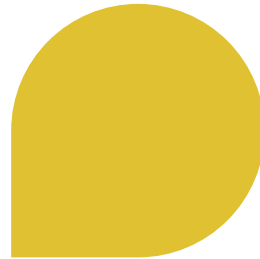




# BAME Strategic Plan

for Merton 2010-13



## Summary



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# Acknowledgements

**Merton BME Forum (a network of Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) voluntary and community organisations) is the designated body responsible for the production of this BAME Strategic Plan 2010-13.**

The BME Forum offers its sincere thanks to all who offered their time and support to develop a Plan that truly reflects the views and needs of BAME organisations and communities in Merton. The Forum is particularly grateful to the following individuals, organisations and partnerships:

BAME Plan Scrutiny Panel

Joint Consultative Committee with Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisations

Members of Merton BME Forum, Peer Support Network and Thematic groups

Merton Council

Merton Partnership (Executive Board, Thematic Groups, Project Boards)

Merton Voluntary Service Council

Merton Volunteer Centre

Metropolitan Police (Merton)

Minority Ethnic Network (MiNet)

Race on the Agenda (ROTA)

Sutton and Merton NHS

Labour MP for Mitcham and Morden

Conservative MP for Wimbledon

The individuals that participated: one-to-one, group meetings, seminars (March 2009 and February 2010).

# Foreword

## **Welcome to Merton's refreshed Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Plan 2010-13.**

Merton Unity Network (MUN), who facilitates Merton BME Forum, commissioned Norman Urquia to work with the Forum and local stakeholders to produce this Plan, which is based on a wide range of evidence, data and consultation. Like 2006 Plan, this Plan expresses BAME organisations' aspirations, needs and concerns; though some of the needs and objectives are very much the same as previous years.

The Plan is BAME defined, informed and driven, with a clear vision about how BAME organisations and their respective communities can help shape the way they live and work in Merton; making this an innovative and democratic approach to the development and delivery of this Strategic Plan.

Approximately 40 BAME organisations (including faith groups), and statutory agencies consulted, have expressed a wide range of pressing issues that need to be addressed in respect of the BAME Sector. This refreshed Plan is to help BAME organisations to further develop their interactions with the wider environment. This includes gaining an in-depth understanding of the local operating environment which is ever changing. The impact of the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review will result in reduced budgets that require new approaches to respond to greater diverse needs. This includes more sensitive services; for an increasing population of new ethnic minority communities projected beyond 2011 Census.

This Plan therefore aims to provide a systematic and structured approach to addressing those priority issues and needs. It seeks to establish appropriate links to key developments, structures and initiatives to avoid duplication in efforts. This Plan demonstrates the commitment of the BAME sector to work in partnership across a wide range of agencies, locally, sub-regionally and regionally to support their development and help fulfil their aspirations and that of the communities they represent.

We are all delighted to be part of this initiative and look forward to working in partnership to achieve the vision and key priorities set out in this BAME Strategic Plan 2010-13.



**Lola Barrett**  
Chair  
Merton Unity Network

**Patricia Anderson**  
Chair, BME Forum and Chief Officer  
Merton Unity Network



# 1 Introduction

This strategy has been developed on behalf of Merton BME Forum which is an independent, community led collection of voluntary organisations which serve Black Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. The Forum is hosted by Merton Unity Network, an umbrella organisation providing support to the BAME voluntary sector in Merton.

Members of the BME Forum have indicated that they want a plan which:

- Expresses their aspirations, needs and concerns.
- Provides a clear vision of how the BAME 'sector' can help define and shape the Merton they want to live and work in.
- Helps BAME community organisations work together to develop a co-ordinated approach to service development and delivery.
- Identifies actions which policy makers, service providers and partner organisations can carry out to bring about the vision.

## 2006 – 2009 BAME Strategy

This document is a refresh of the 2006 BAME Strategy which helped to change the way BAME VCOs work, their relationship with policy makers, and their involvement in decision making processes.

The previous strategy key objectives were:

- Improve community engagement
- Improve effectiveness and access to appropriate support
- Improve service co-ordination and Planning organisational and sectoral
- Learn from good practice

The strategy achieved the following:

- Helped identify a shared vision and priorities and actions to address key priority issues for communities in Merton.
- Demonstrated that voluntary sector organisations which serve BAME communities can work together to engage with communities and articulate local priorities.
- Raised the profile of the BAME communities in Merton and promoted the need for culturally sensitive community involvement for planning and delivering services.

## 2010-2013 Strategy

The key needs and objectives are very much the same as previous years.

The 2010 strategy aims to build on these achievements by working with local stakeholders to identify forthcoming priorities and plan a programme of activities to help deliver positive outcomes, equality of opportunity, and a fair share of resources for all communities.



Vestry Hall,  
Community Centre

## Why do we need a BAME strategy?

The BME Forum supports the improvement of services for the whole community. However, the Forum recognises that a disproportionate level of disadvantage, such as socio economic deprivation, education under-achievement, poor health, injustice and inaccessible services, are still felt more acutely by BAME communities.

The Forum notes that members of BAME communities can find it more difficult to be accepted and integrated into mainstream society and continue to experience disadvantage over generations. But the general consensus is to strive for strength in unity and promote equality and fairness. The guiding principle here is that through unity all disadvantaged communities can be helped to thrive and achieve their full potential and that:

- Services should be sensitive to the needs of all communities.
- Targeted services are provided for groups who experience exclusion from mainstream services.
- BAME Voluntary organisations can provide specialist knowledge and advice needed to achieve better engagement, address gaps in services and help design appropriate services to improve uptake among BAME communities.
- The BAME voluntary sector also plays a key role in connecting communities, so they can jointly respond to their increasingly diverse and complex needs while promoting an equal and cohesive society.

This Plan sets out the strategic direction for the BAME voluntary sector to identify and address key local priorities. These include improving customer services, promoting social justice, enhancing knowledge of local communities to improve the commissioning of services.

By implementing the principles and recommendations in this plan BAME voluntary organisations can help bring about greater equality for all communities including groups such as Eastern European migrants, Gypsy, Roma and Irish Travellers and other disadvantaged communities from the more deprived parts of Merton.

## Method for refreshing the strategy

The strategy has been refreshed using a multi-method approach designed to make the most of the various sources of information available. This has included:

- Over 60 in-depth Interviews with key stakeholders.
- Recognition of national policies and review of local policies.
- Statistical profiles.
- An electronic survey of BAME voluntary sector organisations in Merton.
- Meetings of the BME Forum to identify key issues.
- Consulting the Peer Support Network
- No Change - No Gain Seminar with 80 participants.

## Terminology: BME, BAME or BAMER

When the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Forum was set up in 2005/6, the acronym 'BME' was used as a catch all to refer to Black and Minority Ethnic groups. More recently the more overtly inclusive term 'BAME' has been used to acknowledge the Asian communities within all minority ethnic groups and 'BAMER' to include refugee communities.

The BME Forum supports the use of 'BAME' in this strategy to provide consistency with other policies and strategies. However the BME Forum has no wish to change its name and wants to preserve a sense of continuity for its members and local communities that represent BAME communities.

More importantly the Forum is aware that discussions about acronyms must not distract attention from the main aims of identifying ways in which BAME communities can help uphold the principle of equality for all and remove barriers to equality.

## 2 Vision and mission defined by BAME organisations

### Terminology: Historically excluded groups

The term "hard to reach" represents a particular view of communities and gives the impression of distant and disconnected sections of the statutory sector. However frontline staff in the same sector do not consider communities to be hard to reach as they see them on a daily basis.

Similarly members of local communities find the statutory service hard to reach, particularly if they need to access the individuals who are making decisions on their behalf and these key decision makers cannot be readily accessed by local residents.

However there needs to be an understanding that certain communities require more active engagement and outreach if they are to participate in local affairs. The onus is on the statutory sector to demonstrate that engagement is genuine and meaningful and that the

contribution of local people can have an impact on local decisions. This **requires active engagement, transparency and open feedback to local people.**

*A fair share for all, in raising the standard of living of BAME communities and the communities they live with, making sure no one is left behind.*

### OUR VISION:

To make Merton a borough that is fair; where people from all walks of life take part in all aspects of society.

### OUR MISSION:

For the BAME voluntary sector to work collaboratively with key partners to improve opportunities for communities and reduce inequalities; to support and enable cultural differences to be recognised and respected, and to acknowledge both the contributions and needs of diverse groups living, working, playing and learning in Merton.

As travel, migration and technology increases, the connection between local and global communities and the cultural and population mix in the UK, London, and Merton, have become increasingly complex.

The BME Forum embraces the diversity that globalisation presents; the new mix of ideas, ways of thinking, culture and creativity which enrich our lives and economy. The Forum wants to strive for a borough where people of all backgrounds can achieve their aspirations and are able to contribute to a borough where **differences are respected** and fair services are sensitive to the needs of all individuals regardless of their cultural background.

The BME Forum believes that this can be achieved by collaboration between statutory sector and grassroots voluntary organisations which engage with members of our communities and embrace the diversity within them. In particular there remains **a need for voluntary sector with specialist knowledge of supporting and working with BAME communities.**

### 3 Context: Demography and socio-economic policy

#### 3.1 Demographics: Population profile

- i. Changes in BAME population
- ii. Age, gender, nationality, religion
- iii. Population distribution; where the communities are
- iv. Deprivation.

#### 3.2. Socio-Economic Policy

#### 3.1 DEMOGRAPHICS - POPULATION PROFILE

Merton has a growing and diverse population which includes many different communities from a range of different Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds.

A national census of residents is taken every ten years. At the last census in 2001 Merton had a population of 187,908, with **25% of Merton's residents from a BAME background.**

The census found that the BAME population was higher in the East of the borough as high as 49% in Graveney, Longthornton and Figges Marsh, and as low as 12% in Lower Morden in the west of Merton.

The largest ethnic category is Asian comprising of 11% of the borough and there is also a significant Tamil population which is counted under the "Asian Other" sub category.

The 2001 census is increasingly out of date and has not kept pace with recent population changes, due to population growth and migration.<sup>1</sup>

Until the next census the best alternatives are estimates based on a combination of information sources which are often not designed for this purpose, such as labour force survey.

<sup>1</sup>Local calculations before the economic downturn indicated that the official estimates may have underestimated the population by up to 10,000 people; much of this underestimation will affect migrants and groups. (Source: Merton Partnership 2008)

#### i. Changes in BAME population

Merton's population has changed since 2001 (at 187,908). By 2008, the best estimate indicated that the population had reached **201,400**, (Office of National Statistics 2008 mid-year estimate) which represents a 7% increase (13500 people). The proportion of BAME communities has also grown since the census and is now almost **30%** of the population (rising from 25%); forecast to rise to **32%** in 2016 (DMAG).

This rise is due to a number of reasons including growth in the local population, migration from other parts of the UK, for example people moving outwards from inner to outer London boroughs and lastly international migration from countries such as Poland, South Africa and Sri Lanka.

Merton Population Breakdown 2001

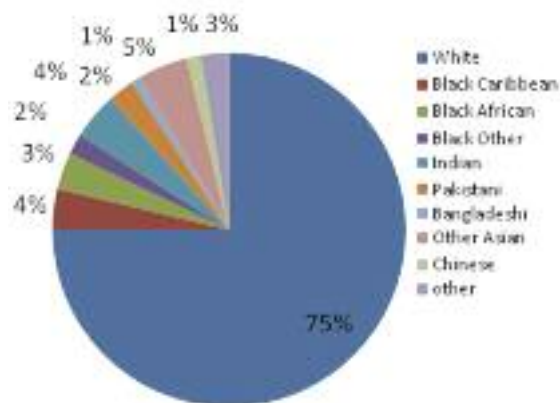


Figure 1 - Merton population breakdown 2001 Source ONS 2001 Census

Population Breakdown 2016

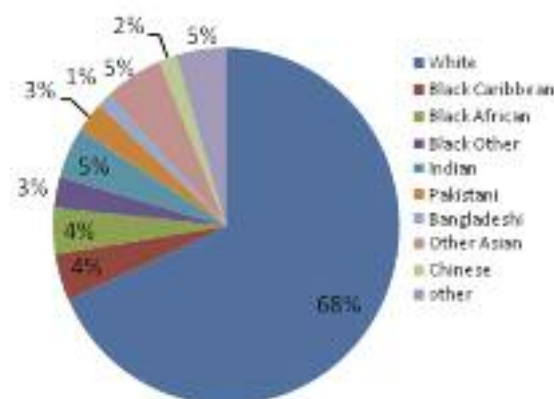
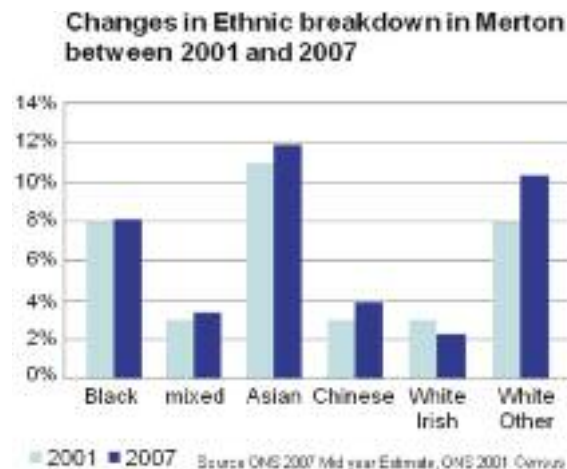


Figure 2 - Population breakdown by ethnicity. Source GLA, DMAG briefing 2009 - 08

The different communities have been growing at different rates; the greatest change has been in the combined categories, “Asian other” category in the GLA figures and ‘white other’ and ‘Chinese other’ in the ONS figures.

