

# Isle of Wight Infrastructure Group

## REPORT OF THE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME

Towards an Infrastructure Development Plan  
for diverse communities on the Isle of Wight

Research and Report by  
**North Harbour Consulting Limited**  
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## Executive Summary

The Additional Support Programme (ASP) is part of the Home Office's ChangeUp project. ChangeUp aims to map the infrastructure support needs of voluntary and community organisations and agree a 'Local Infrastructure Development Plan' to achieve improvements over the ten years from 2004 to 2014. The ASP aims to do exactly the same things for Black and Minority Ethnic, Minority Faith, Refugee, Asylum Seeker, Gypsy and Traveller voluntary and community organisations. This report, which forms an Annex to the Isle of Wight Infrastructure Development Plan, gives the results and recommendations of the ASP undertaken on the Isle of Wight between November 2005 and March 2006.

The 2001 Census shows that 1,752 people, (1.3% of the Isle of Wight's population) were from non-white ethnic minorities. When people of Irish origin, and people in the Census 'Other White' category are added, the proportion of non-UK white people doubles to 3.2% of the Island's population, or 4,300 people. The Isle of Wight's population has not remained static since the Census, however. There are economic migrants living on the Island, and refugees and asylum seekers have also arrived in the UK and may have settled on the Island since 2001. There are two conclusions to be drawn from this data. Firstly, the number of people from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities counted in the Census is now likely to be an under-estimate when compared with the current situation. Secondly, no single ethnic or religious minority dominates in terms of numbers. The Island's diverse communities represent small numbers of people from many parts of the world.

The diverse communities on the Island are not only small in number, but individuals from these communities are often isolated socially and geographically. There are few representative bodies for BME and other communities, and there are only a handful of groups representing particular national or faith communities. Therefore the kind of consultation with organisations and groups from within the diverse communities on which ASPs in other areas have been based has only been possible to a limited extent on the Isle of Wight. To overcome this difficulty fieldwork associated with the project made contact with individuals who were known by statutory and voluntary agencies on the Island to be prominent in their communities; a small number of voluntary groups based in diverse communities; and front-line services and professional workers that were likely to have people from diverse communities among their service users.

The evidence from this fieldwork is that many people from the Island's diverse communities do not mix socially outside their own community, and in many cases do not know how or where to access a range of services that they and their families might need. Taken as a whole, the responses indicate a very limited knowledge of where to get information, advice and support, and where to go if the service they received was not satisfactory for some reason. People from these communities did not seem to know very much about the voluntary and community sector's role, and some said they did not know the difference between voluntary and statutory services. Yet it is clear that there are a number of statutory and voluntary services on the Island that are doing good work, and about which people from the diverse communities seem to know very little.

Turning to the question of community representation, the general feeling among people from the diverse communities was that no-one currently represents their interests other than a few key individuals whom they trust. Asked if they thought it was important for them as individuals and as communities to have a voice in developing local services and in decisions about their community, almost all of them said that it was.

There is a thread running through several of the responses to this and other related questions that the people who took part in the project want to join with others in their own communities and with other communities, but need help to get this going. It was suggested that help with bringing communities and networks of people together is needed, and possibly also a multi-cultural centre which could be a focus for culture and recreation. For those who are not already organised or involved, the possibility of having somewhere to go and people from their own and other backgrounds to talk to appears to be attractive as well as helping to overcome feelings of isolation and alienation.

As part of the research to establish what services were being provided by mainstream organisations to the Island's diverse communities, a small survey of key infrastructure and service providers was carried out. Organisations that said their services had been provided to people from the diverse communities tended to be those with an open door policy, and with no specific figures for the number of people from these communities that had used their services. It is notable that very few organisations said that they had provided services specifically to people from the BME, Faith, Refugee, Asylum Seeker, Gypsy and Traveller communities. Three organisations have each provided information, advice and support to significant numbers of service users each from these communities. Other respondents said that they had provided a service to a very small number of individuals or did not keep a count.

Similarly, very few organisations provide infrastructure services to minority community groups on the Island even though from the small number of groups that exist and whose members were interviewed there is some demand for infrastructure support in respect of starting a new organisation, funding, access to premises and organisational development. Only one of the respondents provides the basic support needed to start and grow an organisation. There is no specialist advice on equality, diversity and race relations. Nor do any of the organisations that responded undertake community capacity building with the diverse communities. The provision of capacity building and infrastructure services to diverse communities and their groups appears to be significantly under-developed on the Island.

All of the organisations that took part in the survey were asked to say whether they specifically address issues of diversity and social inclusion in their work. A majority said that they did, and backed this up by identifying a number of specific actions that they take including adoption of appropriate codes of practice, ethnic monitoring of service delivery and training for staff and volunteers on diversity and social inclusion. Although these responses compare favourably with similar surveys in other parts of the South East, there was still an apparent gap between the stated policy position on these issues and the number of people and groups from diverse communities that appear to have been served. These issues need to be explored further.

Organisations were next asked whether they collaborate or work in partnership with organisations from within the diverse communities in providing services to these communities. With a few notable exceptions, responses give the impression that mainstream (white) organisations are talking to each other about diversity issues rather than to people from the diverse communities.

However, there is also an issue of who these mainstream agencies could engage with. There is a very small number of groups on the Island who are in touch with people from their own community, but most of the diverse groups do not yet appear to have a group of this kind with which contact could be made. There is evidence that tends to support the need for some form of community capacity building within and between the diverse communities on the Island.

Infrastructure providers have a key role to play in promoting the principles of good practice in relation to the provision of infrastructure services, and in helping front line VCS service providers to develop services that are accessible and culturally appropriate for people from

the ASP communities. They may also have a role in assisting in the community development process, although they may need guidance from more experienced BME community development agencies on the mainland.

Consultation with people from the diverse communities, public and VCS service providers and others that has taken place on the Isle of Wight through interviews and meetings has revealed a list of actions, which will be developed into an action plan with named lead organisations and a time frame for delivery. These actions need to be taken to improve access by diverse communities to public services, build capacity for these communities and support the development of community-led organisations. The proposals are grouped under six headings:

- developing an Equality and Diversity Forum and a Code of Good Practice for the Voluntary and Community Sector as means of promoting equality and diversity awareness among volunteers, employees and services users of voluntary and community organisations;
- improving access to front-line VCS services by people from the diverse communities;
- establishing a training programme on equality and diversity awareness for voluntary and community organisations, possibly in partnership with the statutory sector;
- a proactive programme of outreach to diverse community groups and individuals who are identified as potential community champions in the interests of community capacity building;
- linked with this, the provision of infrastructure support services on the same basis as to any mainstream VCO; and
- the need to establish a Media Project on the lines piloted by Refugee Resource and Oxfordshire Racial Equality Council with the aim of countering the predominantly negative and stereotyped images of people from all the diverse communities, and particularly refugees, asylum seekers, Gypsies and Travellers, frequently promoted by the media.

## Introduction

### 1 The ChangeUp Framework

1.1 The ChangeUp programme was launched by the Home Office Active Communities Unit in June 2004 as a direct response to the 2002 review by the Treasury of the role of the voluntary sector in the delivery of public services. It aims to create a framework for building capacity and developing infrastructure support for front-line voluntary organisations and community groups<sup>1</sup> that are already or intend to become providers of public services. The intention is that by 2014, the needs of frontline voluntary organisations and community groups (VCOs) will be met by support services which are:

- available nationwide;
- structured efficiently, avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort;
- offering high quality provision that is accessible to all while reflecting and promoting diversity; and
- sustainably funded.

1.2 Over the past year, front-line organisations, infrastructure service providers such as councils of voluntary service and rural community councils, local authorities and other stakeholders have been collaborating across England on a strategic planning exercise that will shape the structure of support services that best suit the needs of frontline organisations in their areas, and how they should be funded. These 'Local Infrastructure Development Plans' (LIDPs) as they are called must be completed by March 2006 so that work can start in 2006/2007 on developing good quality infrastructure provision for the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in each area.

