



Cultivating Success: Collaborating for the benefit of our Customers and Consumers

BME London Landlords response to The London Mayor's draft consultation document for a diverse and inclusive city

BME London Landlords (BME London) are group of 14 BME led Housing Organisations (Registered social landlords) who have a combined asset base at a value in excess of £1.2 billion, accessed £300 million in social grants, manage over 6300 London homes and has the capacity to develop 2100 new homes. BME London have come together and formed a mission to work together in partnership to deliver ambitious, innovative and influential projects that provide positive outcomes and enhance value for money for our residents communities and organisations (1. BME Collaboration: The art of the possible 2016). BME London has already demonstrated success by working in collaboration to deliver groundbreaking procurement, leadership and employment projects (2. BME Collaboration: Multiplying Success 2017). The organisations include:-

1. Apna Ghar Housing Association
2. Arhag Housing Association
3. Bangla Housing Association
4. Ekaya Housing Association
5. Odu Dua Housing Association
6. North London Muslim Housing Association
7. Imani Housing Co-op
8. Industrial Dwellings Society (IDS)
9. Inquilab Housing Association
10. Innisfree Housing Association
11. Shian Housing Association
12. Spitalfields Housing Association
13. Tamil Housing Association
14. Westway Housing Association

All the above organisations originated from seeking to serve distinct first and second generation migrant communities evolving to serve tenants and stakeholders from all communities; whilst retaining their experience and expertise of the cultural nuances related to their communities enshrined in their founders vision.

As a collective we welcome the Mayor's vision for a diverse and inclusive city for all and believe that our experience in directly serving BME communities and coming to work together as BME community enterprises not only provides a template as a collaborative process for organisations, but is an ideal emergent impact for The Mayor's Office and GLA to utilise to work more effectively and efficiently to reach BME communities. BME London is well positioned as a key strategic partnership body to work with The London Mayor to meet the many challenges that face London as outlined in your consultation document.

The Evidence

With so much data from recent reports into race inequality. (3. Deep Roots, Diverse Communities, Dedicated Service' BME National (2016), 4. EHRC's Healing a divided nation, 5. The Lammy Review of the treatment of, and outcomes for, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) individuals in the Criminal Justice System, 6. Entitlement and belonging: social restructuring and multicultural

Britain, Institute of Race Relations, 7. Joseph Rowntree Foundation's Solving UK Poverty and Ethnicity and Poverty studies, 8. Ethnic Inequalities in Mental Health: Lankelly Chase Foundation/ Mind/Affiiya Trust/Centre for Mental Health, 9. Public Health Outcomes Framework: Health Equity report, focus on ethnicity Public Health England) All of which highlight the parallel lives that people from BME communities have lived and are still living in the UK; especially when considering issues such as social exclusion, disproportionality in deprivation, child poverty, challenges towards social integration, the impact of housing and immigration policy, lack of access to affordable homes, secure lives, economic prosperity, health and mental health inequalities.

How Can The Mayor's Office and GLA work with BME London to fulfil its vision?

What are the most effective actions we could take to act on our priorities?

BME London collaboration initiatives and vision need to be at the heart of creating the diverse and inclusive city, that The Mayor's Office envision. BME London as a collective body of frontline community enterprises, with established track records in sound governance and financial management of £300 million in social grants within the regulatory context of social housing, have developed robust operational models that have been sustained for over 25 years. These social businesses provide an attractive partnership vehicle to drive the necessary capacity building and structural transformation within and for marginalised BME communities to enable equitable access to the opportunities of economic prosperity that London provides.

BME London's housing organisation's map of operation covers nearly every Greater London borough each with the management infrastructure, necessary administrative capabilities to be the conduits to expedite the execution of strategic project initiatives with the financial management expertise and credibility to leverage added value and the investment required to targeted BME communities to benefit, and realise much of The Mayor's vision for a diverse and inclusive city with the efficacy required.

BME London proposes that The Mayor's Office, The GLA engage with BME London further to explore and take advantage of emergent impact opportunities developed by BME London's collaboration initiatives to facilitate the priority outcomes stated with its consultation documentation.

By utilising BME London collaborative structure as a key strategic partner The Mayor will be able to further enhance its role as an enabler to leverage more from the resources available to effect its vision. With the Mayor's office vision there is a clear opportunity to strengthen the impact that BME London can have playing a central role in targeting existing stakeholders and potential beneficiaries from BME communities by plugging into the delivery of GLA strategic plans across London.

This thinking will at the same time facilitate a strengthening strategic partnerships between local authorities BME Housing Organisations, and BME Voluntary and Community Sectors which will increase the potential for the creative design and dynamic delivery projects optimising value for money and social return on investment.

Priority outcome 1.1 Affordable, accessible decent homes

BME London's role in supply and development of new affordable homes in Partnership
As specialist frontline BME registered social landlords, BME London are positively encouraged by the Mayors priority to create more affordable, accessible decent homes and will make themselves and their resources available to play their role working in partnership with the Mayor Office, The GLA and local authorities to increase the supply and development of affordable homes in line The Mayors recently published housing strategy. BME London Landlords are already engaged with the deputy Mayor for housing preparing a mutual agreeable offer to leverage the assets of member BME London organisations to effect this priority outcome.

