



2008

Coming Together

Findings from the ELREC Community Planning Project
Phase 2: October 07-March 08



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Foreword

Community planning in its most simple terms is communities and organizations working together to improve services and quality of life. At ELREC we realize the importance of communities being involved in decisions affecting their lives. It is about local people having a say in local issues and shaping matters important to them. Research has shown that minority ethnic communities show a lack of awareness around areas of community planning and active engagement.

This is the second phase of the Community Planning Project at ELREC where we have aimed to work closely with minority ethnic communities and partnership organisations, as a means of working towards empowering individuals in getting involved in local planning and provisions. This report will give an insight into the activities and outreach work that has been carried out to remove some of the barriers in effective engagement and recommendations for future work. Many thanks to Angus Kelly, Community Development Assistant whose hard work and perseverance helped make this project successful.

Shasta Hanif
Community Development Officer

Abstract

An increasing amount of resources have been channelled to give communities the opportunity to participate in the community planning process. Yet this process of community engagement and participation is still a fragmented approach. Barriers to involvement still exist for communities, these barriers increase and can even change entirely when engaging with equality groups. Working specifically with the minority ethnic community in each locality within the Lothian area the aim of this project was to increase awareness and involvement in service provision and community planning. This report has identified the needs of the community to be part of the process by working directly with the community and feeding this into the community planning partnership. Furthermore this report has highlighted recommendations for local authorities and CPP's to follow to effectively engage with ethnic minority communities.

Keywords: minority ethnic communities; community engagement; community planning partnerships; provision of service needs; methodology



Introduction

The Community Planning Project was initiated in its first phase in February to June of 2007¹ and its second and current phase October 2007 to March 2008. This report highlights the findings from the current phase on promoting awareness and participation from people in the Minority Ethnic (ME) communities in the community planning process. This work has substantiated the findings documented in other studies on the general lack of representation of members of ME communities in the local community planning process.

Working out-with the City of Edinburgh extensive outreach work was carried out in West, East and Midlothian, in collaboration with each local authority. Compared to Edinburgh all three localities are town/rural in nature and thus attention was focused on the engagement strategy to reach a dispersed ME community. The outreach work carried out culminated in two focus group meetings arranged in each locality. This was an opportunity to invite ME individuals and groups to meet and discuss ways of engagement and thoughts of involvement with representatives from the community planning partnerships from each locality.

The aims and objectives of the community planning project were:

1. Continue to raise awareness of the inequalities experienced by ME communities and the benefits of local Community Planning Partnerships engaging with those communities in the community planning process.
2. To strengthen relationships with community planning partnerships and the authorities with their local BME communities.
3. To promote the engagement strategy as statute by the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.
4. To implement the recommendations of the seminars conducted in the first phase of the project.

Note on Terminology

Through out this report the term ME (Minority Ethnic) will be used. For the purpose of this study ME refers to groups that have different national or cultural traditions from the majority of the population. In this context it will be used to refer to people from Asian or Chinese origin and could also refer to English, Irish and other European groups. The term BME (black and minority ethnic) is not being used in this report as it was agreed by the SAREC- Scottish Alliance of Racial Equality Councils- board during the joint funding for this project that the minority ethnic would be used.

¹ Edinburgh and Lothians Racial Equality Council, (2007). *Report: 'We are all in this together' promoting awareness on race equality in the community planning process.* Edinburgh.



ELREC

Edinburgh and Lothians Racial Equality Council (ELREC) exists to promote racial equality and to fight all forms of racism. We believe that no one can claim to live in a fair and just society whilst racism and racial inequalities exist. ELREC will work jointly with our beneficiaries and partners to challenge racial injustice and dismantle barriers which deny individuals and communities equal access to life opportunities in Edinburgh & Lothians.

We aim to

- Work towards the elimination of racial discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups
- Promote and organise co-operation of the statutory authorities and voluntary organisations

Founded in 1971 ELREC is a voluntary body and charitable company made up of individual members and representatives from a wide range of organisations. ELREC has a remit to work across the areas of the City of Edinburgh, Midlothian, West Lothian and East Lothian Council.