The ‘white other’ category has grown from 8% to over 10% of the population. National Insurance statistics indicate that the increase is largely due to new arrivals of Polish and South African groups. Growth in the ‘Chinese’ category is mainly from the “Chinese other” category which has risen from about 1% to almost 2.5% of the total population, this has brought the overall category of ‘Chinese’ to almost 4%. Though this is a small overall number this represents the largest growth proportionately of any group. These general grouping will contain several communities with different profiles, languages and needs.

Among the Asian category, growth from 11% to almost 12% of the population is accounted for mainly by growth in the Indian population. There has also been a slight drop in the White Irish population which is now closer to 2%. This may be due to undercounting or later generations being absorbed under the white British category.



**Figure 3 - Changes in ethnic breakdown 2001-2007. Source 2001 census, 2007 Mid-year estimate**

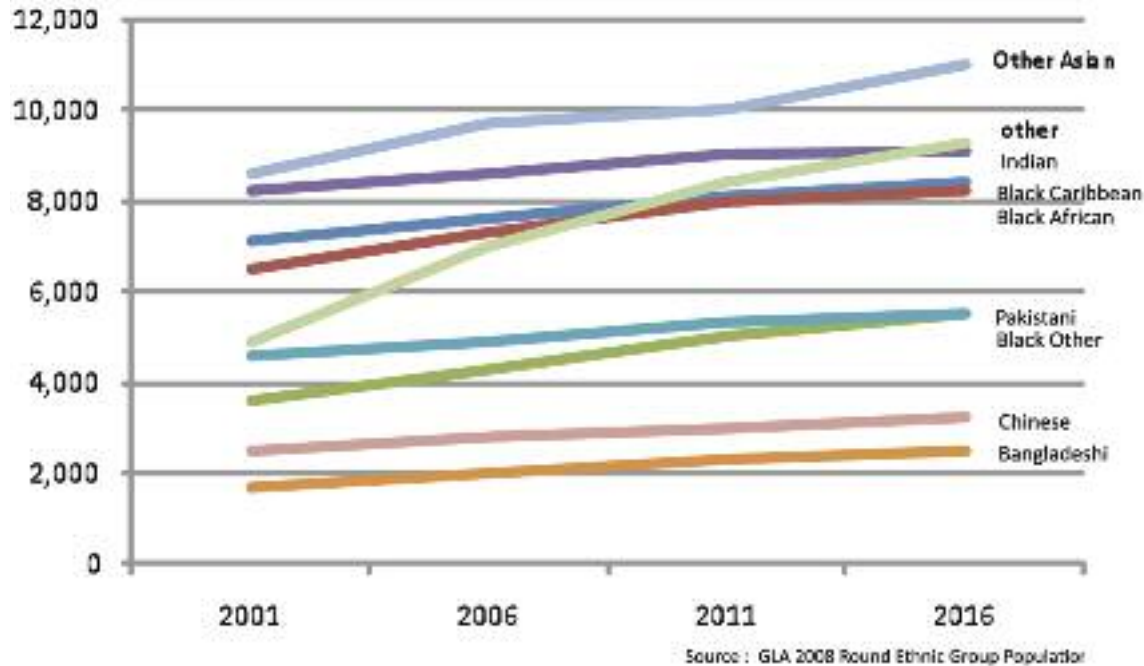
The 2008 ONS population estimate indicates that 72.7% of Merton was classed as ‘White’; this includes 2.5% Irish and 10% ‘white other’. The white other group has grown by 5000 since the 2001 census and may include people with specific language needs.

Comparing the ONS figures and the latest GLA DMAG population projections (which use a slightly different methodology) give further support to the idea **that Merton is becoming more ethnically diverse**. These categories give an indication of the broad different groups in Merton but do not indicate the sub-groups for example Tamil, Somali, Polish or Roma people living in Merton.

**Figure 4 - Changes in Merton population 2001-2016 Source: GLA DMAG – Round ethnic group population projection 2009 - 08**

	White	Black Carib	Black African	Black Other	Indian	Pakistani	Bangla-deshi	Other Asian	Chinese	other	BAME
<b>2001</b>	143,300	7,100	6,500	3,600	8,200	4,600	1,700	8,600	2,500	4,900	25%
<b>2006</b>	138,500	7,600	7,300	4,300	8,600	4,900	2,000	9,700	2,800	7,000	28.2%
<b>2011</b>	137,900	8,100	8,000	5,000	9,000	5,300	2,300	10,000	3,000	8,400	30.3%
<b>2016</b>	134,700	8,400	8,200	5,500	9,100	5,500	2,500	11,000	3,200	9,300	32%

### Change in Merton's population 2001 - 2016



**Figure 5 - Change in ethnic population proportions 2001 - 2016: Source GLA, DMAG - Round ethnic group population projection 2009 - 08.**

#### Population survey methodology:

It should be noted that the annual Labour force survey which has been used to estimate the population:- excludes students in halls who do not have a UK resident parent; and excludes people in most other types of communal establishments (e.g. hotels, boarding houses, hostels, mobile home sites, etc).

It also provides estimates of those living in private households that only include migrants staying for 12 months or more.

The overall message is that Merton is becoming more ethnically diverse and the rate of change is greatest for the categories of “other”, “other Asian” and “other African”. The implications are that an increasingly complex borough will require more sensitive services, which are aware of the specific needs of the different communities, often new communities with little prior history or exposure to the UK.

In addition, local services will need to better engage with these new communities, even though some groups may be unfamiliar with the formal voluntary sector and may have become accustomed to having many of these services provided by extended families or informal community ties.

***We must not pander to stereotypes; communities are complex and not one dimensional***

## New and potentially hidden groups

With increasing complexity, services will need to be aware of the needs of smaller and perhaps hidden groups. This will include Eastern Europeans, Nepalese Ghurkhas, among others.

Gypsy and Traveller communities have been part of Merton for centuries, some have settled while others visit periodically. The issues for this community include being able to access services such as education and reducing isolation from much of the settled community. The count of Gypsy and Traveller Caravans indicates a relatively small number. However, there are also sites on the borough boundaries in Wandsworth and Croydon often in the more neglected areas.

Count of Gypsy and Traveller Caravans on **Authorised sites (with planning permission)**

Jan 2009	17
Jul 2008	17
Jan 2008	18
Jul 2007	20
Jan 2007	15

**Figure 6 - Count of gypsy and traveller caravans on authorised sites (2009)**

Source:

[www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/caravancountjan2009](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/caravancountjan2009)

Aside from these mobile communities there are also settled Gypsy and traveller communities within Merton, anecdotally in Phipps Bridge and Lavender Fields.

## ii. Age, gender, nationality, religion

### AGE

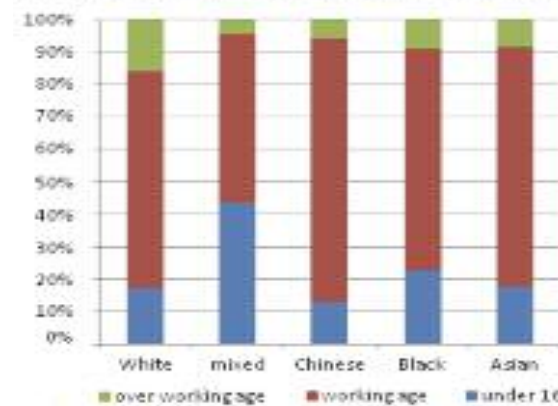
Merton's age and ethnic profile is changing. The age breakdown indicates that BAME groups tend to have a greater proportion of younger residents; almost half of the Asian population are of school age, followed closely by 'white other; and 'Chinese other'.

The Asian or Asian British community and white other have the largest proportion of school age children.

Over 50% of Merton's school age children are from BAME communities.

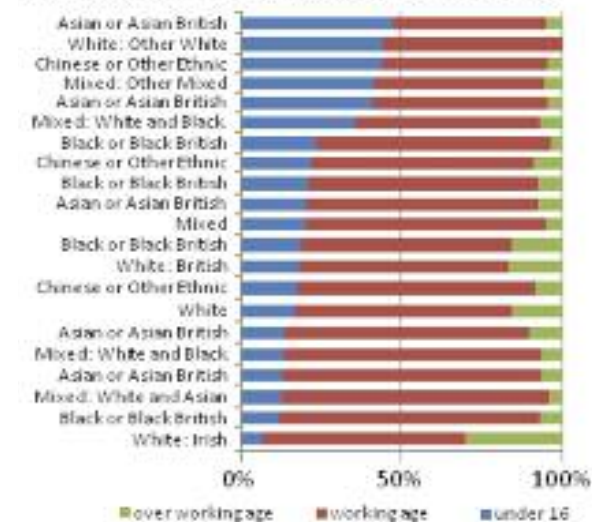
Those communities that have been here the longest have a greater proportion of pensioners for example the Irish community, followed by White British, Black or Black British.

**Age breakdown for Ethnic Groups in Merton 2007**



**Figure 7 - age breakdown by ethnic group 2007, by ethnic group and subgroup, Source: ONS mid year estimate 2007**

**Age breakdown ethnic groups Merton 2007**



**Figure 8 - age breakdown 2007, Source: ONS mid year estimate 2007**

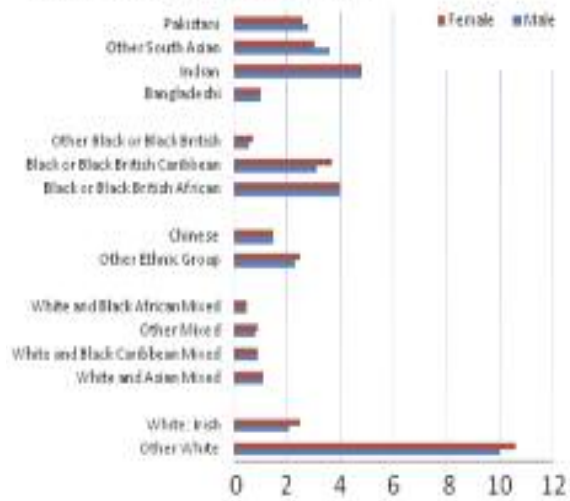
### GENDER

In most of the ethnic groups in Merton the number of males and females are roughly equal, but there are some exceptions. For example there are a greater proportion of females than males for Black Caribbean, White other, White Irish groups.

In contrast there are more males than females in the Pakistani and "other South Asian" groups.

More analysis is needed with community groups to understand the implications for these communities. This is likely to present more issues for those who rely on their own community for care and support from women for example childcare, social care and single parent families.

**Gender and ethnic breakdown in Merton 2007 mid year population estimate**



**Figure 9 - Gender and ethnic breakdown, Merton 2007: Source ONS mid year population estimate (2007)**

**NATIONALITY**

Statistics for country of birth give some indication of the ethnicity of communities living in Merton. These estimates are not as precise as some of the other population statistics, however by combining with other data sources we can get an idea of the nationalities living in Merton.

The ONS estimate for the top nine non UK countries of birth in Merton are given in the first column below. This corresponds with the top 5 countries from the National Insurance registrations (NINos) and electoral register. While this gives an indication of first generation migration it does not indicate ethnicity and cannot be used to estimate the size of the second generation who are born and raised in the UK.

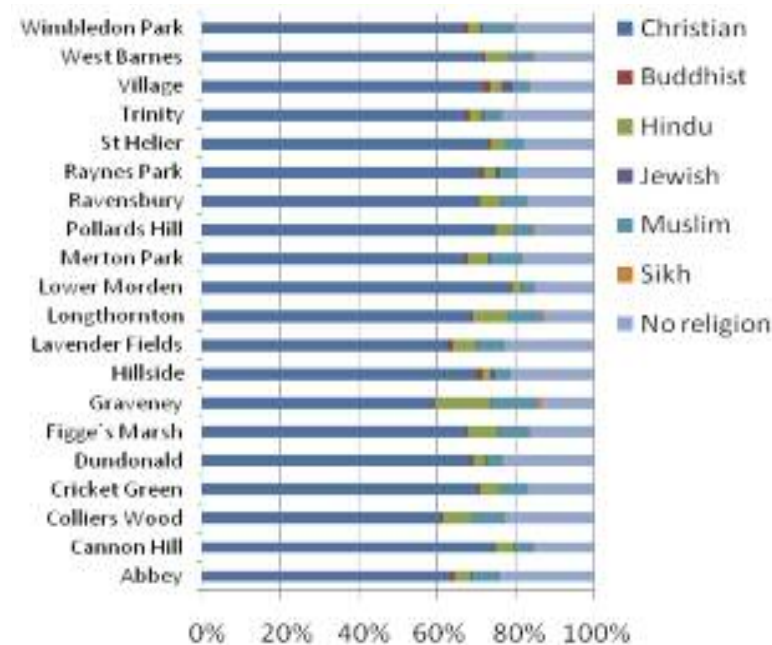
**Most common countries of birth / nationalities (other than UK) in Merton using different data sources**

ONS Country of birth 2001	National Insurance 2007	Electoral Register 2007
Poland	South Africa	South Africa
South Africa	Poland	Ireland
Sri Lanka	Australia	Sri Lanka
Pakistan	Pakistan	Poland
Jamaica	Sri Lanka	Ghana
India	India	India
Republic of Ireland	Lithuania	Pakistan
Romania	Ghana	Italy
Ghana	Germany	Germany

**RELIGION**

The 2001 census can be used to indicate the distribution of religions in the borough.

