



Code of Good Practice On Black and Minority Ethnic Groups



Bolton's Compact

Bolton's Compact is a statement of partnership between the local statutory sector and voluntary and community sectors. The Compact represents a commitment to respect each other's rights and responsibilities.

The Compact aims to enhance the way voluntary and community groups and statutory organisations relate to each other, communicate and work together.

As part of the Compact 6 Codes of Good Practice will be produced:

- Black and Minority Ethnic Groups
 - Community Groups
 - Consultation
 - Funding
 - Partnership Working
 - Volunteering

Bolton's Code of Good Practice on BME Groups

This Code of Good Practice sets out principles, which all partners involved, consider essential to enabling the development of BME voluntary and community groups. BME groups may need more support because they are on average smaller, less well funded and, therefore, often find it harder to sustain themselves in the long term than other voluntary and community groups.

To effectively support the development of BME groups, the Code should be used together with the other Codes, especially the Codes on Community Groups and Funding.

Although the Code seeks to improve the working relationship between statutory organisations and BME groups, it can also be used by other agencies who want to adopt good practice in working with BME groups.

What Next?

All partners will be working to implement the Code. The BME Steering Group will meet 4 times a year to ensure that the Code makes a real difference to the lives of the people of Bolton. If your organisation would like to be involved please get in touch – contact details are on the back page.

Background

Bolton is fortunate to be home to a strong and diverse range of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) voluntary and community sector groups.

The statutory sector, and in particular signatories to the Compact, recognise that BME groups are uniquely well placed to assist in

- Promoting racial equality
- Representing BME communities
- Promoting community cohesion
- Improving the delivery of services to BME communities

The national Code of Good Practice states that BME groups tend to be disproportionately smaller and less well financed than the average voluntary and community sector organisation. Locally commissioned research, by Bolton Community Network and partners in the statutory sector, would tend to confirm that many BME groups in Bolton are in the same position.

The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (1999) led to the passing of new legislation which strengthened and extended race legislation in the UK. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 requires all public authorities, not only to work to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination, but also to promote race equality and good relations between people of different racial groups. There is a public duty that requires that race equality is mainstreamed and is integral in tackling institutional racism and promoting community cohesion. The Cattle Report (2001) announced the need to develop a 'new compact, or understanding, between all sections of the community', and to agree some common elements of "nationhood".

Because of the factors outlined in the three paragraphs above, the local statutory sector recognises that special attention needs to be paid to ensuring that sufficient support is available to maintain a strong and vibrant local BME voluntary and community sector.

Key Principles

Joint undertakings:

Commitment to Bolton's Community Cohesion Charter.

In December 2003 the Bolton Vision Partnership launched the Community Cohesion Charter for Bolton:

"Our Vision is that everyone in the Borough will be able to live peacefully in harmony with their neighbours and in their communities".

- The signatories to the code agree to promote community cohesion in all their activities as laid out in the charter.
- Raise awareness of the requirements of this Code to the wider statutory, voluntary and community sectors.

Statutory Sector undertakings:

The Statutory sector acknowledges that it has a responsibility to ensure that fair and equitable support is given to BME voluntary and community sector organisations. To do this it will undertake to:

1. Provide proportionate and appropriate support.

Agencies offering support or working with the voluntary/community sector will:

- Know what BME groups exist and what support is needed.
- Actively seek out opportunities to promote their services available to the voluntary and community sector.
- Continually develop the capacity and sustainability of BME groups through support, training and funding.
- Ensure that all communication, be it written or verbal, is accessible to the BME group.
- Assist, where applicable, in the setting up of new BME groups, where there is an identified need.

2. Monitor the support given to BME groups.

- Any agencies providing support will monitor how that support is used to sustain and improve the wellbeing of BME groups.
- Records will show what proportion of the support to the voluntary and community sector is going to BME groups.
- The principle of self declaration will apply. That is, groups will be invited to say whether or not they are a Black and Minority Ethnic group and which group they belong to.

3. Support BME groups to effectively participate.

- Make every effort to reach existing BME groups and encourage their participation.
- Recognise the barriers to participation by BME groups and seek to overcome them.
- Recognise the important role that BME groups play in racial equality and community cohesion and ensure, through development, they are able to reach their full potential to participate.
- Encourage individuals from BME communities to participate in the activities of BME groups.

4. Ensure effective consultation with BME groups (see also Code of Good Practice on Consultation).

- Involve Black and Minority Ethnic Voluntary and Community Sector organisations at an appropriate point and level in all relevant consultation exercises.

Black and Minority Ethnic voluntary and community sector's undertakings

1. Ensure the effective development of BME groups (see also Code of Good Practice for Community Groups).

- Ensure that groups are run properly and that trustees and committee members are aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Use public funds appropriately and inform funders when organisations face significant management and resource challenges, including financial difficulties.
- Make use of appropriate training and development opportunities.
- Operate in an open way, providing opportunities for voluntary and community action by a diverse range of individuals, showing a commitment to wider equality issues in addition to race equality.
- Adopt appropriate quality standards and apply best practice in management and service delivery within organisations.

2. Develop links with other groups in Bolton.

- Develop partnership working with other groups to share good practice, expertise and other practical skills.
- Inform and present community concerns to statutory organisations and other partners based on accountable partnerships with local communities, e.g. through Bolton Community Network.

3. Actively participate within the wider community.

- Play a full and active part within the wider voluntary and community sector.
- Work in partnership with the statutory sector and other voluntary and community organisations in promoting race equality, tackling social exclusion and promoting community cohesion.



This BME Code of Good Practice was developed by

Bolton at Home
Bolton Community College
Bolton Community Network
Bolton Council for Voluntary Service
Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council
Bolton Racial Equality Council
Great Lever Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder
Job Centre Plus

Thanks also go to all the organisations that took part in the
consultation process



For further information contact:

Compact and the support needs of BME groups

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The website: www.boltoncompact.org.uk

The website holds up to date information on all local and national Codes. There is a feedback form that can be filled in on line.

Make your voice heard and have your opinions taken into consideration on any of the Codes.

Please log on and find out what else is going on in the world of Bolton Compact.

* This Compact Code of Good Practice will be made available in Urdu, Gujarati on tape and in large print upon request.