

# The black and minority ethnic housing crisis

**From the Shelter policy library**

**22 September 2004**

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# Shelter

## The black and minority ethnic housing crisis

Black and minority ethnic (BME) households are over-represented among England's homeless population. While the 2001 census reveals that BME households make up 7 per cent of England's population, in the year ending June 2004 BME households accounted for 20 per cent of households accepted as homeless by local authorities (table 1).

**Table 1**

Ethnic group	All households (2001)		Homeless households (2003/04)	
	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
All white	19,059,718	93	98,590	72
Total, non-white, BME	1,391,709	7	30,500	22
Unknown	N/A	-	7,920	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,451,427</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>137,000</b>	<b>100</b>

England: population and households accepted as homeless, by ethnic group<sup>1</sup>

As table 2 illustrates, black African/Caribbean households are most severely over-represented. They make up 10 per cent of homelessness acceptances despite accounting for only 2 per cent of England's population. They also represent just under half (45 per cent) of all BME homeless households. Also over-represented are households falling into other non-white ethnic groups, which account for 7 per cent of homelessness acceptances despite making up only 2 per cent of the general population.

**Table 2**

Ethnic group	All households (2001)		Homeless households (2003/04)	
	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Black African/Caribbean	449,301	2	13,330	10
Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi	543,230	3	7,320	5
Other, non-white, ethnic groups	399,178	2	9,850	7
<b>Total BME</b>	<b>1,391,709</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>30,500</b>	<b>22</b>

England: population and households accepted as homeless, by non-white BME group<sup>2</sup>

The overall trend in homelessness acceptances in the six years since 1997<sup>3</sup> shows that there has been a disproportionate increase in homelessness amongst BME households

<sup>1</sup> Source: Office of National Statistics: *UK Census 2001* and Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: *Statutory Homelessness Statistics*: homeless households in priority need accepted by local authorities under the 1985 and 1996 Housing Acts (April 2003 – March 2004)

<sup>2</sup> Source: Office of National Statistics: *UK Census 2001* and Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: *Statutory Homelessness Statistics*: homeless households in priority need accepted by local authorities under the 1985 and 1996 Housing Acts (April 2003 – March 2004)

(table 3). Between April 1997 and March 2004, total homelessness acceptances by English local authorities have increased by 34 per cent. However, in the same period, homelessness amongst non-white BME households rose by 77 per cent (over twice as fast). There was a particularly sharp increase in homelessness amongst black African/Caribbean households. This rose by 89 per cent (two and a half times faster than the general population). Homelessness amongst Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi households rose by 56 per cent (one and a half times as fast). There was also a sharp increase in homelessness amongst other, non-white, BME households. This rose by 80 per cent.

**Table 3**

	<b>1997/1998</b>	<b>2003/2004</b>	<b>% increase</b>
White	78,180	98,590	26%
Black African/Caribbean	7,050	13,330	89%
Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi	4,690	7,320	56%
Other, non-white, ethnic origin	5,470	9,850	80%
Total non-white BME	17,210	30,500	77%
Unknown	7,070	7,920	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>102,430</b>	<b>137,000</b>	<b>34%</b>

England: households accepted as homeless April 1997 to March 2004, by ethnic group<sup>4</sup>

### Causes of BME homelessness

Research carried out for Shelter in 2001<sup>5</sup> found that, whilst there had recently been a number of studies in Britain specifically about BME homelessness, the quality and quantity of this information was far from adequate. The researchers highlighted a lack of understanding of the causes of BME homelessness and recommended that research should be undertaken to identify the main routes that BME people of different ages and of different ethnic groups follow, in and out of homelessness. The lack of such comprehensive, national research makes it difficult to properly assess the causes of BME homelessness. For example, the homelessness statistics produced by the Office of the

<sup>3</sup> 1997 has been used as a starting point to analyse the trend, because it was the year in which both the Housing Act 1996 came into force and the current Government was elected.