Religion does not follow the same East / West split as is found with Ethnicity. It crosses all cultural boundaries. The most **religiously diverse** ward in Merton borough is Graveney [see Figure 10 below] which is also the most ethnically diverse. Religion can be the cause for community tensions and some respondents have reported a marked rise in Islamophobia coupled with racism and they attribute this to the rising profile of religion in local and national media.

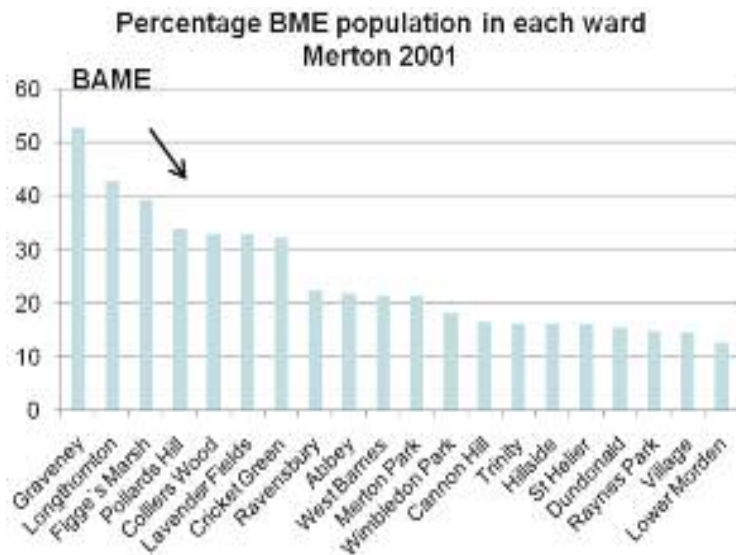


**Figure 10 - Religious breakdown in Merton 2001. Source 2001 Census**

**iii. Population distribution - where the BAME communities are**

The chart below indicates the proportion of BAME communities in Merton at the 2001 Census.

It is worth noting that the east of the borough has BAME populations exceeding 30%. It is also worth noting that in the centre and in one western ward, West Barnes the BAME population is greater than 20%.



**Figure 11 Percentage BAME population by ward. Source 2001 census**

**iv. Deprivation**

Different social and ethnic groups have different probabilities of suffering from multiple deprivation; which relates to the occurrence of several forms of deprivation concurrently, such as low income, poor housing, and unemployment. This can be particularly stressful for families and communities. Within Merton, a wide range of multi-deprivation indicators and measures are used such as census based indices. However, in order to ensure fairness and accuracy in resource allocation a wider range of indices are used that have to be both weighted and validated, for example, the use of Super Output Areas (SOA). SOA contains 10 sets of measures (income deprivation; employment deprivation; health deprivation and disability; education; skills and training deprivation; barriers to housing and services; crime; the living environment; the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index; the Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index).

Merton is considered to have a low level of relative deprivation and is ranked the 6th least deprived borough in London. The reputation of Wimbledon as a wealthy area gives the impression of an affluent borough, but this does not tell the whole story as there are areas of significant deprivation a stone's throw from Wimbledon.

The east of the borough is known to be significantly more deprived than the west, but there are also pockets of deprivation in the west of the borough in Raynes Park and Wimbledon Park. However, in the more

severely deprived pockets in the east of Merton eight of Merton's super output areas (SOA's) are in the 25% most deprived nationally and, thirteen of Merton's SOA's are in the 20% most income deprived nationally, all are located in the east of the borough and these tend to be areas with the highest BAME population.

There is evidence that many BAME communities still experience a greater level of deprivation. With a few exceptions the most deprived wards in Merton are also those with the highest proportion of BAME communities. This trend is likely to continue and one of the key issues is that members of BAME communities will live in the most socio-economically deprived areas of the borough.

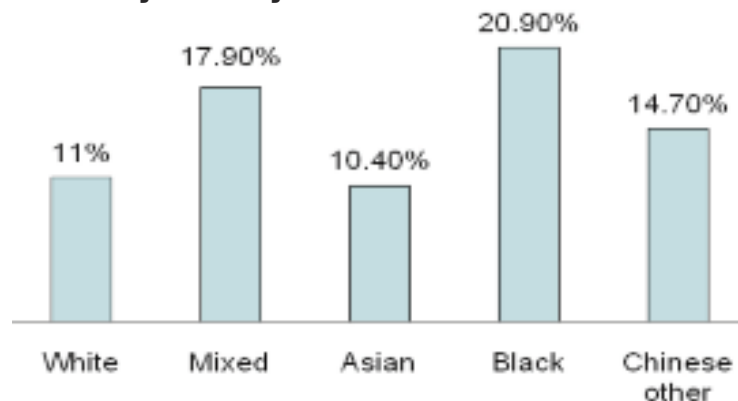
SOA code	Ward	IMD score	Within % most deprived	% BAME population in wards (based on 2001 census)
E01003390	Figge's Marsh	37.56	16.57%	39.5%
E01003379	Cricket Green	34.89	19.50%	32.2%
E01003391	Figge's Marsh	34.45	19.96%	39.5%
E01003373	Cricket Green	32.59	21.97%	32.2%
E01003377	Cricket Green	31.73	23.07%	32.2%
E01003432	Pollards Hill	31.44	23.41%	33.8%
E01003357	Abbey	30.86	24.14%	21.8%
E01003452	St Helier	30.63	24.42%	16.2%

**Figure 12 Most deprived super output areas Merton: source Merton Observatory 2010**

The indicator below shows that the impact of 'deprivation' varies across all ethnic groups, for example the chart below suggests that Asian children have almost a similar rate of eligibility for free school meals as their white peers. Black children have a higher rate.

However, within the racial classification of 'Asian' there are ethnic groups that are over-represented in the workless population, for example, Bangladeshi and Pakistani residents. More analysis is, however, needed to understand the anomalies and explore the issues for those who have to rely on their own community for care and support.

**Eligibility for free school meals in Merton by ethnicity 2008**



**Figure 13 Eligibility for free school meals in Merton by ethnicity. Source Neighbourhood statistics (2008)**



## 3.2 SOCIO- ECONOMIC CONDITION AND POLICY

This strategy has been prepared in a changing political and socio economic context. During the fieldwork the overwhelming concern from statutory and voluntary sector alike is that they are entering a time of greater need within communities and fewer resources with which to meet those needs.



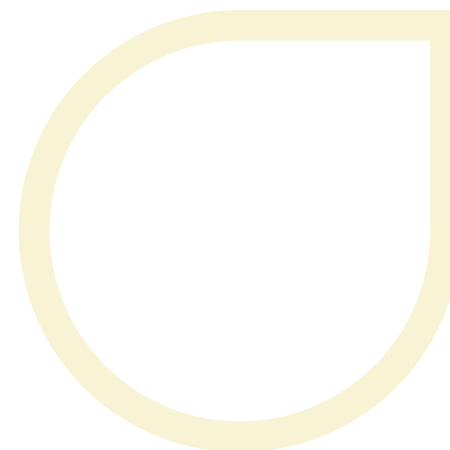
Extract from:

### **'The Merton Local Area Agreement (LAA) 2008-2011 'Bridging the Gap':**

Merton remains a borough of contrasts between the affluent wards in the west (Wimbledon) and the more deprived wards in the east of the borough (e.g. Mitcham):

- Average household income in the borough is £29,000 a year, but in wards in Mitcham it is between £5,000 and £13,000.
- The borough average unemployment level is 3.3% but it ranges from 2% in Village ward (west) to 5.4% in Cricket Green (east)
- Village and Hillside wards (west) are in the 5% most prosperous in the country – Cricket Green, Lavender Fields and Pollards Hill (east) are in the 15% most deprived.
  - All of the eastern wards have higher proportions of people without any qualifications than the average for England.
  - Female life expectancy at birth in the Cricket Green area of Mitcham (77 years of age) is more than eight years shorter than in the Hillside district of Wimbledon (85.3 years).
    - At the 2001 Census approximately 25% of the population was from black and minority ethnic groups, whereas around 50% of children attending Merton schools – where 160 languages are spoken – are from these groups.

For those reasons 'Bridging the Gap' became the overall theme for the LAA, particularly focusing actions on the priority areas of multiple deprivation, with the aim of lifting the opportunities for people in those areas so that they are comparable with those in the west of the borough. Source: **Merton's Local Area Agreement 2008-11**



The international economic crisis has sparked a funding crisis in the public sector which may change the relationship between the voluntary sector and funders. Increasingly the voluntary sector will be relied on as a value for money way of achieving the goals of the statutory sector.

Coupled with this there have been a number of developments in legislation and policy which require voluntary sector input.

- Community Plan
- Compact and Community Engagement Networks (CEN)
- Duty to involve
- Duty to promote community cohesion – in schools, etc.
- Promoting volunteering
- Equality Act 2010
- LINK - Local Involvement Network
- Neighbourhood renewal strategy and plans
- Town Centre Developments
- Patient and public involvement
- Localism


Voluntary sector organisations will need to demonstrate that they can meet these priorities and that they have a firm evidence base to demonstrate the need for their service and that they can work in partnership with the statutory and private sector to deliver the required outcomes.

### **Economic downturn: recession**

The economic downturn has placed added pressure on public sector finances which is having a knock on effect on the BAME voluntary sector. The associated budget cuts to reduce the national deficit have also had a dramatic impact at the local level and will require a rethink about the delivery and funding of public services. Interviews with local stakeholders indicate the following concerns:

- That there will be increasing need among all communities and that BAME communities are more likely to experience greater levels of deprivation and therefore more likely to use the statutory sector services than private sector services.
- That the reduced funding which is available will result in the closure of a number of BAME VCOs which will leave a number of communities without support.
- That as more affluent people feel the economic pressure they will begin placing extra demands on public and voluntary sector facilities (for example, schools, local Citizens' Advice Bureaux); and the extra pressure can displace traditional public sector clients which are disproportionately from BAME communities.
- Cuts in funding for local services may achieve short term goals of balancing the books without considering the wider benefit provided by the voluntary sector.

- The overhaul of housing benefits is likely to displace vulnerable groups to the more affordable parts of London such as Mitcham and Morden; extra housing will require extra infrastructure as well as employment opportunities.
- The cuts in public services will impact on BAME groups who are traditionally a higher proportion of the workforce having been attracted by greater equality of opportunity in the public sector.
- Push for lone parents to work is likely to impact on those communities who traditionally have a greater proportion of lone parent families.



***Funding crisis  
can lead to conflict  
between VCOs;  
need to find a way  
to resolve this...***

## 4 Key challenges for BAME organisations

**Communities are not homogenous;** they are diverse and there are complexities in ensuring equality in access to services. The diversity of Merton's BAME sector is enriched with a wide range of culture. Public services need to be sensitive to the needs of all customer segments including those groups that have been defined by their identification to different national, ethnic or religious origins. This task is becoming increasingly complex as the population itself becomes more complex, but a failure to do so risks leaving large segments of the community disconnected.

All support agencies should therefore work in partnership to ensure access, particularly if best value is to be achieved and maintained and proper regard is given to equality of access. This can be effective where the equality impact assessment process, used as a formative state, is taken into account.

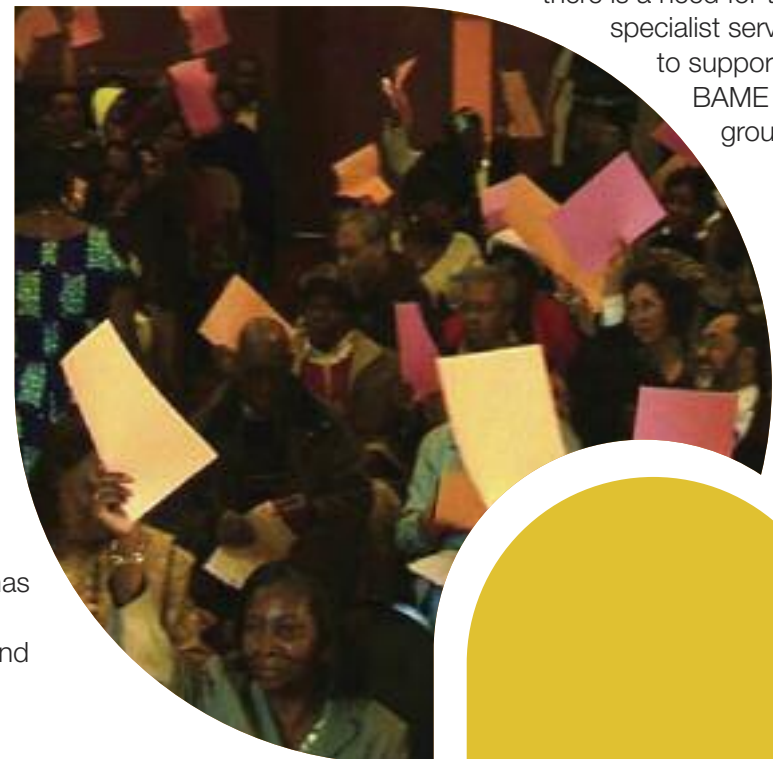
Community engagement is a challenge for statutory and voluntary agencies funders and politicians looking to ensure that local people have a genuine voice through various forms, such as having a voice in influencing policy. The BAME sector is in an ideal position as their grass roots contacts and experience can help determine the direction of policy.

The challenge for BAME VCOs is to be able to contribute to this process, which is a strength which many funders and parliamentarians are looking for and to which BAME VCOs should take action to address; to get involved and be supported, for example, through representation on several policy bodies and engagement with a wide range of commissioning processes.

