Wales Centre for Public Policy
Canolfan Polisi Cyhoeddus Cymru

Improving Race Equality in Housing and Accommodation

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Contents

Summary

- This report is one of a series of six that provides independent evidence to inform the development of the Welsh Government's Race Equality Action Plan.

- It brings together existing evidence on the extent and causes of race inequality in housing and identifies ways in which the Welsh Government can address it.

- Housing is an important area for race equality because people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds are more likely to face housing disadvantage and there is a strong link between housing, poverty, income and social cohesion.

- This report focuses on key areas including: housing quality and availability; homelessness and risk of homelessness; and community cohesion and residential segregation.

- It recommends ways of addressing racial inequality including:

  o Providing an updated Black, Asian and minority ethnic Housing Action Plan outlining clear commitments.

  o Prioritising outreach and engagement with Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, to raise awareness of services and the ability to access them.

  o Undertaking more research in order to understand better the housing needs of Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities in Wales, including culturally-specific needs.

  o Investigating the feasibility and effectiveness of creating a 'BME Housing Association' which is led by and provides services for Black, Asian and minority ethnic tenants.

  o Expanding the provision of pitches, including temporary stopping points for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

  o Increasing the supply of social and affordable housing, since this will disproportionately benefit Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.

  o Taking measures to prevent homelessness, including delivering on existing commitments to provide housing for asylum seekers.

  o Tackling residential segregation as part of a wider integration strategy that promotes social interaction, unity, and common purpose between ethnic groups.

Background

The Welsh Government has made a commitment to publish a Race Equality Action Plan designed to tackle structural racial inequalities in Wales (Welsh Government, 2020a). This report is one of six produced by the Wales Centre for Public Policy to provide independent evidence to inform the development of the Action Plan (see Annex 1). It focuses on evidence and recommendations for action related to race equality in housing and accommodation.

Terminology

In writing our review we actively avoid using the acronyms/terms 'BAME' or 'BME', except where this describes the name of an organisation or network, as we recognise that these are contested terms and can be experienced as stigmatising, depersonalising and 'othering'. As such we seek to refer to specific people and communities of people wherever possible. Where this is not possible, and while any overarching category will be imperfect, we use the term 'Black, Asian and minority ethnic'.

Introduction

Recommendation
• Data on housing and ethnicity should be routinely collected and accessibly published in Wales, following the example of the English Ethnicity Facts and Figures Service.

The relationship between housing and race has been brought into sharper focus by the inequalities highlighted by the Coronavirus pandemic (see e.g. Ogbonna, 2020). Although it attracts less attention than some other social issues, the strong links between housing and other manifestations of race inequality mean that it is a key determinant of wellbeing. These manifestations include:

- Income and wealth inequalities (visible through lack of access to suitable housing and overcrowding);

- Health (because of the link between housing conditions and health outcomes); and

- Cultural and community cohesion (including questions of segregation and integration).

While attention is often focused on increasing access to good-quality housing, Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups are also disproportionately likely to become homeless, so this requires attention.

The quality and availability of affordable housing is an important issue in many rural communities in Wales. However, Wales's Black, Asian and minority ethnic population is particularly concentrated in the coastal cities of South Wales: Cardiff, Newport and Swansea.[1] Research has shown that there is a correlation between high proportions of Black, Asian and minority ethnic residents and poor quality housing in urban, rather than rural, areas of Wales (Ogbonna, 2020, p.18).

Statistical data on housing conditions and ethnicity are routinely published in England as part of the Ethnicity Facts and Figures Service, and although some data are collected in Wales, these are not always easily accessible. Increasing the accessibility of data will increase understanding of the nature of any race inequalities and promote efforts to address them.

Evidence from England suggests that Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups tend to live in worse housing conditions than the White British population. Members of the Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Black African, Black Other and Mixed White/Black ethnic groups are considerably more likely to have damp in their houses; and Bangladeshi and Mixed White/Black African households are more likely to live in 'non-decent' homes than other ethnic groups (UK Government, 2019).[2] Black, Asian and minority ethnic households are also more likely to live in fuel poverty (20% of households) than White households (9.7% of households) (UK Government, 2019).

Published Welsh statistics suggest that homeownership rates are lower for Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, with much higher percentages renting in both the private and social rented sector (Statistics for Wales, 2020a).[3] Overcrowding rates

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[1] The proportion of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents is estimated at 20.8% in Cardiff, 12.3% in Newport, and 8.6% in Swansea, compared to 5.8% for Wales as a whole (Stats Wales, 2020a). These figures are based on the Annual Population Survey.

[2] A 'non-decent' home is defined as one where any of the following characteristics apply: 'it does not meet the basic health and safety standards for housing; it is not in a reasonable state of repair; it does not have reasonably modern facilities and services; it has insulation or heating that is not effective'. 17% of all homes meet this definition, compared to 24% of Bangladeshi households and 33% of Mixed White/Black African households. (UK Government, 2019).

