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EQUALITIES BOARD

**Tuesday, 8th February, 2022 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber,
Civic Centre, Silver Street, Enfield, EN1 3XA**

Membership:

co : Huseyin Akpinar, Guner Aydin, Clare De Silva, Ergin Erbil (Chair & Associate Cabinet Member (Non-geographical based)), Achilleas Georgiou, Margaret Greer (Vice-Chair), Jim Steven and Ayfer Orhan

AGENDA – PART 1

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Board are invited to identify any disclosable pecuniary, other pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests relevant to the items on the agenda.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 1 - 10)

To agree the minutes from the Equalities Board meeting on the 1st December 2021.

4. BULGARIAN/ROMA COMMUNITY PROJECT (Pages 11 - 58)

To receive the report of Nishan Dzvingozyan, Social Integration Consultant, Edmonton Community Partnership.

5. ANNUAL ENFIELD EQUALITY & DIVERSITY REPORT 2021 (Pages 59 - 62)

To receive a presentation on the analysis to date to inform the Annual Report.

6. WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22 (Pages 63 - 64)

To note the Equalities Board Work Programme 2021/22

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting will be confirmed at Annual Council on 25 May 2022.

EQUALITIES BOARD - 1.12.2021**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EQUALITIES BOARD
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 1ST DECEMBER, 2021**

MEMBERS: Councillors Guner Aydin, Ergin Erbil (Chair & Associate Cabinet Member (Non-geographical based)) and Achilleas Georgiou and Ayfer Orhan

Community Representatives:

Tim Fellows - Enfield LGBT Network

Bevin Betton – Enfield Racial Equality Council

Officers: Joanne Drew, Director of Housing & Regeneration, Peter George, Programme Director, Meridian Water, May Hope, Plan Making Manager, Helen Murch, Head of Strategic Planning & Design, Andrea Clemons, Head of Community Safety, Lucy Nasby, Strategy & Policy Manager, Annie Radcliffe, National Management Graduate Trainee, Stacey Gilmour, Governance Officer

Also Attending:

Simon Allin, Local Democracy Reporter

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Greer and Councillor De Silva. Councillor Lindsay Rawlings was substituting for Councillor De Silva.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest registered in respect of any items on the agenda.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

AGREED the minutes of the last meeting held on the 7th September 2021 subject to the following amendment:

- (i) Page 8 (1) should read The Proud North London Trust

4. AFFORDABLE HOUSING

RECEIVED the report of Joanne Drew, Director of Housing & Regeneration, a copy of which is attached to the agenda.

NOTED:

- (i) The report provides an update on provision of affordable family sized homes to buy and rent within the Council's direct delivery programme.

EQUALITIES BOARD - 1.12.2021

- (ii) The Council aims to build 3,500 affordable homes by 2035 with a target to deliver 40% family sized homes (i.e. homes with 3 bedrooms or more) across the Housing Development Programme.
- (iii) This comes after the borough's 2019 Local Housing Need Assessment (LHNA) highlighted a 42% shortfall in three-bedroom rented homes. In addition, the highest demand among households on the waiting list for council housing is for three bedroomed homes.
- (iv) The provision of good quality 3 bedroom or larger homes will create the home environment families need to aspire and thrive throughout their lifetime.
- (v) Previous reports considered by Cabinet and Council in February 2019 and January 2020 recognised the role the Council can play in increasing housing supply in the borough – both in its role of directly delivering new build homes (or acquiring them for affordable rent) and in enabling the delivery of homes by housing associations , developers and private landlords.
- (vi) Delivery of affordable family sized homes is an area where intervention is required if the Council is to meet its commitment to create a lifetime of opportunity.
- (vii) A summary of the family homes currently being progressed through the Council's 2016-23 programme is attached at Appendix 1 of the agenda.
- (viii) The Council, through its Housing Development Programme, is on track to deliver more family homes to meet the needs of Enfield residents. However, funding remains a real barrier to accelerating supply to meet ever growing need.

Following Joanne's update the following comments/questions were raised.

- Joanne explained that the rents from social and affordable homes were not enough to pay for the costs of building them, so the authority needed grants from the Government or Greater London Authority (GLA) to fund them. She added that family homes cost more to build per unit than one and two-beds, so there isn't enough grant to enable a whole scheme to be built out viably.
- Joanne went on to say that schemes are always a compromise between what the Council would like to do, which is as much affordable housing as possible, and what can be afforded. So, schemes are balanced up with smaller units to make them viable recognising that there is also a demand for these homes including from downsizers.
- In response to a question from Cllr Georgiou about the report's connection to Equalities, Joanne explained that the majority of residents in temporary accommodation were from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds. She added that the housing waiting list had a higher percentage of residents with disabilities and critical housing needs of different complexities and this is the same across London. Joanne added that at least 10% of the homes built by the Council will be fully wheelchair adaptable and suitable for those with disabilities.
- An in-depth explanation was provided on what is meant by affordable homes. It was also advised that the least affordable housing for

EQUALITIES BOARD - 1.12.2021

residents is in the private rental sector as opposed to Council /Housing Association properties. These residents therefore have the most challenges as their income often doesn't cover private rental levels.

- Enfield Let, an Ethical Lettings Agency has been set up to assist those who would otherwise struggle to access private housing and ensure residents are not discriminated against because of their financial status. The move towards ethical letting is part of Enfield Council's wider strategy to tackle homelessness and reform the private rental sector in the borough.
- Bevin Betton, Chair of Enfield Racial Equality Council said that the Housing Associations that Enfield Council use should also be looking at family-sized houses. He acknowledged that family-sized housing is costly, but this is what is required therefore Enfield Council should be providing this.
- Joanne replied that the Council was looking to make best use of existing homes, tackling 'under-occupation' by encouraging people who do not need large homes to downsize. She added that a scheme called 'chain links' is being investigated to maximise the rehousing opportunities when a new home becomes vacant.
- Pointing out that 'affordable' housing as defined by the Government is out of reach of many in the most deprived parts of Enfield, Cllr Georgiou said that the Council needed to 'lead the way' and define what is affordable for residents.
- Joanne explained that if the Council were to adopt such a policy, it would affect the 'quantum' of housing that could be supplied and the number of family homes that could be delivered.
- Cllr Orhan asked for clarification on the figures shown on page 12 of the report and Joanne provided a detailed explanation.
- Cllr Erbil commented that equalities did not appear to be at the top of the agenda for Housing Associations/Registered Providers (RPs) and therefore questioned as to what extent the Local Authority work with these partners to enforce this. Joanne replied that Enfield Council sees itself as leaders in the borough as housing planners, working closely with Housing Associations/RPs to ensure good practice and positive outcomes. She added that the Registered Provider Framework Charter will enable the Council to hold RPs to account for wider service delivery.

The Chair thanked Joanne for her interesting and informative update.

5. MERIDIAN WATER RESIDENTIAL & EMPLOYMENT UPDATE

RECEIVED the report of Peter George, Director-Meridian water, a copy of which is attached to the agenda.

NOTED

- (i) The report updates the Board on the progress to date towards delivering the Council's target of 10,000 homes and 6,000 jobs at Meridian Water.

EQUALITIES BOARD - 1.12.2021

- (ii) Meridian Water is a key component in contributing to the vision, aims and priorities of the Council's Corporate Plan. This includes:
 - Good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods;
 - Safe, healthy and confident communities;
 - An economy that works for everyone.
- (iii) Meridian Water Aims & aspirations include:
 - Highest quality of design and place-making throughout;
 - New facilities to include restaurants, schools, community facilities, parks, health, leisure and culture.
- (iv) A residential update was provided detailing progress made to date on delivering the four sites at Meridian Water that has received Cabinet authority to proceed: Meridian 1-4. (please refer to Appendix 1: page 23 of the agenda for a plan of Meridian 1-4).
- (v) Discussions took place on the strength in diversity aspect of the programme including:
 - Promoting public sector values via procurement;
 - Insisting sub-contractors achieve 50% BAME and 50% females at a partner level plus Edmonton company;
 - Investment in scholarship/future generation;
 - Design future procurements to promote SME/diverse frameworks;
 - Encourage public sector partners to adopt a similar approach
- (vi) An employment update was also provided which covered details on the required outcomes. These included:
 - Create 6,000 permanent, high quality jobs of which no less than 25% will be from local labour;
 - Deliver 1,000 new high-quality jobs through Meanwhile Employment Uses on land intended for redevelopment, where possible rehoming these businesses within the new development;
 - Enabling local Enfield employers to supply meridian Water starting with its construction, with no less than 10% of all investment benefiting local employers;
 - Deliver 1,000 construction jobs, sustained over 25 years, of which no less than 25% will be from local labour.
- (vii) Meridian Water Enfield Construction Skills Academy will train up to 500 people a year giving them skills to gain a meaningful career in construction. Designs for the Skills Academy have progressed, and planning permission has been granted. Procurement of the Skills Academy Operator commenced in August with selection likely to be completed early 2022. The Skills Academy is due to be delivered late 2022.
- (viii) The Council has also entered a partnership with Troubadour Theatres which has delivered three film studios at Meridian Water with three more to be delivered by 2023. Troubadour also plan to deliver a skills academy for the film industry in 2023. This will provide sector-based training in technical roles associated with film production with a target of training up to 450 roles per annum. This Academy will work with an Higher Educational partner to deliver recognised industry qualifications.

EQUALITIES BOARD - 1.12.2021

Following Peter's update, the following comments and questions were raised:

- Vistry have appointed a local firm to deliver Groundworks on Meridian 1a. This is a significant piece of work and great news for the local economy. Vistry is also performing well on levels of local, female and Black, Asian and ethnic minority construction staff.
- Through the procurement of the professional services for Meridian Four project, the team has sought to ensure that the Council's approach to promoting Equality, Diversity and capturing Social value benefits have been captured.
- In response to a question regarding employment numbers and statistics Peter explained that KPI's, data gathering, and baselining of these numbers is now in place with a tracker being updated quarterly and relationships with employers and contractors allows for the anonymized data to be collected. The monitoring also includes data on equalities, diversity and inclusion.
- Clarification was sought on paragraph 9, page 18 of the report. Peter advised that strategic and industrial land at Meridian Water will be discussed with the Greater London Authority (GLA) but in the context of the overall Local Plan, the target of 10,000 homes to be built remains constant.
- Concern was raised that climate change had not been addressed as part of the presentation received as this was most important in relation to equalities. Peter apologised that this slide had been missed from the power point presentation provided but agreed that it was absolutely right to raise climate change in relation to equalities.
- Peter asked for direction from the Chair as to the frequency of updates to the Board on progress with Equalities in relation to Meridian Water.

Action: Lucy Nasby/Chair

The Chair thanked Peter for his interesting and informative presentation.

6. DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

RECEIVED a copy of the report of May Hope, Plan Making Manager, a copy of which is attached to the agenda.

The following information was highlighted:

- (i) The council is in the process of preparing a new local plan for Enfield. This report provides an update to the Board on the equalities impact of the draft Local Plan (ELP).
- (ii) It is a statutory requirement for all Councils to prepare a Local Plan and ensure that it is up to date. Enfield's current Local Plan includes a Core Strategy published in 2010 and a Development Management Document published in 2014: as both are older than five years they are required to be reviewed.

EQUALITIES BOARD - 1.12.2021

- (iii) Preparing a new Local Plan provides the council with an opportunity to set out a positive vision for growth, ensuring that appropriate facilities and infrastructure are provided for future residents. It is a vitally important tool for helping the council deliver its corporate priorities and delivering the spatial elements of the council's corporate plan.
- (iv) When preparing Local Plans, the Equalities Act 2010 requires the council to:
 - Consider all individuals when shaping policy;
 - Eliminate discrimination;
 - Advance equality of opportunity;
 - Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.
- (v) This public sector duty is an important task to be carried out during all stages of the Enfield Local Plan preparation.
- (vi) The Local Plan has also been subject to Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA). The Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) ensures equalities are addressed by considering the protected characteristics.
- (vii) The Enfield Local Plan (ELP) includes long term planning framework for the borough up to 2039. The Plan will have a significant impact on the lives of those who live and work or visit the borough. Important choices will be made between competing demands and seeks to address inequalities, but policies need to be assessed for unintended consequences for equality issues.
- (viii) Plan preparation started in 2015 and includes engagement with voluntary bodies at each stage, which represents the interests of different racial or national groups, religious bodies, bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons, Enfield Youth Parliament, young people and students. EqIA assessments have also been completed at all stages.
- (ix) Information was provided on addressing inequalities through the vision and strategic objectives of the ELP. Four key themes of the ELP vision are:
 - A nurturing place;
 - A deeply green place;
 - Workshop of London;
 - Distinct and leading part of London.
- (x) Detailed strategic objectives address many equalities matters. These translated into objectives informing IIA and the EqIA.
- (xi) Further information was provided on the ELP policies on disability, age, race, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnerships.
- (xii) There are no specific policies for addressing religion or belief. However, Policy BG10 deals with space for burials and cremation and addresses the needs of different faith groups and the needs of diverse communities.
- (xiii) Equalities issues have helped underpin the development of the ELP policies. Many policies are designed to improve the relevant equality strands where possible or have a neutral impact.
- (xiv) Fulfilling the duty in relation to equalities matters in the development of ELP policy is an evolving and ongoing process. Equalities matters will

EQUALITIES BOARD - 1.12.2021

be taken into account when reviewing representations and making recommendations on the next iteration of ELP policy.

