

Good Practice in Positive Action

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by

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Summary

Introduction

Positive action is not formally defined under the Race Relations Act (1976). As discussed in this report, and as commonly understood, the term covers practices which involve assisting under-represented groups to compete with others on equal terms.

PATH (Scotland) aims to tackle the under-representation of black and minority ethnic (BME) communities in employment in Scottish housing through positive action measures. The scheme operates by offering BME individuals the opportunity of a two- or three-year work placement within housing associations and local authorities throughout Scotland. The PATH (Scotland) trainees also undertake a formal housing qualification on a day-release basis.

This project extends research on and dissemination of good practice in positive action, both in housing and also in social work and education, identified by PATH (Scotland) as potential areas of public sector employment in which positive action might increase levels of BME employment. Previous research has suggested how knowledge and commitment within public sector bodies could be improved, by networking and the better dissemination of information. PATH (Scotland) has emerged as having a clear lead in developing positive action in Scotland especially in housing, but also potentially in other areas.

The aims of the research were as follows:

- To evaluate the current PATH (Scotland) scheme and identify good practice lessons;
- To explore the need for and practice of positive action in social work, education (both identified by PATH (Scotland)) and the voluntary sector;
- To explore the potentiality of positive action for refugees;
- To assess funding options for positive action;
- To identify and disseminate good practice lessons from other positive action initiatives.

Methodology

The project had six elements:

- a review of published statistical information about black and minority ethnic employment in the UK;
- interviews with 15 black and minority ethnic workers in social work, education and the voluntary sector;

- evaluation of the current PATH (Scotland) scheme via a review of practice and outcomes, as well as stakeholder interviews, with 10 trainees and ex-trainees, 10 placement organisations and three universities and colleges;
- exploration of potential positive action for refugees via key informant interviews;
- a review of potential funding for positive action using documentary sources; and
- an exploration of positive action projects from elsewhere in the UK.

Key Findings

Statistical evidence about BME employment

Statistical data from the 2001 Census and other UK survey data indicate continuing under-representation of BME groups in certain areas of employment. The basis for positive action on a broad front, i.e. demonstrable under-representation, appears to be well supported.

Scottish public authorities still have some way to go in terms of publishing monitoring statistics. In particular, monitoring data are not yet published to permit assessment of career progression for BME groups. However, in the light of under-representation, career progression is also likely to require positive action.

BME workers in Scotland – views and experiences

Interviews with BME employees in education, social work and the voluntary sector revealed that many had experienced discrimination, failed to gain promotions and complained about discriminatory treatment. The unsatisfactory outcomes had led to feelings of resentment and resignation. Experiences were more negative than those revealed in recent research for the Chartered Institute of Housing in Scotland, which suggested that housing employers had progressed in terms of improving working environments, helped by the PATH (Scotland) scheme. Interviews conducted as part of the present study indicate that, in social work and education, there appears to be more work to do.

Positive action was seen as an important solution to many of the problems identified, but only if it involved re-education of all staff and was accepted by everyone in the workplace. Otherwise, resentment and racism would not be successfully challenged.

Stakeholder perspectives on PATH (Scotland)

Overall, PATH (Scotland) appears as an exemplar of good practice, providing the opportunities the trainees need and want, as well as supporting them through some of the difficulties faced in an often unfamiliar field of work and study. Placement organisations are supported in terms of implementing equality policy, tackling racism, and facilitating the work of BME employees. Universities and colleges also receive briefings to support the integration of BME students.

Some issues need to be addressed, including communication issues, and racism experienced by students both in placements and in the universities and colleges. PATH (Scotland) is widely believed to contribute towards improving the position of trainees vis-à-vis the employment market, but the issue of racism cannot be dealt with by a small organisation such as PATH (Scotland). There is a demonstrable need for a clearer commitment from employing organisations to implementing equality policy, promoting equal opportunities and using positive action, where relevant. Ownership of positive action in such organisations is needed, but is not necessarily easy to achieve.

Refugees and positive action

The Scottish Refugee Integration Forum has already identified the need to remove barriers to refugees moving into employment, and positive action programmes would be a way of tackling the issue. Refugee communities are widely recognised as possessing considerable skills and a number of programmes are already operating, providing support to refugees entering employment, notably in the health area.

The Scottish Refugee Council's skills audit will provide valuable information for the development of future positive action programmes. PATH (Scotland)'s programme is already open to refugees and some people have been referred to the scheme. The skills audit will inform further work in housing training and may indicate needs for training in other areas.

Funding positive action

There is no one obvious potential source of funding for PATH (Scotland), and the continuation of funding from several sources appears inevitable. At present, PATH (Scotland) receives funding from the Scottish Executive, Communities Scotland, the Community Fund and charitable sources. Some English PATH schemes receive funding from the European Social Fund. All of these have varying advantages and limitations:

Issues in connection with funding PATH (Scotland) include:

- A key disadvantage of funding from a range of sources is the time-consuming process of identifying potential sources and making applications to them. This is a significant cost for a small organisation, with limited staffing. Secure funding for a period would provide an opportunity for sustained advance in activities, and time to devote energy to securing a viable financial future for PATH (Scotland).
- Stakeholders (trainees, placement organisations, universities and colleges, and Scottish housing organisations more generally) already contribute positively towards PATH (Scotland). There may be scope to consider ways of raising further funds, particularly if PATH (Scotland) extends its activities into other professional areas.

Implications of the study

Looking to the future, the study has the following implications:

- There is a continuing need for positive action in Scotland, and the study has shown that PATH (Scotland) is making a key contribution in this field, both in the specific field of housing and also more generally through other activities and through its standing as an exemplar of good practice. PATH (Scotland) has a valuable fund of experience and expertise.
- PATH (Scotland) s wider work on positive action has the potential to develop and to inform, for example, community regeneration, or developing the career aspirations of young people.
- Under-representation of BME groups goes beyond housing employment, and there are good arguments for extending positive action work into other professional fields, notably social work and education.
- PATH (Scotland) would benefit from a more secure funding position. This would permit concentration on positive action work, and reduce the imperative to devote resources to complex fund-raising activity.
- There are further opportunities for collaboration between organisations working on different elements of positive action. For example, PATH (Scotland) s expertise can inform refugee integration activities, at the same time as PATH (Scotland) takes on refugees as trainees.

Thus, in the upcoming funding phase, PATH (Scotland) s activities can include:

- The central project of positive action for training in housing, open to members of BME groups including refugees.
- Diversification into other professional areas, such as social work and education.
- Promoting links with agencies working with refugees, to facilitate further access to PATH (Scotland) training by refugees (building on existing activity).
- Exploring the role of positive action in community regeneration (the research element of this work is already funded).
- Supporting research on career aspirations of BME young people (already funded).

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This report responds to research briefs issued by PATH (Scotland) and by Communities Scotland. For PATH (Scotland), it is the third in a series of research projects conducted by the University of Stirling to support and inform the organisation's activity. Previous work has involved an audit of equality policy and positive action in Scottish local authorities and housing associations (Bowes Sim and Wilson 2001), followed by an action-research project promoting the understanding and implementation of positive action in these local authorities and housing associations (Bowes and Sim 2002). For Communities Scotland, the report includes evaluation of PATH (Scotland), including the identification of lessons for good practice, an exploration of potential for positive action for refugees and comments on funding options for future positive action work.

This project extends research on and dissemination of good practice in positive action both within housing and in the wider fields of social work and education, identified by PATH (Scotland) as potential areas of public sector employment in which positive action is merited to increase BME employment in area of under-representation. Conclusions arising from our previous work provide essential background to this study. We demonstrated that levels of knowledge about and commitment to positive action in Scottish local authorities and housing associations were generally low. The earlier work also suggested some ways in which levels of knowledge and commitment could be improved, including networking and the better dissemination of information. PATH (Scotland) emerged as having a clear lead in the process of developing positive action in Scotland especially in housing, but also potentially in other areas, especially in public sector employment.

1.2 Positive action

Positive action is not formally defined under the Race Relations Act (1976). As discussed in this report, and as commonly understood, the term covers practices which involve assisting under-represented groups to compete with others on equal terms.

- Positive action means action permitted by the Race Relations Act (1976) that allows employers, training bodies, trade unions and employers associations to
- Encourage applications for jobs or membership from people of a particular racial group (as defined by the Act);

Provide training to help fit people of a particular racial group for particular work or posts where they have been disproportionately under-represented at any time during the past twelve months.

Positive action does not mean conferring advantage. So people can be given training to help them apply for jobs. Their applications must then be treated equally with others. Positive action is permissible under the Act in certain limited circumstances, that is, where disadvantage can be demonstrated with evidence.

Section 37 of the Act allows any person to provide members of a particular racial group with access to facilities for training for particular work, or encouragement to

take advantage of opportunities for doing that work when they have been under-represented in that work at any time within the past 12 months (CRE 1989:14). Section 38 permits employers to select employees from a particular racial group and train them to do jobs in which, over the last 12 months, members of that group have not been represented at, or have been under-represented (CRE 1989:14). It also allows employers to encourage non-employees and employees of particular racial groups to take advantage of opportunities for work in their organisation: this could mean applying for jobs, or applying for training placements (CRE 1989:14).

Some people erroneously describe positive action as positive discrimination. Positive discrimination however is likely to constitute unlawful discrimination, as selection would tend to be based on racial group.

1.3 PATH (Scotland)

PATH (Scotland) aims to tackle the under-representation of black and minority ethnic communities in employment in Scottish housing through positive action measures. The scheme operates by offering black and minority ethnic communities the opportunity of a two- or three-year work placement within housing associations and local authorities throughout Scotland. The PATH (Scotland) trainees are also required to undertake a formal housing qualification on a day release basis (further details are given in Chapter Four).

1.4 Aims of the research

The aims of the current research were as follows:

- to evaluate the current PATH (Scotland) scheme with a view to identifying good practice lessons;
- to explore the need for and practice of positive action in other professions in social work, education (both identified by PATH (Scotland)) and the voluntary sector (in which there are apparently key opportunities for BME workers);
- to explore the potentiality of positive action for refugees;
- to assess funding options for positive action;
- to identify good practice lessons from other positive action initiatives;
- to disseminate good practice to Scottish local authorities, including housing, social work and education professionals.

1.5 Organisation of the report

In chapter two, we outline the research methods used in the study. Chapter three examines background statistics on the employment of black and minority ethnic workers in housing, social work and education, as well as other areas of employment. Chapter four outlines the PATH (Scotland) process, and present key statistics on trainees and the outcomes of training. Chapter five explores the real experiences of black and minority ethnic workers in education, social work and the voluntary sector in Scotland, identifying the potential for positive action. Chapter six looks at the perspectives of stakeholders in the PATH (Scotland) scheme and identifies the good practice lessons it offers. Chapter seven examines the potential for positive action for refugees in Scotland, reviewing some precedents. Chapter eight reviews funding for positive action, placing PATH (Scotland) in a wider context. Chapter nine draws more general conclusions about good practice in positive action and the contribution and potential of PATH (Scotland). Examples of good practice in positive action from elsewhere are outlined in Appendix Two.

2 Research methods

2.1 Introduction

The project had six elements,

- a review of published statistical information about black and minority ethnic employment in the UK;
- interviews with black and minority ethnic workers in social work, education and the voluntary sector;
- evaluation of the current PATH (Scotland) scheme via a review of practice and outcomes as well as stakeholder interviews;
- exploration of the potential for positive action for refugees involving key informant interviews;
- a review of potential funding for positive action using documentary sources; and
- an exploration of positive action projects from elsewhere in the UK.

Each of these datasets was designed to inform good practice in positive action, as well as to identify any wider need for positive action in the Scottish context.

2.2 Statistical information

Statistical information was obtained from the 2001 Census, published April 2003, from data supplied by Scottish local authorities and housing associations and from the PSI s fourth national survey of ethnic minorities (Modood *et al* 1997).

2.3 Interviews with BME employees

We undertook a total of 15 interviews with existing BME employees in social work and education, to ascertain insider views about best practice in positive action, as well as the extent to which it was already practised or might be needed. Interviews also included voluntary sector employees in related fields (excluding housing associations), who might have experienced exclusion from mainstream employment in their chosen profession, and have entered voluntary sector employment in which opportunities appeared greater

These employment sectors had been identified by PATH (Scotland) as potential areas in which positive action work might be needed, and in which positive action involving training might be appropriate, following the PATH (Scotland) pattern.

2.4 Evaluation of PATH (Scotland)

The aim of this section of the work was to evaluate PATH (Scotland) s work by examining the operation of the scheme in terms of process and outcomes and by exploring the experiences and views of stakeholders in the current PATH (Scotland) scheme. We aimed to identify the good practice lessons offered by the scheme. Stakeholders were the trainees themselves, including some ex-trainees, the placement organisations and the training organisations (universities and colleges).

Interviews were carried out with ten trainees and ex-trainees, and representatives of ten placement organisations and three training organisations. Interview schedules are reproduced in Appendix One. The interviews covered each respondents experiences of the scheme, and their views about its strengths and any weaknesses they had encountered, as well as ascertaining the achievements of PATH (Scotland) in relation to its aims.

2.5 Positive action for refugees

Key informants were interviewed to identify the potential for positive action for refugees in Scotland. This was done in the light of the recent Scottish Refugee Information Forum s report (SRIF 2003), which emphasised the need for active measures to promote refugee integration. The interviews covered existing activities, as well as identifying what particular issues might be faced in work in this area.

2.6 Funding review

The funding review considered PATH (Scotland) s pattern of funding to date. Information on potential funding sources was identified and scrutinised for PATH (Scotland) s eligibility and the conditions of funding. Information on the funding of other positive action schemes was also identified.

