

BME Housing Strategy 2010 – 2013

A Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Housing Strategy for Northampton Borough Council 2010 – 2013

This is a subsidiary to the council's overall housing strategy and addresses BME specific issues.

BME Housing Strategy 2010 – 2013

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BME Housing Strategy 2010 – 2013

Foreword

I am delighted to introduce Northampton Borough Council's 2nd Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Housing Strategy. This strategy has been developed following the BME Housing Needs Survey to establish the housing needs of all Black and Minority Ethnic communities living in the borough including emerging BME Communities.

I believe that it is very important that everyone who lives in our Borough has access to good quality housing. I hope through this document and by working in partnership with our key stakeholders we will be able to ensure that all our residents receive fair, accessible, culturally appropriate housing and housing related support services.

The council and its partners are determined to address the full range of housing and housing related support needs of our communities and this strategy provides the framework for our plans to achieve this objective.

We strive for social cohesion to make sure that the Borough is a place where racism, prejudice and discrimination are not tolerated and where everyone feels safe in their homes. To this end, I appeal to all our housing and support providers to respond positively to the challenge of encouraging and supporting truly mixed communities where residents from different ethnic backgrounds live and thrive together. Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the development of this strategy.



Councillor Sally Beardsworth
Portfolio Holder for Housing, Northampton Borough Council

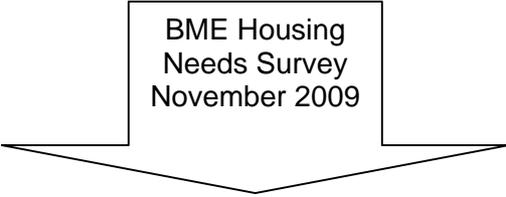
BME Housing Strategy 2010 – 2013

1.0 How does the document work?



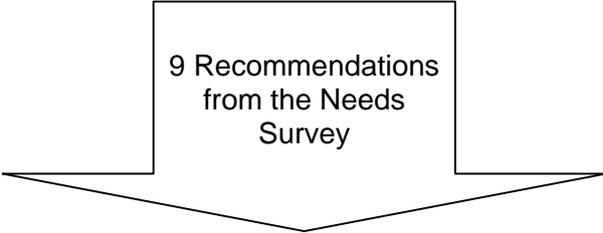
Housing
Strategy 2010 -
2015

Identified a need to produce a BME housing needs survey through its Equality Impact Assessment as it recognised that some BME communities may have different housing needs



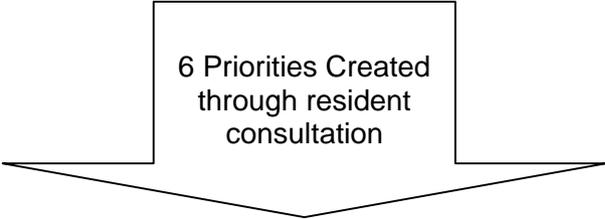
BME Housing
Needs Survey
November 2009

The BME housing needs survey was conducted from November 2009 to January 2010 by research company, Ecotec. They recommended that NBC work towards 9 actions.



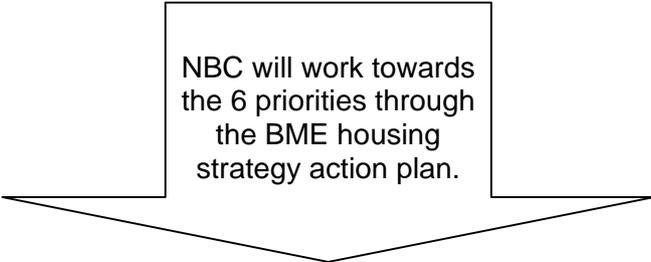
9 Recommendations
from the Needs
Survey

We consulted with residents of Northampton on whether they thought these are the correct 9 recommendations NBC should be working towards.



6 Priorities Created
through resident
consultation

It was decided that all actions should remain as they are important to residents, however 3 should be placed in the over-arching housing strategy as they are a general need issue.



NBC will work towards
the 6 priorities through
the BME housing
strategy action plan.

Out of the 6 actions some were placed in higher priority than other and NBC will work towards completing the higher prioritised ones first.

BME Housing Strategy 2010 – 2013

2.0 Summary

This strategy has been produced in response to Government research, which shows that BME communities have differentially disproportionate housing needs including difficulties accessing Local Authority services and generally live in poorer quality housing.

Northampton has a growing BME population, which is becoming increasingly diverse (P15 – 17). It is estimated that the BME population in Northampton has risen from 12% in 2001 to 16% in 2009. (Census 2007(Estimated))

Northampton Borough Council recognises that BME communities may have a range of housing needs. We therefore carried out a housing needs survey in November 2009 and the following key issues were highlighted.

- Increase awareness of housing support and advice services amongst BME communities.
- Promote our housing advice services to support BME households in the private rented sector
- Promote low-cost homeownership products
- Build more larger family sized accommodation
- Continue to ensure housing is available in preferred areas of the town
- BME sensitive design briefs for all future affordable housing schemes
- Review standards before council properties are offered for re- letting.
- A review of any staff training needs created by the changing and increasing demands on the service from BME households.
- Commitment to build further relationships with BME communities

Northampton Borough Council consulted on these 9 issues to make certain they were representative of the views of the wider community.

After the 12- week consultation period we concluded that the following 6 actions should be priorities in the BME housing strategy action plan, as they are BME specific:

1. Increase awareness of housing support and advice services amongst BME communities.
2. Promote our housing advice services to support BME households in the private rented sector
3. Promote low-cost homeownership products
4. BME sensitive design briefs for all future affordable housing schemes
5. A review of any staff training needs created by the changing and increasing demands on the service from BME households
6. Commitment to build further relationships with BME communities

The following 3 actions will be included in the over-arching housing strategy as research has shown that they are general needs issues:

1. Build more larger family sized accommodation (Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA))
2. Continue to ensure housing is available in preferred areas of the town (Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA))
3. Review standards before council properties are offered for re- letting. (Complaints)

BME Housing Strategy 2010 – 2013

3.0 Consultation Process

The consultation period for the BME housing strategy ran from the 2nd August 2010 to the 22nd October 2010. NBC did extensive consultation on this strategy and we received 322 completed questionnaires.

3.1 The questionnaire

We decided to create a one page 'easy read guide' for all, as it would make the document more accessible. To accompany the easy read guide was the questionnaire, which set out 9 initial recommendations. Within the questionnaire we asked residents if they agreed with the 9 initial recommendations, what their top 3 priorities were and if they felt any priorities have been missed off.

The consultation approach included a range of processes to ensure we received as many comments as possible. These are explained below:

3.2 Promotion

From 2nd August 2010 to October 2010 the BME housing strategy has been:

- Publicised on the front page of the NBC website
- Sent out to all internal staff
- Advertised on the new screens in the OSS

3.3 Events

NBC attended/ held events where we handed out questionnaires with pre-paid envelopes to encourage residents to return them to us.

Events include:

- Event in the Town Centre 25/08/10
- Community Event in the market square 11/08/10
- Event in the Weston Favell Shopping Centre 18/08/10
- Bidding Workshop 12/08/10
- Eastern European Event 06/09/10
- Workshop for specific BME groups i.e. 16 – 24 year olds and 50+ year olds. (CEMC)
- Workshop with the BME forum 28/10/10
- BME forum in the Great Hall (Hosted by Northamptonshire Police) 13/09/10
- Northampton Bangladeshi Association 23/09/10

3.4 Mailshot

Finally, we targeted BME tenants by using our profiling data to send out a mail shot to 1500 tenants. The mail shot included, a brief summary of the BME housing strategy, the questionnaire, a pre-paid envelope and how they can find out more information.

3.5 Partnership working

NBC have worked closely with Council of Ethnic Minority Communities (CEMC) and the NHS Community Development Team for BME communities in Northamptonshire on the consultation of this strategy as they have stronger links within the BME community, especially groups whose voice are not usually heard to ensure we received comments from interested parties to help understand the housing needs of our residents.

BME Housing Strategy 2010 – 2013

4.0 Summary of consultation outcomes

- We interviewed **210** residents for the BME housing needs survey from November 2009 to February 2010 and we used this information to help form the priorities.

Between 2nd August 2010 and the 22nd October we consulted with **322** residents 2010 on the BME housing strategy (See Appendix 2 for full results)

- The top 4 priorities 330 residents supported were;
 - NBC should increase awareness of housing support and advice services amongst BME communities. (289 people voted in favour of this priority)
 - NBC must promote it's housing advice service to support BME households in private rented accommodation (280 people voted in favour of this priority)
 - NBC must review its standards before Council properties are offered for re-letting. (298 people voted in favour of this priority)
 - NBC must build more family- sized homes e.g. 3+ bedroom (277 people voted in favour of this priority)
- The least supported priority was:
 - Ensure a proportion of new homes are designed to meet the living needs of BME residents e.g. designed for religious reasons. (118 people voted against this priority)
- The top 4 comments we received on the completed questionnaire were about;
 - Repair waiting times
 - Anti Social behaviour
 - Language barriers and communication
 - Equal rights for all

1. Repair standards and waiting times

Repairs and response times are covered in the repairs handbook, which is given to tenants on the day they move into their property.

