

THE CRE IN WALES

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Wales is a commonwealth of communities that includes one of the oldest ethnic minority populations in the UK. The wealth of knowledge and experience among these communities contributes most of the time to a positive attitude to diversity. However, there are occasions when xenophobia raises its ugly head – resulting in racial harassment, institutional racism, and even murder.

CRE Wales has a crucial role to play in contributing to the vision and the future political, economic, and cultural development of a rapidly changing nation – by working in close partnership with institutions in the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Working with the National Assembly for Wales

The Government of Wales Act – and the three-year strategy, Better Wales (2000) – demands that all citizens enjoy equal status and have fair access to resources and services. The aim is to ensure that racial equality is mainstreamed, both in the Assembly and elsewhere, as a means of transforming social relations and creating institutional structures that are not discriminatory. For example, the Assembly expects all its departments to make equality objectives part of their Best Value arrangements. CRE Wales has been working with the Assembly, through the Equality Policy Unit (EPU), to assess the impact of policies and practices in the areas of regeneration, social inclusion, and monitoring the achievement of racial equality.

In the course of the year, we responded to several consultation documents, across the spectrum of devolved subject areas.

Baseline policy audit

CRE officers assisted the EPU in auditing how

each of the 57 divisions of the National Assembly was taking account of equality in their policies and practices. The survey found consistently high levels of awareness of equal opportunities, and some good practice.

However, it concluded that there is still much further to go, especially by way of training, if values, beliefs and attitudes are to be changed. The survey recommended that the Assembly should take a lead in mainstreaming. The Equal Opportunities Committee welcomed the report and recommended that the EPU work with the CRE to implement the main recommendations.

Stephen Lawrence Inquiry – Education Working Party

A group of volunteers was invited to form a working party to consider how the National Assembly might take the lead in tackling institutional racism. The aim was to implement the recommendations of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report, particularly the recommendations on education, an area where there is considerable concern among ethnic minority communities.

The CRE played a robust role in the work of the Education Working Party, which made the following key recommendations:

- curriculum enrichment should be an integral part of the whole curriculum, not just an add-on
- references to racial and cultural diversity should be more explicit in the Personal and Social Education (PSE) Framework, and its statutory status should be seriously reviewed in 2002
- LEAs and schools should be made aware that materials and resources aimed at valuing cultural diversity, and preventing racism, are available from RECs and ethnic minority voluntary organisations



One of the Education Working Party's recommendations was that schools in Wales should take a whole school approach to enriching the curriculum, not treat racial equality as a bolt-on consideration.

- all schools should have a copy of the CRE's standard for racial equality in schools, *Learning for All*
- guidelines should be prepared by the Qualifications Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales for the PSE Framework, to advise teachers on how to include equality of opportunities in the curriculum
- leaflets should be produced, drawing teachers' attention to the legal obligations of schools
- advice should be available on developing policies on tackling racial harassment.

A leaflet about racist behaviour, and why it is unacceptable, is being published for children, and the Assembly is collecting information about recorded racist incidents, on an annual basis, which will be published by local education authorities. The working party has endorsed the work being done by Estyn, the schools inspection body in Wales, to encourage awareness of racial equality in schools.

Public appointments

The National Assembly has responsibility for almost 600 appointments to 143 public bodies. In 1999, members of ethnic minority communities held one per cent of public appointments. The aim is to increase this proportion and, in the case of public bodies that serve communities with large ethnic minority populations, to reflect these.

CRE Wales was consulted about this and made several recommendations, ranging from different methods of advertising appointments

and training selectors to mentoring schemes for potential candidates.

From the Margins.

Edwina Hart AM, Minister for Finance, Local Government and Communities, and the head of CRE Wales, made presentations at the launch of the report, *From the Margins to the Centre: Assessing the Need for a Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy in Wales*. The event was attended by 200 people from housing associations and ethnic minority communities.

The report recommends that:

- the National Assembly should take a strategic approach to identifying and meeting ethnic minority housing needs, as part of its overall housing strategy for Wales
- further research, coordinated at an all-Wales level by the Assembly, should be commissioned into the social and economic circumstances of people from ethnic minorities in Wales, and how these circumstances impact on their housing needs.
- local authorities should work with registered social landlords (RSLs) to draw up a profile of ethnic minority communities in their areas
- the National Assembly should take account of the needs of ethnic minority communities when setting design standards for social housing

CRE Commissioner Ray Singh with Zenda Azhar of The Valleys REC at the relaunch of CRE Wales.