Following May's update, the following comments/questions were raised.

- In response to a comment regarding the allocation of cemetery and burial space, May advised that there are policies within the ELP addressing burial needs and site allocations for all different faith groups. The Chair, Cllr Ergin Erbil added that a multi-faith cemetery is to be developed in the borough and this is a work in progress.
- Cllr Orhan said that she believed housing is an equalities issue as is social inclusion. She added that residents have voiced very strong concerns regarding the type of and allocation of housing within the ELP as the plan appears to be designed to bring people into the borough rather than structured for the needs of local residents; therefore outpricing local residents and not addressing local needs. Helen Murch, Head of Strategic Planning & Design responded that an important foundation of the plan in terms of housing is to ensure that people who are born and live in the borough can stay in the borough. Policies developed have been designed to ensure that the plan delivers the mix and levels of affordable housing that the borough needs, and this includes larger family homes.
- Tim Fellows, Chair, Safer Neighbourhood Board felt that the burden of house builds needs to be shared as the East of the borough is becoming more and more dense. Helen said that this is something that Enfield Council are very aware and conscious of. The spatial policy for distribution of this growth is one that is thought to be the best solution in order to level things up.

The Chair thanked Officers for their interesting update.

7. KEEP PEOPLE SAFE FROM DOMESTIC ABUSE

RECEIVED the report of Andrea Clemons, Head of Community Safety and Julie Tailor, Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator, a copy of which is attached to the agenda,

NOTED:

- (i) The report provides an update on the sections within the Fairer Enfield Policy which relates to Tackling Domestic Abuse and Violence against Women and Girls and provides assurance that the requirements of the policy are being progressed.
- (ii) Updates were provided against each element and full details of these are included in the report.
- (iii) Progress has been made in ensuring that local services designed to tackle domestic abuse support all communities and are easily accessible
- (iv) The Enfield Domestic Abuse Hub was launched on the 1st May last year in response to concerns over increasing domestic abuse incidents

EQUALITIES BOARD - 1.12.2021

during the Covid-19 pandemic. Its helpline continues to operate during weekdays between 9am and 5pm.

- (v) The hub had improved the service provided to those contacting it. It has received 242 contacts since its launch and the council aims to keep it running beyond the end of the pandemic.
- (vi) During the last two years the Council has also set up a scheme to encourage perpetrators to change their behaviour and used communication campaigns aimed at preventing abuse by challenging the attitudes that foster it.
- (vii) Demand for services had been higher during the Covid-19 pandemic and delivery had at times been more difficult.
- (viii) The Council had secured around £300,000 from the Mayor's Office for Policing and crime (MOPAC) to continue its perpetrators programme after a successful pilot, following a joint funding bid alongside Barnet and Brent Councils.
- (ix) The project, set to run until July next year, allows perpetrators of abuse to voluntarily access a programme to help them change their behaviour, rather than doing so in response to a court ruling. The idea is to work with perpetrators from communities which may be marginalised for a variety of reasons and will also work in an intersectional way with the families to make sure that domestic abuse is being addressed in an appropriate way as well as recognising some of the pressures that may exist in terms of gender, culture or other factors.
- (x) Recent communications campaigns also included a project run with Enfield Youth Parliament. This focused on challenging inappropriate behaviour and has been shared on social media platforms.

Following Andrea's update, the following comments/questions were raised:

- Responding to a question from Cllr Rawlings, Andrea said that the council also had access to a helpline for male victims of domestic abuse.
- Cllr Orhan asked how the council could identify and help 'invisible' groups of people who were not speaking out about the abuse they faced because they were fearful of coming forward, perhaps because people would not listen or believe them. Andrea said that it was important to repeat the message that people could be confident that help is available for them. Adding that many women may be frightened to leave abusive relationships, she stressed the importance of providing good homes and opportunities with well-paid jobs.
- Andrea advised the meeting that the council was also looking at working with faith groups to help tackle domestic abuse. The Chair, Cllr Erbil suggested holding a community meeting with faith leaders, as well as working with organisations such as Age UK and Healthwatch Enfield.
- It was agreed that Andrea would come back to a future meeting of the Equalities Board with further updates to include:
 - Cross Department Practical Solutions (e.g. what's available across departments, for example housing/finance)

EQUALITIES BOARD - 1.12.2021

- Data on ethnicity/gender of reported Domestic Violence
- Update on any development regarding a community meeting to include faith leaders.

Action: Lucy Nasby/Andrea Clemons

The Chair thanked Andrea for her interesting and informative update.

8. EQUALITIES BOARD DRAFT FORWARD PLAN 2021/22

NOTED the Equalities Board Draft Forward Plan for 2021/22.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

NOTED and agreed the date of the next Equality Board meeting as follows:

Tuesday 8th February 2022

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Until this report is published, even if it is ultimately to be considered in Part 1, it should not be circulated beyond the Cabinet (excepting officers writing and reviewing the paper through this process) or sent externally, and its contents should be treated as confidential.

**London Borough of Enfield
Equalities Board**

8th February 2022

Subject: Bulgarian / Roma Community Project
Cabinet Member: Cllr Keazor, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Cohesion
Executive Director: Ian Davis, Chief Executive

Purpose of Report

1. Nishan Dzvingozyan will present a report to the Equalities Board which provides an overview of the Edmonton Community Partnership Bulgarian / Roma integration project.

Proposal(s)

2. To update the board on the challenges faced by the Bulgarian (GRT) and the wider Eastern European communities in Enfield.

Reason for Proposal(s)

3. The report by Nishan Dzvingozyan will provide an overview of the work undertaken by the Edmonton Community Partnership Bulgarian / Roma integration project.

Relevance to the Council Plan

4. A fairer Enfield is one of the four cross-cutting themes of our Council Plan 2020-22. In [Fairer Enfield 2021-25](#), we outline our commitment to create an inclusive borough, where all residents, regardless of their protected characteristics, are supported to fulfil their potential, are treated equally with respect and actively involved in shaping the decisions that will affect the services they receive and the places they live in.

Background

5. The Edmonton Community Partnership is an alliance of 18 schools and members of the local community. The partnership manages a range of local projects and events that help improve the lives of children, young people, their families and the wider community in Edmonton.

Main Considerations for the Council

6. The Bulgarian / Roma integration project has been operating since 2019. It is estimated that 20,000 Bulgarians live in Enfield. However, as a result

of language barriers, digital exclusion and social isolation there are many families who have been unable to access the support services they are entitled to. The project has received funding from Home Office, National Lottery Community Fund, Enfield Council, and North Central London Clinical Commissioning Group.

7. To support the Bulgarian / Roma Community, the Partnership have hired a Bulgarian Support Worker to connect with local families from Bulgaria and across Eastern Europe and offer additional support. This has ranged from providing food, home essentials and internet access throughout the coronavirus pandemic to community meetings explaining the process for securing EU Settlement Status and encouraging coronavirus vaccine uptake, conducted in their native language.
8. The Board will receive a presentation from Nishan Dzvingozyan, Bulgarian Support Worker, on the challenges and barriers faced by the Bulgarian (GRT) and the wider Eastern European communities in Enfield.

Conclusions

9. The attached report by Nishan Dzvingozyan provides an overview of the Bulgarian / Roma integration project ran by Edmonton Community Partnership.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Quarterly Progress Report Bulgarian / Roma (Eastern European communities) integration project in Edmonton, January 2022

Quarterly Progress Report

Bulgarian/Roma (Eastern European communities) integration project in Edmonton, North London

January 2022

**Grant Funded community engagement programme by Edmonton Community Partnership (ECP),
funded by:**

- **The Home Office**
- **North Central London Clinical Commissioning Group (NCL CCG)**
- **The London Community Response Fund**
- **The National Lottery Community Fund**
- **Public Health Enfield Council**
- **Enfield Council's Brexit Grant**
- **Enfield Council's 'Neighbourhood Fund' grant**



Prepared for
Edmonton Community Partnership

by
Nishan Dzvingozyan

January 2022

Project name: Community Engagement Programme of Edmonton Community Partnership

Scope of the programme: Bulgarian/Roma (GRT) communities in Enfield and the wider EU communities

Period Covered: 12 October 2020 to January 2022

Name and organisation of the project's coordinator: Nishan Dzvingozyan

Project Lead/Consultant

Edmonton Community Partnership

Tel: +44 7758118609

E-mail: nishanecp@gmail.com

Project website address: <http://www.edmontoncommunitypartnership.org/home/>

Contents

1. Executive Summary
2. Background information
3. Introduction
4. Aim of the community engagement programme
5. Project support
6. Project scope
7. Methodology
8. Partner organisations

9. Challenges
10. Completed tasks
11. Tasks planned until June 2022
12. Lessons learned
13. Recommendations
14. Conclusion

“On International Roma Day we celebrate Roma culture. We also recognise the human rights abuses experienced by Roma communities today and through history, in particular the Nazi genocide of Europe’s Roma and Sinti populations” – Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan

“Community engagement is about ensuring that those most impacted by social challenges have a say in designing and implementing solutions...”

Schmitz, P. (2017), *Community Engagement Toolkit*

Government agencies, corporations and organisations have often experienced difficulty when trying to connect with the people who are most impacted by their projects. It is necessary to leave the office, get from behind the computer, and interact with people face-to-face. There is an art and process to engage with your community – a group of people with shared commonality.

This report illustrates how Edmonton Community Partnership, and its partners interact and engage with the communities they support in an authentic and intentional manner.

Nine key operating principles and On-The-Ground Strategies of the community engagement programme of Edmonton Community Partnership

Nine key operating principles:

- *Clarity of purpose*
- *Knowing your community*
- *Inclusivity*
- *Equity and fairness*
- *Effective communication*
- *Accountability*
- *Knowledge growth and capacity building*

- *Evidence-based planning and decision-making*
- *Monitoring and evaluation*

On-The-Ground Strategies:

Our strategies are grouped into four broad categories:

- *Preparation*
- *Initial contact and outreach*
- *Knowledge sharing and relationship building*
- *Shared leadership and decision-making*

ALONE WE CAN DO SO LITTLE. TOGETHER WE CAN DO SO MUCH.

- Helen Keller

1. Executive Summary

Who do we support?

This report highlights the goals and objectives of the Edmonton Community Partnership Bulgarian Project, period covered, project implementation, administration, accomplishments, and challenges.

The project is supporting Bulgarian/Roma and the wider Eastern European communities in Edmonton.

Who is delivering the project?

The project is unique as it has been delivered within and beyond a network of 18 schools (approx. 8,000 families reach) and a very diverse group of organisations.

Approximate number of potential service users?

The number of potential service users in Enfield (only from the Bulgarian community) is up to 20,000 residents and the wider EU communities – up to 70,000. The estimate is based on the number of applications from Enfield made to the EU Settlement Scheme. See below.

The additional funding provided by the NCL CCG, and Public Health Enfield Council was to raise awareness of the Covid-19 vaccination among these communities, to facilitate easier access to services provided by the NHS and encourage GP registration, which is at a very low level within Enfield.

Recent funding provided by The National Lottery Community Fund is to establish (from 2022) an ongoing hub to support Eastern European communities across Edmonton for a minimum of three years.

What is our goal?

- Build trust
- Reducing social and health inequalities

- Support in the process of obtaining the new Settled Status
- Raising awareness of the Covid-19 vaccination
- Encouraging GP registration
- Facilitating easier access to services provided by Enfield Council, the NHS and other public bodies in the UK
- Providing reliable and accurate information and support on different subjects related to these communities
- Signposting to other organisations
- Support the member schools of ECP
- Providing mental health support
- Help the Bulgarian GRT community to navigate the benefit system
- Reducing antisocial behaviour and providing support to the sex workers in Enfield
- Providing training on numerous subjects including Employment Rights and Tenancy Rights
- Reducing poverty
- Signposting rough sleepers to partner organisations
- Empowering these communities

What does the report highlight?

This report highlights the impact of the European Union Settlement Scheme on the Bulgarian/Roma community in Edmonton, including barriers and recommendations. The report also includes findings and emerging challenges and barriers to this community which are not directly related to scope of the programme financially supported by the Home Office but have had a significant impact on this community in recent months. The information in this report has been collated and interpreted by Edmonton Community Partnership – a partnership of 18 schools in Edmonton and partner organisations – between 12 October 2021 and January 2022. This information is based on extensive outreach with the support of the schools and partner organisations.