We have no evidence to support the fact that repairs standards and waiting times is a specific issue for BME resident only, so NBC will be dealing with this issue by monitoring complaints received by all residents. We will ensure that when complaints are made that we capture the ethnicity of the resident in order to monitor this issue.

2. Anti Social behaviour

The Northampton Anti-Social Behaviour Unit is made up of staff representing Northampton Borough Council and Northamptonshire Police. The Unit addresses anti-social behaviour issues in partnership with all relevant agencies.

Landlord Services also operate Anti Social Behaviour Monitoring to help our tenants suffering from ASB. Please contact your Housing Officer for more information on ASB.

BME Housing Strategy 2010 – 2013

We have no evidence to support the fact that Anti Social Behaviour is a specific issue for BME residents only. NBC will be looking into this issue by monitoring complaints received by all residents by collecting Ethnicity at the first point of contact. The contact centre staff may need to under go further training but this will be reviewed under priority 5 (P34).

3. Language barriers and communication

NBC staff receives equalities training as standard but will be providing housing staff further training on how to deal with people who have language and communication requirements. We will also review our training on customer's preferred communication channels. This will be covered under priority 5 (P34).

We will continue to gather profile information on our tenants so we will know; what language they speak and whether they can read and/or write English, so we can then deal with tenant quires over the phone or in writing. Following our Interpreting and Translating Guidance, we will address these issues.

We will also be continuing consultation/ research so we understand future BME housing needs and problems. An action under priority 6 is that we will be holding monthly workshops with BME community organisations.

Under priority 1 we will increase communication through targeted campaigns and through BME specific literature and we are also in the process of developing a Customer Engagement Strategy where this issue will be covered in more detail, this will be out for consultation soon.

NBC always review their language profiles on a regular basis and look to use the most commonly spoken languages in the Borough. We are also working towards updating our Internet page to include translated pages of the most commonly asked about topics – i.e. how to report a repair.

4. Equal rights for all

Northampton Borough council's has adopted a single equality scheme that allows us to review our services whilst recognising the complexities of our community. The scheme incorporates all equality strands

Northampton Borough Council has been successfully reviewed by external assessors through a Peer Review process. This confirmed that the Council had reached the requirements to be an Achieving Council

The council, both as a provider of services and an employer, is legally required to promote equality in the provision and delivery of its services to its diverse communities irrespective of Ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender, age and faith

Please see website for consultation outcomes and the consultation process

5.0 Purpose and Scope of the Strategy

The Council recognises that people from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups can experience disadvantages in relation to housing and that there can be particular needs and aspirations that need to be addressed.

The Northampton Borough Council's Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) housing strategy has been developed as a result of Government statistics¹ which show BME communities usually have specific housing needs and aspirations including difficulties accessing Local Authority services and generally live in poorer quality housing.

The new BME Strategy will focus on ensuring that Northampton's Black and Minority Ethnic Households are receiving appropriate housing and that they can access our services easily. By doing this, the Council is meeting its legal and statutory obligations with regards to equality and diversity in delivering a housing service.

The production of this Strategy was identified as an action in the Council's overarching Housing Strategy 2010-2015; to Create Resilient and Cohesive Communities and therefore fits within and complements the Housing Strategy and its vision that:

We will support well- maintained, affordable and environmentally sustainable homes of all tenures, and neighbourhoods where people choose to live. We will promote access, opportunity and choice for all sections of our community.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE: Housing Needs and Aspirations of Ethnic Minority Communities (2008)
DCLG: Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society (2006) Chapter 2.3
Survey of English Housing, four-year moving average, 1996-97 to 2006-07
Statutory Homelessness, 4th Quarter 2007. DCLG Statistics Release, data are for England

6.0 Strategy in context; National / Regional / Local Drivers and Local Context

This section of the strategy looks at the relevant national, regional and local context relating to Northampton that directly impacts the BME Housing Strategy.

6.1 National

The government emphasises the importance of providing housing choice; building more homes in the private and public sector and creating community cohesion in our cities, towns and neighbourhoods. The 2000 amended Race Relations Act and the 2005 *'Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society Strategy'* emphasises the need for public authorities to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination, and promote equality of opportunity by development and promotion of community cohesion.²

The Race Relations Act (1976) (Amended 2000)

This Act and subsequent amendments place a duty on all housing providers to promote equality in all aspects of service delivery. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 strengthened the earlier legislation by placing a legal duty on local authorities to take action and eliminate discrimination by promoting both equality of opportunity and positive race relations.



www.legislation.gov.uk

Statutory Code of Practice on Racial Equality for Housing (2006)

This Code came into effect on 1st October 2006. It replaces the statutory codes of practice in rented and non rented housing issued by the Campaign for Racial Equality (CRE) between 1990 and 1991 and sets new standards for achieving racial equality. The Code recognises the changes in the way housing is both provided and managed in England. New social landlords have emerged and the housing association and private rented sectors have grown considerably. The Code also treats the segregation of a person from other people as unlawful, direct discrimination.



www.equalityhumanrights.com

The Race and Housing Inquiry: Challenge Report (2001)

This report outlines measures to increase race equality for housing associations. In response, the Housing Corporation published a BME Action Plan 2005-2008 and the Department of Communities and Local Government, (DCLG), produced its own BME Housing Action Plan which places an obligation on local authorities to work closely with BME groups in drawing up their housing strategies.

This report offers everyone, including people from BME communities, the opportunity of a decent home at a price they can afford. The proposals aim to promote choice,

² Please note. Some of the national drivers are under review due to changes in government. For the latest information please visit www.communities.gov.uk

fairness and the opportunity for individuals to own or rent a decent home that meets their needs

 www.housing.org.uk

Equalities Act 2010

Northampton Borough Council is committed to ensure that everyone is fairly and equally treated irrespective of race, gender, disability, age, sexuality, religion or belief or any other part of his or her lives. The Council aims to meet our legal duties and follow the Equality Code of Practice. The Equality Act is due to be implemented, gradually, from October 2010 and should work alongside the Equality Framework which councils use to help.

 More information can be accessed on our equality objectives and corporate plan by accessing the following link [Northampton Borough Council's Equalities Objectives and Corporate Plan](#) alternatively call 01604 838575 and request a copy.

 For more information on the 2010 Equalities Act and the Codes of Practice (Draft) please visit www.equalityhumanrights.com. We will review the strategy once the Code of Practice has been released.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE: Housing Needs and Aspirations of Ethnic Minority Communities (2008)

This document is part seven of an eight part series looking at demographic, spatial and economic impacts on future affordable housing demand.

 This paper can be accessed by following the link [Housing Needs and Aspirations of Ethnic Minority Communities \(2008\)](#) alternatively please call 01604 838575 and request a copy.

6.2 Regional

** Please note. The council is aware of the new coalition governments intentions to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies, but is continuing to plan for the future on a 'business as usual' bases pending more government detailed announcements.*

Northampton is part of the Milton Keynes/ South Midlands Growth area, so we are therefore planning a significant growth of 40,000 homes between 2001 and 2026, which will also boost the economic growth of the town creating many job opportunities. We will be expanding and diversifying our housing to meet the needs of these new residents including BME communities. This ambitious economic programme will benefit many BME residents both in terms of better work opportunities and a better choice of homes.

Investment Statement 2008-11 March 2009: East Midlands

This statement requires all Investment Partners working alongside Local Authorities in areas with a significant BME population to produce a BME method statement. This seeks to ensure all Investment Partners work with community organisations,

including BME associations, to engage them in activities such as project design, access to lettings, property management or ownership.

 www.homesandcommunities.co.uk

East Midlands Regional Housing Strategy 2008 – 2016

This strategy states that all local housing authorities in the East Midlands should produce a BME housing strategy. This might form a sub-section of a local housing strategy. BME housing issues should also be incorporated into local sustainable community strategies.

 This strategy can be accessed by following this link [East Midlands Regional Housing Strategy](#) alternatively please call 01604 838575 and request a copy.

Black and Minority Ethnic communities and housing in the East Midlands: A strategy for the region. (2008)

The report sets out a strategy for the East Midlands to meet the housing needs of black and minority ethnic communities.

This document states that the advantages in producing a local BME housing strategy and action plan are:

- Highlighting to stakeholders the importance of tackling BME housing issues.
- Making it clear that BME housing issues are a community priority.
- Setting out an action plan; and
- Coordinating policies to benefit BME communities.

 www.emregionalstrategy.co.uk

6.3 Locally

Northamptonshire's Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2011

This strategy identifies the four key areas, which the county will focus on until 2031, which are

- Living and Thriving
- Fit and Healthy
- Safe and Secure
- Children and Young People

All other strategies and plans are linked by this strategy, including the Housing Strategy 2010 – 2015, whose vision is that *'we will support well- maintained, affordable and environmentally sustainable homes of all tenures and neighbourhoods where people choose to live. We will promote access, opportunity and choice for all sections of our community'*. Its aims to deliver the National, Regional and Local housing priorities laid out for Northampton, including addressing the BME housing communities needs, which is where this BME Housing Strategy fits.

