

Review of Social Landlords' Implementation of the Black, Minority Ethnic (BME)

Housing Action Plan for Wales – October 2005 (Employment Practice Solutions (EPS) Report)

List of 'Suggestions to Move Forward' in the Review for the Welsh Assembly Government:

	Research 'Suggestions to Move Forward'	Action for the Welsh Assembly Government	Progress
1	Maintaining Momentum	The Welsh Assembly Government should consider providing organisations with feedback on their BME housing strategies and action plans.	Feedback was sent to local authorities and group consortium on their BME strategies in February 2006. Feedback has been given to Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) on their race equality plans through the Employment Practice Solutions (EPS) report, which was published on the Assembly website and includes best practice to be considered by RSLs when reviewing their plans. Existing plans should be built upon in light of this best practice.
2	Maintaining Momentum	The Welsh Assembly Government should consider reinforcing the links between the Welsh Assembly Government and future Inspection Regulatory Regimes.	The regulatory code for housing associations in Wales has recently been published. This includes a section on equal opportunities. Support for inspection processes focussing on BME issues will continue.

3	Leading by example	The Welsh Assembly Government should consider regularly publishing and disseminating its own progress reports and including progress on its own employment policies/practices and training for staff.	This report updating the Committee is in the public domain. The Race Equality Scheme is also in the public domain.
4	Leading by example	The Welsh Assembly Government should consider the feasibility of nominating a co-ordinator to ensure that all the Welsh Assembly Government actions are being undertaken in a joined-up way and to ensure that any areas where overlap of responsibility occurs are adequately and effectively addressed.	The Welsh Assembly Government does have staff at senior levels appointed as equality champions and these are in place for every department ensuring that actions are undertaken in a joined up way. This is coordinated by the Strategic Equality Diversity Unit.
5	Mainstreaming	Consideration should be given to clearly identifying actions likely to have local authority-wide implications in any future or updated Welsh Assembly Government BME Housing Action Plan.	The review group agreed that this is not appropriate for the BME Housing Action Plan. Tai Pawb has been working with 9 RSLs to increase the employment of BME staff. The working group will consider this further in relation to recruitment policies in housing departments.
6	Definitions of BME	The Welsh Assembly Government should consider agreeing a clear and common definition of BME to be used throughout Wales.	There are no plans to adopt the term Minority Ethnic instead of Black Minority Ethnic as BME is the term used in WAG Literature and to change it may cause confusion.
7	Self-Assessment against the Welsh Assembly Government	The Welsh Assembly Government should consider developing a self-assessment	A SHMG project jointly funded by WAG and the WLGA has been approved to develop a self assessment

	BME Housing Action Plan	tool/toolkit. This would include a simple matrix of the key areas of the BME Housing Action Plan providing a method of cross-referencing to organisational strategy and action plan. It could also be used to log evidence and track organisational progress against the Welsh Assembly Government BME Housing Action Plan.	<p>toolkit to be used by local authorities on a number of key housing areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy • Homelessness • Repair and Maintenance <p>The working group is making recommendations to the practioner group developing the toolkit to ensure that the key areas of the BME housing action plan are identified within the toolkit. The strategy element of the toolkit has been looked and recommendations are going back to reinforce BME elements.</p>
8	Research and Dissemination	The Welsh Assembly Government, in consultation with Tai Pawb and relevant BME community groups, should consider ways of combining research involving BME groups to minimise the risk of these groups and individuals becoming overburdened and/or disillusioned.	The working group reported back to the full BME group meeting to be held in September 06.

9	Consultation and involvement of BME people in housing strategy development	The Welsh Assembly Government should reinforce the fact that involvement is not about doing research on groups but is about involving people in a meaningful way and this should extend to inviting comment/involvement in strategy development.	<p>It is essential that the housing requirements of BME groups (e.g. bigger properties) are taken into account. The Welsh Assembly Government can monitor what percentage of the social housing grant goes on BME projects.</p> <p>The local housing strategy guidance is in the process of being issued in its final form and provides guidance on involving BME people in housing strategy development. Comments from Tai Pawb and the Welsh Refugee Council have been incorporated.</p>
10	Empowering BME people: positive action	The Welsh Assembly Government should consider the feasibility of funding a BME trainee scheme along the lines of the Positive Action Training in Housing (PATH) scheme.	The working group is developing advice to WAG on the feasibility of WAG funding a scheme under SHMG. It is currently being considered as criteria for SHMG.
11	Consultants and contractors	The Welsh Assembly Government should consider making it clear to local authorities and housing associations that all contractors and consultants, including those with less than 20 employees, need to comply with race equality standards and that use of 'Construction Line' does not guarantee compliance.	The local housing strategy guidance issued for consultation refers to this.
12	Changes to Welsh Assembly	The Welsh Assembly Government should	The working group agreed that this is not appropriate

	Government BME Housing Action Plan for Wales	consider the feasibility of amending the BME Housing Action Plan for Wales so that it clearly identifies actions likely to have local authority-wide implications.	for the BME Housing Action Plan.
13	Changes to Welsh Assembly Government BME Housing Action Plan for Wales	<p>The Welsh Assembly Government should consider amending the BME Housing Action Plan for Wales to take account of following suggestions made by local authorities and housing associations on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) strengthening of section 14 on Gypsies and Travellers (ii) strengthening of section 12 on the private rented sector as many BME people are living in this sector and it was perceived that in some cases the sector provides very poor conditions. 	This has been completed and the action plan has been updated to reflect this. It has been published on the Assembly Internet site.