[3] The statistics are not broken down by ethnicity, and in England, some ethnic groups are more likely to own their homes than White British people (UK Government, 2019).

are higher for all groups in Wales compared to England, but particularly affect Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, most notably Gypsy and Irish Travellers (28.7% living in overcrowded conditions), Bangladeshi people (27%) and Other Black people (26.9%) (Statistics for Wales 2020b). This compares to 3.9% for the least overcrowded group in Wales, White Irish people, and a 3% average for all households in England.[4]

The data on overcrowding in Wales are based on the 2011 Census, and therefore may not reflect current circumstances.[5] However, the picture they paint suggests that for Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups in general, and particularly among certain ethnic groups, housing is more likely to be substandard and overcrowded. This is due, in part, to the fact that Black, Asian and minority ethnic people are often concentrated among the most deprived areas, particularly inner cities, as well as wider patterns of poverty and social exclusion (Gulliver, 2016).[6]

This report focuses on three broad issues that are highlighted by existing research and data:

- Housing quality and availability;
- Homelessness and risk of homelessness; and
- Community cohesion and residential segregation.

These actions were identified through four phases of analysis:

- First, we analysed the best available evidence, policy reports and reviews which make recommendations for reducing race inequality in Wales and the UK to identify recurring recommendations or 'types' of interventions (see Annex 2).
- We then tested and refined these with academic experts.
- Next, we conducted a further review of academic and grey literature evidence related to each of these interventions with the aim of establishing which of

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[4] 4.9% of White British people in Wales lived in overcrowded conditions.

[5] Data from England are based on the English Housing Survey, combined from 2016 to 2019, and therefore more recent (UK Government, 2019).

[6] This concentration itself may be due to historic patterns of settlement and employment. For instance, historical social housing rules requiring an established connection with a local area excluded (perhaps unwittingly) recent migrants, pushing them into the private rented sector — and, during the post-war immigration period, to slum landlords and lower-quality housing, who were more likely to accept applications from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people (Gulliver, 2016).

these recommendations are likely to have the greatest impact if they are included in the Race Equality Action Plan.

- Finally, the report was peer reviewed by two experts in the field: Alicja Zalesinksa (Tai Pawb) and Dr Victoria Showumni (University College London).

The causes, consequences and solutions to race inequality are interconnected and so require change across a range of policy areas and public services and beyond the public sector. So, this report should be read in conjunction with five related reports that focus on **leadership and representation, education, health and social care, employment and income** and **crime and justice** (see Annex 1), and an overarching report (forthcoming) which pulls together cross-cutting findings and recommendations.

Improving housing quality

Recommendation
Ensure that the housing needs of asylum seekers and refugees are given due consideration in the Race Equality Action Plan, building on and implementing existing commitments.

Improving housing outcomes for Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups will require action to improve the condition of housing stock of all types (social housing, privately rented and owner occupied), as well as increasing prospects for homeownership. General measures to increase employment and income prospects for Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups will provide help achieve this and are considered in 'Improving Race Equality in Employment and Income', a separate report in this series (see Annex 1).

In addition, specific housing interventions that have been mooted and which are explored below include:

- Increasing the role of BME Housing Associations to provide targeted social housing that meets the specific needs of Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups (Gulliver, 2016).[7]

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[7] 'BME Housing Associations' is the sector's preferred term, referring to Black and Minority Ethnic people. It is replicated in this report to reflect this usage.

- Reflecting the needs of Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities (including specific measures to address overcrowding) in development plans and local housing assessments (Ogbonna, 2020; Race Alliance Wales, 2020). The needs of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities have been highlighted as an area which requires more explicit attention.

- Increasing the overall provision of affordable and social housing, because this will have a disproportionate and positive impact for Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups (Race Alliance Wales, 2020).

- Supporting refugees to access move-on accommodation after a successful asylum claim (Ogbonna, 2020; Race Alliance Wales, 2020). Additional support for asylum seekers includes meeting the needs of destitute asylum seekers and ensuring that housing provision is of an adequate standard. These recommendations are already in the process of being researched and implemented by Welsh Government and as such, have not been included in this report (Welsh Government, 2020b). However, they should be included in the Race Equality Action Plan, along with measures to support better quality accommodation for asylum seekers and a strategy to tackle hidden homelessness among the refugee population.

Further concerns include the increased risk of becoming homeless for Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, and questions surrounding residential segregation.

BME Housing Associations

Recommendation
• The Welsh Government should consider commissioning research to evaluate the effectiveness of BME Housing Associations in other UK nations, to assess whether one should be established in Wales.

BME Housing Associations serve minority communities (for over 80% of rents) and are led by people from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background at director level (Gulliver, 2016).[8] They provide for the specific housing needs of Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, and offer culturally sensitive and relevant services.

Creating a BME Housing Association in Wales was considered as part of the 2002 BME Housing Action Plan, but the subsequent feasibility study recommended a

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[8] See footnote 7 above on terminology.