 This strategy can be accessed by following this link [Sustainable Community Strategy for Northamptonshire](#) alternatively please call 01604 838575 and request a copy.

Northampton Borough Council Housing Strategy 2010 – 2015

This BME Housing strategy sits under the new Housing Strategy 2010 –15. This Housing Strategy will encapsulate the key housing issues from the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, and also the Council's Central Area Action Plan, and will provide the detailed actions to help deliver the growth identified in the Joint Core Strategy, as well as the affordable housing and the regeneration that is required to transform the town centre area of Northampton. It has identified four priorities for attention, which are to:

- Manage the supply and growth for the future of Northampton;
- Create resilient and cohesive communities;
- Deliver well-designed, high quality homes, neighbourhoods and services; and
- Improve customer access, opportunity and choice

Within this document one of the objectives is to gain a better understanding of the BME communities' housing needs.

 To request a copy of this document please call 01603 838575 or you can access the strategy by following this link http://www.northampton.gov.uk/downloads/housing_strategy_2010_web.pdf

Study of Black and Minority Ethnic Housing and Support Needs: Northamptonshire.

This project was undertaken on behalf of Northamptonshire County Council in partnership with the County's constituent local authorities and registered social landlords to better understand the housing and support needs of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities in Northamptonshire. Many concluding comments from this work correlate with the BME housing needs survey and therefore reinforce our proposed approach.

West Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2009)

In 2009 Northampton Borough Council commissioned Opinion Research Services (ORS) to carry out the West Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). This highlighted that Northampton has a higher BME population than the other authorities within the West Northamptonshire sub-region. It also showed, based on the Census 2001 figures, Northampton experienced a net immigration of BME residents, which would correlate with the estimated proportionate increase in the BME population.

NBC Tenant satisfaction Survey 2008

A tenant satisfaction survey based on the STATUS guidance² was carried out by Ipsos MORI on behalf of Northampton Borough Council. The Council has a statutory

² Running STATUS: A guide to undertaking the standardised tenant satisfaction survey (2nd edition) National Housing Federation, 2008

duty to provide this under the new National Indicator framework and the results are used to inform National Indicator 160 – overall satisfaction with landlord services.

The survey was conducted across a 2,500-tenant address sample and there were 997 respondents, which amounted to a 40% response rate. 10% of respondents were from a BME group and this is given as 7% Black, 2% Asian and 1% Mixed. The fieldwork was carried out between October and December 2008. In terms of overall satisfaction, net levels for BME tenants are not significantly below that of the whole tenant population. Level of tenant satisfaction has an age related correlation with younger tenants being far more likely to be dissatisfied. The age profile of the BME population may in part account for relative dissatisfaction levels.

Northampton Borough Council BME housing Need Survey

The strategy has been developed from the results of a BME Housing Needs Survey which was carried out by a specialist consultant; Ecotec. Three research methods were used in order to gain the best possible snap shot of Northampton’s BME population and their needs, including interviewing **210** residents and we used this information to help form the priorities. Please see page 17/18

7.0 Vision

We will support well – maintained, affordable and environmentally sustainable homes of all tenures, and neighbourhoods where people choose to live. We will promote access, opportunity and choice for all sections of our community.

8.0 BME Population

Northampton is the largest Borough in England and according to Office of National Statistics (ONS) mid-2009 population estimates; the Borough of Northampton has a population of 205,200. This shows an increase of just under 15,000 people from the Census 2001 population figure of 190,716.

8.1 BME Population Breakdown

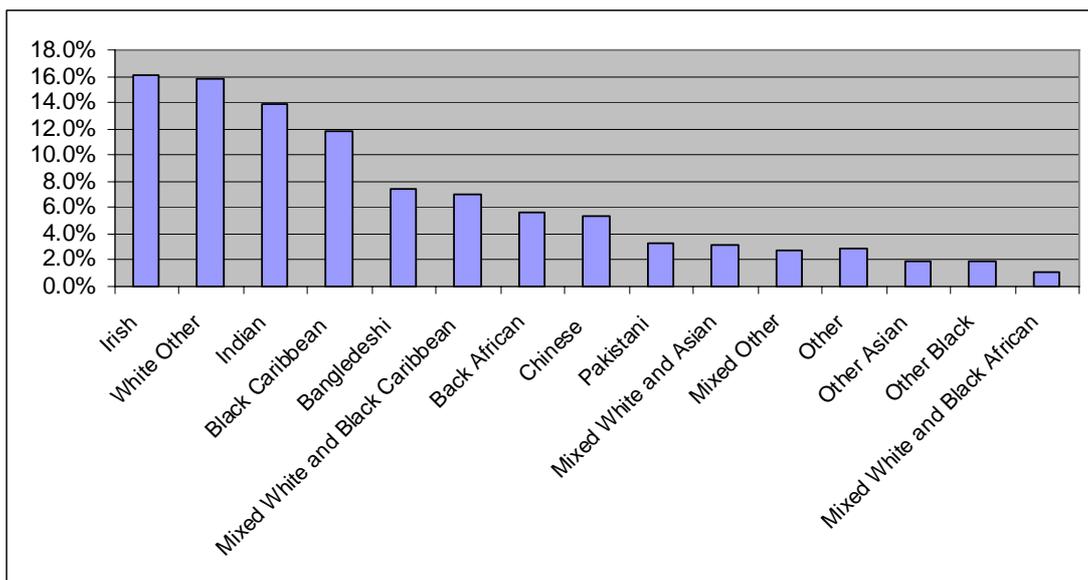


Figure 1. Source: Census

At the time of the Census over 30% of Northampton's BME population was defined as either 'Irish' or 'White Other'. These are the largest two groups, followed by 'Indian' at just under 14% and 'Black Caribbean' at just under 12%. It should be noted however that those of 'Mixed White and Caribbean' heritage accounted for just over 7% of the total BME population, meaning those residents with some Black Caribbean heritage would have formed the largest BME group.

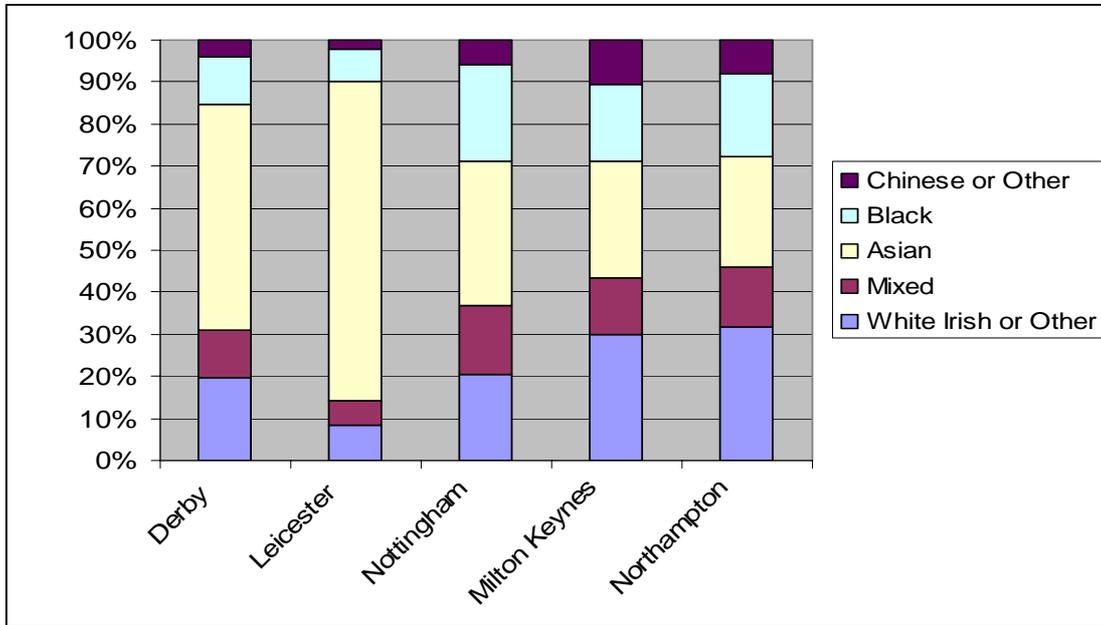


Figure 2 Source: CENSUS 2001

Figure 2 provides a comparative breakdown of the broad BME groups across the same geographies. Northampton shows a higher proportion of White Irish and Black population than the region as a whole, but significantly lower proportion of Asian population.

9.0 BME population Projections

9.1 Northampton has a growing BME population both in respect of numbers and the increasing diversity of that population. At the time of the Census in 2001, the BME population made up some 12% of the total population, however estimates predict that this figure has risen subsequently to over 16% in 2007. Population projections also predict a net increase to the town's population over the next twenty years in part due to international migration. Newer migrant groups in particular, such as those from Africa and Eastern Europe, are estimated to have seen an increase in their numbers, whereas more established ethnic groups such as those with Irish and Caribbean heritage are estimated to have seen a small decline in their population within the town.

