

Fata He BME Development Inclusion

‘Valuing Diversity & Difference in the Community’

**Struggles and Challenges: Assessing and Developing
Effective Mechanisms for the Provision and
Participation of Black and Minority Ethnic People in
Devonport’s
New Deal for Communities
Programme.**

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Nobody Listens?

Voices From the Past

Do not forget me, or my brothers and sisters. We existed in the past and through you, we will exist long into the future.

Do not weep for me children for you were born to change our future. Hold your head high, and be proud on account of the colour of your skin and who you are – an individual who holds the history of many.

Do not fight the person who calls you names, or use similar foulness to challenge them. Look, listen and learn from your parents and elders, for those that do will develop a powerful tool – your voice. a voice. which will be added to the many



1.0 Introduction

Historically, studies on ethnicity, racism, and urban regeneration have centred on those areas that are typified by distinct and often substantial conurbations of diverse communities. However, the majority of Britain's white population have negligible regular contact with those from Black and other ethnic minority (B&ME) groups and perhaps as a consequence there has been a plethora of recent research, which has attempted to observe and understand the problems, experienced by B&ME communities in areas undergoing urban regeneration.

This report addresses the now recognised gap in knowledge by focussing on a predominantly white neighbourhood (Devonport) within the city of Plymouth whose residents, staff, and Board Members of the New Deal for Communities programme have minimal contact with residents and groups from B&ME backgrounds.

2.0 Methodology

This report involved examining civil renewal documents, sourced academic reports and literature, and disseminating information supplied by the Devonport Regeneration Company (DRC).

The report also takes the view that within some analytical and evaluative research it is usually customary for social science researchers to remain unbiased in comparison to the large number of commissioned reports which often appear biased in favour of the agencies paying for such research. Fata He's stance on this issue and from the perspective of a black-led infrastructure organisation is to *'Tell it as it is'*. Our decision in taking this approach is purely intended to allow DRC staff, and members of its Board to open up to a meaningful, honest and transparent dialogue which will turn many of the critical comments contained in this report into positive outcomes.

Based on the above principle a number of important points for future development have arisen, which will have clear implications for the future direction of meaningful and effective participation and provision for B&ME residents in the Devonport area, and in providing DRC with positive outcomes in its future assessment and other external evaluation reviews.

Fata He BME Development has set out to discover the struggles and challenges that exist for Fata He and Black and Minority Ethnic (B&ME) residents in their engagement with the Devonport New Deal for Communities (NDC) program. It will use the previous funding proposal *'Valuing Diversity and Difference in the Community'*, submitted to Devonport NDC in June 2003, to build on developing sustainable mechanisms for engaging with local black and minority ethnic (B&ME) families, individuals and groups. The report will use the benefit of community cohesion, capacity infrastructure building, and social enterprise on which to improve opportunities and develop a sustainable community in which B&ME residents, and people from wider sections of the community can ultimately benefit and feel fully included in local area based initiatives (ABI's) such as the Devonport NDC program.

In an effort to better understand why black led organisations might cause such a problem within predominantly white areas undergoing regeneration and urban renewal particular attention will be paid to the current crisis facing black led groups and B&ME residents attempting to engage with regeneration partnerships in relation to support, funding and other resources, which must be freely expressed without the feeling that *'nobody listens'*.

As with all reports of this kind, Fata He's findings must be partial rather than complete however, as the report develops it will be possible to draw together a number of effective mechanisms which will assist Fata He, and the Devonport Regeneration Company better understand, resource, and meet the needs and priorities of Black and minority ethnic residents within their community.

More fundamentally there is the question of how the user perspective of Devonport's black and minority ethnic communities, is to be assessed and operationalised. Whilst New Deal Delivery Plans, consultation and survey exercises can obtain in-depth knowledge on which to base general policy direction, any serious attempt to attain appropriate provision and resources needs to be accompanied by a radical rethinking of black and minority ethnic user involvement. At its broadest level, such a move necessitates fully including B&ME groups in local policy and planning processes. To *'Listen to Black and minority ethnic people'* might seem controversial enough in

itself. To actively involve B&ME people in a continual consultative and planning process, which they can engage in, is almost unthinkable within the current climate of our culture.

Furthermore, bearing in mind the past history of DRC, and any current developments DRC might be considering in addressing the needs of B&ME communities overall within the neighbourhood, begs the question, as to how far does current and emerging B&ME provision and resourcing seem likely to meet the criteria of user appropriateness when a 'one size fits all' method is used which is not congruent with their needs?

Time and limited resources meant that this report was necessarily small scale and therefore should be seen as a preliminary exercise. It is Fata He's intention to develop this work over time in order to be better placed to assist the Devonport Regeneration Company apply the necessary mechanisms, resources, and tools to effectively and positively engage with its B&ME communities.

3.0 Background

3.1 Black and Minority Ethnic Settlement in Plymouth

The city of Plymouth may not appear to be an obvious and immediate example of urban settlement for B&ME people. As has been suggested earlier most research and studies relating to B&ME communities have usually been carried out in larger cities such as London, Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds. However, as this report will show, that although the numbers of B&ME people may be small in comparison to those larger cities, the example using Plymouth, and indeed Devonport, where B&ME people are less visible, offers some useful insights into thinking about the local experiences of B&ME as being distinctive and similar to other B&ME communities engaging in urban regeneration and area based initiatives.

The city of Plymouth is the largest city west of Bristol on the south-west coast of England. For the past five hundred year's it has largely developed through connections with a naval, military and maritime history. While the city rests on its rich maritime history, the naval and military connections have declined over the past twenty years leaving it without a strong commercial or industrial sector, which has led to economic decline.

Indeed, the demise of the Devonport Naval Dockyard, which at one time was one of the major employers in the city, led the government in recognising the severity of unemployment, which still remains at a higher level than the national average (ONS, 2003). Thus, since the late 1980s, the city has received European Union, central government, and regional regeneration funded grants and area based initiatives.

As a maritime port Plymouth has explicit connections with the slave trade in terms of the direct importing of slaves to Britain through two of Plymouth's (and England's) most famous heroes: most notably Sir John Hawkins, born in Plymouth in 1532, and who is recognised as England's 'First slave trader', and Sir Francis Drake, who accompanied Sir John Hawkins on many of his slave trading voyages on behalf of Queen Elizabeth the First, and rich English merchants. There is historical evidence which clearly links Plymouth as a slave port, although not on the scale of ports in Bristol and Liverpool. There are also records of Black servants who were enslaved in the

city, and as such, many of these servants on gaining their freedom, would have assimilated into local communities across Plymouth and the wider areas of Devon and Cornwall. Similarly, some of the freed servants would have married into these communities and had children (Fryer, 1984; Walvin; 1973; Williamson; 1969).

Like the ports of Liverpool, Bristol, and Cardiff such assimilation of early black freed slaves into local communities would have produced mixed heritage settled populations, which are still evident in many of our towns and cities today. Later during the Second World War, and the 1960s, and because of Plymouth's naval and military connections, the arrival of Black male and female service personnel would have also developed relationships with the local population. As is evident in the city of Plymouth some of the mixed heritage children from these relationships have assimilated and married into the white community, which has produced inherent psychological issues over identity and to what community they belong.

3.2 Devonport

The Devonport community grew from a small early 17th century settlement which surrounded the Royal Dockyards to a self-governing borough consisting of a population approximately 84,000 by the 1900s. By 1914 the borough of Devonport was amalgamated into the County Borough of Plymouth which in 1928 was subsequently renamed the City of Plymouth.

Devonport has a rich social and architectural history, which the local Naval base and Dockyard have been responsible for expanding and shaping the area despite the severe bombing Devonport experienced during the Second World War. Redevelopment after the war has meant that little of the original 18th and 19th century town remains.

As highlighted earlier, although the Dockyard has downsized over the years, a large area including many buildings remain redundant. Hence, areas of Devonport remain split by a large dismal wall, which separates the community.

Since the 1960s, the city council redeveloped the area and built a number of properties in Ker Street, Pembroke Street, Mount Street, James Street and Clowance Street. During the 1990s, mainly due to funding from the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB), and European Union Objective funding, Clowance Street was demolished and developed by the Westcountry Housing Association. Similarly, the Pembroke Street Estate underwent major renovation. Starting in late 1995, the Tamar, and Tavy tower blocks have been refurbished, and in the last few years work on the final tower block Lynher house, has been completed (NDC, 2001).

Evidence by Glover, (2002, 2003 and 2004) and Mackeith, (2003), suggests that early black settlement in areas such as Devonport and Stonehouse may have been due to the arrival of African merchant seaman. Throughout the years, many would have settled in areas which were within easy reach of the dockyard. Similarly, early Army records show that a number of Black Naval and Army service personnel would have been based in and around Devonport. Upon leaving the service, some would have left to settle in other parts of the region, while others would have assimilated into the local community. Hence, due to gaining their freedom, and the later arrival of Black male and female service personnel in the early 1970s, has, as earlier suggested

left an evident Black mixed African /African Caribbean population. Thus contrary to public opinion the oldest surviving ethnic groups in the city are those of black mixed parentage, and our current Lord Mayor, Councillor Claude Miller (A descendant of a Plymouth black freed slave from Sierra Leone) provides firm evidence that assimilation of black mixed groups into the Plymouth population has been an on-going and continuing process.