'secondary housing organisation' that would act with landlord organisations to promote and assist housing needs for Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities (Welsh Assembly Government 2002; BME Housing Project 2003).[9] This may have been because of a contemporary consolidation of the BME housing sector in England and a sense in the wider housing sector that BME housing associations may, for a variety of reasons, have run their course (Stott and Fava, 2019). However, it is an option that could merit a fresh look.

Although the sector is much reduced in size from its peak, its representative body argues that housing associations by and for Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups could still help meet distinctive housing needs through their roots in, and understanding of, diverse communities (BMENational, 2017). This includes the needs of older Black, Asian and minority ethnic people, which are considered in more detail below. A BME Housing Association could also help to address concerns that a lack of representation among housing association staff leads to a lack of understanding of specific community needs. Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff are particularly underrepresented on housing association boards (Tai Pawb, 2020a), and the board diversity requirements for BME Housing Associations could help increase representation more generally.[10]

There is limited evidence (but some anecdotal support) to support the claim that BME Housing Associations are best placed to fulfil these aims. So, as a first step, the Welsh Government may wish to conduct a new study into the feasibility and effectiveness of a BME Housing Association in Wales.

Understanding the needs of Black, Asian and minority ethnic Communities

Recommendations
• More recent data should be collected on the extent, demographic breakdown and location of overcrowding in Wales. A strategy should then be developed to reduce overcrowding, targeted at the areas of highest incidence.

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[9] A similar role is currently played by Tai Pawb, whose remit is not, however, exclusively focused on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic specialist services provider BAWSO also offers support, advice and information to allow private and social tenants to maintain their tenancies.

[10] It is important to note that measures are being undertaken to increase representation, as well as address racial inequalities, in housing associations in Wales (Tai Pawb, 2020b). A BME Housing Association might complement, rather than replace the need for, these efforts.

- Interim measures like prioritising already-overcrowded households on social housing waiting lists could help, if appropriate stock is available.

- Welsh Government should carry out an updated assessment of culturally-specific housing needs, based on a representative sample of Wales's Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.

- More effort should be made to engage Black, Asian and minority ethnic tenants and homeowners, including through proactive outreach and engagement. Best practice from within the sector should be learned from.

There is no 'one size fits all' model for Black, Asian and minority ethnic housing, because people from different cultural and ethnic groups will have differing requirements. As housing needs intersect with other characteristics such as physical disability, there will also be differing individual requirements. Nonetheless, there are some identifiable needs and particular issues which should be addressed.

Overcrowding has been a particular focus since the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic. Larger than average household size and a greater likelihood of intergenerational living among some Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups means that overcrowding is a particular problem. This is compounded by poverty and a lack of available housing stock. Evidence given to UK Parliament by Cym D'Souza of BME National suggests that three-bed-plus affordable and social housing is not being delivered at the required scale (Women and Equalities Committee, 2020).[11] This appears to have been an issue for some time (Jones, 2010). Social landlords cannot allow overcrowding in their lettings, so families which cannot access social housing of a size appropriate to their needs may find themselves pushed into poorer-quality, private rented or owned accommodation (Women and Equalities Committee, 2020). However, more research will need to be done to identify the current scale of overcrowding in Wales. This could build on the Welsh Government's commitment to undertake further research in response to Professor Ogbonna's report on behalf of the socioeconomic subgroup (Welsh Government, 2020b).

Measures that could be taken in the interim include prioritising overcrowded households on social housing waiting lists, which could have a short-term impact, but will depend on the housing stock available in local authority areas. Measures such as

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[11] Only 5,008 of the total 231,413 socially rented dwellings in Wales have four or more bedrooms, although 84,955 dwellings have exactly three bedrooms (Stats Wales, 2019). Dwellings with four or more bedrooms made up 445 of the 1,759 new dwellings built in Wales in October-December 2019, but this includes all new dwellings and not just social housing (Stats Wales, 2020b).

incentivising tenants to acquire larger private sector homes, or incentivising the private sector to provide larger homes on a lease, might also be considered (Jones, 2010).

Beyond addressing specific issues of poverty, homelessness (considered below) and overcrowding, there appears to have been little recent research into the housing needs of Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. Although it is almost two decades old, the BME Housing Project (2003) carried out focus group interviews with members of Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups in Wales which articulate cultural, as well as material, needs, including:

- The heightened need for private outdoor spaces, particularly benefitting Muslim women who observe religiously-derived modesty rules;

- More toilet and washing facilities in houses, and larger food preparation areas; and

- Cultural sensitivity, including understanding that some areas may be unsuitable for housing placement, due to higher incidence of racial harassment.

While many of these needs would be beneficial more widely — few people would turn down larger kitchens or additional bathrooms — it is also important to recognise that these are particular cultural or social needs for some individuals or groups; and to reflect this in housing developments and offers.

The same research also noted generational differences, with a younger generation more aware of the resources available to them, and less likely to be constrained by cultural expectations, including around extended families living in the same property or nearby[12] (this was also notable among woman respondents). So, it is important to conduct an updated assessment of the specific housing needs for Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities to understand current needs. This should be based on engagement with a range of Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities; representing all ages, genders and levels of cultural attachment to the community, rather than being based around 'community groups'. The 2003 report additionally shows that the responses of male-dominated 'elders' tended to differ from younger groups.