<sup>4</sup> Source: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: *Statutory Homelessness Statistics*: homeless households in priority need accepted by local authorities under the 1985 and 1996 Housing Acts (April 1997 – March 2004)

<sup>5</sup> Somerville, P., Steele, A., and Sodhi, D. (2001) *Homelessness among Black and Minority Ethnic People: A Scoping Exercise for Shelter* (unpublished)

Deputy Prime Minister do not provide data on the cause of homelessness by ethnicity. However, by drawing on existing research, a number of key factors emerge.

### **Overcrowding and 'hidden' homelessness**

BME households are at least seven times more likely to live in overcrowded conditions than white households<sup>6</sup>. People of Bangladeshi origin are particularly likely to suffer from overcrowding with over half of Bangladeshi children living in officially overcrowded conditions<sup>7</sup>.

There is a lack of research on 'hidden' homelessness (for example, people sleeping on sofas and floors in the homes of friends and relatives) amongst BME households. However, a number of studies have suggested that 'hidden' homelessness might be more likely amongst certain BME groups, particularly Asian households. This sometimes arises out of a need to accommodate family and community members coming from abroad, or because strong cultural ties prevent the hosts from asking their guests to leave. The presence of concealed nuclear families within extended families can contribute to overcrowding.

Overcrowding and 'hidden' homelessness can occur because of the failure of housing legislation and housing organisations to recognise the need for extended families to be housed together in larger homes. It can also occur because households are unaware of, or reluctant to exercise, their rights under housing and homelessness legislation.

Hidden homelessness can create conditions leading to statutory homelessness. For example, in cases where pressures on the host household result in them asking the 'hidden' homeless household to leave, the latter usually have no tenancy rights and are often forced to make a homeless application. Research on BME homelessness in Scotland<sup>8</sup> found that a breakdown in existing relationships seemed to be a common contributory factor in homelessness. This included a deterioration or breakdown in relationships between older and younger members of the extended family, sometimes exacerbated by overcrowding. For example, one older Chinese man reported that living together with his son's family had placed such an unbearable strain on the family that his daughter-in-law had left home, leaving him to look after three young children.

### **Social exclusion**

Another likely factor in BME over-representation in the homeless population is that BME households are more likely to be socially excluded. People are deemed to be socially

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<sup>6</sup> Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: *Survey of English Housing 2000/2001*

<sup>7</sup> Office of National Statistics: *UK Census 2001*

<sup>8</sup> Scottish Ethnic Minorities Research Unit/Heriot Watt University (Scottish Executive Social Research, 2004): *Black and Minority Ethnic Communities and Homelessness in Scotland*

excluded if they suffer from a series of problems including unemployment, discrimination, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime, ill health and family breakdown<sup>9</sup>. There is evidence to show that BME people are more likely to suffer from some of these problems.

### **Low income**

BME people are over-represented among low-income households. In 2001/02, over half of households headed by a Pakistani or Bangladeshi person had household disposable income below 60 per cent of the median. This compares with between 21 and 29 per cent of those from other BME groups, but only 16 per cent of households headed by a white person<sup>10</sup>. Households on low incomes often struggle to pay their housing costs, resulting in rent or mortgage arrears. Arrears can lead to homelessness when landlords decide to evict or where the threat of legal action causes the family to abandon their home.

In 2002/03, 14 per cent of social tenants and 6 per cent of private tenants said that they had been in rent arrears in the last year.<sup>11</sup> Data from local authorities suggests that 40 per cent of council tenants had rent arrears in 2003<sup>12</sup>, suggesting that a significant percentage of tenants do not realise that they are in arrears or that housing benefit has not been paid.

### **Unemployment**

Unemployment is also disproportionate amongst the BME population<sup>13</sup>. For example, in 2001/2002, Bangladeshi men had the highest unemployment rate in Great Britain at 20 per cent (four times that for white men). Youth unemployment is consistently high across all groups, but is higher for BME people aged under 25. In 2001/2002, over 40 per cent of young Bangladeshi men were unemployed. Young black African men, Pakistani men and women, black Caribbean men and women, and men of mixed race had unemployment rates in excess of 20 per cent. The comparable unemployment rate for young white British men and women was 12 per cent and 9 per cent, respectively. Unemployment can often be a trigger of homelessness, for example, because it leads to mortgage repossession, about which little is known in relation to BME groups.

