

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **DRAFT BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC HOUSING STRATEGY**

**Mary Wood**

#### **Background**

This is the first Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy produced by Bury MBC and has been written in recognition of the significant percentage of people living within the Borough with a BME background (6%) and the disadvantage often experienced by this section of the community in the choice and quality of housing available to them. It takes account of the Council's obligations under the Race Relations Act 1976, as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, to promote race equality.

#### **Introduction**

The strategy has been based on a Housing Needs Survey and Private Sector Stock Condition Survey undertaken in 2001, also an Asian Housing and Social Care Needs Survey funded by the East Bury Initiative carried out in the same year. A Housing Forum event was held on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2003 to inform the strategy and a working group has developed the document.

The strategy covers a three year period, after which it is envisaged it will be reviewed. The Action Plan will be monitored on a quarterly basis and reviewed annually. It aims to develop best practice, good customer care and to tailor services to be sensitive to differences in the needs and preferences of the various communities in the Borough.

This strategy sits firmly under the umbrella of the Housing Strategy, contributing to the wider enabling and strategic role the Council has, and alongside the complimentary Homelessness and Shadow Supporting People Strategies.

#### **Structure**

The strategy has been compiled as follows:

- Section 1 – Foreword  
Sets out the Council's commitment to take action to reduce and eliminate inequality and discrimination experienced by BME communities within the Borough
- Section 2 – Aims and Objectives  
Sets out the aim and objectives of the strategy
- Section 3 – National Context  
Identifies the legislative framework, the race and equality standards, the disturbances in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham and the community cohesion issues these highlighted
- Section 4 – Corporate Context  
Identifies the contribution to corporate objectives, corporate housing priorities, corporate race equality work and links to other strategies
- Section 5 – Local Context

Describes the demographics within the Borough, levels of deprivation and unemployment and highlights the resource issues. It also highlights other initiatives, which will potentially benefit the BME community eg. Four Wards Initiative and Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder

- Section 6 – Here and Now in Bury  
Describes the current position in the Borough, co-ordinating work already being undertaken and identifying gaps in provision
- Section 7 – The Next Steps  
Details the action being planned to fill gaps and improve service delivery
- Section 8 - Action Plan  
Identifies key tasks to be carried out, designating a lead officer and identifying resources. This will be re-organised in chronological order prior to publication and to identify tasks which are also part of other strategies.

### **Issues**

The strategy has identified a number of issues which require action, centred around the following themes:

- Further research, consultation and communication with the BME community to understand and identify needs and demands, using a variety of mechanisms
- Lack of baseline information – Tenant profiling, customer satisfaction, ethnic monitoring
- Awareness raising for the BME community in respect of the services and opportunities offered by the Council
- Awareness raising for Bury MBC staff of the culture and needs of the BME community
- Physical condition and suitability of property within the private sector particularly in areas popular with BME communities
- Integration of asylum seekers and refugees into the community

### **Conclusions**

The strategy will help promote greater integration of communities within the Borough, helping to build and promote stable, safe and sustainable communities.

The effective implementation of this strategy will ensure that BME communities are able to fully access the services offered by Housing Services and that direct and indirect discrimination does not occur. It will enable Bury's Housing Services to meet any national or local requirements with regard to the provision of services to BME communities.'