



For Isle of Wight Council

Report on mapping exercise for Isle of Wight Council



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1. Introduction

The Isle of Wight has a rich multi cultural history and has influences from early settlers such as the Beakers, Romans and Saxons to the French and Spaniards who came during the middle ages. In more recent years, The Isle of Wight has become home to students, families and individuals from all around the world, whilst also being a popular destination for overseas visitors.

Whereas Britain is a multi cultural and multi faith country recognising and harnessing positive diversity, the Isle of Wight remains isolated and untouched in this respect.

Faith Regen UK is a national multi faith organisation based in London, providing enabling services to empower and regenerate disadvantaged communities. Faith Regen UK is very aware of the diverse needs of society and address community issues such as housing and education in a cultural and faith sensitive manner.

Faith Regen UK have been commissioned by the Isle of Wight Council to do a mapping exercise in order to determine what faith and ethnic minority communities exist on the island and what services are currently available to these communities.

This piece of work is extremely important as the Isle of Wight hosts a closed community of mainly white descent with a minority of people from ethnic minority backgrounds. In order to join the 21st century, the island needs to embrace the multi cultural, multi faith dimension which makes the world the global village it is today.

This mapping exercise enables the housing directorate to gauge the priorities and concerns of the BME community and fill any gaps in service provision. This research suggests that more joint working within the council departments and the wider public bodies is needed.

We found that the Bengali community was not only the largest but also the most deprived in terms of housing needs.

2. Project outline

The rationale for the mapping exercise was to:

2.1 Identify where the hard to reach Black Minority Ethnic communities (BME) and faith communities were on the Isle of Wight.

2.2 Find out what service provision is demanded of the Council by the BME and faith communities.

2.3 Provide recommendations to move the Isle of Wight Council forward on the equality of opportunity and diversity agenda.

3. Project methodology

3.1 The purpose of this project was to determine what faith and ethnic minority communities exist on the Isle of Wight and what services are currently available to these communities.

The Isle of Wight Council will use the findings of this exercise as a starting point to develop strategies to meet the needs as determined by the community and work towards the social exclusion agenda.

3.2 Please find below the steps taken to accomplish this project:

- Study the current census statistics on faith and ethnicity
- Study the Island press and media
- Study existing signposts to the BME and faith community support
- Engage with registered BME organisations and businesses on the Island
- Engage with educational establishments on the Island
- Engage with the community groups on the Island
- Conduct meetings with faith and community representatives
- Create a questionnaire and distribute to members of faith and minority communities to gauge their experiences of living on the Island.
- Hold informal focus groups and meetings in culturally sensitive venues at convenient times.
- The Faith Regen UK research team included members of the BME and Faith communities and speakers of other community languages.

4. Main concerns & priorities

4.1 Isolation of BME individuals

Lack of:

- Affordable Basic English language training
- Awareness and sensitivity from host community
- Communication within and between communities
- Cooperation
- Specialist support for BME individuals

Other concerns identified

4.2 Attitude

4.3 Cultural appreciation

4.4 Crime prevention

4.5 Economy

4.6 Education

4.7 Faith

4.8 Housing

4.9 Immigration

4.10 Language

4.11 The aging population

4.12 Youth

4.2 Attitude

4.2.1 Media

Isle of Wight radio provokes racism. DJ Alex Dyke makes crass racist statements which triggers similar remarks from listeners. (Source: Jane Turner, Vectis Group)

IW Radio (Alex Dyke) has received 20 complaints in the past two years (Source: IW County Press, 03.10.03).

4.2.2 Racism

BNP stickers are placed about the island. On the YBNP website the list of schools include Cowes High School, meaning that pupils may be supporters. (Source: Jane Turner, Vectis Group)

Racism from Islanders to non-islanders, especially if someone is "seen" to be different!