After decades of regeneration strategies in the city, and within individual wards including Devonport. The city has historically failed in investing social and economic regeneration to many B&ME communities. Despite the economic contribution to the city's wealth mainly through small to medium business evident in the Chinese, Asian, Bangladeshi, Greek and African / Caribbean communities, there has been an absence in the recognition of the B&ME business sectors contribution to the city's economy. Similarly, Fata He could also be critical of the failure to generate enough investment in B&ME social enterprise and new business start-up opportunities. There is also clear evidence that some B&ME people have relocated to the city through economic reasons bringing with them a wide range of skills and expertise in both the business and community and voluntary sector. However, the skills and expertise which B&ME people offer are very often not recognised and valued hence, there are very few management posts or senior positions filled by B&ME people, which is evident in all employment sectors of the city.

The creation of invisible barriers around neighbourhood boundaries and the way recent regeneration schemes have been funded by central government appears to have created a culture of mistrust, lack of information or clarity about the various funding programmes, which has often led to misconceptions, with different areas and groups from B&ME and the wider community believing that they have received less money than others. This often leads to resentment in which both Black and White communities complain about the absence of funds, or designed projects and programmes, which do not meet their needs. Indeed, misunderstandings, such as those currently experienced in Devonport New Deal for Communities arise because various groups are not properly consulted, resourced properly, or involved in projects and, even if they are, may often appear as tokenistic.

3.3 Census Data Relating to B&ME People in Plymouth, and the Devonport Ward

According to the 2001 national census, Plymouth has a total population of 240,720 (ONS, 2003). Based on this information, approximately 1.62 per cent of residents were identified from B&ME groups – 3,900 in total. This figure takes into account the number of B&ME people who described themselves under one of the following census categories: Asian or Asian British (Indian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, other), Black or Black British (African, Caribbean, Other), Chinese, mixed ethnic groups, and other ethnic groups. The largest ethnic minority group recorded were the Irish (0.6 per cent or 1,359), followed by the Chinese whose population number was recorded at 0.5 per cent (1,201). The lowest recorded group were those of Pakistani origin who numbered 89 in total. However, as noted earlier the largest groups when combined are those of mixed African/African Caribbean and Asian heritage. This actual 2001 figure for Plymouth's B&ME population indicates an increase in the previous 1991 census figures, which stood at 0.88 per cent or 2,140 people (ONS, 1991).

However, the census does not give us a complete record of the population, and while it includes those people who were able to complete census forms, many communities such as Gypsy and

Travellers, asylum seekers, and overseas students for whatever reasons may not have completed them. Thus, if we were to take these communities into account it might be more probable that the B&ME population in Plymouth could be between 5,000 to 8,000 or more.

Due to a lack of research undertaken at citywide and neighbourhood levels, the B&ME population remains largely unknown. Indeed the neighbourhood 2001 census for Devonport (Table 1.) reveals a local population of B&ME residents numbering 144. Door-to-door research conducted by Fata He in 2002 highlighted a B&ME resident population of 240. According to an earlier survey carried out by NDC in Devonport in January 2000, revealed that B&ME residents made up 1.8% of the NDC area's population. Furthermore, as Devonport lies within the St Peters ward, the 1991 Census figures indicate B&ME residents at 1.1 % of the ward population. In addition since 2001 an increase in these figures was probably due to the number of asylum seekers dispersed and placed in the Raglan Road, area of Devonport, which at that time was a National Asylum Seeker Service (NASS) run housing provision provided by Aldephi Properties Ltd. Taken together this suggests that there has been an increase in the number of B&ME residents within the Devonport area. However, due to the decanting of people in order to improve local housing stock which included B&ME and other residents, changes in government legislation relating to asylum seekers, and asylum seekers who might have gained refugee status has meant that some have relocated to other areas of the city. Hence, the exact number and ethnicity of B&ME residents remains unknown but if the numbers of black mixed children which have not been accounted for, and who live within white families the figure is more likely to be in the region of about 100.

Fata He are also aware of a number of Gypsies who live in the Devonport area who through economic reasons have left their previous nomadic life style and moved into social and private housing in the area. There are also a number of white Irish residents within the Devonport area who represent the largest minority ethnic group within the city. However, this causes a further problem in census counts and other surveys, as Gypsies and those of Irish origin are regarded as ethnic minorities within the 1976 Race Relations Act (Amended) 2000. However, many when filling out census and other survey forms (if they did) would have identified themselves as white in the census, and other surveys do not identify Gypsies as an ethnic group.

Despite the small increase in numbers of B&ME residents migrating in and out of the area over the years. Several B&ME residents have often emphasised that because they are low in numbers increased their likelihood of racism and social isolation. Such isolation in low areas of ethnic minority settlement can cause long - term psychological problems as residents lack links to key institutional agencies and access to local service providers thus, run the risk of becoming wider estranged from local and citywide social and political systems. Lacking 'a sense of place' in an already deprived community without the support of other ethnic groups and personal networks very often leads to affecting their quality of life by reducing confidence, self-esteem, and a sense of belonging.

Table 1. 2001 Census - Ethnic Groups In Devonport.

Ethnic Group	Resident Population (percentage)			
	Devonport		Plymouth	England
	No.	%	%	%
White	4853	97.7	98.4	90.9
Mixed	65	1.3	0.6	1.3
Asian or Asian British	6	0.1	0.3	4.6
Indian	0	0.0	0.1	2.1
Pakistani	3	0.1	0.0	1.4
Bangladeshi	0	0.0	0.1	0.6
Other Asian Background	3	0.1	0.1	0.5
Black or Black British	25	0.5	0.2	2.1
Caribbean	3	0.1	0.1	1.1
African	19	0.4	0.1	1.0
Other Black Background	3	0.1	0.0	0.2
Chinese	14	0.3	0.3	0.4
Other Ethnic Group	3	0.1	0.2	0.4

Source: ONS, 2003

These and many other issues were identified by Fata He during previous NDC BME Focus Group meetings and previous interviews, in which some B&ME residents exhibited low levels of aspiration, a lack of motivation and a sense that they have poor and very limited future prospects and opportunities when compared to their white counterparts within the Devonport NDC area. Indeed, many of the issues described above, and contained within this report share similar themes with previous research, in particular, reports by (Dhalech, 1999; Glover, 2003; Jay, 1992; Roberts, 2003; Williams and Tacchi, 2001). Furthermore, the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR, now the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister OPDM), issued a New Deal for Communities Race Equality Guidance in February 2000 to all NDC Partnerships, which makes clear reference for NDC partnerships to recognise that:

“In neighbourhoods where Black and ethnic minority groups make up a relatively small part of the population, the need for race equality measures is possibly even more crucial. In areas with small Black and ethnic minority populations, people tend to be more isolated, marginalised and threatened by racial harassment (DETR, 2000:13).

Thus, local regeneration partnerships, which include the Devonport New Deal for Communities programme, are more successful where all sections of the neighbourhood are actively involved and empowered. It is an area where B&ME voluntary and community sector organisations such as Fata He play a vital role in ensuring that B&ME residents involved in regeneration is effective. Furthermore, is a need to recognise the advantages of forming mutual bonds between Fata He and other mainstream community and voluntary sector organisations.

3.4 A Sense Of Place

As previously described above a resident's sense of identity and belonging to a community is very often shaped by a number of overriding factors such as, culture, life experiences, family, and their individual social and economic prospects. Vertovec (1999) suggests that people who undergo changing their identity or acquiring a second identity in order to fit can often be a difficult experience, as people are uncertain about their place and how they might fit into the wider community. Thus, having to change or take on a second identity becomes even more difficult.

Where ethnic difference is highlighted, those who are affected by such factors further separate themselves from their neighbourhood, and live self-contained lives where they experience very little contact with members of the community and other people from different ethnic groups from other areas of a city or town. As such, they become detached and isolated resulting in exclusion as their neighbourhood continually changes around them.

The immense task facing neighbourhoods undergoing regeneration are by no means exclusive to Devonport or to its B&ME residents. The challenges of tackling social and economic deprivation, high unemployment, poor job prospects, fear of crime, bad housing, and arguably, worst of all, the mistrust and resentment that some sections of the community are getting more than others are evident among many urban regeneration programmes across England. Hence, vision statements as the one contained in the 'Devonport People's Dreams', New Deal for Communities Delivery Plan 2001 –2011 states that: *"Our Vision is to create a thriving, vibrant community that raises aspirations, grasps opportunities and which has people queuing to join"*. May well test how Devonport put these words into action through their future action plans and strategies. Moreover, when related to race equality issues DRC must endeavour to accept responsibility in creating good race relations in which the views, concerns, and needs of its B&ME population are effectively included in local policy and service provision. Without creating the willingness to present a positive, open, and honest agenda to its neighbourhood, and in particular its B&ME residents, many will not feel the need to queue up or join in with a process that they feel rightly excluded from.