1.3 On the Isle of Wight, the Isle of Wight Infrastructure Group is the ChangeUp Consortium and its members have been meeting since 2003. Over the last year the group has worked to establish the Isle of Wight Infrastructure Group Infrastructure Development Plan.

### 2 The Additional Support Programme (ASP)

2.1 As part of the ChangeUp programme in the south east of England, an Additional Support Programme (ASP) has paid particular attention to the capacity building and infrastructure needs of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities, Faith communities – and in particular minority faiths, Refugees and Asylum Seekers, Gypsies and Travellers. In this report these groups are termed 'the diverse communities'.

1.2 The main tasks in the Isle of Wight ASP project have been:

- to update the mapping of the diverse communities and community groups on the Isle of Wight that has been undertaken in previous work on behalf of the Isle of Wight Council;
- to identify relevant individuals and groups from within the Island's diverse communities and consult them about any support they may need from the

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<sup>1</sup> A glossary of terms is given in Annex 1.

VCS, so that they can play a fuller part in the social, economic and environmental life of the Island in future;

- to liaise with the main public sector bodies on the Island to ensure that public services provided by the VCS are delivered in a way that is sensitive to cultural and religious diversity;
- to consolidate the findings into a report that forms part of the Island Infrastructure Development Plan.

2.3 The Additional Support Programme for the Isle of Wight has been managed by a steering group comprising representatives from the voluntary and community sector, infrastructure bodies and statutory organisations, reporting to the IIG. Membership of the steering group and the names of consultants working on the project are given in Annex 2. Fieldwork was commissioned from North Harbour Consulting Limited. Work started on the ASP in November 2005, and fieldwork was completed at the end of February 2006.

## Diverse Communities On The Isle Of Wight

### 3. A note on ethnic categories

- 3.1 National Statistics<sup>2</sup> draws attention to the fact that people adopt multiple identities when describing their ethnicity. The categories that they might choose from include country of birth, nationality, language spoken at home, parent's country of birth coupled with their own country of birth, skin colour, national or geographical origin, racial group or religion. The categories used in the 2001 Census (see Table 1 below) are a hybrid of several of these categories. The Census also records separately people's stated religion.
- 3.2 The Census data are a good place to start in identifying which minority communities are present on the Isle of Wight. However, the scope of the ChangeUp ASP programme is broader than the Census definitions of either ethnic origin or religion. For example, it is not possible to identify certain minority faiths from the Census – although the main world faiths are included. It is not possible to separately identify refugees, asylum seekers or economic migrants from the Census. Nor is it possible to identify Gypsies and Travellers even though UK race relations legislation identifies Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers as separate ethnic categories.

### 4. Counting the number of people from Black and Ethnic Minority communities

- 4.1 The very broad definition of the ASP programme target communities posed difficulties to the researchers in carrying out their first task, which was to add to existing knowledge about these communities by mapping their presence across the Island. Table 1 gives the breakdown of the Island's population into the 2001 Census definitions of ethnic origin. The table shows that 1,752 people, (1.3% of the Isle of Wight's population in 2001) were from non-white ethnic minorities. When people of Irish origin, and people in the Census 'Other White' category are added, the proportion of non-UK white people doubles to 3.2%, or 4,300 people.

4.2 Table 1: Population of the Isle of Wight by Ethnic Origin, 2001 Census

Isle of Wight	No	%
All People	132,731	100.00%
White	130,992	98.69%
Of which Irish	903	0.68%
Of which Other White	1,646	1.24%
Mixed Ethnic Origin	717	0.54%
Asian	438	0.33%
Black or Black British	305	0.23%
Chinese and Other	292	0.22%
<b>Total All Non-White Ethnic Minorities</b>	<b>1,752</b>	<b>1.32%</b>
<b>Total: Non-White plus Irish plus Other White</b>	<b>4,301</b>	<b>3.2%</b>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/ethnic\\_group\\_statistics/how\\_define/categories.asp](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/ethnic_group_statistics/how_define/categories.asp)

- 4.3 The question might be asked: Why add these ‘Irish’ and ‘Other White’ categories? The evidence is that there is substantial discrimination against people of Irish origin; and whereas the majority of people falling into the Other White category used to come from the Commonwealth and North America, recent migration patterns have brought into the UK and onto the Island people who are not culturally Anglo-Saxon.
- 4.4 Ethnic and other minorities form a fairly minor proportion of the Island’s population even with the addition of white minorities. However, as already noted, it is not possible from the Census data to identify refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants, Gypsies and Travellers, although some may be included in the Census categories under another label.
- 4.5 There are other reasons for suggesting that the 2001 Census count underestimates the ASP populations – particularly amongst the refugee, asylum seeker, economic migrant, Gypsy and Traveller communities. Some people who fall into these categories do not have settled accommodation. For that reason alone they may not have been counted. Some of these groups are also fearful or suspicious of officialdom – either because of their experiences in their country of origin, or because they do not wish to be identified for other reasons (see the quote from an interviewee below paragraph 10.1). Gypsies and Travellers, for example, are not separately identified in the Census and for cultural reasons are not likely to have given their information to the Census.
- 4.6 There are other groups that the Census probably did not count. A study by Faith Regen for the Isle of Wight Council<sup>3</sup> estimated that there were 265 international students studying on the Isle of Wight. The ASP project has interviewed a small group of visiting international students and it is the policy of the Isle of Wight College to attract students from overseas.
- 4.7 The Island also contains three prisons housing more than 1,600 inmates<sup>4</sup>, 55% of whom are from non-white ethnic minorities<sup>5</sup>. Prisoners’ families visit them on the Island, adding to the number of people from diverse communities who are present at any one time.
- 4.8 The Isle of Wight population has not remained static since the Census for other reasons. The ‘Other White’ census category would now include not only economic migrants from within the twelve EC states, but also from the new EC Accession States in Eastern Europe whose citizens did not have the right to work in the UK in 2001 and who are now present in quite large numbers. Some refugees and asylum seekers have also arrived in the UK and may have settled on the Island since 2001. Certain sectors of the Island’s economy are heavily dependent on seasonal labour during the summer months – agriculture/horticulture, leisure and tourism. Some seasonal labour is thought to be from the diverse communities living on the Island for part of the year in temporary accommodation.
- 4.9 There are other indications of the diversity of the Island’s minority populations. 190 children attending the Island’s schools speak thirty-four different languages other than English<sup>6</sup>. The Island attracts 2.5 million tourists every year, of whom

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<sup>3</sup> Faith Regen UK, June 2004, *Guide to BME and Faith Communities on the Isle of Wight*, p. 5

<sup>4</sup> H M Prison Service, Prison Information, Locate a Prison web site

<sup>5</sup> Faith Regen UK, 2004, *op cit*, p. 7

<sup>6</sup> Information from the English as an Additional Language Service, December 2005

155,000 are from overseas<sup>7</sup>. The 2001 Census showed that almost 1,500 people practiced religions other than Christianity.

- 4.10 There are two conclusions to be drawn from this data. Firstly, the number of people from BME communities counted in the Census is now likely to be an under-estimate when compared with the current situation. Secondly, no single ethnic or religious minority dominates in terms of numbers. The Island's diverse communities represent small numbers of people from many parts of the world – from South East Asia, the Middle East and from Eastern Europe, as well as from South Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and elsewhere in the Commonwealth.

## **5. Identifying ASP community groups and organisations on the Isle of Wight**

- 5.1 It is clear from the two reports by Faith Regen UK<sup>8</sup> that the diverse communities on the Island are not only small in number, but that individuals from these communities are often isolated socially and geographically. There are few representative bodies for Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) and other communities as a whole, and there is only a handful of groups representing particular national or faith communities. A group called Equals is in the early stages of development. The group aims to become a voice for all the diverse communities and to celebrate equality and diversity on the Isle of Wight, to raise awareness and actively challenge anti-discriminatory practice and attitudes. The Island Rainbow Community is another new group being formed by parents with children of mixed parentage. The group People on the Streets (POTS) acts as a point of contact for homeless people, Gypsies and Travellers. There are also groups representing the Polish and Jewish communities, and faith groups including the Bahai community, Buddhists and the Muslim community. It is also known that members of other faiths have to go to the mainland to formally worship and celebrate their beliefs.
- 5.2 Therefore the kind of consultation with organisations and groups from within the diverse communities on which ASPs in other areas have been based has only been possible to a limited extent on the Isle of Wight.
- 5.3 As a starting point for the fieldwork, a contact database was compiled from a number of sources containing the names of:
- individuals who were known by statutory and voluntary agencies on the Island to be prominent in their communities;
  - a small number of voluntary groups who were thought to have people from diverse communities amongst their members; and
  - front-line service agencies and professional workers that were likely to have individuals and families from diverse communities among their service users.
- 5.4 Individuals from these three groups were invited to take part in a launch workshop to collaborate on the design of a study methodology. The workshop took place in Newport on 29 November 2005 and was attended by 52 people from diverse communities, voluntary and statutory service providers including Council departments and the NHS, the police and Parkhurst Prison, and the business community. The workshop identified a number of different routes and agencies through which people from the diverse communities could be identified. These included the health visiting service; the personnel department at St Mary's Hospital; the Council's Family Resource Team; Sure Start; welfare, faith and

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<sup>7</sup> Faith Regen UK, 2004, *op cit*, p. 5

<sup>8</sup> Faith Regen UK, 2004, *op cit*, and 2004, Report on Mapping Exercise for the Isle of Wight

family support services at the prisons; the Chamber of Commerce and major employers; Hampshire Police – Community Support Team; the Jewish Society; Housing Associations; Isle of Wight College; Citizens' Advice Bureau; Home-Start IOW; People on the Streets (POTS); and Parish Councils and Village Halls.

- 5.5 Following the workshop, extensive efforts were made to make contact with all these individuals and groups to establish whether they were interested in taking part in the project, and if so whether they could help in identifying people from the diverse communities and arranging opportunities for the consultants to meet them. This approach also helped to overcome the restrictions placed on fieldwork of this kind by the Data Protection Act 1998. A number of individuals and groups were identified as a result of this work, although given the short period of time available for the study not all of the agencies could provide contacts in time, and not all contacts could be followed up by the consultants.

## **6. Two issues for the ChangeUp ASP programme**

- 6.1 In the course of the preparatory work and discussions with stakeholders, two issues emerged that have important implications for the ChangeUp ASP project on the Isle of Wight.
- 6.2 The ChangeUp programme is intended to focus on the capacity-building and infrastructure support needs of front-line voluntary and community organisations that are currently or might in future be involved in the delivery of publicly funded, public services. Within ChangeUp, the ASP is intended to focus on the capacity-building and infrastructure support needs of all VCOs and specifically those organisations that are based or are dedicated to serving BME, Faith, Refugee, Asylum Seeker, Gypsy and Traveller communities. On the Isle of Wight, it became clear that there are at present very few groups that fit this description.
- 6.3 On the other hand, individuals and families from the diverse communities – especially newcomers - need access to good quality front line services delivered either by statutory or voluntary organisations; communities may need capacity building and organisational support from community development workers or agencies; and at some point in the future groups that are indigenous to the ASP communities may well need the kind of infrastructure services that the ChangeUp programme aims to promote. In a well-integrated, multi-racial society there should be no difficulty for them in achieving both these goals, but there is evidence on the Isle of Wight as there is elsewhere that this level of social integration has not yet been achieved by many of the Island's diverse communities.<sup>9</sup>
- 6.4 Yet strictly speaking, the needs of individuals and families are outside the ChangeUp remit, while the Island's diverse communities have not yet developed to the point where they have created community-based organisations that are capable of using the services of VCS infrastructure providers and which are the focus for ChangeUp. On the Isle of Wight, therefore, the ASP programme has had to be adapted to look at the support needs of individuals and families within the diverse communities, and at the capacity building needs of these communities rather than at infrastructure support needs of diverse community organisations *per se*. However, infrastructure support needs also have to be considered for the future.
- 6.5 The second issue that has emerged on the Isle of Wight is also one that has affected ASPs in other parts of the South East. Preliminary discussions of the

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<sup>9</sup> Faith Regen UK, 2004, *op cit*, and 2004, Chapter 4, pp 6 - 12

range of different minority communities now present on the Isle of Wight highlighted the existence of a new, and rapidly growing group of economic migrants. This is backed up by evidence provided by the English as an Additional Language Service which has identified five Eastern European languages, seven Western European languages, three languages from the Middle East, four African languages, five languages from South Asia, and ten languages from China and South East Asian countries. The existence of significant numbers of economic migrants represents an additional category of people from diverse communities to be considered within the ASP programme.

## The Support Needs Of Individuals And Groups From Within The Diverse Communities

### 7. Characteristics of the people interviewed

- 7.1 As part of the fieldwork for the project, 12 interviews and meetings with small groups of people from the Island's diverse communities took place. In total, 27 individuals were involved in answering questions about their social contacts, use of public services provided by both the statutory and voluntary sector, their experiences of life on the Island, and their attitudes towards the possibility of improving services for their community and/or developing a voice for their community. Additional information was obtained from a discussion with a group representing mothers with children of mixed parentage. More detailed information about the results of the consultation process are given in three working papers.<sup>10</sup>
- 7.2 Table 2 gives the breakdown of respondents between the various ASP categories. No percentages have been calculated for this and other tables due to the small number of interviewees. Further work is planned by the ASP steering group to extend consultation to refugees, asylum seekers, Gypsies and Travellers. One interviewee – a service user of one of the front-line VCOs that engaged with the project - preferred to be anonymous. Some other interviewees preferred not to classify themselves under one of the ASP headings.

Table 2 – Distribution of interviewees by ASP Group

	No of Interviewees
A minority ethnic community	16
A minority faith community	1
Refugee	0
Asylum seeker	0
Romany gypsy or traveller	0
Other	0
No response	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27</b>

- 7.3 Table 3 gives the breakdown of respondents by ethnic origin (Census 2001 definitions). Once again the table is affected by one anonymous interview and one interviewee who preferred not to classify themselves by ethnic origin.

<sup>10</sup> These are available in electronic format only from North Harbour Consulting Limited at [northharbour@brconnect.com](mailto:northharbour@brconnect.com).

Table 3 – Distribution of interviewees by Ethnic Origin

	No of Interviewees
White British	0
White Irish	0
Other White	4
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	1
Mixed White and Black African	0
Mixed White and Asian	0
Other Mixed Race	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	2
Other Asian	13
Black Caribbean	0
Black African	3
Other Black	1
Chinese	0
Other Ethnic Group	1
No Response	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27</b>

7.4 Table 4 gives a breakdown of where people live on the Island.

Table 4 – Geographical location of home

	No of Interviewees
Brading	1
Cowes	11
Newport	4
Ryde	7
Sandown	2
Totland	1
Not known (anonymous interviewee)	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27</b>

## 8. Social contacts and sources of information and advice for individuals and families

8.1 People interviewed were asked to talk about their social networks, and where they find out what is going on. Based on the evidence of the interviews, the majority of people from the diverse communities socialise within quite close family groups. Social interaction between different minority communities or with the wider community does not appear to be frequent. Social interaction for some women is particularly limited.

- 8.2 People also get their information about what is going on from within their own community (family, friends) or alternatively from local newspapers and magazines. The media are clearly important in communicating information about what is going on. However, if the media are unsympathetic to the needs of diverse communities, and occasionally racist or hostile as suggested in working group discussions and in the Faith Regen UK research, then people from the diverse communities are hostages to fortune in terms of what information the media will and will not carry that is relevant to their needs.

## **9. Access to information, advice and support services**

- 9.1 Most interviewees said that they have somewhere to go for information, advice and support. However, the majority of sources listed are very specific to particular concerns that the person might have had at a particular moment in time – for example, Sure Start, their GP, the Job Centre, Home Start or the local library. Once again, people said that their family and friends were a major source of information, and only one person mentioned at this stage in the interviews the CAB as a source of general information and advice.
- 9.2 Following this up, people interviewed were asked if they knew what organisations were available on the Island for general information, advice and support. Almost two thirds (17 out of 27) either said that they did not know or made no response.
- 9.3 Those that said they did know of at least one organisation mentioned the CAB (5 mentions); the Isle of Wight Council (3 mentions); NHS Direct, the Job Centre and the Law Centre (1 mention each). Other sources of information mentioned (but presumably not for advice and support) were the telephone directory and Sandown Library. Of those who did know of at least one agency from which to get information, advice or support, all had used an agency they had mentioned.
- 9.4 Two people that did not know of any agencies to go to said:  
*“A lot of people do not know these organisations exist.”*  
*“I do not know any agencies so I have not used them.”*
- 9.5 There was also a low response (8 responses out of 27 people interviewed) to a question about whether interviewees knew where to go if they wished to make a complaint about a service they had received. Taken as a whole, these responses indicate a very limited knowledge of where to get information, advice and support, or where to go if the service they received was not satisfactory for some reason.
- 9.6 When taken together with the information from front-line VCOs that was collected separately (see Section 11 and onwards in the report) it is clear that there is good work going on that people in the diverse communities do not know exists. Feedback from those attending the launch workshop in November 2005 suggests that people from a range of different VCS and statutory agencies working on the Island were meeting each other for the first time. It is possible that there is a lack of collaborative working between front line agencies working in closely related fields that means that people from the diverse communities might have one point of contact to resolve one issue they may have, but that the point of contact they use does not refer them on to other agencies who could help in resolving other issues. This theme is picked up in the Island’s Infrastructure Development Plan under the heading of improving networks and partnerships. It is also possible that, in future, groups like Equals might have a signposting role to put people from the diverse communities into contact with the appropriate group or groups for their particular needs.

- 9.7 Next, interviewees were asked whether there were any other types of support that they thought should be available. A full list of responses to this question is given below with an additional comment from the authors.
- 9.8 *“Someone from the Home Office to speak to people on the Island about employment, visas etc; and interpreter/translator for maternity services”* Some women in this group had experienced difficulties with no-one available to translate for them. The Law Centre can access this kind of information at present but it is clear that for some people its services need more promotion.
- 9.9 *“Polish members are not eligible for benefits. (Recent economic migrants from Poland are being referred to here) “School age children need Polish lessons to learn about their language, history and culture.”* One possibility is that the Polish Society could be resourced to provide signposting and basic advice for recent arrivals from Poland.
- 9.10 *“We need to know about how to get funding for the Mosque which needs repairs and central heating, better lighting etc. We would like to start providing information and advice to people using the Mosque but there is no money to convert part of the building into an office and centre.”* With the possible exception of the Isle of Wight CVS – part of the Rural Community Council - whose services need more promotion to diverse communities, there seems to be a lack of advice about where faith groups can obtain access to funding.
- 9.11 *“We need professional advice about mortgage finance - none of the lending institutions on the Island will give us a mortgage even though we have long term work permits and secure jobs. Our friends in London and Birmingham who have similar circumstances have been able to obtain mortgage finance. Banks and building societies on the Island seem to be more restrictive in their lending policies. We have a child and live in a two room rented flat which is unsuitable. We do not want housing from the Council – we want to stand on our own feet.”* Information from the organisations involved in steering the ASP and from the business development organisations is that financial institutions on the Island tend to be conservative in their lending. Mortgage finance houses are still ‘red-lining’ districts where mortgages are hard to get – a practice that disappeared from most parts of the mainland some time ago. It is not only institutions that are risk averse. It is said that it would be unusual for someone born and brought up on the Island to have business or social contacts with people from the diverse communities. Institutional conservatism is therefore matched by individual conservatism. VCS infrastructure providers need to make the case via the Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Partnership for lending institutions to become more open to new groups on the assumption that the Island’s population is likely to become even more diverse and will need to be socially and economically integrated.
- 9.12 *“Counselling - someone for people to talk to; a club or group to meet other people and support each other.”* Once again it is notable that while there are counselling services available from a number of agencies on the Island, this interviewee at least was unaware of them.
- 9.13 *“A support group for single mothers,”* and *“Social clubs for minority groups that could offer support from within the community provided by the local authority through its ‘diversity agenda’ or the arts.”* In the IDP proposals, there is support for the idea of some kind of cultural or social club for people from diverse communities who feel isolated or excluded.
- 9.14 *“Racial advice in schools; more contact with other people from BME backgrounds.”* Mothers and school employees made similar points so there

appears to be an issue in respect of race and diversity that the VCS infrastructure providers need to take up with the Island's Education Service.

- 9.15 *“Help with transport.”* There is a need for information about the transport schemes that exist on the Island to be communicated to the diverse communities.
- 9.16 *“Getting letters or information translated into Thai. If I want to get a book or magazine in Thai, I have to go to London to buy one. The Council should provide a translation and interpreting service.”* Interpreting and translation services are available internally within the Isle of Wight Council and in the NHS Hospital Trust at St Mary's. It is not clear however whether these services are available to voluntary and community organisations. There may be a case for pooling interpreting and translation resources as a basis for making them available to a wider range of organisations.
- 9.17 There is, however, an issue about whether such services could cover the very wide range of languages now spoken on the Island. Regional and national resources such as Language Line would clearly have a role to play.
- 9.18 *“We would like a group organised by Japanese people to provide information about what is available, but we want to use mainstream services. Some students needed to get jobs and that is difficult in the winter time. One student had used the Job Centre Plus website but had not yet been into a JCP office”* – note of an interview with Japanese students at the Isle of Wight College. Similar services run by voluntary organisations exist on the Island, and need promotion to the diverse communities.

## **10. Social isolation as a reason for non-use of services**

- 10.1 One response to the questions about knowledge and use of services was particularly significant:
- “The basic fact is that ethnic minority people live in isolation, do not have contacts and don't make contacts due to fear, shyness and language barriers. I have lived on the Island for 21 years and work as a health professional. There is a fear of the unknown that stops people approaching agencies for help - people do not know about or understand the agencies and what they do because of their cultural background. There is also a fear of being noticed or being reported. This is trapping people in isolation.”*
- 10.2 This contribution is significant. There is evidence from elsewhere that just because people don't engage or do not complain this does not mean that they do not have any needs or difficulties that they need support with.
- “Every family, including my own, has a story to tell about how badly we were treated by the system ... Currently, black involvement .. is marginalised .. (people) don't want to be involved in institutions where they always feel outnumbered and out-gunned. But that doesn't mean they don't care.”<sup>11</sup>*
- 10.3 These statements suggest that isolation is more than just about lack of information, where you live on the Island or language barriers. It is also about the psychology of being perceived as different, of coming from a different culture with values and experiences that are not valued and may even be denigrated by the host community. The Island's Youth and Community Service is aware of racial abuse directed at visiting international students, for example. Interviews with

<sup>11</sup> Trevor Philips, Chair CRE, 'White paper: black power – critics of the planned schools reform ignore the experiences of black Britons in education', *The Guardian*, 2 Feb 2006

people as part of the Additional Support Programme in other areas away from the Isle of Wight suggest that fear of racism and the implicit threat of hostility to people from the diverse communities is a further barrier that helps to perpetuate the tendency for people to seek information and help mainly from within their own communities. The problem is compounded because there is a lack of role models – professionals and senior managers who are from the diverse communities – for young people from both BME and white backgrounds. This can lead to low self-esteem on the part of young black people, and a stereotypical view of people from diverse communities as being ‘less equal’ on the part of young white people.

## **11. The role of the voluntary and community sector**

11.1 The interviews then attempted to move the focus towards the role of the voluntary and community sector. Asked if they knew the difference between the voluntary sector and local government, eight interviewees said they did, but 18 said they did not. There was one non-response. One interviewee typified responses from people who did not know the difference: *“We have not had much contact with them, therefore cannot answer the question.”*

11.2 The different roles of government and the voluntary sector were explained to those that did not know the difference, and they were then asked how the voluntary sector could improve its services to better meet their own needs and those of their community. Where interviewees were involved with a community or faith group their suggestions have been incorporated into the final section of the report. There were also several suggestions about the kinds of personal support that people felt they needed:

*“Classes for people from countries other than the IoW who need to speak English and understand the system; courses are very expensive and not local; Learn Direct has been offered but is not taught and you are left on your own to learn.”*

*“I want to get more people involved in activities.”*

*“More support for single mothers.”*

11.3 The interviews finally turned to the question of representation, first asking ‘Who do you feel represents you or your community?’ The general feeling was that no-one currently represents the interests of the people interviewed other than a few key individuals whom they trust. Asked if they thought it was important for them as individuals and as communities to have a voice in developing local services and in decisions about their community, almost all of them (24 out of 27) said that it was.

*“Groups can help each other and individuals volunteer to translate for each other; it is necessary to put your point across face to face as the message is stronger and clearer; it is very difficult by phone or email; through a group the individuals are supported.”*

*“Local people sitting on the boards of organisations - e.g. the Police Authority.”*

*“It depends. If it’s a voice to find ways of socialising, not really as we have our own contacts. If it’s about major issues like housing, then yes of course.”*

*“If these agencies employed people from my background then I would talk to them. This would greatly help people to overcome their fear, shyness and language barriers.”*

*“We need more contact and more information.”*

*“We should be invited into statutory services to make them more aware of issues that affect us.”*

*“Talking to people; writing letters in English.”*

- 11.4 Two thirds of the interviewees (18) said that they had personally been involved in some form of consultation previously, but some said that people they knew had not been involved. This last response suggests that the people who offered to be interviewed by the consultants for the ASP were on the whole people who were confident and had some previous experience of consultation exercises. The concern might be that they are not necessarily typical of their communities.
- 11.5 A large majority of interviewees (22 out of 27) said that they thought it was important for people from the different communities to work together on common issues.
- “Yes, it is no good to stay as individual communities. It is more helpful to be in a mixed group and learn from others. There is a need for an Asian Women's group as there seems to be a need for this. Men get support from work colleagues and the Mosque, but it is different for women.”*
- “It has to start from us. A collective voice might be needed in e.g. housing or employment - one of us is a university graduate (bio-chemist) but paid on a school-leaver grade salary. African people are treated worst of all. The media contribute to negative attitudes. Our experience is that incomers to the IoW are more racist than the 'natives'. (The Health Visitor who arranged the meeting said that she had heard the same thing from other people.) There is a lack of respect for people who are different. Yet they cheer the English soccer team when a black player scores, so it is possible to change attitudes.”*
- “Certain things are going to be similar; need to build relationships between groups and individuals. We would have more strength and more say if we worked together.”*
- “I understand Bengali, Pakistani and Indian culture but do not understand Jamaican, or South African - but it is important to get to understand each other. There is a need to overcome ignorance about different cultures and communities, so working together is useful.”*
- “I think there should be ONE community.”*
- “There is diversity in food, social and cultural life and it is good to share; we need to create positive role models.”*
- “The group felt strongly that they do not want to do things just as Japanese people but with everyone. They want to share knowledge and learn from others while on the Isle of Wight.”*
- 11.6 These responses are extremely positive and in favour of partnership and co-working on a range of issues between the different communities. It is good to see social and cultural life added into the equation as there is likely to be a more positive attitude to meeting through culture, arts and recreation than through a uniform focus on social and economic issues.
- 11.7 Looking at how this might be achieved, a number of respondents agreed that there was a need for their own community to begin to organise itself to address some of the issues that had been raised. However, interviewees said that most communities could not do this by themselves but needed the help of an individual or organisation that they trusted.
- 11.8 There is a thread running through several of the responses to this and other questions that interviewees want to join with others in their own communities and with other communities, but need help to get this going. It was suggested that

help with bringing communities and networks of people together is needed, and possibly also a multi-cultural centre which could be a focus for culture and recreation. For those who are not already organised or involved, the possibility of having somewhere to go and people from their own and other backgrounds to talk to appears to be attractive as well as helping to overcome feelings of isolation and alienation.

11.9 In addition to the interviews reported above, one of the consultants met a newly formed group that has an interest in diversity issues as they affect families with children of mixed parentage. The issues of concern to them group under three headings:

- Schools: racist school bullying, threats and name-calling; lack of understanding of parents and children from diverse backgrounds from teachers; schools not being approachable on issues arising from racism; a lack of BME role models in schools.
- GPs: The patronising manner of some GPs towards people from minority backgrounds, and a lack of experience among GPs of BME health issues.
- Commercial: a lack of hair-dressers and hair products for afro-hair, and a lack of ethnic food shops and a Halal butcher on the Island.

## 12. **Front-line services provided by mainstream voluntary organisations and ASP community-based organisations to people from those communities**

12.1 As part of the research to establish what services were being provided by mainstream organisations to the diverse communities, a small survey of key providers was carried out. Questionnaires were sent to more than 40 statutory and voluntary organisations covering a wide range of different services. 20 responses were received in the short time available for replies. All of the respondents provide services across the Island, not just in particular localities.

12.2 Of those who replied:

- 16 said that they have an ‘open-door’ policy providing services to the whole community - thus some of their service users are from the diverse communities, but it is whoever ‘walks through the door’;
- three respondents provide services that are specifically aimed at people from the diverse communities – the EALS service, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Police Community Support Team, and Equals;
- one respondent said that they have provided no services that they are aware of to people from diverse communities.

12.3 Table 5 shows the fields in which the organisations provide information, advice or support to people from the diverse communities, and the number of organisations in each field. Other answers given by some respondents raise a question about the interpretation of Table 4. Although the question asked about services actually provided to people from diverse communities, other answers suggest that the question may have been answered from the perspective of the services that are available to them.

Table 5 – Service areas for which information, advice or support has been provided to people from diverse communities

	No of Responses
Education and training	9
Housing and accommodation	8
Primary health care	4
Specialist health care	3
Social services	5
Community safety / policing	7
Benefits, pensions and income support	5
Environmental services	1
Recreation, sports and leisure	4
Employment and making a living	5
Business support	5
Other:	5

12.4 Table 6 shows the communities which have been supported with these services in the past two years.

Table 6 – Diverse communities to which information, advice and support services have been provided

	No of Responses
Individuals from all the diverse communities	13
Groups and voluntary organisations led by people from the diverse communities	5
Black and Minority Ethnic People	4
People of a Minority Religion or Faith	2
Refugees and Asylum Seekers	1
Gypsies and Travellers	1
Don't know	3

12.5 Again, these answers need interpretation. Organisations that said their services had been provided to anyone from the diverse communities tended to be those with an open door policy, and with no specific figures for the number of people from these communities that had used their services. It is notable that very few organisations say that they have provided services specifically to people from the BME, Faith, Refugee, Asylum Seeker, Gypsy and Traveller communities. It is not clear in all cases whether the provision of services to individuals and families from the diverse communities is a policy position – i.e. they have an open door policy, or whether services have actually been delivered to such people. Three organisations – the Isle of Wight College, the English as an Additional Language Service and Sure Start Children's Service have each provided information, advice and support to 200 or more service users each – these are the organisation's estimates. Other respondents say that they have provided a service to very small number of individuals. The responses shown in the table may therefore be aspirational in some respects rather than a factual account.

12.6 Where organisations say they have provided services to individuals or families, Table 7 shows the categories of people served. The same cautionary note needs

to be applied to this table as to Table 6. In this case as in Tables 5 and 6, more organisations have said they provided services to particular types of people from the diverse communities than the number of people to whom these services were said to be provided.

Table 7 –Types of people from the diverse communities to whom services may been provided

	No of Responses
Children (age 1 – 15)	6
Young People (age 16 – 25)	12
Older People (age 50 or more)	7
Carers	4
Families and parents	10
Homeless People	6
Service and ex-service people	5
Women	9
Men	11
Unemployed people	8
Victims of crime, violence, abuse or harassment	8
People with a learning disability	7
People with a physical or sensory disability	5
People with a medical condition	5
People with mental health issues	5
Other: please specify ...	2

12.7 Where organisations provided infrastructure services to organisations and groups as opposed to individuals from the diverse communities, Table 8 shows the support services they said they provided. These figures appear more realistic and in line with the answers to other questions.

Table 8 – Infrastructure support services provided to groups from the diverse communities over the previous two years?

	No of Responses
The advice needed to start a new group/organisation:	1
Information and advice about funding:	2
Access to premises and facilities:	1
Recruiting, managing and retaining volunteers:	1
Employment and human resources:	1
Speciality advice on equality, diversity and race relations	0
Organisational development:	2
Public policy, good practice and the law:	0
Specialist support in particular areas of service delivery:	3
Information and communication technology:	1
Skills & Training:	1
Partnership building / brokerage / networking:	1
Assistance with policy and research:	1

- 12.8 It is clear from Table 8 that very few organisations that responded to the survey provide infrastructure services to minority community groups on the Island even though from the small number of groups whose members were interviewed there is some demand for infrastructure support in respect of funding, access to premises and organisational development. Only one of the respondents provides the basic support needed to start and grow an organisation.
- 12.9 There is no specialist advice on equality, diversity and race relations. Nor do any of the organisations that responded undertake community capacity building with the diverse communities. The provision of capacity building and infrastructure services to diverse communities and their groups appears to be significantly under-developed on the Island.
- 12.10 All of the organisations that took part in the survey were asked to say whether they specifically address issues of diversity and social inclusion in their work. 14 out of 19 said that they did. Organisations were then asked about the ways in which these issues are being addressed. Table 9 lists a number of possible actions that voluntary and statutory organisations can take. Organisations were asked to say whether or not they implement each of them.

Table 9 – The steps being taken to address issues of diversity and social inclusion?

	No of Responses
Policies and procedures relating to diversity and social inclusion have been adopted	17
Training on diversity and social inclusion is given to all committee members, volunteers and employees	11
Statistical and qualitative monitoring of service delivery to socially excluded groups and minorities is undertaken and reported to the management committee and external stakeholders	9
Relevant Codes of Practice are followed (e.g. Commission for Racial Equality, Equal Opportunities Commission and Disability Rights Commission etc)	15
Services and resources are focussed on meeting the needs of excluded groups and minorities	8
People from excluded groups and minorities are consulted about service planning and delivery	7
People from excluded groups and minorities are represented on the management committee	3
The needs of excluded groups and minorities and examples of good inclusive practice are drawn to the attention of organisations, groups and communities using our services	12
Other	2
Do not currently address these issues or non-response	5

- 12.11 Compared with findings in other areas of the South East where North Harbour Consulting has been involved in a local Additional Support Programme, the number of responses that tick most of the boxes appears large. For example, eight organisations say that they undertake statistical monitoring of their service

delivery to people from diverse communities, and ten organisations that responded reported on the number of people from diverse communities used their services. However, only two of these said that their figures were based on accurate records. The remainder said that the figures were estimates or were unable to provide a figure. There is some evidence in interviews with front line service providers that not all of them collect records of the ethnic origin of their service users therefore there are discrepancies between answers to different questions that need to be explored further.

12.12 Of those who said they do not undertake ethnic monitoring of service delivery, a number said either that they are currently collecting information, developing systems that would allow them to do so, or would like to but need advice. The issue of what categories to use in order to reflect the use of services by groups whose identify is not revealed by the Census classification system for ethnic origin also needs to be considered in future work.

12.13 Organisations were next asked whether they collaborate or work in partnership with organisations from within the diverse communities in providing services to these communities. 5 organisations said that they do; 11 said that they do not; and there were 3 non-responses to this question. The organisations that said they did work in partnership with other bodies to promote diversity issues mentioned the following partners:

- Newport Mosque (2 mentions);
- IoW Council – education and social services;
- IoW Police;
- IoW NHS;
- Housing associations;
- The prisons;
- Schools and Sure-Start;
- Equals and
- The Disability Discrimination Act Task Group.

12.14 With the exception of the Mosque and Equals, the responses give the impression that mainstream (white) organisations are talking to each other about diversity issues rather than to people from the diverse communities. However, there is also an issue of who these mainstream agencies could engage with. There are groups on the Island (such as the Polish Society) who are in touch with people from their own community, but most of the diverse groups do not yet appear to have a group of this kind with which contact could be made. However, there are other approaches to 'reaching out' to diverse communities that could be tried:

- South Wight Housing Association is about to conduct a tenant survey, part of which will be a series of questions designed to find out more about the needs of tenants from diverse backgrounds;
- Medina Housing Association has established a BME Forum, which is an active attempt to engage with BME tenants to feed into service improvement and housing development standards. So far, there are five or six people from diverse communities involved with this initiative;
- Medina HA is also planning to carry out a full tenant profiling exercise, and the Chief Executive is leading on the development of a Leader Group (Local Employers Acting on Disability, Equality and Race) on the Island;

- The Isle of Wight Council’s Housing Department is also developing a standing focus group of people from a number of the diverse communities as a sounding board for policy development.

12.15 Finally, the infrastructure organisations were asked a series of questions about whether, in their view, the diverse communities on the Isle of Wight need any additional support services, and if so what they are and whether the organisation making the recommendation can provide them. Eight out of the 18 organisations that responded to the survey said that the minority communities do need additional support; four said that they did not know; and six organisations did not reply to the question. A number of suggestions were made for how support could be improved – either with new or redirected services, or by changing the policy and practices of public and VCS organisations. These are included in a consolidated list of proposals in the following section.

12.16 Seven organisations said they felt able to provide some of these services, but were limited by the factors described in Table 10. It is evident that a number of these barriers could be resolved through training and sharing of expertise.

Table 10 – Barriers that prevent organisations from providing these services now

	No of Responses
Insufficient staffing within your organisation	5
Insufficient skills or experience	5
Language barriers	2
Lack of cultural awareness	4
Insufficient funding	5
Lack of partners/ inefficient communication between potential partners	1
Premises too small or unsuitable	2
Insufficient demand for services	2
Other	1
We could not provide these services, or non-response	11

### **13. The role of VCS infrastructure providers in promoting closer links between ASP community groups and the wider VCS**

13.1 Almost all of the findings in this report suggest that there are a number of interlocking barriers that prevent people from diverse communities asking for and receiving even basic information, advice and support about their personal and family needs. These barriers are also preventing community groups within these communities from receiving the help they need to develop.

13.2 Lack of knowledge of where to go for support is matched by a lack of promotion of the services that are available targeted at the diverse communities. Some services are either not available at all on the Island so that people have to go to the mainland to access them, or have very limited availability restricted to particular locations within the Island. There are particular barriers for new arrivals who do not know the system, women and girls from Muslim, Gypsy and Traveller communities, and those who do not speak English as an additional language. The situation was well summarised by a senior CVS manager from another area who said:

*“Our experience is that minority groups wish to be able to access generic services but services may need to reflect some additional support needs, including the time taken to provide them given cultural differences. More promotion of the services which are available is needed to encourage people to use them. Better monitoring of those who do come forward is needed, e.g. many organisations use the general census categories to monitor clients and this does not include Gypsies/Travellers or faith groups. An infrastructure organisation would not normally need to know an individual’s faith but could justify asking for a group’s identity.”*

13.3 The National Compact Code of Good Practice on working with BME voluntary and community organisations suggests that in order to engage effectively with BME voluntary and community organisations, the Government and the mainstream VCS need to address a number of key issues<sup>12</sup>. These include:

- a joint commitment to taking forward the race equality agenda as well as recognising the significant role to be played by the BME voluntary and community sector in partnership with Government and others towards achieving race equality;
- improved quality and construction of consultation and participation by the BME voluntary and community sector in policy development, implementation and evaluation;
- better support and resources for the BME voluntary and community sector which reflects its role in addressing public service inequalities and allow it to operate, develop and contribute on an equal footing with other partners, particularly Government and the mainstream voluntary and community sector; and
- recognition of the specific contribution and needs of the BME sector, particularly at local level, and how this impacts on funding, capacity and sustainability.

13.4 The Compact Code of Practice goes on to promote best practice in developing a partnership approach with the BME VCS, creation of joint working initiatives which improve policy and outcomes for BME communities nationally, regionally and locally, promote and support volunteering within BME communities, and make appropriate references to this Code in all governmental and VCS publications.

13.5 Infrastructure providers have a key role to play in promoting the principles of good practice in relation to the provision of infrastructure services, and in helping front line VCS service providers to develop services that are accessible and culturally appropriate for people from the ASP communities.

## **14. Consolidated list of suggestions and proposals**

14.1 The consultation with people from the diverse communities, public and VCS service providers and others that has taken place on the Isle of Wight through interviews and meetings has revealed a long list of actions that could be taken to improve access by diverse communities to public services, build capacity for these communities and support the development of community-led organisations. All of these suggestions and proposals are grouped under thematic headings below with a comment about whether they are seen as a priority, and whether they are short, medium or long-term actions. The immediate next step will be to take these

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<sup>12</sup> Active Communities Unit (2004), *op. cit.*, page 3

proposed actions and establish an action plan with timescales against which named organisations are charged with leading the required action.

14.2 Improving access to front-line VCS services by people from the diverse communities

At this stage the ASP has only begun to:

- i. Understand the needs of the diverse communities; greater and more detailed understanding of need is required.
- ii. There remains little understanding of what the VCS can deliver.

Once need and current provision have been established it will be possible to identify gaps in provision which need to be met.

In addition to determining need and understanding capacity to deliver there are two prongs to the strategy to improve access to front-line VCS services that can, and need, to be developed as soon as possible:

- better signposting - improving the quality and availability of information about the VCS that is available to and proactively targeted at the diverse communities – this includes collecting together in one format and then disseminating, if necessary in translation, information about the range of services available and where to go for signposting to specific services; and
- making VCOs more aware of diverse needs and how to meet them.

14.3 The following improvements in information services and delivery are suggested, some of which would benefit everyone living and working on the Island if they were adopted.

14.3.1 Directory of services: A number of directories exists at present including an advocacy services directory; and a directory of some front-line and learning and skills services. A partnership of VCOs led by the CVS is developing a database of information about voluntary and community organisations that are active on the Island using a system that has been developed for CVSs in Hampshire. The Isle of Wight Council already provides a listing of clubs and societies on its web site ([http://www.iwight.com/living\\_here/voluntary/voluntary.asp](http://www.iwight.com/living_here/voluntary/voluntary.asp)). However, this information is in separate compartments, and none of it is linked. On the evidence of the fieldwork for the ASP, very little of it is getting through to people from diverse communities. It was suggested at the ASP launch workshop that information about services available to the public needs to be brought together in one place so that all front-line agencies working with the public have the information they need to understand, and provide information about agencies that are providing related services.

This would be a first step towards helping to link up front-line service provision in ways that would benefit people from all the Island's communities.

14.3.2 Point of Contact: People from diverse backgrounds who are newly arrived on the Island whether as refugees, asylum seekers, migrant workers or visitors need to be given a welcoming point of contact. This could include a 'gateway' information service that links to the hubs in the main IDP (page 20) and local info-points provided by organisations such as the CAB and Age Concern. In the Ryde area there are a number of businesses owned by people from the diverse communities that are supported by Ryde Development Trust. These businesses all have access to the internet and could become additional points of contact within their own communities. The Ryde hub already exists with a number of organisations working from the same building; what will need to be considered further are the resource and skills implications if this work is to be extended.

14.3.3 Interpreting and translation services: It should not be assumed that all individuals from the diverse communities will need interpreting and translation services. Many of them, including some of the recent arrivals from Eastern Europe, are well educated and speak good English. Nevertheless, there are particular communities for whom there are language barriers and whilst for some spoken English is not a problem, written English remains a barrier. These groups are not only defined by their ethnicity but also by their class and gender. Muslim women, for example, may never have had the opportunity to learn English for cultural reasons. Therefore there are several actions proposed that are aimed at making interpreting and translation services more widely available – to individuals as well as communities through:

- expanding the provision of and access to English as an Additional Language (EAL) classes for newly arrived adults who speak little English, as well as for groups who have lived on the Island for some time and for whom inability to speak English is a major barrier to their ability to use public services and take part in civic life. This work could be delivered by VCOs or by statutory agencies;
- using arts development and activities such as dance and dressmaking as a basis for learning English languages – an approach that could make it easier for some women and young girls to learn the language;
- also linking language tuition with business development, extended schools, healthy living etc.
- pooling of resources between the Island's existing interpreting and translation services operated by the Council and the Hospitals NHS Trust, with the aim of making this service available to all front-line agencies on the Island, or if that is not affordable, making the service available to the VCS hubs and key information agencies such as the CAB, Law Centre and Age Concern (this list is not definitive);
- making available translated literature about the services available on the Island for people with little English, and leaflets or posters in main languages that signpost where information about services can be obtained.

14.4 There is also an urgent need to make statutory and VCS services accessible and culturally appropriate for diverse communities through:

- recruitment practices that ensure that mainstream VCOs recruit and involve committee members, volunteers and employees from diverse backgrounds. A first step may be encouraging people to get involved as volunteers;
- the development of equality and diversity policies and practices that ensure that service users from diverse communities are welcomed and provided with good quality, culturally appropriate services;
- included in this are the need to ensure that people from diverse communities are consulted about the range of services needed in a particular area of provision, and the way these services should be delivered;
- also included is the need to develop a VCS protocol to standardise ethnic monitoring practices, including the extension of the standard Census categories to capture information about Gypsies and Travellers, refugees and asylum seekers, economic migrants and possibly also faith communities who use VCS services.

14.5 All of these initiatives should be promoted through an Equality and Diversity Code of Good Practice which ensures high standards of conduct and service delivery on the part of the VCS; a commitment to offering advice, support and constructive

criticism where needed by the diverse communities; and a shared commitment to promoting principles of equality, diversity and social justice for all the Island's people. The CVS has already undertaken some basic research and developed a set of 'guiding principles' around which the Code could be developed.

14.6 Following on from this, a programme of training on equality and diversity awareness is needed for voluntary organisations on the Island. This programme should in due course cover:

- awareness and understanding of the different needs of diverse communities on the part of service providers;
- celebration of cultural diversity, coupled with the need for cultural sensitivity on the part of all communities;
- cross-sector and inter-agency training on equality and diversity for front-line service providers including the Race Relations Acts, diversity and cultural awareness policy and good practice;
- training and education for front-line agencies in providing help and support to the victims of racial abuse;
- education and training in discrimination on grounds other than race (e.g. disability), victimisation and harassment.

Delivery of such a programme could be undertaken through cross-sector working. There is a need to use and share the existing expertise within and across all sectors.

14.7 Organisations based in or with a specific remit to serve the diverse communities need access to infrastructure services on the same basis as any other VCO. The services that were specifically mentioned as being needed were:

- Information, advice and support for individuals thinking of starting a community group, and for groups at the stage where they are being formed;
- access to premises and facilities;
- information about where to go and how to apply for funding, for Faith groups as well as for groups providing services;
- information and advice on recruiting, training and retaining volunteers;
- support for organisational development – registering as a charity, or good practice in managing and governance; etc;
- access to ICT; and
- guidance on public policy, good practice and the law as it affects small VCOs.

14.8 A programme of community capacity building is needed to help diverse communities on the Island to develop their own voice and their own community organisation. For a small Island with so many diverse communities, languages and beliefs, it may not be realistic to expect that every single community will develop a separate voice or set of organisations. Nevertheless, the same rights exist for these communities as for any other on the Island. The voluntary sector as a whole and the VCS infrastructure providers in particular have a role to play in providing support for diverse communities. This might be done within the RCC or CVS, by the three hubs that are being developed for the Island, or through partnership between all these bodies.

14.9 If there is insufficient experience among the Island's infrastructure providers to undertake this task, then it might be possible to bring in experience from a body such as Portsmouth Race Equality Network Organisation (PRENO) or a dedicated BME community development agency such as Sompriti (based in East Sussex).

Even if the Island's infrastructure providers are committed to undertaking this work themselves in the longer term, there is still a case to be made for inviting a body such as PRENO or Sompriti to guide the early stages of the work programme.

14.10 In pursuit of the new Code of Good Practice on Equality and Diversity that is proposed for the Island (to be led by the Compact Development Group), the organisations that have been involved with the Additional Support Programme in consultation with Equals and leading individuals from the diverse communities should consider establishing a Media Project on the lines piloted by Refugee Resource and Oxfordshire Racial Equality Council as part of the ChangeUp programme in Oxfordshire. The aims of the Oxfordshire Media Project were to counter the predominantly negative and stereotyped images of refugees, asylum seekers, Gypsies and Travellers adopted by the media. A similar project on the Island would be in a good position to win over the local media to promote positive images of the Island's diverse communities.

14.11 Other possible actions proposed by the people who were consulted in the course of this project include the following:

- there is a need to protect buildings associated with minority faiths;
- there is a need to provide a site or sites for travellers;
- Support for workers from Eastern Europe is also needed;
- Social and cultural events are needed to bring people together from different backgrounds. Linking arts development to events like Ryde Carnival would be a good idea. Local projects of this kind might be linked up Island-wide after a period of time.

Salma Ahmed, Catherine Ely and John Palmer  
North Harbour Consulting Limited  
March 2006

## Annex 1

### Glossary of Terms

#### **‘VCS’**

This is a shorthand reference to the Voluntary and Community Sector.

#### **‘VCOs’**

This is a shorthand reference to Voluntary and Community Organisations.

#### **‘Capacity Building’**

*“activity that empowers and strengthens the ability of voluntary and community organisations to develop their organisations, systems, people and skills so that they are better able to define and achieve their objectives; engage in consultation and planning; manage projects; and take part in partnerships, social enterprise and service delivery.”<sup>13</sup>*

#### **‘Community Capacity Building’**

*“Activities, resources and support that strengthen the skills, abilities and confidence of people and community groups to take effective action and leading roles in the development their communities.”*

#### **‘Infrastructure’**

*“ ... the facilities, organisational structures, systems, relationships, people, knowledge and skills that exist to support and develop, co-ordinate, represent and promote front line organisations thus enabling them to deliver their missions more effectively.”<sup>14</sup>*

#### **‘Infrastructure Organisations’**

Infrastructure organisations are:

*“ ... those whose primary purpose is to provide infrastructure functions or services (support and development, co-ordination, representation and promotion) to front line organisations. They are sometimes called umbrella organisations, second tier organisations or intermediary organisations.”<sup>15</sup>*

#### **‘Generic Infrastructure Organisations’**

Generic infrastructure organisations provide support to all VCOs within a particular geographical area.

#### **‘Specialist Infrastructure Organisations’**

Specialist or ‘sub-sectoral’ infrastructure organisations provide support to VCOs working with specific communities such as Gypsies and Travellers; specific client groups such as the elderly or people with learning disabilities; BME and faith groups; or within specific service areas such as health and social care.

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<sup>13</sup> Active Communities Unit, (2004), op. cit., page 15

<sup>14</sup> Active Communities Unit, (2004), op. cit., page 15

<sup>15</sup> Active Communities Unit, (2004), op. cit., page 15

### **‘Infrastructure Support Services’**

In practical terms, infrastructure support might include any or all of the following:

- support for individuals starting up a new group or organisation;
- assisting with access to premises and facilities – meeting rooms, offices, equipment etc;
- giving advice and information on recruiting, managing and retaining volunteers and operating a volunteer recruitment service;
- giving advice and information on how to recruit, train, manage and develop employees including compliance with employment legislation, equal opportunities etc;
- developing the organisation, including:
  - governance and leadership;
  - organisational management;
  - social inclusion, race equality and diversity;
  - service development and planning;
  - setting targets and quality standards;
  - performance monitoring;
  - business planning;
  - funding and financial management;
  - marketing;
  - health and safety;
  - risk management and insurance;
  - problem solving and support in a crisis.
- information, advice or assistance in relation to public policy, relevant legislation, significant developments that impact on the sector’s operating environment, and best practice;
- specialist support in particular areas of service delivery – for example, meeting professional standards in child care provision;
- information and communication technology - strategies for deploying ICT, access to low cost support / equipment and software, ongoing ICT support;
- skills & training - developing the organisational and professional skills of employees and volunteers including management committees;
- partnership building / brokerage - bringing together frontline organisations and other public and private sector organisations for joint/co-operative policy making, planning and service delivery;
- policy and research: collecting and providing evidence in order to influence policy, planning and service delivery;
- advocacy / representation: on behalf of voluntary and community groups to policy makers, service planners and funders.

### **‘Social Enterprise’**

A social enterprise is a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners. Social enterprises are diverse. They include local community enterprises, social firms, mutual organisations such as co-operatives, and large-scale organisations operating nationally and internationally. There is no single legal model for social enterprises. They include companies limited by guarantee, industrial and provident societies, and companies limited by shares. Some organisations are unincorporated and others are registered charities.

## Annex 2

### Names of people and organisations associated with the Island Additional Support Programme

#### ASP Steering Group

Name and Organisation
Cllr Ian Stephens, Isle of Wight Council (Chair)
Dave Simmons, GOSE ASP Co-ordinator
Carole Alstrom, Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Trust
Rosie Barnard, Isle of Wight Council
Dave Chapman, Ryde Development Trust
Sue Dovey, Rural Community Council (Resigned February 2006)
Helen Newbery, Sure Start Ryde
Martyn Pearl, Medina Housing Association
Marian Prowse, Council of Voluntary Service
Debbie Sagar, Isle of Wight NHS Primary Care Trust
Gordon Wakefield, H M Prison, Parkhurst

#### Consultants

The following people worked for North Harbour Consulting Limited in the course of this project:

- John Palmer (Managing Director);
- Salma Ahmed (Director);
- Catherine Ely (Associate Consultant).