



The Experiences and Needs of Ethnic Minority Residents and Workers in the Borough of High Peak

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This project was supported by;

- University of Derby Buxton, Culture, Lifestyle and Landscape Research Group
- Derbyshire Dales County Council
- High Peak Borough Council
- High Peak and Dales Primary Care Trust
- Derbyshire Police Services
- Voluntary and Community Sector

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1. Background

Following Eric Jay's expose of rural racism in southwest England in 1992, research focusing on ethnic minority residents in rural areas in the United Kingdom started to gain momentum. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 has also had a significant impact on the attention public authorities place on the needs of ethnic minority people in rural areas. The General Duty of the above-mentioned act requires public authorities to:

- Eliminate racial discrimination
- Promote Equality of Opportunity
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups

The Specific Duties of the Race Relations (Amendment Act) 2000 set out the arrangements for meeting the General Duty and are central to public authorities' Race Equality Schemes. In particular, several of the Specific Duties require public authorities to:

- Identify those of its functions and policies that are relevant to the performance of the General Duty
- Assess and consult on the likely impact of proposed and existing policies on the promotion of race equality
- Monitor policies for any adverse impact on the promotion of race equality

In order to monitor compliance with these duties race equality standards have been incorporated into public authorities' Best Value performance management systems, to ensure that there are clear race equality priorities and targets for services and employment.

To respond in an effective way, the General Duty organisations providing a public service in the High Peak need knowledge and understanding of the particular experiences, issues and therefore needs of ethnic minority residents. To date this has been a difficult objective to achieve due to the small number and dispersed nature of ethnic minority people in the High Peak and the fact that there are no area based ethnic minority communities or community groups that could be approached for information.

In light of this the High Peak Borough Council (HPBC) commissioned this report supported by Derbyshire Country Council, the Health service, the Police service, the University of Derby College Buxton and the Voluntary sector. The brief was to research the experiences and needs of ethnic minority people in the High Peak and consider the implications for service providers. It was hoped that this research project would therefore engage with ethnic minority people and build up a database of people with whom to consult. The High Peak boroughs public authorities need to establish contact with ethnic minority people in order to;

- Improve public authorities' knowledge and understanding of key issues affecting their lives
- Assess the impact of policies and services for any adverse effects, identify any unmet service needs and improve services accordingly
- Assist the development of mechanisms for future consultation
- Assess the level of demand and capacity for community development initiatives amongst ethnic minority residents.

The project was based on existing research focusing on the experiences of ethnic minorities in rural areas, in particular Gaine and Lamley (2003) and Gaine and Gough (2002), as they are distinguished by their emphasis on the experiences and needs of ethnic minority residents and workers as users of specific public services.

The research project has strong links with the following High Peak strategies;

- High Peak community safety strategy
- Our community...Working Together...High Peak Community Strategy
- HPBC Corporate Equality Plan
- HPBC Consultation Strategy
- HPBC Communications strategy
- Derbyshire County Council Race Equality Scheme
- Tameside and Glossop Primary Care Trust –Draft Health Improvement and Equalities Strategy
- High Peak and Dales Primary Care Trust Strategy

2. Executive Summary

Positive general living experiences

- The majority of people we spoke to said the main thing they liked about living in the High Peak was the environment, particularly in terms of being able to engage with countryside activities and feeling safe within it
- Many of the informants had moved to the High Peak from large cities therefore it was a decision, which they made through choice, and research, which suggests, is relative to the positive experience
- Most people felt that local people were friendly

Negative general living experiences

- The majority of informants felt that the lack of leisure activities and entertainment was a key negative issue in the area
- The lack of leisure and entertainment was thought to be responsible for increasing crime, anti-social behaviour and the drug culture associated youths in the High Peak
- Some people felt that heavy traffic and congestion impinges upon their everyday life
- Although local people were thought to be friendly, many people thought that the local communities were insular and thus not welcoming
- Some people do not feel comfortable engaging with the local community for the above reasons