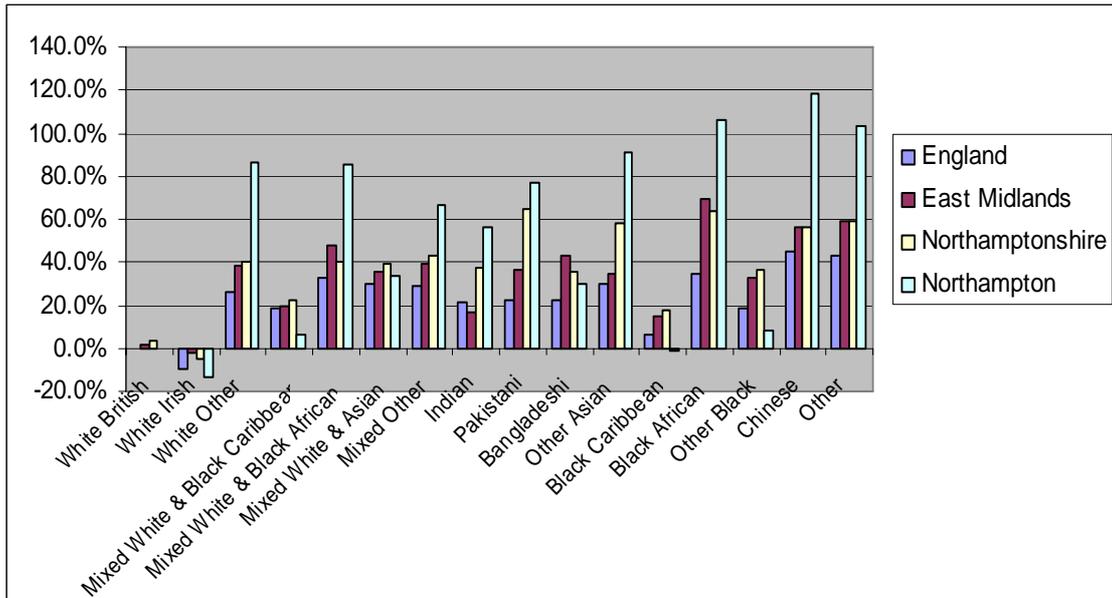
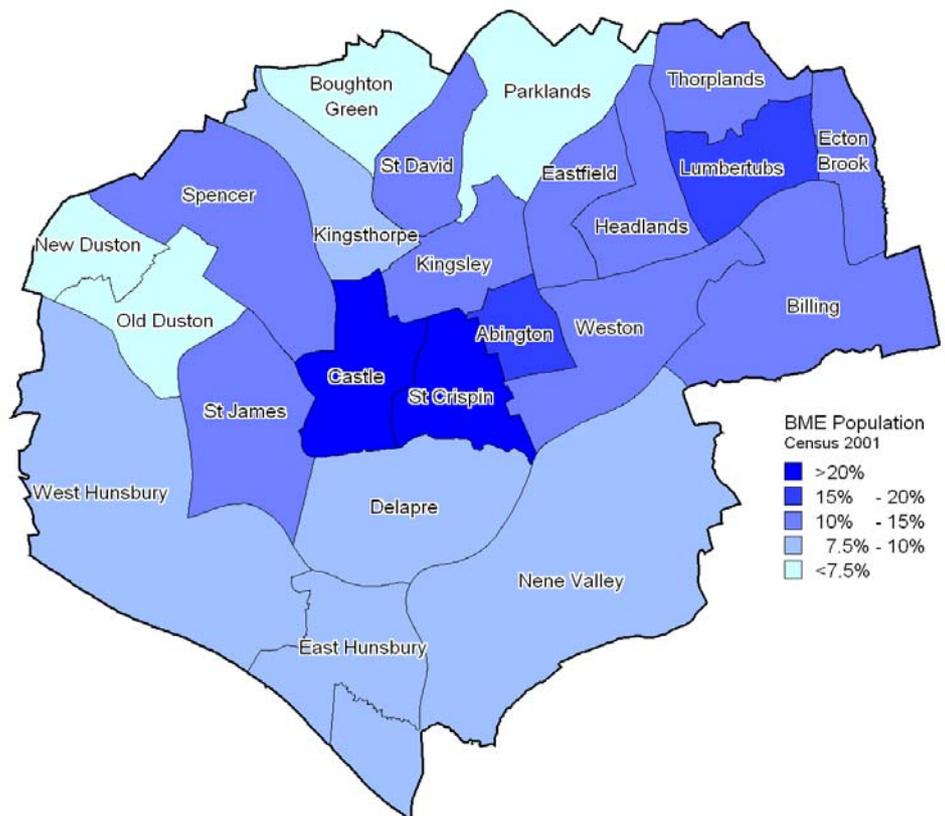


Figure 3. Estimated increase in BME population by ethnic group Source: Census 2001

9.2 Northampton has an even geographical spread of BME households with all wards at the time of the Census showing over 5% of their population as being from a BME group (See map below). BME households are slightly over represented in social housing, although this fluctuates significantly between ethnic groups. For example, households from an Asian background, in particular of Indian heritage, appear under represented in social housing, while the converse is true for households of White Other or Black African heritage.



Source: Census 2001
This map shows the BME population spread over the different wards.

10.0 Housing Needs Survey

The strategy has been developed from the results of a BME Housing Needs Survey which was carried out by a specialist consultant; Ecotec. Three research methods were used in order to gain the best possible snap shot of Northampton's BME population and their needs.

10.1 Stage one was a desk top review of all available contextual information and data; including Office of National Statistics (ONS), National Census of Population (CENSUS), Congress of Racial Equality (CRE), Continuous Recording system (CORE). They also included a literature review of the national, regional and local drivers stated above.

10.2 Stage two was the Semi- Structured interviews done by peer interviewers, in which they completed 210 questionnaires. These questionnaires asked 40 questions relating to:

- Current accommodation
- Current neighbourhood
- Future Housing needs
- Emerging new households
- Support needs
- Access to Housing Services
- Household Makeup

Ecotec used the secondary data to determine how many people from each ethnicity group we needed to complete a proportion of questionnaires. Using the census figures to reflect the increased populations of Black African and White Other groups the numbers of interviews obtained were as follows:

Irish	15	Bangladeshi	15
White Other	44	Black Caribbean	29
Mixed ethnic groups	17	Black African	35
Indian	28	Chinese	8
Pakistani	8	Other	11

10.3 Stage three consisted of focus groups and five in depth interviews, largely conducted by telephone but with one face to face. The people used in this stage were a mixture of male and female and different age ranges. Those taking part were recruited from those who had completed the main survey and were selected because they fell into one or more of the groups who seemed of most interest e.g. Black African, Other White, renting privately or being dissatisfied with services they had received.

For the purpose of this research Gypsies and Travellers were not included within this research as a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment was commissioned in 2008 to identify the needs of this community in Northamptonshire. *Please see page 50 of the Housing Strategy for further information on Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in Northampton.*

 This document can be viewed following this link: [Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment](#) or calling 01604 8385753 and requesting a copy.

11.0 Recommendations from the Research

From this research, the main study findings recommended 9 priorities. Over the next pages we will explain in detail why the piece of research recommended these specific priorities.

<p>Recommendation 1 Increase awareness of housing support and advice services amongst BME communities.</p>	<p>Recommendation 2 Promote our housing advice services to support BME households in the private rented sector</p>	<p>Recommendation 3 Review of standards before council properties are offered for re-letting.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4 Promote low-cost homeownership products</p>	<p>Recommendation 5 Continue to ensure housing is available in preferred areas of the town</p>	<p>Recommendation 6 BME sensitive design briefs for all future affordable housing schemes</p>
<p>Recommendation 7 Build more larger family sized accommodation</p>	<p>Recommendation 8 A review of any staff training needs created by the changing and increasing demands on the service from BME households.</p>	<p>Recommendation 9 Commitment to build further relationships with BME communities</p>

12.0 Explanation of the Recommendations

12.1 Recommendation 1: Increase awareness of housing support and advice services amongst BME communities.

The findings from the study showed that the Council was by far the most likely source of help and advice of which people were aware; beyond this their awareness was very limited. This limited awareness of alternatives means that there is a very heavy reliance on the Borough Council as a source of knowledge and help. As such it impacts on resource allocation to NBC frontline services⁴.

This chart shows % of contact with different housing services.

	%
Council Housing department	37
Bank or Building Society	28
Landlord	14
Citizen's Advice Bureau	8
Estate or letting agent	7
A Housing association	7
Community Law service	3
Social Services	3
Care and Repair	1
CAN	<1
No – none of these	31

Awareness did vary by ethnic group and those least likely to be aware of the council were Indian, White Other and Black Caribbean. 80% of the Indian population are owner-occupiers so they may consult their bank or building society rather than the council. White Other and Black Caribbean are two of the largest groups living in social rented housing so the fact they are least likely to think of the council for housing support and advice is an issue we need to address. African residents are slightly more established in Northampton and have made

more progress into the social housing system so there could just be a language barrier that inhibits them from knowing what services we offer.