### **Poor housing conditions**

BME households are more likely to live in poor housing conditions, with 8 per cent of BME households living in housing that it deemed to be unfit, compared to 3.5 per cent of white

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<sup>9</sup> Social Exclusion Unit website, 2004

<sup>10</sup> Office of National Statistics (2004): *Social Trends No.34*, p.87

<sup>11</sup> Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, *Survey of English Housing*, 2002/03

<sup>12</sup> CIPFA SIS 2003

<sup>13</sup> Office of National Statistics: *Annual Local Area Labour Force 2001/02*

households. Over 9 per cent of Asian households live in unfit housing (table 4). Poor housing conditions can cause homelessness, where the housing is so unsuitable that the household cannot continue living in it.

**Table 4**

	<b>All households (000s)</b>	<b>Households in unfit housing (000s)</b>	<b>Percentage of households in unfit housing</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>19,081</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>3.5%</b>
Black	497	40	8.0%
Asian	644	60	9.3%
Other	289	19	6.7%
<b>Total BME households</b>	<b>1,430</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>8.3%</b>
<b>All households</b>	<b>20,511</b>	<b>782</b>	<b>3.8%</b>

England: Households living in unfit housing in 2001, by ethnic group<sup>14</sup>

### Limited housing opportunities in the right location

Another factor for the disproportionate and increasing number of homeless BME households may be the lack of appropriate and affordable housing in particular areas. This might be because they have additional locational housing needs in comparison to white households. Many households face limited housing options because of the constraints of affordability or the need to be near schools, workplaces, family members, and other support networks. However, it has been suggested that limited housing options can be compounded for BME households for a number of reasons.

### Racial harassment

Racial harassment, and the development of so-called ‘no-go’ areas for BME people, is likely to be a major cause of BME homelessness. BME people are four times more likely than white people to see racist harassment as a serious problem in their area<sup>15</sup>. Research evidence suggests that harassment associated with residence remains widespread and can have a negative effect on a BME household’s choice of residential area<sup>16</sup>. Research on BME homelessness in Scotland cites ‘fear of racial harassment in

<sup>14</sup> Source: Office of National Statistics: *UK Census 2001* and Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: *English House Condition Survey 2001*

<sup>15</sup> Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (May 2003): *Housing and Black and Minority Ethnic Communities: Review of the evidence base*

<sup>16</sup> Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (May 2003): *Housing and Black and Minority Ethnic Communities: Review of the evidence base*

certain areas, which is not recognised by local authorities' as a common difficulty faced by BME households affected by homelessness. In one case, a young woman of Pakistani origin was afraid of losing her priority status as homeless. She had already refused two offers of accommodation for fear that, as a recognisable Muslim, she and her family would be particularly susceptible to racial harassment in these areas following the attacks in the United States in September 2001.

Research for Shelter<sup>17</sup> suggested that there was a need for research, working with multi-agency panels, to establish which areas are 'safe' for BME people to live in, and exactly how 'safe' each area is. It also suggested that there was a need to find out why BME people would not consider moving to certain areas, whether it was due to fears about racism or because they wanted to be near particular shops and facilities.

### **Other locational needs**

There is evidence that some BME households are more likely than white households to face other locational constraints in their housing options. Consultation with faith and BME communities in the London Borough of Hackney<sup>18</sup> illustrated that certain groups needed to live in particular locations. For example, Jewish participants emphasised their dependence on their social infrastructure, such as the need for them to be near Jewish schools and kosher butchers, and also stressed their need to keep their community together by continuing to live within the M25 area. Muslim women participants highlighted the importance of the extended family and family networks to their lives, and said that the need of Muslim households to live in the close vicinity of a mosque is a priority that is not considered enough in the development of housing policy.

### **Lack of appropriate housing and related services**

Research from the 1960s to the 1980s demonstrated that there were discriminatory practices against minority ethnic groups, in both social and private sector housing. However, it has recently been acknowledged<sup>19</sup> that the lack of more recent research on this issue makes it difficult to tell whether or not the disproportionate increase in BME homelessness is due to BME people still facing limited housing choices because of discrimination. Research conducted for Shelter<sup>20</sup> found that direct and indirect racial

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<sup>17</sup> Somerville, P., Steele, A., and Sodhi, D. (2001) *Homelessness among Black and Minority Ethnic People: A Scoping Exercise for Shelter* (unpublished)

<sup>18</sup> Faith Regen UK Limited (May 2003): *Consultation with Faith and BME Communities on the Homelessness Strategy: Report for the London Borough of Hackney*

<sup>19</sup> Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (May 2003): *Housing and Black and Minority Ethnic Communities: Review of the evidence base*

<sup>20</sup> Somerville, P., Steele, A., and Sodhi, D. (2001) *Homelessness among Black and Minority Ethnic People: A Scoping Exercise for Shelter* (unpublished)

discrimination within the housing and homelessness system does continue to be a problem and suggested that this was a topic worthy of further research. It identified a number of areas of potential discrimination, from the effects of nationally sanctioned discrimination against asylum seekers to longstanding issues of indifference, ignorance, 'colour-blindness', insensitivity, unreasonable demands for written evidence, preferential treatment of established white residents, and general inconsistency of treatment. Concerns about discrimination fell into two main categories.

### **Implementation of legislation**

Firstly, the research found that interpretation of the homelessness legislation was sometimes indirectly discriminatory. An example given was that local authorities often restricted those with whom a homeless applicant 'may reasonably be expected to reside' to members of the nuclear, rather than extended, family. The researchers found that this reflected long-term culturally dominant assumptions about the nature of family life and could discriminate against, for example, Asian families, who are more likely to live in extended families. As a result of this policy, Asian households wishing to live as an extended family would be more likely to experience serious overcrowding and unhealthy housing conditions that might ultimately lead to relationship breakdown and crisis homelessness.

Another example is the interpretation of eligibility under the homeless legislation. Research published by Shelter in 2003<sup>21</sup> found that a disproportionate number of homelessness decisions in respect of African or Caribbean applicants and 'other ethnic group' applicants were found to be ineligible for homelessness assistance. In the case of African/Caribbean applicants, ineligibility decisions made up 23 per cent of all such decisions, whilst all homelessness decisions for this group made up only 8 per cent of the total. In the case of 'other' groups, ineligibility decisions made up 27 per cent of all such decisions, whilst all decisions for this group made up 7 per cent of the total. The research concluded that certain BME households might be deemed ineligible for assistance because they are asylum seekers or people from abroad who fail the habitual residence test. However, it recommended that there be a further breakdown of the eligibility statistics to explore whether there might be some other explanation.

### **Training of staff**

Secondly, there was concern over the lack of training and information on different ways of life and cultural practices that are available to generic housing and homelessness workers, resulting in an inability of generic service providers to respond sensitively to people with different cultural needs. One participant felt that, as a result, local authorities did not have the relevant knowledge of the cultures concerned to develop the increasing range of services required. This is borne out by the findings of recent research.

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<sup>21</sup> Meth, F. and Wrigglesworth, R. (Shelter, July 2003): *More than a Number: report on the analysis of ODPM homelessness statistics: financial year 2001/2002*

Research for the London Borough of Hackney<sup>22</sup> found that BME people face a barrier in accessing housing services when the attitude of staff is demeaning and dismissive. Research in Scotland<sup>23</sup> has found that BME people face both a lack of sensitivity by housing officers to their vulnerability to racial harassment and difficulties in obtaining information due to language differences, literacy issues, lack of familiarity with the system, and institutional discrimination.

### **Access to specialist services**

In addition to the discriminatory nature of generic homelessness services, a number of studies have identified problems faced by BME people in accessing specialist services, without which they may be at more risk of sudden homelessness. A common example given is the lack of services for BME women experiencing domestic violence – a major cause of homelessness. Research for Shelter<sup>24</sup> suggested that, although Asian households appeared to have the same levels of domestic violence as other groups, there were lower levels of family break-up related to such violence. This could suggest a lack of appropriate services for Asian women suffering domestic violence or a perception amongst the women that services will be unwelcoming to them and provide inappropriate accommodation, especially hostels. Other research has borne this out<sup>25</sup>, finding that accommodation in a mainstream hostel for women escaping domestic abuse was sometimes so unsatisfactory – enduring racial abuse from, and cultural differences with, other residents – that the women returned home.

The perceived and actual discriminatory nature of mainstream advice services has been cited as a reason for the disproportionate incidence of BME homelessness. Recent research on BME homelessness in Glasgow<sup>26</sup> suggests that many BME people feel excluded from mainstream services. This is sometimes because they are not aware of their existence or are unaware that they can help them to enforce their rights. The research also reported on a perception amongst BME communities that mainstream services are not to be trusted because of a lack of staff from BME backgrounds, the risk of racism and abuse from other

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<sup>22</sup> Faith Regen UK Limited (May 2003): *Consultation with Faith and BME Communities on the Homelessness Strategy: Report for the London Borough of Hackney*

<sup>23</sup> Scottish Ethnic Minorities Research Unit/Heriot Watt University (Scottish Executive Social Research, 2004): *Black and Minority Ethnic Communities and Homelessness in Scotland*

<sup>24</sup> Somerville, P., Steele, A., and Sodhi, D. (2001) *Homelessness among Black and Minority Ethnic People: A Scoping Exercise for Shelter* (unpublished)

<sup>25</sup> Scottish Ethnic Minorities Research Unit/Heriot Watt University (Scottish Executive Social Research, 2004): *Black and Minority Ethnic Communities and Homelessness in Scotland*

<sup>26</sup> Lemos and Crane (July 2004): *Minority Ethnic Homelessness in Glasgow: experiences of service users: a report to Communities Scotland*

service-users, and the sharing of services and accommodation with people with chaotic lifestyles, such as alcohol and drug-abusers.

Through Shelter's Multi-Lingual Project, run by the North East Housing Aid Centre in Newcastle, we have seen how language can present significant barriers to accessing available homelessness services and supports, and to participating in housing schemes such as Choice-Based Lettings.

### Changes to homelessness legislation

A recent increase in the proportion of BME households accepted as homeless might also be explained by recent change in homelessness legislation. The Homelessness Act 2002 extended the definition of 'priority need' to new groups of vulnerable homeless people. One of these new groups are people who are vulnerable and are no longer able to occupy their home as a result of any form of violence or threats of violence (under the Housing Act 1996, the definition only included those experiencing domestic violence). As a result of this change in the legislation, people who are vulnerable and unable to occupy their homes because of racially-motivated violence, or threats of such violence, are now accepted by local authorities as being in priority need. An increase in the number of households being accepted by local authorities for this reason might explain why there was a sharp increase in BME homelessness in 2002/2003 (appendix 1) – this part of the Homelessness Act 2002 was implemented from July 2002.

### Refugees

A further explanation for the disproportionate increase in BME homelessness could be the increase in the numbers of asylum applications in particular years since 1997 (table 5). Many of these applicants may classify themselves as BME people. In recent years the largest number of asylum applicants have been from countries with majority non-white populations, such as Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Somalia, Zimbabwe and China.

**Table 5**

Year	Number of asylum applications received	Percentage change from previous year
1997	32,500	+10%
1998	46,015	+42%
1999	71,160	+55%
2000	80,315	+13%
2001	71,025	-11%

2002	84,130	+18%
2003	49,370	-41%

**United Kingdom: applications for asylum, by year from 1997 to 2003<sup>27</sup>**

Whilst asylum-seeking immigrants make up only a small proportion of the total immigrants to the UK each year, the 49,370 asylum applications received in 2003 represented the equivalent of only 3.5 per cent of the 1,396,000 overseas workers residing in the UK in that year. People who have recently sought asylum are much more likely to be accepted as homeless.

While people await the determination of their asylum claim, they are excluded from both employment and entitlement to mainstream welfare benefits such as income support, child benefit, and disability living allowance. Consequently, unless they have access to existing funds, they are unlikely to be able to afford accommodation. Since April 2000, asylum-seeking households who find themselves destitute are entitled to apply to the National Asylum Support Service (NASS), which can provide accommodation and financial support. The latter is the equivalent to 70 per cent of income support rates, so people awaiting a determination of their asylum claim have little chance of saving money with which to secure their own housing once their NASS support ends.

Once people have been granted refugee status or leave to remain in the UK, they gain entitlements to mainstream homelessness assistance and welfare benefits. But households accommodated by NASS usually have only a few weeks to secure alternative accommodation before they are evicted<sup>28</sup>. In the face of this ‘crisis homelessness’, they are often forced to make an application for homelessness assistance. To monitor the impact of the asylum support system on homelessness acceptances, in September 2002 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister began collecting information on the number of households accepted as homeless due to the loss of NASS accommodation. During 2003, a total of 3,173 households leaving NASS accommodation were accepted as being unintentionally homeless and in priority need by local housing authorities<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> Source: Home Office: *United Kingdom Asylum Statistics 2003 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)*

<sup>28</sup> People housed by NASS under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 are excluded from the security of tenure provisions of current housing legislation. However, the Asylum Support Regulations 2000, as amended by the Asylum Support (Amendment) Regulations 2002, require NASS residents to be given a minimal seven days notice to quit.

<sup>29</sup> Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, *Quarterly Housing Activity Returns (P1E)* completed by local authorities in England: households dealt with under the homelessness provisions of the 1985 and 1996 Housing Acts

An increase in the number of households accepted as homeless because of the loss of NASS accommodation might also help to explain why the number of BME households accepted as homeless has risen sharply in particular years and in particular regions (appendix 1). The years with the highest number of BME homelessness acceptances (2000/2001 and 2002/2003) coincide with those years that experienced the highest number of asylum applications. In addition, the region that has experienced the sharpest increase in BME homeless acceptances – Yorkshire and Humberside – has been the region that has consistently received the largest number of asylum seekers under the NASS dispersal system.

## Recommendations

### More national research

The first step in tackling BME homelessness is a better understanding of its causes, and the barriers to its prevention. It is only once the causes of BME homelessness are properly understood that any attempt can be made to tackle them. In order to gain a better understanding of the causes of the disproportionate increase in homelessness amongst BME households, a great deal more qualitative and quantitative research is required. This should include:

monitoring by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister of the reasons that BME households accepted as homeless left their last settled home, via the P1E returns from local housing authorities. This would best be undertaken by the introduction of a case-by-case database for monitoring activity under the homelessness legislation

research to identify the main routes that BME people of different ages, and of different ethnic groups, follow in and out of homelessness

research into the extent of, reasons for, and impact of 'hidden homelessness' and statutory overcrowding amongst BME households

research into racial harassment 'no go areas' and other areas that BME households would not consider suitable areas to live, and how this might affect the housing options of BME households

research into whether direct and indirect racial discrimination within the housing and homelessness system continues to restrict the housing options and choices of BME households. This should attempt to identify the key problems with the current administration of homeless services for BME people, and how these can be resolved

research into the impact of the National Asylum Support System (NASS) on BME homelessness, including hidden homelessness and homelessness acceptances, and how homelessness caused by the loss of NASS accommodation might be prevented.

### **More support for local good practice**

The Homelessness and Housing Support Directorate of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister should prioritise addressing the over-representation of BME households amongst households accepted as homeless. Tackling BME homelessness should be a priority for the resources that the Directorate provides for local authorities to implement their homelessness strategies, and support innovation and best practice.

### **Local authorities' BME homelessness strategies**

Some local authorities, as part of their homelessness reviews and strategies, have already commissioned or conducted research into the causes of homelessness within BME communities in their areas. However, all authorities that have experienced an increase in BME homelessness should undertake this work, and assess the effectiveness of homelessness services in meeting the needs of BME groups. This information should be used to help focus preventative action to reduce BME homelessness, and to ensure that homelessness services are racially and culturally sensitive to all sectors of the community they are serving.

### **National Asylum Support Service**

The impact of NASS on BME homelessness should be considered and addressed at both a national and local level. The Asylum Support (Amendment) Regulations 2002 should be amended to allow people accommodated by NASS a minimum 28 days, rather than seven days, notice to quit their accommodation. To avoid crisis-driven homelessness, people accommodated by NASS should be given early information and advice on their housing rights and options, once their NASS support ends.

## Appendix 1

	1997/1998	1998/1999 (% change)	1999/2000 (% change)	2000/2001 (% change)	2001/2002 (% change)	2002/2003 (% change)	2003/2004 (% change)
<b>White</b>	<b>78,180</b>	<b>78,260</b> <b>(+0.1%)</b>	<b>77,950</b> <b>(-0.4%)</b>	<b>83,820</b> <b>(+7.5%)</b>	<b>83,130</b> <b>(-0.8%)</b>	<b>91,480</b> <b>(+10%)</b>	<b>98,590</b> <b>(+7.8%)</b>
<b>Black African/ Caribbean</b>	7,050	7,100 (+0.7%)	7,690 (+8.3%)	9,860 (+28.2%)	10,380 (+5.3%)	12,920 (+24.5%)	13,330 (+3.2%)
<b>Indian/ Pakistani/ Bangladeshi</b>	4,690	5,280 (+12.6%)	5,470 (+3.6%)	6,430 (+17.6%)	6,880 (+7%)	7,220 (+4.9%)	7,320 (+1.4%)
<b>Other</b>	5,470	6,440 (+17.7%)	6,820 (+5.9%)	7,500 (+10%)	8,390 (+11.9%)	10,160 (+21.1%)	9,850 (-3.1%)
<b>Total BME</b>	<b>17,210</b>	<b>18,820</b> <b>(9.3%)</b>	<b>19,980</b> <b>(+6.2%)</b>	<b>23,790</b> <b>(+19.1%)</b>	<b>25,650</b> <b>(+7.8%)</b>	<b>30,300</b> <b>(+18.1%)</b>	<b>30,500</b> <b>(+0.7%)</b>
<b>Unknown</b>	7,070	7,200 (+1.8%)	7,680 (+6.7%)	7,080 (-7.8%)	9,050 (+27.8%)	8,290 (-8.4%)	7,920 (-4.5%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>102,430</b>	<b>104,260</b> <b>(+1.8%)</b>	<b>105,580</b> <b>(1.3%)</b>	<b>114,670</b> <b>(+8.6%)</b>	<b>117,810</b> <b>(+2.7%)</b>	<b>130,070</b> <b>(+10.4%)</b>	<b>137,000</b> <b>(+5.3%)</b>

England: households accepted as homeless each year from April 1997 to March 2004, by ethnic group<sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Source: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: *Statistical Release: Statutory Homelessness: England: Second Quarter 2004*

**South West****Population and homeless households**

Ethnic group	All households		Homeless households	
		Percentage	2003/04	Percentage
All white	2050534	98	10,400	90
Total, non-white, BME	35455	2	820	7
Unknown			350	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2085989</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>11,570</b>	<b>100</b>

**Population and homeless households by ethnic group**

Ethnic group	All households		Homeless households	
	Total	Percentage	Total	As % of total
Black, African/Caribbean	9858	0.5	360	3
Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi	11102	0.5	80	1
Other, non-white, ethnic groups	14495	0.7	380	3
<b>Total BME groups</b>	<b>35455</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>820</b>	<b>7</b>

**North West****Population and homeless households**

Ethnic group	All households		Homeless households	
		Percentage	2003/04	Percentage
All white	2,705,944	96	15680	84
Total, non-white, BME	106843	4	2100	11
Unknown			810	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,812,787</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>18,590</b>	<b>100</b>

**Population and homeless households by ethnic group**

Ethnic group	All households		Homeless households	
	Total	Percentage	Total	As % of total
Black, African/Caribbean	19984	1	700	4
Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi	58664	1	690	4
Other, non-white, ethnic groups	28195	2	710	4
<b>Total BME groups</b>	<b>106843</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2100</b>	

**North East****Population and homeless households**

Ethnic group	All households		Homeless households	
		Percentage	2003/04	Percentage
All white	1,048,792	98	7720	92
Total, non-white, BME	17500	2	310	4
Unknown			340	4

<b>Total</b>	<b>1,066,292</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>8370</b>	<b>100</b>
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**Population and homeless households by ethnic group**

Ethnic group	All households		Homeless households	
	Total	Percentage	Total	As % of total
Black,African/Caribbean	1833	0.2	90	1
Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi	9388	0.9	70	1
Other,non-white, ethnic groups	6,279	0.9	150	2
<b>Total BME groups</b>	<b>17500</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>4</b>

**Yorkshire and the Humber**

**Population and homeless households**

Ethnic group	All households		Homeless households	
		Percentage	2003/04	Percentage
All white	1977375	96	11,520	71
Total, non-white, BME	87372	4	2340	15
Unknown			2270	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>2064747</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>16,130</b>	<b>100</b>

**Population and homeless households by ethnic group**

Ethnic group	All households		Homeless households	
	Total	Percentage	Total	As % of total
Black, African/Caribbean	16708	1	430	3
Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi	53816	3	550	3
Other, non-white, ethnic groups	16848	1	1360	8
<b>Total BME groups</b>	<b>87372</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2340</b>	<b>15</b>

**East Midlands**

**Population and homeless households**

Ethnic group	All households		Homeless households	
		Percentage	2003/04	Percentage
All white	1,649,732	95	7960	83
Total,non-white, BME	82745	5	1130	12
Unknown			530	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,732,477</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>9620</b>	<b>100</b>

**Population and homeless households by ethnic group**

Ethnic group	All households		Homeless households	
	Total	Percentage	Total	As % of total
Black,African/Caribbean	19616	1	400	4
Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi	48556	3	430	4
Other,non-white, ethnic groups	14573	1	300	3
<b>Total BME groups</b>	<b>82745</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1130</b>	<b>12</b>

## West Midlands

### Population and homeless households

Ethnic group	All households		Homeless households	
		Percentage	2003/04	Percentage
All white	1979150	92	11,840	76
Total, non-white, BME	174523	8	3170	20
Unknown			640	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>2153673</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>15,650</b>	<b>100</b>

### Population and homeless households by ethnic group

Ethnic group	All households		Homeless households	
	Total	Percentage	Total	As % of total
Black, African/Caribbean	50045	2	1230	8
Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi	100944	5	1270	8
Other, non-white, ethnic groups	23534	1	670	4
<b>Total BME groups</b>	<b>174523</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3170</b>	<b>20</b>

## East of England

### Population and homeless households

Ethnic group	All households		Homeless households	
		Percentage	2003/04	Percentage
All white	2154112	97	9830	87
Total, non-white, BME	77863	3	960	8
Unknown			570	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>2231975</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>11360</b>	<b>100</b>

### Population and homeless households by ethnic group

Ethnic group	All households		Homeless households	
	Total	Percentage	Total	As % of total
Black, African/Caribbean	21574	1	240	2
Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi	34439	2	300	3
Other, non-white, ethnic groups	21850	1	420	4
<b>Total BME groups</b>	<b>77863</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>8</b>

## London

### Population and homeless households

Ethnic group	All households		Homeless households	
		Percentage	2003/04	Percentage
All white	2320936	77	11,690	37
Total, non-white, BME	695061	23	18,650	58
Unknown			1560	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>3015997</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>31,900</b>	<b>100</b>

### Population and homeless households by ethnic group

Ethnic group	All households		Homeless households	
	Total	Percentage	Total	As % of total
Black,African/Caribbean	316888	11	9560	30
Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi	251799	8	3580	11
Other,non-white, ethnic groups	126374	4	5510	17
<b>Total BME groups</b>	<b>695061</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>18650</b>	<b>58</b>

## South East

### Population and homeless households

Ethnic group	All households		Homeless households	
	Total	Percentage	2003/04	Percentage
All white	3173143	97	13,390	87
Total,non-white, BME	114345	3	1370	9
Unknown			590	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>3287488</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>15,350</b>	<b>100</b>

### Population and homeless households by ethnic group

Ethnic group	All households		Homeless households	
	Total	Percentage	Total	As % of total
Black,African/Caribbean	23700	1	360	2
Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi	53970	2	450	3
Other,non-white, ethnic groups	36675	1	560	4
<b>Total BME groups</b>	<b>114345</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1370</b>	<b>9</b>

*England: households accepted as homeless each year from April 1997 to March 2004, by region<sup>31</sup>*

<sup>31</sup> Source: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister