

# FOSTERING GOOD RELATIONS IN SCOTLAND

DEVELOPING COMMUNITY  
COHESION THROUGH  
PUBLIC POLICY

COALITION FOR RACIAL EQUALITY  
AND RIGHTS, MAY 2021



**CRER**

Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights

The design of this publication is inspired by the infographic posters created by the sociologist W.E.B. DuBois and his colleagues for an exhibition at the Paris World Fair of 1900. These posters used statistical evidence to show the realities of oppression, marginalisation and discrimination affecting African American people at that time. Although his views and context are separated from ours by over 100 years of change, we share his commitment to achieving racial justice for all, using evidence-based and rights-based approaches to eradicate racism and racial inequality.



# WHO WE ARE

The Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights is a Scottish anti-racism charity based in Glasgow.

We are focused on working to eliminate racial discrimination and harassment, and promote racial justice across Scotland.

Our key mission is to:

- Protect, enhance, and promote the rights of minority ethnic communities across all areas of life in Scotland; and,
- Strengthen the social, economic, and political capital of minority ethnic communities, especially those at greatest risk of disadvantage

CRER takes a rights-based approach, promoting relevant international, regional, and national human rights and equality conventions and legislation.

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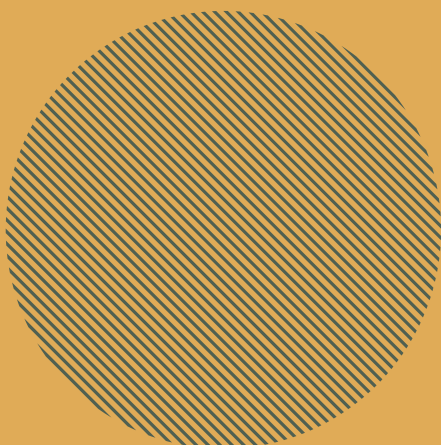
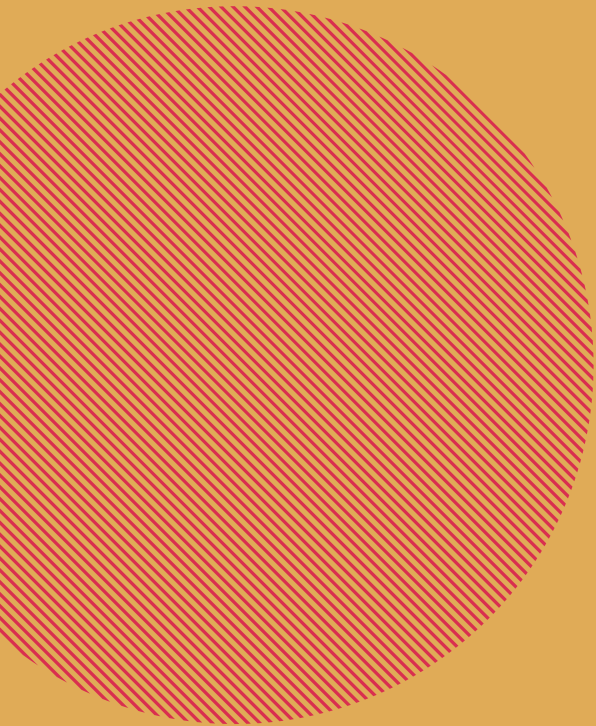
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# INTRODUCTION

The self-assured notion of an inclusive Scottish national identity, comprising many and varied cohesive communities, needs to be re-evaluated.



## Scotland often prides itself on having a strong, fair and inclusive national identity.

Until 2018, this was one of the key outcomes within the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework.<sup>1</sup> This goal is echoed by the legal obligation to 'foster good relations' placed upon public sector organisations under the Equality Act 2010.<sup>2</sup> Despite this, at both national and local level, policy directly addressing community cohesion is conspicuously absent in Scotland.

The concept of community cohesion is perhaps underplayed in Scotland because, in contrast to England, demographic change is not seen to have significantly redefined the character of many local neighbourhoods. Residential segregation where specific minority ethnic groups cluster in particular areas (often the focus of these discussions) is a rare phenomenon, even in Scotland's largest cities.<sup>3</sup>

It is worth noting that where areas are mainly populated by white majority ethnic groups, this is rarely described as 'clustering', and these neighbourhoods are often invisible in discussions about community cohesion. Other signs that community cohesion might be lacking easily go unnoticed by majority ethnic white Scots, who don't experience racism themselves and tend to see it as incidental, rather than as a wider social problem.<sup>4</sup>

However, as the authors of *No Problem Here: Understanding Racism in Scotland* point out, everyday racism remains a structuring force within Scottish society, "...From racial harassment in the community, to systematic discrimination in the workplace".<sup>5</sup> The self-assured notion of an inclusive Scottish national identity, comprising many and varied cohesive communities, needs to be re-evaluated.

This report is part of a programme of work undertaken by CRER since 2014 aiming to support implementation of the duty to foster good relations. The general equality duty set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010<sup>6</sup> states that public sector bodies and others carrying out a public function must have due regard to three 'needs'. The first of these is the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct. The second is the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. This briefing focuses on the third need; the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

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1. The National Performance Framework outcomes were revised in 2018; for information, see Scottish Government website for details of the **national identity outcome prior to 2018**

2. UK Government. **Equality Act 2010**. London: The Stationery Office

3. Kelly, B. and Ashe, S. (2014). **Ethnic Mixing in Glasgow**. Manchester: CoDE

4. Arshad, R. (2020). Lessons Learned About 'Race' in Scotland. In: Meer, N., Akhtar, S. and Davidson, N. (eds) *Taking Stock: Race Equality in Scotland*. London: Runnymede

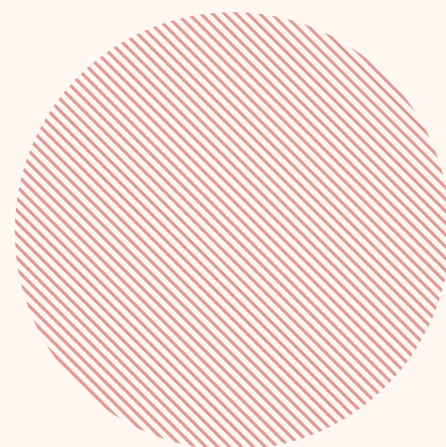
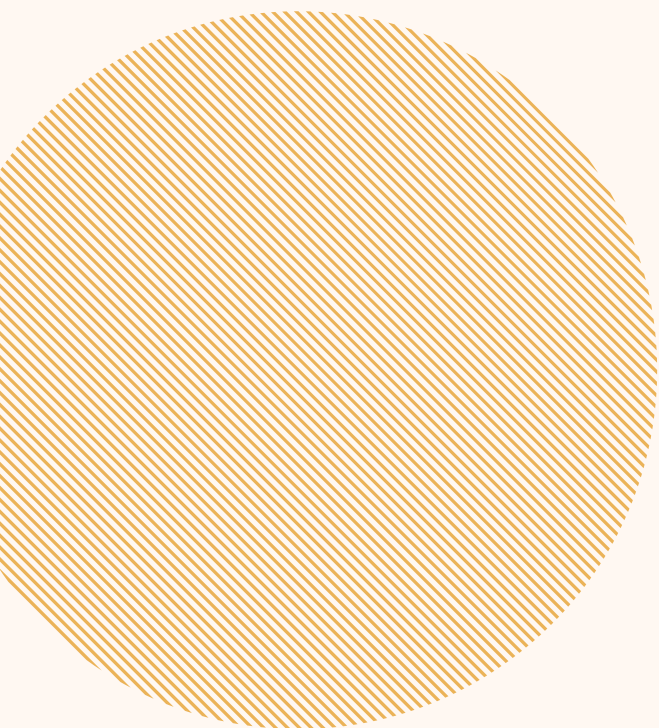
5. Davidson, N., Linpaa, M., McBride, M. and Virdee, S. (eds) (2018). *No Problem Here: Understanding Racism in Scotland*. Edinburgh: Luath Press.

6. UK Government. **Equality Act 2010**. London: The Stationery Office

The programme of work to date has included a major conference in November 2014, followed by a masterclass facilitated by Professor Ted Cattle in 2015. The emerging thinking from these events was captured in our 2016 report, *Promoting Good Relations: New Approaches, New Solutions*.<sup>7</sup>

A further conference was held in 2019, where Professor Sir John Curtice gave a keynote address exploring the use of data (specifically the Scottish Social Attitudes Survey) in policy formation and fostering good race relations. Other areas explored included the utility of singling out 'race' as a category of analysis in the Scottish context, and the evolution of Local Integration Plans in England.

This publication builds on our programme of work so far to set out the policy implications of community cohesion and fostering good relations in Scotland. This includes contrasting approaches in Scotland and England at local and national level, as well as identifying future challenges and opportunities for the role of public policy in implementing the duty to foster good relations.



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7. CRER (2016). *Promoting Good Relations: New Approaches, New Solutions*. Glasgow: CRER

# WHAT DO WE MEAN BY 'GOOD RELATIONS'?

Community relations at both local and national level are fluid and dynamic.





## Our previous report, *Promoting Good Relations: New Approaches, New Solutions*, set out the following definition for good relations:<sup>8</sup>

“Communities of all kinds living and working together with understanding and respect, so that people experience:

- Freedom from discrimination, stereotyping, harassment or violence
- A shared sense of belonging and acceptance
- The ability to participate equally in economic, political, civic and social life
- Freedom to agree or disagree respectfully, without fear of reprisal or rejection”

The reference to 'communities of all kinds' reflects the broad scope of good relations in the general equality duty, which covers eight of the nine protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation). As an anti-racist organisation, CRER's interest in good relations primarily centres on race but recognises commonality and intersectionality with other protected characteristics.