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[12] Broadly speaking, second generation immigrants have more similar housing preferences to natives compared to first generation immigrants, further reflecting this shift (Coulter and Casey, 2019). However, the presence of a 'first generation in every generation' effect in some communities may complicate this picture (Casey, 2016).

It is also important to have an up-to-date assessment of the housing needs of older people from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background. These include support for moving into sheltered accommodation, or other forms of later-in-life support and care. Some groups have limited awareness of these services, and services themselves may lack the cultural awareness or outreach capacity to serve them properly (Jones, 2008). Supported living might be a culturally unfamiliar concept, particularly for people from a South Asian background with a strong tradition of family-based care (Jones, 2008).

Understanding how these needs intersect, and the experience of different needs within Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, will be vital to informing appropriate housing provision in the future, but the sector recognises that engagement remains a difficult issue.[13] In part, this may be due to problems with awareness of and access to services: research on homelessness services (discussed below) shows that Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups are more likely to be unaware of the help that is available to them, to feel socially excluded or isolated, and to face language barriers in accessing services (Campbell, 2015). Better outreach could help to overcome some of these barriers, and best practice suggestions include pro-active provision of housing information, and providing information in a range of formats and media to allow tenants multiple ways to access it (Tai Pawb 2005; Tai Pawb 2012).

The needs of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities

Recommendations

- The needs of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities should be clearly understood. Efforts should be made to obtain better data about the numbers of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers in Wales, including those who are 'housed'. Housing needs assessments should take into account the desire of some of those who are 'housed' to return to a more traditional lifestyle.

- Local authorities should increase the number of pitches available to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, including making provision for temporary stopping places.

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[13] This is not specific to Wales, as research has found that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups are also more likely to be overlooked in engagement in Northern Ireland (Muir and McMahon, 2015).

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities are a diverse grouping of peoples who have traditionally adhered to a nomadic lifestyle.[14] Although this remains an important part of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller heritage, increasing numbers no longer adhere to a nomadic lifestyle. While exact figures are difficult to come by, particularly as many people from a Gypsy, Roma and Traveller background choose to conceal their ethnic background to avoid discrimination, it is estimated that over half and possibly up to three quarters of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers in Wales live in bricks and mortar accommodation (Shelter, 2008; Welsh Government, 2015).[15] This means that meeting the housing needs of these communities must take into account both groups who keep a nomadic lifestyle, and those who live in a more settled way. It must also take into account the needs of those who have felt forced into adopting a settled lifestyle, and those who wish to return to a more traditional community (Shelter, 2008). Gypsies and Travellers Wales suggests that many who live in bricks and mortar accommodation are on waiting lists for pitches on a dedicated site (Gypsies and Travellers Wales, n.d.). Housed Gypsies, Roma and Travellers can feel social exclusion and 'cultural trauma', with negative physical and mental health outcomes resulting (Greenfields, 2009).

Previous work in Wales has noted a historic shortage of pitches and sites too small to accommodate any more than an extended family group (BME Housing Project, 2003). There is some evidence that there is still a shortage of pitches, and sites may be in unsuitable locations, away from community facilities (Gypsies and Travellers Wales, n.d.). Many sites are in undesirable or hazardous locations such as next to fast roads or by industrial units (Welsh Government, 2003). A lack of suitable provision, including temporary stopping places, contributes to social exclusion and poor community relations (Greenfields, 2009). Frequent opposition to planned sites from the 'settled' community can include abuse and discrimination, and weak leadership can mean no strong countervailing voice is heard (Greenfields, 2009).

This means that while Welsh law requires local authorities to provide adequate accommodation for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, this does not often translate into practice. There are currently 405 local authority pitches available in Wales, for a Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community of at least 2,785 (Statistics for

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[14] Different groups have distinct cultural heritage and norms: for instance, Romany and Roma groups are descended from groups who left India, whereas Irish Travellers share a culture based on an indigenous Irish heritage (Shelter, 2008). There are also 'New Travellers' descending from groups adopting a nomadic lifestyle in the 1960s.

[15] It is unclear whether 'bricks and mortar accommodation' is consistently meant to refer to all housing in general, or if it sometimes excludes (for instance) more permanent structures on dedicated Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites. This may also explain the wide discrepancy in figures.

Wales, 2020c; Welsh Government, 2015).[16] While this represents an increase over previous years, unauthorised caravan sites remain a problem, and there are an unknown number of 'housed' people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller backgrounds whose needs may not be being met, so there remains a need for a more rapid increase in provision. While part of this can be met by public provision, supporting an expanding network of private sites (for instance by clarifying and simplifying the planning process) will also help to meet this need.

Support is also required for those who keep a nomadic lifestyle. Dedicated stopping places or alternative ways of delivering housing, such as land lease, could help here, and improving access to employment and income will help maintain independence for these families.