Specific ethnic minority issues

- Ethnic minority people in general do not like to be identified as such and it is felt that this is the major reason for the inability to engage people with this project
- There are no specific established or organised ethnic minority groups or communities within the High Peak
- Most of the problems which ethnic minorities in the High Peak face are the same as everyone else; the barriers are language and knowledge
- Some of the ethnic minority people interviewed from an educated, professional background felt that they had an advantage over other ethnic minority people as they feel able to deal with any situations confidently

- It was suggested that if ethnic minority people have specific needs then they should lead their own initiatives
- Integration into the local community appears to be place and person specific in terms of the characters of the people and communities involved.
- Generally people felt that they had no specific needs in terms of religion and culture, however they felt that schooling should address young peoples understanding of diversity
- Some Catholic people felt that there is no equality in terms of their religious needs in the work environment compared with those of other religious groups
- Many minorities expect racism and discrimination and tolerate it, people who are not visibly from a minority find racist comments offensive and painful to deal with.
- Most people would only report a racial incident if it was violent
- Some people feel that ethnic minority initiatives are simply a token gesture

Education Services

- Response rate to the research from schools was very low, only one school out of seven participated in sending out letters to perspective interviewees, no-one under the age of eighteen was engaged with the project, neither could we engage any school staff to relate their experiences and training
- All experiences cited come from parents, mature students and teachers in higher education and tends to relate to past experiences
- Generally experiences quoted were of a positive nature or demonstrated a schools ability to act upon any problems which have occurred
- Ethnic minority teachers feel that there is a need for diversity training for staff

Health services

- Management and steering group members were very helpful however it was difficult to gain individual GP's help in gaining access to ethnic minority patients in the High Peak
- Most interviewees felt positively towards health services and negative issues raised were of a generic nature
 - Waiting lists and times
 - Appointment booking systems

- No main hospital in the High Peak
- Lack of NHS dentists
- Generally people understand the problems that the health service faces
- The few specific issues related to ethnic minorities suggests that that issues depend very much on an individuals needs
- Health services need to identify their users and tailor their services accordingly

High Peak Borough Council

- Managers and steering group members provided information, literature and first point of call contacts
- Many of the people interviewed were unaware of the services provided by HPBC
- A lack of knowledge, procedures and systems is not only seen as a barrier but as also inducing a lack of confidence in people when dealing with the HPBC
- Generally issues were of a generic nature
 - Road sweeping and cleaning not adequate
 - Refuse collection and recycling needs improving
 - Necessity for more tips
 - Lack of value for money in terms of taxes paid and service quality provided
 - Lack of communication, listening and feedback
- Some people who were approached to take part in the project declined saying that it was too late, it should have been done ten years before
- Most people were impressed by the HPBC call centre
- Some people feel that the HPBC should identify its ethnic minority population and
 - Send out its information packs
 - Identify the different community languages being used
 - Have information packs previously translated into the major community languages
- Positive comments demonstrate a change in HPBC services over the years
- Many people felt that they needed to have better communication and feedback
- Ethnic minority relations with the environmental health department were very good

- HPBC need to identify and provide for people lacking in knowledge, promoting themselves to be approachable and helpful to all.

Police services

- The police service were very supportive and informative throughout this research project
- Most of the issues discussed were of a generic nature
 - Difficulties with calls to the police being rerouted to a call centre
 - A need for more police patrolling the streets
 - Lack of communication
- Those issues specifically related to ethnic minorities were concerned with the stop and search law
- Overall feelings and perspectives of police come from individual experiences, many of which relate back to a persons country of origin
- Some concern has been expressed in terms of confidentiality with other services