This current Project, which was carried out by the community planning team with a dedicated Community Development Assistant, was created through funding from the Equality Unit of the Scottish Government.



Community Planning

What is Community Planning?

Community Planning comes in many shapes and forms but importantly it has been described 'as the most significant policy and practice development relating to competence for community engagement'.² It relates to the mechanisms to which local authorities, in partnership with public bodies and communities communicate to develop a community plan for an area. For local communities it is the opportunity to have a say, participate and engage on issues specific to their needs and present these views to service providers. This vital input in turn will have a role in the development and improvement of service provision at a local level.

At the heart of community planning, there should be a genuine attempt to engage with the community and it is essential to have representation from all equality groups when possible to allow for a fair and transparent process.

Why engage with the community?

Under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, the local authority has a duty to initiate, maintain and facilitate a dialogue with public bodies including health boards, police, fire department and others but also that these bodies are required to actively participate and assist the local authority. However without community involvement community planning will fail to deliver services that communities need. Communities need to share the responsibility of power and control as a partner for effective community planning.

The Scotland Act identifies three aims for community planning:

1. Community engagement – making sure people and communities are genuinely engaged in the decisions made on the public services which affect them.
2. Joint working – a commitment from organisations to work together in providing better public services
3. Ensuring that economic development components of Community Plans are coherent with, and contribute to, the overall national objectives. (Scottish Executive: 2004).

To ensure effective engagement with communities in the community planning process certain key principles for statutory bodies need to be adopted.

² Scottish Community Development Centre, (2007). *Better Community Engagement: a framework for learning*. Commissioned by Communities Scotland



These are:

- Demonstrate genuine *commitment* to working with communities
- Lead to *outcome oriented* community engagement
- Engage at the *appropriate levels* to which communities best relate
- Recognise the vast *diversity* of community to engage, i.e. formal to informal
- Engage with the most *independent* and accountable bodies for effective representation.
- *Learn the lessons* from past activities

It is from these key principles that ELREC decided to investigate the current process of engagement with ME groups within the three localities outlined in the introduction. The first phase of the project culminated in a series of seminars entitled 'We are all in this together' held across the localities in May of 2007.

'We are all in this together' seminar findings

Findings from the seminars indicated that local authorities are falling short in their duty to engage with specific groups such as ME communities. Themes that were expressed strongly within each locality are detailed below:

- **East Lothian**

Feedback from the seminar was that there is a lack of communication about strategies for community involvement. There was an interest for developing/reviewing Community Engagement strategies regarding race equality however participants were unsure if they possessed the knowledge and experience to be involved. Participants also felt that community planning partnerships were failing to develop strategies that seriously took into consideration language and cultural issues.

- **West Lothian**

The key recommendation was for a strengthening of the West Lothian Minority Ethnic Forum. Participants stressed the important of representation stating that the Forum could have an important role in engaging with the West Lothian CPP. This forum could spread across the nine Locality Planning Partnerships within the locality.

- **Midlothian**

Participants recommended that it would be useful to set up a mini forum for ME communities living or working in this area. Participants felt that there was little evidence of engagement with ME communities within the Council's current consultation exercise.



A few expressed that they had received citizen panel survey questionnaires however did not feel that the Council was engaging with ME groups throughout Midlothian.

Across the three localities an issue most discussed by participants was the lack of ME infrastructure out-with Edinburgh. Specifically the lack of organisations working with ME groups where they can access advocacy, information and language support. In the context of these key recommendations, the current project identified the need to develop local focus groups for ME communities to discuss ways on how they would like to be engaged and how to promote involvement.



Phase 2: October-March 2008

Outreach Activities undertaken

Methodology

Within the six months allocated for this project, numerous activities were undertaken by the Community Development Assistant to maximise the publicity of the project. Covering the three localities, below are examples of the methods involved in reaching out to ME individuals and communities.