The duty to foster good relations places a positive obligation on public sector bodies. In other words, good relations cannot be measured simply by the absence of bad relations; for example, low reported levels of prejudice-based harassment in the workplace or reductions in the rate of hate crime. Instead, there must be impactful, measurable action to build good relations between groups of people.

Positive obligations in law and policy are arguably harder to conceptualise and to implement. In practical terms, then, the duty to foster good race relations might be most obviously implemented through work to improve community cohesion. This is the focus of much of this briefing.

However, the aspirational definition of good relations presented here does not indicate that cohesive communities need to be utopian or permanently harmonious. Community relations at both local and national level are fluid and dynamic. Community cohesion entails responding to tensions as they arise, working towards good relations over time and through shifting and developing social challenges.

In line with our earlier work on fostering good relations, CRER continues to encourage movement away from focussing on 'integration' towards a clear policy emphasis on community cohesion.

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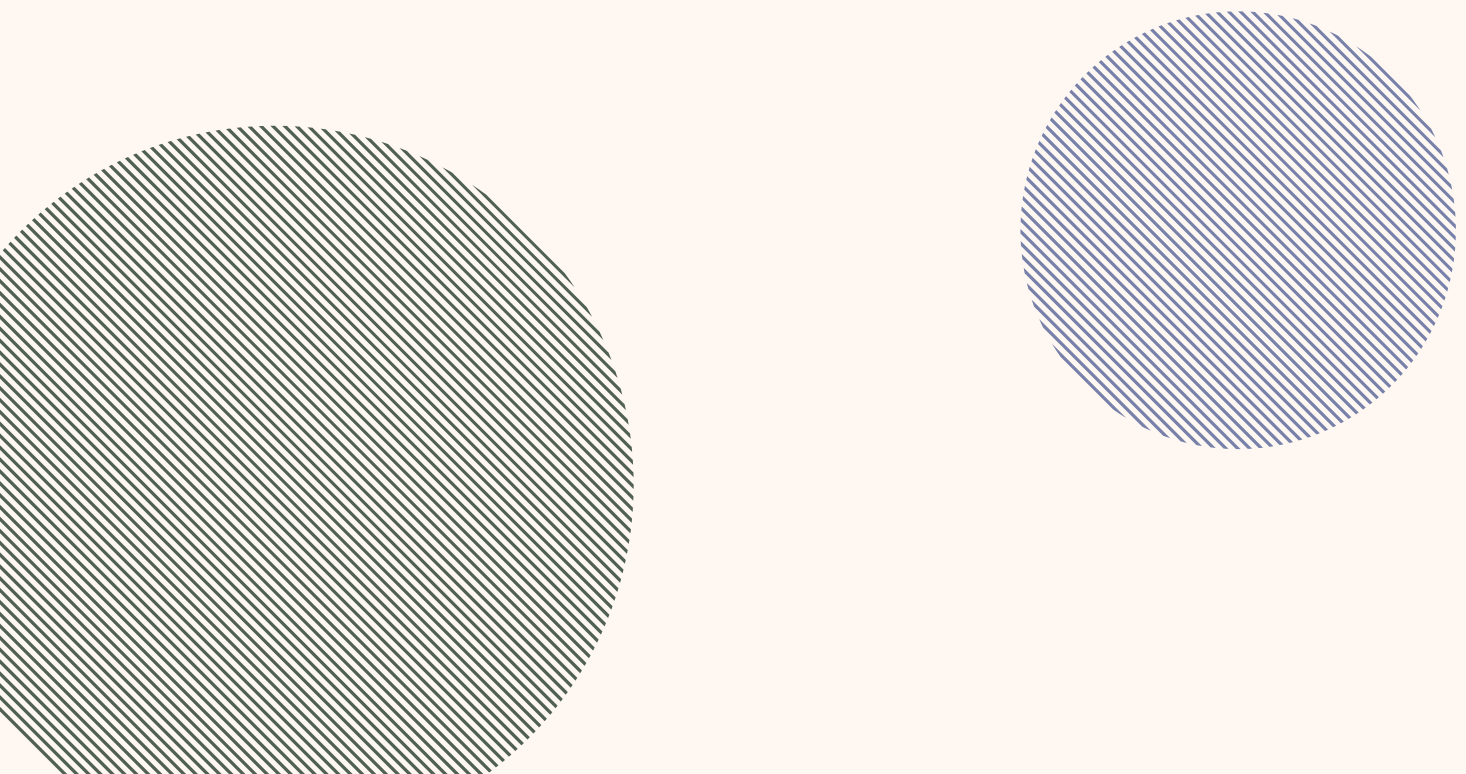
8. CRER (2016). *Promoting Good Relations: New Approaches, New Solutions*. Glasgow: CRER

Integration work is necessary as a practical measure to ensure newly arrived migrants have the support they need to access their rights and settle in to life in Scotland. However, using this as a proxy for community cohesion places an unfair expectation on minority ethnic communities and individuals to integrate themselves into a dominant culture which overwhelmingly frames them as 'different' and existing outside of the norm. This expectation extends to those who have lived most, or all, of their lives in Scotland; not just recent migrants.

Broadly, the group asserting that integration needs to happen are the majority ethnic group, yet perceptions of cultural difference within the majority ethnic group actively prevent integration. Whilst majority ethnic people interested in equality might try to overcome this, the prevailing context fails to shift. This is a key manifestation of the social structure of racism.

The Scottish Government, for instance, has vocally rejected the kind of nationalism that privileges one set of cultural norms or behaviours above another. Despite this, there is still an element of rhetoric that paints Scotland as a culturally homogenous entity 'welcoming' minority ethnic people, 'embracing' diversity and being a 'tolerant' nation. Who decides who is welcome, who should be embraced, or worse still tolerated? This indicates a perception of difference in belonging, where the majority ethnic group automatically belongs and can choose to assign belonging to others.

A genuinely inclusive national identity would take it as a given fact that belonging is for everyone, and focus instead on tackling the deeply ingrained racial inequalities that threaten a secure sense of belonging for minority ethnic people.



# WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT COMMUNITY COHESION IN SCOTLAND

Good relations and racial equality are concepts inextricably linked with community cohesion.



## Measurable evidence on community cohesion in Scotland is patchy at best. Unlike England, which has a specific published policy on measuring and monitoring community integration with 20 indicators,<sup>9</sup> Scotland has no dedicated approach to this.

Until the review of the National Performance Framework in 2018, the concept of community cohesion was arguably reflected in two National Outcomes.

Firstly, in terms of sense of belonging and inclusion on the national level, the aforementioned 'We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity' was a potentially relevant outcome. However, the accompanying narrative did not mention community cohesion, and only glancingly addressed related concepts. For example, the list of factors impacting national identity included 'The influence that new Scots bring to our communities', and Government's role in achieving the National Outcome included 'Achieving equality of opportunity for Scotland's communities and faith groups to share equitably in Scotland's success.' These points were largely lost amongst the broader focus on Scotland's international image and national pride. In keeping with the narrative, none of the performance indicators used to monitor this outcome related in any way to community cohesion.

Secondly, 'We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others' could arguably be seen as the outcome previously most relevant to community cohesion at neighbourhood level. Indeed, community cohesion did receive a very brief mention in the accompanying narrative. However, again, the performance indicators did not relate to community cohesion.

The revised National Performance Framework<sup>10</sup> has the potential to significantly improve Scottish Government's approach to tracking community cohesion trends in Scotland. Whilst it still lacks a coherent narrative that specifically explores community cohesion in its own right, the revised outcome 'We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe' includes the Social Capital Index in its list of indicators.

9. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019). **Measuring Outcomes for Integrated Communities: Technical note**. London: HM Government

10. Scottish Government (2018). **National Performance Framework**. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

# MEASURING COMMUNITY COHESION IN SCOTLAND

The Social Capital Index defines social capital as 'the resource of social networks, community cohesion, social participation, trust and empowerment that collectively provide an important part of personal and social wellbeing now and in the future'.<sup>11</sup> It measures this across four areas; social networks, community cohesion, social participation and community empowerment.

Community cohesion is monitored across eight variables:

- Neighbourhood rating
- Neighbourhood belonging
- Feelings of safety walking home
- Neighbourhood trust
- Neighbourhood kindness
- Has places to meet up and socialise in their neighbourhood
- Welcoming places and opportunities to meet new people
- A neighbourhood where people get on well together

As explored in a previous CRER report,<sup>12</sup> very limited numbers of the National Performance Framework indicators are published disaggregated by ethnicity on the Scottish Government's Equality Evidence Finder website,<sup>13</sup> and the Social Capital Index is not included in this.

However, the 2020 publication *Social Capital in Scotland: Measuring and Understanding Scotland's Social Connections*<sup>14</sup> does report on the performance of the Social Capital Index. It examines some differing findings for minority ethnic groups, albeit briefly: "...People from minority ethnic backgrounds have lower levels of neighbourhood help and trust, but also higher levels of 'getting on well together' with people in the neighbourhood, and the availability of places to meet and interact and meet new people." Other indicators are not explored in the narrative, however the authors conclude that the differences suggest "...important patterns that could be considered in other research."