2. Background information

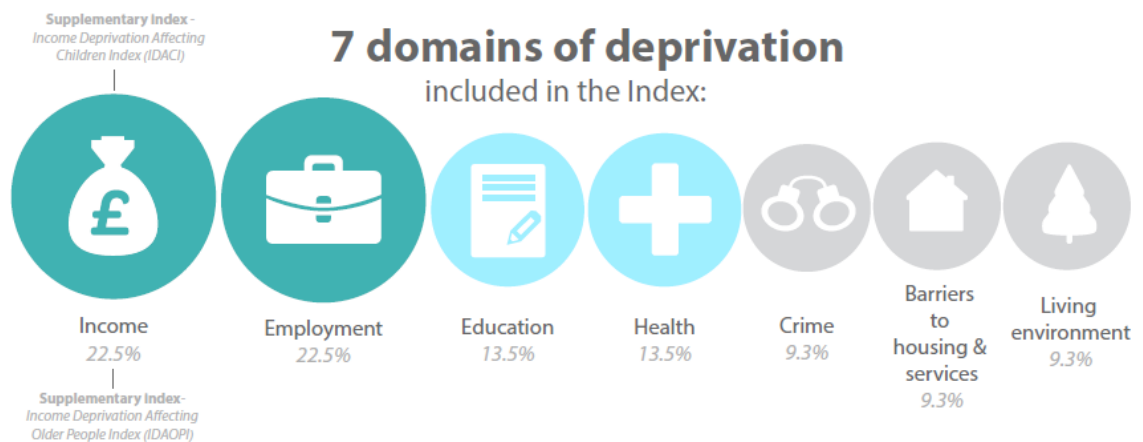
The project is taking place in Edmonton Green and the wider Edmonton (Enfield). Edmonton Green Ward is situated in the south-east of London Borough of Enfield, bordered by Lower Edmonton Ward to the north, Haselbury Ward to the west, Upper Edmonton ward to the south, and by the London Borough of Waltham Forest to the east. It is covered by postal districts N9 and N18.



This is the area where the schools with the highest proportion of parents from a Bulgarian GRT background are.

Overall deprivation in Edmonton Green – (9 very bad, ILIVEHERE RATING 9/10)

Indices of Deprivation statistics are broken down into domains of deprivation or more simply, categories.



In Edmonton Green out of all monitored and measured categories Barriers to Housing and Services are rated with the worst rating – (10 extremely bad, ILIVEHERE RATING 9/10)

Deprivation Statistics Comparison for Edmonton Green, Enfield (ilivehere.co.uk)

Analysis carried out by the Local Government Association indicated that, within Enfield, Edmonton Green is the most deprived of the 21 wards in the Borough. The same analysis estimates that it is within the 10% most deprived wards in England.

Edmonton Green (enfield.gov.uk)

In this section of the progress report, we are highlighting the most challenging and new emerging issues these communities are facing, and also providing recommendations on how to move forward.

3. Background

Enfield and Edmonton are home to one of the largest Bulgarian and Bulgarian/Roma communities in London. As EU citizens, Bulgarian/Roma residents are among the groups most acutely affected by the EUSS.

This report intends to bring forward information on how the EUSS has been applied to the Bulgarian/Roma community in Enfield and Edmonton. It also presents information on specific issues outside the scope of the programme of concern which have emerged in the last months for the Bulgarian/Roma community and provides recommendations for moving forward.

4. Aim of the community engagement programme

Social inclusion is at the centre of our project's approach. The target groups are socially excluded due to many barriers.

Our Bulgarian/Roma community is vulnerable in many ways, massively exacerbated by the Covid-19 crisis: mostly living in poverty (Edmonton is in the top 10% of most deprived areas in the UK), they have a very low educational background, lack of IT skills, often no access to Wi-Fi, and severe language barriers.

They have also, in many cases, not engaged in UK culture and as such do not know how to access what they need, resulting in being isolated.

Edmonton Community Partnership (ECP) delivers the programme with organisations who have workers and volunteers with a range of languages and focus most of our advertising in Bulgarian (via hard copy material, Bulgarian radio stations and Bulgarian social media).

5. Project support

Since our last progress report, we have been delivering drop-in sessions on different subjects with the support of the schools in Edmonton, coffee mornings, webinars, conversational English classes, setting up Facebook pages in Bulgarian, and engaging with new partners including Doctors of the World, the Independent Monitoring Authority (IMA) and London Councils.

Edmonton Community Partnership was invited to deliver a presentation at a meeting organised by London Councils and the GLA. We discussed the challenges faced by the GRT and the Eastern European communities in London and made some recommendations on how to facilitate access to services provided by the local authorities in London and engage more effectively with hard-to-reach groups.

We have been actively engaging with Public Health Enfield and commissioned by them to increase Covid-19 vaccination take-up (which is at alarmingly low levels among these communities).

6. Project scope

The project scope has not changed. We are determined in our effort to engage with hard-to-reach and vulnerable members of the Eastern European/EU/GRT communities in Enfield, and notably the Bulgarian/Roma and the wider GRT communities

7. Methodology

This report focuses on desk research produced by the project and a focus group representing some of the partners involved in the project.

8. Partner organisations

IF YOU WANT TO GO QUICKLY, GO ALONE. IF YOU WANT TO GO FAR, GO TOGETHER.

- African Proverb

So far, we have worked with the following schools and partner organisations:

- Starks Field Primary School
- Hounsfeld Primary School
- Edmonton Academy Trust – Edmonton County School
- Brettenham Primary School
- Cuckoo Hall Academy
- Fleecefield School
- Churchfield Primary School
- Meridian Angel Primary School
- West Lea School
- Alma Primary School
- Wilbury Primary School
- Oakthorpe Primary School
- Raynham Primary School
- St John and St James Church of England Primary School
- Eldon Primary School
- The Bulgarian Embassy in London
- Settled
- ECYPS
- Novini London

- Metropolitan Police: APS Monica Malecka, PS Ian Davey, PC Neil Rogers – Edmonton Police Station
- Healthwatch Enfield
- Office for National Statistics
- Community Barnet
- Institute for Public Policy Research
- North Central London Clinical Commissioning Group (NCL CCG)
- Public Health Enfield Council
- The Modern Slavery team of Enfield Council
- Haringey Council: Andrew Christina, Elvan Asutay, Communities and Inequalities, Haringey Council
- GRT Board of Enfield Council
- Joanne McCartney MLA – Deputy Mayor of London
- Kate Osamor MP
- Feryal Clark MP
- Ilhan Kyuchyuk – Member of the European Parliament
- The Work Rights Centre
- Medicus Health Partners
- University of Nottingham, The Rights Lab, School of Sociology and Social Policy
- St Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church in Edmonton
- St Peter’s Church in Edmonton
- Social Sphere, Edmonton
- New Europeans
- CAB Enfield
- Enfield Dispatch
- Doctors of the World
- The Independent Monitoring Authority
- The GLA: Dr. Elisabeth Pop, Social Integration Team, Farah Elahi, Community Engagement Team,
- London Councils: Eleanor Ferguson, Principal Policy and Project Officer, Eva Barnsley, Principal Policy and Project Officer, Health and Social Services
- The Bulgarian Centre for Social Integration and Culture
- DJMC Academy
- Barnet and Southgate College

Interviews with Eastern European Parents/Carers from Starks Field Primary School

❖ *These interviews were conducted at the end of the summer term 2021. Nishan Dzhingozyan was in attendance for some of the interviews with Bulgarian families*

What is your ethnicity?	Bulgarian Turkish – 55% Bulgarian – 11% Polish Gypsy – 16%
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	<p>Greek (parents from Albania) – 6%</p> <p>Romanian – 6%</p> <p>Turkmenistan – 6%</p>
When did you enter the UK?	<p>25 years ago - 6%</p> <p>2013 – 13%</p> <p>2015 – 19%</p> <p>2016 – 31%</p> <p>2017 – 6%</p> <p>2018 – 6%</p> <p>2019 – 6%</p> <p>2020 – 13%</p>
What is your highest level of education?	<p>Age 7 – 4%</p> <p>Age 9 – 8%</p> <p>Age 11 – 8%</p> <p>Age 12 – 4%</p> <p>Age 13 – 16%</p> <p>Age 14 – 13%</p> <p>Age 15 – 4%</p> <p>Age 16 – 4%</p> <p>Age 17 – 8%</p> <p>Age 19 – 4%</p> <p>College – 14%</p> <p>University – 13%</p>
Comments about education:	<p><i>I left school at 11; I read a bit and write very basic Bulgarian.</i></p> <p><i>I left school at 12 and can't read or write.</i></p> <p><i>I went to university but didn't do my final teacher training exams. The only work I have had has been in shops in Greece.</i></p> <p><i>I went to school up until Year 2. I had a bit of schooling in different countries as I'm from a Gypsy family. I schooled myself so that I can read English, but I can't write.</i></p>
Do you work?	<p>No – 11%</p> <p>Labourer – 39%</p> <p>Cleaner – 22%</p> <p>Delivery driver – 11%</p> <p>Fish and chip shop – 11%</p> <p>Waitress – 6%</p>
What are your aspirations for your children?	<p><i>I want them to stay here and for them to be well educated. (Four respondents)</i></p> <p><i>To be well educated.</i></p> <p><i>To be well educated and to be able to read and write.</i></p>

	<p><i>I want better for the children. I want them to finish their studies and go to college/university.</i></p> <p><i>We moved to the UK because of them.</i></p> <p><i>To be well educated and fluent in English.</i></p> <p><i>I have big plans for the children – lawyers, etc.</i></p> <p><i>I plan to stay here – my child doesn't speak Bulgarian.</i></p> <p><i>My child is doing well, and we hope that will continue and that she will adapt to this environment.</i></p> <p><i>For them to study – I don't know what.</i></p> <p><i>To make something different of their lives, not like me.</i></p> <p><i>A better life – what the children want to do. I don't tell them what to do. My older daughter is 17 and not married (I got married at 15), so it's not the same expectations as with me.</i></p> <p><i>The best for them – higher education – finds work they appreciate.</i></p> <p><i>Do the jobs they want to do. Have lots of different dreams. There is no expectation any more in my culture that girls won't work.</i></p>
What is your view of education in the UK?	<p>OK – 6%</p> <p>Good/happy – 49%</p> <p>Very good/very happy – 33%</p> <p>Better than in Bulgaria – 12%</p>
Is there anything that we could do to support you with your own development?	<p>English classes – 9%</p> <p>IT classes – 49%</p> <p>Settled status assistance – 33%</p> <p>Other (TA/accountancy course) – 9%</p>
Other specific questions asked:	<p>What is your view of education at Starks Field?</p> <p>Is there any more information that you would like to share with us?</p>

9. Challenges, barriers and emerging issues

Potential challenges in the Engagement Process

DON'T BUILD LINKS. BUILD RELATIONSHIPS.

- *Rand Fishkin*

- **Importance of the demographic factors**

This is a key factor in planning how to successfully engage a community. It is important to meet people “where they are” and to embrace the community in all its complexity. Thus, the engagement process must take diversity into account – diversity, as reflected in different group identities, lived experiences, and historical relationships, as well as in varying concerns and priorities and even different ways of communicating.

Future plans: In order to continue engaging successfully with our target group, we intend to deliver our activities mainly in Edmonton where these communities are.

- **Facilitating diverse participation**

We need to ensure that the team coordinating the engagement initiative has visible representation of the community’s diversity. We need to bring on board residents who live in the community, know it well, and reflect the diverse groups in that community.

Future plans: We plan to identify local residents and parents from our schools, from these communities, offer them training and work with them towards a better engagement with our target group

- **Community outreach process**

Methods should be tailored to the interests and communication styles of the people to be reached. People will come out to a meeting, for example, if the subject matter is important to them.

Future plans: We intend to continue conducting surveys, 1 to 1 interviews, drop-in sessions and coffee mornings as this is the best way to identify any emerging issues and to find out what the needs of these communities are.

- **Engaging youth**

Engaging youth requires its own distinct approach. Even so, we should be careful not to treat youth as a monolithic group – youth are as diverse as the rest of the community and engagement strategies should be designed with this reality in mind.

Future plans: Identifying volunteers from this age group should be one of our priorities. Setting up a working group with them will attract others

- **Communication**

The importance of providing solid, easily accessible information throughout the course of the community engagement initiative. Information about project goals, plans, timelines, and expected results should be readily available and widely distributed.

Future plans: We set up a Facebook page in Bulgarian and have marketing materials in Bulgarian. Using social media and any other forms of advertising on Bulgarian news agencies,

radio stations, and through the marketing channels of the different stakeholders will be our priority in 2022.

- **Building leadership capacity**

The need to build leadership capacity in the community through education, training, mentorship, and opportunities to acquire “on-the-ground” experience.

Future plans: Identifying community leaders from this background, offering them training and working with them towards our goal will be one of our priorities this year.

- **Strengthening community voices**

Counterbalance to institutional weight at the community stakeholders’ table

Future plans: This is directly linked to building leadership capacity. Once identified and trained the community leaders should get actively involved in the delivering of the community engagement programme.

- **Power sharing**

The community engagement process should actively encourage shared leadership and inclusion. Service providers should take the lead in ensuring that resident voices are heard.

Future plans: Encouraging the stakeholders to have members of these communities on their boards, to ensure their voices are heard, is something we will be insisting on. This is also related to the lack of representation at all levels – from political representation to representation in the local institutions, organisations and volunteer groups.

- **Modelling desirable behaviours**

Leaders of an engagement initiative should try to model behaviours that help to make everyone at the community table feel valued, respected, and committed to the collective effort.

Future plans: This is related to the understanding of all stakeholders that we are delivering a long-term community engagement programme, and not only providing some additional services. We encourage the stakeholders to engage proactively with these communities and involve them in the decision making.

- **Removing barriers to participation**

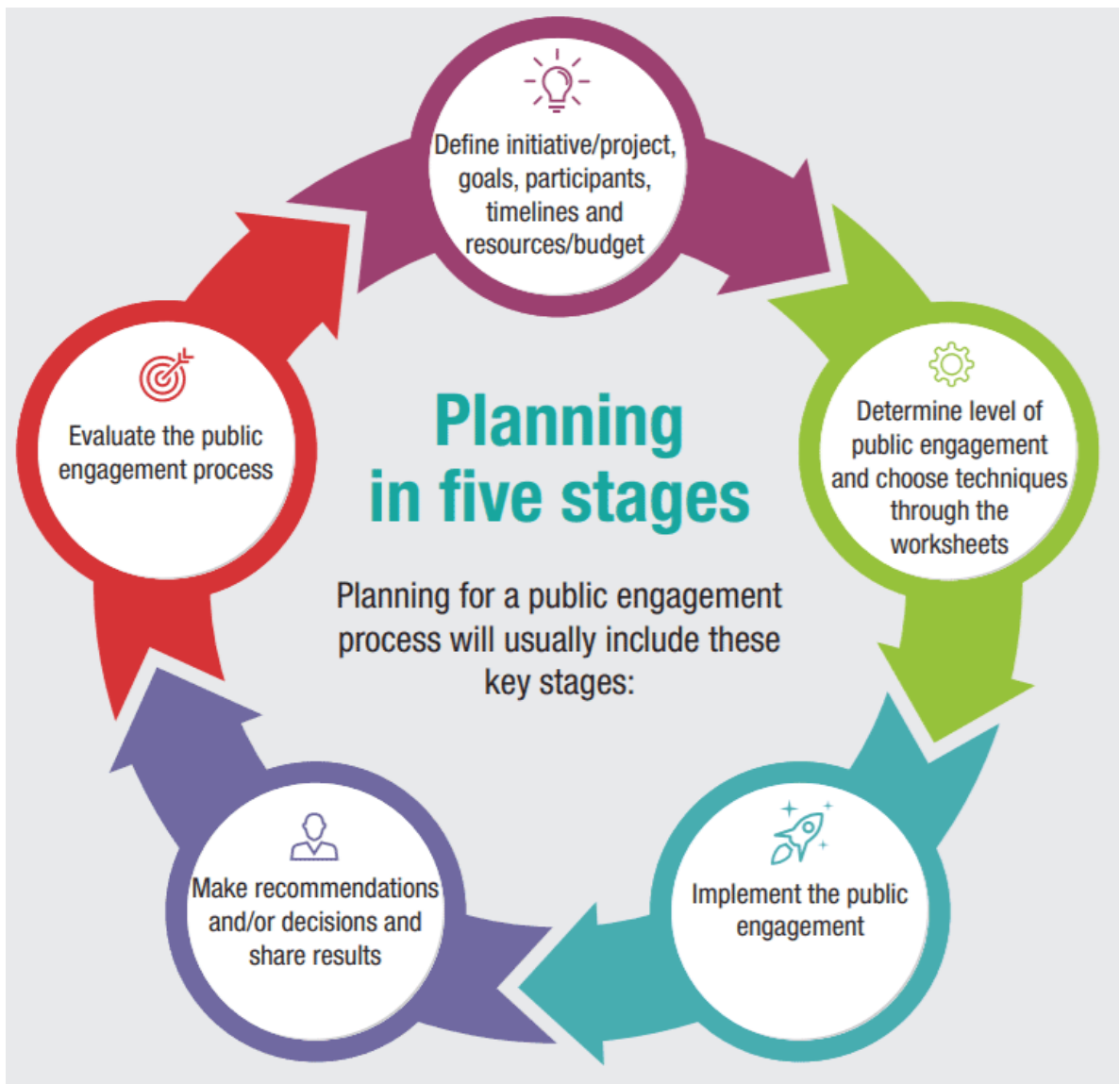
In addition to ensuring that stakeholders’ discussion and planning tables are reflective of the community’s diversity, project leaders should ensure that chosen communication channels are in sync with those preferred by the community, so that people will be able to make their voices heard.

Future plans: We will continue with the engagement and identifying the preferred and most appropriate communications channels to work with these communities. Covid-19 has had a massive impact on our engagement. We need to be aware that this might again be the case in 2022.

- **Communication and social media**

The objective is to find gateways to connect with people and develop a credible relationship with them. In the end, what really matters is whether the chosen communication strategy is effective at connecting with the people one needs to reach.

Future plans: We will continue our engagement on social media and any other media outlets in Bulgarian and exploring other avenues – monthly newsletters with the Bulgarian Embassy and any other organisations working actively with this community.



Approaching the problem

Facilitators of community engagement programmes need to work consistently to create a working environment in which equity and inclusivity are established norms. They will need to develop appropriate anti-racism strategies to counteract and remove racism's influence within the engagement process. A few examples of such strategies would include:

- Acknowledging the community’s experience with racism and its impact on community participation and on the development of trusting relationships
- Identifying and removing potential barriers to community participation
- Establishing clear “ground rules” for community participation
- Accessing who is at the community table and who is not – why – then taking action to close the gap
- Providing “safe” space where people can feel secure
- Giving equal recognition to the contributions and expertise brought to the table by participants of all racial backgrounds/communities

EU Settlement Scheme

Total number of applications

According to the data provided by the UK Government the total number of applications as of 30 November 2021 was 6,340, 200. Source: EU Settlement Scheme statistics - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)



❖ **Figure 1**

Figure 1 - EU Settlement Scheme: cumulative number of applications received, and applications concluded at the end of each month since the start of the scheme

Applications received

As seen in Figure 1, as of 30 September 2021, 6.2 million (6,223,350) applications had been received

Source: Table EUSS_MON

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/eu-settlement-scheme-quarterly-statistics-september-2021>

Applications to the EU Settlement Scheme by nationality (Top 10 countries)

Country of nationality	Total
Romania	1,333,980
Poland	1,124,930
Italy	560,720
Portugal	427,470
Spain	364,170
Bulgaria	330,720
Lithuania	278,290
France	236,710
Germany	167,920
Hungary	158,830

❖ **Figure 2**

As Seen in Figure 2, 5 of the top 10 countries are from Eastern Europe. These communities are also the largest communities in Enfield.

Applications to the EU Settlement Scheme by local authorities

Top five London local authorities

Newham 146,910

Brent	134, 860
Ealing	109,940
Haringey	99,940
Barnet	92,940

❖ **Figure 3**

- Enfield is in the top 10 London local authorities by applications received between 28 August 2018 to 31 March 2021, taking ninth place with 72,260 applications submitted to the EUSS.
- 20,160 of these applications are from residents from a Bulgarian background, many of them from a GRT background. We don't know the exact number of applications from Bulgarians from a GRT background in Enfield as the data from the Home Office only includes applications by nationality.
- Source: EUSS Settlement Scheme quarterly statistics March 2021 EU Settlement Scheme quarterly statistics, March 2021 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Challenges and emerging issues

- **Relatively high number of residents from EU/Bulgarian/GRT background who have not applied**

Our outreach activities and engagement with our target group demonstrate that most of them (95%) have applied and received Pre-Settled Status. However, when asked about family members who have not applied yet, the answers demonstrate months after the end of the period when EU citizens were able to apply for the new immigration status, a relatively high numbers of Enfield residents from a Bulgarian background have not applied yet or are unaware of the process at all.

Case study:

B is a local resident from a Bulgarian GRT background. When approached at a drop-in session at one of the Bulgarian cafes in Edmonton and asked about his immigration status, he confirmed that he moved to the UK a couple of months ago and is not aware of the EUSS.

Recommendations:

- Continued support by ECP and other stakeholders.
- Delivering information sessions in Bulgarian and signposting late applicants to Settled.

- All stakeholders – identifying funding for Bulgarian speaking community engagement officers.
- **EUSS - Children at risk**

Many parents who have secured the new immigration status are unaware of the fact that their children should be linked to their application.

Case study

C and her two children live with the grandparents in a double room in Edmonton. C has very limited language skills and is not working. When approached at a drop-in session at Churchfield Primary School and asked about her immigration status she wasn't sure whether she had got it or not. The application was made by her former landlord who is not answering her phone calls. C wasn't aware that her children must be linked to her application. C didn't have any documentation to prove her immigration status and wasn't able to access the system of the Home Office as her former landlord provided his personal email address and mobile number which are used to access the system. C wasn't in receipt of any financial help from the state.

Recommendations:

- Continued support by ECP and other stakeholders.
- Delivering information sessions in Bulgarian and signposting late applicants to Settled.
- Making the schools aware of the need for the children to be linked to the parents.
- All stakeholders – identifying funding for community engagement officers.



❖ ***Banner in Bulgarian advertising our EUSS campaign***

• **Lack of understanding on how to digitally access the new immigration status**

Another major challenge we identified in our outreach was the total lack of understanding on how to use the new status, how to prove their status after Brexit and how to update their details on the Home Office system – inability to do so will lead to serious consequences for a very large number of local residents from European/Bulgarian/Roma background and the possibility of not being able to access services provided by different agencies, including the NHS and schools.

Case study:

A and P are a couple from a Bulgarian GRT background living in Edmonton. When asked at a drop-in session delivered at Eldon Primary School both were unaware of the process of proving their new immigration status and did not know how to maintain it.

Recommendations:

- Continued support by ECP and other stakeholders.
- Delivering training sessions on how to maintain the new immigration status.
- All stakeholders – identifying funding for officers delivering the training.

<https://fb.watch/a20EZu7J7f/>

❖ ***Live-streamed event on the EUSS in Bulgarian delivered by Settled and Edmonton Community Partnership***

• **Lack of understanding about the different types of immigration status**

Another issue which appeared from the beginning of our engagement was the lack of understanding about the difference between Pre-Settled Status and Settled Status, and the rights and responsibilities connected to being a holder of either.

N is a single mum living in Edmonton. Her language skills are very limited. When asked at a drop-in session at Starks Field Primary School if she was aware of the difference between Pre-Settled and Settled Status and the rights and responsibilities coming with the possession of it, she confirmed that she wasn't aware that there are different types of immigration status for the EU citizens living in the UK after Brexit. N relies heavily on her "accountant" to deal with her immigration issues.

Recommendations:

- Continued support by ECP and other stakeholders.

- Delivering training sessions on the different type of immigration status and rights and responsibilities connected to being a holder.
- All stakeholders – identifying funding for officers delivering the training with the support of the 18 schools members of the ECP.
- **Lack of language and IT skills**

These skills deficits are among the main barriers for a large number of our target group. The application is digital, and the lack of IT and language skills, lack of access to the internet and IT equipment, and a lack of basic information about the process are forcing many of them to seek the services of unauthorized/unlicensed organisations or individuals who charge them what may appear to be exorbitant fees.

Settled ПОТОК НА ЖИВО НА БЪЛГАРСКИ ЕЗИК
Директно излъчване от Facebook

Петък, 29 януари,
14.00 часа британско време

на български език
Директно излъчване от Facebook

EDMONTON COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP
WoRC
Work Rights Centre

Hallo Hi alo jHola
cześć ahoj ciao здравей Bonjour

www.facebook.com/WeAreSettled

Email:
advice@settled.org.uk

wearesettled
Registered charity no. 1184580
OISC organisation no. N201900057

OISC

❖ *EUSS session in Bulgarian organised by our partner organisation Settled*

Recommendations:

- Continued support by ECP and other stakeholders.
- Delivering (and sign posting to) ESOL classes and IT training.
- All stakeholders – identifying funding for training.
- **Using the services of unauthorised organisations, accountants and individuals who are not registered immigration advisers**

Among this community, it is common practice to seek help from casual contacts, friends and neighbours, and unauthorised organisations or individuals who have not received any training and/or are not authorised by the Home Office to deliver this service or are not registered immigration advisers. Most of them are not aware of the email address or telephone number used by the person(s) who helped and charged them for their service. Many have changed their ID card or passport after applying for the new status. Not knowing the email address, telephone number and/or the unique number of your ID card or passport doesn't allow you to access your profile on the Home Office system, update your details (they will need to do it every time a change in their personal circumstances occurs) and most importantly to prove their immigration status after Brexit.

Case study:

B is a father of two daughters. The family lives in Edmonton. Very limited language skills. B is not employed at present. The family has not been receiving any financial support from the state in the last 4 months. B confirmed that his "accountant" is dealing with basically anything related to the interaction with any public bodies and institutions in the UK. B was not aware that these "accountants" cannot provide immigration advice.

Recommendation:

Delivering information campaign with stakeholders and highlighting the importance of relying on registered and qualified advisers.



❖ *Drop-in session on EUSS delivered by Settled, Edmonton Community Partnership and Houndsfield Primary Schools*

Access to services provided by the NHS and GP registration

According to a January 2020 report by the Enfield Poverty and Inequality Commission, the number of Enfield residents that may not be registered with a GP is 15,644. According to the same report, 20,000 is the estimated number of people with unmet mental health needs in Enfield.

<http://www.smith-institute.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Enfield-Poverty-InequalityCommission-Report.pdf> (Ref.27)

The UK's primary care services are open to everyone in the country. This principle is enshrined in law as well as in the contracts which govern GP services. NHS England guidelines, in interpreting GP services' duties in relation to equalities and non-discrimination, protect the right to GP registration for those who are not able to provide proof of address or identification.

However, many GP practices are failing to implement these principles and, as a result, vulnerable patients are facing worrying obstacles and unnecessary delays to primary care access.

In 2018, almost one fifth of 2,189 registration attempts made by Doctors of the World across 990 GP practices were refused. In almost two thirds of cases, patients were refused because they could not produce the required paperwork (ID or proof of address).

[Registration Refused cover 3 \(doctorsoftheworld.org.uk\)](https://www.doctorsoftheworld.org.uk)

Our outreach demonstrated that between 15-20 % of our target group belong to this community. Access to mental health services, and more generally health services including sexual health, is a massive challenge for the Bulgarian/Roma community. Our outreach demonstrates that mental health emerged as a barrier people face in navigating other problems associated with poverty.

Case study

Coffee morning with the Bulgarian parents. Some of them are reporting that they have paid up to £100 per person to get registered with a GP. When asked about the fact that the NHS is a free service and they don't need to pay to get registered, they replied that language barrier, lack of information about the procedure and unawareness of which service is free and which is not is forcing them to rely on "middlemen" to access the service.

Recommendations:

- Delivering outreach sessions with the support of Medicus Health Partners, Public Health Enfield Council and Doctors of the World in Bulgarian at different locations in Edmonton.
- Intensive information campaign to build greater understanding, raise awareness and address concerns.
- All stakeholders – identifying funding for Bulgarian-speaking community engagement officers as “Health Champions”.



- ❖ *Drop-in session in Bulgarian delivered by Settled, Medicus Health Partners, the Works Rights Centre, Edmonton Community Partnership and the Ark*

Covid-19 Vaccination

The Covid-19 pandemic forced many in our target community to go back to Bulgaria. Our outreach demonstrates that there are many families who are separated due to financial hardship. Some members of the family are in Bulgaria, others in the UK. Usually, the ones abroad are not aware of the new Settled Status and are struggling to provide the requested documentation.

Another big challenge and barrier we identified is the lack of trust related to any information about vaccination against Covid-19. According to Public Health only around 700 residents from a Bulgarian background are vaccinated and the Bulgarian and the GRT communities are among the communities with the lowest uptake of the Covid-19 vaccination.

The monthly age-standardised mortality rates (ASMRs) for deaths involving COVID-19 have been consistently lower for people who had received a second dose at least 21 days ago, compared with unvaccinated people. This is the case for all age groups.

Source: Office for National Statistics: [Deaths involving COVID-19 by vaccination status, England - Office for National Statistics](#)

Case study

A is from a Bulgarian GRT background and lives with her daughter and her husband in Edmonton. The family is not vaccinated against Covid-19 and rejects any opportunities to get vaccinated. When asked at a drop-in session delivered at Eldon Primary School for the reasons rejecting vaccination, they said that they don't trust the doctors.

Risk of exposure to the virus depends on the circumstances in which people live and work. The impacts on people's health and lives will significantly depend on their circumstances prior to the start of the pandemic. Ethnicity, occupation and social deprivation are relevant factors for the groups selected for this report. These groups have long been exposed to systemic barriers to the conditions necessary for good health and wellbeing.

Excluded groups often face routine exclusion from healthcare due to barriers to GP registration, fear of and experienced discrimination and, in some cases, limited entitlement to health services. The GRT community in Enfield belongs to this vulnerable group. At a time when we all need to need to follow public health advice and access NHS services appropriately, a large group of the population in Enfield was not integrated into the health system.

The pandemic has created additional barriers reducing these communities access to the services provided by the NHS.

Case study

18 parents from a Bulgarian GRT background attended a coffee morning at Houndsfield Primary School. 17 of them were not vaccinated against Covid-19. Most of them were not registered with a GP. A few weeks later after intensive information campaign with the support of the school and Public Health Enfield Council we organised a Covid-19 vaccination session. Only a few parents attended the session.

Edmonton Community Partnership received a grant from Public Health to increase Covid-19 vaccination uptake in Edmonton in the under-40 age group among the Eastern European communities.

We are using the schools' infrastructure to communicate with Eastern European parents, to coordinate vaccine pop-up clinics, to engage 1-to-1 with our target group, and generally to raise awareness of the Covid-19 vaccination and services provide by the NHS.

Another way of engaging with our target group was to create a dual language video for social media to promote uptake of the vaccine.

<https://fb.watch/a4ycksYQOO/>

❖ ***Video in Bulgarian promoting a joint session with Enfield Council, Houndsfield Primary School and Edmonton Community Partnership***

Another major barrier for our target group is the lack of IT skills, language barrier and lack of access to IT equipment. Lack of access to the internet affects accessing health care services especially during the pandemic.

Another major concern for the spread of Covid-19 among the Bulgarian GRT community in Edmonton is the fact that they live in multiple-occupancy dwellings. This is the most common scenario, and it has been confirmed by many members of the community when asked about their living conditions. This finding was also confirmed by the Cardiff based Romani Cultural and Arts Company (RCAC) who said that these communities have been “disproportionately affected” by the Covid-19 pandemic.

[Coronavirus: Gypsy, Roma and Travellers 'disproportionately' affected - BBC News](#)

In July-August 2020, a qualitative investigation done by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), involving three focus groups and 47 semi-structured interviews, was conducted through virtual platforms and telephone calls with 70 individuals from different ethnic and vulnerable groups. One of the groups was the Gypsy, Roma and Travellers community. They were recruited through existing Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) networks. Verbal informed consent was obtained from all participants. Feelings towards hospital attendance for COVID-19 vaccine trials and research were explored. Responses were recorded, transcribed and analysed using a thematic approach.

The research demonstrates that the main barriers faced by the GRT community in terms of vaccination against Covid-19 were:

- Fatalistic ideology and limited interest in vaccines
- Nomadic, communal and restricted living conditions
- Social distancing and self-isolation not feasible

[The views of ethnic minority and vulnerable communities towards participation in COVID-19 vaccine trials \(nih.gov\)](#)

Recommendations:

- Delivering outreach sessions with the support of different stakeholders on Covid-19 vaccination.
- Intensive information campaign in Bulgarian delivered with the support of the schools, Bulgarian newspapers and media outlets in London, Enfield Council and community champions from this community.
- All stakeholders – identifying funding for Bulgarian speaking Covid-19 community engagement officers.

- Enable access to services provided by the NHS, for people who otherwise experience exclusion.
- Conducting welfare checks and deliver outreach sessions supporting rough sleepers
- Identifying evolving and emerging health needs of vulnerable groups
- Designing marketing materials on Covid-19 in languages of other vulnerable groups, e.g. Romanian and Somalian.



❖ **Banner in Bulgarian encouraging the Bulgarian community to get vaccinated. We produced with Public Health Enfield Council banners, posters, billboards and leaflets which were distributed among the schools and partner organisations.**

As part of our communication campaign reaching out to the Bulgarian community in Enfield, we organised a series of webinars in Bulgarian. One of them was chaired by the Leader of Enfield Council, Cllr Nesil Caliskan.

[Enfield Council to host online coronavirus vaccination webinar for London's Bulgarian community · Enfield Council](#)

Suspension of benefits from DWP

Hundreds of residents from a Bulgarian GRT background have had their benefits suspended without a valid explanation from DWP. This unexpected situation has created a very difficult situation for the most vulnerable members of this community.

Edmonton Community Partnership has been delivering extensive outreach in Edmonton at places where the Bulgarian GRT community gather in order to engage with the community,

identify their needs and signpost them to relevant organisations. Our outreach includes calling the DWP on behalf of the parents from our schools and local residents from this community, and referrals to Enfield Council and other partner organisations.

We also provided emergency Christmas support to 20 families who were in desperate need of financial support due to their benefits being suspended.

The outreach will continue during 2022 and we hope to be able to establish a proper referral system.

Recommendations:

- Identifying emergency funding to support the most vulnerable members of this community.
- Setting up a referral system to signpost them to Enfield Council and other stakeholders.
- All stakeholders – identifying funding for Bulgarian speaking (housing and benefit) community engagement officers.



❖ ***Drop-in session in Bulgarian on Employment rights delivered by Houndsfield Primary School, Edmonton Community Partnership and the Work Rights Centre***

Support for residents at risk of homelessness or with no income

Nishan Dzhingozyan

December 2021

1. Introduction
2. Summary of Key findings
3. Recommendations
4. Methodology

Introduction

Enfield and Edmonton are home to one of the largest Bulgarian/Roma (GRT) communities in London. In 2017, the Eastern European communities, and notably the Bulgarian, Romanian, and Roma communities, were recognised as hard-to-reach and underrepresented groups by the office of the Mayor of London. The reasons for this decision are complex and are related to the interaction between local authorities in London and those communities.

The main objectives of the survey are to identify the challenges and barriers faced by these communities, especially the Bulgarian GRT community as a result of suspension of their benefits.

In a one-to-one mini-survey for Edmonton Community Partnership, Nishan Dzhingozyan explored the target group's knowledge, awareness and attitudes towards accessing any support networks for residents who are at risk of homelessness or who have no income.

The survey was conducted among 10 adults from Bulgarian/Roma (GRT) background in Edmonton, from 20 December to 22 December 2021.

Summary of key findings

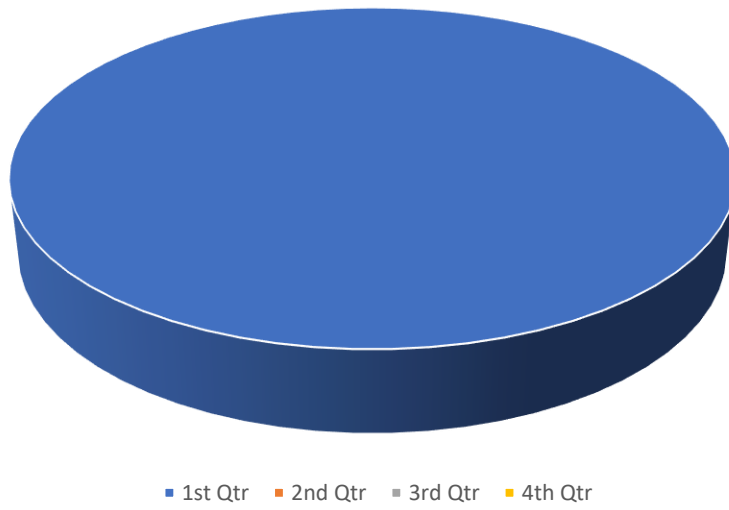
The survey, conducted by Edmonton Community Partnership from 20 December 2021 to 22 December 2021, asked 10 representatives of the Bulgarian/Roma (GRT) communities in Edmonton several questions on their understanding of the existing support network for residents at risk of homelessness or who have no income.

The result of the survey will be communicated to Enfield Council and partner organisations to make them aware of the findings of the survey and to help them in their engagement with this community, to facilitate better access to services.

- 1. The Bulgarian Roma (GRT) community in Edmonton is not aware of any organisations or support network providing help, assistance and guidance to people at risk of homelessness or with no income**

All interviewees indicate that they are not aware of any organisations helping people at risk of homelessness or with no income

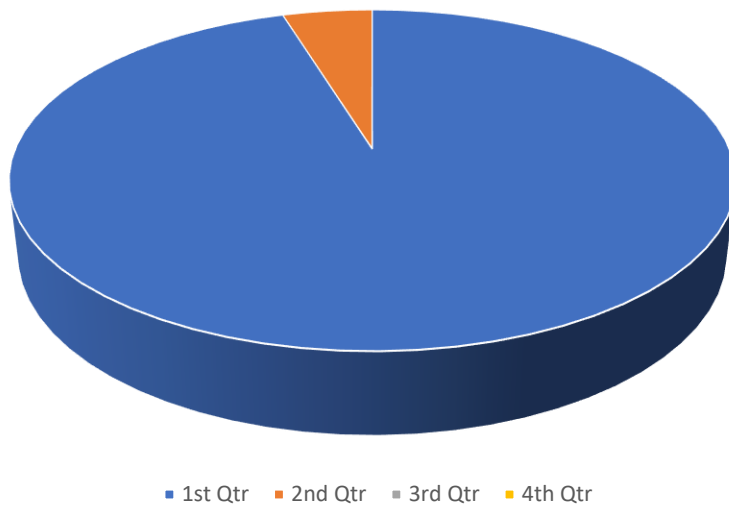
Are you aware of any organisations providing assistance to people at risk of homelessness?