Changes in the funding and political landscapes, compounded by the recession, have seen many BAME organisations folding. The London economic downturn has meant a reduction in small grants programmes, where funding streams have become too expensive to offer to VCOs. There has also been a paradigm shift in funding for VCOs; which means funding has become bigger and fewer and puts smaller VCOs at a disadvantage. There is also a move from output to outcome measures and smaller VCOs need support so that they are able to demonstrate the value of their work in a way which suits flexible ways of monitoring success. In addition, Government Departments are operating a strategic procurement and commissioning model which is contextually value added; moving towards larger projects with greater flexibility; adopting purchasing models supported with project plans and driving value for money. The public sector poses a financial challenge which has implications for local government expenditure and investment strategy.

Changes have also seen 'equality', particularly "race equality" often replaced with the loose term 'cohesion'. Without core funding (essentially for running costs) many BAME VCOs cannot exist, and therefore cannot make their contribution to cohesion. Nevertheless, cohesion is viewed as another take on society for the Third Sector, but the loose idea of 'cohesion' does not generally support "single" identity groups, for example BAME VCOs; who provides "specialist services" for many ethnic minority communities. Our experience tells us that

there is a need for these specialist services to support BAME groups.



*The decision to have greater sensitivity and representation in mainstream services rather than the provision for ethnic specific services, continues to exclude many communities because of the reluctance of mainstream providers to acquire cultural competencies.*

Therefore, as part of a wider programme to strengthen society, the opportunity must be given or taken for these services to be provided, which may result in promoting positive action to improve race equality and ensure “best value” is being obtained by services users and the wider communities.

Does the benefit of social objective outweigh the costs of provision?

BAME VCOs need to work together to gain access, and the sector needs to ensure that it can reduce the imbalance in the competition for contracts; and is able to face the challenges of the recession (as groups dip into reserves and work in collaboration to strengthen back office work and campaigning); to be more effective to weather the storm.

The demographic across London Boroughs such as Merton, is continually changing. In respect of the BAME sector, there is the impact of:

- Mobile communities; migration.
- Economic conditions (e.g black men are not as mobile for employment).
- Culture and value.
- Technology in respect of life chances and opportunities.

**2011 Census** - the whole environment has shifted since the 2001 Census and the 2011 Census will no doubt show some positive as well as negative changes in the population, class and economic profiles of the BAME Third Sector. It will no longer be appropriate to use Asian as a blanket term, for example, classifying Bangladeshi communities as other

Asian groups. In addition, it is important that BAME VCOs help to ensure that communities are represented in the 2011 census. This will have crucial impact on funding for BAME VCOs and the service they provide.

**Funding Environment** - Many voluntary sector organisations have been created in a different funding environment and will need to adapt to the new funding culture. This will require a strategic awareness of community needs and policy priorities, a firm evidence base for community needs and how the interventions that VCOs provide can help meet the statutory obligations.

In addition there is growing awareness of the complexity of ethnicity and the interplay with social class and deprivation. The needs of the different BAME groups can be different, and show different patterns. For example some BAME groups achieve higher than average school attainment, while other have show strong entrepreneurial flair and success, some are less deprived, some have language needs other have health needs.

For this reason statutory sector is recognising that ethnicity alone is not necessarily an indicator of need. While this has been couched in unfortunate rhetoric the BAME voluntary sector needs to be aware of this changing attitude and provide strong evidence base to justify their work.

Need to move away from “Me too funding” and towards commissioning services at their full economic cost, in effect to follow a social enterprise model. There are however opportunities and recommendations, to pool resources and work in a conciliatory way to maximise the benefit for communities,

- Commission local work.
- Utilise existing information.
- Capacity building, through training development.
- Build infrastructure; Not forgetting the spinoff value of voluntary sector in building these.
- Greater need means greater demand for expertise, which is held in the voluntary sector.
- Cross borough work – reduced reliance on grants from monopoly funders opens up the possibility for cross borough projects.

### **Information Gap**

Within the statutory sector, there is generally a lack of local information, or an inability to use intelligent and up to date data to correctly evaluate the development, and impact, of policies on certain groups within society, for example, young BAME people. Such information can be readily obtained from faith, voluntary and community groups.

## 5 Key issues and priority needs for action as identified by BAME voluntary and community organisations

**Following a series of consultation, commencing March 2009, eight themes have been chosen to represent clearly the key issues and priority needs as identified by BAME organisations for Merton's local communities. A detailed description of each of the following thematic issue (including key priority needs and objectives and an action plan), is outlined below.**

### 5.1 Education and learning

### 5.2 Health and general well-being

### 5.3 Housing and regeneration

### 5.4 Older People

### 5.5 Children and Young People

### 5.6 Employment, Skills and Enterprise

### 5.7 Safer, Stronger and Sustainable

### 5.8 Crosscutting Issues and Needs

The key priority needs are formulated into strategic priority objectives and outcomes. The intent is that, through the implementation of the actions outlined in this Plan, BAME organisations will be able to respond effectively with appropriate data, and with strong, enabling partnerships, in meeting the priority outcomes identified.

A number of key stakeholders and lead partner agencies are also listed in the full Plan; against a series of actions and, where relevant, their related activities are reference linked to other strategies, policies and initiatives. Making that reference link has helped to map related activities; therefore avoiding duplication in efforts to address the needs identified and identifying the gaps in service provision.

Within the Action Plan, reference is also made to MUN, BMEF and PSN (Merton Unity Network, BME Forum and Peer Support Network). PSN is the “operational arm” of the BME Forum which is facilitated by Merton Unity Network. The BME Form enables ethnic minority groups to come together and engage strategically with statutory and other partners, to consider and respond to a range of issues. The PSN (through a range of thematic sub-groups) enables ethnic groups to work collectively to strengthen and sustain their development and that of their communities; by being proactive in finding solutions to their shared difficulties, by pooling resources, sharing information and skills, developing and implementing a ‘plan of action’ to take forward key priority objectives.

MUN/BME Forum is in regular contact with over 75 BAME Organisations. An average of 45 BAME organisations and 150 individuals, annually, uses the facilities provided through the BME Forum and PSN. Several of those BAME groups are listed as local stakeholders and against respective key thematic priority issues and related service area within the Action Plan.

NB: A description of the other acronyms used, can be found within the ‘Glossary’ section of the full Plan.

## 5.1 EDUCATION AND LEARNING

**This covers all aspects of learning from schools to adult education.**

### 5.1.1 PROFILE (NATIONAL AND LOCAL INDICATORS AND STATISTICS)

#### Statistical profile:

- Around 50% of Merton's primary school pupils are BAME and over 160 languages spoken.
- Local GCSEs Performance: Source: London Borough of Merton 2004

Percentage of pupils	English & Maths	
	Level 4+	Level 5
White British	76%	22%
White Other	66%	21%
Black African	65%	11%
Black Caribbean	62%	6%
Black Other	69%	10%
Asian Bangladeshi	67%	14%
Asian Indian	79%	33%
Asian Other	79%	30%
Asian Pakistani	74%	21%
Mixed Other	62%	25%
Mixed White & Asian	81%	35%
Mixed White & Black African	76%	29%
Mixed White & Black Caribbean	76%	21%
Chinese	75%	25%
Other Ethnic Group	76%	19%
Merton	73%	21%

### Local Area Agreement statutory related indicators and targets -

[www.idea.gov.uk/idk/aio/8511975](http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/aio/8511975)

- NI 45 Young offenders' engagement in suitable education, employment or training
- Improve behavior through reducing the number of exclusions of pupils from black and minority ethnic groups: a) fixed period; and b) permanent exclusions (Child Poverty)
- NI 108 Key Stage 4 attainment for Black and minority ethnic groups
- NI 102 Achievement gap between pupils eligible for FSM and their peers NI 82 Inequality gap in the achievement of a level 2 qualification by age 19 at KS 2 + 4
- NI 82 Inequality gap in the achievement of a level 2 qualification by age 19
- NI 148 Care leavers in employment, education or training

### 5.1.2 NATIONAL AND LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT AND LOCAL STAKE-HOLDERS ARE OUTLINED IN FULL PLAN

### 5.1.3 LOCAL ISSUES & NEEDS (FROM INTERVIEWS AND WORKSHOPS)

#### Schools (Primary and Secondary education)

- High exclusion & expulsion rates among some groups, who are disproportionately excluded from schools, e.g. BAME children. Tendency to crisis manage one community then move on to the next, need to keep an overview on the whole community.
- Bullying and gangs in schools.
- Under-reporting of racist incidents in Merton Schools.
- Lack of attainment and qualifications among BAME children. What is being done to address this imbalance especially when over 50% of primary school intakes are from the BAME community?
- Noticeable drop in BAME children's academic achievement when they leave primary school to attend secondary/high school.
- Lack of opportunities and progression for BAME teaching staff.
- Lack of visible BAME teachers in Merton's schools especially those schools not in the East of the borough.
- Low attainment of children of some BAME groups.
- Decline in the academic achievements of mixed raced children is a cause for concern, as this demographic is the fastest growing within the BAME group.
- Lack of a supportive learning environment for BAME children both at school and at home.
- Lack of opportunities for those who do not achieve standard national qualifications such as GCSE's.

- Some BAME groups are achieving similar numbers of GCSEs as the general population but are achieving a fewer passes in Maths and English.
- Lack of awareness and support from schools for BAME children who suffer or have parents who suffer from illness such as sickle cell, lupus, mental health issues.
- More black teachers and role models in schools and greater representation on Schools Governing Boards.
- Improvement in the provision of culturally appropriate teaching in school curriculum. Provision of teaching materials that reflect BAME experiences, contributions and achievements in a constructive way.
- More supplementary schools to address the low attainment in schools. More flexible learning styles – doing rather than listening.
- Pressure on education resource; with more parents requiring local schools as some public school displaced into Merton schools; currently in the west.
- Support needed for BAME parents with vulnerable young boys: such as information, advice and guidance; parenting skills and confidence building; counselling support arrangements (MUN & BTEG - Apr 2010).
- Education and play provision needed for Gypsy and travelling children.

### Young people and adult learning

- Mentoring and nurturing ambition for BAME young people. Not letting a desire for ethnic matching leave young people without support.
- Help with translating foreign qualifications so that they are recognised in the UK and making it possible for migrants to pursue their former careers
- Effective career planning which promotes development
- Support for young carers in respect of learning and skills development
- NEET (Not in education, employment or Training) scheme need to look at underlying issues, e.g. lack of confidence, lack of ambition, depression.
- Improve education and basic skills training for those with dyslexia.
- Health issues: for example, mental health. Depression mistaken for laziness, lack of ambition, but this is a result of people being overwhelmed with a range of issues.
- Limited support for people for whom English is a second language.
- ESOL comprises of three different groups which each of their own issues, for example, (1) young adults, (2) older settled former refugees with a wide range of needs from illiteracy to graduate and employment, and (3) international students who are usually better off.
- Funding for ESOL being reduced – demand for ESOL is high. Need to assess people range of English language abilities.
- ESOL needs to be more targeted, for example, it is needed especially for women; who can support child learning.
- Local college provides path to higher education and vocational qualifications for those who may have missed out on traditional route, often from more deprived and excluded backgrounds. Often they are from BAME communities.
- BAME communities are more likely to see education as a way forward; this doesn't appear so for white working class so emphasis should be on providing access to all.
- The needs of younger students are very different to older people; they need to adapt maybe grow up, soft skills needed; having the right demeanour to succeed. Need to learn how to be self directed, in study career and life.
- It is not enough to have the qualifications one has to talk the talk and look the part, ie 'linguistic capital' – a way of speaking and or behaviour that is valued by the appropriate network and can wield influence in society.
- Need to provide outreach activities for NEET- BAME VCSs can work with colleges and other partners.
- Targeted support needed to respond to specialist educational needs of BAME communities, this means cultural sensitive training programmes, but with over 140 languages, there is a need to strike a balance because of the danger of dissecting the market too much - can't satisfy everyone.

- Budget cuts means that educational establishment will have to focus on core work - voluntary sector can help with better links between services and cross borough connections; coordinating activities.
- Need to work with excluded kids to get them out of the 'cycle', there is some rough and tumble low level violence which needs to be looked at.
- Need to address concerns about gang culture and gang activities, which raise child protection issues.
- Colleges should work with recognised voluntary sector to help young people deal with issues of growing up and anger management, etc.
- There is a westward drift in education, where young people move across boroughs to get away, e.g. Wimbledon kids move to Kingston, and Sutton.
- Older students are more focussed on studies.

**Access to education information - using publicity more creatively and effectively, e.g. at cultural events**

- Use of Libraries for learning, with access to:
  - Specific language books
  - Health information
  - General life information
  - Interaction with other people, e.g. mums @ story time in different languages

5.1.4 KEY PRIORITY NEEDS – AS IDENTIFIED BY BAME ORGANISATIONS

- Reduce the level of exclusion and expulsion rates among BAME children.
- Increase positive representation and action
- Improve educational attainment
- Improve access to learning information and support

**See full plan for a list of key actions to address these priority needs; linked where relevant to other local strategies to avoid duplication of effort and identify gaps in service provision.**

## 5.2 HEALTH AND WELL BEING

This section deals with all aspects of health, from health promotion and education, access to services, palliative and end of life care.