The newest group is Eastern European, which is included in the White Other group. They are less established in the social rented sector and rely more upon the private rented sector. They may be unaware of what services we offer due to language barriers and are not being able to get advice from family and friends on where to go for help due to being in a newly arrived community.

The Chinese group was a very small sample but 3 out of 8 did not know where to go for advice, which is a significant number of people if it extends across the community as a whole.

Awareness did vary by tenure also with 90% of those renting from the council thinking of going to the authority for help and advice services and a much lower percentage for owner occupiers (43%) who would think of going to their bank or building society first. Only 21% renting from a private landlord would think of using our services and would prefer to consult their landlord for help and advice which depending on the calibre of the landlord, may not be the best course of action. (Private sector services will be covered in more detail in the next objective.)

⁴ Staff in direct contact with our customers, i.e. Contact centre and One Stop Shop Staff

The conclusion is that there is certainly more scope to increase awareness and help people understand the nature of housing support that might be available to them.

12.2 Recommendation 2: Promote our housing advice services to support BME households in the Private Rented sector.

The findings from the study showed that 25% of the people in the study were renting from a private landlord. It was found that three out of four households surveyed (77%) have a tenancy agreement, 15% do not and the remaining 8% do not know whether they have or not. Fewer people (62%) - were confident that they were fully aware of their rights as tenants. The main reason given as to why they had chosen private sector renting was that it was all they could afford and that they could not get a property through the Council due to waiting times.

Looking at people's preferences, the BME group with the highest preference for renting from a private landlord was the White Other group.

From the study we also found many people were renting because they couldn't afford to buy and it was the most convenient solution for them. It showed that many only planned to be in that particular area for a short period of time, which correlates with the fact that 80% of people in private sector renting had moved within Northampton in the last 3 years. Renting from the council was seen as more secure than private renting, with private renting many felt they were "at the mercy" of their landlord and many felt that with a council letting there was more scope to personalise a home and redecorate than in private rented accommodation. Every respondent completing the survey that was renting in the private sector was on the councils' housing waiting list.

From the survey many respondents had children in their teens and twenties who may wish to leave home in the future but the general view is that the current economic climate makes it very difficult for the young people to move into independent housing. Purchase is unlikely for a single person and the most likely scenario is to share rented property with others. It was also thought unlikely that young people without any specific housing problems would be a high priority for Council housing so they would have to rely on the private sector.

The East Midlands Regional Housing Strategy 2008 - 2016 states that councils and housing associations should place higher priority on tackling issues in the private rented sector. Such actions will address overcrowding and the poor housing conditions faced by migrant workers.

In conclusion, it can clearly be seen that private renting is not the tenure of choice, many see it as less secure and very expensive but simply had to go into that tenure through no other choice. It has a role as the tenure of transition while people wait for a council property or become secure enough financially to move to ownership. Due to the current economic downturn there has been an increase in the number of people looking to move into social housing. In Northampton our Housing Register is now up to 8200 people and growing. Therefore with only 12,260 council homes available and only approximately 1000 council housing lets per year the need to look at more innovative and progressive ways to use the private sector will be paramount.

12.3 Recommendation 3: Review of standards before council properties are offered for re-letting.

During the study many tenants raised the issue of their property being in a very poor condition at handover stage. They felt that they had no other choice as they had to make a decision there and then. In some cases, the property was seen as dangerous to household members, this was a significant concern to the households affected.

In 2000, the government challenged all public landlords to meet the Decent Homes Standard. The Decent Homes Standard requires that houses should be warm, weatherproof and have reasonably modern facilities.

Northampton Borough Council is aiming to meet this challenge for as many of our properties as possible, as soon as possible. This is being carried out through a programme of planned maintenance and improvements however for a number of our properties the standard will not be met by the deadline set of 2010 and so an exemption for these has been granted by the government. However, once completed these works will ensure all NBC homes meet the Decent Homes Standard.

How we will achieve Decent Homes standard this set out in the draft Housing Asset Management Strategy 2009/10 – 2013/14.

Northampton Borough Council's re-lettable standards were produced in January 2008. This is a checklist of standards, which a housing officer is required to check before letting the property.

To conclude; an issue that was raised regularly throughout the survey was that their theproperty was in a very poor condition at time of handover. Northampton Borough council's lettable standards need to be reviewed and monitored closely. This is an issue that is being reviewed as a priority.

12.4 Recommendation 4: Promote low-cost homeownership products

The findings from the study showed that only 1 person out of 210 respondents lived in a housing association shared ownership property.

Findings from qualitative interviews show that owner occupation is the preferred tenure across all BME groups but for those who do not currently own their own properties it was found that the key barrier to owner occupation was the lack of finance.

Detached houses were the most desirable type of property (46%) but only 14% could realistically afford these. All ethnic groups favoured purchase overall and this was strongest amongst the Indian and Black Caribbean communities. The least likely to favour purchase are the Irish and Other White groups, both of whom have an above average preference for renting from the council.

The study shows that some respondents have children living at home in their teens or early twenties who may wish to be independent in the future. Most said they would prefer to buy but affordability and access to mortgages restricts this. Looking at affordability, around half of those who would like to buy think they may be able to do so, although it would have to be with a mortgage rather than outright. The remainder

think they would need to compromise by renting from the Council (no-one mentioned a Housing association as an alternative to the Council). One person would be prepared to consider shared ownership and in a brief discussion in one of the focus groups it was suggested that there is little real understanding of the concept.

Some people do see a mortgage as 'too risky' in the current economic climate though. They are afraid to make that big a commitment if their employment is uncertain; they think it would be easier to cut their monthly outgoings if they were renting. This is likely to discourage some people from moving into home ownership particularly as house prices are very high and deposits of 20% or 25% might be required.

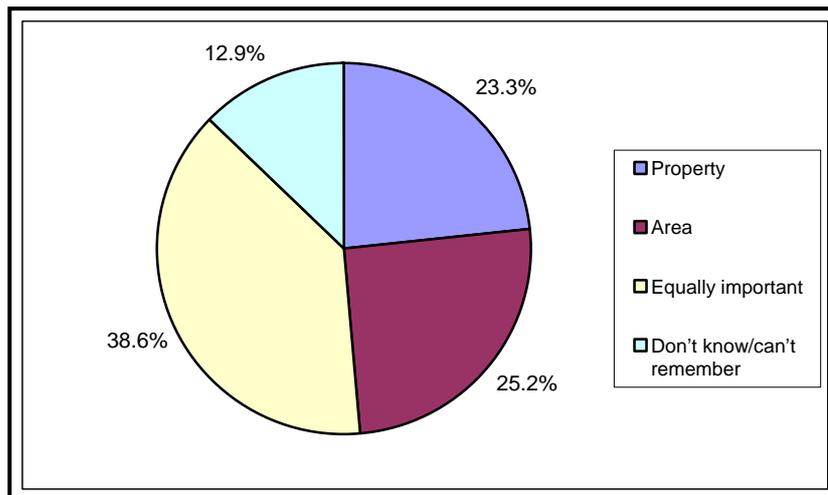
In conclusion, all ethnicity groups show that they have little understanding of the shared ownership concept. Many believe they cannot afford owner occupation, as they are not financially able to put down a deposit of 20 – 25%.

12.5 Recommendation 5: Continue to ensure housing is available in preferred areas of the town

The study showed that a very high proportion of the sample, (56%), were intending to move within the next five years. This included 40% who thought they would 'definitely' move and 16% who thought a move was 'possible'. Only 34% were confident they would not move, with 10% uncertain. It also showed that 80% of the people currently in private sector renting had moved within Northampton in the last 3 years. One of the main reasons for wishing to move was the need for a larger property.

Respondents were then given the opportunity to explain in their own words why they lived in their particular location. The two most commonly offered reasons were to be near family and friends and to be near work. The main positive influence on choice of property was that it was in a convenient location. This was supported by the

attractiveness of the area and having the right type and size of house.



This graph shows the main influences why the respondent chose their home.

Looking at the moving intentions of different ethnic groups it is clear that the 'newer' communities are the least settled and hence most likely to want to move. Some 83% of Black African respondents would want to move and 68% of 'Other White' residents. It is very likely that such households would require support to enable them to settle and integrate into these new areas.

People were also asked if there were areas of Northampton in which they would not want to live. Only 10% said they would be happy to live anywhere and another 10% were unable to comment. The main places they would wish to reject included: Eastern District (63% would not want to live there), Kings Heath (20%) Semilong (9%) Spring Boroughs (5%). The reason for not wanting to live in these areas was poor reputation and perceived high crime levels.