2. The interviewees possess little understanding of the structure and the way the local authorities in the UK operate

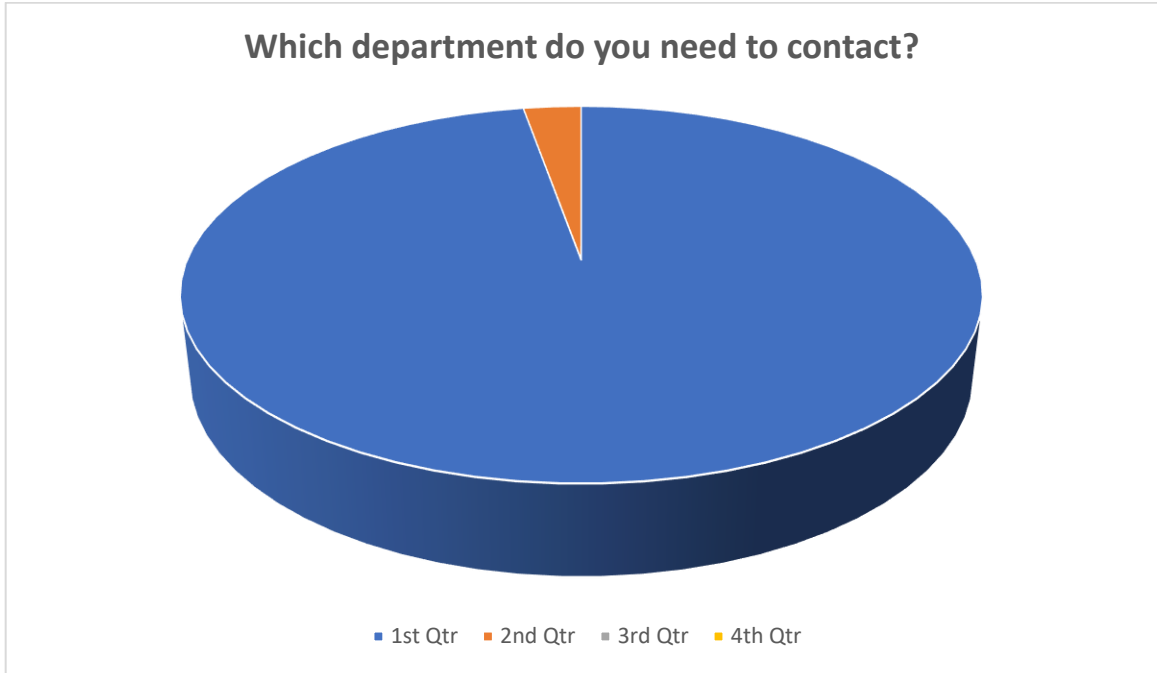
Most interviewees indicate that they don't know that they need to contact the local authority

Are you aware that you might need to contact the local authority if you are at risk of homelessness?



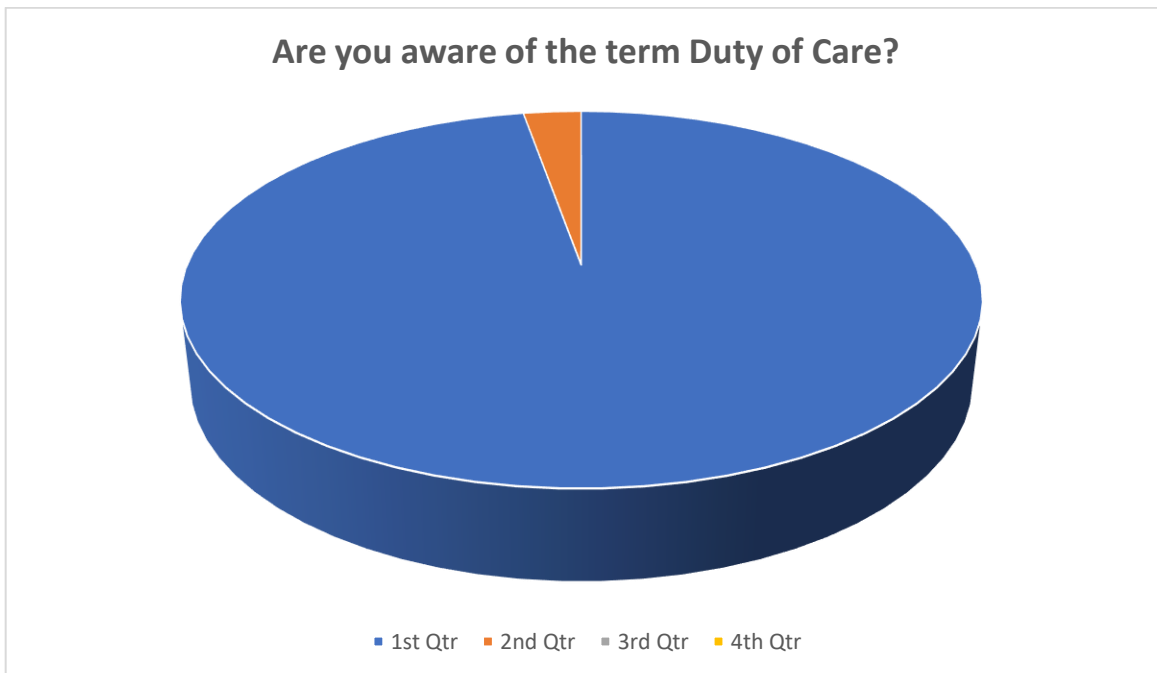
3. The interviewees possess little understanding of the structure and the way the local authorities in the UK operate

Most interviewees indicate that they don't know which department they need to contact if they are at risk of homelessness



4. The interviewees possess little understanding of the safeguarding and child protection issues

Most interviewees indicate that they don't know that the local authorities and schools in the UK have a duty of care to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of a child or young person.



Recommendations

- Intensive information campaign to build greater understanding and raise awareness of the services provided by Enfield Council

The survey indicates that most of the interviewees from this community are not aware of the services provided by the local authority and how to access it. An intensive information campaign is needed to build greater understanding and raise awareness among this community.

- Setting up a referral system to signpost vulnerable residents and parents from the schools' members of Edmonton Community Partnership to Enfield Council

Methodology

For the purposes of this survey, we approached adults aged 18 and older in Edmonton from a Bulgarian/Roma (GRT) background. The sample was selected in two stages. In the first stage, the sampling frame was a list of randomly selected parents from a few of the schools in Edmonton. The second stage of sampling was randomly selected residents from a Bulgarian/Roma (GRT) background in Edmonton.

The survey consists of 10 completed one-to-one interviews. All sample surveys are subject to possible sampling error, that is, the result may differ from those which would be obtained if the entire population under study were interviewed.

The questionnaires used in this study were designed by Edmonton Community Partnership.

Composition of the survey interviewees

- Male – 20%
- Female – 80%

- 18-29 – 10%
- 30-44 – 60%
- 45-59 – 20%
- 60+ – 10%

- Full-time employed – 30%
- Part-time employed – 20%
- Out of work – 50%

Case study

A and his wife B have a very limited knowledge of English and no IT skills. Both applied to the EUSS with the help of a neighbour and received a refusal from the Home Office. Both are not aware of the reason for being refused to get Pre-Settled or Settled Status. As a result of this their benefits were suspended. The family has a new-born baby, and the mother is not able to work. The family has not been able to pay their rent for months and are struggling even

with food. The landlord is threatening the family and asked the mom for sexual intercourse with him if they want to stay at home. Both parents possess little awareness of services provided by Enfield Council and are not able to provide the requested documents to rent a flat on the private market.

Tenancy rights/access to housing

After the suspension of benefits from DWP, another issue has emerged. Many members of this community are at risk of homelessness due to their inability to cover the rent.

Case study:

G is a father to two children – five and ten years old. The government has suspended their benefits and he is struggling to get any jobs due to his limited language skills and lack of qualifications. They family received a letter from the estate agent stating that they need to pay immediately £6,000 to cover the rent in the last months. They also received a letter from the estate agents confirming that they will be seeking possession of the property and that the landlord will take the family to court.

Recommendations:

- Delivering training on tenancy rights in Bulgarian with the support of the network of schools and other stakeholders.
- Setting up a referral system to signpost them to Enfield Council.
- All stakeholders – identifying funding for Bulgarian speaking community engagement/housing officers.



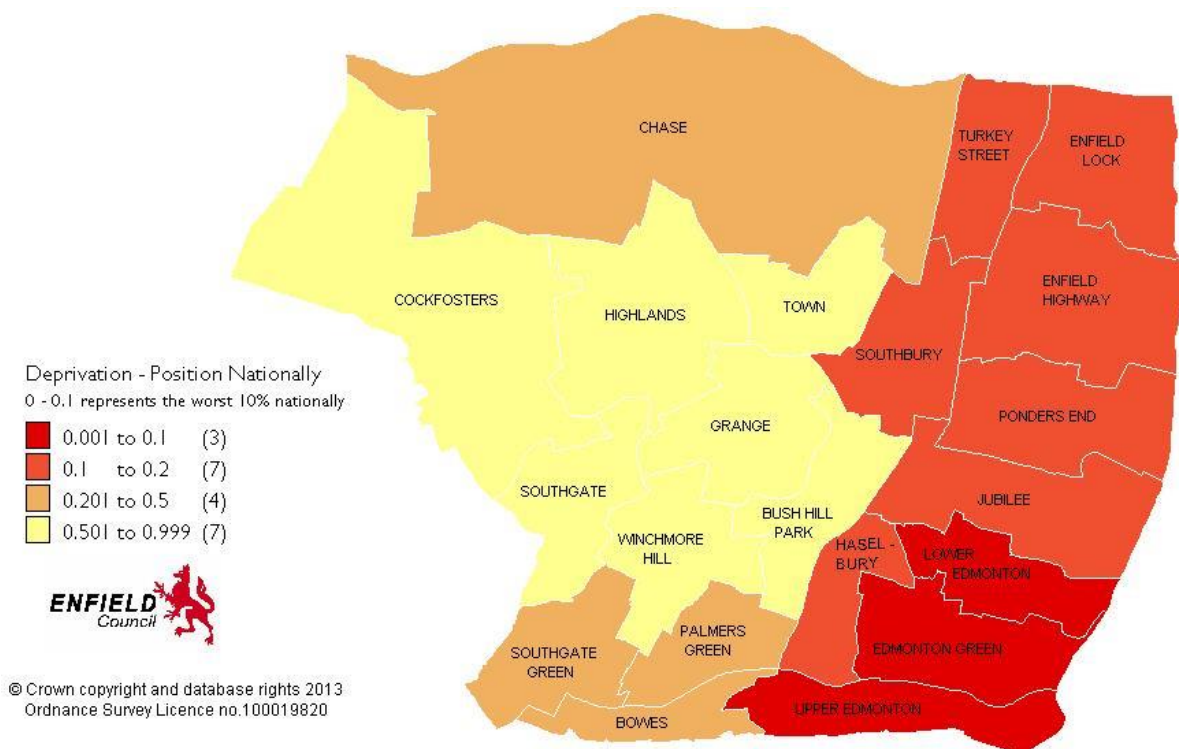
❖ *Drop-in session delivered by Enfield Council, ECP, Houndsfield Primary School and the WRC*

Poverty

According to the Enfield Poverty and Inequality Commission report in January 2020, one in three children in Enfield live in poverty.

<http://www.smith-institute.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Enfield-Poverty-Inequality-Commission-Report.pdf> (Source: Enfield Borough Profile 2019)

Our outreach demonstrated that between 20-25% of our target group belong to this community.



Our outreach indicates that most of the members of this community live in poverty. According to Enfield Children & Young Persons Services (ECYPS), only in the week commencing 23 November, 70% of the people attending the food bank they run were from Bulgarian/Roma background.

Recommendations:

- The stakeholders should take an early intervention approach to preventing children being at risk of poverty and homelessness.
- The stakeholders should act together and in coordination to signpost families in need to food banks and ensure all families and children have access to healthy food.
- A whole-community approach should be taken to reduce poverty and children being at risk.
- The stakeholders should work together to make sure the children are “school-ready” and secure basic necessities for school.

Unmet mental health needs

When asked the parents from a Bulgarian GRT background at a drop-in session delivered at Eldon Primary School what kind of support they most urgently need, the most common answer was mental health support.

The Covid-19 pandemic, the lack of income, insecurity and housing issues were named as the main issues experienced by them.

Recommendations:

- Providing mental health support
- Delivering sessions on stress management
- Organising stress-reducing initiatives
- The Eastern European Hub should provide mental health support in the most common ethnic languages



❖ *Setting up a drop-in session at the Ark with the support of the Work Rights Centre, Settled, ECP and Medicus Health Partners*

Modern Day Slavery

Many families from a Bulgarian GRT background are reporting that that are “employed” by local businesses with no contract, PPE, training and paid annual leave. When asked to report to the Police, they are reluctant to report the issues in fear that this might lead to an investigation and their income being stopped. In the most common scenario, they work well below the national minimum wage.

Case study:

H is a Bulgarian citizen from a GRT background living in Edmonton. When asked at a drop-in session at Houndsfield Primary School whether he is employed or not, he confirmed that he is

employed by a Turkish company in Edmonton and is earing £4 per hour. H wasn't sure whether he has an employment contract or not. H does shifts including nights shifts. The shifts are 12 hours.

Recommendations:

- Setting up a referral system
- Delivering training in Bulgarian on employment rights
- Setting up a working group with the Modern-Day Slavery team of Enfield Council, ECP and other stakeholders
- Designing marketing materials in Bulgarian
- The stakeholders should tackle poor employment trough an active procurement strategy

Mounting debt

As a direct result of the suspension of their benefits, a large number of families from this community are reporting mounting debt in excess of thousands of pounds for uncovered rent. This issue is affecting the majority of this community and it has been reported at every drop-in session in Edmonton.

Recommendations:

- The stakeholders should free the poorest and most vulnerable members of this community from the burden of problem debts by extending access to benefits advice and support around debt.
- The stakeholders should ensure people have the offer of financial literacy education.
- Designing marketing materials in Bulgarian
- Delivering drop-in sessions on budget management

Date	Description	Rent Due	Rent Received	Outstanding Balance
27/08/2021	August Rent	£1,200.00	£1,200.00	£0.00
25/09/2021	September Rent	£1,200.00	£1,200.00	£0.00
	October Rent	£1,200.00	£0.00	£1,200.00
	November Rent	£1,200.00	£0.00	£2,400.00
	December Rent	£1,200.00	£0.00	£3,600.00
	Total	£6,000.00	£2,400.00	

Local labour market suited to the needs of this community

When asked about the reason for not being employed, most of the members of this community are reporting a few common issues: lacking or low educational background, language skills and lack of information about local vacancies, as well as difficulties re-entering the labour market after periods of unemployment.

Case study:
B and D live in Edmonton. Both are unemployed. When asked at a drop-in session how and where they are looking for job, both replied that they don't know how to do it online as their English is limited and they don't have access to IT equipment. Neither of them was aware of any local job vacancies.

Recommendations:

- Working in partnership with local educational providers to deliver suitable employment training
- Working in partnership with job centres to identify suitable job opportunities
- Increasing volunteer opportunities for the GRT community to gain the requested skills and confidence.
- Delivering training on self-confidence (a major issue among this community)

Lack of representation on a political level

More than 70,000 residents submitted their applications to the EUSS. Lack of representation on a political level is a big challenge not only for the GRT community, but also for the wider Eastern European and European residents and taxpayers.

The lack of representatives on a political level familiar with the challenges and barriers experienced by these communities is slowing down the process of integration and full participation in the political, economic and cultural life of the Borough.

Recommendations:

- Providing guidance, support, encouragement and training to members of these communities considering political career.
- Identifying community leaders
- Promoting “being proactive” policy
- Raising the issue of lack of representation on a political level and in the local administration of this large group of residents



❖ *In June 2021 an organisation supporting Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) communities in London launched a campaign to amplify their voices in the capital*

Source: [Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities in London demand City Hall voice \(swlondoner.co.uk\)](https://swlondoner.co.uk)

Reducing social isolation and exclusion

Social inclusion is a major challenge for the GRT and some of the Eastern European communities due to the multiple barriers and challenges experienced by these communities.

Recommendations:

- Stakeholders should support and initiate cultural events celebrating the GRT and the Eastern European culture and traditions. The Eastern European Fair in Enfield organised three years ago attracted more than 5,000 local residents.
- Working in a partnership with the volunteer sector to initiate workshops and other activities reducing social isolation and promoting social cohesion and neighbourliness.

The benefits regulations do not allow for pre-settled status to count as a qualifying right to reside

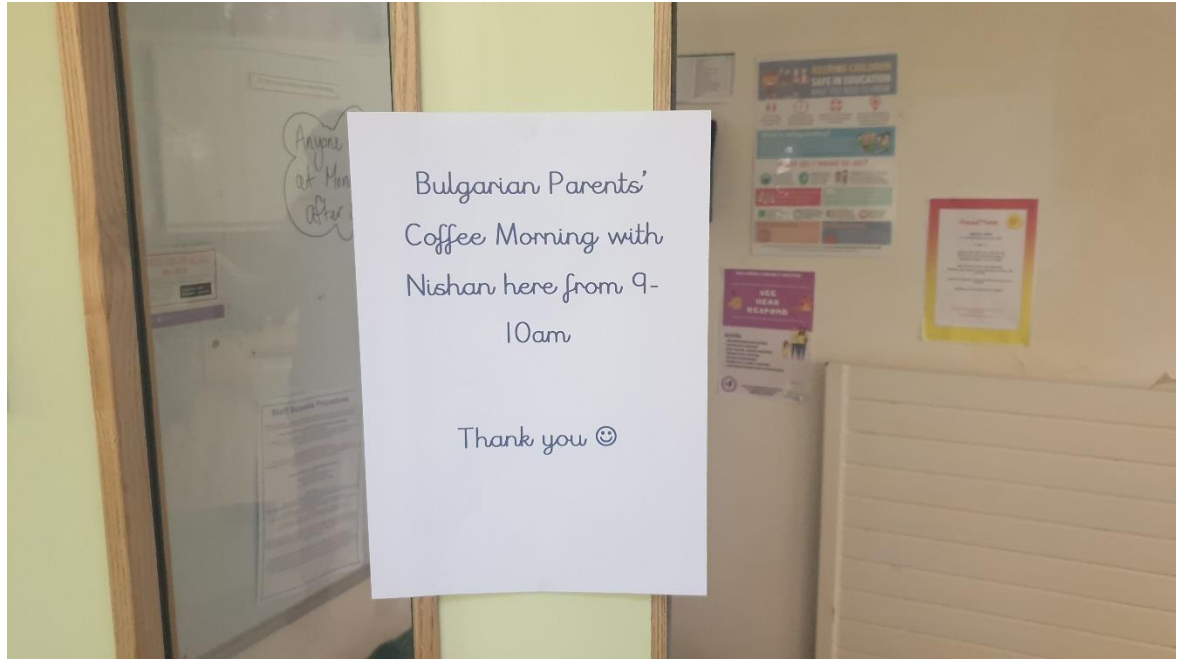
This means that a person with pre-settled status who is not exercising a right to reside, or who only has an initial right of residence or the right to reside as a jobseeker, will be ineligible for benefits.

They will need to demonstrate that they have established a right to reside, even if they already have Pre-Settled Status.

[Pre-Settled Status and Access to State Benefits - Richmond Chambers \(immigrationbarrister.co.uk\)](http://immigrationbarrister.co.uk)

10. Completed tasks

- Milestone of engaging with 4,000 vulnerable residents and parents from Bulgarian/Roma background
- Identifying and setting up a local support network of schools and partner organisations
- Starting a marketing campaign on social media in Bulgarian with the support of different stakeholders
- Purchasing IT equipment (18 laptops) and starting to deliver training sessions in Bulgarian using the infrastructure of the schools
- Identifying volunteers and distributing marketing materials in Edmonton
- Identifying any emerging issues and challenges faced by this community
- Delivering webinars in Bulgarian with the support of Enfield Council, Public Health, the NHS and other partner organisations including the schools in Edmonton, Medicus and Healthwatch Enfield
- Delivering a presentation at a meeting organised by the GLA and Enfield Councils
- Started delivering drop-in sessions with the support of local food banks and churches
- Securing grants from Enfield Council, NCL CCG, the Big Lottery Fund, and Public Health
- Identifying a small group of volunteers from these communities
- Training programme on how to prove your new immigration status
- Raising awareness of the multiple challenges and barriers faced by these communities
- Mapping exercise of existing organisations representing or supporting this community
- Organising coffee mornings
- Drop-in sessions on employment rights



❖ *Coffee morning delivered at Churchfield Primary School*

11. Tasks planned in 2022

- Shared understanding by the stakeholders that we are delivering a large-scale community engagement programme, supporting groups officially identified as hard-to-reach and underrepresented, and not only providing different services to these communities
- Continuing raising awareness of the challenges experienced by this very large group of local residents
- Identifying new partner organisations and working in partnership with them
- Continuing with an extensive outreach programme
- Continuing the marketing campaign
- Continuing with drop-in sessions, ESOL classes and coffee mornings
- Continuing with the webinars in partnership with the other stakeholders
- Hiring Bulgarian and Romanian speaking officers
- Mapping exercise of existing organisations representing or supporting this community
- Delivering training on subjects related to the GRT and the wider Eastern European communities
- Ensuring full publicity in accessible and visible forms for these communities
- Developing partnership working with members of these communities – workshops, joint events, etc.
- Use of Digital Storytelling. Anyone with a computer and camera can create a digital story, which can be shared with others online.
- Organising a round-table discussion on the challenges and barriers experienced by these communities with different stakeholders and representatives of our target group.

- Engaging with groups we haven't been working so far – the Romanian GRT community in Edmonton
- Identifying local community champions and training them to act as a “bridge” between these communities and the stakeholders
- Setting up the Eastern European Hub
- Collating data on the GRT and Eastern European communities in Enfield
- Identifying “success stories” and role models and giving them publicity and platforms to encourage the community to fully participate in the life of the Borough
- Setting up a fully functioning referral system to signpost service users to relevant departments of Enfield Council and other public bodies
- Working actively with partner organisations to encourage GP registration and vaccination against Covid-19
- Organising an event to celebrate the GRT and Eastern European culture and heritage
- Promoting the Bulgarian Facebook page among the stakeholders
- Engaging with the sex workers in Edmonton and signposting them to relevant organisations
- Producing a full yearly report for the programme
- Identifying additional funding to enhance the scope of the programme and engage with other hard-to-reach groups – the Somalian community, etc.
- Recruiting two bilingual staff members to work in the schools

12. Lessons learned since the beginning of the programme

- The implementation of the new immigration status and its consequences have already had a massive impact on these communities, and it will likely deepen the social, economic and health inequalities these communities are experiencing.
- In order successfully to engage with this very large group of local residents, a joint approach of all stakeholders is needed.
- Lack of awareness and understanding of the issues experienced by these communities has been a challenge. Raising awareness of these issues is critical to gain the necessary support from all stakeholders and other public bodies and institutions in the UK.
- The basis of any community engagement programmes is extensive outreach. Hiring officers who speak Bulgarian and other ethnic languages is crucial for the success of the programme.
- Digital engagement including Zoom presentations and email distribution of marketing materials is not suitable for this community due to the low level of IT skills
- Only a very limited number of people from this community can complete an EUSS application independently
- Limited access to information and support
- Many Bulgaria/Roma in Edmonton have applied for Pre-Settled Status even though they are eligible for Settled Status
- Relatively large number of them do not possess valid identity document
- Relatively large number (10-20 %) of Bulgarian/Roma children are not making applications and their applications are not linked to the parents
- The majority of rough sleeping Bulgarian/Roma have not applied to EUSS

- Many people who might be eligible for EUSS, but have not applied, believe the system is only for those who are currently employed and that those who do not work or receive benefits will be refused
- The engagement process must be conducted in Bulgarian due to the low English language skills of the Bulgarian/Roma community
- Widespread misunderstanding of the new Settled Status and the rights and responsibilities attached to the new immigration status
- Common practice among this community is the use of unauthorised and unregistered individuals to help them with applications for Settled Status
- Many families are reluctant to approach any authorities and access services provided by them due to multiple barriers
- Inability for many of them to provide documents requested by the Home Office
- Severe impact of Covid-19 on the income of many families from this community
- Lack of understanding of the system in the UK. Many of them are not aware of the services available to them
- Large numbers of them are not registered with a GP. In the light of Covid-19 this is a very worrying factor
- Unwillingness to access the services provided by the NHS, mainly due to low language skills. Many of them travel to Bulgaria to get an appointment with a doctor.
- Lack of understanding and/or struggling with tenancy rights and housing issues
- Lack of easily accessible information materials in their language with basic information, guidance and support on subjects related to them
- Lack of any support network except the schools
- Lack of trust
- Those who work in environments dominated by their native language do not have any exposure to English-speaking environments, as they socialise in clustered communities and lack the opportunity to develop their English language skills through interaction with native speakers
- Widespread misunderstanding of the Covid-19 vaccination programme and its aim
- Widespread disbelief in information about Covid-19
- Lack of information and understanding of basic medical principles
- Poor understanding of the structure and services provided by the NHS
- Lack of information and understanding about services provided by walk-in centres
- Strong influence of church leaders on this community

Unexpected outcomes

- Securing some additional funding to enhance the scope of the programme and tackle the multiple challenges and barriers experienced by this community
- Partnership and engagement with London Councils and the GLA and discussing setting up a cross-council working group supporting these communities
- Active partnership with Public Health and NCL CCG
- Active partnership with ONS

13. Recommendations

- Need for further support for the Bulgarian/Roma community in Enfield. We recommend that all stakeholders continue making efforts to support the Bulgarian/Roma community in Enfield and the wider EU communities
- Identifying new partner organisations and enhancing the scope of the programme, engaging with other hard-to-reach groups
- Setting up a Board of Stakeholders and meeting monthly
- Identifying new funding streams
- Promoting the Bulgarian Facebook page and other activities on social media
- Setting up a “hot-line” in Bulgarian
- Digital Status. This community is experiencing enormous difficulties in accessing their digital status and proving and updating their details on the Home Office System. The training delivered by ECP and Settled should continue throughout 2022 and engage with all schools in Enfield. At some of the schools there are up to 124 families from Bulgarian/Roma background. A series of training sessions is needed in the Bulgarian language to equip them with the knowledge of how to deal with the digital status. Serious financial resources should be allocated to meet the needs of the training sessions
- Targeted advertising. We recommend all stakeholders take the necessary steps to advise schools and employers about the EUSS scheme and support them to provide the most accurate information to the Bulgarian/Roma community in their native language
- ESOL classes with Bulgarian support to be delivered with the support of partner organisations; ideally, they would include modules on employment rights, CV writing and interview skills
- Training sessions on the differences between Pre-Settled and Settled status and how this is going to affect those on Pre-Settled status after Brexit to be delivered to the local residents and parents from Bulgarian/Roma background and also to the Parents’ Support officers
- Encouraging and advising this community not to rely on unregistered advisers and facilitating access to agencies who can provide services legitimately and free of charge
- Facilitating easier access to services provided by Enfield Council and other agencies by providing information about services available to them. One of the reasons for not accessing service is that they are not aware of the services available to them
- Encouraging GP registration
- Encouraging Covid-19 vaccination
- Setting up a service with health service providers to facilitate access to the NHS and help them get registered with a GP
- Setting up a service with organisations providing information, guidance, and support on tenancy rights
- Working closely with the Metropolitan Police, the THT, Healthwatch Enfield and other agencies to tackle the issue of sex workers in Edmonton
- Working closely with the member organisations of the Eastern Europe Forum and introducing them to the Bulgarian/Roma and the wider EU communities in Edmonton
- Setting up a referral system to signpost vulnerable members of these communities to Enfield Council and other public bodies
- Offering training to the school staff on specific cultural barriers faced by this community

- Organising another Eastern European Festival in Enfield following the very successful one organised in 2019. Organising cultural events is a very good way of engaging with hard-to reach groups
- Working closely with the GRT Board of Enfield Council
- Working closely with NCL CCG
- Collating data on the GRT communities in Enfield
- Mapping exercise of existing Eastern European organisations and business in Enfield
- Setting up an Eastern European Hub in Enfield
- Working in close partnership with the Bulgarian Embassy in London and the Bulgarian Foreign Office
- Organising a round-table discussion on the challenges experienced by these communities with representatives of different stakeholders
- Identifying community leaders and volunteers from this community
- Training community champions

14. Conclusion

This report shows that there is much that can be done locally to improve the wellbeing of these communities, facilitate access to services provided by Enfield Council, the NHS and other public bodies and partner organisations, and reduce social and health inequalities.

Edmonton Community Partnership and the stakeholders appreciate that this work is extremely challenging with competing demands and reduced resources, but it is essential.

Failure to act will carry a much larger cost for these communities, the schools in Edmonton, Enfield Council and the other organisations involved in this project.

Edmonton Community Partnership recommends that the stakeholders develop an action plan in response to the recommendation in this report. An important part of that will be setting measurable targets which can be publicly reviewed.

The most affected section of this community are women and vulnerable families. Very often they have gaps in their employment history, many have no history of employment altogether and thus struggle to provide any evidence proving their existence in the UK. Culturally, Bulgarian/Roma mothers prefer to look after their children themselves. It is common for women from this community to stay at home beyond their maternity period. This affects greatly their EUSS residence records, and consequently access to the benefit system.

Another major barrier for them is obtaining new ID documents, especially in the light of Covid 19 when the Bulgarian Embassy was closed. The difficulties obtaining new documents ranged from administrative issues, a lack of wherewithal to pay for a new document or ability to travel to Bulgaria to obtain them. Many EU Embassies in London, including the Bulgarian Embassy, have a long waiting list for obtaining new documents due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Embassies were not open. Due to Brexit, a huge number of EU citizens decided to renew their ID cards or passports. The majority of those placed on a waiting list are having issues with their ID documents. Not being able to provide a valid ID document then leads to inability to complete the EUSS application process.

Widespread misinformation and misunderstanding of the way the health services in the UK operate are causing great challenges for this community. Information and drop-in sessions are needed to help them navigate the system.

There are hundreds of families from this community in Edmonton who are not registered with a GP. This is creating a bubble of residents who do not rely on the services provided by the NHS and are not accessing any information, support or guidance provided by the NHS.

Designing and delivering a long-term community engagement programme to facilitate access to services provided by the NHS and reduce social and health inequalities is needed.

The lack of Bulgarian-speaking employees in most of the public institutions and GP surgeries in Enfield is also another barrier for this community. Hiring someone who can communicate in their mother tongue with members of this community will significantly improve the communication.

Lack of representation on any level for this community and the GRT communities is a challenge we need to tackle.

Delivering a long-term community engagement programme supporting this community will benefit the schools, the local authority, the NHS and other public bodies in the UK. If successfully delivered, the programme could be used as a template for engaging with other priority groups: for example, the Somalian and Afro-Caribbean communities. Our outreach demonstrates that many members of the Somalian communities in Enfield are holders of European passports, mainly Italian and Dutch, and are experiencing similar challenges as our target group.

Finally, delivering a long-term community engagement programme will equip these communities with the knowledge and confidence to navigate the system and participate more actively in the socio-economic, political and cultural life of the borough.

It is important to say that this work is not the sole responsibility of Edmonton Community Partnership. The recommendations in this report are for Enfield as a whole and for communities identified as hard-to-reach and underrepresented by the Office of the Mayor of London.

Many of the recommendations in this report require the leadership of public sector partners, the voluntary sector, and volunteers from these communities.

For the success of the programme, everyone involved in the delivery of the programme must play their part.

Edmonton Community Partnership

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Until this report is published, even if it is ultimately to be considered in Part 1, it should not be circulated beyond the Cabinet (excepting officers writing and reviewing the paper through this process) or sent externally, and its contents should be treated as confidential.

**London Borough of Enfield
Annual Equality and Diversity Board**

8th February 2022

Subject: Annual Equalities Report

Cabinet Member: Cllr Nneka Keazor, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Cohesion

Executive Director: Ian Davis, Chief Executive

Purpose of Report

1. The Board will receive a presentation summarising activities and projects that the Council has focused on over the last year to deliver its Fairer Enfield policy and how these initiatives have delivered positive outcomes for people who live, learn, earn in or visit Enfield.
2. This presentation and feedback from the Board will be used to develop the Council's Annual Equality and Diversity Report for 2021/22, for publication in May 2022.

Proposal(s)

3. The Board are asked to review the summary of the progress, highlighted in the presentation, towards achieving the Council's eight equalities objectives and our commitments as a community leader, service provider, commissioner and employer, as outlined in the Fairer Enfield policy.

Reason for Proposal(s)

4. A summary of progress against our equalities objectives and of the work undertaken during 2021/22 to embed the principles outlined in the Fairer Enfield Policy is being presented to the Board for their feedback, to help us develop the Council's Annual Equality and Diversity Report for 2021/22.

Relevance to the Council Plan

5. Fairer Enfield is one of the cross-cutting themes in the Council Plan 2020-22 and the Fairer Enfield policy sets out the principles which we need to follow across the workforce to ensure we deliver on this priority to tackle discrimination and promote and enhance equality, inclusion and diversity in all that we do.

6. Our Annual Equality and Diversity Report is an opportunity to demonstrate progress in making Enfield a fairer place where everyone has the same opportunities, whatever their background or situation.

Background

7. The [Fairer Enfield Policy 2021-25](#) sets out how Enfield Council will tackle inequality and foster an inclusive workplace and inclusive communities, as the borough continues to grow, develop and create new opportunities for everyone in Enfield. It demonstrates the Council's compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty set out in the Equality Act 2010. The Public Sector Equality Duty is made up of a general equality duty which is supported by specific duties.
8. The specific duty requires the Council to:
 - Annually publish information to demonstrate how it is complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty. This information must relate to people who are affected by the Council's policies and practices, such as employees and service users.
 - Prepare and publish equality objectives at least every four years.
9. The Council publishes an equality and diversity report on an annual basis in accordance with this duty. The annual [Equality and Diversity Report 2020](#) demonstrates progress during 2020/21. We are now developing the report for 2021/22 and the Board will be presented with a summary of our progress for discussion, to inform the further development of this report.

Main Considerations for the Council

10. The Fairer Enfield Policy sets out how Enfield Council will tackle inequality, support an inclusive workplace and communities and create new opportunities for everyone in Enfield. This policy includes eight equality objectives to reduce inequality, which affect specific groups in Enfield.
11. These objectives are to:
 - Overcome racism in Enfield
 - Deliver positive interventions to reduce serious youth violence in Enfield
 - Increase the number of residents affected by special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) who are in paid employment
 - Improve the wellbeing and celebrate the contribution of Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Trans Communities
 - Provide access to support services and networks to reduce social isolation
 - Work with our partners to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on children and young people's mental health and wellbeing
 - Keep people safe from domestic abuse
 - Promote safer and stronger communities by encouraging the reporting of hate crime and reducing repeat incidents

12. The presentation to the Board will set out the objective (listed above), why it was selected when we formulated our policy during 2020, a summary of the key activities and projects that the Council has focused on over the last year to deliver them, and consideration of the impact, based on our analysis so far.
13. The presentation will include our workforce review, which outlines the makeup of our workforce by ethnicity, age, disability and gender. It will also show how these groups are represented across different pay scales and includes the annual gender and ethnicity pay gaps.
14. The presentation will contain good practice case studies that provide an overview of how the Council has worked in partnership with our statutory, voluntary and community partners, and engaged with our residents, in its capacity as a community leader, service provider and commissioner, to deliver equality initiatives that support work on improving service outcomes for diverse communities in the borough.

Conclusions

15. The presentation to the Board will highlight progress towards achieving the Council's eight equalities objectives and our commitments as a community leader, service provider, commissioner and employer. The Board will be asked for their feedback and this will be used to develop our Annual Equality and Diversity Report for 2021/22.

Report Author: Lucy Nasby
Strategy and Policy Manager

Date of report: 31st January 2022

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Work Programme – Equalities Board 2021/22

Proposed Work Programme as at September 2021. This is subject to change based on the feedback from the Board members and any emerging local or national issues of relevance.

Date	Agenda Item	Purpose of the Presentation
1st December 2021 Papers Deadline – 23 rd November 2021	Affordable Housing	To update the Board on how the Council is providing affordable family-sized homes to buy and rent.
	Draft Local Plan	To update the Board on proposals in the draft Local Plan.
	Keep People Safe from Domestic Abuse	To update the Board on actions, in our Fairer Enfield Policy, to keep people safe from domestic abuse.
8th February 2022 Papers Deadline – 31 st January 2022	Bulgarian/Roma Community Project	To provide an overview of the Edmonton Community partnership Bulgarian/Roma Integration Project
	Annual Enfield Equality and Diversity Report 2021	To review the Annual Equality and Diversity Report 2021.
June 2022 Papers Deadline - TBC	Deliver positive interventions to reduce serious youth violence in Enfield	To update the Board on actions, in our Fairer Enfield Policy, to deliver positive interventions to reduce serious youth violence in Enfield.
	Stonewall Equality Index	To update the Board on findings and actions from the Stonewall Equality Index 2022.
	Work with our partners to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing	To update the Board on actions, in our Fairer Enfield Policy, to work with our partners to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing.
September 2022 Papers Deadline - TBC	Increase the number of residents affected by special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) who are in paid employment	To update the Board on actions, in our Fairer Enfield Policy, to increase the number of residents affected by SEND in paid employment.
	Promote safer and stronger communities by encouraging the reporting of hate crime and reducing repeat incidents	To update the Board on actions, in our Fairer Enfield Policy, to promote safer and stronger communities by encouraging the reporting of hate crime and reducing

		repeat incidents.
December 2022 Papers Deadline - TBC	Overcome Racism in Enfield	To update the Board, on actions, in our Fairer Enfield Policy, to overcome racism in Enfield.

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