

Gloucestershire Compact
Black and Minority Ethnic
Voluntary and Community Organisations
Code of Practice

1. Who is this Code of Practice for?

- Black and Minority Ethnic Voluntary and Community Sector Groups
- Public Sector Bodies

2. What is the Gloucestershire Compact?

The Gloucestershire Compact is an agreement between local public sector bodies and the voluntary and community sector, to support and improve partnership working between the sectors. It is underpinned by Codes of Practice, based on the national Codes, which cover the following areas:

- Black and Minority Ethnic Voluntary and Community Organisations
- Community Groups
- Consultation
- Funding and Procurement
- Multi-sector Partnerships
- Volunteering

The Gloucestershire Compact and its Codes contain specific undertakings for each sector, as well as a series of joint undertakings, which aim to make a positive impact on partnership working in the county. In this context, the term “undertaking” commits partners to work towards the principle or action in question.

3. What is the aim of this Code of Practice?

This Code of Practice aims to give specific attention to the needs of the Black and minority ethnic (BME) sector and aims to make a positive impact on the relationship between the BME sector and the public sector in Gloucestershire. It aims to set a framework for promoting:

- A joint commitment to taking forward race equality, including sharing best practice and promoting good relationships
- Improved quality and quantity of consultation and participation with the BME sector
- Recognition of the specific needs of the BME sector
- Better access to resources and support for the BME sector

4. Background and Context

Gloucestershire has a BME population of just over 16,000, making up 2.5% of the total county population of 564,599 (The BME population makes up 7.2% of the total population for England and Wales). The majority of Gloucestershire's BME population reside in the City of Gloucester where they make up 7.5% of the population. *(Source: 2001 Census)*

The BME sector has arisen in response to the specific needs of these Black and minority ethnic communities and through efforts to bridge gaps in existing services.

The BME sector is made up of groups which could be defined as organisations whose ethos is geared towards the empowerment of Black and minority ethnic people and will include amongst others faith groups, refugees, travelling community and asylum seekers.

5. Joint Undertakings

All partners to the Gloucestershire Compact are committed to working together to continually improve the effectiveness of the relationship between the public sector and the BME sector, and undertake to:

- 5.1 Recognise the ever-changing diversity of the BME sector in relation to race, culture and faith as well as other issues.
- 5.2 Develop a partnership approach to taking forward the Government's strategy for achieving race equality and community cohesion by promoting and sharing best practice and celebrating success.
- 5.3 Promote and support compliance with the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 and other equalities legislation which promotes civil society.
- 5.4 Promote joint working initiatives, which improve the policy and implementation outcomes for BME communities at a local level (particularly those programmes aimed at revitalising deprived communities and promoting a more inclusive society).
- 5.5 Contribute to initiatives to promote understanding and learning between the sectors, such as joint training/development days, and awareness-raising seminars.
- 5.6 Encourage and support volunteering by and within BME communities.

6. Public Sector Undertakings

The Gloucestershire Compact public sector partners undertake to:

Value the work, knowledge, experience and expertise of the BME sector across the County

- 6.1 Raise general staff awareness and knowledge of the BME communities and sector across the county through training, information and signposting.
- 6.2 Provide opportunities for the BME sector to supply information and training on BME issues to public sector bodies.
- 6.3 Ensure that knowledge and links exist with the BME sector at a strategic level within individual agencies.

Recognise that the BME sector needs appropriate support, resourcing and information in order to effectively work with public sector partners.

- 6.4 Acknowledge the emerging and continuing needs of the sector.
- 6.5 If requested, information is made available to people who speak other languages in the most reasonable methods available.
- 6.6 Tailor information and communication to the specific needs and capacity of different groups being targeted.
- 6.7 Use appropriate umbrella bodies and networks to channel and target information effectively to the sector.

Support capacity and organisational development within the sector and the specific role of infrastructure organisations

- 6.8 Support BME organisations' access to information, training and organisational development advice and guidance.
- 6.9 Support the development of infrastructure which responds to the specific needs of the BME sector and which complements, but does not duplicate, existing provision.

Improve the BME sector's access to resources

- 6.10 Ensure that the commitments made in the Funding and Procurement Code of Practice are equally applied to the BME sector.
- 6.11 Work to improve the co-ordination of funding to the BME sector.
- 6.12 Consider the specific support needs of the BME sector in accessing funding, for example by providing training.
- 6.13 Wherever possible, provide in kind practical support eg legal and human resources advice, venues etc.
- 6.14 Monitor levels of funding to the BME sector.
- 6.15 Support and work in partnership with BME groups to promote diversification of funding within the BME sector.

Ensure that public sector bodies and practices do not discriminate against the BME sector.

- 6.16 Ensure that policies and practices are promoted and monitored through an effective and transparent equal opportunities strategy.
- 6.17 Ensure that processes are open and accountable and have effective feedback and complaints systems.
- 6.18 Ensure that each agency proactively addresses equal opportunities issues and has access to appropriate expertise and resources.

Consult with the BME sector in relation to policy and strategy developments.

- 6.19 Where appropriate, involve the BME sector from pre-consultation to implementation stage, thus ensuring that the implications for BME communities and race equality are considered and addressed.
- 6.20 Provide feedback from any such consultation carried out with the BME sector.

6.21 Monitor the impact and influence of the BME sector on such strategic developments.

Improving the employment and learning opportunities available to the BME sector.

6.22 Ensure that the commitments made in the Volunteering Code of Good Practice are equally applied to the BME sector.

6.23 Create and utilise opportunities for mentoring, apprenticeships and work shadowing wherever possible.

6.24 Wherever possible, work with other partners to provide practical learning support for BME sector managers and management committees.

Recognise the independence of the BME sector, and its right within the law to challenge institutions' policies and practices, irrespective of any funding relationship that might exist.

7. Black and Minority Ethnic Voluntary and Community Sector Undertakings

The Gloucestershire Compact BME sector partners undertake to:

7.1 Strive to play a full and active part within the wider voluntary and community sector in fulfilling the undertakings of the Compact.

7.2 Continue to promote ethnicity, culture and religious diversity.

7.3 Encourage co-operation, collaboration and joint working amongst the diverse groups that make up the BME sector.

7.4 Continue to develop a local structure accountable to local groups which will enable communication and consultation with them.

7.5 Continue to make use of appropriate training and learning opportunities.

7.6 Respond to the needs of service users by providing culturally appropriate services.

7.7 Audit and communicate organisational needs and issues within the sector.

7.8 Maintain open and dynamic organisations providing opportunities for voluntary and community activity by a diverse range of individuals regardless of issues such as disability, gender or sexual orientation.

Produced in May 2006 in collaboration with Linking Communities on behalf of the Gloucestershire Compact Group by the Partnership & Participation Project

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Further information about the Compact can be found on the Gloucestershire

Voluntary and Community Sector website www.gloshub.org.uk

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