



Cultivating Success: For The Benefit Of Our Customers and Consumers

Friday 20th March 2020

BME London Landlords (BME London) the collaborative initiative comprising of 14 BME led Housing Organisations (Registered social landlords) based in London, have joined together to fully support the 15 Race equality and migrant rights organisations press release statement that calls for an independent review into institutional racism in the Home Office.

Following the press release published by the Runnymede Trust on Thursday 19th March 2020, highlighting the full set of recommendations following the publication of the Windrush Lessons Learned Review, we, The BME London Landlords (BME London) Collaborative Initiative, fully support the contents of the press statement that calls for the implementation of all the recommendations outlined in the Windrush Lessons Learned Review, which includes a full apology to those affected by the Windrush injustices and to make the Windrush Compensation Scheme more accessible and ensure independent oversight of the scheme as matter of urgency.

The full set of **recommendations** are:

- The treatment of the Windrush generation was a terrible but predictable injustice. The Review shows that government ignored repeated warnings and has still refused to apologise and compensate people who were detained, deported and in some cases died having been wrongfully treated. The government must right the wrong, beginning with a full apology to those affected, and making the compensation scheme process more independent and accessible.
- The Review shows why the Hostile Environment must be scrapped. None of the measures cited in the report, such as Right To Rent, have been repealed, the Home Office continues to treat people badly while the current Immigration Bill continues with policies and framing that will lead to further injustices.
- The EHRC to undertake an independent review into whether the Home Office's immigration policy and practices are in accordance with equality law, including its understanding of racial discrimination and the extent of institutional racism in the department.
- The Review also reveals poor workplace practices and culture in the Home Office. It is long past time for systemic reforms in decision-making, to ensure caseworkers get better support and are able to raise concerns with senior managers, and for leadership to send a stronger message that it is committed to a more open and empathetic organisational culture. (continued)
- Deportations of those who have lived in Britain since they were children should now end. Further, citizenship policy (including fees) should ensure that those who have the right to citizenship are provided with that citizenship, and racially discriminatory clauses in the 1971 Immigration Act and the 1981 Immigration and Nationality Act should be repealed.
- The government should commit to an extensive well-funded programme of support for grassroots and voluntary sector services that run outreach and support programmes for survivors of the Windrush injustice. The Hostile Environment is the latest in a catalogue of

injustices experienced by this community over many years, and so this support should be extended to the wider cause of racial justice.

- The Windrush injustice reflects the Home Office's failure to listen to those affected and organisations that pointed out the likely impact of the Hostile Environment. Government has refused to listen to civil society, dismissed concerns out of hand and attacked the integrity of those raising genuine concerns. The government must implement the WLLR recommendations on better engaging outside government, including groups that criticise its policies, if it is to avoid another similar injustice.
- The government should establish an independent advisory group and chair that reports directly to Number 10 and the Cabinet Office on the implementation of the Windrush Lesson Learned Review.

BME London Landlords

The full list of BME London Housing organisations supporting these recommendations are:

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 Ltd
8. Industrial Dwellings Society (IDS)
9. Inquilab Housing Association
10. Innisfree Housing Association
11. Shian Housing Association
12. Spitalfields Housing Association
13. Tamil Community Housing Association
14. Westway Housing Association

Race Equality and Migrant Rights Organisations

The full list of race equality and migrant rights organisations supporting these recommendations are:

The Runnymede Trust; Race on the Agenda; Voice4Change England; JCWI; Migrant Rights Network; Jewish Council for Race Equality; Traveller Movement; Race Equality Foundation; Friends, Families and Travellers; Olmec; BME Forum Croydon; Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre; Council of Somali Organisations; Caribbean and African Health Network; Black Training and Enterprise Group

Dr Zubaida Haque, Deputy Director, the Runnymede Trust said:

“The findings of the Windrush Lessons Learned Review are alarming, wide-ranging and profound: a terrible injustice was done to the Windrush generation, but the events and policies leading up to it were entirely predictable. Wendy Williams, the Independent Reviewer, makes it very clear that the injustice was not an accident, but a result of institutional failures to understand race and racism, in comparative ways as defined by Lord Macpherson's definition of institutional racism over 20 years ago.”

“It is now incumbent on this government to not only “right the wrongs” suffered by the Windrush generation (and other ethnic minority groups) as a result of the government's

hostile environment policies, but also to understand how and why Home Office culture, attitudes, immigration and citizenship policies have repeatedly discriminated against black and ethnic minority British citizens. Unless the issues around institutional racism are meaningfully addressed, we risk the same mistakes and injustices being repeated.”

Windrush campaigner Patrick Vernon OBE said:

“It has been two years since the Windrush Scandal was exposed highlighting how the government systematically, as part of the Hostile Environment, abused the human rights and dignity of British citizens from the Windrush generations and descendants. We now need effective leadership from the Prime Minister to swiftly implement the recommendations with independent oversight of the Home Office. The report is more than lessons learnt, it is an indictment of the nature and impact of structural racism in government and how politicians and senior civil servants over the years have failed to have a duty of care and respect to the Windrush Generation”

About BME London Landlords

BME London Landlords (BME London) are a collaborative initiative of 14 BME led Housing Organisations (Registered social landlords) based in who have a combined asset base at a value in excess of £1.5 billion, accessed £300 million in social grants, manage over 6300 London homes and has the capacity to develop 2100 new homes. BME London came together in 2016 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).

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