Best practice guides and literature reviews suggest that meeting the needs of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities requires active outreach and engagement (Greenfields et. al., 2016; Greenfields, 2009). This is especially important because Travelling communities have a long history of persecution by states and governments and may therefore be reluctant to engage. Active consultation will also help authorities to understand what facilities and pitches are required, and where sites should be located. Consultations should be timed to avoid times of year when travelling takes place, particularly between April and October (Greenfields et. al., 2016). Consultation and dialogue with local 'settled' communities could mitigate community tensions, and already forms part of Welsh Government guidance (Welsh Government, 2015).

Increasing social and affordable housing availability

Recommendations

- Include data about the needs of Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups in Local Housing Market assessments.

- Ensure that data from Local Housing Market assessments are used to inform the siting and specification of housing developments.

- Continue efforts to increase the stock and housebuilding rate for social and affordable housing, which will have benefits for Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.

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[16] This is likely to be a significant undercount, as many people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller backgrounds conceal their identity in order to avoid discrimination or from fear of state persecution (Women and Equalities Committee, 2019).

- Work should be done to establish whether the current structure of social housing grants is a barrier to provision.
- Consider interventions that target where Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities are concentrated, in order to help improve housing conditions.

Because Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups are over-represented in the social housing and private rented sectors, and are more likely to live in poverty, increasing the supply of social and affordable housing could disproportionately benefit these groups. The Welsh Government is committed, as are all main political parties in the Senedd, to increasing the total stock of social housing as well as the rate of new social housebuilding. Following through on these commitments will therefore have a large impact. Based on the evidence and feedback from within the sector, this section notes some specific interventions and proposals, and suggestions of ways in which the needs of Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities could be met through them. It is also the case, however, that universal provision will go some way towards meeting unmet housing need.

As noted above, a particular concern will be ensuring that the mix of new build housing includes sufficient larger stock to meet the needs of Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. This could be achieved by requesting that the needs of Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups are taken into account in Local Housing Market assessments, as is already the case for some local authorities such as Cardiff (City of Cardiff, 2015). Local Housing Market assessments are designed to inform local authority housing and planning strategies, including planning for the provision of affordable housing, and the inclusion of data about Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups will help ensure that their needs are met. This could involve direct consultation as well as data analysis. Relevant data such as deprivation, overcrowding and average household size could also be given more prominence and salience in both local authority and housing association development plans, as these are disproportionately present among some Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. This builds on recommendations in the Welsh Government-commissioned Independent Review of Affordable Housing Supply, which also notes that Local Housing Market assessments should be better integrated with Local Development Plans (Pamment, 2019).

Robust evaluation of these measures would help to inform future practice on their effectiveness, as little currently exists. Steps should be taken to ensure that these measures are also considered in new housing developments.

Affordability remains a major issue in many parts of Wales. Research by the Bevan Foundation (2019) suggests that both private and social rents are unaffordable for the lowest paid, and private rents are unaffordable for median earners.[17] House prices cost slightly under six times the annual income of lower-paid people on average in Wales, although there is considerable variation, with prices in Blaenau Gwent at just over three times annual income, and prices in Monmouthshire costing almost eight times annual income (Bevan Foundation, 2019). Since people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds are more likely to be lower-paid, they have less choice about the availability and quality of housing available to them, which compounds existing issues with housing quality. The recommendations in the Independent Review of Affordable Housing Supply (in relation to both increasing housebuilding rates, and financing and supporting local acquisition and construction) form a good basis for increasing supply, and should therefore be taken forward (Pamment, 2019).

The Welsh Government's strategy for social housing promotes the use of Modern Methods of Construction (MMC; Welsh Government, 2020c). The aim of MMC is to facilitate housebuilding at a scale beyond what is achievable using traditional techniques, using methods such as new-generation prefab or modular construction methods (Welsh Government, 2020c). This provides opportunity for increased housebuilding scale through standardisation of parts, for instance. MMC is generally highly-rated for its potential to increase the volume and quality of housebuilding (Davies, 2018). Investing in and rolling out these methods more widely could help address unmet social housing need more generally, as well as for Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.

Reforming social housing grant structures could go some way to ensuring that properties of appropriate size and condition are built, although this is an emerging area of concern and more research will need to be done to establish its salience as a factor.

Other possible policy solutions include renovating derelict properties in inner city areas (discussed below). Some proposals suggest densification, i.e. increasing housing density — which does not always equate to tenements or blocks of flats (Bessis, 2018). While difficult to deliver within the current planning system, and they may attract local opposition, this could increase housing supply and choice in areas where Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups are likely to be concentrated. This will also help improve housing quality in local areas, possibly preventing the dispersal of communities where this could be a barrier to housing access (see below). It will be

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[17] Under the definition used, a rent that is under 25% of gross earnings is considered 'affordable'.

particularly important to consider the intersection of housing provision with the cultural and community needs of local groups, so that developments are located in the most appropriate places, and with the most appropriate housing mix.

Homelessness and risk of homelessness

Recommendations
• The needs of Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups should form part of the Welsh Government's homelessness strategy, prioritising outreach and awareness raising for vulnerable groups. • Ensure that refugees have access to move-on accommodation, which could help drive down the disproportionate rate of Black, Asian and minority ethnic Section 75 applicants. • Anti-homelessness provisions put in place during the Coronavirus pandemic form a good basis for a long term anti-rough sleeping and homelessness prevention strategy.

Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups are more at risk of being homeless. In 2018/19 7% of successful homelessness prevention applicants and 6% of relief from homelessness applicants in Wales were from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, under the requirements of Section 73 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 (Statistics for Wales, 2019). This compares to between 5-6% of Wales' population as a whole.[18] However, on a separate measure, 15% of households assessed as involuntarily homeless under Section 75 of the Act were from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background (Statistics for Wales, 2019). This indicates a priority need remaining after Section 73 duties are discharged.

While higher than the share of Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups in the general population, initial (section 73) rates in Wales are much less disproportionate than in England, where 32% of homeless households were non-White in 2017/18 (most

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[18] The Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic population of Wales is estimated at 5.8% in 2020 (Stats Wales, 2020a). In the year ending 30 March 2019, it was given as 5%, but this figure was calculated as a percentage of all respondents to the Annual Population Survey rather than as a percentage of all respondents declaring an ethnicity – so may be an undercount.

recent data available; UK Government, 2019). The increased disproportionality when moving through the system indicates that there may be ongoing issues in engaging with and meeting the needs of Black, Asian and minority ethnic households. This perhaps reflects Wales' more developed homelessness policy, as well as the absence of some conditions (such as 'Right to Rent', which requires landlords to ensure that prospective tenants have the legal right to live in the UK) that are possible causes for some Black, Asian and minority ethnic homelessness in England (Garvie, 2017).

Research by Shelter Cymru suggests that over-representation can occur for a number of reasons, including poverty, social exclusion, and lack of knowledge about available assistance services (Campbell, 2015). Some groups, particularly migrants, are unaware of the help that is available, or unable to access it because of language barriers. Others may be or feel excluded from wider society, sometimes due to cultural pressures such as strictly enforced gender roles, forcing women to remain home.[19] Lack of suitable accommodation, and fears about further social exclusion in certain areas, also play a role. Finally, Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups suffer from the same risk factors as majority populations: poverty; lack of experience or ability to live independently; mental or physical health issues; and substance abuse (this and previous from Campbell, 2015). Lower rates of home ownership, and increased reliance on private and social rented accommodation, may also play a role (Garvie, 2017).

Some homelessness may be 'hidden' as families or individuals are looked after by relatives rather than going through statutory provision. This could contribute to overcrowding and poor housing outcomes, so it will be important to assess the rate at which this is occurring.

A further factor is the impact of the statutory housing framework on refugee housing. Homelessness experienced as a result of having to leave Home Office accommodation is a significant driver of Black, Asian and minority ethnic Section 75 homelessness in Wales (Kent, 2019). In part, this is due to the mismatch between the length of the move-on period, in which refugees have to find new accommodation

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[19] For instance, there is evidence of 'young Yemeni women who had never visited [Cardiff] city centre' despite living in Butetown, just south of the city centre (Campbell, 2015: 9). Addressing this will require active integration strategies as well as outreach.

(28 days), and the 56-day 'homelessness prevention' period established under Welsh housing law.[20]

There is little research evidence available about interventions for Black, Asian and minority ethnic populations, although some indications that they experience worse outcomes compared to other population groups (Sheikh and Teeman, 2018). However, as with other population groups, addressing the risk of homelessness will require a mix of interventions, including those (such as reducing poverty and increasing access to suitable housing) identified above.

Increasing awareness of available services, and in particular actively working to reach isolated or excluded communities, will be particularly important, particularly as there is now an increased focus on 'upstream' prevention of homelessness (i.e. intervening prior to actual or threatened homelessness to offer support or services).[21] Broader social inclusion or integration strategies could actively work to signpost services to users, which already forms part of best practice suggestions (Tai Pawb, 2005; Tai Pawb, 2012).

The housing measures that have been implemented to prevent rough sleeping during the Coronavirus pandemic, including support for moving into permanent accommodation and changes to the eviction process, could be extended to form the basis of long-term provision (Welsh Government 2020b). The situation is more complex when dealing with those with no recourse to public funds, but lessons could be learned from the support that was made available to them during the current crisis and governmental commitments to addressing the housing needs of refugees (Welsh Government, 2020b). The Welsh Government has also commissioned a report on possible provision for those with no recourse to public funds, whose recommendations are believed to be compatible with the existing law (Petch and Stirling, 2020).

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[20] This review has not considered refugee housing in detail, as the Welsh Government have already made a series of commitments in regard to this issue (Welsh Government, 2020b). It will be important to follow these through with actions.

[21] The WCPP has previously published work assessing preventative measures for youth homelessness, which includes a typology of interventions (Schwan et. al., 2018).