2.7 Survey of current UK positive action initiatives

A UK-wide review of current positive action initiatives was conducted through internet searching, telephone interviewing and collection and review of documentary material. We aimed to cover 15 projects. In the event, we identified six projects in other parts of the UK which offered substantial examples of good practice, and a number of local initiatives in Glasgow, which we have also included in the report (Appendix Two). It became clear that, though many organisations paid lip-service to positive action, mentioning it in their publicity and apparently supporting it in practice, in fact relatively few were involved in initiatives of any substance.

3 Background statistical information

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents statistical data on patterns of employment of BME people in the UK. These data are essential to demonstrate the continuing under-representation of BME people in certain employment sectors. Lawful positive action requires under-representation to be demonstrated. Under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000), public authorities (including local authorities and housing associations) are required to keep data monitoring the ethnic composition of their workforce, and to publish these data annually. To date, very few such data have been published — when the performance of public authorities improves, these data will be of crucial importance in demonstrating the position of BME workers in Scotland, and will improve the rather sketchy picture currently available.

3.2 The 2001 Census

Detailed data from the 2001 Census are now starting to appear. Improvements have been made to the accuracy of the data, by adjusting for under-enumeration, some of which may affect BME groups. As compared with the 1991 Census, finer categories for ethnicity were used — these are sometimes amalgamated in the publications to form larger categories. As data have been only recently published, their full implications cannot yet be assessed.

According to the Census data, the total minority (i.e. non- White) population of Scotland is 101,677, 2 per cent of the total population. The minority population described as economically active i.e. those employed, self employed or seeking work is 34,559, or 1.4 per cent of the economically active as a whole.

In general, the Census data for Scotland confirm the continuing over-representation of South Asian people in self-employment, and their consequent under-representation in other areas of employment generally. Thus 24 per cent of Indians, 36 per cent of Pakistanis and 23 per cent of Bangladeshis in Scotland are self employed, as compared with 11 per cent of the population as a whole. 26 per cent of economically active Chinese people in Scotland are also self-employed. Other minorities do not show the same high levels of involvement in self employment.

Census data include a breakdown of employees by industry and ethnic group. Two industries of interest here are Education and Health and social work.¹ Table 3.1 identifies the proportions of different ethnic groups employed in these two sectors.

¹ This research did not focus on employment in health, and some caution should be exercised in reading the figures — in the health sector, overseas recruitment has been actively pursued, and it is not possible to identify its impact from figures currently available.

TABLE 3.1: Employment in ‘education’ and ‘health and social work’

Employment sector	Percentage of workforce					
	White	Indian	Pakistani and other South Asian	Chinese	Other	All Minority
Education	98.6	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.6	1.4
Health and social work	98.4	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.7	1.6

Minorities form 1.6 per cent of the total population in employment. These figures therefore suggest that overall, minorities are under-represented in education, as they form a smaller percentage of the workforce than might be expected. In health and social work, these very general figures must be interpreted with caution — they include, for example, health workers recently recruited abroad, due to a general shortage of qualified personnel in the UK. There is some variation between different ethnic categories, some of which may be accounted for by the overseas recruitment in the health field. It should be noted that these figures indicate nothing of the experiences of workers in either sector in terms of job type or career progression.

The Census data do not permit a gender breakdown — we would expect some gender variation. It is likely that the general data hide some significant variations which require finer-grain scrutiny.

3.3 The fourth national survey of ethnic minorities

The Policy Studies Institute's fourth national survey of ethnic minorities (Modood *et al* 1997) was carried out in 1994. As the fourth in a major series of surveys of BME people in England and Wales, this survey identifies a number of well-established key aspects of BME employment patterns and trends which are also relevant for Scotland.

Key findings of the survey are:

- there is significant variation both within and between different BME groups;
- relatively higher unemployment for Pakistani/ Bangladeshi and African-Caribbean men;
- lower employment rates among Pakistani and Bangladeshi women;
- variation in jobs, job levels and working conditions within and between different BME groups;
- high rates of self employment among Pakistanis, Indians, African Asians and Chinese groups;
- perceived discrimination, especially against Asians, and especially Muslims;
- higher rates of union membership for most BME groups, but not Pakistanis/Bangladeshis;

- decreasing disadvantage in terms of job level overall, but Indians and African Caribbeans experience relative disadvantage, and Pakistanis and Bangladeshis experience severe disadvantage;
- disadvantage is at least partly attributable to discrimination;
- economic restructuring has also contributed significantly to disadvantage.

These points indicate the complexity of patterns of workforce representation among BME groups. In particular, they suggest that broad figures may disguise some particular problem areas, such as the position of women, the role of discrimination in employment and the impact of restructuring in certain industries and areas in which BME workers were commonly employed. We have already noted in the discussion of Census data that high rates of self employment complicate the picture — how far these may be related to exclusion from other employment is not clear.

3.4 Scottish data

The material in this section derives from data published by Scottish local authorities and housing associations. To date, as we have noted above, the publication of data has been limited, and the picture we are able to present is inevitably sketchy. Generally, data appear to be readily available for housing employment than for other areas. We were unable to identify specific figures for employment in social work or education either through employers or professional associations.

Our audit of equality policy and practice (Bowes Sim and Wilson 2001) included a postal survey of housing employers in Scotland, part of which covered the composition of the workforce. We asked for a current staff profile, if possible, with a breakdown by gender, ethnicity and grade. Many local authority respondents were unable to do this for their organisation and so the data remained incomplete. Nevertheless, the data that were actually made available suggest that housing associations employed proportionately more black and minority ethnic staff than local authorities. Overall, 6.6 per cent of housing association staff were of BME origin, compared to a figure of 0.4 per cent for local authorities. As might be expected, there is a significant difference between urban and rural areas. Organisations operating exclusively in rural Scotland had 0.5 per cent of their employees from BME groups, but the figure rose to 1.8 per cent in mixed rural / urban organisations, and 7.6 per cent in urban areas. There are in particular, some urban housing associations in Glasgow with higher proportions of BME employees which will have affected the totals.

Analysis of the figures by gender suggests that most BME staff were female and the split of approximately 70 per cent female to 30 per cent male did not really vary, either between housing associations and local authorities, or across different areas of Scotland. Data on BME staff by grade, however, were almost impossible to obtain, reflecting the position that most organisations were undertaking ethnic monitoring of staff at the point of application and appointment, but not thereafter. It was therefore impossible to judge the success of minority ethnic staff in reaching senior level posts.

As a further indication of levels of housing employment, it is worth noting that the Chartered Institute of Housing in Scotland has 35 members who identified themselves as of BME origin, out of a total membership of almost 1700.

It is clear that in Scotland public authorities still have some way to go in terms of publishing monitoring statistics as required under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000). Whilst there is national under-representation of BME groups in housing employment nationally, nothing is known of career progression of BME employees.

3.5 Conclusion

Whilst only limited and imperfect data are available, there is evidence of continuing disadvantage in employment for BME groups, though particular groups may be more vulnerable than others. The patterns of employment are complex, and data may mask some significant disadvantage. The basis for positive action on a broad front, i.e. demonstrable under-representation, appears to be well supported.

4 Overview of the PATH (Scotland) scheme

4.1 Aims of the PATH (Scotland) scheme

PATH (Scotland) aims to

- rectify the under-representation of black and ethnic minority people working in housing in Scotland;
- provide high quality training which is tailored to the needs of individual trainees;
- enable the trainees, when qualified, to compete effectively for employment within the housing labour market;
- enable BME people to gain a professional / academic qualification.

The current PATH (Scotland) scheme commenced in 1998, and has been funded by a range of organisations, including the Scottish Executive, Communities Scotland (formerly Scottish Homes), the National Lottery Charities Board, and Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland. Some funding (Scottish Homes/Communities Scotland) has supported the central project of positive action training, whilst other elements have supported other particular projects, including research or elements of the training, including staff costs. Placement organisations also contribute important funding, as they pay the trainees allowances, CIH costs and a £1,000 charge per year per trainee as a contribution to PATH (Scotland) administration costs.

4.2 The PATH (Scotland) process

In this section, we outline the process of induction, training and support provided by PATH (Scotland) and the training and placement organisations. PATH (Scotland) recruits trainees, then works with them to achieve the key aims of the organisation

4.2.1 Trainee and placement induction

When applicants are selected for a PATH (Scotland) traineeship, they undergo an induction period. This involves some limited training, which sometimes involves accessing courses run by the Chartered Institute of Housing in areas such as Introductions to Housing Work, and Time Management.

In a small number of cases, applicants decide at this stage that they do not wish to continue with the traineeship and leave after the induction period. The majority who remain then enter discussions with PATH (Scotland) staff, aimed at linking them to the placement opportunities available, and to an appropriate housing course at college or university.

Prior to meeting their intended placement organisation, all trainees spend time working through a Trainee Pack, provided by PATH (Scotland). This is a substantial package of material, as follows:

a Trainee Handbook, containing information on PATH (Scotland) itself, on the training programme to be followed, and training allowances to be paid, on the academic courses to be followed, and on various personnel issues, such as hours of work, annual leave, and disciplinary and grievance procedures;

- guidance on essay writing;
- guidance on report writing;
- guidance on presentation skills;
- guidance on effective writing skills;
- guidance on applying for jobs, and interviewing skills;
- a summary of the responsibilities of PATH (Scotland) to both the trainee and the placement provider;
- a summary of the role of the placement supervisor;
- a weekly diary sheet for use on placement;
- a statement of expectations , i.e. what trainees should expect from their traineeship;
- a Trainee Details Form, for completion to be held in PATH (Scotland) offices;
- an Information Note on Housing, for the benefit of trainees with a non-housing background;
- CIH membership material;
- the most recent PATH (Scotland) Annual Report; and
- a summary of recent PATH (Scotland) research (Bowes and Sim 2002).

Organisations which offer placement opportunities for PATH (Scotland) trainees also receive introductory material in the form of a Supervisors Pack. This is similarly detailed, and includes the following:

- A Supervisor Handbook, which includes sections on PATH (Scotland) itself, on the role of the supervisor, the expectations of the trainee, a guide to the type of work experience which trainees should follow, on the academic courses which trainees will follow, and a range of personnel issues, such as time keeping, hours of work, annual leave, disciplinary and grievance procedures;
- A note on the responsibilities of PATH (Scotland) to trainee and placement provider;
- Summaries of recent PATH (Scotland) research (Bowes, Sim and Wilson 2001; Bowes and Sim 2002).
- A note on the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000;
- A note on institutional equality; and
- A list of useful contact addresses, such as local Race Equality Councils.

4.2.2 Setting up and supervising placements

Once a trainee has been matched with a placement organisation, staff within PATH (Scotland) and the placement organisation sign a Placement Provider Agreement, while PATH (Scotland) staff and trainees sign a Trainee Agreement. A pre-placement meeting is then held between PATH (Scotland), the trainee and the placement organisation, and this is structured according to a detailed checklist and the meeting note is signed by PATH (Scotland) and the placement organisation.

Once trainees start their placements, they are visited by PATH (Scotland) staff and also spend days in PATH (Scotland) offices, for feedback and support sessions. These days can also be used for specialist training that the trainees have requested. External trainers are sometimes used, and these special sessions have included assertiveness, dealing with difficult customers, study skills and mediation.

Prior to a placement meeting taking place, supervisors complete Supervisor Assessment Forms, which detail the progress made by trainees and which form the basis for discussions at meetings with PATH (Scotland). At the end of the first year of training, a First Year Placement Review takes place, and supervisors are asked to complete a progress form, identifying trainees knowledge and skills.

At the end of the placement, both organisations and trainees complete End of Placement Reviews, identifying the benefits, difficulties encountered, levels of support provided and so on. Feedback from trainees may highlight issues to be taken up with organisations in relation to future placements, while organisational feedback can assist trainees in securing employment.

4.2.3 Academic Courses

Depending on the trainees' academic background, they are helped to apply for an HNC in Housing at one of the colleges, or a postgraduate Diploma at Glasgow, Heriot-Watt or Stirling Universities. Placement organisations allow time for day release, as part of the agreement with PATH (Scotland).

Colleges and universities provide feedback at the end of each academic year to both PATH (Scotland) and the placement organisation, or more frequently if problems arise.

Academic courses are validated by the Chartered Institute of Housing and most expect students to be Student Members of the CIH. This is why CIH membership material is included in the Student Pack.

4.2.4 Completing the traineeship

A number of trainees secure jobs before they complete their traineeship, some with their placement organisation. For those who do not, advice is provided within the Student Pack on jobseeking and on skills such as completing a CV and being interviewed. The End of Placement Review forms are also useful in that they allow trainees to request the support of an employment counsellor or employment agency, to help them secure a job.

Finally, six months after trainees have completed their training, they are sent a questionnaire by PATH (Scotland), asking for up-to-date details of current employment, and asking the former trainees to reflect on how well the traineeship prepared them for the jobs which they are now doing. This questionnaire provides important feedback to PATH (Scotland) staff, but it is also felt to be a helpful way of keeping in contact with former trainees.

4.2.5 Overview

As the PATH (Scotland) programme has developed over recent years, the administrative procedures designed to support trainees have also developed. The trainee programmes are now very structured and formal agreements between PATH (Scotland), placement providers and trainees are designed to ensure that the responsibilities of all the parties concerned are clear. The various monitoring and progress forms are also designed to ensure that any problems are identified relatively quickly. Information packs for trainees and placement providers are very comprehensive.

4.3 Trainee statistics

Since its establishment in 1998, a total of 51 trainees have been accepted by PATH (Scotland). In seven cases, either the trainees decided that they did not wish to proceed, sometimes for personal reasons, such as domestic difficulties or an inability to travel to the placement organisation, or else PATH (Scotland) took the view that the person concerned was unsuitable for housing work. The remaining 44 students studied for a housing qualification concurrently with undertaking work experience with a placement provider.

Table 4.1 shows the present position regarding academic study of the 44 trainees.

TABLE 4.1: PATH (Scotland) trainees – April 2003

Status	Number of trainees
Completed HNC	7
Still studying HNC	4
Completed postgraduate Diploma	6
Still studying postgraduate Diploma	14
Completed undergraduate Housing degree	1
Started studying — not completed	10
Applying for entry in 2003	2
TOTAL	44

The fact that ten people started studying but then failed to complete their qualification is perhaps slightly disappointing, but there are a wide variety of reasons for this. In three cases, the trainee secured employment but their new employer was unable to continue to fund their academic study and allow day release. The traineeship was thus partly successful in enabling these individuals to obtain housing jobs, albeit that they were unable to obtain a formal qualification.

In two cases, the trainee secured employment but not in housing, one returning to his former profession. In another case, the trainee was forced to terminate her traineeship with PATH (Scotland) because of problems affecting her immigration status. The remaining five individuals failed to proceed because of a variety of personal reasons.

As far as the placements are concerned, all students were matched with a placement organisation, although some students barely started the placement (leaving very early in the traineeship), while some placements were not completed because the trainee obtained employment. In three cases, the trainee secured permanent employment with their placement provider.

Of the 51 placement opportunities which PATH (Scotland) identified, 31 were with housing associations, 17 with local authorities and 3 with Scottish

Homes/Communities Scotland. At the end of PATH (Scotland) s first year of existence, only two local authorities had offered to support a trainee, but more local authorities came forward with placement opportunities in subsequent years. Eleven organisations have offered more than one placement, suggesting a long term commitment to PATH (Scotland).

The placements are spread across Scotland. It might have been expected that the bulk of placements would be in the Greater Glasgow area, where there is a larger BME presence and where housing organisations might be more aware of BME issues. In fact, 28 placement providers are located outwith Greater Glasgow, in the Lothians, Central Scotland, Tayside and the North East. PATH (Scotland) is therefore operating on a genuinely national basis.

PATH (Scotland) collects data on the employment destinations of trainees. Of the 44 trainees who proceeded with their traineeship, data on the organisations with whom they obtained employment are shown in Table 4.2.

TABLE 4.2 Employment destinations of PATH (Scotland) trainees

Employment Destinations of Trainees	Number
Local authorities	7
Housing associations	6
Scottish Homes / Communities Scotland	1
Voluntary organisations	4
Non-housing	3
Not known	6
Still undertaking traineeship	17
TOTAL	44

There is a wide spread of destinations, with trainees obtaining employment with a range of organisations.

Table 4.3 shows the employment which trainees obtained by the type of housing work involved. The bulk of employment has been in mainstream housing management, with some opting to take jobs as advice workers, in two cases with minority ethnic organisations. This pattern is not surprising, as placement experience is likely to have focused on housing management, rather than more specialist tasks.

TABLE 4.3 Housing employment secured by PATH (Scotland) trainees

Type of housing employment secured	Number
Housing Management	10
Housing Development	1
Housing Policy	1
Clerical	2
Housing Advice	3
Care work	1
Non-housing	3
Not known	6
Still undertaking traineeship	17
TOTAL	44

4.4 Research and evaluation

PATH (Scotland) operates as self-reflective organisation, and has funded research alongside its training programme, to support and contextualise the training, using Scottish Executive funding. An audit of race equality policy and practice (Bowes, Sim and Wilson 2001) audit identified current practice and significant needs for improvement at policy and practice levels in Scottish local authorities and housing associations. Following these conclusions, an action-research project (Bowes and Sim 2002) provided positive action training, promoting cascading knowledge into organisations. In all, 65 participants received training, taking their knowledge back to a range of housing organisations including housing associations, local authorities, housing co-operatives and others.

The next planned research projects, which will support PATH (Scotland) s next phase of work involve firstly, examining the developing career aspirations of BME young people longitudinally and secondly, exploring the role of positive action in community regeneration projects.

4.5 Other activities

PATH (Scotland) s expertise in implementing positive action has formed the basis of specialist training for the placement organisations on such topics as positive action, race equality, equal opportunities and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act. Payment per session is received for this work. Some consultancy is also done, such as the development of a guide on recent legislation for use in a local authority. PATH (Scotland) staff have been called on to participate in consultations such as that concerning the Regulatory Framework for RSLs. Such work is considered valuable for disseminating the good practice expertise held by PATH (Scotland), but its extent is inevitably limited by staff workloads.

PATH (Scotland) has collaborative relationships with other organisations. Some of these relate directly to the training programme, in that the placement organisations in particular seek PATH (Scotland) advice on wider aspects of race equality and positive action. Others are more general — for example, the director of PATH (Scotland) is company secretary of Positive Action in Housing, and the two organisations have run joint training.

4.6 Conclusion

PATH (Scotland) thus operates on a national basis, throughout Scotland. The scheme is tightly structured, with clear guidelines for all participants, and formally negotiated agreements in place between them. PATH (Scotland) provides support for trainees throughout the process of their placement and training, identifies and supports placement organisations and promotes positive action through contact with employers and trainers.

The trainee statistics indicate a record of success, in that PATH (Scotland) trainees achieve good levels of employment on completing the scheme. Where trainees leave the scheme, reasons are identifiable and recorded, and many are beyond the control of PATH (Scotland), the placement organisations or the colleges or universities.

5 Black and minority ethnic workers in Scotland – views and experiences

5.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the views and experiences of the fifteen black and minority ethnic employees interviewed for the study. They were identified through employers and groups of employees and interviewed about their experiences of employment, and their views about the needs for and potential benefits of positive action. The sectors selected for attention were social work, education and the voluntary sector. Social work and education had been identified by PATH (Scotland) as potential areas of the public sector in which positive action might be merited. The voluntary sector is an area in which there are apparently opportunities for BME employment. Housing employees were not included in this study, as their experiences have been explored recently in another piece of research (Bowes, McIntosh and Sim 2002).

The aim of these interviews was to take a wider view on BME employment experiences and to help explore issues of the need for positive action in other employment sectors.

5.2 Employment and experience

Of the 15 interviewees, five worked in local government in social work services, six in education (five in schools and one in further education), and four worked in the voluntary sector. Job responsibilities varied. Of the five people in social work services, only two worked directly in delivering services to the public; the other three were involved in finance, personnel, and the commissioning of services. Of those in the voluntary sector, three worked in advocacy services and one in interpreting.

Interviewees had held their current posts for comparatively short periods. Seven had been in post for between one and two years, seven for three to four years and one for only six months. Certain individuals did, however, have substantial experience in other posts.

All those interviewed were very well qualified. Twelve had a degree (one also with a doctorate), two a professional Diploma and one an HND. All but four people had studied in the UK; these four had degrees from Pakistan, Malaya, Gambia and from Iraq. Not everyone specified their area of study but those that did mentioned social work, health studies and marketing, which were all related to their area of work.

Almost all had studied within the previous ten years. Most degrees had been gained between 1993 and 2001, with only two dating from the 1980s. Three people referred to ongoing training and continuing professional development, and two were currently involved in studying for a postgraduate qualification.

As many interviewees had degrees and professional qualifications, further job-related training had only been necessary in five cases. Such training had generally been provided internally and had been funded by the employer concerned. One person had arrived in Glasgow as an asylum seeker and their training had been funded by the Glasgow Asylum Seeker Project (GASP). Training had mainly been provided during working hours, although in two cases, some training had been provided at other times, with employees receiving time off in lieu. The length of training varied from one day to longer, three week courses.

Three people felt that they had not received sufficient internal training and this had affected their ability to get to grips with the job. One person had started an MSc course and hoped that their employer would decide to help with the costs of the course.

Interviewees were asked how they had heard about their present post and whether they had subsequently applied for promotion. In three cases, people had heard informally, through word of mouth, while in a further eight cases, they had seen an advertisement, either internal or external. One person had moved on from a university work placement, one had just progressed, one had been seconded from another post, and one had moved following an internal reorganisation.

Only two people had received promotion. Four had applied and not got it and this had caused some resentment:

Promotion is a difficult one in social work. Any promotion must be recommended and supported by a senior and unfortunately this does not happen very often. The truth of the matter is that people do not want a black supervisor. As you can imagine, this is very difficult to prove, therefore institutionalised racism goes by unnoticed (1405²).

This individual went on to describe in some detail how they believed that the former Strathclyde Region treated BME and white staff in different ways, in respect of training secondments. The issue had eventually involved the CRE.

Those individuals who had failed to get promotion therefore felt that they had not been treated fairly:

I feel I have been held back in my work, maybe due to personality clashes. I can't really say more than that (1402).

I have evidence to prove that I was badly treated (1406).

I feel, as a first generation in this country, I was very fortunate to get this job. But I do feel that I have no chance of getting promotion, because I have never had the chance of getting further qualifications, which would be beneficial to me professionally (1401).

One individual (interviewee 1405, quoted above) claimed to have been seconded into social work on a scheme to increase the numbers of BME staff in the profession. However, BME staff were paid at a rate lower than white students who were seconded on to similar schemes. The individual refused to

² In this chapter, interviewee numbers are given — these illustrate the range of quotation used, and permit the identification of comments from the same interviewee. In other chapters, a similar range of quotation has been used, but numbers are not given, since they could compromise respondent confidentiality.

participate in the scheme until parity in pay was achieved, after intervention by the Commission for Racial Equality:

It took almost a year to get some kind of equal opportunity programme running in this organisation. I have always felt that my job was on the line since then, but I am determined that other BME employees get equal rights. It is still an uphill struggle for equality almost thirteen years later (1405).

Three people had made formal complaints about their perceived unfair treatment but were dissatisfied with the outcome. There were therefore several experiences of discrimination within our sample but the lack of a positive outcome to complaints had led to feelings of resignation amongst those involved.

It was suggested that a specific example of unfair treatment, in terms of applying for jobs and for promotions, was the reluctance of some employers to give sufficient credit for qualifications obtained overseas.

It is very difficult to prove that I did not get such and such a job, because someone on the interview panel has a problem with my ethnicity, but it goes on. Another problem that is related is age. Often people who come here with an education from another country are required to undertake further training. This can mean another three or four years training, assuming that the individual can afford to train. This can often mean that, by the time he or she is qualified for the job, he or she is too old. This has been the experience of many of my friends (1415).

5.3 Experiences in the workplace

Interviewees were asked for their views on the experiences of BME staff in the workplace. A number of problems were identified, including lack of access to all training and employment opportunities, including opportunities for promotion, and racism and resentment within offices, including institutional racism. One respondent also suggested that BME individuals were sometimes subjected to pressures from family and friends in regard to whether certain jobs were viewed as being more or less acceptable.

Two people stated that they thought white people were sometimes allowed to get away with things which were picked up on, in the case of BME staff.

Slight errors are treated as serious incidents for BME people; things that would be dismissed if they happened to a white member of staff are treated very seriously for BME workers (1415).

This inequality of treatment often led to feelings of insecurity, that the job was never completely safe .

5.4 Positive action

Interviewees were asked if they were familiar with the term positive action , if any positive action initiatives existed within their organisation and, if not, if they thought it was appropriate for their organisation.

Seven people were unsure about the term and were unwilling to provide a definition. The other eight correctly identified it as a means of equipping BME

individuals to apply for employment on the same basis as white people, and with equivalent expectations of success. Positive action, it was suggested was:

Giving training for a particular job, so that the individual can apply for that job and be treated equally (1408).

...when an ethnic minority person receives training and expects to get a job in an area where black people are under-represented (1409).

...a training programme for black and minority ethnic people to gain access to employment (1412).

There did not, however, appear to be many positive action initiatives in existence, of which interviewees were aware. Four people mentioned the PATH (Scotland) scheme and three the Ethnic Minority Advocacy Service, although it is not clear if the latter specifically promotes positive action. In two organisations, there had been discussions about introducing positive action initiatives, but the only tangible result appeared to be the introduction of ethnic monitoring and the establishment of a Black Workers Forum. Mention was also made of internal training to encourage BME staff to realise their potential and remain in the social work profession.

Despite the rather limited success in establishing initiatives, the majority of interviewees were nevertheless clear that positive action was extremely important and should be pursued. They felt that this would help to address the under-representation of BME staff, although two people expressed some scepticism about its likely effectiveness. For example, one person felt he was in a favoured position, as a former asylum seeker:

I am acutely aware that I got the job, because of the asylum seeker situation, because I speak other languages. The regular system has meant that black people have had to train, train and re-train in order to get a basic teaching post. Our expertise has been at best unnoticed or unrecognised – or at worst, ignored (1415).

In another case, the interviewee felt that their employer could be more supportive:

... the Black Workers Forum ... is a group aimed at BME employees throughout the Council... However, as far as I am aware, there are eighty BME workers but only a handful have used the Forum. I asked for permission to start an awareness-raising project to tell all BME workers about the Forum but I was told I could not get access to the names...because it would clash with policy on freedom of information. As a result of this, most of the BME employees are denied information...(1402).

This individual had conducted a survey of BME usage of training opportunities and internal job vacancies and had been concerned at the low numbers of BME employees applying. It was felt that this was an issue which could be addressed by a positive action initiative.

The main benefit of positive action initiatives was seen as being the creation of a workforce which was more reflective of the community which it served:

A Social Services Department should be seen to understand the needs of the community and to provide services accordingly. The only way to address that is to be seen to be representative of the community.

Glasgow is a multi-cultural city and...we must have staff that understand the needs of the BME groups (1402).

It would help the client base to see more people from BME backgrounds were there to present their case for them (1405).

There are more people from BME backgrounds in Glasgow's schools now, which has highlighted the gap in BME teaching staff. We find that children from BME backgrounds will open up more to a teacher of the same or similar background (1411).

It would encourage people from BME groups to apply for jobs that were otherwise seen as unattainable for black people. As the numbers of BME teachers increased, this would in turn provide role models for children from BME groups. As it stands right now, there are so few black teachers, and children get the message that black people are not teachers (1415).