BME London's Role in No Nights Sleeping Rough Taskforce

(10. I-SPHERE Homelessness and Ethnicity from Heriot Watt University study presented at the BME National Conference 2016 identified that the proportion of BME rough sleepers in London, between 2011/12 and 2015/16 increased by 87% as opposed to White rough sleepers in London which increased by 35% over the same period.)

BME London Landlords welcomes that the Mayor's statement to play his part to help Londoners find affordable homes by "coordinating the work of boroughs and other partners to help end rough sleeping through the 'No Nights Sleeping Rough' task force ", but suggest that as part of its coordination role is to ensure that BME London are part of the task force enabling a focus and targeting of resources be given to BME London to support the alleviation of homelessness in relation to specific BME groups who are identified as disproportionately affected in the increasing numbers of London's statutory homeless and rough sleepers.

Priority outcome 1.2 Places where people and business can prosper

BME London Role in Shaping Regeneration Initiatives

BME London organisations are focused on working collectively and providing effective solutions to address the inequalities and economic challenges that BME communities face through a number of ground breaking partnership projects focusing on increasing value for money from procurement processes, high level executive leadership development and mentoring programmes, alongside demonstrable award winning tenant and resident into employment programmes.

The nature of the relationship BME London organisations have with its primary stakeholders, tenants and residents provides an established gateway to community engagement and participation, which can be utilised to ensure more BME representation in the development of a strong civic society, using these gateways to facilitate more opportunities for effective consultation, increased representation from stakeholders from BME communities voice's are heard and play an active role in shaping regeneration initiatives in London.

Priority Outcome 2.1 Child poverty reduction

BME London working towards reducing and eliminating child poverty

(11. Joseph Rowntree Foundation Ethnicity and Poverty study running from 2011 which is focused on how to solve poverty states there is more poverty in every minority group than among the white population. Identifying there is consistent relationship between child poverty and lower educational attainment, increasing risk that poverty will be passed from one generation to the next. Specifically highlighting that adult material deprivation increased by 11 points for Black Caribbean families; 8 points for Chinese families; 7 points for Bangladeshi and Black African families & 5 points for the white majority.)

BME London's vision to be a leading example of successful collaboration; which seeks to increase its capacity, pool resources, add value and achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness has the specific aim to be a key influencer within the housing sector and further afield; This includes each organisation within BME London working towards increasing the accessibility and affordability of housing and childcare and be involved in research to understand the causes of child poverty and specially designed projects that targets eliminating poverty, mitigates against negative impacts of welfare changes, lobby government.

Priority outcome 2.2 Inclusive and accessible education

Priority outcome 2.4 Healthy childhoods

Priority outcome 3.1 A skilled workforce

Priority outcome 5.5 Digital Inclusion

Priority outcome 6.3 An open and engaged organisation

BME London working towards developing a strong BME Community Enterprise Sector in London

BME London recognises the steady decline and deficit in the provision of services to BME communities year on year as a result of austerity measures post 2008 imposed on local authorities in London. The reduction in local authority spending effectively compounds cuts that have impacted BME communities disproportionately contributing to the demise of many BME voluntary and community sector groups, organisations and service providers who in the majority of cases have operated within the context of a precarious funding and financial existence. (12. The BME third sector: marginalised and exploited, Voluntary Sector Review 2015)

The combination of welfare reforms, commissioning and tendering frameworks, along with contract culture served a telling blow to BME VCS's ability to sustain itself to compete and deliver local services in partnership with local and regional authorities.

BME London's housing organisations realise the increasing importance of their role's as BME community enterprises, who have benefited from a rent revenue model that as housing organisations has create a more stable operational model enabling member's organisation to continue to develop and strategically plan for growth and long-term sustainability.

Our objective is to use our collective insight and bargaining power to shape relevant policy and service delivery. As a consequence, our organisations, residents and BME communities will thrive and prosper.

As financially viable BME led community enterprises BME London organisations are keen to take advantage of opportunities to leverage it's existing assets and networks to attract additional funding to effect all of the priority outcomes listed above of The Mayors vision by targeting resources that enables capacity building, further facilitates embedded education as part of local area based strategic partnership initiatives within the neighbourhoods and localities across locality authority areas where BME London organisations operate. Working in partnership with The Mayor's Office or GLA support BME London will facilitate its own member organisations and smaller BME community groups that work with BME communities to create new provision to meet gaps in education, health, workforce development, digital inclusion, and community engagement to positive outcomes where exist provision cannot or have been unable to.

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1. BME Collaboration: The art of the possible (2016)
2. BME Collaboration: Multiplying Success (2017)
3. Deep Roots, Diverse Communities, Dedicated Service' BME National (2016),
4. EHRC's Healing a divided nation,
5. The Lammy Review of the treatment of, and outcomes for, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) individuals in the Criminal Justice System
6. Entitlement and belonging: social restructuring and multicultural Britain, Institute of Race Relations
7. Joseph Rowntree Foundation's Solving UK Poverty and Ethnicity and Poverty studies,
8. Ethnic Inequalities in Mental Health: Lankelly Chase Foundation/Mind/Affiiya Trust/Centre for Mental Health,
9. Public Health Outcomes Framework: Health Equity report, focus on ethnicity Public Health England)
10. I-SPHERE Homelessness and Ethnicity from Heriot Watt University presented at the BME National Conference 2016
11. Joseph Rowntree Foundation Ethnicity and Poverty study running from 2011 - 2015
12. The BME third sector: marginalised and exploited, Voluntary Sector Review 2015