



# Dorset and the challenge of integrating BME Communities

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# BME Communities in Dorset

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- Numbers are small
- 'Not an issue'
- Migrants, Immigrants, Asylum Seekers

## Question

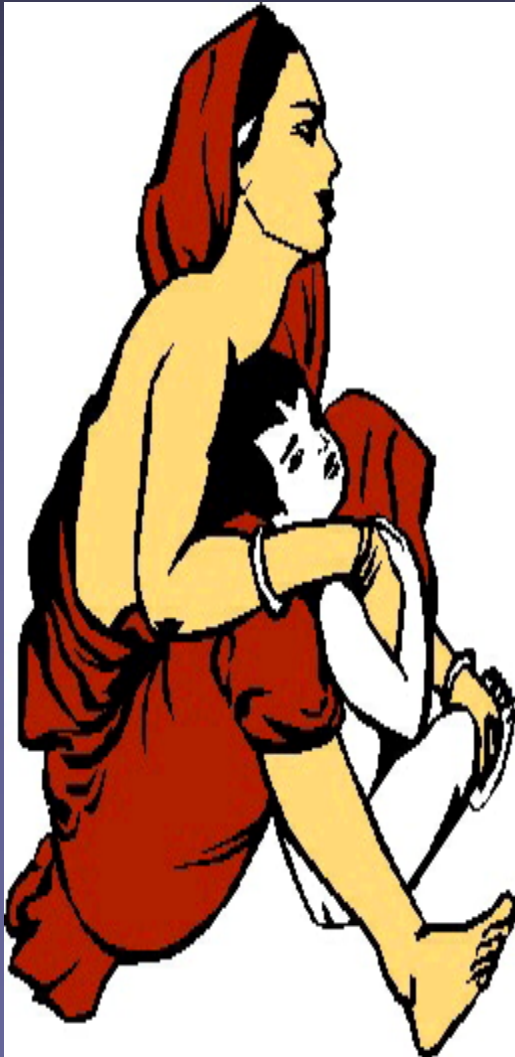
Should the Dorset community accommodate the  
BME communities/migrants etc?

or

Should migrants fit in with the communities?

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# Common issues faced by BME communities



- Being accepted in the community
- Access to health care
- Access to affordable housing
- Access to information on social rights and banking
- Access to education
- Access to assistance with language
- Concerns with employment
- Having a voice in the community

# BME Communities: inclusion & empowerment

- Inclusiveness and empowerment \_ can we say they feel able to contribute fully and equally?
- BME inclusion = equitable opportunity to have BME needs and perspectives accommodated, absorbed and integrated by organisations
- BME contributions not viewed as tokenism



# Social Housing is an issue....

- Housing – how should allocations be done?
- Should BME community needs be factored in the planning?
- Do we view migrants as a positive addition to the BME communities in terms of economics and social fundamentals?
- The same thread “its not an issue” seems to apply within the Housing sector
- BME communities are not always placed within the general population need
- Protection from Hate Crime – Tenant discrimination

# Dorset Prison Population

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- 5 prisons in Dorset
  - Majority are from BME background
  - One prison has up to 63% BME/foreign nationals
  - Is this our concern or not?
  - Do we have a balance between what Dorset ought to do in terms of reintegrating ex-offenders or should they be returned to their countries?
  - Can we all say from Police to Prisons we will not experience the Zahid Mubarak and Rocky Bennett cases?
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# Education

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- Lots happening with teenagers
  - However, still is a real challenge
  - Experiences of out dated policies: ethnic braiding
  - Staff not always equipped to deal with racial incidences: brushed aside
  - How about forging links with BME people in the education of culture/acceptance etc?
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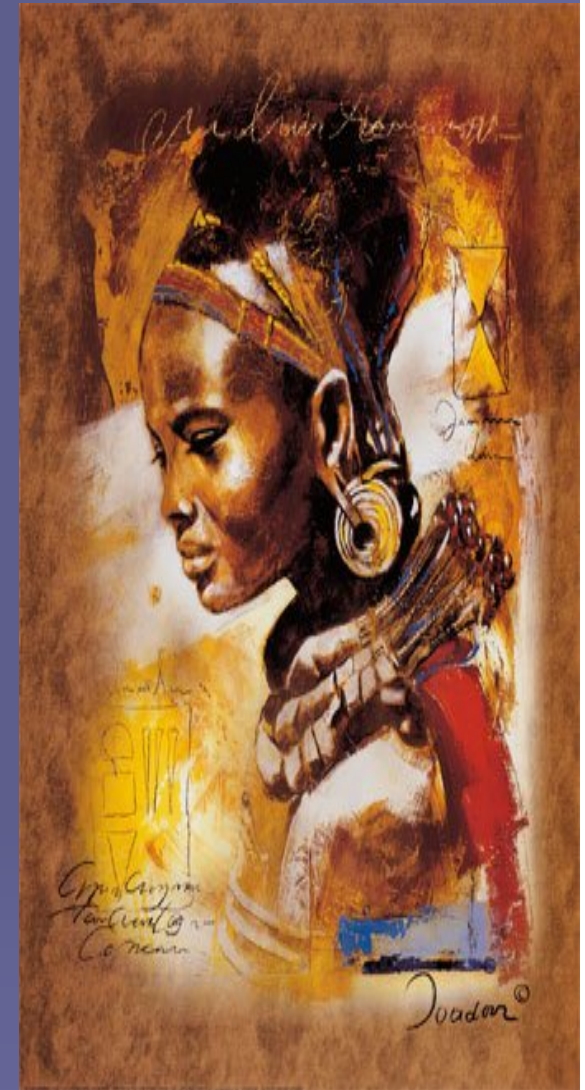
# Employment of BME people

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- Ever changing laws
  - Challenge of EU migration
  - Recruitment policies in Organisations are changing: *How many employers would go through the process of advertising a job for 6 months in order to justify employing a migrant worker?*
  - Likelihood of ending up on social support
  - Exploited and doing menial jobs
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# BME Leadership

- Small numbers
- Performance Management an issue
- Double standards
- Oppressive culture
- “They do not make up sufficient numbers to deserve some concern” as some quarters would view it!
- But common humanity says ‘ the few role models we have deserve protection and should be enabled to grow”
- The young BMEs will naturally aspire & wish to have such people as mentors.



# Dilemmas

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- Most organisations are saying the right things: e.g. RES is in place but they rarely do more than that!
  - Consultation has happened but is it comprehensive enough to make a difference or is it a paper exercise?
  - Should we be thinking about building capacity in relation to 'real' consultation?
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# If we were to examine the current approaches to employment of BME people in Dorset key positions



- Are people being encouraged to blend in?

Or is it about giving jobs that relate specifically to their background



# The ensuing cycle in the workplace has been classic:



- Recruitment
  - Confidence
  - Disappointment
  - Embarrassment
  - Crisis
  - More recruitment
  - “talented BME people then plateau or resign” & emigrate
  - Few reach management level, and
- no one can say exactly why”

## The story is...

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- We do know of the high attrition rates for BME people
  - Investment in BME staff training and development is none existent and or is wasted
  - Even though the case is that the workforce should mirror closely the community or customer base (includes tourist)
  - The more that is known about culture the better interpersonal relations will be
  - It is about understanding the subtle cultural differences
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# BME Agenda: What are the priorities? How do we break the cycle?

- Making it a real true business priority!
- The need for stronger, more proactive approaches that recognise the BME Communities and BME Sector can be a solution/a friend to the challenges
- Mandatory meaningful awareness training
- A goal in any organisation's training should be "identifying unconscious organisational values that work against BME staff and service users
- E.g. Establish recruitment panels that include active input by BME professionals and service users

Consistency

Ensures that  
Diversity is  
valued

Zero tolerance

Respected &  
valued

Clear  
Well articulated  
Values

A foundation  
for good management  
practices

BME staff  
in good positions

Widely shared  
in the County

Establish a  
climate of  
acceptance

Visible BME  
role models

# Employment: Breaking the Cycle

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- Leadership programmes
  - Mentoring, shadowing experiences
  - Employee support groups
  - Visibility of role models
  - Publishing BME employee success stories that emphasize diversity
  - Identifying and publicising promotion criteria
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# Employment: Breaking the Cycle

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- Targeted apprenticeship schemes
  - HR to get line managers to buy into the idea of transparency at interview level!
  - CEO accountability
  - Management has specifiable targets linked to performance
  - Use of psychometric tests that are culturally inclusive
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# What is a good workplace Culture/Climate?

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- Every BME employee made to realise their potential
  - Individual differences valued and celebrated
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# What is a Good Living and Workplace Climate?

- BME people feeling the brand promise!
- Organisations/management with clout using top down directives to enforce initiatives
- Control processes for monitoring and measuring success
- Entrenched and easily observable cultures
- Values like fairness are widespread & inspiring
- Policies and Codes of conduct are clear and unambiguous

# What are the core things we need to think about?

- Leadership: BME profile
- Robust data: BME communities, staff and service delivery
- Integrated Equality Schemes: high priority -discrimination
- Involving people in a true sense: Consult & Act
  - Existing BME communities (travellers too)
  - New arrivals
  - Asylum seekers
- Flexible systems that allow us to be a solution to some of Dorset's issues e.g. security checks
- A good BME representative Forum/Network
- Role models and mentorship

What is it that needs to happen?



Change, but everybody  
needs to play their part!

# Cultural Journey: all people begin with

- Ethnocentricity:
- Awareness
- Understanding
- Acceptance/respect
- Appreciation Valuing
- Selective adoption
- Multiculturalism



# So where are we in Dorset in relation to learning about BME people and the Cultural Journey?

## **Ethnocentricity:**

*“Our way is the only right way”*

## **Acceptance/Respect**

*“Its ok to be different. Differences are to be recognised and acknowledged”*

## **Awareness**

*“wait a minute, there maybe another way”*

## **Appreciation Valuing**

*“Diversity can enhance our lives and even be fun”*

## **Understanding**

*“Oh you mean there are reasons people respond differently?”*

## **Selective Adoption**

*“ People can pick and choose what they like best from each culture”*

## **Multiculturalism**

*“We are no longer the melting pot: lets go for the stir-fry”*



*“You can develop the right attitude toward others if you have kindness, understanding and respect for them, and a clear realisation of the oneness of all human beings”*

*an insight from The Dalai Lama*

Thank you!