- Contact was re-established with seminar participants and invitees through the ELREC database. A letter was sent out to over **130** individuals across West, East and Midlothian to inform them of the current second phase of the community planning project. The letter also asked if correspondence could continue during the project to highlight developments made and arrangements for focus group meetings. Out of all individuals contacted **2** individuals asked not to be kept informed.
- Links were made with key personnel of the Community Planning partnerships through the community planning teams and the equality officers within each locality. Meetings were held to maximize the outcomes of this project and promote genuine engagement with ME communities.
- Through the outreach work sessions carried out by the Community Development Assistant within each locality, relationships were established with ME communities. The project was taken directly into businesses owned by ME communities; these included but were not specific to minority ethnic takeaway food shops, restaurants, newsagents, off licenses, petrol stations and grocery stores. In total the outreach sessions culminated in around **300** hours of face to face work. This generated several requests for home visits and increased the database to **255** contacts.
- As well as increasing the database, directly through the outreach sessions 'community planning' and 'community engagement' was made aware to over **500** individuals of minority ethnic background across the Lothians.
- Presentations were made at places of worship across the localities when possible. It was noted that many ME communities commute to Edinburgh for religious activities as no services are available in their own locality. Unlike East and Midlothian, West Lothian is insular in terms of the locality having a variety of places of worship. Presentations were made in Mosques, Temples and Churches to congregations of **5 to 150** people. This generated awareness and requests for



more information. The Community Development Assistant was invited back on many occasions to discuss community planning and also offer support on other issues facing ME communities.

- The Community Planning project also had a section within the ELREC Newsletter. The information provided in the newsletter aimed to update ELREC's members and ME organisations, local authorities, CPP partners, and individuals on the actions of the Community Development team. Community Planning section within ELREC Newsletter were included in the editions of June 07, September 07, December 07 and March 08. ELREC's general mailing list is 350 plus 250 addresses gathered through the community planning project. A total of **550** copies of newsletters **per quarter** were sent. Details are also available on ELREC's website www.elrec.org.uk.
- Information about the project was also made available through each locality Voluntary Council organisations: Midlothian Voluntary Action (MVA), West Lothian Voluntary Action (WLVA) and East Lothian Voluntary Organisations Network (ELVON). This was then made available to other organisations and groups.
- Contact was made with ME Adult students through ESOL classes from Community Learning and Development departments and Higher Education establishments. This contact led to a request to speak to one class in Musselburgh, East Lothian.
- ELREC also attended several stall and community events where information about the project was made available. This allowed for individuals to hear about the project through other means.
- The Community Planning team also took part in a local community radio talk through Black Diamond FM Midlothian discussing community planning and ELREC, aired on Sunday the 24th of February.

Due to the lack of ME organisations outside of Edinburgh and information available on ME communities, the outreach sessions proved invaluable and vital to the success of this project in creating awareness and discussion around community planning. From the ongoing face to face work carried out in each locality the Community Development Assistant was able to develop a level of trust where by individuals began to open up about their thoughts around 'community planning and its role.'



Forum / Focus Groups- Outcomes and Successes

The outreach sessions culminated in a series of forum/focus group sessions, two per local authority with the 1st focus group aimed solely for ME communities, inviting interested individuals to discuss community planning and also strategies to encourage participation. The 2nd focus group session involved the participants from the first focus group being invited along to meet and discuss community planning with Council workers involved in the community planning partnerships. This was an opportunity for participants to hear what the council engagement strategy included and also the opportunity to have a two way discussion about engaging with ME communities.

The initial meeting solely for ME communities was an opportunity to meet participants in an informal and comfortable situation. For a few this was the first time they had met with or heard of ELREC and so we were able to give information on what the organisation stood for, its aims and objectives. This event allowed the conversation to flow at the participant's level and gave people time to express their views openly. This resulted in the initial discussion on a range of public service issues which are listed in Appendix 1. As each issue was discussed we illustrated how community planning worked and why participation benefited the community.

The second and final focus group session provided the opportunity for participants to engage with those involved in the community planning process and ask the question 'What is my role?' The local authority colleagues described the progress and plans for community planning in their locality. These discussions further highlighted the needs for ME communities to participate in the process.