Voluntary and Community Sector

- An extremely wide and large sector to engage with therefore the Council for Voluntary Services and the Buxton and Glossop volunteer bureaux offices helped with providing information and contacts
- There are no ethnic minority voluntary or community groups established
- There appear to be gaps in knowledge with regards to the ethnic minority population and their lack of engagement with this sector
- One ethnic minority person working for this sector felt that there are not specific cultural needs in order to provide services for targeted groups
- Many of the people interviewed engaged with these services as volunteers rather than as users and speak positively about their experiences, often these people feel that they are ‘putting something back into the community’
- Some people feel that there are issues regarding the lack of training of volunteers
- A possible lack of knowledge coupled with communication problems could contribute to the lack of engagement with the voluntary and community sector.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Overview

Issues Raised	Recommendations
People who do not speak much English encounter problems using services	Involve ethnic minority people and build up a database of local people able to translate in different languages
People from ethnic minorities should lead initiatives	Encourage people to come forward and make suggestions
Some people are unable to read and write in English and therefore are unable to fill in forms	Services need to be able to identify those with special needs
Integration and learning the English language seem to be the best way	Services could promote this and give help accordingly
Many ethnic minority people experience problems when dealing with services due to language problems or a lack of confidence etc	Services need to take action and demonstrate that they are approachable and sensitive to peoples needs
Most of the problems ethnic minorities face are the same as anyone else, the barriers are language and knowledge	Services should identify ethnic minorities and the different languages being used and provide ready printed leaflets in suitable languages
Many people do not understand cultural and religious differences	Service providers need to undergo diversity training, this should be embedded within training systems
Religious needs not catered e.g. Catholics	Services should review their religious provisions to ensure equity
Hard for ethnic minority people to get information or to know how to access information	To have people trained in the services. Perhaps a person from an ethnic minority background who has an insight into the difficulties which people may face and can show empathy and understanding but also be a valuable source of

	knowledge. This has to be easily accessible and well marketed. A one-stop shop service could be implemented as a point of first contact.
Many people believe High Peak towns and villages are insular and any outsider coming in will face difficulties when trying to integrate.	Target the community with initiatives of welcoming people into the community and community building
Some people feel that local people have little knowledge about ethnic minority cultures and customs and vice versa	There is a need to foster a growth of understanding and knowledge of different cultures and customs and encourage community involvement
Some people feel that by being an ethnic minority you are immediately judged as being a suspicious character and therefore they have no faith in ethnic minority initiatives	There is a need to build up a relationship between ethnic minorities and service providers to build up confidence and involve people with the services
There are no ethnic minority groups, mosques or temples within the High Peak	Initiate a campaign to target ethnic minority people and give help to establish groups etc
Police seen as not helpful by some. People tolerating racial abuse	Police could instigate a local campaign and raise their ethnic minority profile

This table demonstrates the key points that arose throughout this project and makes recommendations for the service providers. Many of the issues that were raised were of a generic nature and this suggests that ethnic minority people in the High Peak want to be seen as a part of the community and do not want their ethnicity to be seen as a barrier for them. If one considers those interviews that took place against the lack of engagement from other ethnic minorities there are several issues, which arise;

- People do not want to be identified as an ethnic minority as they have no specific needs
- People do not want to be identified as being different, a large part of the interviewees were from a 'white other' background, which suggests that there

are implications of colour. Do Black, Mixed race and Asian people feel isolated and unable to come forward in the community?

- People feel scared and have a lack of confidence in communicating with authority, those people which did take part generally had a white partner, which suggests they have knowledge and someone supporting them
- People feel that there is no worth in the project – it is only a token gesture
- People do not feel comfortable within the community and therefore feel unable to engage

If services wish to

- Eliminate racial discrimination
- Promote Equality of Opportunity
- Promote good relations between people of different racial groups

Then they must make further efforts to engage with ethnic minorities, communicating and building up trust and relationships in order to make ethnic minority people feel a part of the community and feel able to engage with services and local people. Local communities should also become involved and cultural diversity promoted through service led initiatives. Generally knowledge and information is to be found within all the services but in terms of many ethnic minorities it is felt that information needs to be pinpointed towards them.

Education Service

The feedback in relation to the education service was generally very good, however this cannot be determined to be a realistic representation in terms of an education experience as there were no young people interviewed as previously stated and those people which cited their schooldays had endured racism or bullying experiences for being 'different'. From a staff perspective it would seem that some people do not feel adequately equipped in their knowledge of cultural diversity and this would possibly present future problems. Although schools realized the importance of the research, they generally failed to engage with the project, thus making it difficult to access

young people, therefore it is difficult to arrive at any formal conclusions. It is suggested that;

- Schools and youth organizations work together and fully engage in helping to research into the experiences and needs of ethnic minority youngsters. It is important to remember that 35% of the ethnic minority population are under the age of 16.
- Diversity learning and training is embedded within the school curriculum and staff development and training

Health Services

There were no general ethnic minority issues that were discussed, most issues tended to be of a generic nature. Again there were problems in engaging service staff within this project so we could not determine any known issues that staff had encountered. Comments have been made in terms of what people would be happy to see with regards to their culture and religion but not stated as a need. If the health services wish to consider in more depth issues related to ethnic minorities and develop their services then it is recommended that;

- Health services monitor their users and conduct further research with ethnic minorities
- Undertake an audit into the services which they provide and determine what is already in place for ethnic minorities
- Review staff training and development in terms of diversity training

High Peak Borough Council

It is felt that the main issues for the HPBC are peoples' lack of knowledge of them and their services, language barriers and a lack of confidence in terms of communicating with authority, particularly over the telephone. People who have not been born in this country or brought up in the area do not grow up with the 'ins and outs' of daily life in the High Peak. Unless they are targeted with information about who HPBC are and what services they provide this will be a continuing problem, an important part of this is the HPBC identity, which needs to

demonstrate to ethnic minorities that they are approachable and helpful.

Recommendations that can be made are;

- To conduct a postal survey throughout the High Peak engaging with all residents but;
 - Identifying the different people living within the High Peak
 - Establishing peoples knowledge or lack of knowledge
 - To enable the HPBC to target all ethnic minorities and identify specific needs, e.g. leaflets ready translated into community languages
 - Providing information on how to access information on the HPBC services
 - Fostering relationships within the community
- Have a person from an ethnic minority background, who has an insight into difficulties which ethnic minority people face trained with a general overview of services to provide a ‘one stop service shop’ to give advice and information

Police services

The Police services have specific codes of practice in place and are very knowledgeable in issues that surround ethnic minorities and cultural diversity. The problems which they face generally are concerned with peoples perspectives of them and as mentioned the ‘stop and search’ law. There are also the issues of people ‘tolerating’ racial abuse, which is an area for development. It is suggested that the way forward is to;

- Communicate with ethnic minorities
- Foster relationships
- A local campaign to raise the ethnic minority profile

Voluntary and community services

From the interviews with ethnic minorities and the voluntary services it is clear that some people are engaging from a volunteer position, however very few people are using the voluntary and community services and it was apparent that many people are

unaware of them. Again it would seem that if people have come from different countries they are not aware of all the services that are in place and available. It is felt that there is a need within the High Peak to have a community group where ethnic minorities can meet and discuss their experiences and needs, also for example there are no temples or mosques in the High Peak so perhaps the different religious ethnic minority groups would like the opportunity to be able to meet on a regular basis. The voluntary and community sector could:

- Engage their ethnic minority workers to market their services and start new initiatives
- Communicate with ethnic minorities and establish whether there is a need for community groups and give help in forming new groups. Since the research was undertaken this has now been developed through the establishment of a relationship with a partner organization in Derby that specialize in working with ethnic minority groups.
- Target established groups to initiate ethnic minority people to join
- All volunteer services should provide cultural and diversity information to established groups

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