4.2.3 Articles in Isle of Wight County Press (IWCP)

- Mosque doors locked amid fears of an attack (Source: IW County Press 04.04.03)
- Mum and Daughter suffer racist taunts (Source: IWCP 29.08.03)
- Race Hate Charge (Source: IWCP 04.04.03)
- Blind Hatred that is just skin deep (Source: IWCP 14.03.03)
- Football Club fury at racist incident (Source:12.03.04)
- Race attack on visitor (Source: IWCP 05.09.03)

- Wooton couple victims of race hate campaign (Source: IWCP 22.06.01)
- German girl subject of attacks (Source: IWCP 22.08.03)
- Maximum sentence for race attack pair (Source: IWCP 07.03.03)
- Savage death of a cabbie - 'only done it because he is black' (Source: IWCP 07.05.04)
- Nazi signs deface mosque (Source: IWCP 14.03.03)

4.2.4 Failed attempts

Education and community development previously organised a multi culture meeting but representatives failed to turn up. This may be due to the minorities not identifying themselves alongside one another, in fighting and language barriers. (Source: George Weech, Education Community Development)

Multi-cultural events aiming to break down barriers often only attracts those already committed to equality and diversity.

4.3 Cultural appreciation

Quay Arts Centre would like to broaden client base to the minority communities, tourists and international students as the current base consists of mainly white middle class (Source: Stephen Munn, Centre Director, Quay Arts Centre).

4.4 Crime prevention

4.4.1 Police support

There is a distinct lack of trust between the police and the minority communities. Police are prone to 'managing the problems' without engaging properly with the communities. When approached about the issues of trust, the police get very defensive and it is thought that no suitable prevention methods are being taken. (Source: Joyce Milford, Vectis Monitoring).

4.4.2 Vectis Monitoring Group

Remit for Vectis is only to monitor the police. The council have offered Vectis premises, however if the island group affiliate with the monitoring group in London then their guidelines strictly prohibit council influence.

Problems also arise with communication with Vectis. The Young Carers Group had difficulty in contacting Vectis (A young boy was being racially bullied/ isolated and there was no one with whom he could relate his experience to).

A dedicated group must be made official with easy communication, premises and dedication to taking calls and enquiries. Services needed include educating in schools, trouble shoot, specific counselling and mentoring.

4.5 Economy

Island approach to faith communities and ethnic minorities are a response to the general social conditions, economics are the yeast to the problems. (Source: Andrew Gash, Baha'i)

4.6 Education

General concerns

There is a lack of knowledge and experience with faith and ethnic minority communities.

How to engage with the older community?

4.6.1 EAL - Children

Schools forward children who do not have English as their first language to EAL lessons where they receive a level of support suitable to their needs. The teacher sometimes faces barriers to engaging with the parents. She tries to arrange meetings with parents of every new arrival but finds it difficult when the parents do not speak English and cannot even communicate with each other (Russian and Thai brides). Currently children act as interpreters.

Awareness training needed for schools plus encouragement for them to be more independent, providing access to resources and harnessing positive diversity. (Source: Claire Reid, EAL)

4.6.2 ESOL – Adults

There is a lack of affordable Basic English language training.

The English language service is only provided for children and when a language barrier with the parents is identified, they are referred to a college. The major concern is that there is no basic level for people who do not speak a word of English; so far they have had to have one to one tuition ad hoc basis. College courses are not free.

4.6.3 Religious Education (RE) Teachers

RE teachers on the Isle of Wight lack complete knowledge in other faiths and have expressed interest in visiting other places of worship. (Source: Lilian Weatherly, IOW RE co-ordinator)

4.6.4 College

The Isle of Wight College is targeting international students throughout the world through a magazine called Chinese Student/ International Student. They are represented at all the world exhibitions and promote the Isle of Wight College (Source: Marcia Summers, International Department IOW College).

However, the question raised is this, is the College and the community well enough equipped for the world?

- There are no social, support or activity groups for students, regardless of nationality. No sports field and no college teams.
- Records do not show the percentage of ethnic minorities in college, they simply record the ethnicity per course which swells records as many students study more than one subject (Source: Nigel Mason, Student Services, IOW College)
- Religion is never mentioned or noticed, therefore there is no idea of numbers or needs (prayer).
- Many international students arrive as a group and get tailored programs with education and activities. There are problems when the parents of existing students are racist and do not want their kids mixing, whilst the parents of international students wish integration with British kids to be a

priority. (Source: Marcia Summers, International Department, IOW College)

- The College remit is 'All the education that satisfies the needs of the community'. This means that it has to offer everything, but makes it difficult to provide specialist support (Source: Nigel Mason, Student Services, IOW College)
- International students face issues such as visa renewal every year, home sickness, culture shock and language barriers plus some may have mixed race relationships and marriages with locals (Source: Maureen Buckmaster, Ex student Welfare Officer).

4.7 Faith

4.7.1 Baha'i

The small size of the Baha'i community on the Isle of Wight along with the unpopularity of religion in general, means they have difficulty being taken seriously. For example, The Baha'i group have been refused permission to hold exhibitions in Ryde Town Square and in Ryde Library (Source: Ian Digby, Ryde Baha'i, Isle of Wight)

4.7.2 Islam

The Mosque is not a registered charity and therefore not entitled to funding and is self funded through contributions from local businesses. There are very high running costs of about £1000 a month. There is violence and intimidation from local juveniles. The police are slow to respond to calls, sometimes not arriving at all and generally do not do enough to deal with the problem.

(Source: Sanawar Miah, Jame e Mosque and Islamic Community Centre)

The Mosque is situated in Newport and there is no other place for worship on the island. Current opening times are fifteen minutes before prayer until fifteen minutes afterwards. At all other times it is locked up. This means that when people have work/ family/ transport issues they miss the prayer.

Although they have permission from the council to open twenty-four hours, the support is minimal.

The Imam does not speak English, only Bengali. This is a serious problem as the Muslim community speak different languages making English the only language to communicate with everybody in. Imams are supposed to play a main role; leading the prayer and spiritual nourishment. Their duties also include supporting the community in other aspects of life and promoting social harmony. Currently the Imam needs an interpreter when he communicates with the people.

There are no halal butchers on the Island so Muslim families have little choice but to go to the mainland if they want halal meat. (Source: Mr.Faizur Rahman, Maharaja Restaurant)

4.7.3 Muslim Women

Women feel very lonely and isolated. There are no community centres or facilities for Muslim women who may be from different ethnic minorities backgrounds to socialise and support each other etc.The Mosque has no facilities for women, nor are there any separate rooms for women to attend prayers. This means that the mosque cannot be used as a community venue for the whole family.

Muslim community has no celebration or festivities over Ramadan or Eid.

There are no signposts to the Muslim community for new comers to the island, Halal food and the Mosque must be discovered independently. (Source: Zil, Muslim women)

4.7.4 Paganism

Due to misinformation some groups consider Pagans ‘evil’ or ‘devil worshipers’ rather than seeing them as the nature worshipers they are. This situation is improving, but there are still some people who need to be secretive about their beliefs for fear of those they live or work with. It can be also difficult to find secluded land to hold Pagan seasonal festivals on. (Source: Robin Bowen, PF Wight)

4. 8 Housing

4.8.1 Access to service

Many BME people on the Isle of Wight live in private accommodation so do not need council housing; however there are case studies showing that some people are overlooked. Families who are not professionals or business owners suffer in terms of housing. There are many Bengalis on the Island who are waiters or kitchen staff in Indian restaurants and they live in Council accommodation. One example is that of Josna Begum who lives in Ryde in a two bedroom flat with her four children aged 2 to 13. She has been on the waiting list for a larger accommodation for the past 7 years and is suffering from depression because the Council is not doing anything to address her family’s plight. Also due to cultural and religious values many Muslim families have larger families and the children tend to remain at home even when they become young adults. This puts a lot of pressure on the family home due to overcrowding and generational differences.

4.8.2 The Bengali Community

The Bengali community has needs which are not addressed

- Overcrowded accommodation
- Language barriers
- Council doesn’t listen to them
- Extended families wish to live in close proximity
- Many women face isolation in the home
- Youth are disaffected as have no outlets which are culturally sensitive
- No housing plus services available to this community
- Lack of interpreters

4.8.3 Key workers

Many key workers such as hospital staff are from overseas.

- Overcrowding
- Lack of communication with council
- Unaware of housing provision

South Wight Housing Association in Sandown were involved with the integration group with the aim of raising awareness of different ethnic groups. It was found that the Filipino nurses were unaware of housing services. One example we found was of five Filipino nurses living in overcrowded accommodation i.e. four women to one room.

[Source: Lyn Meech, South Wight HA]

4.9 Immigration

4.9.1 The Law Centre forward all immigration cases to Southampton; however they have just stopped taking referrals as they are full. The Law Centre cannot hire someone full time as there are not enough immigration cases. (Source: Mat Thatcher)

4.9.2 Citizens Advice Bureaux free service includes dealing with immigration problems and questions on the level. Some cases are easily resolved as they understand the law and process. However there is nobody at a specialist level and therefore clients are referred to the CAB mainland. If necessary they also provide lawyers contact details. (Source: Bob Matthews, Isle of Wight CAB).

4.10 Language

4.10.1 Translation

The major issue is that people in need of translators have to find people locally or pay a fortune! Hard to find translators include Hindi Punjabi, Urdu and Bengali. In an extreme case a client could have lost their accommodation because of language barriers. (Source: Andy Gallop, New Horizons, Supporting People).

In terms of education and child welfare, there needs to be more emphasis on instant translation services so that parents are privy to the information about their child.

When there are special needs over and above EAL there is a difficulty in communicating with parents. Parent Partnership has produced a translated leaflet which takes parents through the process. (Source: Claire Reid, EAL).

4.10.2 The EAL department has identified a gap in provision. It is important to have someone with specialist knowledge and experience in race equality. Extra staff could also train schools.

4.11 The aging population

4.11.1 There is difficulty in reaching older people from ethnic minority communities on the island; they are not accessing the age concern services. In general older people are more isolated on the island due to less of a family support structure. Reasons include the children leaving the island to work or couples retiring and one of them dying.

4.11.2 Travel on the island is very expensive as is travel over the water. Transport especially effects health of older people. The proposed doctors' appointments on mainland would prevent many older people from attending. (See proposed Health Fit, the strategy by Hampshire re-jig services).

4.11.3 The static outreach (placed in various areas) did not work.

4.11.4 Tourism swells the population on the island and increasing demand for services.

4.11.5 Post office closures affect the community spirit and pensioners can not use new technology provided.

(Source: Felicite Booker, Isle of Wight Age Concern)

4.12 Youth

Ageism and gender appear as more visible factors in deprivation than race and faith.
(Source: Andy Pesky, ConneXions, Newport Isle of Wight)

4.12.1 Sexual health advice

Youth services can only provide advice on sexual health in a secular fashion. The Muslim community does not have a spokesperson who speaks English so young people have no place to go for advice outside the family.

5. Recommendations

Recommendations have been drawn from current community activities, residents' experiences and successful initiatives happening elsewhere as well as specific ideas which are suitable for the Isle of Wight.

5.1 Good practice already available

5.2 Recommendations to implement

5.1 Good practice already available

We have identified the following initiatives as being very proactive in promoting diversity.

5.1.1 New immigrants to the island get a visit from the Health Advice Team.

5.1.2 Education

Pre School

Awareness of other cultures is raised using stories set in other countries and pictures and toys of all races. All schools should follow this lead, not just schools which have multi cultural/ multi faith children.

Isle of Wight College

The College tries to make sure that there are speakers of other languages. The college computers are adapted to Chinese

EAL

Schools can refer children to the EAL service which includes direct teaching, building confidence of teachers, implementing and advising strategies, encouraging schools to see multi lingual child as a positive thing. There are also race issues which overlap the advice she gives to schools. Within one year the student is socially proficient.

4 levels of support:

- Direct teaching - 1hour a week
- Direct teaching - 1hour fortnight
- Monitoring - speak to teachers each term and suggest strategies
- Monitoring – Once a year
- Consultation – leave the schools to contact
- Half are receiving direct teaching

The EAL teacher organises visits to the Mosque for head teachers, most recently attracting 20 people! The aim is for schools to organise their own visits for the teachers and students. (Source: Claire Reid, EAL)

Religious Education

A High School conference on Judaism and the holocaust is planned for Jan 27th (national holocaust day). It is held at Medina High to raise awareness and will include speeches, visits, art, writing, exhibition and theatre.

5.1.3 Presently multi cultural events are limited to the Quay Arts Centre, including African Arts which is aimed at adults. There was a Caribbean festival in Ventnor, at the Cricket Club. (Source: Sue Loveday, The Island Rainbow Community).

5.1.4 The Salvation Army hall is available for any group to use at a reasonable fee. They also collect items and sell items to raise funds for needy families.

5.1.5 Promote the use of the Hospital Multi faith prayer room with facilities for toilet and washing (Ready for Jan 2005).

5.1.6 National Age Concern has a strategy for social inclusion and IOW Age Concern are willing to be part of a project to include members of faith communities and ethnic minority communities. The four groups on the island cater for 50+ and offer social inclusion, including lunches, coffee mornings, bingo, info and advice. A mobile service goes to different areas and includes volunteers from their community. (Source: Felicite Booker, Isle of Wight Age Concern).

5.1.7 We have identified champions who are willing to work on joint projects with the council, to promote and celebrate diversity.

- **Jenny Hopkins Holden** SACRE
- **Rev Gregory Clifton Smith** Multi faith
- **Claire Reid** Language
- **Joyce Milford** Race equality
- **Jane Turner** Health
- **David Downer** Buddhism
- **Fozizur Rahman** Islam & BME
- **Louis Lawrence** Judaism
- **Tony Cortes** Filipino Health Workers
- **Ian Digby** Baha'i community
- **Sue Loveday** BME children
- **Becci Fysh** International Students
- **Alex Paul** Hospital Personnel
- **Felicite Booker** Elderly community

5.2 Recommendations to implement

5.2.1

- Isle of Wight Council may wish to publish and distribute newsletter re all the faith and BME groups
- Isle of Wight Council can signpost these groups via their website

5.2.2

- Interfaith events to encourage networking and awareness of faith and culture
- National commemorations such as Remembrance Day could include representatives from different faiths.
- Encourage activities such as Medina High School World Awareness Day.
- Gather people to learn about each others cultural backgrounds and share music literature and food. Make events suitable for different audiences, formal conference, informal party, stage shows.

- The local library services could be encouraged to hold dignified exhibitions on different faiths.
- As in Eastern cultures, there should be an emphasis on celebrating age. Inter-generation forums to pass on life skills in tandem with inter faith and inter culture

5.2.3

- Identify champions to work on joint project together with the Council, to promote and celebrate diversity
- Identify role models in each community
- Implement counselling services from within each community

5.2.4

- Utilise Churches to deliver regeneration projects for everyone. They are central venues which can deliver training and advice surgeries.
- Utilise media to inform BME communities about services and educate the wider community about multi faith, multi cultural issues

5.2.5

- All faiths to take part in SACRE
- New frame work for multi faith post September 11th. Promote multi culture in schools in island via building links with schools in Portsmouth and Southampton.

5.2.6

- Via Local Strategic Partnerships, faith communities can be represented in various planning activities.
- Some cities hold very successful Inter-Faith annual services sponsored by the Local Authority (e.g. Bristol). This is a good way for faith communities to meet with each other and the local authority and share issues.
- Local Health Authority could be encouraged to support the “Multi-Faith room” at St Mary’s Hospital and the provision of chaplaincy services by representatives of Faith communities.
- The Council could sponsor more arts-related events on the island of a diverse cultural nature.

5.2.7

Explore avenues for encouraging Halal and Kosher butchers to deliver on the island or open outlets on the island itself. Council could also encourage promoting afro hair products and make up businesses.

5.2.8

- Imam needs to improve English language, to attend ESOL classes at college.
- Promote up skilling to all faith leaders

- Communicate to open mosque longer hours, let women have access to the Mosque and use for training and social events.
- Mentoring services. Ethnic minorities on the Isle of Wight are more isolated. It is therefore beneficial to have a service which links people with others who have experienced the same issues. This involves building a trust between people.

5.2.9

- A real focus is needed on raising the confidence and skills of all individuals.
- Diversity and equality seminars for mainstream providers
- Training courses including workshops and toolkits
- Build resource library on diversity and equality issues
- Faith Regen UK can work with the Council to supply a customised Faith Community's Toolkit and training to address the Islands issues of diversity and equality and distribute to the front of house staff.