However, as indicated earlier it would be wrong for Fata He to suggest that such issues only affect B&ME residents. Clearly, there is evidence from the wider community that Devonport NDC has very often failed to take into account all the factors that shape its diverse neighbourhood, whatever its ethnic make-up. To prove successful in the future the Devonport NDC, will clearly need to redesign how it balances the measures it will need to take in meeting the aim of creating a thriving and vibrant community which its residents are queuing up to join. These measures might include positive steps it will take to improve access to services for some groups recognising that deprivation, exclusion, and disadvantage, affects many white residents as well, and that other

groups might need to be supported by efforts to assure other groups that they are not being neglected or given a lower priority. For example, young people, disabled and the aged.

4.0 Engaging B&ME People and the Wider Community in a Local Community Cohesion Agenda

Before moving on to discuss the importance of capacity building and developing its effective use in sustainable mechanisms within social and economic strategies and the NDC programme, this report will briefly highlight some of the advantages of community cohesion which might go some way in developing a sustainable Devonport community in which all its residents might ultimately benefit from. A definition of community cohesion currently used by government is:

A cohesive community is one where:

- There is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;
- The diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued;
- Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and
- Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

(Source: Guidance on Community Cohesion, Local Government Association, 2002).

Apart from the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, the next most publicised media events were the disturbances which took place in Bradford, Burnley, and Oldham between April to July 2001. A report on the disturbances which occurred in Bradford by Sir Herman Ouseley, '*Community Pride Not Prejudice: Making Diversity Work In Bradford*', reached a conclusion which suggests that:

The key concern in the district (Bradford) is that the relationships between different cultural communities should be improved but instead they are deteriorating. There are signs that communities are fragmenting along racial, cultural, and faith lines... Rather than seeing the emergence of a confident, multicultural district, where people are respectful and have understanding and tolerance for difference, people's attitudes appear to be hardening, and intolerance towards differences is growing (Ouseley, 2001).

What seems evident from the above reference is that although Plymouth and indeed Devonport, has not experienced violent disturbances such as those seen in the north of England, it does exhibit many of the signs of being unable to produce proactive measures to promote equal opportunities and good relations between people from different ethnic groups. Clearly, the choices people make about where they live in the city, work, raise and educate their children, and who and what other groups they might choose to socialise with are determined by their social and economic circumstances. However, the choices open to those from B&ME backgrounds are very often constrained by their experiences of racism, discrimination, and harassment. These previously

expressed factors, have led to people from various ethnic backgrounds being placed (through social housing) in areas where they are often isolated, vulnerable, and left with virtually no support. Thus, evidence provided in the Cattle report (2001) suggests that diversity had been a key factor in dividing communities as people from different ethnic backgrounds had very little to do with each other, which not only leads to changes in behaviour and attitudes, but enables right wing groups such as the British National Party (BNP) gain a deeper foothold in areas such as Devonport where they profess to be the voice of white working class residents.

In order to understand how such issues affect community cohesion, we need to revisit our understanding of what community cohesion means, from the perspective of ethnicity and community relations thus, a cohesive community might be characterised by the following:

- Shared values that can be upheld despite other differences between groups;
- A sense of belonging, and an acceptance that this means different things for different groups;
- An intolerance of racial discrimination and harassment;
- Shared pride in the place where people live;
- Respect for people's lifestyles, as long as these do not infringe on others' rights;
- Genuine opportunities for everyone in education, employment, housing, health, and civic and democratic activity; and
- Local leaders who tackle inequality and respect differences in background and outlook. (CRE, 2002).

One of the most important indicators of a successful cohesive community is one in which people from all different ethnic backgrounds can integrate and learn from each other. An example of this has recently been partially achieved through the Plymouth Community Cohesion Facilitation Programme, and the Plymouth Community Cohesion Pathfinder Programme. In effect, although both programmes achieved a high level of engagement with young people from different ethnic backgrounds, very little of the programmes projects were delivered by B&ME organisations. These issues have been highlighted in Community Cohesion evaluation reports (Bryant and Beer, 2004; Glover, 2004) who, assert that *'Some of those interviewed were disappointed that more BME-led organisations had not been involved in the Programme from the planning stage onward'*. Holds a valuable lesson in encouraging non-BME organisations letting go of their power, and supporting smaller and very often under-funded groups to engage in future processes.

Indeed, valuable lessons might also be learnt from future funding strategies for community and voluntary sector organisations. Funding has often been given in response to particular needs of B&ME communities, in the belief that the needs of B&ME people are met by organisations such as the local Race Equality Council (REC). As such, some of these organisations even though they may persist through their remit that they are not a representative body for B&ME people continue to attempt to deliver services while B&ME led organisations slip further behind in terms of allocation of resources and funding to support their own communities. Thus, although many projects delivered by

non-BME organisations might be viewed as laudable schemes, they do very little in raising the expectations of B&ME individuals and groups by treating them as disadvantaged and marginalised victims. Indeed, within the business and voluntary and community sector a majority of B&ME people from different ethnic backgrounds and cultures within the city and the various neighbourhoods would neither place themselves in the position of being disadvantaged and this is particularly true of the Chinese, Asian and Greek communities who make up a large part of the citywide small business sector who, as previously suggested experience their own problems with the city council's planning department, and in raising capital finance loans rather than assuming a position of being disadvantaged and marginalised.

Such issues are also relevant to young people who in a sense will become tomorrow's leaders, directors and senior managers of statutory, private, and voluntary and community sector organisations. Thus within the context of community cohesion, Fata He supports and would readily encourage DRC, and local voluntary and community sector organisations to focus on helping to build a stronger sense of neighbourhood belonging and social participation for all its residents, and particularly to its young residents by supporting the community in recognising:

- Young people from different communities grow up with a sense of community belonging;
- New residents, especially those from ethnic minority backgrounds [are fully included in community activities];
- People have opportunities through [educative] learning opportunities to better understand the many diverse cultures that contribute within the neighbourhood, regionally and nationally;
- People from all backgrounds participate in civic society;
- Racism, discrimination, and harassment is unacceptable; and
- Local extremists who promote hatred are marginalised.

(Adapted from 'Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society: The Government's Strategy to increase Race Equality and Community Cohesion (Home Office,2005) my emphasis.

Furthermore, in order for Devonport to begin to develop a cohesive neighbourhood it will have to move away from insisting that its B&ME community remain segregated. This we mean, that Devonport should not close B&ME residents behind an invisible barrier. Many socialise and interact with other B&ME family members, and other members from their own communities outside Devonport. Similarly, many go outside the area to work, to shop, and take part in leisure pursuits. Thus to suggest that DRC funding should only be used for B&ME residents in the NDC area denies them the right to access the very services and social support mechanisms they need to decrease their isolation and increase their inclusion within the wider community. Such issues appear to go against the theme of community cohesion, and furthermore, might be viewed as being unlawful under the 1976 Race Relations Act (Amended) 2000, when applied to 'enforced segregation'. Compelling B&ME residents to segregation through denying funding applications from organisations in a position to strengthen their involvement in local community activities makes them more vulnerable to exclusion, and reduces, and delays, proactive measures in promoting good relations between people from different ethnic groups. Further reference to community cohesion and its

benefit in developing tools and mechanisms for engaging with B&ME residents and the wider community will be explored in the next section.

5.0 Improving Opportunities – Building a Sustainable B&ME Community

Black and Minority Ethnic [led] voluntary organisations have a crucial role in helping to reach some of the most socially excluded groups in Plymouth and the wider areas of the south west, combating racial discrimination and disadvantage, and providing vital services to their communities (Adapted from the Compact on Relations between Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector in England, Home Office, 2001 my emphasis).

The above reference is particularly relevant to many B&ME led organisations, who much like Fata He are constantly at risk of disintegration through scarcity of funding and having to compete on an already uneven playing field. In recognising our position within Devonport and the wider areas of the city Fata He are constantly striving to *'improve the quality of life of B&ME residents in Devonport and the wider areas of the city and to enable them to participate more fully in the social and economic environment and, to ensure that their diversity is recognised as a positive factor in Plymouth's competitiveness'*. Thus, Fata He main thrust has been in developing 'capacity building' in which to develop B&ME infrastructure and empower the skills of local B&ME residents, so that they can compete more equally in the community.

Capacity building is a term that has become familiar in the public, statutory, and community and voluntary sector mainly through regeneration and community development programmes. However, familiarity does not guarantee clarity. Thus, some definitions of capacity building might include the following:

1. Capacity building is development work that strengthens the ability of community organisations and groups to build structures, systems, people, and skills so that they are better able to define and achieve their objectives and engage in consultation and planning, manage community projects and take part in partnerships and community enterprises (Skinner, 1997 Building Community Strengths).
2. Community capacity building means developing the capacity and skills of the members of a community in such a way that they are better able to identify, and help meet, their needs and to participate more fully in society (Charity Commission 2000).

Based on the Fata He and its previous partner the Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisation (CEMVO) funding proposal *'Valuing Diversity and Difference in the Community'*, submitted to Devonport NDC in June 2003, was to develop a citywide capacity building approach, which would not segregate the Devonport B&ME residents but was rather specifically tailored to meet their needs. This approach was determined by recognising that discrimination, power disparities, and social exclusion would help and assist them to challenge inequalities which exist in the local community. Hence, Fata He were not simply to be seen as facilitators of this process but were empowering local residents to become change agents.

Through our capacity building programme, Fata He would continue to seek to maximise:

- Levels of organised community activity
- Increased organisational ability to manage projects
- Additional funding applications to secure higher levels of resources
- Attract new leadership from the community, and future leaders from young people
- Attract more 'professional' staff from the diversity within B&ME communities so that they are better able to deliver effective and responsive services which meet the needs of its B&ME communities, and who are able to secure more funding streams for the sector
- Increase participation at the local level and in the wider democratic process
- Change perceptions of B&ME led community and voluntary sector groups as being weak, fragile and difficult

It should be further recognised that Fata He, B&ME residents and other groups have a major role to play in supporting the Devonport community and the wider areas of the city. Unfortunately, in the past, our potential contribution has very often not been recognised and valued by public, statutory, community and voluntary, and non-BME sector organisations, some of who openly profess to represent our needs and issues.

Indeed, *'The Compact on Relations between Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector in England- Black and Minority Ethnic Voluntary and Community Organisations: A Code of Good Practice'*, further states that:

To date, funding for the BME voluntary and community sector, whether from existing or new sources has been significantly below that of similar organisations in the mainstream voluntary and community sector. This is all the more detrimental given that the BME sector does not generally have the windfall legacies, income streams and leverage opportunities that the more established mainstream sector attracts' (Home Office, 2001).

It should come as no surprise that funding and grant bodies themselves tend to be nervous of anything outside of the mainstream or funding applications that do not fit comfortably within their decision making structures. Such issues certainly fit within social and regeneration programmes operating across the city, and the Devonport NDC process is no different in this respect. It was therefore no surprise firstly, that small organisations especially, Black led organisations rarely attract large grants (in this case £1.2 m) because of discriminatory doubts about their capacity to manage them. Fata he feel that it is vitally important to include these issues as they severely put B&ME organisations at a disadvantage when applying for funds. Hence, part of writing this report is to highlight the need for decision making structures to produce positive redistribution mechanisms within their grant making processes to redress this imbalance.

As capacity building represents the major aspect of our work, and will form the basis of our future work program with Devonport NDC and the wider sub regional area Fata He will utilize the trailblazing theme developed by CEMVO's Capacity Building Programme, which shared similar frustrations much like Fata He initial funding proposal to NDC, of the seemingly impossibility of securing regeneration funding by assumptions being made such as: *'As a Black organisation, you*

are written off before you start (with responsive assumptions like) 'someone will run off with the money', 'they won't deliver'.

The Fata He capacity building programme is not only innovative, but is fundamental to the future success of Devonport's B&ME residents and other people from wider areas of the city and the sub region. In essence, this programme and the mechanisms for engaging B&ME residents will address the poor record of support for B&ME leadership in regeneration and in building a cohesive and inclusive community. Although such a programme might seem characteristic of Devonport NDC's own Community Engagement Strategy, the Fata He programme encourages new ways of working, and takes new approaches in promoting social exclusion and regeneration even though some might see such an approach as being led by an 'inexperienced' organisation. However, one must ask themselves the question, with regard to assessing, planning and delivery of services to B&ME communities who are the recognised experts. DRC Staff members? Individual Board members? Or B&ME residents themselves?

It is inevitable that in rolling out this programme that mistakes will be made by Fata He initially finding their feet. However, if Devonport NDC and its accountable body Plymouth City Council are truly serious about building a diverse, healthier and cohesive environment for B&ME participation and in policies relating to regeneration and programme delivery, organisations like Fata He need to be actively supported in their approaches, rather than penalised for showing inexperienced teething pains.

Current assessment of New Deal for Communities within Devonport indicates that the program has a particularly poor reputation for being inflexible and bureaucratic, and that its processes emphasise number crunching rather than spending money that produces 'real' results or innovation. For example, many of its processes would seem to be community based decisions however, its management and administrative functions assumes that voluntary organisations such as Fata He have the administrative structures to handle the voluminous paperwork involved. Furthermore, funding is normally paid in arrears, which again assumes that Fata He have an extensive financial infrastructure. Finally, apart from a small amount of funding made available to Fata He in which to research and develop tools as to how it might engage with B&ME residents. There has not been very little opportunity in which to offer effective and longer term support and to directly involve B&ME residents in developing schemes. As a result, although Fata He have been successful at forming a positive working relationship with the Wolseley Community and Economic Development Trust (WCEDT), who since September 2004 have agreed to act as our accountable body, and our local work within Parkside Community Technology College (since the recent racist incident) Fata He have not received the necessary support from Devonport NDC in relation to building a cohesive B&ME infrastructure within Devonport, despite encouragement from the equality and community cohesion team within the Government Office for the South West (GOSW).

The Government's New Deal for Communities was supposed to be different in terms of its long-term engagement with B&ME communities. For example, it claimed to be the first regeneration programme which introduced a Race Equality Guidance to all NDC partnerships. The programme also claimed that it had learned from previous criticism and made explicit reference to ensure that NDC partnerships fully encouraged and enabled the involvement of Black and Minority Ethnic people at all levels of the partnership, and that local Black led organisations should be supported and funded so that they are able to deliver vital services to their communities.

Having taken into account all the above it is from this approach that Fata He wishes to seek and secure a comprehensively commissioned capacity building infrastructure program by developing a unique and tried mechanism (developed by CEMVO's £2.5 million SRB capacity building program) which used a free-standing skill enhancing capacity building programme built on a 'slow burn' developmental process based upon an introductory 'Year Zero'.

During this 'Year Zero' very little project spend would occur (apart from some early 'wins'). Instead, concentration would be on establishing new local and citywide partnerships, and ensuring that through our accountable body finance management and appraisal arrangements were embedded, and that local B&ME residents were fully involved in this process. Indeed, some of the valuable lessons learned from the CEMVO capacity building program were:

- More traditional deliverers of regeneration like local authorities do not have to overcome doubts and scepticism from funders. Voluntary organisations, by contrast, are so aware of the way in which their abilities are questioned, that they are tempted to try to prove themselves by seeking to deliver quickly at a time when they should be nurtured.
- Voluntary organisations developing bids might be better advised to have a 'Year Zero' in which management, monitoring and evaluation systems and partnership structures are developed, and more time spent in appraising options for programme delivery.
- If voluntary organisations follow this advice, it is essential that this is acknowledged as a positive development by funders, so that the kind of fears expressed by Black led organisations turn out to be groundless.
- There should be less pressure for early wins. Taking things slowly should not be seen as a sign of weakness.
- Local authorities and local Strategic Partnerships should put the year zero concept at the heart of their plans for working with local BME led community and voluntary sector organisations.

(Source: Peter North, 2001, Local Economy Policy Unit South Bank University)

Pivotal to the success of Fata He capacity building programme would be the formation of an inclusion and diversity work or theme group which would be representative of B&ME and other minority groups. The main objective of this group would be to assess, monitor and actively participate in ensuring that delivery mechanisms and priorities were effectively being rolled out to benefit the community. Secondly, it would ensure that DRC were following equal opportunity and race equality guidance within its overall delivery program. Specifically in relation to its commitment to *(KO9) – which endeavours to 'engage all disadvantaged and minority groups in the NDC and other regeneration processes'*. In effect, the long-term benefits of such a relationship with DRC will enable B&ME residents, other minority groups, local business and community organisations to come together to discuss how we could work better and understand many of the issues facing socially excluded minority groups within the area. Such a program would indeed benefit DRC in its ability to fully include the benefits of community cohesion and the recent introduction of the ChangeUp Infrastructure Program within its overall delivery plan and structures.

A further benefit to DRC would be viewed by its funders (Neighbourhood Renewal Unit, OPDM, and GOSW) as being seen as a fully inclusive program which has ensured longer term inclusion of B&ME and other minority group interests throughout its program activities, and have integrated good practice lessons learnt from building and promoting the benefits of community cohesion and building long-term sustainable infrastructure within excluded B&ME and other minority groups. Future DRC reviews and evaluations might well enhance and improve their overall assessment in their delivery and in improved community participation.

Indeed, from a community perspective, this program would further enable those who might feel isolated from the rest of the community enhance future possibilities of bringing together public, statutory and community and voluntary sector organisations in order to receive further necessary support and information when needed. Very often minority groups experience difficulty in finding out what is going, and where they might fit into being effective deliverers and participants in local projects and programs partly, because many meetings are held behind closed doors, and because of a lack of confidence of participants in engaging in the process. Secondly there are further issues relating to how inherent and unintentional prejudices and discrimination which work against such groups by misinformation and mistrust on both sides.

At the same time there are also difficulties within B&ME communities and other minority groups who themselves have not formed effective working relationships which has meant that it has been difficult for them to work together for example, the lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transsexual (LGBT) community, refugee and asylum seeker community, aged, disabled and young people. Such issues are not separate from the wider community as some B&ME communities and other groups often experience in-fighting and fragmentation very often brought on by 'outside' individuals and groups who profess to be representatives and voices of these groups. What this means is that B&ME communities and other minority groups have fallen further behind in building effective and sustainable infrastructure at an internal and external level.

However, as this report is mainly concerned with building the infrastructure of B&ME residents within Devonport, other issues relating to exclusion include current funding regimes, which although based at a citywide level heavily affect how we deliver services at the local level. Fata he, much like other black led organisations feel frequently over looked when funding comes into the city, and coupled with the bureaucracy and lack of strategic information make it difficult to compete with other, well known, and established citywide groups. Where funding has come into the city, it has often been given to these larger agencies, or a formal network, which has excluded Fata He and other smaller black led groups.

Furthermore, although public and statutory organisations are obliged to consult with different community groups, unfortunately (or purposefully) when they are planning services, they very often by pass groups such as Fata He, preferring to consult with one or two larger and well-established organisations, or non-BME organisations who as previously stated propose to represent our views, needs, and concerns.

In identifying many of these issues, Fata He is determined to develop a real and meaningful capacity building infrastructure program and in promoting the benefits of community cohesion, which is seen as crucial in connecting not just B&ME people but people from all sections of the community, and in helping them shape the future cohesion of their communities which positively promotes the diversity and cultures within its community. In keeping this in mind, and in keeping

with the overall tenor of capacity infrastructure building, we are indeed privileged to have been identified as the potential sub-regional lead BME body (Devon, Cornwall, Plymouth and Torbay) for the new Home Office funded ChangeUp Infrastructure strategy which will enable us not only to build sustainable local and citywide B&ME infrastructure, but also at the sub-regional level working with the voluntary and community sectors and across the counties of Devon and Cornwall, and the cities of Plymouth and Torbay. The ChangeUp Infrastructure 10 year programme is designed to build the capacity and infrastructure of all voluntary and community sector organisations including B&ME through:

- Governance
- Performance Improvement
- Strengthening Diversity
- Workforce Development
- ICT
- Volunteering

Fata He's role will be to bring specialist sub-regional stakeholders together to agree a ten year action plan which includes working with marginalised groups. These issues are integral to the development of sub-regional hubs. As such, the Home Office have declared that diversity (race equality and community cohesion) should be a core component of standards for performance improvement in infrastructure building including implementing the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 where organisations receive public funding. Our interests as previously expressed within this framework is to build effective links with other ABI's (e.g. DRC) in order to establish sustainable inclusion and diversity sub-groups / theme groups through using the above themes and in partnership with other organisations, so that these groups are able to attain their own representative voice and be in a position to assess and recommend priority and actions, monitor and evaluate programs and projects that directly affect their needs within neighbourhoods, and which affect policy locally, sub-regionally and regionally.

6.0 Social Enterprise

Fata He BME Development was established in April 2002, following a breakdown in the Black and Minority Ethnic Coalition of Plymouth (BMECOP). In May 2003 Fata He became the very first Black led organisation in the city to gain legal entity as a limited company. It is also the very first Black led organisation set up as a social enterprise which although having community as well as social and commercial aims is democratically owned by its members, and B&ME communities. As most social enterprise's Fata He aims often conflict with creating enough resources through training and research to stay afloat and to provide much needed services with social returns. This is not seen as an easy task as the level of support locally and regionally to social enterprise's is very poor let alone one which is B&ME led.

A recent report commissioned by a large bank '*Turning Big Ideas into Viable Social Enterprise*' (Cardiff University, 2004) suggests that the government in its drive to offer technical business support to the UK's social economy lacks focus as it is too basic and fails to understand the needs of its sector it is supposed to help particularly through local area based initiatives (ABI's). A further finding from this report conclude that social enterprises need more of the right kind of support such as building their own internal infrastructure first.

Thus within the framework of ChangeUp Fata He through commissioned work from DRC would create an innovative and creative locally based community social enterprise program that positively seeks tackling social inclusion which includes building and developing short and longer term trust with hard-to-employ groups particularly, B&ME residents who have experienced a long history of discriminatory exclusion in relation to employment and self-employment opportunities.

One of the main thrusts within this area would be for DRC to acknowledge and recognise a 'considerable need' for more support training which further recognises the unique expertise of B&ME practitioners within Fata He and its partner organisation and accountable (Wolseley CEDT) body, including other organisations such as Co-Active to provide expert training based on their expertise of managing large organisations, and in their skills in achieving and sustaining both social and economic goals. It is also within this area that Fata He would wish to see the inclusion of young people actively supported. The ChangeUp infrastructure program, and NDC program are both intended to achieve a long life, thus the benefits of encouraging and actively including young people within these programs would provide opportunities and realise an emergence of future local business and community leaders who have been empowered and supported locally, and who will significantly add to the social and economic growth and wealth of the community and the city.

7.0 Current Position: DRC and it's engagement with B&ME Communities

Since the B&ME consultation day, which took place on 21 November 2002 at the Royal Fleet Club in Devonport very little has happened in terms of DRC's effective engagement with B&ME communities. Although this has been recognised by DRC as an underdeveloped and weak area, the appointment of a dedicated B&ME worker further viewed as a positive move by DRC in which to provide outreach work and consultation in order to highlight the specific needs of B&ME residents in more detail has achieved very little in reaching out to all BME communities within the area.

Fata He could indeed be critical of DRC's record relating to B&ME work carried out to date. However, it has been recognised that throughout many of the B&ME Focus Group and other activities that Fata He attended, many of the initial teething problems were due to the DRC B&ME worker's lack of engagement with B&ME groups. Subsequently, and upon reflection, these issues were primarily due to the worker's lack of understanding the community development process coupled with inexperience in working with a long-standing and indigenous B&ME community who had already experienced a historical record of exclusion from social and economic ABI's within the Devonport area.

Fata He mention this, as from personal experience and from work carried out prior to the inception of the NDC programme in Devonport, community development especially within B&ME or any other community of interest can very often take many years to develop trusting relationships with participants rather than months, and as was highlighted at many of the B&ME Focus Group meetings which were mainly attended by B&ME residents from the African refugee community which further highlights that the DRC B&ME worker felt more comfortable engaging with people from her own ethnic background. This type of engagement, as has been shown can have consequences on other B&ME community individuals feeling that they are excluded and their needs and views are not valued within the DRC program. Hence, since the resignation of the B&ME worker, the inception of informal social evenings supported by the current B&ME DRC Board

representative, and the work carried out by Fata He in bringing together all sections of B&ME communities and the wider community suggests that there is now a real need to ensure that DRC staff and Board Members are fully included in all future aspects of work relating to Devonport's B&ME communities.

7.1 DRC's Financial Contribution to Devonport B&ME Communities

Fata He has found it necessary to report on previous requested information which has been identified as a serious outstanding issue for the B&ME Focus Group for over 18 months. The issue relates specifically to expenditure in relation to monies spent directly by DRC on B&ME communities since April 2001. Secondly, there needed to be an acknowledgement and record of DRC staff and Board Members receiving equalities and race awareness training. And finally recognition of B&ME input into the Devonport Race Equality Action Plan (REAP), and acceptance of responsibility from DRC as to how the REAP is to be monitored and evaluated.

With regard to information recently received from DRC relating to financial details on projects benefiting only B&ME residents as B&ME residents from April 2001 to date, DRC responded with the following information:

...The overall sum we have recorded is £131,334.83. Of this figure, £71,595.48 relates to salary and associated on-costs (pension, NI etc) for the BME Worker. However, it is likely that this overall figure is higher as we were not separately recording BME community related expenditure prior to June 2003 and therefore most expenditure to this date is likely to be excluded. It is worth noting separately that the total approved level of funding for projects specifically relating to BME communities is £145,749 of which £113,873 has been spent to date... (DRC, April 2005).

It is also worth noting that the accountable body for the Devonport NDC programme is Plymouth City Council. As such, and bearing in mind that NDC funding is public money in which some local B&ME residents pay income and community tax and those who own local businesses also pay business rates have in some ways contributed to NDC funding. With regard to 'projects specifically relating to BME communities' we would ask which BME projects have been specifically funded? And considering the amount of information DRC request in claim forms in relation to its own funded projects, we would have expected to see much more detailed breakdown of costings in financial information. Moreover, to date, Fata He was aware that we were the only B&ME project funded by DRC at a cost of £19,250.00? Secondly, the appointment of a B&ME Worker was financed directly within the DRC staff team, and not within a local B&ME organisation. Thus, the £71,595.48 expenditure for such a post (incl. Pension and NI) cannot be included as an amount directly spent on B&ME communities, and therefore cannot be seen as a direct benefit to B&ME communities.

If we were to deduct the salary and associated on – costs for the DRC BME Worker (71,595.48), from the overall sum (£134,334.83) recorded to date by DRC this would equate to balance of (£62,739.35). If the further amount of (£19,250) funding, which relates to the Fata He pilot project was deducted from this amount we are left with a balance of £43,489.35. Thus even if we were to take into account the costs of the BME Consultation Event (November, 2002), the small number of previous B&ME Acorn applications, a B&ME trip to the seaside, and the small number of B&ME informal social evenings that have taken place we are at lengths in attempting to understand how

the engagement and BME expenditure equates to **£43,489.35**? Furthermore, in our request to DRC for this information, and in their response further states that *'It is worth noting separately that the total approved level of funding for projects specifically relating to BME communities is £145,749 of which £113,873 has been spent to date'* (DRC, April 2005).

We find major disparities in understanding exactly how, and what has actually been DRC's contribution to Devonport's B&ME communities. Moreover, if as highlighted above is an indication of how DRC communicates its financial information to its Board, projects and the wider community, Fata He were certainly confused in attempting to understand, comprehend or break down how funding is allocated to specific projects and communities of interest. Thus, if we were confused it is no wonder that the wider community have issues with the way DRC conducts its business in terms of its probity, openness, transparency, plain English etc, and this may go some ways to understanding why residents particularly those from B&ME communities do not trust or have faith in DRC delivering an effective and equal NDC program which residents will simply not queue up to join.

7.2 Race Awareness Training (R.A.T.)

Further request from DRC was to establish how effective and how many DRC staff and DRC Board Members had received (RAT). The response from DRC (April 2005) stated that prior to its restructuring, all 16 staff members had received racism awareness training, and this included two DRC secondees. Further training had taken place with 7 community Board members, and DRC further stated that agency Board members were likely to have received similar training within their own organisations.

Once again, Fata He can be critical of DRC's attitude toward race awareness training, which has been an on-going concern for members of the B&ME community since the early days of the NDC program. Although we can congratulate DRC in its attempt at ensuring that staff and Board members receive race training, our concern is in (i) *the process in selecting the individuals/group who delivered the training as this was not agreed by the Race Equality Working Group which Fata He were a member of?* (ii) *there was, and has been no published material or feedback to the B&ME Focus Group or to the B&ME community as to the success of the program and feedback from those who took part* (iii) *Fata He believe that training such as this is an on-going process and as such, should be an on-going requirement for **All** Board members whether agency or not. They are also part of a team and accountable to the Devonport community.* We would further recommend that issues relating to exclusion are not just relevant to B&ME communities in terms of 'race' but are just as relevant in terms of 'recognising culture and difference'. Secondly, further training should include Anti-discriminatory practice which relates to all socially excluded and minority groups.

We would therefore recommend that any future training programmes (in terms of its material and style of delivery) such as the one highlighted for June 2005, are assessed by those groups who have recognised expertise in the areas concerned. This would go some ways in validating DRC training programs which have the backing and support of communities of interest.

7.3 DRC's Race Equality Action Plan

Section 7: Monitoring and Evaluation of the ***New Deal for Communities – Race Equality Guidance*** suggests that *...monitoring and evaluation will be a central feature of all aspects of the New Deal for Communities programme. Monitoring race equality is a key part of this effort* (DETR, 2000:49-51). As such ethnic monitoring should allow DRC to continually check as part of an on-going process how well they are involving and benefiting B&ME residents within projects and activities.

Key questions designed by the Race Equality Guidance Steering Group were to highlight to NDC programmes how to draw up an action checklist in which to monitor the extent to which B&ME residents and groups are involved in regeneration and are benefiting from NDC projects. These action points included the following examples:

- What is the ethnic profile of the local community?
- How inclusive is the partnership?
- How many B&ME organisations are involved, and in what capacity?
- How many B&ME people are taking part in public meetings?
- In terms of the main objectives of the NDC programme, what is the expected profile of those local residents participating and benefiting?
- Will it be appropriate to target certain B&ME communities or specific B&ME individuals for a particular project to address a particular need?
(Source: NDC Race Equality Guidance (DETR, 2000:50).

Firstly, Fata He recognise and are aware of the many contentious issues relating to the DRC Race Equality Action Plan (REAP). We will therefore first assess and comment on the revised Draft REAP dated December 2004 before looking at other issues directly related to REAP before finally looking at a positive way forward in which DRC, partners, and the B&ME communities themselves can feel more at ease with, and in ensuring its implementation as an effective tool in tracking the process and progress of B&ME participation and activity in the NDC program.

DRC has suggested that it has identified and reviewed its REAP by using information from:

1. Advice and guidance from a variety of sources including: NRU Race Equality Guidelines, NRU Guidance Notes (PN27), Governance Health Check and PN25, Partnership checklist, DRC Handbook and DRC Delivery Plan.
2. Specific recommendations for Devonport using feedback from three pieces of work; AHG Consultancy independent review of DRC's initial REAP, Race for Opportunities benchmarking, and the Performance Management Framework.
3. Feedback from DRC staff team and the local community (including the BME consultation day).

The Draft REAP document then goes onto explaining a brief context of Devonport's B&ME communities, DRC's approach in engaging with B&ME communities and, how the REAP will fit into the bigger picture.

Taking the second heading in the Draft REAP (How has DRC identified its Race Equality Action Plan?) and by identifying the comments made at points 1 and 2 one can clearly see why there are points of contention. Firstly, under point 2 there is no mention of the specific brief commissioned by DRC in March 2004 to Fata He BME Development, as was agreed at the February BME Focus Group meeting, that Fata He be commissioned by DRC to write a **'Brief for an external advisor to undertake an evaluation on Devonport New Deal for Communities progress in the implementation of its Race Equality Action Plan'**. (A full copy of the Fata He BME Brief commissioned by DRC is submitted at appendix A).

The aims of the brief submitted to DRC on Friday 12 March 2004 after being approved by the B&ME Focus Group were to:

- Facilitate a one day workshop in order to explore black and minority ethnic (B&ME) participant's perspectives on their experiences of area regeneration programmes such as New Deal for communities.
- To draw together all information through a number of exercises and group discussions thus enabling participatory approaches to community involvement in monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in which to address the contents of this brief
- To write a draft brief report (incorporating the requirements for a revised REAP), which would be circulated to all B&ME participants
- On receiving feedback from B&ME participants prepare final write-up brief and deliver to Devonport NDC.

We further advised that this brief should be read in conjunction with a number of other documents including the NDC Race Equality Guidance issued by the DETR in February 2000.

Fata He facilitated a workshop on Tuesday 9 March 2004, and conducted several group exercises in which B&ME residents were asked to design a 'wish list' and comment on key issues which were designed to assist DRC, and the advisor in identifying some of the concerns and needs of local B&ME people who took part in developing the brief. Reproduced below are the comments and priorities developed by B&ME residents who took part in the workshop:

Group 1.

1. Equal treatment in decision-making. For example, B&ME woman and young people involved in decision making. Wish to see a black police officer.
2. A private safe place for B&ME people only to meet and support each other. Train the children about culture and raise awareness on issues affecting the community, and also identify different needs. For example, education, employment, training, recognition of qualifications. There should also be culture awareness about our home countries: food; clothes; political situation; music; behaviour and religion.
3. Want to see Black projects run by Black people and for Black people with support from other organisations. Existing Black projects should be funded and supported in a constructive manner. There were also issues highlighted around health for

example, Black GP in local surgery and issues relating to problems with accessing health information.

The key issues for group 1 were:

- Inclusion in all decision-making, and wish to work more closely with the police in terms of decision-making on matters of security (Racist abuse, harassment etc) implementing a clear process of communication.
- Private building/space to meet and highlight issues, support and training for all
- Fund and support B&ME projects.

Group 2.

1. Live in a happy environment, where we are treated equally and with respect. Wish to receive support from service providers. Provide financial support to B&ME projects such as Fata He, to help support all B&ME groups to overcome their problems.
2. Recognition of skills – equal opportunities for jobs, courses and training. Education – to help overcome language barriers and help overcome racism for example, not treated as equals particularly with regard to B&ME people engaging with local GP's, further identified barriers with GP's receptionist
3. recreational activities for B&ME people – own centre or hall – music – football other activities for young people.

The Key issues for group 2 were:

- support from service providers and financial support to B&ME groups
- recognition of B&ME skills and equal opportunities in jobs, courses and training
- recreational activities including the need for a centre or hall

After this session the two groups were brought together and asked to compare and prioritise all wishes and key issues into 3 areas of priority. These were identified as:

Priority 1.

- A private safe space for B&ME people to meet and support each other
- Train and raise awareness on community issues, and identify different needs
- Fund and support B&ME projects
- Live in a happy environment
- Recreational activities – centre or hall

Priority 2.

- Equal treatment and inclusion in all decision-making – B&ME women and young people involved in decision-making process
- Treated equally and with respect – particularly with regard to health i.e. access GP's surgeries, receptionist can sometimes be a barrier

Priority 3.

- Wish to see Black projects run by Black people for Black people with support from other organisations
- Black projects should be funded and supported in a constructive manner
- Education, employment, training and recognition of qualifications
- Cultural awareness of home countries i.e. food, clothes, music, behaviour, religion and political situations (why we are here as refugees and asylum seekers)
- Equal opportunities in education, jobs, courses and training
- Funding support to B&ME groups i.e. Fata He to assist all B&ME groups to overcome their problems

The group further went on to discuss in detail the appointment of the external advisor, purpose of the project, planning and preparation and other information pertaining to how B&ME people felt the external advisor should conduct and complete the REAP. The document 'Brief' ends with a conclusion which states that ... *'it should also be emphasised that local B&ME people involved in this brief both welcomed and recognised the importance and value that evaluation of Devonport NDC's progress in the implementation of its Race Equality Action Plan should bring to the overall future planning and consultation in effectively hearing the voice of, and addressing the needs of its B&ME community within the local NDC regeneration programme'* (Glover, 2004).

It therefore needs to be noted within the contents of this report which is about addressing and developing effective mechanisms for provision and participation of B&ME people in Devonport's NDC programme, the reason as to why Fata He BME Development were commissioned by DRC to undertake a B&ME workshop in which to gather B&ME residents perspectives and experiences which would have enabled participatory approaches to B&ME involvement in monitoring and evaluation mechanisms within the REAP and the overall delivery of DRC projects were not included as part of the **'Advice and guidance from a variety of sources'** suggested at point 1 of the 'Board Paper: DRC Race Equality Action Plan (REAP)' presented to the Board on 14 December 2004, and dated 4 April 2005.

Furthermore, given that the Fata He Brief contained vital guidance and information necessary for DRC and the external advisor in addressing the concerns of B&ME residents it appears that the DRC Board were not shown, or have not been informed of the contents of the Fata He Brief for an external advisor to undertake an evaluation of NDC's progress in implementing its REAP. We would further suggest that had this document been made available to the Board and to the external advisor much of the noted contention concerning the lack of input by B&ME residents would have indeed created necessary mechanisms in which to enable DRC to match its milestones with measurable outcomes which had been previously agreed and had been supported by B&ME residents who took part in addressing their concerns with regard to the DRC REAP.

It has been further noted within the DRC Draft REAP relating to 'Devonport Context' (page 1-2) to address concerns regarding the style of language and terminology used within this section.

Firstly, there are inherent problems regarding descriptions of ethnic groups thus DRC needs to include a reference relating to the terminology it uses within the REAP. In order to assist this

process and to describe B&ME residents we would suggest that an alternative might used, and would suggest DRC consider the following as an acceptable alternative:

'The style of language, interpretation and issues relating to terminology in describing B&ME people are fraught with danger, and such definitions are not neutral in distinguishing the many different collections of social groups evident within the local area of Devonport. Secondly, we need to be cautious how the use of such language might homogenise and minimise the many important diverse cultures and histories relating to the many different people of both ethnic and geographical origin. Those who have been labelled 'Black' are normally referred to as New Commonwealth migrants who came to this country in the late 1940s. These ethnic groups consisted of people of African, African-Caribbean and Asian origin.

As the term 'Black' has continued to be used by successive governments to describe 'non-white' groups on account of their skin colour it is often used by other minority ethnic groups (i.e Chinese, Kurdish, Gypsies etc) on political grounds. For example, in areas of low ethnic minority settlement (i.e. Plymouth) where some minority ethnic groups might describe themselves as 'Black' at times of political unrest (BNP voting) in order to feel less vulnerable, in forming solidarity, and safety in numbers being part of a much wider minority ethnic community. Moreover, as black and other minority ethnic groups experience varying levels of racism within their neighbourhoods much more needs to be achieved in furthering debates on the adoption of an acceptable terminology which begins to capture many of the rich and cultural connections of these groups, and which need to be correctly interpreted in central and local government policies' (Glover, 2003).

Secondly, the document refers to '*a BME population which is largely transient*' and uses as an example the large number of asylum seekers who have recently moved out of the area. There needs to be some consideration to who actually is being referred to as a transient population. The only minority ethnic community who could truly be described as being transient are Gypsies and Travellers who very often maintain a nomadic lifestyle where they are always on the move or being 'moved on'. The reason why asylum seekers left the Devonport area were due to some gaining refugee status and have since remained in Devonport and are now recognised as B&ME residents. Other asylum seekers had to leave due to changes in government asylum housing legislation thus to describe the BME population in Devonport as being largely transient suggests a population that is always on the move. If they had moved of their own accord over a period of time they might be referred to as a 'migrating' population. As such, to describe the Devonport B&ME population as transient is incorrect.

With regard to the comment that '*The BME population is made up of individuals and families dispersed across the area, many are inter-married or of mixed race, but all part of the wider community*', raises concern for the following reasons: If DRC were describing the entire population of Devonport then such a statement would be correct. However, as the REAP is referring specifically to the BME population in Devonport then for reasons of monitoring and evaluation there would need to be a way to describe ethnic backgrounds of residents in order to indicate how some B&ME residents were receiving more or less than other B&ME residents. This is even more important within REAP given that DRC are expected to monitor projects and activities in order to ensure that certain groups are not being disadvantaged or excluded?

We have therefore used the word 'group' to describe different B&ME residents who might be disadvantaged or excluded. This simply refers to the recommendations made by the Commission

for Racial Equality (CRE) in the 2001 Census for ethnic origin classification in order that regeneration partnerships such as NDC programmes are better able to identify particular ethnic groups within their local areas. Thus although within B&ME groups there are B&ME individuals and families dispersed across the area they are in effect different members of different groups for example, African, African-Caribbean, Chinese, Irish etc. Finally, if B&ME residents are not differentiated by their ethnic groups there is an inherent danger of assuming that a 'one-size fits all' and this would clearly be detrimental in effectively monitoring and evaluating DRC in terms of its projects, outputs and outcomes, and as to which groups might be included and those who are not.

The second part of the comment that many are *'inter-married or of mixed race'* further raises concern as to who? Or what group is being referred to? Secondly, the term *'mixed race'* tends to view such individuals as belonging to black groups only. Thus, we prefer to use the term *'mixed heritage'* which better describes individuals from all ethnic groups.

Previous research conducted in Devonport 2002 by Fata He found that many children described as 'mixed heritage' were in a family where the mother was white. Furthermore, many were single parents and were not inter-married as described in the DRC Draft REAP. Most of the mixed heritage children born in the city and indeed Devonport have been the result of previous interracial relationships which as described in section 3.1 and 3.2 of this report suggested a long-standing history of 'mixed heritage' interracial relationships, some of who have married into, and out of their various ethnic backgrounds. There are of course a number of other adults and children within the Devonport area who could also reasonably be described as 'mixed heritage' in terms of their ethnicity and mixed relationships within local Irish and Gypsy groups, as well as within those from religious groups. Finally, whether those of 'mixed heritage' origin see themselves as *'all part of the wider community'* is highly questionable and debatable.

In the final part of this section the BME population is referred to as *'In addition, many of the remaining BME residents are second and third generation who are British and some do not feel inclined to join a community based on their ethnic origin'*. As previously highlighted, due to the arrival of New Commonwealth migrants in the late 1940s, African merchant seaman in the 1950s and black Military personnel who began arriving in the city in the early 1970s, some of whom would have married into the white community, and bearing in mind that there are perhaps only one or two long-standing indigenous 'mixed heritage' families living in Devonport who would fall into this category it would be most unlikely that they could be described as 'many of the remaining BME residents' are second and third generation'.

Moreover, since the dispersal of asylum seekers to Plymouth in 2001, it could be further argued that a number of B&ME people living in the Devonport area since gaining refugee status are of black African origin, and therefore could not be described as being second or third generation British. With regard to their feeling not inclined to join a community based on their ethnic origin is highly debatable, as Fata He would suggest that some B&ME residents from a number of ethnic groups have been involved in DRC activities for example, BME Focus Group albeit on a small scale. We would therefore suggest that this statement might refer to the fact that the majority of B&ME residents might feel that they have not been properly consulted as to their exact priorities and needs within the overall regeneration process.

On a final note within this section, the DRC Draft REAP also refers to *'How will the Race Equality Action Plan fit into the bigger picture?'* The Draft REAP further states that *'DRC's future approach to delivering the REAP is to share responsibility across the staff team as one aspect of inclusive working practice'*. An important point worth considering for DRC in sharing that responsibility must also include how they are to be monitored, and by whom? It might seem sensible in that as B&ME residents are to be the ultimate beneficiaries of any REAP that any responsibility in delivering the REAP is shared with the B&ME Board representative and members of the B&ME community perhaps through a joint working party. Thus all milestones, responsibility, target dates and measurable outcomes would need to be ratified through a joint-decision process which includes on-going and meaningful consultation with the B&ME community or its elected B&ME representatives.

This would seem to be an effective method for ensuring that B&ME residents part-own the REAP by feeling included and part of it, and how it might be used as a monitoring and evaluation tool to deliver much needed services and projects across the wider NDC delivery process. This would further benefit DRC by being seen as a mechanism of good practice in terms of working with a socially excluded group which would be of immense benefit in future DRC's external assessment evaluation reviews and reports.

8.0 Summary and Conclusion

As previously highlighted in the introduction to this report within most analytical and evaluative research it is usually customary to remain unbiased in comparison to the large number of commissioned reports which often appear biased towards the agency paying for such research. Fata He's stance on this issue, and from the perspective of a black-led community sector infrastructure organisation is to *'tell it as it is'*. As such, the initial reaction to those who read this report might possibly be to place it in an area where it will never see daylight again. Our decision in taking this approach is purely intended to allow for DRC and the wider community to open up to a meaningful open, honest and transparent agenda which turns negative action into positive outcomes. Based on this principle a number of important points for future development have arisen from this report, which will have clear implications for the future direction of effective and meaningful provision and participation of B&ME residents in the Devonport NDC programme, and in providing positive outcomes for DRC in its future GOSW assessment and other external evaluation reviews.

Overall this report has been critical of DRC in its historical pattern of piecemeal development without any sustained strategic approach towards issues of race and racism; projects directly benefiting B&ME residents; and in its failure to develop a more imaginative approach to engaging with B&ME groups particularly young B&ME people. However, although DRC might defend its past achievements in particular, the B&ME Consultation Day, and the B&ME Focus Group (which they did not achieve alone), and which offered some promise of future B&ME provision in the area in the short term, B&ME communities within Devonport still remain underdeveloped and without a clear and prioritised developed framework on which to build on, and which positively values and recognises their position within the community. If these issues are not taken seriously by the DRC Board and staff team it will further weaken B&ME groups in their ability to survive in an increasingly fluid and competitive regeneration environment which will continue to change around them leaving them without a sense of place, and which delegates them to an already socially excluded position.

Whilst NDC funding has enabled previously neglected areas to be addressed – most notably, the physical environment in terms of public space and new housing, little social application has been sufficiently developed and prioritised to meet the specific types of needs expressed by B&ME residents in the community. Moreover, although Fata He and the B&ME Board representative have achieved some small pieces of work (one-day-events and informal social evenings) with limited resources the amount of DRC funding provided has been poorly conceptualised further leading to poor provision when compared to funding and resources to other organisations in the area as is user consultation and representation.

Black and minority ethnic led specialist organisations such as Fata He play an important role in delivering much needed social, educational and welfare services on behalf of diverse communities. However, despite the comprehensive range of projects and support functions that DRC provides, B&ME groups have historically faced and continue to face a number of major challenges and obstacles. The lack of understanding, recognition and valuing Fata He's input (REAP Brief, REWG, BME Focus Group etc) and by dictating in closed meetings as to who should have access to DRC commissioned Fata He documents has created an atmosphere of mistrust on both sides. Whether the disclosure of such documents to the wider community was

unintentionally or intentionally confidentially classified by DRC staff members and certain members of the Board such actions have, and will continue to severely restrict and impede the effective future growth and development of B&ME residents, and might further impact on Fata He's long-term sustainability in delivering vital and much needed support to B&ME residents. We therefore suggest that DRC recognise that Fata He's position as a specialist black –led organisation which attempts to deliver specialist services to B&ME and members from the wider community is positively valued as a compliment, rather than an alternative to the overall future success of the NDC programme.

This report has further highlighted the importance of adopting community cohesion and capacity infrastructure building as enabling mechanisms within the NDC programme in order to develop a sustainable and cohesive community where there exists a common vision and a sense of belonging which is shared by all members of the community. The benefits of integrating young people, parents and agency representatives within the neighbourhood through informal and formal social gatherings allows the building of strong positive relationships to be formed coupled with the diversity and recognition of people's backgrounds, cultures and circumstances being positively valued.

The further benefit of Fata He's role as the sub-regional B&ME ChangeUp Infrastructure lead body will enable the capacity building of Devonport's B&ME residents and other minority groups to be firmly embedded within DRC's strategic objectives and in meeting its K09 objective which endeavours to *'engage all disadvantaged and minority groups in the NDC and other regeneration processes'*. Although DRC might feel it would be relegated to an 'arms length' approach, we would ensure that they are incorporated as a partner in the developmental planning process, community and user consultation, and in future strategic approaches to problem solving and provision. We view this as positive and participative inter-agency work coupled with finding new innovative ways of resourcing priority areas and access to professional expertise. We have further suggested that DRC pays particular attention to the benefits of community placed social enterprise through which Fata He and its accountable body Wolseley Trust and partner Co-active, would seek to tackle social exclusion through building and developing trust with hard-to-employ groups particularly B&ME residents who through long-term and often discriminatory exclusion have been neglected in employment and self-employment opportunities.

We would therefore suggest that if DRC are interested in seeking a continuing consultative and involving B&ME agenda within its priority action plans it will need to review how it intends to commission specialist B&ME service provision within the community across the wide range of user benefit which includes; supply, needs, resources, user perspectives, cross-cultural arrangements, capital investment, desired outcomes, quality of monitoring, responsibilities and authority of representation. All these user benefits should be *'proofed'* for the concerns of B&ME residents and specialist provider as a matter of standard equal opportunity practice. It is within this lack of strategic approach by DRC that Fata He recommends DRC consider the commissioning of Fata He BME Development as the locally based specialist B&ME provider which not only wishes to deliver vital and much need support to B&ME residents and the wider community through an inclusive community cohesion agenda, but is recognised for assisting

DRC in developing its longer term REAP, themed groups, communication, community engagement and consultation strategy.

It is clear from the contents of this report that particular and unprecedented challenges face DRC and members of the Devonport community in the future as it continues to concentrate on meeting the needs of a neighbourhood characterised by multiple disadvantage. Whilst NDC funding has enabled previously neglected areas to be addressed most notably relating to the physical environment which appear to be largely audit and paper directed, very little in the way of consultation, participation and user involvement mechanisms have been deployed. Consequently, B&ME residents and some members from the wider community feel excluded from the NDC regeneration process which will ultimately signify failure for DRC in being able to meet 'quality measures' of user-appropriate provision.

However, DRC must be congratulated for its inter-agency working which has improved dramatically over the past 2 year's, and further given that it has accepted that monitoring and evaluation although chronically underdeveloped in practice has now entered its vocabulary of funded projects there offers a promise of user input through an inclusion and diversity theme group which although previously had not been considered may now visualise a positive joint-working relationship in which minority group representation will be able to assess (monitor and evaluate) DRC's and their own impact on future provision and areas of priority within the community.

Finally, if DRC accept that the contents of this report although critical at some of their past and current practices are willing to acknowledge the many positive challenges which have been identified in this report, and are further willing to adapt to new methods and mechanisms in meeting these highlighted needs as an equality issue. Experience has shown that residents are more likely to be open about commitments made on behalf of DRC. Furthermore, enabling DRC to review its current position and in its future communicating of active commitments to equality of opportunity through projects and future commissioned work will ensure that it is effectively meeting the challenges of a positive and affirmed anti-discriminatory agenda (which does not oppress people into conforming) and culturally diverse commitment which goes beyond paper policies into good day-to-day practice and management which has robust systems for monitoring their own performance on race equality, including internal transparent accountability arrangements and external arrangements with minority group representation from within the B&ME and wider community.

9.0 Recommendations

1.0 DRC need to be explicit about its commitment to equality of opportunity in access to its community members and local community based service providers. Such a commitment to valuing diversity and challenging discrimination and harassment must take a range of effective measures to ensure that DRC staff, Board members and funded or future commissioned projects know of, and act upon anti-discriminatory commitments. These should include:

- Adopt a clear equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory statement of principle.

- Drafting a policy or action plan (in consultation with, and representation from groups concerned i.e. Inclusion and Diversity Theme Group) that sets out the measures DRC is going to take to achieve its statement of principle.
- Procedures will also need to be included for senior staff members and Board members to follow if complaints are made that someone feels they are being treated unfairly or harassed.
- Such measures should be made clear in formal agreements with funded projects – what is expected of them – not to discriminate or harass anyone.
- All staff, all Board members, and senior managers from DRC funded projects should be trained in the obligations of anti-discriminatory practice, and the obligations that the statement of principles places on themselves/or organisation.
- Tenders for training are sourced locally first. Government requirements suggest that local people and services know best the needs of their local community.
- The Race Equality Action Plan (REAP) should remain the responsibility of DRC. However, the monitoring and evaluation of its effectiveness should include a representative B&ME community joint-working group, or an independent assessment by an agreed suitably qualified organisation.

2.0 DRC adopts and implements the positive benefits of community cohesion and B&ME capacity infrastructure building by:

- Commissioning Fata He BME Development, who has already had citywide experience of delivering a project under the Plymouth Community Cohesion Facilitation Programme. Fata He would be responsible for supporting a network of local community groups (including schools and young people) and individuals, and in bringing them together to promote the benefit of community cohesion through tackling ignorance, racial prejudice and conflict resolution. The benefits to DRC will see a better mix of people from different ethnic backgrounds taking part in local projects and activities; reduction in the number of unreported racist incidences; reduction in youth crime; increase in young people accessing local and citywide youth service provision; changes in attitudes, behaviour and perceived perceptions from all sections of the community; produces an effective mechanism for good practice in DRC's external assessment and evaluation reviews.
- The benefits of Fata He BME Development and social enterprise have been extensively highlighted throughout this report albeit that it is regionally recognised that some people from various ethnic groups are under-represented in particular sections of the community and in particular types of work or self-employment. As previously expressed Fata He would take effective steps to reach hard-to-employ groups and through a joint communication strategy with DRC and other partners tell people about job opportunities, work experience for school leavers, open days, and run various training and employment familiarisation events to encourage people

from hard-to-employ groups to apply for jobs and self-employment opportunities.

- Our capacity building and community cohesion strategy would also involve continued work with local schools. In particular, Parkside Community Technology College which has experienced a number of racist problems. We continue to work in the school in promoting mutual understanding and encouraging friendships between children from the many diverse backgrounds evident in the school. However, there is a great need to ensure that the school does not itself become segregated from the community. Thus part of our forward strategy will be in ensuring that this school in particular is used as a community facility by all sections of the communities it serves, likewise is a need to ensure that parents are fully involved in future planned informal social evenings.

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