- the National Assembly should consider establishing ethnic minority-led RSLs.

The National Assembly is currently supporting a project to examine the case for establishing ethnic minority-led RSLs. It has also responded to the recommendation for further research.

Ethnic minority elders

The report, *Hope and Care: Black and Minority Ethnic Elders in Wales*, was launched in partnership with the National Assembly, the Policy Research Institute on Ageing and Ethnicity (PRIAE), and the CRE. The head of CRE Wales and Jane Hutt AM, Minister for Health, gave keynote speeches at the event.

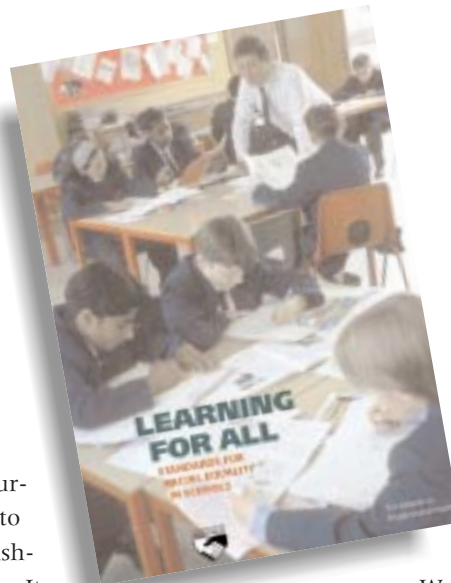
The key recommendations of the report are:

- to commission a development plan setting the future direction of care for ethnic minority elders in Wales
- to introduce ethnic monitoring immediately in the areas of health, housing and social services
- to undertake research on the needs of ethnic minority elders – for example it is not even known how many are in residential and nursing care at present.

The National Assembly has not yet responded to the report, but PRIAE has approached the Assembly to work with it in pursuit of some of the recommendations.

Learning for All

The launch of *Learning for All*, the CRE's standard for racial equality in schools, was held in Llandrindod Wells, in July 2000. It was attended by approximately 70 educationalists from all over Wales, together with representatives from the Qualifications Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales Estyn and the National Assembly for Wales. CRE commissioner Cherry Short and the head of CRE



Wales gave presentations. The standard received support from the Minister for Education, Rosemary Butler, who also wrote a foreword to the document, to give it a Welsh context.

Workshop sessions were held during the day, to discuss implementation of the standard, and compliance with the new Curriculum and Inspection Framework in Wales.

Working with the public sector

Leadership Challenge

The public sector is a major employer in Wales and the CRE gave priority to promoting the Leadership Challenge to this sector during 2000. The year saw organisations such as Cardiff University and Gwent HealthCare NHS Trust sign up to the initiative, and hold launches for their employees to enable them to understand and support the work that would be developed as a result. The organisations are currently drawing up action plans, which will be monitored by the CRE.

The Leadership Challenge launch of Gwent HealthCare NHS Trust was attended by Jane Hutt, National Assembly for Wales' Minister for Health and Social Services. She emphasised the importance of equality of opportunity – not only in relation to people's health but also in building effective health service organisations in Wales. Mr Dennis, Chair of the Trust, said: 'Heads of organisations can take the lead by establishing practical programmes of action on such issues as ensuring fair representation of ethnic minorities in the workplace they manage.'

Criminal justice

CRE Wales continues to develop its work with the police. During 2000, we held meetings with the two new Chief Constables of Dyfed Powys and Gwent police forces to discuss work on racial equality issues. Both

chief constables agreed to work in partnership with the CRE to deliver rigorous racial equality strategies that would address the recommendations of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report, as well as Home Office guidelines.

South Wales police continued to develop racial equality initiatives in line with these recommendations. In 2000, they supported the force's Black Police Association by seconding someone to the post of coordinator of the association, to assist with membership, and with the recruitment of ethnic minority officers.

The CRE also assisted the Crown Prosecution Service's (CPS) South Wales branch in hosting a well-attended seminar to inform ethnic minority communities of the work of the CPS and the legal framework within which it operates. A number of meetings have since been held with CPS South Wales officers and a schedule of work on employment and service delivery issues, which will be delivered in partnership with CRE Wales, has been agreed.

Health

CRE Wales and the Policy Research Institute held a joint seminar on Ageing and Ethnicity to look into the needs of ethnic minority elderly people in Wales. The seminar was well attended by practitioners and people from ethnic minority communities, who, for the first time, were being consulted about their needs.