### 5.2.1 PROFILE (NATIONAL AND LOCAL INDICATORS AND STATISTICS)

**Mental illness** – Nationally. The Mental Health Minimum Data Set (2009) showed that the rates of detention via the Mental Health Act increased steeply in 2009 (The NHS Information Office 2009). This report also showed that 31.8% of service users receiving care on inpatient units were detained under the Mental Health Act. This is a greater number than in previous years. The data also showed that 53.8% of the “Black” and “Black British” group who were inpatients, spent some time detained compulsorily in comparison to 31.8% overall. The over representation of certain Black and Minority Ethnic Groups within inpatient services is not new.

The results of the 2009 “Count Me In” Census have also just been published (Care Quality Commission 2010). The Census found that 22% of all patients were from minority ethnic groups compared to 20% for the 2005 Census, possibly reflecting the changing population of the UK. The rates of individuals subject to the Mental Health Act were higher than average for some groups namely the Black Caribbean, Black African, Other Black and White / Black Caribbean Mixed and Other White Groups. The rates of people from Other Black and Black Caribbean groups detained under Section 37/41 has remained higher than average for the last five years. The rates of admission or detention have not reduced since 2005 for Black and minority ethnic groups.

### **Mental illness** - locally

- Number of people suffering from mental illness (SMPCT, estimate, 2000) 30,000
- Demand for mental health services (SMPCT, 2000) 8% below national average
- Percentage of Super Output Areas in the 10% most deprived for mental health (IMD, 2007) 1%
- Source Merton Observatory

From the JSNA- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Core Data Set 2009  
[www.suttonandmerton.nhs.uk/ec/files/docuploads/JSNACoreDataSet](http://www.suttonandmerton.nhs.uk/ec/files/docuploads/JSNACoreDataSet)

[www.suttonandmerton.nhs.uk/ec/files/docuploads/WCCpanelreport.pdf](http://www.suttonandmerton.nhs.uk/ec/files/docuploads/WCCpanelreport.pdf)

*NB: The JSNA is renewed annually and published by NHS Sutton and Merton in the autumn.*

**Mental health inequalities are** more severe for people from BAME groups.

- Increased risk of hospital admission and coercive care under the provisions of the Mental Health Act 1983.
- Greater difficulty accessing mental health assessment and treatment.
- Higher levels of dissatisfaction with mental health services.
- Greater likelihood of considering their diagnosis inappropriate.
- Greater likelihood of having medical problems misattributed to mental health.

**Diabetes:** People from Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups are up to six times more likely to develop diabetes. However, diabetes is also more common in certain ethnic and social groups who are more likely to be overweight or have a genetic predisposition for the condition.

- Mortality may be more prominent in the ethnic population who may have higher risk factors and who may be less able to access appropriate services.
- People from deprived or ethnic communities are less likely to have body mass index or smoking status recorded. Also less likely to have records for blood sugar levels, retinal screening, blood pressure, and neuropathy or flu vaccination.
- Patients in areas of high deprivation and with larger minority ethnic populations receive poorer diabetic care in terms of the control of their blood sugar or blood pressure and the identification of complications such as eye disease.

**Dementia:** People from BAME groups make up just 1.7% of the total population affected by dementia. This is expected to increase by 15% over the next decade. The younger age profile is reflected in the larger proportion of people from BAME groups with early onset dementia, 6.1% compared to 2.2% for the UK.

**Stroke:** The prevalence of stroke among Afro-Caribbean and South Asian men is 40-70% higher than the general population. There is also a higher risk of stroke for people in the Black African and Black Caribbean ethnic groups due to a genetic predisposition towards some of the key risk factors.

**Heart disease and high blood pressure:**

There is less prescribing of cholesterol lowering drugs for heart disease in deprived areas with large BAME population.

**Cancer:** BAME people less likely to access screening services leading to later diagnosis and potentially poorer outcomes, e.g. prostate cancer.

**Sickle Cell Anemia Disorders and Thalassemia** – disproportionately affect BAME communities. There is a need for greater knowledge of those who are making the decision, e.g. Department of Works and pension, GP's, service commissioners and housing.

**Lupus** – an autoimmune disease disproportionately affects BAME Communities.

**Infectious diseases:** TB used to be a major health problem in England before antibiotic treatment now less common. In recent years the numbers of cases have been increasing, among minority communities from places where TB is widespread or in people with weakened immune systems such as people with HIV. Locally in Sutton and Merton the levels of TB are said to be below the minimum level that requires immunisation.

**Teenage Parenting/Pregnancy:** High rates of teenage pregnancy associated with low educational attainment and disengagement from school, economic deprivation, and poor mental health. Young people at increased risk of teenage pregnancy include children of teenage mothers, looked after young people, those misusing alcohol and involved in crime, those with low self-esteem and some black and minority ethnic groups. Early onset of sexual activity, poor contraceptive use and repeat abortions are other significant risk factors.

**Teenage Pregnancy:**

- 41.1 conceptions per 1000 women aged under 18 in 2007
- 8.7 conceptions per 1000 women aged 13-15 in 2007
- 9.18 per 100 women

Source ONS [www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/ssdataset.asp?vlnk=8903](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/ssdataset.asp?vlnk=8903)

Year	Teenage (under-18) pregnancy rate per 1,000
1998-00	45.2
2001-03	42.3
2004-06	38.8
2005-07	39.1

Source Merton observatory at 2010

## Smoking

There is no good information on smoking prevalence, synthetic estimates of adult smoking rates were developed from the Health Survey for England data. These estimates show that a quarter of Sutton and Merton borough residents smoke, the same as the England average. At ward level the proportion of people who smoke ranges from 33% in Cricket Green to 3% in Wimbledon across Merton

[www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/](http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/); Sutton and Public Health Report– health inequalities; [www.suttonandmerton.nhs.uk/ec/files/docuploads/JSNA%20Core%20Data%20Set%202009%20v.2.pdf](http://www.suttonandmerton.nhs.uk/ec/files/docuploads/JSNA%20Core%20Data%20Set%202009%20v.2.pdf); Association public health observatories, Merton Health Profile - [www.apho.org.uk/resource/item.aspx?RID=50751](http://www.apho.org.uk/resource/item.aspx?RID=50751)

### 5.2.2 NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT AND LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS ARE OUTLINED IN THE FULL PLAN

### 5.2.3 LOCAL ISSUES AND NEEDS (FROM INTERVIEWS AND WORKSHOPS)

Social and economic related issues; such as **Health Inequalities**

- Increasing pressure on BAME communities to provide care support for families. [See also Older People Theme at paragraph 5.4]
- The BAME third sector need to be involved in the rapidly changing health agenda and user-led services, etc.
- Need for cultural competency in health services.
- Access to green/open spaces
- Mental health - Improve recovery. Better health services that encourage self-reliance, are welcoming and within comfortable settings. Some groups struggle to reconcile their background with the UK and this causes stress.
- Domestic violence – A gap in service provision, despite the adverse impact on the health of the victim and the whole family.
- Substance misuse is growing at an alarming rate; overwhelming the number of specialist service providers.

- **Accident and Emergency (A&E):** Local evidence has identified that people from ethnic groups, or recent immigrants, use emergency care when they could use their GP primary care.
- Day case and elective (pre-planned) care are lower among patients with lower income, lower educational attainment and from minority ethnic groups. Emergency inpatient use is higher in deprived areas.
- Raising awareness: Access to health promotion:
  - Better health data which is easily accessible.
  - Accessible health services.
  - Smoking cessation needed for ethnic groups, males, young females.
  - Screening services, for example, for travellers and migrants communities. Body Mass index screening; Screening for cancer and prescribing. Effective targeting of groups is needed to increase uptake of screening services. Use of social marketing insight approaches and health equity audit would support and help in understanding why uptake of screening services is lower than the national average and which population groups are not accessing the services currently. In particular this work needs to focus on ethnic minority groups.
- Improve support to carers.

The following are identified in the Sutton and Merton JSNA 2009 and referred to in section 5.2.1 above

- **Mental Health** - more severe for people in BAME groups. Cultural pressures
- **Diabetes:** Greater prevalence for BAME groups linked to higher BMI
- **Dementia:** Expected to increase
- **Stroke:** Higher prevalence for Afro-Caribbean and South Asian men
- **Heart disease and high blood pressure:** Higher prevalence less prescribing for cholesterol lowering drugs
- **Cancer:** Higher incidence of prostate cancer, less screening breast cancer
- **Sickle Cell and Thalasaemia** Inherited condition which affects Black, African, Asian and some Eastern European and Mediterranean groups.
- **Infectious diseases**
- **Teenage Pregnancy:** higher in more deprived wards
- **Smoking:** smoking cessation advice needed in different languages

#### 5.2.4 KEY PRIORITY NEEDS – AS IDENTIFIED BY BAME ORGANISATIONS

- (i) BAME Voluntary sector to work in partnership to provide coordinated service planning and delivery.
- (ii) Provision of information that are widely disseminated, for example, through community groups and workshops.
- (iii) Develop cultural competence; ensuring that services reflect the demographics of the borough and respond with specialist local healthcare.
- (iv) Effectively challenge health inequalities and the provision of services; to ensure they are inclusive and policies are representative of the BAME sector (using tools such as Equality Impact assessments).
- (v) Improve health prevention measures. Screening/Health Checks need to be more available and accessible.

**See full plan for a list of key actions to address these priority needs; linked where relevant to other local strategies to avoid duplication of effort and identify gaps in service provision.**

## 5.3 HOUSING AND REGENERATION

This section focuses on the issues that impact on BAME communities in respect of local housing and regeneration.

*We need to engage with BAME groups; involve them in developing policies - a duty to involve*

West: Wimbledon



East: Figges Marsh, Mitcham

### 5.3.1 PROFILE (NATIONAL AND LOCAL INDICATORS AND STATISTICS)

- **Resident Survey**
- **Impact of having benefit changes is likely to be felt in outer London boroughs, particularly places such as Mitcham and Morden.**
- **Related National indicators:**
  - NI 155 Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)
  - NI 158 % non decent council homes
- **Housing profile from housing associations, and LB Merton**
  - Housing Register Applicants - 42% of housing register applications in Merton are from BAME households 2003-2008. [www.merton.gov.uk/homelessness\\_strategy\\_for\\_merton.pdf](http://www.merton.gov.uk/homelessness_strategy_for_merton.pdf)
  - Breakdown of Homeless by ethnicity in Merton 2007/2008 - African / Caribbean 26%, Indian/ Pakistani/ Bangladeshi 8%, other including Chinese 15% [www.merton.gov.uk/homelessness\\_strategy\\_for\\_merton.pdf](http://www.merton.gov.uk/homelessness_strategy_for_merton.pdf)
  - Number of families in bed and breakfast accommodation
  - Number of adults in bed and breakfast accommodation
  - Number of households in temporary accommodation

- % change in average number of families in temporary accommodation
- Average length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation
- Average length of stay in hostel accommodation
- Number of homelessness cases prevented

Source: Merton observatory (at 2010)

Deprivation: Most Deprived Super output areas in Merton are in within the following wards Figges Marsh, Cricket Green, Pollards Hill, St Heliers and Abbey. These fall into the most deprived 25% nationally. Source: Index of Multiple Deprivation, IMD, 2007

### 5.3.2 NATIONAL AND LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT AND LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS ARE OUTLINED IN THE FULL PLAN

### 5.3.3 LOCAL ISSUES (FROM INTERVIEWS AND WORKSHOPS)

#### **Environmental & Regeneration**

- Overall, people from ethnic minorities who live in Merton are more likely to need housing and suffer from social exclusion (not being able to take part in society). They also suffer from racial discrimination and racial harassment, and have difficulties accessing information and services because of language and cultural barriers. [An analysis of Census 2001 data and housing records].

- Review of local migration policy is needed. Migrants housing/lettings need to change as householders get more established within communities; many came as single occupants but thereafter may start families; these families are found living in accommodations which are no longer suitable.
- Regeneration: housing and displacement policies: placing social housing in areas of greatest population density (such as the east of the borough); east vs west divide. Supply of housing is greater where there is higher concentration of ethnic minorities.
- Concerns that location of housing is mainly in areas of tension.
- Ethnic minorities form a large proportion on Housing Register and of homeless applicants, as well as getting general housing advice from Housing Advice Service.
- Perception that council is not housing ethnic minorities. However, people are not housed or prioritised by ethnicity so by law of averages more should be housed.
- Ethnic-minority households, in particular Black African households, are more likely to be living in unsuitable housing than white households (Merton Housing Needs Survey 1999 and Housing Service records).

- Overcrowding in some BAME communities due to large families. Asian residents are more likely to experience overcrowding (data from Census 2001) and other housing problems such as poor heating and repairs and maintenance (Housing Needs Survey 1999). Asian and other households are more likely to need larger homes, which are in short supply.
- Limited housing stock and choice based letting system disadvantages BAME communities who do not know about the system.
- Promotion of the new 'green' initiative may improve insulation but overlook BAME communities prior needs.

#### Access

- Lack of homes – decent, affordable and safe homes needed.
- Asylum seekers, gypsies and travellers not having access to social housing.
- New arrivals/ newer communities, e.g. asylum seekers, gurbans, EU accession workers.
- Housing of homeless; perceived as invisible; EU accession workers becoming homeless, rough sleepers organised. Sofa Surfing - MASH Merton Association Single Homeless.
- Housing ex offenders. Developing a strong peer volunteer system; need to have things in place to reduce re-offending.
- Choice based lettings – online system of application problematic for older people; need to house people where they want to live (east vs west of the borough).

- Disability and housing – more housing for people with special health needs such as sickle cell and thalassaemia.

#### Social

- Unemployment and social exclusion
- Domestic violence e.g. honour killing
- Community cohesion, anti racist extremism
- Tensions between communities

#### Issues outlined in the Draft Ethnic Minority Housing Strategy 2010

- Domestic violence
- Housing and migration
- Worklessness, social exclusion
- Community Cohesion, anti extremism

#### 5.3.4 KEY PRIORITY NEEDS – AS IDENTIFIED BY BAME ORGANISATIONS

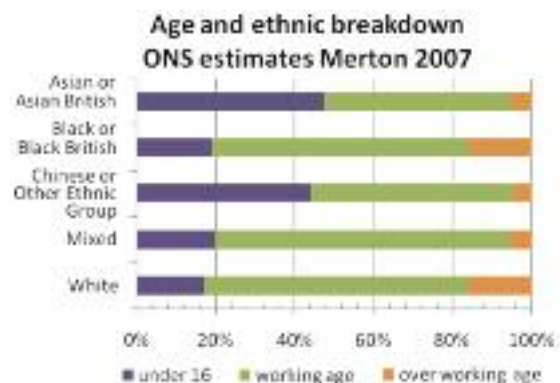
- (i) Improve access to housing
- (ii) Improve awareness of Domestic Violence and disability housing options
- (iii) Improve access to employment and reduce social exclusion
- (iv) Improve information systems
- (v) Address issues of migration and community cohesion

**See full plan for a list of key actions to address these priority needs; linked where relevant to other local strategies to avoid duplication of effort and identify gaps in service provision.**

## 5.4 OLDER PEOPLE

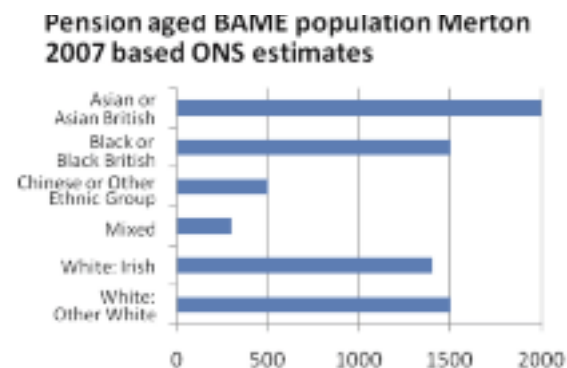
### 5.4.1 PROFILE (NATIONAL AND LOCAL INDICATORS AND STATISTICS)

- Census 14.88% of Merton's population were pension aged in the 2001 Census
- Latest estimate 2007 ONS population estimate



Asian groups have the highest BAME pension age population, followed by Black / Black British.

A high proportion of White Irish residents, about 30%, are at pension age.



### National indicators (NI) or local Indicators

- NI 129 End of life access to palliative care enabling people to choose to die at home
- NI 132 Timeliness of social care Assessment
- NI 139 People over 65 who say that they receive the information, assistance and support needed to exercise choice and control to live independently.

- *The percentage of older BAME people who feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds can get on well together.*
- *The extent to which older people receive the support they need to live independently at home.*
- Trends issues – adult social care, social care for older people

### 5.4.2 NATIONAL AND LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT AND LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS ARE OUTLINED IN THE FULL PLAN

### 5.4.3 LOCAL ISSUES (FROM INTERVIEWS AND WORKSHOPS)

#### Health/Social Care

- Growing older BAME population - adult care; 1st and 2nd generation migrants.
- Independence vs isolation of elders – generation gap as second generation become more integrated and there are more 'mainstream' attitude to social care.
- Expectation that BAME communities will look after their own leaves elderly carers looking after partners; independence and integration of younger generations leaves elders with less support.
- Pressure on extended families that care for older people at home.
- Difference in culture between youth and elders. Older generations not in touch with the issues which affect young people. Expectation of younger generations is higher. The elder generations did not expect equality, the younger do.
- Health problems specifically dementia in BAME elderly communities where no specific service caters for them. The perceived stigma associated with Dementia needs to be addressed; need to effectively raise awareness and to encourage people to seek support.

### Access / planning

- Expectation that some BAME groups “look after their own” means less planning for services.
- Expectation that they look after their own affects employability and economic participation of community, often women.
- Access to meaningful engagement- language barrier, confidence, awareness of issues.
- Engagement needs to be transparent and easy to participate.
- Sensitivity to the need for a balance between culturally appropriate activities and mainstream activities.
- Services need to be culturally competent, so that BAME groups do not feel excluded.
- Many of the BAME elderly do not feel comfortable accessing information through mainstream channels and would prefer receiving such information through their various organisations and clubs within the community.

### Social and Economic

- Means tested care.
- Independence and integration of younger generations leaves older with less support.
- Informal employment in earlier years leaves older people with little pension provision.
- Feeling safe in the neighbourhood.
- Feeling valued by society, wealth of experience not used.

### 5.4.4 KEY PRIORITY NEEDS - AS IDENTIFIED BY BAME ORGANISATIONS

- (i) Improve health/social Care
- (ii) Provision of culturally appropriate intergenerational services
- (iii) Greater opportunities for socialising among peers
- (iv) Recognition of older people 's support towards the family structure

**See full plan for a list of key actions to address these priority needs; linked where relevant to other local strategies to avoid duplication of effort and identify gaps in service provision.**

***There is a struggle with commissioning services; if you support a group you can then separate them from the mainstream***

***Some communities are divided, and if you fund one you might alienate the other....***

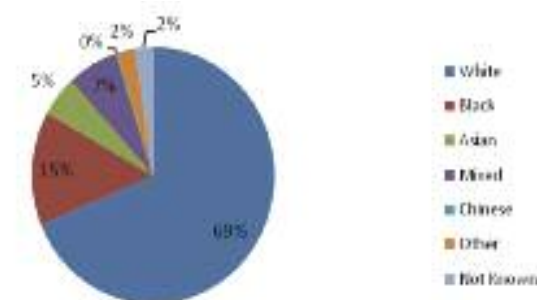
## 5.5 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

This section looks at the needs of children and young people. It includes issues of child poverty, opportunities for young people, parenting and family support.

### 5.5.1 PROFILE (NATIONAL AND LOCAL INDICATORS AND STATISTICS)

- NI 116 Proportion of children living in poverty
- Deprivation - Nearly a quarter of children and young people in Merton live in areas that are within the 30% most deprived in the country and 21% of Merton's children live in overcrowded housing (JAR pg.3 - 2007)

### Ethnicity of NEET young people Merton 2008

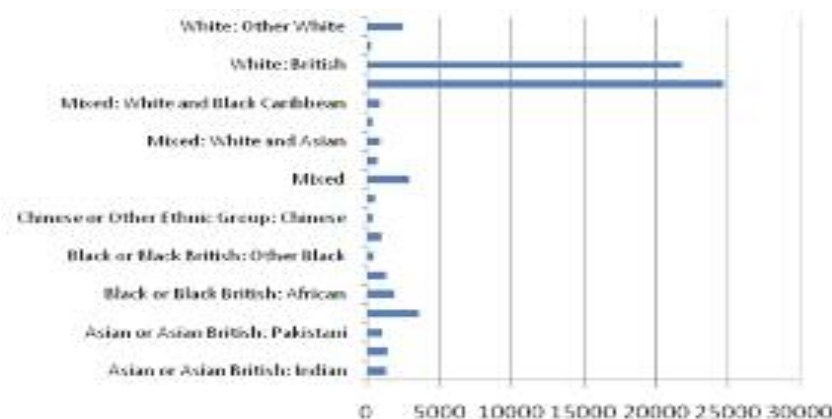


Source: CYPP Needs Analysis DRAFT 2009/10 p118 [www.merton.gov.uk](http://www.merton.gov.uk)

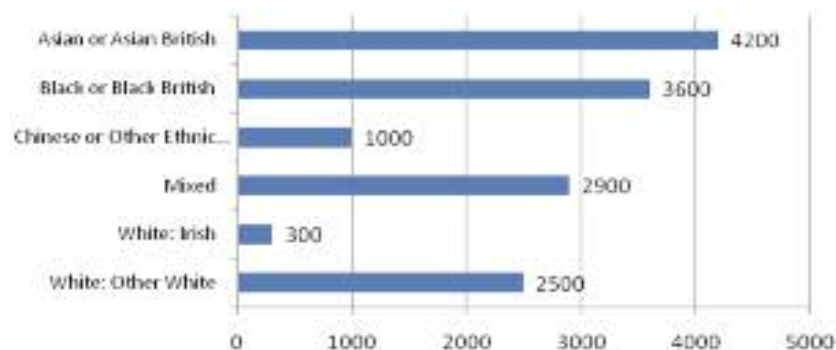
Approximately 50% of all of the children in Lavender, Phipps Bridge (now Cricket Green) and Pollards Hill wards live in workless households, a statistic which places these three wards among the worst 10 wards in South London for child poverty. Attempts to break the cycle of deprivation through social and educational interventions at the Early Years stage are in the developmental phase. [Merton's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy: Creating Sustainable Communities in East Merton 2005–2010 pg10.]

*We need to harness the energy and idealism of young people, provide them with opportunities to express themselves in positive outlets*

### % BAME groups aged under 16



### Source: Merton BAME groups aged under 16 2007 ONS estimate



## Child poverty data

Wards	All children	Children in Workless Families		Children in families on Working Tax Credit		Total Children in low-income families	
	Number	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Merton	40,075	8,150	20%	7,140	18%	15,290	38%
Lavender Fields	2,345	805	34%	560	24%	1,365	58%
Cricket Green	2,880	1,010	35%	570	20%	1,580	55%
Figge's Marsh	2,690	805	30%	620	23%	1,425	53%
Ravensbury	2,345	775	33%	435	19%	1,210	52%
Pollards Hill	2,835	795	28%	585	21%	1,380	49%
St Hellier	2,370	660	28%	470	20%	1,130	48%
Colliers Wood	1,605	425	26%	310	19%	735	46%
Longthornton	2,390	610	26%	445	19%	1,055	44%
Graveney	1,970	385	20%	420	21%	805	41%
Abbey	1,565	345	22%	230	15%	575	37%
Trinity	1,535	270	18%	155	10%	425	28%
West Barnes	2,030	255	13%	240	12%	495	24%
Lower Morden	1,935	215	11%	250	13%	465	24%
Cannon Hill	1,855	170	9%	225	12%	395	21%
Raynes Park	1,715	200	12%	155	9%	355	21%
Merton Park	1,780	180	10%	140	8%	320	18%
Wimbledon Park	2,240	200	9%	175	8%	375	17%
Dundonald	1,350	110	8%	95	7%	205	15%
Hillside	1,075	60	6%	45	4%	105	10%
Village	1,565	40	3%	20	1%	60	4%

Local Authority and Standard Table (ST) Wards - Children in Workless Families. Child Poverty statistic taken from End Child Poverty website ([www.endchildpoverty.org.uk](http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk)): The main data covers August 2006. However, ward breakdowns are for August 2005.

## Ethnic composition of offenders on Youth Justice Disposals

(CYPP Needs Analysis 2009/10 pg107-08) – Reported that black young people are over-represented in the youth justice system, where rates are more than double their proportion in the population; which is above local and national averages. From Sept 2008 – Aug 2009 a total of 832 children and young people were accused of crimes. This represents 26% of all accusations of crime in the borough. (CYPP Needs Analysis presentation by M. Sutherland). BAME young people as victims of crime are more likely than white counterparts.

5.5.2 NATIONAL AND LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT AND LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS ARE OUTLINED IN THE FULL PLAN

This table shows that the wards with the highest levels of child poverty are the same ones that have been shown to be the most ethnically mixed.

### 5.5.3 LOCAL ISSUES (FROM INTERVIEWS AND WORKSHOPS)

#### **Environment and young people**

- Higher proportion of BAME children in low income households (child poverty)
- Young people from ethnic minorities face double discrimination
- Breakdown of family values and family system in UK communities affects BAME youth
- Greater parenting skills are required; training needs to be provided to parents to address issues such as underage pregnancies and culture gaps
- Gang culture and perception of gangs
- Drugs and alcohol misuse
- Obesity in some cultural groups
- More health promotion needed, e.g. sexual health
- Stigma of being from the wrong side of the borough (the east)
- Stop and search; awareness training and proper procedures needed

#### **Isolation – generation gap**

- Bridging the gap between generations and community
- Having a voice; being listened to by adults – being meaningfully consulted and able to contribute and participate within the community
- Value young people's culture but allow them to be bi-cultural across generation and ethnic groups
- Opportunities for young people to engage with adults so they can get on in the workplace and display their worth

#### **Access to information and services for young people**

- Need to learn the tricks which allow access to society
- Homelessness, for example, young people, asylum seekers
- Working in partnership to manage the asylum process
- Not enough accessible recreation/leisure facilities, for example, refugees and asylum seekers are not accessing mainstream youth clubs - [SLRA consultation with young refugees and asylum seekers in early 2010]. Cultural barriers inhibit access e.g. manifested in parents not allowing access for young Muslim girls
- Provision of appropriate youth activities – gender separation for some groups, e.g. specialist activities for young girls; female only swimming after school hours
- Supplementary training to make up for the lack of attainment in schools
- Youth Parliament to be well representative of the community
- Mentoring and nurturing young people: a sense of instilling self-esteem, self-worth, confidence and ambition
- Language support for BAME mothers, ESOL language training. There needs to be more mother and child support. Culture appropriate projects aim to bring language support into homes
- Parenting: skills and counselling support arrangements and information, advice and guidance needed
- Young parenting: teenage pregnancy

- Provision of ethnicity data needs to be improved, e.g. Child protection, safeguarding and family support: increased from 18% in 2006/07 to 33% in 2008/09. Ethnicity “not known” (CYPP Needs Analysis 2009/10 pg56)
- Governance training needed for groups

#### **Social and economic**

- Young people need to fulfil ambition, but also to have realistic ambitions
- Respect and trust is needed from others in the community e.g. adults
- Appropriate engagement required – quick turnover from discussion to action
- Allow participation in mainstream society rather than ghettos; meaningful engagement, e.g. with service providers
- Need to challenge demonising stereotypes of young people as, clueless, in gangs and dangerous
- Removing language barriers
- Lack of job opportunities for young people
- Embracing cultural life; music enables self-expression
- Managing and exploring identities, making friends
- Harnessing energy of young people
- Dealing with other peoples issues (emotional baggage)
- Social exclusion of young people, BAME young people, young people in care

5.5.4 KEY PRIORITY NEEDS - AS IDENTIFIED BY BAME ORGANISATIONS

- (i) Bridge the gap between generations and communities and reduce the intergenerational cycle of poverty
- (ii) Manage the asylum process
- (iii) Widen and promote Youth Parliament representation; involvement in democratic process
- (iv) Remove barriers to development
- (v) Improve central networking

**See full plan for a list of key actions to address these priority needs; linked where relevant to other local strategies to avoid duplication of effort and identify gaps in service provision.**



*Escape youth group*

## 5.6 UNEMPLOYMENT, SKILLS AND ENTERPRISE

**This section focuses on the issues that impact adversely and disproportionately on BAME communities in respect of barriers to employment and skills development.**



### 5.6.1 PROFILE (NATIONAL AND LOCAL INDICATORS AND STATISTICS)

#### A Profile of Merton

*“... a high number of residents commuting in and out of London to work. It is, on the whole, well connected, with two London Underground lines (District and Northern), Tramlink, Overground trains and numerous main roads. A defining characteristic of the borough is the difference between the poorer, more deprived east (Mitcham), and the wealthier, more prosperous west (Wimbledon)”.* (Source: The Merton case background and context - 2009)

#### ONS Annual Population Survey 2009:

- Merton working age employment rate - ethnic minority 69.6
- Merton 16+ unemployment rate - ethnic minority 9.3
- Merton % of ethnic minority of working age who are economically inactive 24.5%

Source NOMIS ONS annual population survey 2009

Average Weekly Earnings 2007 Merton £431, compared to £618 across London – Source London Development Agency 2007 Borough Economic Profiles

The 2009 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings placed jobs in Merton as providing the lowest average weekly pay in London. The median average of £370 compared with £551 across London.

[www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme\\_labour/ASHE-2009/2009\\_work\\_la.pdf](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_labour/ASHE-2009/2009_work_la.pdf)

London's Poverty Profile indicates that 20% of jobs in Merton paid less than £7.50 an hour.

[www.londonspovertyprofile.org.uk/indicators/topics/low-pay-and-in-work-benefits/low-paid-jobs/](http://www.londonspovertyprofile.org.uk/indicators/topics/low-pay-and-in-work-benefits/low-paid-jobs/)

Labour Force Survey, ONS 2005–2007 indicates that across London about half of Bangladeshi employees are paid less than £7.50 per hour, compared with about 10% of White British employees.

#### Local area agreement targets

- *The percentage of unemployed people claiming benefit who have been out of work for more than a year*
- *Number of businesses supported through local initiatives and still trading after 12 months. Target 85% in West and 75% in East (LAA p.49)*

#### Possible targets:

*Local people empowered to have a greater role in the delivery of services – volunteering*

*Number of people assisted into work who are on or at risk of going onto incapacity benefit*

Key results from both Merton Local Labour Force and Labour Market Survey (February 2005 documents were:

### **Unemployment – key barriers**

- Childcare costs
- Travel time and travel costs
- Many respondents need intensive tailored support, to gain employment, not one size fits all approach
- Residents not aware of affordable training opportunities
- Black African and Caribbean men disproportionately affected
- BAME Communities not connected to informal network of opportunities
- Declining local job opportunities, poorly paid local jobs

Initiatives proposed, included supporting the retention of employment land in order to maintain a pool of local jobs, redressing travel time issues. Encouraging working from home and flexi work in order to overcome childcare and travel time barriers. The establishment of a locally based one stop tailored employment support service on a one-to-one basis.

### **Skills**

- Many respondents lacked soft skills
- Lack of coordination – partners need to work together, be unselfish and share clients.

### **Employers – key issues**

- Employers do not see the benefit of taking on staff with additional support needs
- Employers are not aware of the help that is available to take on and train staff
- Skills mismatch

Initiatives proposed at 2004/5: included training for lone parents; employability and transferable skills development; confidence building training – soft skills; protocols to guide inter-agency referrals. Influencing learning prospectus by focusing on skills gap areas. An Action based communications strategy – needed to persuade business of the benefits through newsletter communicating the business case for diversity and for training; outreach events; use of learning broker model; one to one's with employers and use of existing intermediaries, e.g. collaborative working and follow up on employers.

### 5.6.2 NATIONAL AND LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT AND LOCAL STAKE-HOLDERS ARE OUTLINED IN THE FULL PLAN

### 5.6.3 LOCAL ISSUES (FROM INTERVIEWS AND WORKSHOPS)

#### **Unemployment and skills development**

- Lack of work opportunities for both highly and lower skilled BAME people.
- Provision and protection of local jobs.
- Employment: need BAME representation in senior roles locally. Large employers must lead by example and employ proportion of full range of BAME groups. Loss of employment opportunities; Domino effect of companies closing down that rely on each other going out of business.
- Local poorly paid jobs.
- The role of the BAME third sector in employing many marginalised and disadvantaged communities and also reaching out to them locally (how many are employed locally and who is providing what type of service.
- Poor transport hinders mobility; for example, location and excessive costs of travel.
- Mentoring opportunities sparse.
- Poor intake of internships – apprenticeships.
- Low representation of BAME staff in senior roles – there is evidence that not only are BAME groups under represented in senior roles but that it is harder for them to be appointed for senior roles. Statistics provided by one large local employer indicate that some BAME groups are five times less likely to be appointed than their white peers, this is particularly the case for some Asian groups in the statutory sector.

- Learning opportunities to be given to those who do not achieve standard national qualifications such as GCSE's; vocational training given to get on a career pathway.
- English for Speakers of other Language (ESOL): Many people are trapped by the financial support application process and funding threshold for ESOL language training. Limited support for people for whom English is a second language.
- Some key policy related documents are not being consulted on properly and widely with BAME VCOs who feels they are used as a tick box exercise.
- Restriction on funding (such as benefits) for some BAME groups, e.g. refugees and asylum seekers. Support given to refugees – often without economic support and not allowed to work. This is hard for families and especially where families want to lead by example.
- Migrants and refugees need help to convert qualifications – they can also be a resource for helping local young people build up their skills.
- Increased numbers of BAME seeking volunteering opportunities requires more infrastructure support.
- VCOs, and by implication volunteers and small businesses that work with them must not be exploited as a cheap way to provide services.

### **Business**

- Support needed for the establishment and development of BAME businesses. Small businesses (e.g. corner shops) need help to compete with multi-national companies.
- Local Market Research required assessing need and making sure BAME sector can respond effectively with changing needs.
- Fair contracts needed for small and medium local enterprises.
- Social Enterprise.
- Receives good support for start up initially but no long term support – BAME organisations usually much smaller – not many large BAME led organisations.
- Local commissioning to be accessible by BAME organisations – standard contracts which are designed for big national and multinationals should not be unnecessarily applied for procuring services from small local VCOs and businesses.
- BAME sector reliant on a few sources of funding. Need to consider what else the sector can do – develop full spectrum of skills e.g. technology, high tech, cuisine, culture and arts. Build up of skills improve competitiveness.
- Impact of downturn on funders adversely affects the survival of BAME organisations, more likely to look at VCOs as a cut price way of delivering services.

### 5.6.4 KEY PRIORITY NEEDS AS IDENTIFIED BY BAME ORGANISATIONS

- (i) Improve support to BAME organisations.
- (ii) Improve training and development
- (iii) Access to local commissioning of services
- (iv) Increase representation of BAME groups/communities at all levels of employment

**See full plan for a list of key actions to address these priority needs; linked where relevant to other local strategies to avoid duplication of effort and identify gaps in service provision.**

## 5.7 SAFER, STRONGER AND SUSTAINABLE

**This theme explores issues of community safety, building a stronger and sustainable BAME sector.**

*Merton Unity Network*



### 5.7.1 PROFILE (NATIONAL AND LOCAL INDICATORS AND STATISTICS)

- Annual Residents Survey 2009
- Hate crime statistics Safer Merton
- National Indicators and Community Cohesion (CC) Indicators
  - The percentage of people who feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds can get on well together (NI 1, CC 1) - Preventing Extremism and Building Community Cohesion and Integration.
  - The percentage of adults surveyed who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area (NI 2, CC 4) - Empower local Merton Council people to have a greater choice and influence over local decision making and a greater role in society.
  - The percentage of people who feel that local ethnic differences are respected (CC 5).
  - Number of racial incidents recorded by police authorities per 100,000 (CC 6).
  - The percentage of people from different backgrounds who mix with other people from different backgrounds in everyday situations (CC10).
  - Participation in regular volunteering (NI 6).
  - Perceptions of anti-social behaviour (NI17).
  - Perceptions of drug use or drug dealing as a problem (NI42).
  - Overall / general satisfaction with local area (NI5).

### 5.7.2 NATIONAL AND LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT AND LOCAL STAKE-HOLDERS ARE OUTLINED IN THE FULL PLAN

### 5.7.3 LOCAL ISSUES (FROM INTERVIEWS AND WORKSHOPS)

#### **SAFER - COMMUNITIES**

- Reduction in gang culture and activities.
- Domestic violence; a higher profile in some communities, e.g. honour killing.
- How safe is Merton re hate crime?
- Tackling racially motivated and hate crime and racial harassment.
- The “Prevent Extremism Agenda” and resurgence of racism – some community tensions in some areas, e.g. rising profile of religion and Islamophobia.
- Specialist victim support for BAME communities needed. Who are involved – are commissioned services appropriate for those perpetrators who are released – how proportionate are the figures for those involved in crime.
- Gap left by Merton Race Equality Partnership needs to be assessed and addressed.

## STRONGER - COMMUNITIES

- Improve community engagement - statutory sector lack capacity and local contacts and need to engage with BAME groups and involve them in developing policies; their duty to involve. Some scepticism about statutory sector and the possibility of genuine engagement.
- Recognition needed of the positive work that the BAME voluntary and community sector do to promote cohesion.
- Need to support and increase volunteering among BAME communities.
- Need to promote the benefits of volunteering for individuals and communities.
- VCOs must not pander to stereotypes; communities are complex and have multi voluntary sector needs to reflect the diversity within the communities.
- Importance of community cohesion, integration – and maintaining an identity. There is a connection between religion and cultural identity.
- Community tension is on the whole positive. Deprived communities (of white and BAME groups) often have the same issues BUT white working class do not experience racism and hate crime. Important to fight and undermine racism and there is a need for BAME communities to come together with their deprived non BAME neighbours; to build a stronger community; to diffuse the potential for racist sentiment and appeals to funders issue.
- Concern that some BAME communities do not feel they are getting on together. There is a need to defuse tensions between some BAME communities; for example through the presence of new arrivals.
- Threat of segregation - communities looking inward; some communities are very focused on issues from country of origin. Some provide mono-cultural services and run the risk of becoming segregated and inward looking. This leaves them vulnerable to isolation.
- Perceived gang culture – can this energy be harnessed for positive causes and does gang membership fulfil a need for support within a group?
- Saturday schools – a community based resource for bridging the skills gap.
- Isolation within communities – generation gap.
- Need to broaden out from traditionally well connected communities – to reach new communities.
- Venues needed for local groups – for cultural activities, around the borough not always east of the borough, e.g. Mitcham.
- ESOL is essential for cohesion.
- Migrants seen as scapegoats for the economic downturn – recession
- Competition, “survival of the fittest?” Clear identity and remit needed for voluntary and community organisations (VCOs).
- Encourage participation in 2011 census collection.

***It is important to fight, and not undermine, racism;***

## SUSTAINABLE (ORGANISATIONS AND COMMUNITIES)

- Neighbourhood Renewal, Regeneration and Sustainable Communities: Town centres and Neighbourhood Renewal Area Plans.
- Dependence on “charismatic leaders” – succession planning needed within organisations.
- Imposed responsibility and agenda hinders progress within some communities.
- Changing nature of funding for BAME VCOs – from grants to commissioning.
- Funding for VCOs is major concern; funding crisis will impact on BAME communities. Decisions/challenges: voluntary sector v social enterprise for the delivery of services.
- Increased need and reduced funding for BAME VCOs.
- BAME VCOs responding to the sceptical climate and adapt to move from grants to commissioning.
- Building capacity with depleting resource.
- Need for Disability (DDA) compliant premises.
- Adverse impact of economic downturn (recession) on BAME third sector.
- Concern that multicultural societies have less trust and social capital.

## 5.7.4 KEY PRIORITY NEEDS - AS IDENTIFIED BY BAME ORGANISATIONS

- (i) Improve community engagement.
- (ii) Improve effectiveness and access:
  - Influencing change
  - Mapping of activities
  - Marketing (and promoting) activities
  - Building capacity
- (iii) Reduce fear of crime
- (iv) Address the concerns that some BAME communities do not feel that people are getting on together
- (v) Support local BAME VCOs so they can continue day to day social cohesion work
- (vi) Work to assess and fill the gap in specialist service provision for BAME communities.



## 5.8 CROSSCUTTING ISSUES AND NEEDS

**There are a number of cross cutting issues which are relevant to the various sub-themes, below, but are also highlighted throughout the Plan.**

- Education
- Partnership capacity: engagement and sustainability
- Socio-economic development
- Gender
- Volunteering

*Ethnic Minority Centre*



### 5.8.1 PARTNERSHIP CAPACITY: ENGAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

#### Education

- The type of education people receive has an impact on how they engage with services or not people actually engage, for a variety of reasons, for example, some groups are more articulate, confident and have the know-how to engage with services and local representatives in a way that allows them to be heard.

#### Partnership capacity - engagement

- There is a crucial role for the voluntary sector.
- Some statutory agencies struggle to engage with BAME communities; there is a role for BAME VCOs to improve two way communication between these agencies and local communities.
- Genuine engagement and participation are required. There has been some concern that consultation (with BAME VCOs and communities) is superficial and disingenuous. In order for it to be genuine, there must be key goals, focussed targets and actions that are owned and reported on annually.
- Community groups need transparency in consultation, where local people are given sufficient information, including the full range of pressures on decision makers so they understand what is available and can inform decision.

- Statutory sector needs to be trained to interpret and read between the lines so that they can understand what communities are asking for. Often community engagement does not ask the most pertinent or searching questions and this leads to glib and unsubstantial responses which are then taken at face value.
- Concern that some agencies will subcontract to underfunded partners that are squeezed and struggle to deliver services.
- Agencies need to engage with communities, on their terms, using language that can be understood and appropriate methods, for example, new technology such as texting and 'face-book'.

#### Partnership capacity - sustainability

- The feeling that BAME groups are exploited in superficial 'tick box' exercises by some agencies.
- Need for statutory agencies to share data with BAME groups for the benefit of developing local communities.
- Need for premises and access to venues.
- Cultural type organisations have a role to play in developing cohesion.
- BAME VCOs face similar challenges to small non BAME groups. They need funding and other resource, often they access support from different infrastructure organisation. BAME VCOs need support for capacity building.

- A most common concern of BAME VCOs is how the third sector would survive financial pressures following the economic crisis. There is also concern about access to public funding and the role of the voluntary sector for the future.
- Too many VCOs chasing limited sources of funding. This funding crisis then leads to conflict between VCOs.
- BAME VCOs provide services and do a lot of community work but many have lost funding and some are folding. Funding crisis is also experienced, where funders need evidence of the work VCOs do; services provided and who they serve. They also need a clear link to business plan, community plan and other Merton Partnership documents. BAME VCOs will need to diversify; look at the skills that the community have which can be charged for; to raise revenue in the light of funding cuts. There is the need, to strike a balance between charging a nominal fee and losing clients because of costs.
- Need a DDA compliant venue; dangerous for people to visit services if not DDA compliant.
- VCOs experiencing cut in funding is considering changing name and moving away from Merton. Also some groups need to extend their reach if they are to survive.

#### 5.8.2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- The demand and relative value of land for residential development has led to the loss of considerable quantities of employment land and displacement of many jobs from the borough.
- The number of jobs has fallen by about 1,000 while the population of working age has grown by more than 10,000. Resident workforce has increasingly commuted to work in central London.
- Low wage economy: average earnings for all jobs in Merton are low relative to those among its neighbouring boroughs and in the rest of Outer London.
- Town centres are considered crucial to economic prosperity: they are where people make and spend money and are key magnets for investment.
- Transport is a key issue affecting viability of town centres - There needs to be good transport across the borough but also to key areas out of the borough, e.g. to central London, Croydon, Tooting, Brixton, Kingston and New Malden.

#### 5.8.3 GENDER – INEQUALITY

Many of the issues raised in this Plan affect the genders differently so targeted action is required where appropriate.

**Women** - Apart from obvious medical areas, such as childbearing and reproductive health, there are also social issues which affect female members of communities. Honour violence, genital mutilation, oppression, people smuggling, subservience, some not allowed to integrate, or allowed to develop English. Women targeted for choosing to wear religious clothing, some women may feel pressured to conform.

In addition, female members of BAME communities are often more likely to work for public sector employers who have historically promoted equalities and valued diversity. The reduction in funding for the public sector will impact on female BAME residents. Transport is a concern for women who do not feel safe using public transport in the evenings.

**Men** - the profile of concerns is also relevant, prostate cancer, mental illness, suicides, cardio vascular disease affects BAME males more. Young BAME males also more likely to be affected by stop and search, excluded from schools and be victims of street violence.

BAME young men do less well at school and in many cases are not as well represented as females in the large local employers workforce.

#### 5.8.4 VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering brings many benefits to society and individuals. These benefits are not limited to the unique services that are provided which often meet needs that other agencies do not provide.

Volunteering also benefits individuals by helping to improve their skills and providing positions of responsibility and work experience which helps them to be more competitive and confident in the jobs market.

In addition formal volunteering provides individuals with opportunities to mix in new circles, with people from different social backgrounds and different generations. Bringing different types of people together to achieve a common cause helps communities become more integrated and to build links and support networks within and across communities.

Importantly for BAME communities', volunteering is led by the communities themselves and their sense of the most pressing needs faced by local people. In this way it is rooted in local issues rather than 'one size fits all' national initiatives and can be for a voluntary organisation an important route for engaging with local communities.

Although BAME communities are distinct and unique BAME voluntary organisations often face similar issues and challenges. These include shared experiences of discrimination, greater specific needs, adapting to a majority culture smaller organisations often set up around the energy, charisma and enthusiasm of individuals, reduced resource and capacity to provide labour intensive support to local communities. For this reason BAME voluntary sector requires targeted specialist support which can help them meet these specific needs.

***In areas where inequalities are felt by all communities; and where some groups don't attend mainstream services, the BAME third sector and 'mainstream' third sector should work together on high profile joint initiatives that tackle local issues; for the benefit of all***



## 6 Resources: Management and Monitoring Arrangements

**There are a number of strategic actions that have been outlined within this Plan, for which Merton Unity Network and the BME Forum will need to take forward, in partnership, and in alignment with a number of key agencies' action plans, for example, LB Merton –Community Plan 2009-2019, Corporate Equality Scheme (2010-2013) and NHS Sutton and Merton Equality Scheme (2010-13).**

These actions will need to be resourced to ensure the development and implementation of this Strategic Plan and ultimately the empowerment of BAME organisations and their communities to work in partnership to realise their goals. A range of support, financial and otherwise, will be required from key agencies to facilitate successful implementation of this Strategic Plan.

The action plan will be developed with clear delegations and review procedures to 'check' progress and evaluate the impact on BAME organisations. Work will be implemented in partnership with members of Merton Partnership and other local, sub-regional and regional agencies, for example, Race on the Agenda, Minority Ethnic Network.



*JCC Committee members,  
19 October 2010*

# Appendix 1

## Organisations Participating

A large number of local organisations and bodies participated in the development of the plan.



- 3rd Phase Education
- Accede
- Active Support and Care
- African Caribbean Elders (ACEs) Club
- African Educational Cultural Health Organisation
- Alapon
- Anjuman Women's Group
- Asian Elders
- Association for the Polish Family
- Aymadiyya Muslim Association (AMA)
- Bangladeshi Association of Merton
- Bengali Association of Merton
- Brittani Hindu (Shiva) Temple
- Black Training and Enterprise Group (BTEG)
- Clarity
- Cofade
- Escape Youth Group
- Ethnic Minority Centre (EMC)
- Euro Bangla Federation
- Fanon Resource Centre
- Merton/Southside Partnership
- Grenfell Housing Association
- Job Centre Plus
- Kiara Training College
- Lajolla Health Initiatives
- Local BAME residents
- London Borough of Merton - Adult Services
- London Borough of Merton - Children School and Families (inc Youth Service)
- London Borough of Merton - Community Engagement
- London Borough of Merton - Councillors
- London Borough of Merton - Housing
- London Borough of Merton - Equality & Diversity
- London Borough of Merton – Environment and Regeneration
- London Borough of Merton/Safer Merton
- London South West Chinese Association
- Make It Happen
- Merton and Sutton Mediation Service
- Merton Chamber of Commerce
- Merton Community Transport
- Merton Home Tutoring Service
- Merton Oasis
- Merton Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia Group (MSCTG)
- Merton Unity Network
- Merton Voluntary Service Council
- Metropolitan Police - Merton
- Minority Ethnic Network (MINeT)
- Mitcham and Morden MP
- Mitcham Filipino British Association

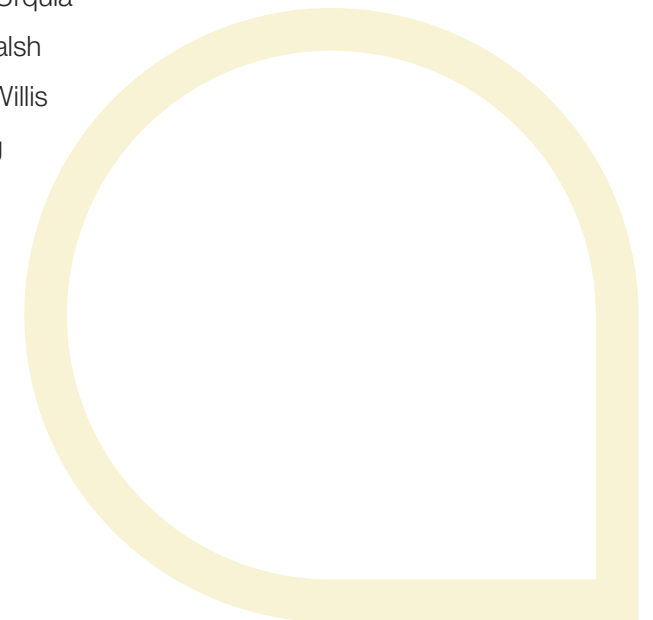
Mitcham Youth Club  
Pakistan Welfare Association  
Polka Theatre  
Positive Network  
Race on the Agenda (Rota)  
Rhema Church Ministries  
St Georges Hospital, NHS  
South London African Women's Association  
South London BME Partnership  
South London Refugee Association  
South London Tamil Welfare Group  
South Mitcham Community Association  
South Thames College  
Sutton & Merton PCT  
Tamil Welfare Association  
Taylor Road Day Centre  
Victim Support Merton  
Volunteer Centre Merton  
West Indian Families & Friends Association (WIFFA)  
Wimbledon MP

**Other bodies**

BME Forum, Peer Support Network and Sub-Thematic Groups  
Joint Consultative Committee with Ethnic Minority Organisations  
Merton Partnership - Executive Board and Thematic Partnership Groups; Project Boards  
No Change No Gain Seminar – 26 February 2010 (80 participants)

**Scrutiny Panel (of plan) at 28 October 2010 and 2 November 2010**

Patricia Anderson (Chair)  
Roy Dawson  
Beau Fadahunsi  
Anne Hoblyn  
Beverley Huie  
Jennifer Mintah-Sem  
David Pinder  
Anthony Salia  
Wasia Shahain  
Nick Smart  
Norman Urquia  
Jamie Walsh  
Evereth Willis  
Jo Young



If you would like more information in your own language, please contact us at the address shown in the bottom box.

**Albanian** Nëse dëshironi më shumë informacion në gjuhën tuaj, ju lutemi të na kontaktoni në adresën e dhënë në kutinë më poshtë.

**Arabic** إذا أردت معلومات إضافية بلغتك الأصلية الرجاء الاتصال بنا في العنوان الممنون ضمن الإطار أدناه.

**Bengali** যদি আপনার নিজের ভাষায় লেখা আরও তথ্য জান তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করুন, ডানার বক্‌সে আমাদের ঠিকানা রয়েছে।

**Chinese** 如果你需要用中文印成的資料，請按低端方格內提供的地址與我們聯系。

**Farsi** اگر مایل به اطلاعات بیشتر به زبان خود هستید، لطفاً با آواز طریق آدرس زیر تماس بگیرید.

**French** Pour tout renseignement complémentaire dans votre propre langue, veuillez nous contacter à l'adresse figurant dans l'encadré du bas.

**Gujarati** જો તમને તમારી પોતાની ભાષામાં વધારે માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો કૃપા કરીને નીચે અંતમાં આપેલા ખાનામાં દર્શાવેલા સરનામે અમારો સંપર્ક કરો.

**Punjabi** ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਲੈਣੀ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਹਿੱਥਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਖਾਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਪਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

**Somali** Hadii aad u baahan tahay faahfaahin intaa kabadan oo ku soobsan afkaaka hooyo ama Af Somali fadlan lana soo xiira cinwaanka hoos ku qoran.

**Spanish** Si usted desea más información en su propia lengua, por favor contáctenos en la dirección al pie del formato.

**Tamil** உங்களுக்கு மேலில் உள்ள தகவல்கள் குறித்து வினாக்கள், அல்லது மேல்க்குறி தர்ப்பட்டுள்ள வினாக்களில் கட்டுரை செய்தல் குறித்து கேள்விகள்.

**Urdu** اگر آپ اپنی زبان میں مزید معلومات حاصل کرنا چاہتے ہیں تو براہ کرم ہم سے اس پتے پر رابطہ قائم کریں جو کہ نیچے کے کس میں درج ہے۔

**You can also get this information in large print, in Braille and on tape.**

Contact Merton Unity Network on 020 8648 9551 or email: [admin@mertonunitynetwork.org.uk](mailto:admin@mertonunitynetwork.org.uk)