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11. Scottish Government (2018). National Performance Framework **Social Capital** webpage

12. CRER (2020). **Scotland's National Performance Framework: Measuring outcomes for minority ethnic communities**

13. See the **National Performance Indicators** interactive dashboard on the Equality Evidence Finder website

14. McClymont, K., Jacobs, P. and Cavanagh, B. (2020). **Social Capital in Scotland: Measuring and Understanding Scotland's Social Connections**. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

Good relations and racial equality are concepts inextricably linked with community cohesion. Despite this, progress reporting on the Social Capital Index makes no attempt to address these concepts in a narrative sense.

However, the report includes a table of statistics on community cohesion broken down by ethnicity (within a wider section listing breakdowns for subgroups of the population). This can be usefully analysed.

**TABLE 1: COMMUNITY COHESION INDICATORS BROKEN DOWN BY ETHNICITY, SCOTLAND, 2018**

Indicator	White	'Other minority ethnic'	Difference (% points)
Rates neighbourhood positively	95	93	-2
Feels a positive sense of neighbourhood belonging	78	71	-7
Feels safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark	82	80	-2
Agrees that 'This is a neighbourhood where most people can be trusted' (2017)	78	69	-9
Agrees that 'This is a neighbourhood where people are kind to each other'	83	82	-1
Agrees that 'This is a neighbourhood where people from different backgrounds get on well together'	70	78	+8
Agrees that 'There are places where people can meet up and socialise'	59	68	+9
Agrees that 'There are welcoming places and opportunities to meet new people'	52	64	+12

Source: McClymont, K., Jacobs, P. and Cavanagh, B. (2020). **Social Capital in Scotland: Measuring and Understanding Scotland's Social Connections**. Edinburgh: Scottish Government (Analysis using data from the Scottish Household Survey 2017/2018)

This data presents a complex picture. The more positive views of minority ethnic groups about the availability of 'welcoming places and opportunities to meet new people,' and about people from different backgrounds getting on well together, seem at odds with the lower levels of trusting people in the neighbourhood and having a positive sense of belonging to the neighbourhood.

It may be that the two positively regarded indicators are less personal, more neutral concepts, leading respondents to consider not just their own experience in the area, but also broader public perceptions about its reputation and social environment.

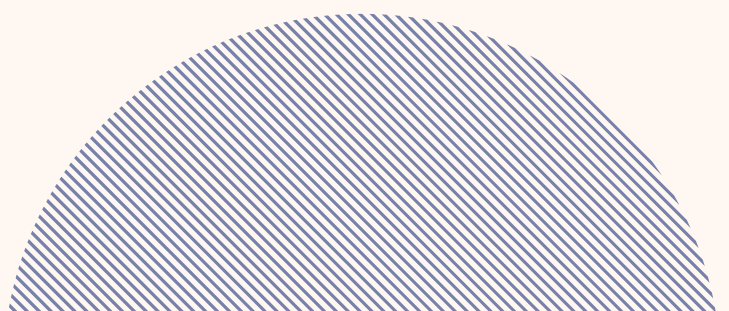
There are wider caveats about the usefulness of the suite of indicators on community cohesion. To be truly effective, analysis would need to be able to draw out differences between areas of high and low ethnic diversity. When considering their neighbourhood (and consequently neighbours), are respondents considering neighbours from ethnic groups that don't match their own? If asked to do so, would their answers be markedly different?

Crucially, intersectional consideration of the above indicators would be likely to raise questions about how the data should be interpreted. Whilst specific intersectional data is not published in the report, data on age and gender is included.

There are dramatic differences between different age groups on some of the indicators; for example, over 75s are far less likely to feel safe walking alone at night in their neighbourhood. This has implications for interpreting the ethnicity data on that indicator, because the BME population is demographically much younger than the white population. It's therefore likely that an analysis by ethnicity excluding over 75s would paint a significantly worse picture for minority ethnic people than a simple two percentage point difference on this indicator. Potential variations for data disaggregated by both ethnicity and gender are harder to predict, but would be useful in understanding differing perceptions for minority ethnic women and men.

The Social Networks indicators used in the Social Capital Index are also useful for examining community cohesion, as these relate more directly to relations between respondents and their neighbours (although similar caveats apply).

This may, in fact, be a more reliable way of looking at community cohesion from the point of view of minority ethnic people. Several of the Community Cohesion indicators look at the characteristics of a neighbourhood rather than people's own experiences within a neighbourhood, and so might be affected by perceptions of what 'most people' would say, rather than reflecting the individual's experience.



**TABLE 2: SOCIAL NETWORKS INDICATORS BROKEN DOWN BY ETHNICITY, SCOTLAND, 2018**

Indicator	White	'Other minority ethnic'	Difference (% points)
Agrees that 'If I was alone and needed help, I could rely on someone in this neighbourhood to help me'	86	75	-11
Agrees that 'If my home was empty, I could count on someone in this neighbourhood to keep an eye on my home'	86	67	-19
Agrees that 'I feel I could turn to someone in this neighbourhood for advice or support'	77	67	-10
Agrees that 'In an emergency, such as a flood, I would offer to help people in my neighbourhood who might not be able to cope well'	91	82	-9
Meets socially with friends, relatives, neighbours, work colleagues at least once a week	73	73	0
Felt lonely in the last week some/most/almost all/all of the time	21	23	+2

Source: McClymont, K., Jacobs, P. and Cavanagh, B. (2020). **Social Capital in Scotland: Measuring and Understanding Scotland's Social Connections**. Edinburgh: Scottish Government (Analysis using data from the Scottish Household Survey 2017/2018)

Notably, all of these more personal measures of relationships in the local neighbourhood show worse outcomes for minority ethnic groups. The difference for minority ethnic people feeling they could count on someone in the neighbourhood to keep an eye on their home was almost 20 percentage points, which perhaps echoes the previously mentioned views on trustworthiness. Perhaps understandably, then, minority ethnic people were also less likely to report that they would support others in the neighbourhood.

The two indicators not related to the neighbourhood show more neutral results, with no difference in the proportion of people socialising at least once a week (and only slightly worse results for experience of loneliness). Again, however, the difference in age profile means that analysis by age and ethnicity may illuminate significant differences between minority and majority ethnic groups.



It's important to note that sampling issues may impact the robustness of this data. CRER has previously raised concerns about the breadth of sampling across different ethnic groups in national research. Although ethnicity data for research samples is rarely published, one notable example is the Scottish Surveys Core Questions (SSCQ) data.

The Core Questions are a set of questions replicated across three national surveys; the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey, the Scottish Household Survey and the Scottish Health Survey. Although part of the stated purpose of SSCQ is to increase the sample of minority groups within national data collection, the ethnicity breakdown of its sample in 2016 showed under-representation of most minority ethnic groups and particularly the larger groups such as Pakistani and Chinese populations. On the other hand, the White: Other British group was significantly over-represented.<sup>15</sup>

Outwith the Social Capital Index, there are other sources of evidence which may be of use in measuring community cohesion. For example, the Scottish Household Survey 2018 shows that 19% of people living in Scotland do not know anyone from a different racial or ethnic background.<sup>16</sup> Similarly, the British Integration Survey 2019 showed that 54% of respondents in Scotland's wider social networks were entirely composed of people of their own ethnicity. This was the second highest result for an area of Britain, coming slightly behind North East England (57%).<sup>17</sup>

Belonging can also be seen as a measure of the extent to which people feel connected to a local community. According to the 2015 Scottish Social Attitudes Survey, 37% of white individuals in Scotland feel very strongly that they belong to their local neighbourhood compared to 25% of non-white minority ethnic individuals.<sup>18</sup>



15. Scottish Government (undated). **Scottish Surveys Core Questions 2016 – Equalities Findings Report**. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

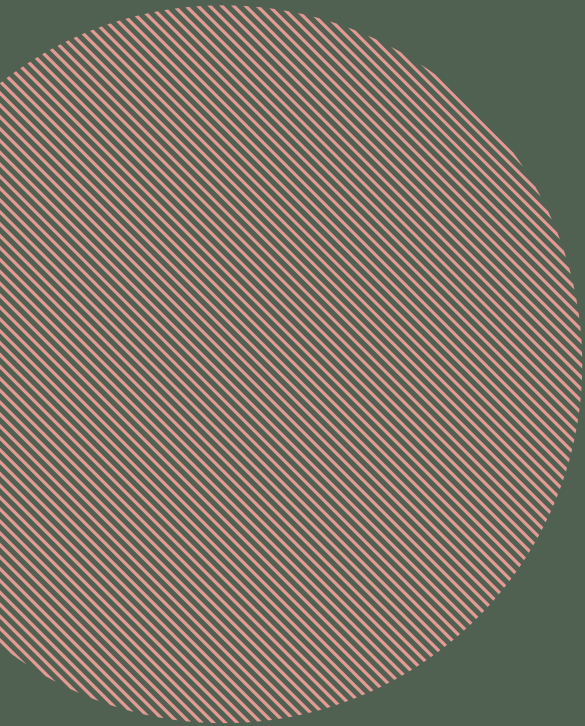
16. Scottish Government Housing and Social Justice Directorate (2019). **Scottish Household Survey 2018**. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

17. The Challenge (2019). **British Integration Survey 2019**. London: The Challenge

18. Scottish Government Social Research (2016). **Scottish Social Attitudes 2015: Attitudes to discrimination and positive action**. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

# RACISM, PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION

Racial hate crime consistently remains the most commonly reported hate crime in Scotland.



**Although fostering good relations and creating community cohesion must be recognised as policy agendas in their own right, they are significantly linked to anti-racism and tackling hate crime. In some ways, overt racism, prejudice and discrimination may be seen as the visible 'tip of the iceberg' for poor community relations.**

The presence of overt racial hostility in Scotland is perhaps most seriously exemplified by the presence of far right groups, such as the Scottish Defence League (which has been active since 2009 and has been banned by Facebook for hate speech).