Positive action was also seen as being problematic, not least because it could lead to resentment among white staff, unless they were sufficiently informed about the reason for establishing such initiatives. One respondent suggested that, ideally, BME staff should obtain employment on their own skills and ability. That said, their exclusion from access to certain jobs in the past needed to be addressed through positive action. But thought needed to be given as to how schemes could be implemented, delivered and supervised.

If everyone understands what the project aims to do, and it is made very clear to them that positive action is not about preferential treatment for black workers, then it will be accepted for what it really is. In my personal experience, I think that most people would encourage a positive action programme in education (1414).

There was also a concern that employers would have unrealistically high expectations of individuals who had been on positive action programmes:

Sometimes things are left for 'specialist' workers, i.e. ones without qualifications, to carry out all the jobs necessary. In other words, the danger of having a positive action programme is that these workers will be expected to be 'super workers', who will have an exceptionally high work load dumped on them, whether these jobs are appropriate for them or not (1401).

It was also recognised by some interviewees that the needs of BME staff were not the only ones which might be addressed through positive action, as some white workers had been excluded from jobs or from promotions, because of class, gender or religion. Positive action for BME staff should not therefore be viewed in isolation.

Human nature is such that, if it is perceived that one group is favoured over another group, then there will be barriers. I would suggest that there are many other minority groups in Glasgow, and they are equally under-represented in certain employment sectors, and as soon as you highlight the plight of one group, you are, at the same time, marginalising another. Therefore, if there is positive action in education and social work, then it should be aimed at addressing the under-representation of all minority groups – the disabled, single women, and the long-term unemployed (1415).

While recognising the need for positive action, it was also thought that there might be barriers to its implementation within organisations. One of the main barriers was ignorance of its aims but this could be addressed through better information and awareness-raising campaigns. More difficult to address was the belief that much racism within organisations was covert, possibly unintentionally so. An example of this was the way in which information circulated through informal networks, including lunchtime sessions at the pub, from which BME staff felt excluded.

One of the first steps identified by interviewees was awareness-raising, to inform all staff about the need for positive action. Thereafter, initiatives might usefully focus on particular groups. For example:

I think that it should be aimed at young people who have already demonstrated a special aptitude for community-based work (1403).

It was also suggested that proper supervision and back-up needed to be in place to ensure success. Another suggestion was to second BME staff to colleges and universities, where they could undertake work-based placements. This is similar to the existing PATH (Scotland) scheme, though more limited, as it would not include the extra training provided under the scheme.

Funding was perceived as a potential problem. One local authority was running a scheme to encourage BME staff to realise their potential but it was, of necessity, restricted to its own employees. Positive action initiatives would need to be aimed at the wider BME communities, to enable individuals to apply for posts, but the operation, and presumably the funding, of such a scheme would probably have to be undertaken by another body.

5.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, it was clear that many employees had experienced discrimination, had failed to gain promotions and had complained about discriminatory treatment. The unsatisfactory outcomes had led to feelings of resentment and resignation.

Positive action was seen as an important solution to many of the problems which were identified, but only if it involved re-education of all staff and was accepted by everyone in the workplace. Otherwise, resentment and racism would not be successfully challenged:

Positive action is definitely needed but it is very important that there is an education programme for all staff about the needs of the client base...BME clients need to know that they have the choice to speak to someone who understands the problems that they face (1402).

Overall, it was argued that positive action should not be used by organisations merely as a front to cover employers against criticisms of institutional racism and under-representation of BME staff, about which they were doing little.

Compared with the experiences of employees in housing (Bowes, MacIntosh and Sim 2002), the experiences of these employees were less positive. The CIH report suggested that housing employers had made progress in terms of improving working environments, whereas in social work and education, there appears to be more work to do. It was clear from the CIH report that PATH (Scotland) had played a significant role in the quality of working experience for the employees interviewed. Among the voluntary sector employees interviewed for the current research, matters are somewhat better, but this would have been predicted for workers in BME voluntary sector groups.

6 The PATH (Scotland) scheme: stakeholder perspectives

6.1 Introduction

This chapter forms part of the evaluation of the current PATH (Scotland) scheme, examining the points of view of the three main stakeholder groups, the trainees and ex-trainees, the placement organisations and the training organisations. It complements the material on process and outcomes discussed in chapter 4, and the evidence of need for positive action identified in the outline of statistical data (chapter 3) and the account of experiences of BME employees (chapter 5).

6.2 PATH (Scotland) trainees

6.2.1 Characteristics

Ten PATH (Scotland) trainees (8) and ex-trainees (2) were interviewed about their current and past experiences of the scheme, taking account of both the training and placement elements. There were six men and four women, ranging in age from 24 to 50 years. Their ethnic origins were varied, representing South Asian, African, Caribbean and European groups, and they spoke a wide range of languages. Both the ex-trainees were working in housing jobs at the time of interview, though not with the organisations in which they had been placed under the PATH (Scotland) scheme. Neither had received a CIH professional qualification on completion of their training, as this had not been available through PATH (Scotland) at the time.³

6.2.2 Academic study

The interviewees were attending or had attended a range of university and college courses. Four were unequivocal about their enjoyment of the courses, four had enjoyed most of their studies, and one was experiencing difficulties at the time of interview. Considering which parts of the course they had enjoyed the most, some students identified particular topics that they had found especially interesting, whilst others expressed more general enjoyment, both of the course itself and of the experience of being a student:

I have enjoyed everything so far. It is all so new, I find I am wide-eyed most of the time.

We [the student group] find that we have much more in common than any one of us had expected – this has had an unexpected positive effect.

Two students had felt excluded from class discussions, ignored by other students and staff. One in particular explained clearly how such exclusion could arise:

³ CIH professional qualifications became available to PATH trainees from 2002.

I felt excluded from class discussions because I did not have prior knowledge of housing or local history. Often class discussions were based on events that I had no knowledge, for example rent strikes. Most of the people in the class had some knowledge of the events, or at least the geographical location.... I had no idea. I felt that as a direct result of my lack of local knowledge, my opinions were not valued in any way, either from staff or from other students.

This student saw the difficulty as lying in their own lack of knowledge — to an outside observer however, the comments raise questions about the apparent failure of the class to include this student. Such problems may be alleviated by the introduction to housing which is now offered as part of the PATH (Scotland) training.

All but one trainee felt that the quality of the course was good, though commented that the workload was sometimes heavy and the level of study quite demanding. All but two felt that they had received good supervision — for one of these, the whole experience seems to have been negative.

They noted particular problems faced by part-time students, including some difficulties with access to library resources, and with gaining access to student support services. These were due, they explained to time pressures, as much as to the availability of services.

Three trainees had experienced health and or personal problems at some stage during the course, and these had generally been satisfactorily resolved. One trainee in particular described support received from both staff and fellow students and another had found the institution to have been flexible in responding to difficulties. One however felt that the problem continued, but had just carried on, seeing no point in continuing to raise the difficulty.

Trainees who had not experienced problems were asked where they would have sought help had they done so. All stated that they would have gone to PATH (Scotland). It is worth noting that this route appeared to have been used only by one of those who had had some difficulties.

Considering the relevance of the training to their careers, nearly everyone was happy with this, though one took a more instrumental view:

It was a means to an end for me. My qualifications from home were not recognised here, so I had to re-train. The course provided me with the piece of paper that I needed to be taken seriously for employment here.

This comment reflected a reality for several trainees. Notwithstanding the need for the training, only one trainee had received career advice during the course.

Respondents were asked to comment on the experiences of BME students taking their course. Here, they noted clear needs for the kind of support they received from the PATH (Scotland) scheme, referring for example to the unfamiliarity of the subject, the newness and demands of the study regime. Others commented on difficulties with the institution, whilst seeing these as a challenge to be overcome:

I think that segregation goes on in every establishment....sometimes the segregation is by choice – people from BME groups tend to stick together for obvious reasons.....Sometimes the segregation is forced by

other social situations. However, I think that the individual can overcome the segregation if they have the personality and the determination to persevere.

If the individual is prepared to address the issue from the start, then this will prevent any problem from escalating...In my experience, most people are unaware that a comment could be interpreted as racist, and once I tell them...they have apologised to me and the matter is dropped. This is all part of the education process of co-operation and mutual respect.

One trainee saw the PATH (Scotland) scheme as having a wider impact on the issue of racism:

There are no quick fixes to address this issue. I do however think that schemes such as PATH (Scotland) will make a difference. As people from BME groups who manage to succeed in education and continue to make inroads into the labour market, this has to make some impact on one aspect of the minority issue.

Overall, the trainees and ex-trainees expressed satisfaction with their courses, whilst identifying some difficulties attached to part-time study and to aspects of racism. These, however, were identified by a minority.

6.2.3 Placement experiences

Four of those interviewed had had placements in local authorities and the others in housing associations. These had covered a wide area of Scotland and had included both urban and rural authorities and small and large housing associations. Thus the interviews covered a wide range of experiences.

All described the work they did on placement as being general, in that they had moved about between different parts of the organisation. Most had enjoyed the placement overall, though some had enjoyed some areas of work more than others. This respondent identified a particularly positive placement experience:

I have enjoyed every aspect of the training so far. I have no complaints about anything in the placement. My line manager has listened to me to determine my needs and...has structured my training to complement the training that I will be receiving at the next stage of my academic course.

Several mentioned that they had enjoyed working with members of the public, and saw this as one of the best aspects of their work.

Asked about the least enjoyable aspects of their placements, people highlighted moving around the organisation as presenting particular difficulties, in that they did not have a desk, and sometimes found themselves getting in the way of busy staff. Two felt that their skills were under-valued, and that they had not been allowed to do real work at times:

The worst aspect is that I have no permanent post. I do not stay in one place long enough to prove that I could be an asset to the department. It would be better if I had been given specialist work. It is not good to be considered a Jack-of-all-trades. That is no good to anyone.

They expressed a wish for the placement to be more demanding, and to involve real work and effective use of the skills they felt they had. The PATH

(Scotland) scheme is designed to move people through blocks of work in the placement organisations so that they gain wide experience — for this respondent at least, this approach had not proved helpful.

Sources of help perceived for problems with placements included the placement supervisors, and four respondents again mentioned PATH (Scotland) as a source of advice and support.

Three people specifically mentioned racism as a problem in the placement organisations, and another spoke more generally of resentment and power structures. Others however did not see particular problems for BME workers in their placement organisations.

Respondents were asked to identify aspects of their placements and the organisations which they felt provided examples of good practice. Some referred to the organisations themselves, which had, for example, good equal opportunities policies, or treated the trainees well, involving them in decision making about the placement and the jobs they were doing. Others referred to aspects of the practice of the organisations, some of which were described as doing particularly good, responsive work with local minority communities.

6.2.4 The PATH (Scotland) scheme

All the trainees and ex-trainees rated the PATH (Scotland) scheme positively, and referred to the impact of the scheme on individuals and organisations alike:

Without the PATH (Scotland) scheme, there would be no BME employees in this office.

You have heard the saying 'give a man a fish and he will feed his family for one day – give him the tools to catch his own fish and he will feed his family for life'. This is all that black people want from any system, an equal opportunity to work.

The PATH (Scotland) scheme enables BME people to gain the relevant experience to get a job in housing. I would not be here without the PATH (Scotland) scheme and I believe for my employer, that the experience of having a BME employee has been very positive, and hopefully will lead them to be less reluctant to consider applications from BME people in the future.

PATH (Scotland) empowers people from BME groups to make the most of their own individual skills. The training and support that PATH (Scotland) offers is excellent. The scheme offers the flexibility to be able to study and gain work experience at the same time.

They also identified some difficulties. These included the level of payment they received whilst in the scheme, which was mentioned by four people. Others referred to perceptions of the scheme, noting that some still perceived it as a form of preferential treatment, and did not understand positive action. They suggested that there was a need for better education about positive action for the placement organisations and their staff:

Some of my colleagues have asked me how is it fair that BME employees should get preferential treatment when there are so many

local people unemployed. However, I believe that education about the real aims of the PATH (Scotland) scheme should be better implemented.

Comments like this emphasise the conspicuous position in which PATH (Scotland) trainees could find themselves, often the sole BME person in an organisation, and somehow seen as representing the BME population as a whole. They also suggest that the information about positive action which is sent to organisations by PATH (Scotland) is not necessarily effectively disseminated within them.

Looking at the aims of the PATH (Scotland) scheme, the respondents felt that it would contribute towards rectifying the under-representation of black and minority ethnic people working in housing in Scotland. They emphasised however that this was a responsibility for housing organisations generally, and that PATH (Scotland) could not do this alone, although it was making a contribution to change. They also felt that the aim of providing good quality training was being fulfilled, though noted that the individual's motivation and commitment were also important. The qualifications gained were seen as assisting BME people to compete in the labour market, though again, some reservations were expressed:

This is difficult. The training is excellent, but I do not think that training alone will stop racial discrimination.

Again therefore, the trainees were assessing the scheme in relation to the environment, which they perceived as continuing to be discriminatory.

6.3 Placement organisations

6.3.1 Characteristics

Representatives of ten placement organisations were interviewed, four local authorities and six housing associations. Each of those interviewed was included for their special expertise in speaking about the organisation's experience of the PATH (Scotland) scheme.

Apart from PATH (Scotland) trainees, half of the organisations had other minority ethnic staff, with most mentioning one or two people. Only the larger local authorities had more members of staff from a black or minority ethnic background. One respondent mentioned that they did not know this information, as no monitoring was done.

6.3.2 Involvement in PATH (Scotland)

Organisations had become involved following contact by PATH (Scotland). For seven, their experiences had been unequivocally positive, with two not yet ready to comment because the placement was currently at an early stage. One organisation, which had taken two trainees had had one negative and one positive experience. For the future, six interviewees stated that their organisation would definitely take on another trainee.

Yes, we would definitely consider taking on other PATH (Scotland) trainees. We are keen to encourage people from BME groups into this type of employment.

One of these respondents was especially positive about the current PATH (Scotland) scheme as compared with the previous one:

Trainees are carefully monitored and supervised throughout the new scheme to ensure that the trainee receives the best possible training that is designed to suit the needs of the individual.

Four felt that another trainee was a possibility, but that they would like a break. These were generally the smaller organisations, which referred to lack of staff who could supervise a trainee, and in one case, the early stage of the current trainee in their training.

Six organisations had rather limited experience of trainees under the current scheme, having received only one trainee each, with others having received as many as five. These were of mixed gender and ethnic background. Each organisation tried to ensure that trainees gained experience in different jobs within the organisation, sometimes with an opportunity to specialise in the later stages of the placement, with supervision generally being the responsibility of a number of people. One organisation explicitly stated that their preference was to keep the supervision informal. Two indicated that they knew little about the training the PATH (Scotland) trainees were receiving at college, despite having received information from PATH (Scotland). Four organisations were involved with other training, either seconding staff for training or taking on students on placement.

6.3.3 Trainees' experiences

The PATH (Scotland) trainees were felt to fit in well at the time of interview, and to get on well with other staff in the organisation as well as with other trainees. There were no indications that any particular measures had been taken to ensure this.

In considering what problems the trainees might have expected to face, three respondents referred only to potential difficulties in dealing with racist members of the public, and related that these had not in the event occurred. It was notable that only one saw potential problems within the organisation itself:

I think that the biggest problems are related to the type of environment that we work in. There are very few BME workers in this field, and I can only imagine that this must make black employees feel outnumbered, which must be intimidating for most people.

One respondent noted that trainees could face financial problems, as the trainees allowance was in their opinion low. Others noted that trainees were perhaps over-qualified for some of the tasks they were asked to do, where they already had qualifications in other areas.

Where problems had been encountered, in only three cases, these had apparently concerned trainees high expectations — attempts to resolve these difficulties had been made, and had generally succeeded.

6.3.4 The PATH (Scotland) scheme

The strengths of the scheme for PATH (Scotland) trainees were seen in terms of access to experience they might not otherwise have received, as well as improved prospects of employment. Here, there was an acknowledgement of lack of access to employment in housing for people from BME backgrounds. The college or university training was seen as useful for the trainees, and as enhancing their job prospects.

For organisations, the scheme was felt to have improved awareness of the barriers faced by people from BME backgrounds, and to have been of wider benefit in tackling issues of exclusion:

The strength of the PATH (Scotland) scheme for employers is that it allows us to develop our training and recruitment programmes to become more inclusive in terms of cultural and ethnic diversity, which will help to raise awareness of related issues.

We benefit from having a BME worker because it helps dismantle barriers of race and culture between staff and clients alike. It is a very positive learning experience for all.

This respondent added that the organisations received an extra member of staff at very low cost. The scheme was seen as increasing the supply of BME workers:

It will provide us with BME workers, which will help us develop a better understanding of the needs of BME workers and clients.

It also provides us with a highly trained member of staff, who on completion of the scheme will be better qualified than many other members of our existing staff.

Some difficulties were also identified. These included the pressure on trainees, who were receiving PATH (Scotland) training, organisational training and college training at the same time, as well as potentially being in placements which involved travel far from home. One respondent expressed regret that there were insufficient staff available to provide another PATH (Scotland) placement.

Considering whether the PATH (Scotland) scheme would achieve its aims, respondents felt that it would go some way towards rectifying the under-representation of BME people in housing employment in Scotland:

I think the PATH (Scotland) scheme will have a huge impact on the number of BME employees in local government jobs and this can only be positive.

Several added comments noting that PATH (Scotland) could not achieve this alone, and that action on a wider front was needed, including further positive action work:

PATH (Scotland)'s objective to integrate BME workers into the labour market is excellent, and I feel that they are doing a great job and they will lead the way for other positive action programmes for the future.

Two respondents saw the PATH (Scotland) scheme as potentially informing positive action initiatives in other areas of employment:

The good practice lessons learned from the PATH (Scotland) scheme could be disseminated throughout other service sectors to help address the under-representation of BME employees in local government and service sectors.

They felt that it potentially offered high quality training tailored to individual needs, and to offer some assistance to trainees in competing for employment within housing.

Thus, organisations were positive about the scheme, though there are two points of concern here. One is the expectation that the trainee would enable organisations to address issues of racism, and the other, that whilst existing staff were being seconded on salary for training, PATH (Scotland) trainees were receiving much lower remuneration.

6.3.5 Good practice

Respondents were asked to identify what, for them, were the good practice lessons to be drawn from the PATH (Scotland) scheme. All felt that there were lessons, in terms of the benefits for the trainees, the organisation of the scheme and the way in which trainees were supported through placements and training:

The fact that the trainee has the opportunity to gain theoretical and practical experience in housing, which will undoubtedly stand them in good stead for future permanent employment in local government jobs.

The PATH (Scotland) scheme in general will be regarded as good practice. It is very well structured and the organisational structures are tight and efficient. The placement organisations have hands-on involvement in every stage of the placement set-up from selection to interview processes. Also, the trainees are kept up to date with any changes that may occur, which gives them a sense of security and participation. The PATH (Scotland) scheme is very professional in all of its dealings, which is essential for its long-term goal achievements and success.

The format of PATH (Scotland) is very good and positive. The training that they provides is excellent. They have a good back-up system for staff.

Respondents were not generally able to compare PATH (Scotland) with any other positive action schemes, and their assessments of good practice therefore came from their experience of the PATH (Scotland) scheme. However, it is important to note that they were also considering PATH (Scotland) in the context of their own organisations, whom they saw as holding some responsibility for the success of the scheme:

The future success for positive action programmes like the current PATH (Scotland) scheme will depend on how the scheme is implemented and monitored. It is very important that all staff involved in potential positive action schemes are made aware of the conditions which necessitate the implementation of such a scheme. Therefore existing staff need to have access to further training in equal opportunity and race equality.

This comment is important for echoing the conclusions of our earlier report concerning the importance of ownership of positive action within housing organisations.

Four respondents felt that PATH (Scotland) should diversify into work in other sectors of employment, including other public sector employment, but also areas such as banking and information technology. They perceived a wide need for positive action programmes for BME workers, and saw PATH (Scotland) as the right organisation to lead developments.

6.4 University and College training

6.4.1 Characteristics

Interviews were held with representatives of two Universities and one College involved in taking on PATH (Scotland) trainees for postgraduate diploma and SVQ courses. All were in senior positions in the establishments, and involved in course direction.

6.4.2 Involvement in PATH (Scotland)

All three had been involved in taking on PATH (Scotland) trainees for five or six years, following an initial approach by PATH (Scotland). They were generally positive about the PATH (Scotland) scheme, though one quickly identified some issues of communication, stating that they knew little of the other training that the participants were receiving outside their university or college course. All agreed that they would readily take on further trainees. The lack of knowledge of the other training involved in the scheme is perhaps surprising, given the information which all organisations had received.

The universities took on trainees already educated to degree level and the college took on people without formal qualifications who were selected by PATH (Scotland). Students had come from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds, and it is worth noting that the training organisations had each received more trainees than any of the placement organisations interviewed. They thus had wider experience of the scheme than the placement organisations. One respondent noted that most of the trainees had been born and brought up in Scotland.

6.4.3 Trainees' experiences

The PATH (Scotland) trainees were in several ways identified as different from other students on the courses. Two organisations described them as keener than other students and two as better qualified than others. Two noted that there had recently been problems with English language for a minority of trainees. Two organisations stated that PATH (Scotland) trainees tended to have less work experience, and that this could mean they had difficulties with some of the housing jargon.

The only special arrangements for PATH (Scotland) trainees included acceptance of late applications and a fee adjustment for trainees in one case. All organisations explained that they had the same expectations as for any other students — one noted that they had expected a good performance from those who were highly educated before starting the course. This organisation, however, had experienced a high drop-out rate of 40%,⁴ whereas the others had had fewer problems. One stated that PATH (Scotland) trainees had better grades than others and were excellent students.

Organisations were asked about supervision arrangements for students, and identified course tutors and student facilitators as providing support.

All training organisations raised problems of communication, one with PATH (Scotland) itself, and all three with the placement organisations. These problems could mean that they were unaware of problems a trainee might be experiencing. They explained that without knowledge of their full circumstances, it was more difficult to put appropriate support systems in place for students, and that there had been some difficulties with lack of correspondence between college/university procedures and those of external organisations.

Respondents felt that the university or college work was very useful for the trainees. However, they noted that trainees faced a number of problems. They referred especially to the problems experienced by women with family commitments, and to occasions on which they felt female students had not had family support. Others had experienced financial problems. Some students who had had difficulties with English had therefore had some difficulty with the courses. One respondent described an incident of interpersonal racism, involving insults from individuals. This was described as having been treated very seriously, but the culprit was never identified.

Two respondents, when asked how they dealt with problems, claimed to treat all the students the same way. One however described having made a special effort to ensure that a student in difficulties was befriended by another, who helped her through her problems.

Respondents felt that the PATH (Scotland) scheme had greatly improved the employment prospects of the trainees. One stated confidently that all the students who had completed the course had gained employment, whereas the other two referred to difficulties which might persist despite the PATH (Scotland) programme:

I would hope they are in a better position to get work, but we cannot account for other factors like racism.

Unlike the placement organisations, the training institution representatives were more likely to identify racism in the employment market as a potential problem for the trainees.

Benefits to the training organisations were seen in the increased numbers of BME students brought by the PATH (Scotland) scheme:

BME students come from very different backgrounds and provide a new kind of debate in tutorials that can help other students gain a better understanding of other issues relating to the subject.

It has...helped students to become aware of other cultures...Similarly, it has helped staff to understand the requirements of teaching a diverse group of students.

Having other cultural practices discussed in class has helped other students and staff gain a better understanding of how housing operates in general.

I think it can only be positive to demonstrate to the wider population that people from BME groups are welcome into the college, and hopefully it will set a good example to other people from BME groups to apply for college and university places.

One respondent identified some costs of the PATH (Scotland) scheme to a training organisation, which offered reduced fees to trainees, but otherwise, no costs were identified.

All believed that the PATH (Scotland) scheme would partly rectify BME underrepresentation in housing employment, and welcomed the training for its ability to satisfy individual needs:

BME groups, like other groups, don't fit nicely into categories with easily definable needs.

Obtaining a qualification was seen as an advantage for the trainees, though the potentially hostile employment market was noted (see above).

Respondents hoped that other positive action initiatives would follow from PATH (Scotland).

6.4.4 Good practice

Respondents felt that the PATH (Scotland) scheme in general offered good practice lessons, and that it was an example which others should follow. An example of the fee support scheme was said to be indicative of good practice learning — though it should be noted that the fees were not charged to the individual students, but to the PATH (Scotland) scheme itself. Comments on good practice were as follows:

The very principle of the PATH (Scotland) scheme is the best example of good practice. They take very good care of their trainees and demonstrate a genuine interest in the trainee's personal and career development at every stage. I only wish that other organisations would show as much interest in their trainees.

They have a very good system of looking after their trainees. If I call at any time to ask about a student, I know that I will be guaranteed to receive the appropriate information immediately. The best example of good practice to be learned from PATH (Scotland) is that it is doing something positive to redress the under-representation of BME groups in the labour market.

I think it is vital that positive action initiatives be introduced into other sectors of the labour market. I would like to add that this college would welcome any other suggestions that were aimed at encouraging any disadvantaged group into further education, if it will improve their chances of gaining permanent employment.

These respondents therefore were generally very positive about the PATH (Scotland) scheme, and saw it as having potential to be extended. Two issues that were identified were some problems of communication (which resonated with the placement organisations' comments), and the issue of dropouts early in the course was a problem for one institution.

6.5 Conclusion

Overall, PATH (Scotland) comes over as an example of good practice. The scheme appears to provide the opportunities the trainees need and want, as well as supporting them through some of the difficulties they face in an often unfamiliar field of work and study. There is support for placement organisations which may need it in terms of implementing equality policy, tackling racism, and facilitating the work of BME employees. The training organisations also receive briefings to support the integration of BME students.

Specific areas of good practice identified by respondents included:

- the clear structure which PATH (Scotland) provides;
- the comprehensive briefing materials supplied by PATH (Scotland);
- the support for students;

⁴ These dropouts had occurred during the probationary period, at the very early stage of the course.

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- the package as a whole, with the elements of both work experience and training;
- the contribution of PATH (Scotland) to improvements in inter-ethnic relations in employing and training organisations;
- the potential to diversify into other areas of employment on a good practice base.

There are some issues which need to be addressed, not all of which can be dealt with by the PATH (Scotland) organisation alone. These include some communication issues between the different organisations involved in the scheme, and also some within certain organisations. Students have faced racism both in placements and in the universities and college. The PATH (Scotland) scheme itself is widely believed to contribute towards improving the position of trainees vis à vis the employment market, but, as respondents pointed out, this is a much larger issue than can be dealt with by a small organisation such as PATH (Scotland). There is a demonstrable need for a clearer commitment from employing organisations to implementing equality policy, promoting equal opportunities and using positive action, where relevant. Ownership of positive action in such organisations is needed, but is not necessarily easy to achieve.

These findings complement the earlier discussion of the structure of PATH (Scotland) and the trainee statistics, supporting the conclusion of those discussions that PATH (Scotland) has proven effective in achieving its aims. They help to explain how the housing employees interviewed for the CIH study (Bowes, MacIntosh and Sim 2002) had generally had better experiences of employment than the BME employees in other sectors interviewed for the present study. Relevant factors appear to be the careful work done with placement and training organisations, as well as the support for the trainees themselves.

7 Refugees and positive action

7.1 Introduction

PATH Scotland has been exploring the extension of positive action programmes into other areas of public services, such as social work and education. Recently, there has been growing interest in how positive action can be extended to meet the needs of the expanding refugee communities within Scotland, and Communities Scotland have asked us to explore this area.

According to the Scottish Refugee Council website, approximately 10,000 asylum seekers have located in Scotland since April 2000, following the implementation of the 1999 Asylum and Immigration Act. The SRC estimates that more than 80 per cent of those dispersed to Scotland (primarily to Glasgow) are receiving positive decisions to their asylum claims and are being given leave to remain within the UK. It is not clear how many of those with refugee status choose to stay in Glasgow and it is anticipated that some may move elsewhere, particularly to London. Nevertheless, a considerable proportion is likely to stay in Scotland and this represents a significant number of people, who may require assistance to enter into long-term employment.

The Scottish Refugee Integration Forum's Draft Action Plan, produced in 2002, identified employment, training and lifelong learning as a matter of particular concern to refugees. The Plan made a number of recommendations as follows:

- the development of a national strategy for the teaching of English to speakers of other languages;
- the identification of adequate resources to support the provision of English language tuition;
- improved access for asylum seekers and refugees on to part-time Higher National courses;
- progress on recognising the qualifications of asylum seekers and refugees, and the provision of conversion courses where appropriate;
- the carrying out, by service providers, of an audit of adult literacy, employment and training programmes, to ensure they meet the needs of asylum seekers and refugees;
- the provision of comprehensive information on education, lifelong learning and training issues; and
- the identification and targeting of barriers, preventing asylum seekers and refugees moving into employment.

Positive action programmes would be relevant to a number of these recommendations, but would be particularly important in relation to the last, in

assisting refugees to compete for jobs on an equal basis with people already resident in the country.

7.2 Current programmes relating to refugees

There are currently five initiatives which provide help and support to refugees entering employment and these are discussed individually below. All five would be regarded as having an element of positive action.

7.2.1 Scottish Refugee Council Weekly Surgery

Because employment is one of the keys to successful integration, the Scottish Refugee Council provides advice and guidance to refugees, and up-to-date information on the rules and regulations affecting entitlement to adult education, training and employment. The SRC holds a weekly advice surgery, supported by volunteers, in Glasgow, where refugees are assisted to complete their CVs, and job application forms, and to try and achieve recognition and validation of overseas qualifications. Approximately 25 people attend an average surgery.

Many of the refugees who attend are subsequently referred to local employment agencies, such as Glasgow North Limited and the Castlemilk Economic Development Agency, as well as Careers Scotland, who also provide guidance workers.

The SRC has also assisted asylum seekers and refugees to attend employer careers fairs, which has enabled them to meet directly with employers and apply for vacancies.

7.2.2 The Bridges Project

The Bridges Project (subtitled Paths to Integration) is a work shadowing scheme organised by the Institute of Contemporary Scotland, in association with the Scottish Refugee Council. Work shadowing is a recognised way for individuals to observe the work of others and gain first hand experience of the workloads involved. In relation to refugees, it provides an opportunity to re-enter the work and professional environment from which they might have been excluded for some time. It helps integration and prepares refugees for a return to work.

Refugees (and asylum seekers) are invited to apply for a work shadow placement in their respective profession or employment area. Each placement is for three months and it is anticipated that the refugee would expect to shadow an employed person approximately once a week. Employers are encouraged to provide placement opportunities and an activity plan for the placement is prepared in advance. Employers also agree to pay the costs of transport to and from the placement, and lunch.

The Institute for Contemporary Scotland visits the placement during the three month period, to monitor progress and ensure that the placement is continuing to be beneficial to both parties. At the end of the placement, both the refugee and the host employer are asked to write short reports on their experiences.

The project has recently secured funding of £30,000 from the European Social Fund and Scottish Enterprise and it is hoped to appoint a dedicated co-ordinator to the project, to secure greater private sector involvement.

7.2.3 Refugee Doctors Programme

This programme is designed to assist doctors who are refugees and asylum seekers to become registered with the General Medical Council (GMC) and thus be in a position to compete for posts in the NHS, within the UK. At present, because of the concentration of refugees and asylum seekers, the programme operates only in the west of Scotland, although it could be extended.

Applicants are assessed by the Deanery of NHS Education Scotland, to assess their previous training and qualifications, and to establish a plan for future training needs. A key element in this plan is usually to ensure that applicants can reach a satisfactory level in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Applicants are enrolled on English language college courses and provided with financial support for travel to them.

After training, candidates are entered for examinations with the Professional and Linguistics Assessment Board (PLAB), as a step on the way to registration with the GMC. Once candidates have successfully passed their PLAB exam and achieved GMC registration, then refugees would be able to undertake paid employment within the NHS, usually in a Senior House Officer post.

The programme operates in a number of locations in England and is an important mechanism for helping medically qualified refugees compete for posts within the NHS in the UK.

7.2.4 Glasgow Overseas Professionals into Practice (GOPIP)

The GOPIP project was set up by Glasgow Caledonian University in October 2002, in the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Community Health. The project developed in response to the shortage of nurses and midwives within the NHS in Scotland (estimated by the University at around 500), and a recognition of the skills and expertise within the refugee communities, which might be harnessed to address these shortages. It is estimated that there are around 50 qualified healthcare professionals at present, from the refugee and asylum seeker communities, who are seeking work as nurses in Scotland.

GOPIP has a Scotland-wide remit and is jointly funded by NHS Education Scotland and Queens Nursing Institute Scotland. The University provides academic support and clinical supervision of the nurses on the programme, including support through the process of registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council. It organises placements and support for nurses working in supervised practice, advice about English language requirements and some financial assistance for travel to hospital placements.

7.2.5 Refugee Teachers Project

The Scottish Refugee Council is currently developing a project to assist refugees with a teaching qualification obtained overseas, enter the teaching profession in Scotland. This has involved liaising with Glasgow City Council, Anniesland College (who are providing English language classes), and the General Teaching Council for Scotland. The programme is intended to operate in a similar way to the Refugee Doctors Programme, with teachers expected to reach a satisfactory level in the IELTS test. So far, however, the programme is unfunded.

7.3 Next Steps

The above programmes are all aimed at helping refugees gain employment and range from general work shadowing and advice to programmes targeted at specific professions such as medicine and teaching. There appears no reason therefore why PATH (Scotland) programmes in housing — and now social work — should not include refugee communities. Indeed, some PATH (Scotland) trainees have been refugees.

The Scottish Refugee Council has already identified that many refugees and asylum seekers have a background in social care and has been approached by the Scottish Executive to investigate the feasibility of developing a fast track programme to social work qualification. The Executive's view is that 15 individuals would be required to make for a viable programme but so far the SRC has only identified 10 potential candidates.

It is clearly important, therefore, to try and quantify the numbers of refugees who might benefit from the introduction of new programmes. The SRC is currently undertaking a skills audit of refugees and asylum seekers, with the final results expected in May 2003. The audit will include information on education at school, college and university levels, qualifications obtained, language skills, employment history (including any training or employment undertaken since arrival in the UK), voluntary activities, and aspirations regarding future training and employment. Once this information is available, programmes can be better tailored to needs.

It would certainly appear feasible, once the information on skills is complete, for programmes to be devised, ready for the start of the educational year in the Autumn.

7.4 Conclusion

PATH (Scotland)'s positive action training programme is already open to refugees, and some people have been referred to the scheme. The skills audit can inform further work in housing training, and might indicate needs for training in other areas.

8 Funding positive action

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we explore aspects of funding positive action, with a view to informing future funding of PATH (Scotland). We look at PATH (Scotland) s current funding, at the funding of other positive action schemes, and at a range of potential sources of funding. We highlight some of the advantages and difficulties presented by the various funding options.

Funding has to be considered against the wider environment in which PATH (Scotland) is working. There is continuing exclusion from housing and other forms of employment experienced by BME groups in Scotland, who are concentrated in certain economic sectors, and who appear to be concentrated in the lower ranks of organisations. Both in terms of entry to the labour market, and in terms of career progression once in it therefore, there is a need for positive action. This has been demonstrated especially strongly by the previous research carried out for PATH (Scotland) to support its work (Bowes, Sim and Wilson 2001, Bowes and Sim 2002) and the recent CIH survey (Bowes, MacIntosh and Sim 2002). Scottish local authorities and housing associations have much to do in order to ensure compliance with both the spirit and the letter of equality legislation, and progress has been slow. Positive action offers a means to improve matters, both within housing and on a wider scale.

Local authorities and housing associations however have a demonstrably restricted understanding of positive action (Bowes and Sim 2002), and there must be doubt about their ability to implement it effectively. Furthermore, especially for small organisations, potential costs of anything more than limited positive action may be a deterrent. Schemes like PATH (Scotland), which can intervene quite significantly to increase numbers of BME people in housing and other employment should therefore be widely welcomed, and seen as an asset for the housing sector as a whole, and for other employment sectors which may become involved.

8.2 Current funding of PATH (Scotland)

The current PATH (Scotland) scheme is currently funded from a range of sources, as we noted in chapter three. Funders include the Scottish Executive, Communities Scotland (formerly Scottish Homes), the National Lottery Charities Board (now the Community Fund), and Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland. Some funding (Scottish Homes/Communities Scotland) has supported the central project of positive action training, whilst other elements have supported other particular projects, including research or elements of the training, including staff costs. Placement organisations also contribute important funding, as they pay the trainees allowances, CIH costs and a £1,000 charge per year per trainee as a contribution to PATH (Scotland) administration costs.

Fund-raising is a key activity of the PATH (Scotland) director, who regularly reviews potential sources of funding from statutory and charitable sources. Regular review is needed for charitable sources in particular, as these change their priorities regularly and do not generally offer funding for long periods.

8.3 Funding other positive action

Positive action schemes, unless they are in-house schemes in large organisations generally receive funding from a range of sources, and in this, PATH (Scotland) is not unusual. As the cases outlined in Appendix Two illustrate, key sources of funding include central and local government, and bodies such as the National Housing Federation (in England — formerly the National Federation of Housing Associations). Some schemes have European Social Fund support, though our informants outlined difficulties securing this funding, including the time consuming application procedure. PATH (Scotland) appears unusual for its success in securing charitable funding

8.4 Funding sources

There is no one obvious potential source of funding for PATH (Scotland), and the continuation of funding from several sources appears inevitable. Funding sources have varying advantages and limitations:

- Central government (the Scottish Executive) already supports PATH (Scotland), funding the research elements of the organisation's work which support the training, and help take forward the development of the programme. The current funding is limited to certain aspects of the organisation's activities.
- One area in which there has been recent activity is refugee integration. Following the publication of the SRIF report (SRIF 2003), the minister announced a budget of £400,000 to support activities, which will cover the production of guidance and training activities. This work will be done within the Executive, and there are no plans to invite bids from elsewhere. A SRIF representative saw no possibility for funding for PATH (Scotland) from this source.
- Communities Scotland also supports PATH (Scotland), and the future projects identified by the organisation to take forward positive action work appear to fall within a continuing imperative to promote race equality and social inclusion in Scottish housing.
- Local authorities and housing associations already support PATH (Scotland) by paying the trainee allowances and contributing to administrative costs. Given constraints on their budgets, it is unlikely that they would be in a position to contribute more fully. However, if PATH (Scotland) extends its work into other professions, this may increase the range of potential contributors of funding along these lines.
- Key beneficiaries of PATH (Scotland) are the trainees themselves, and it could be argued that they should contribute to the costs of the scheme. Such an argument however is not sustainable in the context of wider debates about access to higher education, since PATH (Scotland) trainees are by definition among the most disadvantaged students.

- Scottish Enterprise might be considered a source of support, and positive action schemes elsewhere receive funding from local training and enterprise agencies. However, funding is targeted at skill seekers, and does not cover higher level training, such as postgraduate diplomas.
- PATH (Scotland) has received some charitable trust funding, and there is scope for raising further limited funding from such sources. Trusts however have to be considered unreliable as sources of anything other than short-term project funding. The process of application is time-consuming and trust priorities change regularly.
- The European Social Fund is a further potential source of funding for PATH (Scotland), as it can fund training and projects which tackle unemployment and promote equal opportunities. The ESF requires a significant level of matched funding, and any grant awarded is for a short period (two years is generally the maximum). Other positive action schemes have received funding from this source, though pointed out that the application and review procedures are demanding.

8.5 Funding issues

A number of issues must be noted in connection with funding PATH (Scotland).

- A key disadvantage of funding from a range of sources is the time-consuming process of identifying potential sources and making applications to them. As competition for funding increases, this process requires increasing time and expertise, and becomes a significant cost for an organisation.
- Stakeholders in PATH (Scotland) include the trainees themselves, placement organisations, colleges and universities and Scottish housing organisations more generally, who gain an increased pool of highly qualified applicants from which to recruit. If PATH (Scotland) were to extend its activities into other professional fields, the group of beneficiaries would increase. Most stakeholders are contributing towards PATH (Scotland) positively, where this is possible. There may be scope to consider ways of raising further funds from the wider group of beneficiaries.
- The impact of uncertain funding on the BME voluntary sector is well-documented (Reid-Howie Associates 2000), and PATH (Scotland) is not alone in experiencing uncertainty and difficulties in looking towards future developments. Secure funding, for a period of five years, would provide an opportunity for sustained advance in activities, and time to devote energy to securing a viable financial future for PATH (Scotland).
- PATH (Scotland) has a central project, related to its key aims, which is to provide work experience and high quality training for BME people who want to work in housing. The organisation also pursues smaller projects in specialist areas, such as its research work, or consultancy activities. All the funding is devoted either to the central project or to the smaller activities, and there is no large organisation to support with core funds.