Work with the National Assembly on the development of the Framework for Health Improvements continued during the year. The CRE advised on draft health improvement programmes submitted by local health groups in Wales.

We also provided guidance and assistance to Gwent Health Authority on developing a racial equality strategy and working with the CRE standard for employers, *Racial Equality Means Business*. This work was also pursued with Gwent HealthCare NHS Trust, which had newly signed up to the Leadership Challenge.

Local government

In response to a request from City and County of Swansea local authority for help in drawing up a racial equality strategy, we provided comments on a draft policy, which the council is now rewriting.



Supporting the private sector

2000 was a successful year in capturing the interest of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in Wales. With over 90 per cent of businesses in Wales being SMEs, the leaflet produced jointly by the three equality commissions, *Equal Opportunities in Wales is Your Business Too*, was an important tool in raising awareness of good practice. The Welsh Development Agency (WDA), the Employment Service, Wales TUC, Wales and West Housing Association, TECs and Chwarae Teg funded the production of 40,000 copies of the leaflet.

CRE Wales, in partnership with the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) and the WDA, held a seminar on good equal opportunities practice and current legislation as it applies to SMEs in the construction industry.

The CRE standard for employers, *Racial Equality Means Business* (REMB), was successfully promoted to Careerpaths, Wales and West Housing Association, Gofal Housing Association and the Sports Council for Wales.

Partnerships

The establishment of the North Wales Race Equality Network is just the first, visible, step in the development of a strategic approach to racial equality issues in North Wales. The idea for the project was supported locally by a wide range of statutory and



▲ (Left) Dr Mashuq Ally, Head of CRE Wales, at the launch of *Learning for All*, with Kaye Quinn of Torfaen Council, Ingrid Wilson from the Newport ROOTS Project, and CRE commissioner Cherry Short. (Right) with Rosemary Butler AM, then Minister for Education in the National Assembly for Wales.



▲ CRE Wales, in partnership with NIACE and RECs, launched the capacity building learning and employment scheme for ethnic minorities at County Hall, Cardiff Bay.

voluntary organisations, and CRE Wales provided development funding, in addition to grant funding through the Welsh Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA). The project also received support from a number of local authorities and North Wales police.

The project team has developed a profile of ethnic minority communities in North Wales, including:

- a comprehensive bank of information, both quantitative and qualitative
- information on the experiences of people from ethnic minorities, living and working in North Wales; their relationships with other local communities; and their experience of using local services – including examples of racial harassment and discrimination
- the statutory and voluntary services currently available, and their effectiveness and accessibility for people from ethnic minority backgrounds
- the policies and practices of key agencies in dealing with racial discrimination and providing services to ethnic minority communities in North Wales.
- Interfaith Council for Wales is now being facilitated by the CRE. All major faiths are represented on the Council, which meets at the CRE office. The Council has taken up two major issues – rural racism, through chapel communities, and religious discrimination.

The Network was launched in December 2000 at an event chaired by the presiding

officer of the National Assembly, Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas, and well attended by members of ethnic minority communities, statutory and voluntary organisations, and nearly all AMs in North Wales. Presentations were given by CRE commissioner Cherry Short and the head of CRE Wales.

Connecting Communities

An initial consultative meeting, facilitated by CRE Wales, was held with the chairs and directors of voluntary sector organisations, to encourage partnership bids through the Connecting Communities programme and the Lotteries Charities Board.

- Mewn Cymru made a successful bid to the Lotteries Board and received a £300,000 grant. They were also successful in bidding for £25,000 from the National Assembly, to develop a website and an all-Wales communications network
- Black Voluntary Sector Network made a successful bid to Connecting Communities in the networking category
- Black and Asian Women Step Out (BAWSO), a domestic violence refuge, agreed, at a meeting with CRE Wales, to set themselves up as an all-Wales support group. This would enable them to establish networks through the use of café internet services – and to put in a bid through the New Opportunities Fund
- All Wales Ethnic Minorities Association (AWEMA) has been extremely successful in attracting resources: it received a grant of £24,000 from the National Assembly, and made a successful bid to the Home Office under Connecting Communities. The group was able to establish an office, and to appoint staff to support a health project, funded by the National Assembly; an Economic Development Committee, which has also received funding from the Assembly; and a Right to Vote project, also resourced by the Assembly.