Community cohesion and residential segregation

Recommendations
• Improve housing quality and site more housing developments in or near areas where Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities are located, and promote socially and ethnically mixed neighbourhoods.   • Refresh the Welsh Government Community Cohesion Strategy with a focus on increasing social interaction between groups, fostering a sense of common purpose, and promoting a united Welsh culture and society.

Encouraging integration and belonging goes much wider than simply housing policy, but given the impact of location and condition of housing on integration, it is important to consider ways in which it could be used to tackle residential segregation and create more integrated, socially and ethnically diverse neighbourhoods. This is important because social cohesion, including shared norms and a high level of social trust, plays an important role in fostering democratic governance in addition to providing a range of social benefits.[22]

There is evidence that residential segregation remains an issue in the UK. Kaufmann and Cantle (2016) found that, although there has been progress in mixing between minority groups in England and Wales, there is still segregation between minority groups as a whole and the White British majority. This suggests that new migrants are concentrating in areas that are already more diverse, and that there is some degree of outward movement by White British people.

To some extent, this represents 'clustering' among individuals sharing an ethnic or (especially) religious identity (Casey, 2016: 41-45). There are positive social reasons why clustering might happen, and it is not simply a reaction to social exclusion. For

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[22] This is something that has been the subject of some debate, given the predominant presupposition of a value-neutral state in which central questions about the purpose and proper ends of humanity are devolved to individuals or groups acting within a state framework broadly indifferent to the content of these ends (e.g. Rawls, 1985). By contrast, earlier thinkers recognised the importance of shared morality and belief to the success of democratic governance (de Tocqueville, 2003). This view has been reinforced by more recent work suggesting the importance of social capital, defined in large part by social trust, for maintaining and creating democratic societies (Paxton, 2002).

example, the desire to be among cultural or religious kin or access to the community resources that this entails, such as places of worship or specialist retailers. But clustering might also reflect perceived or actual exclusion from wider society, or a lack of integration with it.

Social trust is lower where ethnic diversity is higher, particularly in local neighbourhood contexts, although the overall effect is modest (Dinesen et. al., 2020).[23] Importantly, however, residential segregation appears to increase the extent to which ethnic diversity reduces social trust, whereas some forms of contact between groups might counteract this reduction (Demivera, 2019). Reducing residential segregation and promoting cultural and social integration might therefore increase levels of overall trust, which is important in maintaining a cohesive and democratic society.

Increasing integration through improved housing

Clustering and segregation may reflect broader patterns of deprivation and poverty: there is some evidence that increased access to resources and higher income is correlated with ethnic de-concentration (Coulter and Clark, 2019).[24] This may also be a reason why more recent migrants, from different ethnic backgrounds, might initially move into more diverse neighbourhoods.

People tend to move short distances from their original location, and Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups tend to move into more deprived areas on average, even where they improve their housing situation (Coulter and Casey, 2019). This may be because areas near to the 'starting position' for people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic background are also more deprived — particularly given the heavily urban concentration of Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups.[25] Place-specific housing solutions could increase housing options and quality, giving greater housing choice to people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, while also potentially making these areas more attractive to people from White ethnic backgrounds.

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[23] This meta-analysis draws on international evidence but includes multiple studies from the UK, which replicate the general trend. The relationship remains significant when confounding factors including economic inequalities are taken into account.

[24] The presence or absence of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic concentrations does not guarantee social integration or exclusion, but clustering tends (for instance) to result in less diverse social networks (Casey, 2016).

[25] In Wales, 90% of people from Asian ethnic groups, 91.2% of people from Black ethnic groups, 80.4% of people from Mixed ethnic groups and 89.4% of people from Other ethnic groups lived in urban areas at the 2011 Census – compared to 66.2% for people from White ethnic groups, and 67% for people in Wales as a whole (UK Government, 2020).

Improving housing quality in inner-city housing markets, including creating greater choice in the type and size of dwelling, could be a way to increase access to good-quality housing without overly disrupting existing social networks (Beider, 2012, p.143). This policy could involve, for instance, new housing developments near to existing areas with a larger Black, Asian and minority ethnic population, or the purchase and renovation of derelict or empty properties by local authorities or housing associations (Beider, 2012). If pursued in tandem with greater integration strategies, and used to promote more socially and ethnically mixed neighbourhoods, this could help reduce segregation while ensuring continued access to community resources, for those members of Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities who require them.

Neighbourhood integration

The evidence suggests that ethnic diversity reduces social trust, particularly at the neighbourhood level (Dinesen et. al., 2020). Integration strategies and counter-segregation plans would therefore be particularly beneficial if locally-based. While not the focus of this review, there would be benefits from considering wider integration strategies in line with housing policy, and some options are therefore presented. Evidence appears to support the view that increased diversity results in a 'hunkering down' effect, meaning that in areas of increased diversity, trust is reduced for both out-groups and in-groups (i.e. with both perceived 'others' and perceived fellows), although to different degrees (Dinesin et. al., 2020, p.451). The exact mechanism for this phenomenon remains unidentified, although candidate suggestions include a loss of general social interaction in more diverse neighbourhoods, lower levels of communication, or a reduced sense of the possibility of collective endeavour (Dinesin et. al., 2020, p.445).

It is therefore likely that successful integration efforts will need to increase social interaction and communication between ethnic groups and foster a sense of common purpose. This implies refreshing current community cohesion efforts, which focus on tackling issues such as hate crime and modern slavery — a focus that has been criticised by groups such as the Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team Wales as being in some ways counter-productive (Welsh Government, 2016; Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee, 2017).[26]

The 2017 enquiry also heard suggestions including assisting refugees with access to and awareness of cultural, arts and sport opportunities; recognising the contribution

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[26] Tackling issues such as hate crime and modern slavery remain important priorities in promoting racial equality, and the criticism has more to do with the idea that these are all that is required for community cohesion. For more on tackling hate crime, see Roberts (2020), a separate report in this series.

that refugees can make; and greater knowledge of the importance of Welsh culture and language (Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee, 2017). The Casey Review argued for a set of strong integration policies, including increased promotion of shared values; support for English language lessons; and increased support for new arrivals (Casey, 2016: 168-9). The Bevan Foundation has also recently set out a series of recommendations for integration, including the prospect of a symbolic 'Welsh citizenship' pledge and ceremony for migrants (Bevan Foundation, 2020). All of these could play a part in a new integration strategy.

'Host communities' must also be willing to accept and welcome migrants. Given the need for common purpose, this may be better conceived and communicated as (in Louise Casey's terms) joining a motorway from a slip-road rather than the common metaphor of a 'two-way street': that is to say, people on the motorway should accommodate and make space for new joiners, but we are all ultimately headed in the same direction (BBC News, 2017). This could reduce the perception of migrants and Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities as 'other' from the White majority. It will be important, as part of this strategy, to continue to invest resources in tackling hate crime.

Finally, it is important to note that, while the majority of recommendations focus on new and recent migrants, integration of settled communities that might be residentially or socially segregated from one another (including majority ethnic groups) will be equally important.

Conclusion

Recommendations

- The Welsh Government should update its current Black, Minority Ethnic Housing Action Plan, which is now eighteen years old, with a new, evidence-informed action plan making specific commitments.

- More effort should be made to reach isolated or disengaged communities, including investigating effective means of communication.

This review has considered a number of areas and recommendations under specific headings. However, there are also more general findings that have emerged from the research and which are worth considering.

There has been little recent research into the specific housing needs of Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. While issues such as overcrowding, housing quality, and risk of homelessness are understood on a statistical level, there is a clear need for further research into these areas.

Race equality is now considered as part of a wider housing strategy; although, there is some suggestion, based on experience within the sector, that this can lead to the needs of Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups being neglected. To avoid this, specific action plans could be updated or created, particularly as the current Black, Asian and minority ethnic Housing Action Plan is now eighteen years old.

Outreach, communication and engagement are recurring themes in this report, and consideration should be given in terms of how to best reach communities that may not already be engaged with or aware of public services. This could form part of a wider integration and inclusion strategy.

Finally, there is potential to tie some of these recommendations in with a post-Coronavirus recovery plan. House building and upgrading could promote economic recovery as well as disproportionately benefiting Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, particularly if there are work and apprenticeship opportunities provided for local people. Homelessness prevention measures put in place during the pandemic could also be extended and built upon as part of a wider prevention strategy.

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Annex 1:
References to the report series

This is one report of six, each focusing on a particular policy area to inform the Race Equality Action Plan. The series of report includes:

Arday, J. (2020). **Improving Race Equality in Education**. Cardiff: Wales Centre for Public Policy.

Hatch, S., Woodhead, C., Moriarty, J., Rhead, R., and Connor, L. (2020). **Improving Race Equality in Health and Social Care.** Cardiff: Wales Centre for Public Policy.

Hatch, S., Woodhead, C., Rhead, R., and Connor, L. (2020). **Improving Race Equality in Employment and Income.** Cardiff: Wales Centre for Public Policy.

Price, J. (2020). **Improving Race Equality in Housing and Accommodation.** Cardiff: Wales Centre for Public Policy.

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Showunmi, V., and Price, J. (2020). **Improving Race Equality in Leadership and Representation**. Cardiff: Wales Centre for Public Policy.

Annex 2:
Recurring recommendations

Recurring recommendation	Area of focus
Measures should be taken to reduce overcrowding, which particularly affects Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.	What works in reducing overcrowding in accommodation?
Build more affordable and social housing.	How can affordable and social housing be delivered at scale? What policy levers can Welsh Government deploy to support this?
Better provision of move-on accommodation for refugees after a successful asylum claim.	What support will assist refugees in accessing stable, long-term accommodation after a successful asylum claim?
Reflect housing needs of Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities in Local Housing Market Assessments and other development tools.	How can Local Authorities and developers support the specific housing needs of Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities?
Provide sustainable housing and destitution prevention mechanisms for those affected as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic.	What long-term support will be needed to avoid destitution or homelessness as a consequence of the Coronavirus pandemic?

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