women's Trust and the Henna Foundation in collaboration with MELA Cymru set out to understand and analyse Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic women's perspective and lived experience in relation to race equality in Wales.

Women Connect First's mission is to empower and improve the lives of disadvantaged Black and Minority Ethnic Women and communities in South Wales to help them realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to Welsh society.

The Hayaat Women's Trust promotes social inclusion for the public benefit by working with African women residing in Wales who are socially excluded on the grounds of their ethnic origin or gender, to relieve their needs and to assist them to integrate into society, in particular by providing health and well-being information, advice, education and training to support and enable them to increase access to quality health and clinical services.

The Henna Foundation provides appropriate services primarily to disadvantaged Muslim women and their families so that they can overcome internal and external barriers and achieve their personal goals and life aspirations. Henna aims to improve participation, reduce isolation and marginalisation, and work with our partners to address the challenges faced by the human family to build a stronger civil society that is faith sensitised, underpinned by the values of social justice, human rights and security.

Supporting engagement were MELA Cymru, a social enterprise that provides digital consultation platforms, tools and hybrid engagement solutions to enable diverse communities to get involved in developments that impact their neighbourhoods and lives.

In early August 2020 the partnership sought to engage women through eight group discussions. In total, 75 women participated in the sessions, offering detailed narrative accounts of lived experiences across the policy areas highlighted in the Action Plan. The discussions drew on an intersectional lens in exploring the relationships between gender, race, age, and socio-economic background. Women from a diverse range of communities

contributed to the research, including women from Welsh African-Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani, Algerian, Moroccan, Somali, Sudanese and Mixed-race heritage.

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ymchwil cymdeithasol ac economaidd

01545 571711

wavehill@wavehill.com

wavehill.com