To conclude; the council needs to ensure that we are building property in areas in which people wish to live. Due to the fact that Northampton has an even geographical spread of BME households within all its wards, we cannot specifically target one area. We can however improve "poorer" areas which have a high proportion of larger affordable homes, through PFI funding and through the Decent Homes Programme so people do not have to compromise so much between size and location.

12.6 Recommendation 6: BME sensitive design

From the study, focus groups and Women's Muslim forum, it was highlighted that the needs from the different BME groups didn't necessarily focus on size and area; many mentioned the design of their current property not being adequate to their needs.

The main issue when their current home did not meet their needs was its size. This is an issue that does seem more important in the context of BME groups as some cultures are more likely to have larger and / or extended families. Another big issue concerned the design of the property, for example, needing privacy for different members of the family. This was sometimes a practical issue, for example allowing older children space to study, and sometimes a cultural one, e.g.: allowing Muslim families separate space for male and female members. Design is not a critical issue for most ethnic groups and even for those families where it is culturally desirable, if they are receiving assistance with housing they acknowledge that it may have to be an aspiration rather than a necessity. Nevertheless, in the face of increasing demands from BME groups on housing services it would seem appropriate to build cultural awareness into the design process. Having a garden was also important for families, and could be another reason for a property failing to meet the needs of residents.

Northampton would like to produce housing that will reflect and respond to the requirements of a wide a range of people as possible, and should therefore take into consideration the many and diverse lifestyles within the communities when looking at housing design.

Future developments should generally seek to promote flexibility in the design of housing and, wherever possible, maximize opportunities for resident choice in relation to the use of rooms, bathroom accommodation, kitchen design, storage, fixtures and fittings, and colour schemes.

12.7 Recommendation 7: Build more larger homes

The findings from the study showed that Northampton has a growing BME population both in respect of numbers and the increasing diversity of that population. At the time of the Census, the BME population made up some 12% of the total population, however estimates predict that this figure has risen subsequently to over 16%. Population projections also predict a net increase to the town's population over the next twenty years in part due to international migration. Newer migrant groups in

particular, such as those from Africa and Eastern Europe, are estimated to have seen an increase in their numbers, whereas more established ethnic groups such as those with Irish and Caribbean heritage are estimated to have seen a small decline in their population within the town.

The study identified that some households were living in properties, which were not suitable for the needs of their household due to their inadequate size. Some 45% of BME residents are in properties, which they feel; do not fully meet their housing needs. The proportions are higher for the newer Black African and White Other communities. Within the different household types, single parents are the least likely to think that their home meets their needs.

The findings from the qualitative research showed that where residents of Northampton felt they had an element of choice between the location and the nature of the property, they would generally discuss having a suitable property (in terms of size, being on the ground floor if necessary etc) first but then, if the question was directly asked, many would say the area / location was more important. So it is clearly an individual decision and people made different sorts of compromises but size was the main priority. The survey also showed that it was Asian and Black African households who are more likely to want a detached house.

The main issue regarding their current home not meeting their needs was its size. Several felt they needed a larger property, especially where they had larger families. This is an issue that does seem more important in the context of BME groups as some cultures are more likely to have larger and / or extended families than White British residents. Having a garden was also important for families.

Northampton is part of the Milton Keynes/ South Midlands Growth area, so we are therefore planning a significant growth of 40,000 homes between 2001 and 2026. We will be expanding and diversifying our housing to meet the needs of these new residents including BME communities. This ambitious economic and residential build programme will benefit many BME residents both in terms of better work opportunities and a better choice of homes.

Our estimated affordable housing projections for this financial year (2010/11) is 100; this has been reduced due to current economic pressures.

12.8 Recommendation 8: A review of any staff training needs created by the changing and increasing demands on the service from BME households.

Northampton Borough Council carried out a tenant satisfaction survey in late 2008. The survey was conducted across a 2,500-tenant address sample and there were 997 respondents, which amounted to a 40% response rate. 10% of respondents were from a BME group and this is given as 7% Black, 2% Asian and 1% Mixed. In terms of overall satisfaction, net levels for BME tenants are not significantly below that of the whole tenant population. The level of tenant satisfaction has an age related correlation with younger tenants being far more likely to be dissatisfied. The age profile of the BME population may in part account for relative dissatisfaction levels

It was shown from the survey that the housing department was the most likely point of contact (37%) followed closely by bank and building society. People who felt their

needs had not been taken seriously were found in most ethnic groups. The respondents who stated that they had not been treated fairly were mainly council or housing association tenants and from Black African or of mixed origin.

Those who felt they had suffered discrimination were mainly White Irish, Black African and Pakistani or Bangladeshi. The organisations concerned included the Council, the Community Law Service and the CAB as well as others. The nature of the discrimination included age and gender discrimination, being a single parent or failing to help because of language difficulties. They felt that another form of discrimination was 'being forced to take the first Council property offered and having no element of choice'. The focus group taken from amongst these respondents supported that view. Where there was an element of poor service, the focus group suggested that this might partly be due to the poor state of Council properties when they are handed over to new tenants.

Contact with the Council and its Housing Officers has been of variable standard but the overall impression is that satisfaction is reasonably high. The Council are seen to have dealt well, in the main, with the more urgent housing situations. But there is perhaps scope to raise the standards of contact with BME groups. The Council is responding to what appears to be changing and increasing demands on its services and any dissatisfaction with services currently is probably not at an unacceptable level.

We have reviewed and introduced new corporate training on equalities and diversity and EIA's. This includes having regard to our legal duties. Some areas e.g. Housing Solutions, also have encouraged BME community members to work with council staff to help ensure that the needs of particular communities are met as part of meeting our duties re race equality.

We monitor our employees in relation to race as well as other equality strands. This helps us to see the extent to which our workforce is reflective of the local community we serve.⁶

12.9 Recommendation 9: Commitment to build further relationships with BME communities

Community consultation and engagement are important as a means of improving the services provided by the Council and its partners. They are also essential to deliver sustainable improvement in any given neighbourhood. From the study it was voiced that current methods of consultation with the BME community by the Council and other service providers were regarded as being very poor. This suggests the need to review existing engagement approaches to ensure that they are relevant to all communities.

Different BME groups may want to be consulted in particular ways compared to others who will prefer the traditional methods.

Current legislation places a statutory duty on public authorities to promote race equality. Its aim is to help public authorities to provide fair and accessible services, and to improve equal opportunities in employment. We have now introduced an Equality Impact Assessment process which reviews our policies to ensure that race equality is considered with a view to identifying and mitigating where possible any adverse impacts.

⁶ Diversity issues are covered in the Housing Equality Action Plan

NBC has developed a Consultation Toolkit based on best practice and this includes some suggestions of contacts to help ensure ethnic minority groups are appropriately included in consultation planning this should be reviewed and built upon.

13.0 Consultation Outcomes

From the Housing Needs Survey it was recommended that Northampton Borough Council should work towards the 9 recommendations above. Northampton Borough Council consultation period ran from the 2nd August 2010 to 22nd October 2010, to consult on the 9 recommendations to ensure we have the correct 9 recommendations and/or if we need to include more or less.

We consulted with **322** residents from various communities (Please see appendix 2) and can conclude that the top 4 recommendations that 322 residents supported were;

Recommendation 1 - NBC should increase awareness of housing support and advice services amongst BME communities. (289 people voted in favour of this priority)

Recommendation 2 - NBC must promote its housing advice service to support BME households in private rented accommodation (280 people voted in favour of this priority)

Recommendation 3 - NBC must review its standards before Council properties are offered for re-letting. (298 people voted in favour of this priority)

Recommendation 7 - NBC must build more family- sized homes e.g. 3+ bedroom (277 people voted in favour of this priority)

Out of the top 4 recommendations we understand and have evidence to support that recommendations 3 and 7 are general need issues and are not BME specific, which is why we will be including these two recommendation in the over-arching Housing Strategy 2010 –2015 as priorities and not in the BME housing strategy. Recommendations 1 and 2 will be included in the BME housing strategy action plan including actions as priorities and we will create actions in order to complete the priorities.

Recommendation 4 – Promote low-cost homeownership products

264 consultees voted in favour of this recommendation out of a possible 330. Northampton Borough Council feels that from the BME housing need research and consultees responses; very few ethnicity groups have little understanding of the shared ownership concept, and that NBC could explain this further through better communication. This recommendation will therefore will be covered in the BME housing strategy action plan as a priority and we will create actions in order to complete the priority.

Recommendation 5 – Continue to ensure housing is available in preferred areas of the town

271 consultees voted in favour of this recommendation out of a possible 330. Northampton Borough Council feels that from the BME housing need research and consultees responses that we need to ensure that we are building property in areas

in which all people wish to live not just BME resident. Therefore this recommendation will be covered in the overarching housing strategy as a priority and we will create actions in order to complete the priority.

Recommendation 6 – *BME sensitive design briefs for all future affordable housing schemes*

177 consultees voted in favour of this recommendation out of a possible 330. Northampton Borough Council feels that from the BME housing need research and from consultees responses that BME resident were very pleased that this recommendation had been acknowledged. 118 people did vote that NBC should not include this, as a priority, but the main reasons being was that they did not understand the recommendation. We will be including this recommendation in the BME housing strategy action plan as a priority and creating actions to complete the priority, but as it was voted the least favorable recommendation we will use all available resources on completing the top 4 priorities voted by BME residents.

Recommendation 8 - *A review of any staff training needs created by the changing and increasing demands on the service from BME households.*

267 consultees voted in favour of this recommendation out of a possible 330. Northampton Borough Council feels that from the BME housing need research and from consultees responses that we need to provide housing staff with further training on how to deal with people who have language and communication requirements. We will be including this recommendation in the BME housing strategy action plan as an priority and we will create actions in order to complete the priority.

Recommendation 9 - *Commitment to build further relationships with BME communities*

276 consultees voted in favour of this recommendation out of a possible 330. Northampton Borough Council feels that from the BME housing need research and from consultees responses that current consultation methods with BME communities could be improved and we need to review existing engagement strategies. We will be including this recommendation in the BME housing strategy action plan as a priority and will be creating actions in order to complete this priority.

From this analysis Northampton Borough Council has concluded that the BME Housing Strategy action plan will now contain the following priorities;

1. NBC should increase awareness of housing support and advice services amongst BME communities
2. NBC must promote its housing advice service to support BME households in private rented accommodation
3. Promote low-cost homeownership products
4. BME sensitive design briefs for all future affordable housing schemes
5. A review of any staff training needs created by the changing and increasing demands on the service from BME households.
6. Commitment to build further relationships with BME communities

Generic recommendations will be incorporated/addressed in the overall Housing Strategy

14.0 Delivering the strategy, monitoring and reviewing

14.1 BME Housing Strategy Action Plan

A comprehensive action plan will be produced from the priorities previously outlined. The action plan will help to deliver the key priorities as identified in this strategy. Actions will be assigned to individual members of the Housing team, to progress.

14.2 Monitoring and review

We will monitor and report progress in a number of ways to ensure that the recommendations in this document are delivered on time and to the highest standards, and that they continue to reflect the priorities of local BME communities. This process will include

- A regular assessment of how the strategy is succeeding.
- Monitoring through the Housing Strategy Steering Panel (HSSP)
- Using BME Housing Forum and all residents who completed the questionnaire as part of the consultation process we will share our progression and measure our success.
- Evaluate on-going feedback from stakeholders and the community

14.3 Census 2011

Census data released next year will allow us to update the BME strategy to allow us more accurately assess to BME housing needs and provide services to meet those needs.

15.0 BME Housing Action Plan

The priorities identified have now been used to form the BME Housing Action Plan. This action plan is made up of action which are BME specific all other priorities which are general need issues can be found in the overarching Housing Strategy.

We aim to deliver most of these priorities where funding permits us to do so⁷ and all actions will be monitored by the Housing Strategy Steering Panel (HSSP) or completed through the Housing Equalities Action Plan (HEAP) in order for us to achieve our goals.

⁷ Following announcements from the Comprehensive Spending Review some of the actions cannot be achieved in light of the current economic climate. Once we have further details on budgets we can then review the actions and complete in order of priority.

Northampton's BME Housing Strategy Action Plan 2010 - 2015

No.	Priority	Milestones & Actions	Monitoring & Progress			Resource	Lead person
			Start	Finish	Monitored by		
1.1	Increase awareness of housing support and advice services amongst BME communities .	Work in partnership with other support agencies in order to spread the load of expectation but also create awareness and impart reliable information.	December 2010	September 2011	HSSP	Existing Staff Resources	Housing Solutions Manager
1.2		Increase publicity through targeted campaigns and through BME group specific literature.	December 2010	September 2011	HEAP	Existing Staff Resources	Housing Strategy and Performance Manager
1.3		When communicating with tenants, make best use of the tenant profile information to maximize awareness and access to services	December 2010	Ongoing	HEAP	Existing Staff Resources	Head of Landlord Services

BME Housing Strategy 2010 - 2013

1.4		Hold community workshops to explain how the Credit Union and CBL system works and any other services we provide, using a translator if required	December 2010	May 2011	HSSP	Existing Staff Resources	Housing Solutions Manager
1.5		Continue our Anti Social Behaviour monitoring to help our BME tenants suffering from Anti Social Behaviour.	December 2010	May 2011	HSSP	Existing Staff Resources	Housing Services Manager
1.6		Work in partnership with the NBC events team to promote BME activities and social gatherings.	December 2010	August 2011	HSSP	Existing Staff Resources	Housing Strategy and Performance Manager
1.7		Include information on property repairs, applying for benefits and how to report a repair in the tenant packs.	December 2010	August 2011	HSSP	Existing Staff Resources	Head of Landlord Services
1.8		Promote the Chain Lettings scheme to tackle overcrowding.	December 2010	August 2011	HSSP	Existing Staff Resources	Housing Solutions Manager
2.1	Promote our housing advice services to support BME households in the Private Rented sector.	Promote housing advice services through BME group specific literature including website improvements	December 2010	September 2011	HEAP	Existing Staff Resources	Housing Solutions Manager
2.2		Write a private sector housing strategy the aims of which will include improving private sector housing standards from BME residents and non-BME residents.	December 2010	March 2011	HSSP	Existing Staff Resources	Housing Strategy Manager

BME Housing Strategy 2010 - 2013

2.3		Carry out a stock condition survey of Private rented accommodation.	December 2010	October 2011	HSSP	GF Revenue	Housing Solutions Manger
2.4		Target landlords in specific BME community areas with literature on their rights and duties.	December 2010	September 2011	HSSP	Existing Staff Resources	Housing Solutions Manger
2.5		Provide new BME Households, housed through our CBL System with detailed information on their rights and information on access to other relevant services.	December 2010	September 2011	HSSP	Existing Staff Resources	Housing Solutions Manger
2.6		Work with landlords to get more of them accredited and become more proactive with ensuring bad landlords are dealt with	December 2010	December 2011	HSSP	Existing Staff Resources	Housing Solutions Manger

BME Housing Strategy 2010 - 2013

No.	Priority	Milestones & Actions	Monitoring & Progress			Resources	Lead person
			Start	Finish	Monitored by		
3.1	Promote low-cost homeownership products	Produce a leaflet explaining in plain English for BME resident and non-BME residents how Shared ownership works and explain other affordable products that are available.	December 2010	September 2011	HSSP	Existing Staff Resources	Housing Strategy and Performance Manager
3.2		Targeted publicity campaigns and BME group-specific literature where necessary	December 2010	September 2011	HSSP	Existing Staff Resources	Housing Strategy and Performance Manager
3.3		Ensure Northampton Borough council's web page on Shared ownership is explained in easy terms and is easily accessible.	December 2010	September 2011	HEAP	Existing Staff Resources	Housing Strategy and Performance Manager
3.4		Work in partnership with other agencies to produce a resource pack about home ownership and home maintenance	December 2010	September 2011	HSSP	Existing Staff Resources and funding to be confirmed	Housing Strategy and Performance Manager
3.5		Promote Shariah compliant loan/finance advice and information	December 2010	December 2011	HSSP	Existing Staff Resources	Housing solutions Manger

BME Housing Strategy 2010 - 2013

4.1	BME sensitive design briefs for all future affordable housing schemes	Development of BME sensitive design briefs for application to all future affordable housing schemes	December 2010	April 2011	HSSP	Existing Staff Resources	Housing Strategy and Performance Manager
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No.	Priority	Milestones & Actions	Monitoring & Progress			Resources	Lead person
			Start	Finish	Monitored by		
5.1	A review of any staff training needs created by the changing and increasing demands on the service from BME households.	Training for all frontline housing staff that focuses on dealing with BME housing issues, including interpreting and translating guidance.	January 2010	May 2011	HEAP	Existing Staff Resources – funding to be confirmed	Customer Excellence Manager (HR)
5.2		Working in partnership with other organisations to ensure that they deal with BME housing needs efficiently and without discrimination.	December 2010	September 2011	HSSP	Existing Staff Resources	Housing Strategy and Performance Manager
6.1	Commitment to build further relationships with BME	Making sure this document and any further BME focused material is consulted on with all the BME communities.	December 2010	August 2011	HSSP	Existing Staff Resources	Housing Strategy and Performance Manager

BME Housing Strategy 2010 - 2013

6.2	communities	Expand the BME housing forum	February 2011	December 2011	HSSP	Existing Staff Resources	Housing Strategy and Performance Manager
6.3		Improve signage in the One Stop Shop.	January 2011	August 2011	HSSP	Existing Staff Resources – funding to be confirmed	Housing Strategy and Performance Manager

Appendix 1: Whom did we consult with?

The following organisations were consulted with:

- East Midlands Housing Association
- The Guinness Partnership
- Leicester Housing Association (LHA ASRA)
- Orbit Homes
- Home Housing Association
- Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association
- Viridian Housing Association
- Metropolitan Housing Trust
- Minster – Hyde Group
- Nottingham Community Housing Association
- Genesis Homes
- Midland Heart Housing Association
- Notting Hill Housing Association
- Derwent Living Housing Association
- Muir Housing Association
- Sanctuary Housing Association
- Accent Nene Housing Association
- CEMC
- Woman's aid
- Northamptonshire Race Equality Council
- Northampton Bangladeshi Association
- Woman's Muslim Forum
- NHS Community Development Team for BME communities
- Indian Hindu Welfare Organisation (Northampton)
- BME Spark (supporting people action research and knowledge)
- Churches Together in Northampton
- Commission for Equality and Human Rights
- Connolly Association (Northampton)
- Diversion
- Federation of Irish Societies
- Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism
- Greek Community in Northampton
Jesus Centre, Northampton
- Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants
- Liberians in Europe
- Malawi Association
- Muslim Health Network
- Nagarjuna Buddhist Centre (Northampton)
- Northampton Afro-Caribbean Centre
- Northampton Hebrew Congregation
- Northampton Irish Support Group
- Northampton Sikhs
- Northamptonshire Racial Equality Council
- Northamptonshire Somali Forum
- Pakistani Cultural Development Centre
- Patel Samaj of Northampton Gujarati Hindu Community
- Polish Community
- Refugee Council
- Somali Community

Appendix 2: Consultation Outcomes

In the questionnaire, consultees were asked whether they agree/ disagree with the following 9 priorities.

Questions	YES	NO	NO ANSWER	TOTAL
1. NBC should increase awareness of housing support and advice services amongst BME communities.	289	28	5	322
2. NBC must promote its housing advice service to support BME households in private rented housing.	280	33	9	322
3. NBC must review its standards before council properties are offered for re-letting.	298	15	9	322
4. NBC must promote low cost home ownership products to BME residents	264	36	22	322
5. NBC must ensure housing is available in preferred areas of the town	271	32	19	322
6. NBC must ensure a proportion of new homes are designed to meet the living needs of BME residents e.g. designed for religious reasons.	177	118	27	322
7. NBC must build more family-sized homes e.g. 3+ bedroom.	277	28	17	322
8. NBC must review its staff training so we understand BME housing issues better e.g. language translations.	267	37	18	322
9. NBC must consult with all BME communities on a regular basis to build further relationships.	276	29	17	322
	YES	NO	NO ANSWER	Order of popularity
Question 1	289	28	5	2nd
Question 2	280	33	9	3rd
Question 3	298	15	9	1st
Question 4	264	36	22	8th
Question 5	271	32	19	6th
Question 6	177	118	27	9th
Question 7	277	28	17	4th
Question 8	267	37	18	7th
Question 9	276	29	17	5th

Appendix 2: Consultation Outcomes

The 4 priorities resident unanimously agreed with that NBC should be working towards are:

- Increase awareness of housing support and advice services amongst BME communities.
- Promote our housing advice service to support BME households in the private rented sector.
- Review our standards before council properties are offered for re-letting.
- Build more family-sized homes e.g. 3+ bedrooms.

The 1 priority that was least favourable was:

- Ensure a proportion of new homes are designed to meet the living needs of BME residents e.g. designed for religious reasons.

118 people voted that NBC should not include this as a priority, main reasons being that they did not understand the priority and that many non-religious residents completed the questionnaire.

After speaking at length a religious group, they were very pleased that this priority had been acknowledged, as it is a problem for her family. As the women and men have to pray in separate areas of the house, the women usually had to go upstairs to pray and due to the way the house was built the women of the house had to pray facing the toilet, and with the children running in and out of the bathroom it has caused problems and discomfort.

This group understood that this would not be a top priority but were just pleased NBC had recognised it as a problem.

Appendix 2: Consultation Outcomes

Breakdown of ethnicity group and age from the completed questionnaires

Age		Comment
16 - 25	51	
26 - 35	96	
36 - 50	92	
Over 50	74	
Didn't say	9	
TOTAL	322	
Ethnicity		
White British	15	
White Irish	4	
Other White	46	Moldova, Polish, Romanian, EU, Ukrainian, Slovak
Mixed White & Black Caribbean	47	
Mixed White & Black African	14	
Mixed White & Asian	2	
Other Mixed	2	Anglo Indian,
Indian	36	
Pakistani	4	
Bangladeshi	23	
Other Asian	10	Kurdish, Sri Lankan, Thai, Iranian
Black Caribbean	33	
Black African	63	
Other Black	6	American, British, Somalia
Chinese	6	
Other	6	Iraqi, Somali, Iraqi, Maltese, Somalia
Unknown	4	
Irish Traveller	1	

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TOTAL	322
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We used CENSUS data try and get an even ethnicity mix, so where Northampton has a bigger population in a particular group, for example, Black African and White Other (Figure 3, page 14) we targeted these groups to get a higher response rate. We also note that we have had lower responses from the smaller groups including White Irish, Mixed White & Black Caribbean, Mixed White & Asian, Pakistani, Chinese and also the younger age band 16 – 25. This has been identified in the EIA for this strategy (Available on the website) and NBC will be working towards ensure we hear from these groups by targeted campaigns.

Appendix 3: Glossary of Terms

TERM USED	WHAT IT MEANS
NBC	Northampton Borough Council
BME	Black Minority Ethnic Category used to describe any ethnicity other than White British.
DMT	Directorate Management Team. Group at NBC made up of Managers and Heads of Service.
HSSP	Housing Strategy Steering Panel. Group at Northampton Borough Council made up of officers and elected members to monitor the delivery of the Housing Strategy and the BME Housing strategy
PSHS	Private Sector Housing Strategy. Sets out the priorities BNC should be focusing on in the Private Sector.
DCLG	Department of Communities and Local Government. A Government agency that Aims to foster prosperous and cohesive communities, offering a safe, healthy and sustainable environment for all. Information about activities and policies.
GOEM	Government Office East Midlands. As part of the Coalition government localism agenda, government ministers announced in May 2010 the abolition of this Government Office.
HAMS	Housing Asset Management Strategy. The Housing Asset Management Strategy (HAMS) sets out the council's plan for improving its housing stock, taking into account the investment needs of homes across the town and the money available for improvements.
EIA	Equalities Impact Assessment. An equality impact assessment involves assessing the likely or actual effects of policies or services on people in respect of disability, gender and racial equality. It helps us to make sure the needs of people are taken into account when we develop and implement a new policy or service or when we make a change to a current policy or service.
CRE	Campaign for Racial Equality. The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) was a non-departmental public body in the United Kingdom, which aimed to tackle racial discrimination and promote racial equality. Its work has been merged into the new Equality and Human Rights Commission.
HEAP	Housing Equality Action Plan – what NBC work towards to make sure everyone is treated fairly in housing.
DHS	Decent Homes Standard. This is a national standard implemented by the Government in 2000, to bring all social rented homes up to a certain decency level.
CAAP	Central Area Action Plan. Development plan document that is part of the Joint Core Strategy and offer more detailed information.
HCA	Homes and Communities Agency. Formed by the amalgamation of English Partnerships and the Housing

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	Corporation, and provided with statutory powers as part of the Housing & Regeneration Act 2008.
ORS	Opinion Research Services. Opinion Research Services is an independent social research practice that works across the UK
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) is a piece of research that has been undertaken on behalf of the Borough Council to determine housing need and demand.
Ipsos MORI	Ipsos MORI is one of the largest and best known research companies in the UK and a key part of the Ipsos Group, a leading global research company
STATUS Guidance	Government body guidance for Local Authorities to follow.
ONS	Office of National Statistics. The Office for National Statistics produces independent information to improve our understanding of the UK's economy and society.
CENSUS	A census is a count of all people and households in the country. It provides population statistics from a national to neighbourhood level for government, local authorities, business and communities.
CORE	CORE provides valuable information about new social housing lettings and sales, and tenants and buyers, across England. This national information source is used by government bodies and organisations to inform social housing funding, regulatory and housing policy decisions.
GTAA	Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment. This was conducted Countywide and a report was produced in 2008.
CBL	Choice-based lettings (CBL) scheme is used at NBC and is designed to introduce an element of choice for people who apply for council and housing association homes. Choice-based lettings allow people applying for a home (including existing tenants who want a transfer) to bid for properties which become available on a points-based system.
PRS	Private Rented Sector
PFI	The private finance initiative (PFI) provides a way of funding major capital investments i.e. regeneration of run down housing areas, without immediate recourse to the public purse.
NHF	The National Housing Federation represents 1,200 independent, not-for-profit housing associations in England and is the voice of affordable housing.
NBHB	New Build Home Buy is a shared ownership option offers brand new homes for sale on a part buy / part rent basis.
HA	Housing Association in the United Kingdom are independent not-for-profit bodies that provide low-cost "social housing" for people in housing need.
CAB	Citizens Advice Bureau helps people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free, independent

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	and confidential advice, and by influencing policymakers.
RSL	Registered Social Landlord – also refers to Housing Association
OSS	One Stop Shop – Located at the Guildhall, where you can come with housing enquires.