- In total **45** people participated in the focus groups sessions. This included **3** young people (under 20) and **9** women.
- Ethnicity of participants included in order of majority Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Romanian, Indian, Saudi, Sudanese and Chinese.
- Over **70** people booked initial spaces but were unable to attend the meetings on the day.

(A detailed list of the focus groups sessions are listed in Appendix 2)

Issues Discussed

Below are specific and more detailed issues which were recurring discussions at the first and second focus group meetings.

Across the three localities those involved in the focus groups session and those who expressed their views during the street work sessions spoke of **community apathy**. They expressed their frustrations in the perceived lack of transparency in local decision-making and 'that things have already been decided' (East Lothian Participant). It would



appear a contradiction to say that strategies and policies need to be working documents but that is exactly what ME communities need so that the those involved in community planning can fulfil the needs of the community and effectively address the inequalities faced by the different equality groups.

Participants described each locality within the 'rural' context. However under the Urban Rural Classification scheme although there is a lack of 'large urban areas' within the three localities, the three localities are shown to be made up as 'Other Urban area' with both accessible and remote small towns.³ Nevertheless, taking into consideration the dispersed context of the communities involved local authorities need to facilitate or provide the support where-by ME communities can access the mainstream networks more effectively. Overall the groups agreed that they were generally happy with their local authority however there is still a need to promote events and opportunities. There was a general agreement that outreach participatory methods as used by the Community Development Assistant in this project are a necessity to create the space for dialogue and support.

Awareness of Community Councils

The question was asked at each focus group session what participants knew about community councils. For those that did not it was explained that community councils are examples of citizen empowerment, having a share of the responsibly and the power. In essence they should reflect the diversity of the area they represent. However nearly all participants were unaware of what, who, and when they met. If ME communities are unaware firstly of the processes involved in community planning then the barriers to participating at a grass root level within a community council level increase. The local authority needs to recognise the barriers and work in partnership with organisations that work with ME communities who would be able to support ME groups. In addition, direct support and training should be duty bound to provide the community councils with effective methods of engaging with their community groups.

At the time of writing up this report the Community Development Assistant was aware of only one minority ethnic Community Councillor across the Lothians (out with Edinburgh), Mr Jalal Chaudry of Musselburgh community Council, East Lothian. Unfortunately he was unavailable to attend the focus group meetings for East Lothian.

Across the three localities the focus groups developed similar strategies in their discussion to improving engagement. An important factor identified for community engagement was the skills needed by the participants. They identified the following which would substantially contribute to higher levels of engagement:

- Knowledge and information of how to get involved;
- Ability to deal with difference and diversity;

³ Scottish Executive (2006), Report: Urban Rural Classification 2005-2006. Edinburgh, p. 10.



- Support from local authority and voluntary organisations- anchor organisation;
- Training from the relevant authority- such as Community Planning or Development and Learning team.

Outcomes

The Outcomes of the focus groups differed respectively to each local authority. Below is a brief summary of what each local authority hopes to achieve as a result of phase 2 focus groups.

East Lothian

The Equality Officer of East Lothian Council represented the Community Planning Partnership. The group were presented with the Partners' aim of setting up a network to which the Council could engage on a range of issues. There was a general agreement to this process. A forum was discussed however the group could not decide if this was possible. The agreement to a network would allow people to contribute in their own time as it was pointed out that many people might not have the time for meetings. It was agreed at the meeting that a questionnaire be developed to gather more views.

Midlothian

The Education Officer of Midlothian Council represented the Community Planning Partnership. The group were introduced to the Council aims of setting up a network on a similar line to East Lothian. There was not a concrete agreement to this process as it became apparent there were other issues to discuss. It was suggested that another meeting occur around May to discuss matters further.

West Lothian

At the meeting the Community Planning team introduced the current Council policy and the processes involved to engage with communities. This was followed by questions from the group. One issue for further exploration was the development of Race Equality forum/group- aiding the Community Planning Partnership on Race. The participants agreed that this was needed to make sure that no individual member of the community or group was discriminated against and also provided an opportunity to get involved. Members of the Multi-Cultural Forum were also present and it was agreed that stronger links need to be achieved with the Forum and other agencies to help the Forum in its work in West Lothian. ELREC will be supporting both the formation of a Race equality group and strengthening links with the Forum alongside the Council aims.



Successes

In addition to the two arranged focus group sessions per local authority four further spin off focus group sessions took place in West and East Lothian and Midlothian as a direct result form outreach sessions by the Community Development Assistant.

West Lothian

1. Asian Taxi Drivers- **15** people involved

ERLEC has been supporting a group of taxi drivers in their aim of tackling discrimination, improving conditions and increasing transparency in the taxi License process. After initial meetings with the drivers a meeting was held with taxi Licensing officials, Police and West Lothian Council workers. It became apparent that there was an unfair process within the taxi license process however it was stated that the issue was a government decision. ELREC is supporting this process.

Ethnicity of the members Pakistani and Bangladeshi

Midlothian

1. House visit to meet **4** members of the Midlothian Muslim Community group.

The group has been developed to start the process of establishing a site for a mosque in Midlothian. The Community Development Assistant supported the group in the process to register as a charity, establish links with local authority and local organisations. This is an ongoing project.

Ethnicity of the members Pakistani

East Lothian

1. ESOL class- **8** people attended, **4** were women.

ELREC were invited to speak to students of an ESOL class at Fisherrow, Musselburgh. Majority of students had been in the UK three years or less finally settling in Midlothian from across the UK. The topic of community planning was discussed within the context of participation. The students discussed the barriers to participation, below are few of their points

- Language - more important to learn the language first before participation.
- Lack of knowledge and support infrastructure for migrant workers.
- Difficulty in connecting with existing social networks.

This discussion further highlighted the different barriers faced by ME groups within the Lothian area, and the serious need for local authorities to work with partner agencies to develop methods that promote the benefits for both sides.

Ethnicity of group included Polish, Romanian, Croatian, Russian, Hungarian and Latvian.



2. Portobello Community Centre & Mosque – two meetings held 1st meeting 5 people and 2nd meeting 15 people attended 7 were young people (under 21).

In attendance were a group of service users of Edinburgh and East Lothian residency at the centre. Attendants were given a short presentation on community planning and also advice on setting up a formal young boys' group. Currently volunteers work with around 20-30 young boys (mainly Muslim boys, however the group is not specifically for Muslim boys) within an ad hoc structure. ELREC has offered support to the group in establishing links with Edinburgh City Council.

Ethnicity of group included Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Turkish.

3. Affects of Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 on ME businesses- 13 people attended and 4 were women.

The Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 completely reforms the licensing for the sale and supply of alcohol in Scotland. During outreach sessions the concerns of this change was raised by owners of ME businesses. This focus group event was as a direct result from feedback gathered during the outreach sessions within the Lothians. Working with the Equality Officer of East Lothian Council and the Clerk to the Licensing Board technical participants had the opportunity to ask technical questions and discuss their issues. It was a highly engaging session for the participants and the Clerk on what support the Licensing Board can offer to businesses in East Lothian. The discussion also brought forward the participants views on what the changes will have on the impact on prevention of crime and disorder.

Ethnicity of group included Thai, Chinese, Italian, Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi.

It is clear from the council strategies that community planning is a learning process. Within this there is at least an initial acceptance by the local authority that more is needed to genuinely engage with community groups. However it is also apparent that they are keen to make the first steps of effective engagement with equality groups. This project has identified that training and support is needed by the community planning partners to effectively engage with minority ethnic communities. These series of focus groups illustrate the interest amongst members of the minority ethnic community and **should** be the start to meaningful dialogue to develop methods of engagement through the discussions and decision making **made by** members of the minority ethnic community.

Although the three localities have decided on different routes to achieve effective communication with equality groups they have to realise the need to break away from the 'tokenistic consultation approach' often viewed by minority ethnic communities, they need to invest time and funds into the community.



Community Engagement Audit

As part of the grant made available by the Scottish Government Equalities Unit, ELREC has been assisting the local Community Planning Partnerships in meeting its race equality objectives in particular engaging the minority ethnic communities in the community planning processes. Part of this has been to gather information of the progress being made by the partnerships.

The Community Engagement Audit was an opportunity for the CPP's to report on the progress of community engagement standards particularly to members of the minority ethnic community. The questionnaire was voluntary with all local authorities giving feedback on their engagement strategies and providing an overview of equality matters in their partnership. The information gathered by the CPP's as been submitted to the Scottish Government Equalities Unit as part of this report.

To comment briefly on the community engagement strategies it is clear that the local authorities are attempting to initiate, maintain and facilitate a dialogue. However the feedback from the focus group sessions illustrate that the extent to which these existing structures engage with ethnic minority groups are in fact not meeting the needs of participants or public sector organisations. Each local authority has identified this and state that they are currently in the process of either reviewing existing mechanisms or are in fact developing new mechanisms to engage with equality groups.

East Lothian: Recognised that existing structures are failing their communities and currently developing the mechanisms to develop the Equality Forum. A new Community Engagement Strategy has been launched for 2007-2010.

Midlothian: Currently developing structure to engage with ME groups. The CPP carried out a three month mapping exercise to identify minority ethnic communities.

West Lothian: Currently developing mechanisms but using a model successfully used to engage with disabled groups through the Disability Equality Forum.

ELREC has been and remains to be a strong partner in promoting community engagement events across the Lothians, with reference made to partner work already indicated by the local authorities. Not including the current phase of the community planning project, special reference was made to the Lothian wide 'We are all in this together' seminars held in each locality during the first phase of this project.



Equality Meeting

Included in the funding agreement ELREC hosted the first Equality Meeting in March 08. The aim of the meeting was to create an opportunity for local voluntary sector partners to discuss how we can work together on a strategic level to a truly discrimination free Lothian region.

At this meeting, the participants agreed there is a need for equality strategic groups to work together on the following points:

- Fostering strategic level co-operation amongst the voluntary/charity organisations involved in Equality.
- Develop a wider recognition of on-going work within the Lothian region by equality groups.
- Work towards the reduction of projects that repeat or duplicate work already carried out.
- Important to maintain current initiatives such as Community of Interest Support Network (COISN, Edinburgh) but also vital to continue dialogues out-with a Local Authority agenda.
- Promote joint working partnerships when possible to reach wider communities.

Invited organisations included;

Age Concern
Children in Scotland
Young Edinburgh
Inclusion Scotland
Scottish Disability Equality Forum
Scottish Women's Convention
Stonewall Scotland
LGBT Youth Scotland
Edinburgh Refugee Centre



Discussion

The key aim of engaging with ME communities and the community planning partnerships was achieved however there were limits to the extent to which the Community Development Assistant could reach out to ME groups. Two crucial factors prevented the project from engaging with more communities: limited time factor and insufficient funding. Building up the trust and networks within each locality took time to achieve the relationship where by ME communities felt empowered to participate in the focus group sessions. The majority of individuals spoken to during this project have been unaware of their potential role in the community planning process and so sufficient time had to be allocated to this process of increasing awareness, a process that the local authority should be carrying out. There is a fear that when the project comes to an end the results of the outreach work carried out will be lost. ELREC has illustrated that it can be an effective partner in engaging with ME groups across the Lothians and promoting the duty that local authority have to engage with equality group. We hope this can be recognised by the community planning partners.

Conclusion

The barriers to engaging with a 'community' are not specific only to members of minority ethnic communities however it has been illustrated by this project that consideration must be given when engaging with equality groups. Overcoming the lack of awareness about community planning is essential to engaging with communities. In order for ME communities to succeed in having a voice and having the opportunity to use that voice community planning partnerships need to invest in the networks that support ME groups.

The aim of holding the focus groups across the localities was to allow members of the minority ethnic community to not only participate but share their views, experiences and knowledge on the provision of services. Their participation has recognised that local community planning partnerships need to be more innovative in their methods and also willing to put these methods into practice. As, has been illustrated information is a vital part in this process and each local authority needs to re-address the way they communicate with their communities and who holds that information.

Decision making does not need to be a difficult process however accepting the fact that this has to be a balanced approach seems to have been a significant barrier. Encouraging community groups to be part the process will benefit not only the community as increasing the sense of ownership but will lead to effective service provision.



Recommendations

- Recognition and acceptance by the local authority and the Community Planning Partnerships that more is needed by them to encourage minority ethnic communities to participate. Additionally they need to put into place the provision of support and guidance for those who want to participate.
- Community Planning Partnerships need to be the driving force behind strategies for genuine two way engagement with minority ethnic communities. CPP's should also actively encourage the benefits of participation to reinforce the commitment of a community involved community plan.
- Create the space whereby a community has an open, transparent and sustainable opportunity to participate.
- Investment in training programmes for community council, community groups, rural trusts on how to engage with equality groups and directive on best practice from the community planning partnerships.
- Invest in the development of a database network of organisations and individuals' working with minority ethnic communities so the CPP's can achieve joined up working.
- Provision of support to the development of anchor organisations that could provide the linkage for minority ethnic groups to work with the partnerships.

A three month Funding extension has been approved by the Equality unit to follow up the recommendations of this report from April to June 2008.



Acknowledgement:

ELREC would like to thank the Equality Unit of the Scottish Government for their financial support to this project. Special thanks and gratitude goes to all the participants of the focus group sessions, who without their involvement we would be unable to have the findings of this report. I would also like to thank the local groups and individuals who fed into the project.

ELREC recognises the important role made by representatives from each locality and is looking forward to strengthening these links. Thanks to EVOG and MVA who provided local support and publicised the project in each locality. I would like to thank the Board members of ELREC who provided cordial support. I would like to extend my thanks and gratitude to Shasta Hanif, Community Development Officer, for her guidance and support in the project. Lastly, I would like to thank Nina Giles, Director, and ELREC colleagues who provided useful suggestions and support.



Appendix 1

Participant Issues

General issues discussed by the participants at the focus group meetings alongside community engagement.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing provision- affordable housing/ council accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education- Higher and Adult classes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESOL provision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen Rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Councils
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination- direct and indirect forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational facilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of religious centre's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural events
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Centre's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women's groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displaced communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Volunteering opportunities for minority ethnic individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community apathy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of ME organisations (particularly outside Edinburgh) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scotland
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-Social Behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Authority



Appendix 2

Focus Group Sessions

First Meeting

	East Lothian	West Lothian	Midlothian
Date	9 th January 2008	21 st December 2007	23 rd December 2007
Venue	Brunton Hall, Musselburgh, East Lothian	Regal Community Theatre, Bathgate	Dalkeith Arts Centre, Dalkeith,
Facilitators	Angus Kelly and Shasta Hanif	Angus Kelly, Nina Giles and Shasta Hanif	Angus Kelly and Shasta Hanif
Participants	3	12	3

Second Meeting

	East Lothian	West Lothian	Midlothian
Date	28 th February 2008	25 th February 2008	27 th February 2008
Venue	Brunton Hall, Musselburgh, East Lothian	West Lothian Council Chambers, Livingston, West Lothian	Dalkeith Arts Centre, Dalkeith, Midlothian
Participants	5	9	13
Facilitators	Angus Kelly and Nina Giles	Angus Kelly and Nina Giles	Angus Kelly and Nina Giles
Local Authority	Rebecca Spillane , Equality Officer	Karen Cawte , Community Planning Development Manager Susan Gordon , Community Planning Development Officer Kenny Selbie , Equality Officer	Gordon Clayton , Education Officer
Public bodies & others		Caroline Spence , Minority Ethnic Development Worker, Advice Shop, West Lothian Derek Fairley , West Lothian Local Authority Liaison Officer, L&B Police	



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