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- PATH (Scotland) is a small organisation, employing two full time staff (director and training coordinator) and two part-time support staff. It operates from its own offices, and is supported by a management group consisting of BME community representatives and experts in the housing field. Collaboration with other organisations (such as Positive Action in Housing) already occurs, as outlined in Chapter Four.

9 Conclusions and implications

9.1 Key points emerging from the research

We outline here the key points which have emerged from each element of the research.

9.1.1 PATH (Scotland) and its outcomes

- The PATH (Scotland) scheme operates nationally throughout Scotland, and has a clear and effective organisation. Trainees are supported throughout their placements and university or college courses, as well as receiving additional, specialist training from PATH (Scotland);
- PATH (Scotland) trainees have a record of success in gaining employment in housing;
- In addition to the positive action training work, PATH (Scotland) contributes more widely to race equality and positive action in Scotland through additional work with housing organisations and by informing policy and practice developments.

9.1.2 Statistical evidence

- Statistical data from the 2001 Census and other UK survey data indicate continuing under-representation of BME groups in certain areas of employment. There is a continuing need for positive action initiatives;
- Monitoring data are not yet published to permit assessment of career progression for BME groups. However, in the light of under-representation, career progression is also likely to require positive action.

9.1.3 Employees' perspectives

- In education, social work and voluntary sector employment, BME workers had experienced exclusion, and their experiences were poorer than those of previously consulted housing employees. They perceived a need for positive action in these areas, and identified that it was not occurring.

9.1.4 PATH (Scotland) stakeholders' perspectives

- Stakeholders experiences led to the conclusion that PATH (Scotland) is an exemplar of good practice;

- Key elements included the work with placement organisations, universities and colleges and the support for the trainees themselves.
- There remain challenges in terms of continuing to promote positive action, and the need for organisations to own it.

9.1.5 Positive action with refugees

- PATH (Scotland) s specialist expertise in the housing field can complement other work in progress — indeed, PATH (Scotland) has already assisted refugees;
- The good practice lessons from PATH (Scotland) have wider applicability.

9.1.6 Funding

- PATH (Scotland) is achieving its aims using a range of funding, and positive action schemes are generally funded in this way;
- The costs attached to fund-raising should not be under-estimated, especially for small organisations;
- Potential funding sources include the European Social Fund, and additional stakeholder contributions which may be attached to expanded operation;
- Uncertainty of funding has a detrimental effect — secure funding for a longer period would permit work on securing the financial future.

9.1.7 Good practice

- PATH (Scotland) is seen as a leader in positive action in Scotland;
- It compares favourably with other programmes in terms of esteem and outcomes.

9.2 Implications of the study

Looking to the future, and on the basis of the conclusions just outlined, the study has the following implications:

- There is a continuing need for positive action in Scotland, and the study has shown that PATH (Scotland) is making a key contribution in this field, both in the specific field of housing and also more generally through other activities and through its standing as an exemplar of good practice. PATH (Scotland) has a valuable fund of experience and expertise.
- PATH (Scotland) s wider work on positive action has potential to develop and to inform, for example, community regeneration, or developing the career aspirations of young people.
- Under-representation of BME groups goes beyond housing employment, and there are good arguments for extending positive action work into other professional fields, notably social care and education.

- PATH (Scotland) would benefit from a more secure funding position. This would permit concentration on positive action work, and reduce the imperative to devote resources to complex fund-raising activity.
- There are further opportunities for collaboration between organisations working on different elements of positive action. For example, PATH (Scotland) s expertise can inform refugee integration activities, at the same time as PATH (Scotland) takes on refugees as trainees.
- In the upcoming funding phase, PATH (Scotland) s activities can include:
 - The central project of positive action for training in housing, open to members of BME groups including refugees;
 - Diversification into other professional areas, such as social work and education;
 - Promoting links with agencies working with refugees, to facilitate further access to PATH (Scotland) training by refugees (building on existing activity);
 - Exploring the role of positive action in community regeneration (the research element of this work is already funded)
 - Supporting research on career aspirations of BME young people (already funded).

Appendix 1: Positive action projects – good practice examples

Introduction

One of the objectives of our research was to conduct a UK wide review of current positive action initiatives, through telephone interviewing and collection and review of documentary material. We had envisaged contacting fifteen projects that would be selected from an initial list identified by others as exemplars.

In order to conduct a comprehensive UK wide review an Internet search was conducted using the search parameters positive action initiatives . Information was also gathered from twenty black staff groups that were selected from various available listings.

In addition to the internet search, a total of six case studies were completed of positive action schemes in the UK. Interviews were conducted in support of these case studies, which also drew on documentary material. For the interviews, two respondents were from established PATH schemes, one interviewee was from a University, one from a recruitment agency and the remaining two were from City councils.

Internet search findings

It is appropriate to highlight at this stage the limitations associated with a search of this nature. The findings are necessarily limited to groups and organisations that have the resources and the initiative to make their projects available on the Internet.

The Internet search result yielded 600 organisations that used the term positive action on their web site. However, after detailed examination, it became evident that the term has become a popular buzz word that was not necessarily used to relate to services offered — for example, groups like the campaign section of Glaxo Smith Kline GSK Global Communities project, have used the term to raise awareness and make demands for action to tackle specific aspects of a single cause. In the case of GSK they state:

...Through Positive Action, GSK works with partners to provide more effective HIV education, prevention, enhanced care, support and treatment for people living with, or affected by HIV/AIDS.

For details of the report: <http://www.gsk.com/index.htm>

Other organisations specified a need for a positive action initiative to be included in their future action plans. However, they were very specific in their target groups. For example, a number of them were targeted at programmes that were designed to raise awareness of the needs of people with specific

physical or mental disorders. Similarly, many of them were gender specific like the Oxford University Athena Project :

Application for funding to assist with a programme of positive action aimed at encouraging applications from women scientists for academic appointments at the University. Positive action with the objective of encouraging applications from an under-represented sex is defined and authorised by the Sex Discrimination Act 1975.

For details of the report: <http://www.athena.ic.ac.uk/s.htm>

As a result of the difficulties presented by the large volume of material identified on the internet, the search was narrowed to organisations that offered services to people from BME groups.

Thirty organisations were eventually selected. Of these, only six offered positive action *training* as permitted under the Race Relations Act 1976, Section 37. The remaining twenty-four offered more general statements about positive action as part of their equal opportunities programmes. For example Richmond Council states:

Where appropriate and allowed in law, the Council will implement Positive Action initiatives as defined by the Sex Discrimination and Race Relations Acts. Examples of Positive Action include staff training and development schemes, the use of specialist press for job advertising and the encouragement of applications for jobs from people because of their race, gender or disability, wherever they may be under-represented in the Council's workforce

For details of the report: <http://www.richmond.gov.uk/>

This search has highlighted that although under the Race Relations Act 1976; employers can legally take positive action measures to help people from ethnic minorities to compete on equal terms for posts in labour forces where they are under-represented, many employers in the UK chose to interpret this in terms of concentrating on better employment and personnel practices such as advertising posts more widely and monitoring the ethnic balance of applicants and appointees. Examples of specific programmes involving training were few.

Positive action in general however appears to be becoming more widespread. The search also revealed that positive action initiatives are part of the long-term future action plans for many organisations across a wide spectrum of industries and organisations, including, private sector industries, Local Government and voluntary organisations.

Case studies

In this section, we outline the case studies, which have been compiled from documentary and interview materials.

Kirklees Council, Yorkshire

Employment Agency
Kirklees Council
Oldgate House
2 Oldgate
Huddersfield
HD1 6QQ

Tel: 01484 225093

<http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/answers/employment-training/positive-training.shtml#work>

Kirklees Council Positive Action Training (PAT) is a scheme which helps people from black and minority ethnic communities and disabled people to gain work experience and skills, so that they are better able to compete for jobs with Kirklees Council in areas where these groups are currently under-represented.

The conditions of employment can vary according to the council's strategy to recruit a workforce that is representative of the community it serves. The scheme has been operating council-wide for a number of years under the Race Relations Act 1976, Section 37 and Kirklees have recently introduced a scheme for disabled people under the PAT umbrella.

Placements under the scheme can vary from 1 to 4 years depending on the training required. Most tend to be for 2 years involving work experience, part time study and personal development training. These full time placements carry a training programme, which is funded by the Council

The annual intake to the scheme is centrally funded and managed within the Council. This is in two stages. The first is an internal stage whereby managers within the Council are asked to put forward bids for placements based on under-representation and supported by evidence. This is then followed by an external process which involves recruiting to placements based on a full recruitment and selection process used for jobs.

The scheme has been very successful so far. Although they do not guarantee employment, the idea is to train up people for specific roles, similar to a modern apprenticeship placement model. This in itself puts the trainee in a more positive position to gain future employment. It also empowers the trainee to be able to compete for jobs for which they would otherwise not even be sufficiently qualified to apply.

TMS Equality and Diversity Consultants

14 Sekforde Street
London EC1R 0HD

Tel:+44 (0)20 7251 3403

<http://www.tms.uk.com/l-prof.html>

TMS is a recruitment agency that has been operating for over 15 years. TMS advises leading employers in the UK and Europe on the attraction, retention and development of under-represented groups, including mentoring, coaching and executive development. They provide positive action initiatives, including targeted recruitment, outreach and development programmes.

The conditions of appointment vary depending on the particular projects involved. TMS provide focused training and support to women and to employees from minority ethnic groups.

The timetable is very much determined by the placement organisation s timetables.

TMS claim to offer Career Development Programmes for minority ethnic managers and staff in Lloyds TSB, Hertfordshire County Council, Barclays, HSBC, Lloyds TSB, Bank of Scotland, Whitbread Inns, Clydesdale Bank, Thomson Regional Newspapers, Prudential Assurance, Bar Council, Cabinet Office, Bank of Ireland, Scottish Enterprise, Forward Trust, Pricewaterhouse-Coopers, Courtaulds, Royal Bank of Scotland, the Metropolitan Police and many others.

The IMPACT Project

University of Bradford,
Bradford,
West Yorkshire, BD7 1DP

Tel: +44 (0)1274 2301274 235512

<http://www.bradford.ac.uk/admin/impact/activities.php>

The IMPACT Project is a collaborative project between the University of Bradford, University of Huddersfield, University of Leeds, Leeds Metropolitan University, Sheffield University and Sheffield Hallam University. IMPACT started in September 2000. It is a positive action project designed to develop the competitiveness and employability of UK minority ethnic undergraduates and graduates through a programme of suitably tailored guidance and career development learning activities.

IMPACT is aimed at UK domiciled minority ethnic students. The timetable is varied dependent on the course undertaken. The programme of activities is diverse and students can choose from or are guided towards, the following activities, many of which are employer led:

- Practical workshops on team working, employment opportunities, job search strategies, applications, interviews and assessment centres;
- Confidential one-to-one discussions for individual guidance and advice;
- Mentoring — successfully completed a pilot programme for 27 partnerships in 2001/02 and launched a new programme in November 2002;
- Access to work experience/shadowing and placements (industrial and summer work placements);

- Student support groups and personal development activities;
- Summer vocational placements.

The project is jointly directed by the Heads of Careers Service of the partner universities and is hosted by the University of Bradford. The Higher Education Funding Council for England initially funded the partners for two years until July 2002. They have now secured alternative funding from Yorkshire Forward, the regional development agency for Yorkshire and Humberside, to ensure long-term continuation and diversification into providing support to minority ethnic graduates and other groups of students.

In the first two years of operation, IMPACT actively worked with over 800 BME students across four universities

PATH (London)

138a Royal College Street
London
United Kingdom
WC1X 8BB

<http://www.unesco.org/most/westeur5.htm>

PATH was established in 1986 as a result of a collaborate effort between the Federation of Black Housing Organisations, the National Federation of Housing Associations and groups of housing associations. PATH was set up to provide training and work experience in housing-related fields of employment to people from ethnic minorities who were under-represented in these fields. Initially there were two schemes in London and Leeds.

The conditions of appointment vary depending on the trainee s career goal.

PATH provides the training through a day release course at college and on-the-job experience, plus complementary short courses. The programmes are structured to meet the known requirements of particular posts. Courses run for one, two or three years dependent on the post.

PATH London is funded by the National Housing Federation (NHF).

The scheme has been highly successful. 96% of those trained have obtained full-time employment or gone on to further education within four months of completing their course. High percentage pass-rates are obtained in professional exams for which trainees are entered. There has been a substantial increase in the proportion of staff from ethnic minorities employed by housing associations. In major London housing associations, around one third of staff now tend to come from ethnic minorities compared to less than 10% in the early 1980s. In senior positions the proportion is lower at around 10% to 15% but is still increasing as promotion opportunities arise. PATH has played a significant role in increasing the number of ethnic minority staff working for housing associations in professional, technical and senior posts.

PATH s initial focus was on housing management but it has now run training courses in a total of fifteen job disciplines which include:

- accountancy
- architecture

Good Practice in Positive Action

- building/maintenance surveying
- civil/structural engineering
- hostel management
- housing advice
- housing development
- housing management
- middle and senior management
- personnel management
- quantity surveying
- first line management
- site management
- working in a special project
- housing warden

PATH Yorkshire

29 Harrogate Road
Chapel Allerton
Leeds LS7 3PD

Tel : 0113 262 4600

<http://www.pathyorkshire.com/index.html>

PATH Yorkshire is a positive action programme set up in 1986. PATH Yorkshire was originally set up to address under-representation of BME people in housing employment, however the activities of PATH Yorkshire have changed over the years and now include:

- To develop the potential of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) people through the provision of vocational training, education and career opportunities;
- To address the under-representation in employment of minority ethnic groups;
- To promote equality of opportunity as a way of eliminating discrimination in the labour market, working towards a more balanced and representative workforce.