Over the years, far right activists in Scotland have consistently re-branded and attempted to define themselves outside the confines of the wider UK far right. For example, National Action linked activists formed Scottish Dawn (which was quickly proscribed under anti-terrorism legislation)<sup>19</sup> and former British National Party members have previously campaigned in Glasgow's Local Authority elections as the Britannica Party.<sup>20</sup> More recently former Britain First leader Jayda Fransen, a convicted hate criminal, stood against First Minister Nicola Sturgeon and Scottish Labour Leader Anas Sarwar in the 2021 Scottish Parliament elections.

Far right terrorism concerns have grown in recent years in Scotland, with the numbers of far right terror suspects referred to Police growing from 23 in 2018 to 39 in 2019.<sup>21</sup> In 2019-20, far right suspects made up the largest proportion of referrals to the Prevent<sup>22</sup> anti-terror programme in Scotland, well over twice the proportion of those with alleged ties to Islamist terrorism. Once assessed for suitability, the proportion of Prevent interventions related to the far right in Scotland is four times higher than those related to Islamist ideology.<sup>23</sup> In one of the most high profile cases, a neo-Nazi who planned to bomb Scottish mosques was jailed for life in 2018.<sup>24</sup>

Whilst a small minority of extremist individuals are involved at this level, it must be recognised that far right recruiting tactics and propaganda do not exist in a vacuum. The central messages about threats to safety, economic stability and cultural life that they use to create fear and defensiveness amongst the majority ethnic population are often reflected in everyday social dialogue, as well as the mainstream media.<sup>25</sup>

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19. Investigative journalists at The Ferret have published several exposes on the **far right in Scotland**

20. **Britannica Party**. Glasgow Hope Not Hate website (undated)

21. **Far-right fanatics on rise in Scotland as number of police alerts increase**. Daily Record, 13th January 2020

22. Despite the recent focus on far right terror threats, the Prevent programme remains problematic, and CRER shares the concerns of organisations such as the **EIS** and **Runnymede Trust**

23. Police Scotland (2020). **Prevent Referral Data, Scotland**, April 2019 to March 2020

24. **Neo-Nazi Connor Ward Convicted of Plotting Terror Attacks**. The Scotsman, 14th March 2018

25. Waterson, J. (2019). **Newspapers Help to Radicalise Far Right, Says UK Anti-terror Chief**. Guardian website

This fear and defensiveness can manifest as 'rivalrous cohesion', where one community unites over shared perception of threat from another. This has a knock on impact on attitudes and behaviours that reaches from voting behaviours of those who would never consider themselves 'racist' but would vote for racist policies,<sup>26</sup> to incidents of discrimination and harassment.

Rivalrous cohesion is one of four community relations concepts explored within an Equality and Human Rights Commission research report into prejudice and unlawful behaviour:<sup>27</sup>

- Harmonious cohesion, with positive regard between groups, empathy for others and willingness to accept new members into the community
- Benign indifference, with an absence of either good relations or overt manifestations of prejudice, but a lack of attention to inequalities and broader experiences of discrimination
- Rivalrous cohesion, where cohesion within specific communities (for example the majority ethnic community) creates a sense of pride and shared values based on perceptions of threat and contempt for the community/communities seen as rivals, or inferiors
- Malign antipathy, where communities are more broadly fragmented and relations characterised by hostility, distrust, conflict and often mutual discrimination

These complexities of social behaviour are part of the reason why measuring community cohesion on a collective level is challenging. Evidence is more readily available on individual experiences linked to community cohesion.

The Scottish Household Survey is perhaps the most robust source of evidence on experiences of discrimination and harassment. In 2018, 40% of respondents who had been discriminated against and 32% of those who had been harassed believed the reason behind this was either their ethnic origin, nationality or accent.<sup>28</sup>

Racial hate crime consistently remains the most commonly reported hate crime in Scotland. In 2019/20 there were 3,038 racist hate crime charges. This represents a rise of 4% from the previous year. There was an increase in racist hate crime charges in over half of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service offices in Scotland between 2018/19 and 2019/20. The rate of racist hate crime charges is more than double that of any other hate crime, and exceeds all other hate crimes put together, representing 54% of the total.<sup>29</sup> This is before taking into account under-reporting. Anecdotally, it's believed that a vast number of hate crimes are never reported to the police.

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26. Ashe, S. (2014). **Why the British National Party Didn't Get More Votes**. Manchester Policy Blogs

27. Abrams, D., Swift, H. and Mahmood, L. (2016). **Research report 101: Prejudice and unlawful behaviour, exploring levers for change**. London: Equality and Human Rights Commission

28. Scottish Government Housing and Social Justice Directorate (2019). **Scottish Household Survey 2018: Annual Report**. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

29. Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (2020). **Hate Crime in Scotland 2010-11 to 2019-20** (breakdown by Procurator Fiscal Office)

Numbers, however, only relate to prevalence. The human cost for individuals on the receiving end of each of these 58 cases per week means that action is imperative, regardless of statistical trends.

The majority of hate crime perpetrators are men aged 25 and under.<sup>30</sup> This has worrying implications for the effectiveness of the last decade of approaches intended to address racism in the school environment. Urgent attention is needed to developing new, evidence based, anti-racist approaches; approaches that actively create attitude and behaviour change in those at risk of becoming offenders.

The young, male perpetrators of hate crime in Scotland today will go on in later life to be employers, colleagues and providers of services to minority ethnic people. This will continue the cycle of disadvantage that minority ethnic people face as a result of both overt and hidden bias.

At the same time, Scotland has a growing, young minority ethnic population. Without work to build community cohesion and bolster against the language of division, community relations in Scottish towns and cities may look very different in fifty years' time.

From this point of view, there may be lessons to learn from the experience in England, where policy makers have historically grappled with the challenges of community cohesion and racial tension in diverse areas.

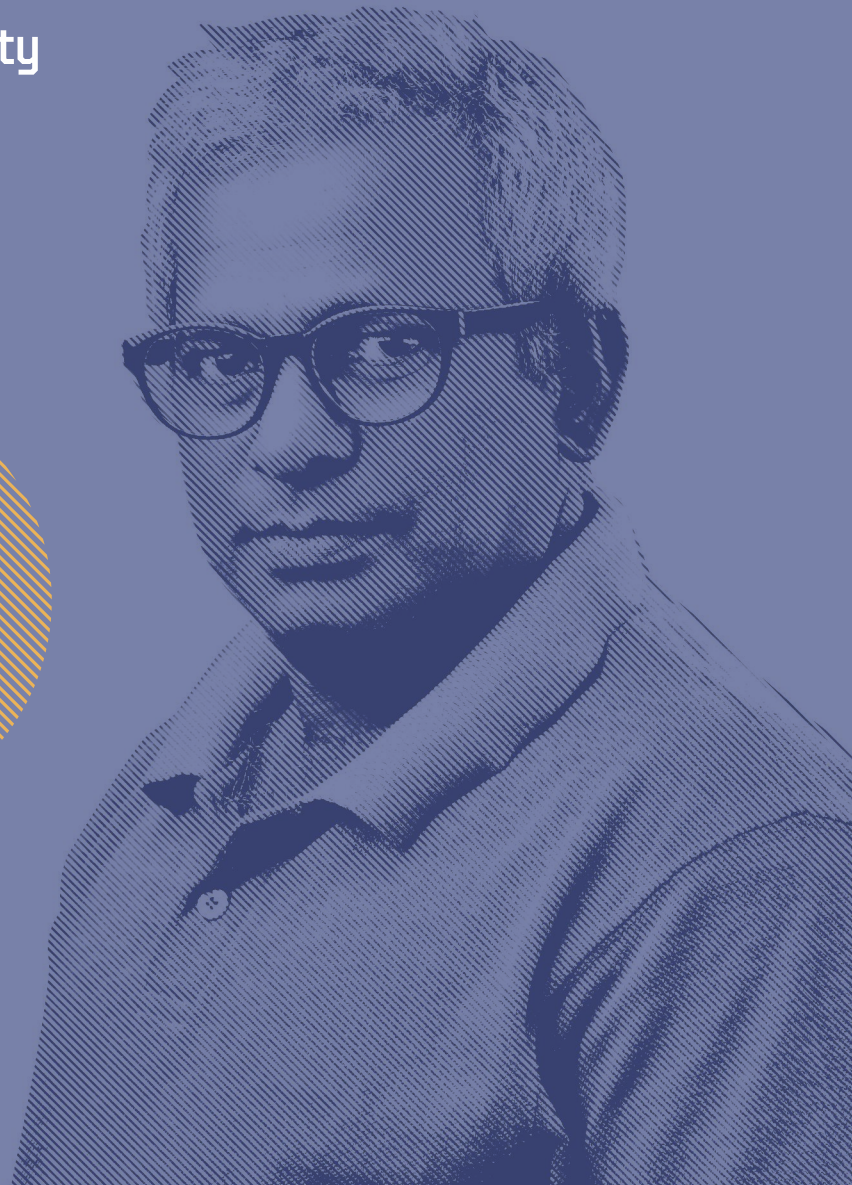


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30. Morrow, D. (2016). **Report of the Independent Advisory Group on Hate Crime, Prejudice and Community Cohesion**. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

# CONTRASTING POLICY IN SCOTLAND AND ENGLAND

In Scotland, there is no recognisable evidence that public authorities are undertaking community cohesion work.



**Challenges clearly persist in Scotland despite the positive rhetoric. In contrast, despite an ostensibly hostile policy environment (or possibly linked to the impact of that environment on communities), community cohesion policy in England has been more pro-active.**

This is especially the case at local level. In some English local authorities, integration planning is moving towards fostering good relations by considering the social, economic, spatial, cultural and political drivers of disharmony.

Contrasting the approaches taken in Scotland and England can highlight some of the pros and cons of community cohesion policy in these two very different arenas.

## NATIONAL COMMUNITY COHESION POLICY IN ENGLAND

In England, policy responses to community cohesion challenges began in earnest in 2001, following a series of riots underpinned by racial tensions in several Northern cities and towns. The emphasis in these policy responses was firmly on integration of minority ethnic groups, and less on addressing the majority ethnic group's role in their dislocation from a shared sense of community.

An independent review team led by Professor Ted Cantele undertook investigation and consultation activities leading up to publication of a final report, commonly referred to as the Cantele Report.<sup>31</sup> This made 67 recommendations for addressing community cohesion at local and national level. Separate inquiries were made at local level in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley. At the same time, a Ministerial Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion was formed, reporting shortly after the Cantele Report.<sup>32</sup> These informed a later inquiry into terrorism and community relations by the Home Affairs Committee.<sup>33</sup>

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31. Home Office (2001). **Community Cohesion: A Report of the Independent Review Team**. London: HM Government

32. Home Office (2001). **Building Cohesive Communities: a Report of the Ministerial Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion**. London: HM Government

33. Home Affairs Committee (2005). **Terrorism and Community Relations: Sixth report of session 2004-2005**. London: The Stationery Office

More recently, the independent Casey Review led by Dame Louise Casey in 2016 focussed on both opportunity and integration. Critical of progress and commitment in the intervening years since the Cattle Report, it identified that “There have been numerous studies and reports on community cohesion over the last fifteen years but a failure to implement practical actions with sufficient consistency, persistence or force to keep pace with the rate of change in communities over that period.” It also highlighted that evaluation of work undertaken during this time had been inconclusive, showing some limited positive change that was difficult to link to specific strategies or projects.<sup>34</sup>

The Casey Review's final report<sup>35</sup> was widely criticised. Perhaps most controversially, the Review advocated for the promotion of 'British values', a nebulous concept condemned by many as reinforcing racist hierarchies and approaching assimilationism.<sup>36</sup> This was despite ongoing criticism of the UK Government's previous rhetoric on 'British values' in connection to integration and anti-terrorism policy.<sup>37</sup>

A recommendation on new migrants being educated about 'British values' also featured in the 2017 report of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Integration, *Integration, not Demonisation*.<sup>38</sup> Despite acknowledging the 'poisonous nature' of the immigration debate in Britain, this report arguably framed patently racist narratives as reality, rather than misinformation. For example, it repeatedly included statements around the need to “Address legitimate concerns over our national sovereignty and feelings of cultural dislocation,” suggesting that there was indeed a threat to national sovereignty and culture rather than acknowledging that unjust perceptions around this were fuelling racism.<sup>39</sup>

Currently, England has a dedicated Integrated Communities Action Plan,<sup>40</sup> aligned with a funding stream (the Integrated Communities Innovation Fund) and an English as a Second or Other Language programme with an integration focus (the Integrated Communities English Language Programme).

The Integration Area Programme<sup>41</sup> is central Government's approach to driving community cohesion forward at a local level (explored in more detail at p. 32). Each of these initiatives followed the publication of the Government response to the Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper consultation,<sup>42</sup> originally launched in March 2018.

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34. Casey, L. (2016). **The Casey Review: A review into opportunity and integration**. London: HM Government

35. Ibid

36. Habib, S. (2016). **It's the Government's Unbritish Values and Intolerance That Is the Problem, Not Muslims**. The Sociological Review Blog

37. Iordanou, G. (2014). **Not Very British #BritishValues: How David Cameron is silencing minorities**. Huffington Post Blog

38. Bell, R. et al (2019). **Integration not Demonisation**. London: All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Integration

39. Ibid

40. HM Government (2019). **Integrated Communities Action Plan**. London: HM Government

41. HM Government Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019). **Integration Area Programme guidance**. London: HM Government

42. HM Government (2019). **Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper: Summary of consultation responses and Government response**. London: HM Government



Several separate policy areas also have explicit links to community cohesion, for example planning policy requires planning authorities to create spaces which foster community cohesion.

In England, hate crime is a separate policy area. Again, an action plan is in place with a funding stream for work on faith, race and hate crime.<sup>43</sup>

Current approaches in England involve much formal policy and activity, with recognition of the need to actively work towards community cohesion. On the other hand, however, central Government policy in England still arguably fails to deal with the legitimate criticism of its overemphasis on the responsibility of minority ethnic communities to integrate, at the expense of integration by the majority ethnic community.

Criticism of the term 'fundamental British values' featured heavily in submissions to the UK Government Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper consultation, but rather than seeking to assuage concerns, Government doubled down on its use of the term in its response.<sup>44</sup>

Scotland, on the other hand, has very little formal policy on community cohesion, and what it does have is largely part of responses to hate crime.

## NATIONAL COMMUNITY COHESION POLICY IN SCOTLAND

Scotland has never developed a standalone strategy, action plan or policy approach on community cohesion. Whilst it does have an integration strategy, the New Scots strategy,<sup>45</sup> this is focussed on practical measures to support refugee and asylum seeker integration rather than on community cohesion.

The Scottish Government's approach to tackling hate crime is set out in Tackling Prejudice and Building Connected Communities,<sup>46</sup> the Government's formal response to the Report of the Independent Advisory Group (IAG) on Hate Crime, Prejudice and Community Cohesion.<sup>47</sup>

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43. HM Government Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2020). **Faith, Race and Hate Crime Grant scheme 2020 to 2021**. London: HM Government

44. HM Government (2019). **Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper: Summary of consultation responses and Government response**. London: HM Government

45. Scottish Government Local Government and Communities Directorate (2018). **New Scots: refugee integration strategy 2018 to 2022**. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

46. Scottish Government Local Government and Communities Directorate (2017). **Tackling Prejudice and Building Connected Communities**. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

47. Morrow, D. (2016). **Report of the Independent Advisory Group on Hate Crime, Prejudice and Community Cohesion**. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

Whilst the IAG's report refers to community cohesion and related concepts regularly, it gives no detail on how it should be conceptualised or how it can be effectively strengthened.

Relevant recommendations from the IAG's report include:

- The Scottish Government should encourage a greater multi-agency strategic and operational approach towards tackling hate crime, eradicating prejudice and building community cohesion that is clearly linked to community planning structures and underpinned by guidance for partners
- The Scottish Government should develop clear plans for taking forward the public sector equality duty to 'foster good relations', and encourage other public bodies to do likewise
- Local government and key partners should afford building community cohesion greater prioritisation within community planning structures, and link this to targets to reduce the incidence of hate crime and isolation

These recommendations to Scottish Government formed two of the 24 actions in Tackling Prejudice and Building Connected Communities. A commitment to form an Advisory Group on Community Cohesion was also included in the actions.

Further relevant themes within the actions include:

- Supporting initiatives through the Equality Budget that contribute to tackling hate crime and prejudice, and building community cohesion
- Improving progress measurement by strengthening national outcome 11 of the National Performance Framework which focuses on building strong, inclusive and supportive communities
- Working through the Race Equality Framework to engage with minority ethnic communities in building community cohesion and safety, and improving the lives of Scotland's minority ethnic communities

Despite a commitment to report on progress in 2020, there has been little visible implementation activity on these particular recommendations since the report's publication in 2017.

The Race Equality Framework for Scotland 2016-2030<sup>48</sup> includes a section on community cohesion and safety. This sets out the Scottish Government's vision on community cohesion and safety for 2030: 'We build good race relations and community cohesion across all communities, and all minority ethnic individuals feel safe, protected and included, and experience less racism.'

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48. Scottish Government (2016). [Race Equality Framework for Scotland 2016-2030](#). Edinburgh: Scottish Government

Within this vision, there are four goals, most of which relate broadly to criminal justice and policing issues. The first of these is 'There is greater cohesion between all communities in Scotland', and the work being undertaken by CRER on good relations (including this publication) is partly intended to support delivery of this. Specifically, this relates to the action point "Explore ways to support public bodies in implementing the 'fostering good relations' element of the Public Sector Equality Duties with regard to race equality and community cohesion."

The Race Equality Action Plan 2017-21 which sits underneath the Race Equality Framework for Scotland included a further two actions relating directly to community cohesion.<sup>49</sup> The first of these committed to including representatives from minority ethnic community organisations on a Community Cohesion Delivery Group.

Progress reports indicate that a Tackling Prejudice and Building Connected Communities Action Group chaired by the Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Communities has been convened, along with an Advisory Panel on Community Cohesion. As neither of these groups have published minutes or other reports in the four years since this was announced, the status of their work is unknown.

The second of the relevant actions within the Race Equality Action Plan committed to engaging minority ethnic communities in the development of a National Strategy to reduce social isolation and loneliness and encourage increased social engagement. The published consultation responses suggest that five BME community organisations submitted a response, with CRER being the only national strategic race equality organisation to do so. It is not known whether any of the 17 consultation events held were targeted at BME communities.

Some of the issues raised in consultation responses relating to race equality were reflected in the summary of consultation responses,<sup>50</sup> however within the strategy itself, there are no practical measures to address these.<sup>51</sup>

Somewhat surprisingly, the section on community cohesion within the strategy makes no mention of community cohesion in the sense of relations between communities of varying ethnicity. Further on in the strategy, a brief acknowledgement is made of the experience of minority ethnic communities: "Minority groups also face impacts that relate to their experiences of prejudice, stigma and wider structural discrimination which again inhibits their space for action. We have published a draft Equality Impact Assessment alongside this strategy and will use the evidence in that to develop this approach further. We will work to build an intersectional approach to this work through developing links with programmes of work around race, disability, and improving the lives of Gypsy/Travellers."

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49. Scottish Government (2017). **A Fairer Scotland for All: Race Equality Action Plan 2017-2021**. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

50. Scottish Government (2018). **Tackling Social Isolation and Loneliness: Consultation Analysis**. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

51. Scottish Government (2018). **A Connected Scotland: our strategy for tackling social isolation and loneliness and building stronger social connections**. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

However, no specific details relating to ethnic minority communities or race equality are outlined in the Equality Impact Assessment (which remains in draft form),<sup>52</sup> and it is not known whether the promised links with programmes of work around race have been developed.

## NATIONAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS IN SCOTLAND

Although there may be few practical national policy measures relating to community cohesion in Scotland, the Scottish Government has invested in several publicity campaigns over recent years designed to communicate a national ethos which regards minority ethnic people (and particularly migrants) as equally part of Scottish society.

Under the banner of 'One Scotland',<sup>53</sup> the original One Scotland campaign in 2014<sup>54</sup> was followed up with the We Are Scotland campaign in 2018.<sup>55</sup> Both of these had a positive focus, with statements and imagery intended to show that minority ethnic individuals and communities are equal to the majority community in belonging and in the right to a Scottish identity.

However, a disproportionate focus on 'welcoming' new migrants within this narrative meant that Scottish born minority ethnic people were often inadequately reflected in these campaigns. Ironically, this approach creates a risk of accidentally reinforcing the impression that minority ethnic communities are not 'from here'.

The One Scotland range of campaigns also included anti-hate crime initiatives, including the 2017 Hate Has No Home in Scotland poster (no longer available online), and the 2018 'Dear Haters' campaign.<sup>56</sup> 'Dear Haters' was intended to target hate crime through a series of letters to 'racists', 'bigots', 'transphobes' and other prejudiced individuals.

Although the aim was ostensibly to encourage hate crime reporting, the tone and content of these was problematic. They used collective messaging (the letter coming from 'Scotland'), rather than the personal messaging which is known to be more effective in creating behaviour change. The 'bystander effect' occurs when bystanders believe that others will intervene, and the responsibility for intervening is not theirs.<sup>57</sup>

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52. Scottish Government (2018). **Draft EQIA - A Connected Scotland: our strategy for tackling social isolation and loneliness and building stronger social connections**. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

53. See the **One Scotland** website

54. Scottish Government (2014). **Scotland Believes in Equality** news release

55. See the **We Are Scotland** page on the One Scotland website

56. See the **One Scotland Hate Crime campaigns** webpage

57. Blagg, R. D. (2019). **Bystander Effect**. Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica

More worryingly, however, the highly emotive wording used in the 'Dear Racists' letter arguably risked damaging community cohesion. Almost a quarter of people responding to the Scottish Social Attitudes Survey 2015<sup>58</sup> felt there was sometimes a good reason to be prejudiced. Readers who personally acknowledge that they have some degree of racism would be likely to feel a sense of defensiveness, shame or humiliation on reading the 'letter', all of which have been shown to risk entrenching prejudiced views.<sup>59</sup>

This may increase the sense of social isolation and feelings of 'white victimhood' which underlie racist attitudes. For people who have particularly extreme views, anything which increases their sense of social isolation could be actively dangerous, potentially leading to them seeking closer relationships with others who feel similarly isolated. For a small but important minority of people with racist attitudes, this could result in a risk of radicalisation by the far right.

CRER raised these concerns when the campaign was first designed. Although the evaluation of the campaign was reported as positive by Scottish Government, its findings in fact supported our view that the messaging would not be effective in encouraging reporting of hate crime, showing only an increase in awareness.<sup>60</sup> Despite this, a relaunch and new accompanying toolkit was planned for March 2020. To our knowledge, no relaunch has been undertaken at the time of publication, however this is possibly due to disruption related to the COVID-19 crisis.

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HATE CRIME AND COMMUNITY COHESION

Scotland's national policy approaches clearly view community cohesion and hate crime as part of the same agenda, with far greater emphasis on tackling hate crime. Ideally, fostering good relations and creating community cohesion would be seen as a pre-requisite for tackling hate crime, and given due prominence as a result. Anti-hate crime activity may go some way to tackling a hostile environment. However, it doesn't necessarily foster good relations.

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58. Scottish Government (2016). **Scottish Social Attitudes 2015: attitudes to discrimination and positive action**. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

59. Ross, H. J. (2020). *Everyday Bias: Identifying and Navigating Unconscious Judgments in Our Daily Lives*. Maryland: Rowland & Littlefield

60. Safer Scotland (2019) **'Dear Haters' Hate Crime Campaign 2018 - Evaluation Report**. Edinburgh: Scottish Government

To 'foster' implies positively building something. This is absent from the current approach. Instead, the focus on individual prejudices and criminal behaviours suggests that racial disharmony is an anomaly, occurring between individuals and in limited circumstances. More policy attention is needed to the social and structural factors underlying community cohesion, and the personal and collective responsibility of Scottish society for creating it.

## PROMOTING EQUALITY AND COHESION FUND

Until 2021, the Scottish Government made funding available to community organisations for equality and community cohesion work through its Promoting Equality and Cohesion Fund. The most recent round, 2017-2020, resulted in funding awards for over 60 projects.<sup>61</sup> Each project is described as covering a particular equality characteristic or theme. In this funding round, only one was described as focussing specifically on community cohesion, although a small proportion of the 27 race focussed projects involved some element of community cohesion work.<sup>62</sup>

It is unclear, however, to what extent the activities undertaken through these projects are likely to improve community cohesion through bringing majority and minority ethnic communities together. Even where this is happening, in practice, the majority ethnic people participating may be those who need these interventions least as they actively want to engage.

This issue was raised in the Casey Review, along with a clear message that more targeted approaches are needed: “[UK] Government's policy consisted of a relatively small pot of funding going towards small scale exemplar projects such as inter-faith dialogue, training curry chefs or cross community social events such as the 'Big Lunch' and 'Our Big Gig'. This has been described to us as amounting to “saris, samosas and steel drums” for the already well-intentioned. These are worthy and enjoyable projects which should continue but they are not enough on their own, nor should they be a substitute for tackling difficult issues.”<sup>63</sup>

Funding for community cohesion work at local level is imperative to improving the Scottish approach. However, improvements can only be made if the effectiveness of current approaches is evaluated, evidence gathered and application criteria revised in light of the lessons learned. Ensuring that the work carried out with Scottish Government funding reflects robust theoretical frameworks on how community cohesion operates, rather than simple and outdated assumptions about integration, is also vital.

61. Scottish Government (2017). **Promoting Equalities and Cohesion Fund 2017-2020**

62. Where unclear, this was established by visiting the organisation's website for information on its work

63. Casey, L. (2016). **The Casey Review: A review into opportunity and integration**. London: HM Government

The forthcoming launch of a new Scottish Government funding stream on community cohesion and inclusion, sitting alongside the recently opened Equality and Human Rights Fund, may provide opportunities to significantly strengthen funding practice in this area.

## LOCAL POLICY ON COMMUNITY COHESION IN ENGLAND

The contrast between approaches in England and Scotland is even more marked at local level.

Strategic approaches to local integration planning in England pre-date the current phase of national strategy. The full history of community cohesion and integration policy at local level in England is understandably too complex to present here. As well as Community Cohesion plans developed at local level, this has included mainstreaming work to embed community cohesion throughout services following guidance from central Government.<sup>64</sup>

Professor Ted Cattle, author of the aforementioned Cattle Report, has criticised some aspects of Community Cohesion Plans. According to Cattle, although the previous English Community Cohesion Plans were designed to bring groups together to reduce tension, this is not sufficient to create integration. In 2017, he proposed an alternative model described as 'Local Integration Plans'.<sup>65</sup>

Cattle's concept of Local Integration Plans aimed to offer local authorities the opportunity to plan and implement joined up thinking (with third and private sector partners) on integration. Cattle argued that these local plans should be used to "coordinate learning to live together, resources for managing population and demographic change, and tackling segregation and discrimination in all domains of public life."

The Local Integration Plans model included a wide range of recommendations for mainstreaming integration work throughout education, employment, housing, service provision and community development.

64. Department for Communities and Local Government (2009). **Guidance for local authorities on how to mainstream community cohesion into other services**. London: HM Government

65. Cattle, T. (2017). **A Proposal for Local Integration Plans**. In: *Essay collection - "If you could do one thing..." 10 local actions to promote social integration*. London: The British Academy

It was intended to be highly adaptable at local level, creating a 'new language of integration' based around the lived experience of local communities. A large part of the focus was on reaching majority ethnic communities, with the understanding that adapting to difference and embracing change does not mean giving up heritage or roots. Tackling perceived grievances arising from resource competition, growing populations and declining public services were also a key feature.

It included recommendations for specific initiatives to develop intercultural competence at local level, taking into account the role of contact in reducing prejudice and promoting good relations.

The intercultural competence approach described in our 2016 report shifts focus away from minority individuals and the need to integrate - to the need for majority groups to positively accommodate difference, and for structures to be responsive to diverging needs and circumstances across the range of communities within neighbourhoods. Similarly, local integration planning in England increasingly recognises the structural factors that affect community cohesion.

One example of this is Birmingham City Council's Community Cohesion Strategy, *Forward Together to Build a Fair and Inclusive City for Everyone*.<sup>66</sup> Developed with input from both community organisations and public sector partners, this strategy attempts to reflect a bottom-up, joined up approach to community cohesion. The shift from focusing on individuals, minority group behaviour and unrest or bad relations is a promising shift towards understanding and potentially fostering good race relations.

## THE INTEGRATION AREA PROGRAMME

The Integration Area Programme announced by the UK Government as part of its current integration initiatives is working initially with five local authorities; Blackburn with Darwen,<sup>67</sup> Bradford,<sup>68</sup> Peterborough,<sup>69</sup> Walsall<sup>70</sup> and Waltham Forest.<sup>71</sup> A mixture of local and national investment in these areas, each of which faces different integration challenges, aims to "...deliver integrated communities, to better understand and tackle the challenges specific to a place, building on existing best practice and local strengths".<sup>72</sup>

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66. Birmingham City Council (2018). **Community Cohesion Strategy for Birmingham: Forward Together to Build a Fair and Inclusive City for Everyone**. Birmingham: Birmingham City Council

67. Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council (2018). **Our Community, Our Future**

68. Bradford Council (2018). **Stronger Communities Together**

69. Peterborough Council (2018). **Belonging Together**

70. Walsall Council (2018). **Walsall for All**

71. Waltham Forest Council (2018). **Our Place**

72. UK Government (2019). **Integration Area Programme** webpage



Lord Bourne, the former UK Government Minister for Faith, provides a foreword for each area's Integration Strategy. The majority of these are almost identical, and largely repeat the rhetoric of the Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper, including the focus on 'British values' (Waltham Forest being the only area where this is not mentioned in the foreword). Interestingly, this concept is not featured within any of the strategies outwith the foreword, replaced in all cases by the more neutral phrases 'shared values' or 'common identity and values'.

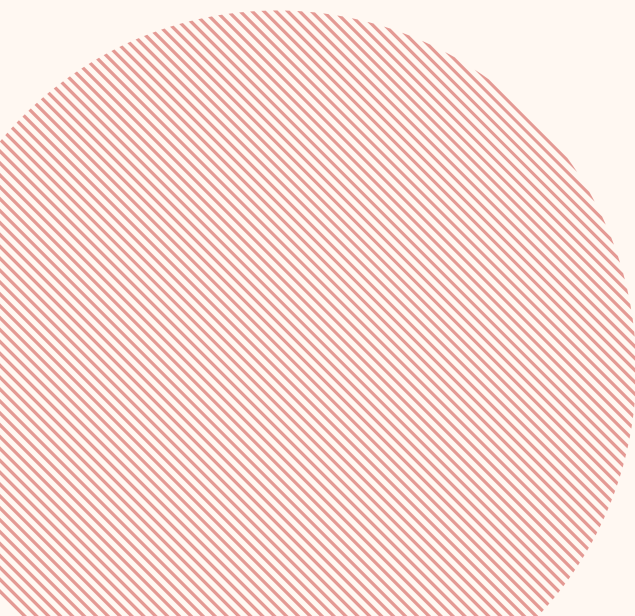
Aside from the foreword, each of the areas' Integration Strategies are very different. However, to a greater or lesser extent, each describes the practical activity already being undertaken in the area, local circumstances and demographics and future approaches.

The language used in describing the challenges and solutions faced in each area also varies greatly. Bradford's strategy is the only one to make active mention of interculturalism, as part of its focus on 'reciprocity, interculturalism, social mixing and economic opportunity.' Blackburn with Derwent, on the other hand, is the only one to mention multiculturalism.

All talk about segregation, in some form, however this is often couched in terms of reducing language barriers and exploring reasons for residential segregation.

Bradford's strategy is perhaps most explicit in addressing the impact of racism and prejudice as a social phenomenon. It includes a priority around 'perceptions of the other' and feeling safe. This explicitly sets out the need to tackle racist attitudes and perceptions. It also makes mention of the area's rejection of far-right extremism. It identifies social mixing as a key aspect of reducing prejudice, in line with evidence on contact theory, and commits to building future activity informed by theories of behaviour change.

All of the Local Integration Strategies are in their early years of implementation, and change is likely to take time. Future evaluation should illuminate what, if anything, Scotland can learn from these varied local approaches to community cohesion.



# LOCAL POLICY ON COMMUNITY COHESION IN SCOTLAND

In Scotland, there is no recognisable evidence that public authorities are undertaking community cohesion work. CRER's research on performance of the public sector equality duties in Scotland has consistently raised concerns about how the duty to foster good relations is being understood and implemented.<sup>73</sup>

A tendency to rely on one-off 'diversity day' events without obvious purpose or impact for implementation of the good relations duty is particularly noted. At worst, these events can be tokenistic and actually reinforce racial stereotypes, particularly where individuals from the relevant protected characteristic group have not had a meaningful role in their development and delivery.

It may be unrealistic to expect Scottish local authorities to take on something like the Local Integration Plan model, or to produce Local Integration Strategies. Obligations to develop strategies, schemes and plans are ever growing, and the public sector equality duty experience has shown that these do not always lead to practical improvements.

In that case, it's clear that targeted action is needed to meet the existing requirement to mainstream fostering good relations throughout the work of public bodies. This is especially pertinent for areas of work such as education, community safety and community planning.

Within community planning, Local Outcomes Improvement Plans are one example of an existing policy mechanism which offers opportunities to deliver progress on the duty. Local Outcomes Improvement Plans, and the associated Locality Plans, set out how Community Planning Partnerships in each local authority area of Scotland will deliver change on a range of priority outcomes designed to improve the lives of local people.

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73. Most recently, CRER (2019). **Equality in Glasgow 2019: Progress of Glasgow's Public Bodies in Meeting the Scottish Specific Public Sector Equality Duties**. Glasgow: CRER

Taking the most recent Local Outcomes Improvement Plans for Scotland's four City Council areas as an example,<sup>74</sup> none of these features a specific focus on community cohesion or good relations. Related concepts such as tackling social isolation and promoting inclusion and community wellbeing are mentioned briefly in each of the plans. Some, but not all, very briefly mention tackling prejudice or hate crime (although no commitment is made to work towards this, and hate crime reduction is not presented as an aim or indicator). Only the Edinburgh Partnership's plan includes an indicator which reflects community cohesion; 'Neighbourhood is a place where people of different backgrounds get along'. However, there is no contextual information relating to this specific indicator within the narrative.

Community empowerment, community engagement and community resilience all feature heavily across the four plans. However, the emphasis is generally always on how geographically defined communities engage with public bodies, or work together to improve their own individual outcomes in areas such as income or health. Relationships between people within local communities are not identified as an issue, except in relation to anti-social behaviour and community safety.

There is a clear argument for regarding community cohesion as a solid foundation for improving community empowerment, engagement and resilience. This is especially true for BME people, for whom a lack of community cohesion is often an active barrier.

Reflecting this, CRER's 2021 election manifesto called for the Community Empowerment Act to be amended to require Community Planning Partnerships to act with a view to promoting community cohesion. This is similar to the anti-poverty approach in the legislation, which focuses on socio-economic disadvantage.<sup>75</sup>

Building community cohesion into Local Outcomes Improvement Planning is only one example of possible ways to create local approaches to fostering good relations. However, the potential benefits go beyond this, arguably making community focussed outcomes more achievable and reducing inequalities in areas such as participation, involvement and social isolation.

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74. Glasgow Community Planning Partnership (2016). **Glasgow Community Plan**; The Edinburgh Partnership (2018). **Edinburgh Partnership Community Plan**; Community Planning Aberdeen (2016). **Local Outcome Improvement Plan**; Dundee Partnership (2017). **City Plan for Dundee**

75. CRER (2021). **Manifesto for Race Equality in Scotland**

# WHAT WORKS TO CREATE COMMUNITY COHESION?

Effective evaluation is the  
key to developing sustainable  
approaches that work.



## As in the field of prejudice reduction more generally, community cohesion work often lacks the evaluation and monitoring needed to establish its degree of success.

Whilst basing initiatives on robust theory about interpersonal attitudes and behaviours (including group behaviours) is an obvious starting point, lack of evaluation makes it difficult to say how best these theories can be applied to real-life situations.<sup>76</sup>

Nevertheless, evidence points to some general principles which are thought to work well in creating community cohesion. In 2015, Dr. Maureen McBride undertook a literature review on effective approaches to prejudice reduction on behalf of Scottish Government.<sup>77</sup> Many of the findings from this review have relevance to community cohesion, as opposed to individual prejudice reduction.

Some general principles which may be effective can be identified within this review:

- Developing initiatives which draw on contact theory, bringing people together in meaningful ways to reduce anxiety about intergroup contact and increase empathy
- Targeting individuals who may be resistant to intergroup contact through attitude and behaviour change initiatives
- Ensuring work is long-term, sustainable and generates opportunities for friendships to form
- Peer-to-peer engagement, ensuring that those leading activities are credible and relatable in the eyes of community members
- Challenging notions of culture and ethnicity as a boundary of 'ingroup' and 'outgroup' status (i.e. who 'belongs' in our own community / ingroup)
- Building skills which allow genuine understanding to develop through critical thinking, perspective taking, self-reflection and interpreting historical contexts, as opposed to policing attitudes and behaviour

Many of these principles are reflected within intercultural competence frameworks, as discussed at greater length in our previous publication on fostering good relations.<sup>78</sup>

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76. Abrams, D., Swift, H. and Mahmood, L. (2016). **Research report 101: Prejudice and unlawful behaviour, exploring levers for change.** London: Equality and Human Rights Commission

77. McBride, M. (2015). **What works to reduce prejudice and discrimination? A review of the evidence.** Edinburgh: Scottish Government

78. CRER (2016). **Promoting Good Relations: New Approaches, New Solutions.** Glasgow: CRER

Intercultural competences are the attitudes, skills and knowledge that people need to build in order to interact positively with people whom they perceive to be 'different' in some way, and in particular where the perceived difference is on the grounds of ethnicity. As set out in our previous report, examples of key intercultural competencies include:

### ATTITUDES

- Respect
- Tolerance of ambiguity
- Open mindedness and curiosity
- Empathy
- Self-awareness
- Confidence to challenge and be challenged

### SKILLS

- Interaction, including listening, communicating, discussing, reacting and clarifying
- Multiperspectivity (seeing things from a range of perspectives)
- Critical thinking
- Problem solving and collaboration
- Ability to grow / adaptability

### KNOWLEDGE

- Knowledge and understanding about different forms of interaction
- Knowledge and awareness about social practices
- Knowledge about the role of social and political actors
- Knowledge about world views and belief systems (including understanding that these can influence, but do not determine, group and individual identity)

Intercultural competence, however, cannot address community cohesion on its own. While ingrained inequalities and personal, social and structural racism are at play, intercultural competence needs to be combined with open and honest discussion of these issues and the power relations which create and maintain them. The preventative opportunities offered by intercultural competence need to be balanced with proactive work to tackle racism and dismantle the structures of advantage and disadvantage, including white privilege and the normalisation of white ideology.<sup>79</sup>

79. In an anti-racist context, whiteness is a social construct. More information about the role of whiteness in creating and maintaining racism and racial inequalities in Scotland is available at the [CRER website](#)

In addition to the principles initiatives are based on and the outcomes they aim to achieve, themes and topics of activities designed to bring communities together may also have an impact on effectiveness. It has been suggested that interventions where people from different backgrounds within a local community work together to address environmental or sustainability issues, for example community food growing or upcycling, may be effective in increasing cohesion.<sup>80</sup> The practical benefits and relative cultural neutrality of these activities may go some way towards addressing the tokenistic tendencies often present in arts and culture focussed integration work.

An earlier literature review conducted for the UK Government drew together evidence on effective planning and delivery approaches for community cohesion work. The key factors identified in this study were:<sup>81</sup>

- Clear designated leadership and responsibility for taking cohesion forward
- Clear statement of vision and values that all can sign up to, and informs work
- Clear planning, and monitoring of cohesion-related initiatives and programmes
- Involving the community
- Effective partnership working across and between public, private, voluntary, community and faith groups
- Encouraging best practice to be mainstreamed in key service areas

Finally, an ongoing programme of work by the Equality and Human Rights Commission into prejudice reduction concluded that effective evaluation is the key to developing sustainable approaches that work. The Commission's four recommendations for policy makers can usefully be applied to community cohesion contexts:<sup>82</sup>

- Legislation, policies, action plans, projects and interventions that aim to reduce humiliation, harassment, violence or abuse based on who people are need to be robustly evaluated, fulfilling at least the minimum standards we set out in our guidance
- Given there is no one-size-fits-all solution, policymakers need to take a nuanced and targeted approach to tackle prejudice and discrimination in different contexts and for different groups, while identifying where there are commonalities and opportunities to make use of best practice in other settings
- Policymakers need to be mindful that interventions can have unexpected outcomes and unintended consequences and therefore need to be evaluated and adapted on an ongoing basis

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80. Baylis, I., Beider, H. and Hardy, M. (2019). **Cohesive Societies Literature Review**. London: British Academy

81. Ipsos-MORI (2007). **'What Works' in Community Cohesion?** London: Department for Communities and Local Government

82. Equality and Human Rights Commission (2017). **Summary Report: Tackling Prejudice and Discrimination**. London: Equality and Human Rights Commission

- Change is likely to come at a slow pace, so policymakers should encourage longer-term investment and planning to establish the impact of projects, including evaluating activities after the intervention itself has finished

The guidance referenced at the first recommendation regarding evaluation was written by CRER under contract for the Equality and Human Rights Commission. We were asked to develop a set of standards for meaningful evaluation of anti-prejudice work along with accompanying guidance and a capacity building programme.

Again, the eight standards set out in the guidance document can usefully be applied to community cohesion work:<sup>83</sup>

INTERVENTION DESIGN	EVALUATION DESIGN	EVALUATION IMPLEMENTATION
<p><b>1</b> Our decision to make an intervention is based on a robust assessment and specification of the need to make an intervention</p> <p><b>2</b> We are clear about the difference we wish to make through our intervention</p> <p><b>3</b> We have reason to believe that the intervention we propose to deliver will produce that difference</p>	<p><b>4</b> We are clear about the nature of the data required to demonstrate that we have made a difference</p> <p><b>5</b> We are clear about the methods we will employ to collect that data</p>	<p><b>6</b> We know how we will analyse the data we collect to produce conclusions</p> <p><b>7</b> We know how we will use our conclusions</p> <p><b>8</b> We have assessed and committed the resources required to deliver the evaluation</p>

Lack of evaluation is a common theme throughout this report, and whatever the direction of future policy on community cohesion in Scotland, meaningful evaluation processes will be of crucial importance.

83. Duff, C. and Young, C. (2017). **What Works? Eight principles for meaningful evaluation of anti-prejudice work**. London: Equality and Human Rights Commission



# THE WAY FORWARD IN SCOTLAND

It must be recognised that racial inequalities in Scotland have barely changed in a decade.



**As demonstrated throughout this report, the lack of focus on community cohesion (as opposed to prejudice and hate crime alone) across both national and local policy in Scotland is a challenge that needs to be urgently addressed.**

Approaches to tackling the sharp end of the wedge, where abuse manifests, are unlikely to be successful in the absence of work to proactively create more cohesive communities. This work is also essential to meeting the legal obligation for public bodies to foster good relations between groups who share a protected characteristic, and those who do not.

In light of this, CRER makes the following recommendations for future policy development on community cohesion and fostering good relations:

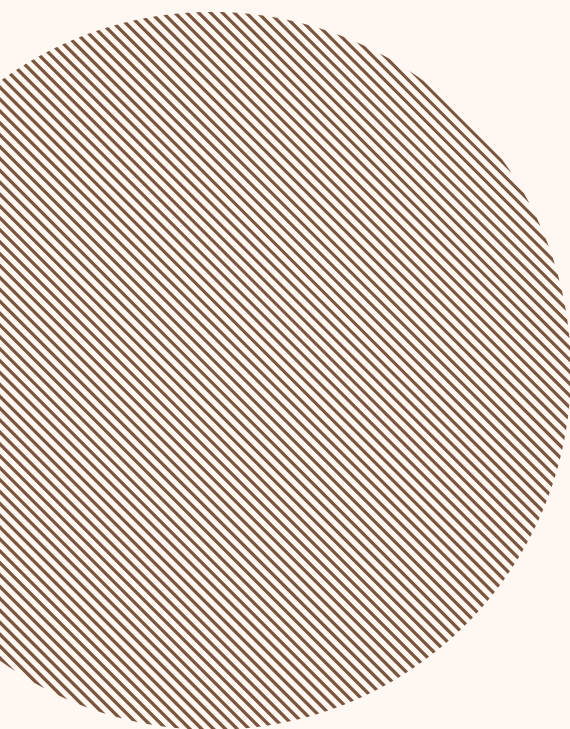
- All public bodies subject to the public sector equality duty should assess their compliance with the duty to foster good relations and identify ways to measure this, with action taken to remedy deficits (including through equality mainstreaming and equality outcome setting processes, for those subject to the Scottish specific public sector equality duties)
- Community Planning Partnerships should build approaches to community cohesion into Local Outcome Improvement Plans and locality planning (ideally with this becoming a requirement through amendment of the Community Empowerment Act)
- Implementation of the community cohesion related actions within the Scottish Government's Tackling Prejudice and Building Connected Communities workstream should be prioritised, with a focus on how future work in this area can develop based on robust evidence of what works to create community cohesion
- Research to inform future approaches to promoting race equality and community cohesion in schools should be undertaken, with particular attention to the impact of current approaches on a) young people who may be at risk of racially aggravated offending behaviour and b) young minority ethnic people and their relationships with peers in the majority ethnic group
- A common evaluation framework should be applied to all Scottish Government funded projects related to community cohesion, with reporting requirements and central collation of findings to inform future funding processes
- Scottish Government and other funders should review and, if necessary, revise criteria for funding community cohesion work to ensure that funded projects are evidence based and underpinned by robust theoretical frameworks

With the right leadership, commitment and action, there are significant opportunities to explore in developing a Scottish approach to fostering good relations through community cohesion policy.

Scotland's political and civic leaders have been notably keen to adopt anti-racist language following the Black Lives Matter protests of 2020, and many were swift to condemn the recent UK level Sewell Report which downplayed the role of racism in generating racial inequalities.<sup>84</sup> However, it must be recognised that racial inequalities in Scotland have barely changed in a decade. This renewed interest in anti-racism must be accompanied by effective action that creates genuine change in the lives of people facing racism and inequality.

With both socio-economic and racial inequalities widening faster than ever over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, investment is needed now to ensure that Scotland's communities are equipped to resist the rhetoric of racism and fear.

Scotland can do things differently, but this requires a shift in understanding of what the duty to foster good relations really means. It also requires significant reflection on how government and the public sector prioritise and resource community cohesion work.



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84. Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities (2021) **Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities: The Report**

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