The conditions of appointment vary depending on the trainee s career goal. The timetable also varies depending on the trainee s career goal and programme selected. All programmes include a work placement, usually for four days per week, which runs in conjunction with an education programme placement. The education programme is generally part-time day release

Leeds City Council and the European Social Fund jointly fund PATH Yorkshire. Placement organisations contribute towards training costs in placements.

The scheme was so successful in its initial remit of providing training for employment that it has now expanded its services to cover other areas of the labour market where there is evidence of under representation of BME employees. The programmes that PATH Yorkshire provide include:

- *Equal Access to Employment*
This programme offers unemployed Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) people an opportunity to work in a vocational area, where they are under-represented. It is open to graduates and non-graduates.
- *Pathways to Management (Graduate Only)*
This programme enables Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) graduates who have been unemployed for 6 months and over, to obtain work experience and qualifications in management positions.

In addition to offering training opportunities on the programmes listed above, PATH also helps and works with organisations and agencies to promote and increase the number of Black and Minority Ethnic people employed in the organisation, for example:

- *Building For Equality In The Criminal Justice System Project*
A new multi-agency approach to increase the number of Black and Minority Ethnic people employed in the Criminal Justice System. The project worked in partnership with six agencies in the Criminal Justice System, to raise awareness and promote opportunities available to black and minority ethnic people through employment market place events. PATH, organised and co-ordinated career fairs at local venues in West Yorkshire

Liverpool City Council

Municipal Buildings
Dale Street,
Liverpool
L69 2DH

Tel: 0151 233 3000

<http://www.liverpool.gov.uk>

Liverpool City Council established a Positive Action Training Programme (PAT) in 1994. The PAT programme provides vocational training for local unemployed people. It is targeted at black people and other minority racial groups, disabled people and women. It allows people access to professions in which they may be under-represented or have traditionally faced exclusion

Recruitment is done jointly with the Pathways Partnerships, local Community Organisations, South Liverpool Personnel, Employment Links Service, Job Centres and Adult Guidance. Briefing meetings are held with over 30 different organisations to help to encourage applications from local people.

The programme provides customised on and off the job vocational training over a period of up to 2 years leading to formal qualifications across a range of professions. Developments of the programme include specific pilot projects providing training in conjunction with private sector employers and other public sector organisations.

PAT is funded through the European Social Fund. The ESF funding requires complex, competitive annual bids, which are scored and approved, based on previous year s performance indicators. These performance indicators are based on strict value for money targets and trainees securing qualifications and jobs. The ESF funding income has grown from £56k in 1994 to £838k in 2000.

Over the 5 years of the programme the success rate of trainees gaining qualifications and jobs is over 85%. Of these 60% of trainees have secured jobs within the City Council. The PAT programme has grown from 40 trainees in 1994 to 96 in 2000. Over 300 individuals have benefited from the programme. Of the 96 trainees 47 are black, 29 are women returners and training into non-traditional professions and 20 are have disabilities. The training is customised and covers NVQ s up to Level 4 in 45 different vocational areas. It also meets the needs of trainees with learning difficulties. Developments of the programme include specific pilot projects providing training in conjunction with private sector employers and other public sector organisations including:

- Women into Management;
- Black People into Management;
- Black People-into-the-Media;
- Training Officer, Merseyside Society for Deaf People;
- Policy/Research Officer, Merseytravel;
- Vehicle Fleet Technician, Merseyside Police;
- Personnel Assistant, Merseyside Police;
- Personnel/Training Officer, HM Customs and Excise;
- Community Health Worker, North Mersey Health Trust.

The programme has received a national commendation from the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) as part of its National Local Authority Race Awards 1996. It was also the winner of the 1999 Opportunity 2000 Award for its contribution to Women s Employment Opportunities. It has also won a DfEE National Training Award (November 2000).

Positive action in Glasgow

In order to determine the current position of positive action initiatives in Glasgow, information was sought from twenty organisations selected from various available listings. Of the twenty organisations contacted, twelve responded with information about perceived positive action initiatives. Ten of these organisations identified PATH (Scotland) as the best example of positive action.

Three organisations identified schemes that were still in the planning and development stage, for example:

I am aware that Glasgow City Council are proposing to undertake a positive action scheme in Social Work but this proposal is still at the early planning stage.

Glasgow City Council Personnel Department are looking at recruitment and retention of BME people generally, who are under-represented in all council departments.

Two organisations mentioned their own services that they considered to be positive action initiatives. However, although these services were aimed at people from BME groups, strictly speaking, they were not positive action as allowed by the Race Relations Act 1976, for example:

We have a few outreach venues where we teach ESOL, one of which is at Castlemilk Baptist Church. The Castlemilk Churches Group was set up when asylum seekers first started arriving in Glasgow and is seen as a good example of a voluntary organization working to integrate asylum seekers into the community.

Five respondents identified black-led groups, which because of the nature of the services that they provided, were required to have black workers or bi-lingual staff. The organisations identified were *Meridian, Glasgow Translation and Interpreting Services, Ethnic Minority Advocacy Services (EMAS)* and *The Ethnic Minority Law Centre*. This demonstrates that there is still a great deal of misunderstanding about the nature of positive action as defined by the Race Relations Act 1976.

Three case studies of organisations that were identified as positive action schemes by more than three respondents are given here. One is a positive action scheme designed for single parents returning to the workplace. The other two are positive action initiatives aimed at addressing under-representation of BME groups in the labour market.

Glasgow case studies

The Bridges Project – Paths to integration.

The Institute for Contemporary Scotland
Suite 3045 The Pentagon Centre
Washington Street
Glasgow G3 8AX

<http://www.contemporaryscotland.com>

The Bridges Project is a work shadowing scheme run by the Institute for Contemporary Scotland, in association with the Scottish Refugee Council. It was set up in October 2002 (see also Chapter Seven).

The Bridges Project is designed for asylum seekers who are either waiting for their status to be decided or who have been given indefinite or exceptional leave to remain and refugees, who wish to gain access to the work environment. The scheme aims to provide a way for the individual to observe the work of others and gain experience of the work environment, such as

timescales and workloads in certain jobs and professions. It also offers an insight into the culture of the new resident country and this is intended to encourage integration and assimilation. The main aim of the project is to provide an aid to prepare asylum seekers and refugees for the return to work.

Placements are open to asylum seekers and refugees with a reasonable standard of English who are invited to apply for a work shadow placement in their respective professions or employment fields. There are no restrictions on the number of placements for which an individual can apply.

Each placement consists of one day per week and will last for a three-month period. Although the individual asylum seeker or refugee receives no payment for the work that they do, they gain insight into the work practices of their particular profession or employment field as it operates in this country. The placement organisations are contracted to provide lunch and cover the full costs of travel expenses.

The placement organisation:

- Provides a work placement for the work shadower for the pre-agreed time;
- Undertakes to provide transport or pay transport costs and provide lunch;
- Agrees to have one point of contact for the work shadower who will be primarily responsible for integrating the individual into the company. Undertake to arrange suitable insurance cover for the work shadower while on the premises;
- Prepares a programme of activity for three months which will allow the shadower to develop an understanding of and demonstrate as many elements of the company as possible and shadow different staff.

The asylum seeker or refugee:

- Undertakes to stay with the company for the agreed period of the placement and to comply at all times with general company policy on dress, behaviour etc;
- Does not accept any payment other than expenses for travel and subsistence;
- Agrees to the activity plan for the placement;
- Accept that the placement does not in any way represent any commitment to the work shadower after the end of the placement in terms of future employment. With the agreement of the company, the work shadower is free to mention the placement in any future job application and the company may be willing to provide a reference .

The project has secured funding from the European Social Fund and Scottish Enterprise Glasgow.

As the project is relatively new, it is difficult to gauge its success at this stage. Some potential benefits can however already be identified. For the individual asylum seeker or refugee, although the work shadow scheme is not a recruitment exercise, it has the potential to lead to employment. For the placement organisations, it could raise the profile of the company and promote a positive image of the employer in terms of equal opportunities, contributions to the local community, partnership working and social justice.

Glasgow Anti Racist Alliance (GARA)

30 Bell Street,
Glasgow G1 1LG

Phone: 0141 572 1140
Fax: 0141 572 1141
E: mail mail@gara.org.uk

<http://www.gara.org.uk>

GARA is a thematic Social Inclusion Partnership which is working to address the social exclusion and racism faced by young BME people in Glasgow. The organisation is currently working at a policy level with its partners and other agencies across Glasgow to develop strategies to address race equality in employment issues. They are working on schemes that will encourage employers to undertake initiatives that will increase BME representation in their workforce.

GARA has been involved in two recent positive action schemes. It part-funded trainee posts at both the Citizens Theatre and Glasgow Film Theatre, and also played a role in recruitment and support for the trainees. GARA is also planning to develop a positive action scheme for youth and community work, but this is still at a very early stage of development.

The schemes were funded by the Scottish Arts Council, who provided the bulk of the funding, with a contribution from Glasgow City Council.

The schemes were very successful in their objective to encourage organisations and employers to undertake initiatives to increase BME representation in their workforce. The schemes provided valuable on the job training experience and confidence to the trainees. However, the short-term nature of the placements did not provide any long-term future employment prospects.

One Plus

Headquarters
55 Renfrew Street,
Glasgow G2 3BD

Tel: 0141 333 1450

<http://www.oneplus.org/offices.html>

One Plus is an independent lone parent organisation who promote positive policies for one-parent families. It was set up in 1986 and operates throughout West and Central Scotland. Though not a BME-focused scheme, their positive

action initiative was agreed to be a useful model by those interviewed on this topic.

The Training and Employment Continuum developed by One Plus provides a programme of support and training to create pathways to sustainable employment for lone parents. One Plus collaborates with a range of partners, creating services, training and employment within local communities to help tackle the poverty associated with one-parent families. The services offered include:

- Advice and counselling for parents and children;
- Information, advice and training on health issues;
- Support for local lone parent groups;
- A flexible open learning and information centre;
- Personal Development and Mentoring Initiatives;
- Pre-vocational, core skills and ICT training;
- Training in Childcare and Play work to SVQ Level II and III;
- Training in Social Care to SVQ Level II and III;
- Training in Business Administration to Intermediate level;
- Intermediate Labour Market opportunities which combine employment with in-work training and service delivery;
- Development of employment opportunities through delivering services in Childcare and Social Care;
- Policy and campaigning work;
- Development of new services.

The project is aimed at single parents residing in West and Central Scotland. There are no academic requirements for taking part in a One Plus initiative. However, eligibility for different options varies, depending on geographical area, age, length of time not in paid employment and other conditions.

The timetable links group-based pre-vocational training, vocational training and employment, as well as access to specialist advice, and a range of support mechanisms including travel and childcare, mentoring and aftercare.

Opportunities involve informal learning through self-help groups; pre-vocational courses; flexible and open learning; ICT courses, vocational training in childcare, social care and business administration.

At One Plus, those participating in learning, training and employment opportunities normally either stay on benefit or take a waged option on an Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) project. ILM projects offer individuals employment experience delivering a service to local people, whilst participants receive in-work training and access to a vocational qualification.

The schemes are partly funded by the European Social Fund.

Over 600 people have taken part in One Plus learning, training or employment initiatives. One Plus has been very successful in their positive action programme for one-parent families delivering services both in-house and on an outreach basis and now has several administrative bases across Glasgow and the West, including:

- Headquarters in Renfrew Street.
- An office in Garrioch Road which, working in partnership with employers and local agencies, offers a range of personal development, work preparation and ICT training with support and guidance. Courses last from 6 days to 44 weeks and are provided in a variety of community venues.
- Childcare training in Millennium Court, which is an administrative base for trainers and internal verifiers involved in the delivery of a range of Childcare Services.
- Kidcare in Renfrew Street is a community enterprise set up by One Plus and Strathclyde After School Care Association. Kidcare runs a variety of out of school care services, nurseries and one off centres.
- In Easterhouse, a partnership project with John Wheatley College offers innovative courses that promote life-long learning, personal development and enhanced career prospects for people living in Greater Easterhouse.
- Childcare in the Community Project in Easterhouse is an Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) initiative which includes the Hullabaloo Childcare Centre in the John Wheatley College Easterhouse Campus and a Childcare Centre based in the Shettleston Campus. Out of School Care is delivered in Wellhouse, Bishoploch, St Benedicts, Sunnyside, St Rose of Lima and Commonhead Schools Out Services. All of which provide a childcare service as well as offering local people in-work training and employment.
- One Plus Schools Out Service in Ardoch Street is an ILM initiative which provides Out of School Care in 7 locations which includes Albert, St Cuthberts, Barmulloch, Elmvale, Ruchill, Balornock and St Philomena's Out of School Care Services.
- Pollok Childcare Works ILM initiative works with existing childcare providers to enable them to increase the number of childcare places available. This new project provides state of the art training, pre-5 and opening learning facilities for the community in Pollok
- Drumchapel Opportunities Nursery is a 31 place nursery registered with HMI, providing day-care for children 6 weeks to 5 years old.
- Drumchapel Childcare Works ILM works with existing childcare providers to enable them to increase the number of childcare places available.

Good Practice in Positive Action

- Choices (Drumchapel) involves working with lone parents using mentors, one to one, problem solving and group support.
- Paisley One Plus Care Services provide high quality domiciliary care services in Renfrewshire, Glasgow and East Renfrewshire.
- One Plus Social Care Training is the central point providing support to their Social Care training projects in Glasgow, Paisley, North Ayrshire, West Dunbartonshire, North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, South Ayrshire and Arran.
- North Ayrshire Childcare in the Community provides one-off cr ches and out of school care services in St Peters, Mayfield and St Brendans. This initiative also operates as an intermediate labour market project, offering in-work training, employment and a childcare service.
- High quality domiciliary care and day care services are provided in
 - Saltcoats, (North Ayrshire mainland);
 - Arran;
 - West Dunbartonshire.

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SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE