



Black South West Network
Annual General Report
2016/17



BSWN is a BAME-led organisation that delivers race equality work through undertaking robust, BAME- led research into the social and economic issues that affect BAME communities; the development of voice and influence mechanisms that locate BAME people in an equal dialogue with decision-makers; the brokering and development of relationships and collaborations that deliver real race equality work on the ground and in the corridors of power; and the development of mechanisms and projects that help BAME communities to use their own agency in social and economic development.

About **BSWN**

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Director's Update



The environment for addressing racial inequality continues to be challenging; austerity and limited investment from funders pose a major threat to the survival of a fragile BAME voluntary sector. We have seen the loss of long - established organisations and emergence of volunteer- led entities trying to fill the gap, with some setting up as Social Enterprises or Community Interest Companies (CICs). The drive towards sustainable models for social purpose organisations is becoming an area of priority for funders. This is not in itself a bad thing but, since most BAME organisations are struggling with capacity issues, it is very hard for these organisations to have the time and resources to rethink their operations and develop these new models - further alienating a lot of organisations/individuals doing great work.

The true scale of cuts on BAME organisations/communities in Bristol and the surrounding region is yet to be fully understood due to lack of any comprehensive research done in this area. In addition, study after study shows ethnic inequality getting worse not just in Bristol but across the country. The Prime Minister, Theresa May, has recently published the Racial Disparity Audit to increase understanding of what drives ethnic inequalities. This is a welcome development insofar as it brings racial inequality back to prominence but it does not tell us anything we do not know already and it suggests no strategies to address the inequalities highlighted.

The Brexit vote in the UK changed the environment for BAME communities. Increased racism and Islamophobia have led to soul-searching questions about belonging and what it means to be British. The Casey Review (December 2016) shed further light on the state of integration in our country. Our communities are no longer as cohesive as we would like to believe/imagine. More than ever, BSWN's community events, discussions and debates are playing a vital role in creating opportunities for dialogue within and between communities to help explore what a shared identity for a city/ region could and should look like. The review of Neighbourhood Partnerships also calls for a new approach to community development and engagement. BSWN sees an opportunity to promote our model of connecting communities using the methods I have described above.

BSWN also strongly believes in an evidence-based approach to policy formulation. Cultivating stronger relationships with both our key (Bristol) universities has been a priority for the organisation insofar as it enables us to harness their academic skills and knowledge.

Over the past year BSWN has completed nine events that engaged over 1200 people on issues of race, heritage, economic inclusion, civic participation, and voice and influence. During this time, as I have alluded to above, a number of key national and international elections occurred that heavily influenced the direction of our cultural inclusion programming and outreach within Bristol – namely Brexit and the rise of reported racially based hate crimes in the UK, and the rise of xenophobic populist movements across Europe.

In addition to our engagement events, BSWN continues to participate in city-wide policy and decision - making structures in ensuring race equality continues to be on the agenda. We are also leading on the development of an Economic Inclusion strategy, focusing on the needs BAME communities.

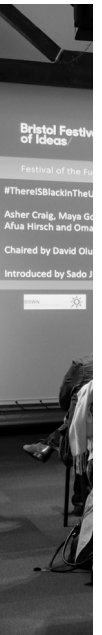


“ BSWN is a member of Taking Action on Race Disparity steering group led by BTEG ”

Key achievements- we have:

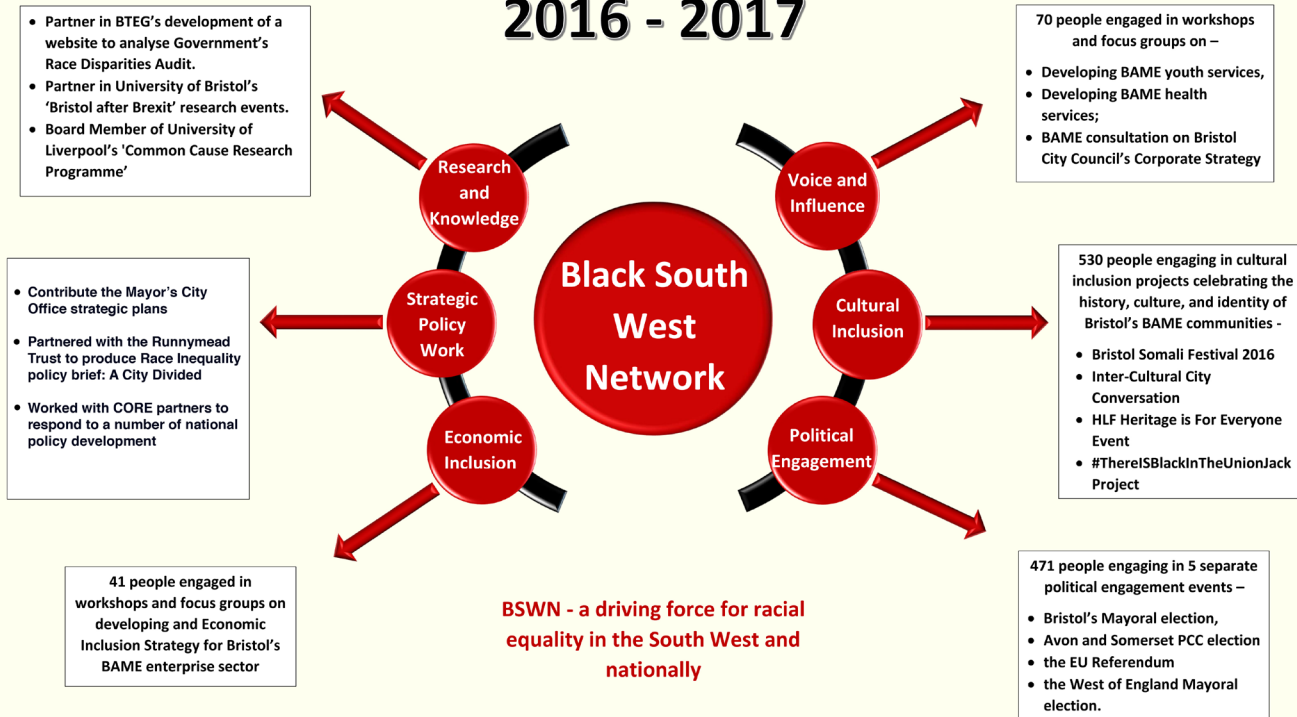
- Raised the profile of race equality both in the city and nationally by working with BAME organisations and communities.
- Delivered a series of events that debated topics ranging from civic and political participation to economic inclusion engaging with over 1200 people.
- Participated and attended over 100 strategic, policy and consultation meetings and events locally & nationally to ensure BAME voices are heard and fed into decision making processes,
- Increased our partnership with local BAME organisations and individuals in enhancing grass root voices and participation.
- Secured funding to develop a new Business Plan for the next 5 years.
- Recruited a new Board of highly effective members in helping implement our new strategic plan.
- Launched our new website and social media platform.

- Been invited by the Mayor to be part of the City Office Partnership – a strategic partnership between public, private and voluntary sector in addressing complex issues facing the sector.
- Secured funding for a fourth successive project from HLF, titled '#ThereIsBlackInTheUnionJack'
- Strengthened relationships with key arts organizations such as M Shed, Watershed and Festival of Ideas.
- Moved to a strategic partner relationship with HLF.
- Led on the development of the Economic Inclusion Strategy in addressing economic working with private and public sector partners.
- Successfully completed the Somali Diaspora project, including an exhibition at M Shed with a record audience attendance of over 400 people.



BSWN **IMPACT** REPORT

2016 - 2017

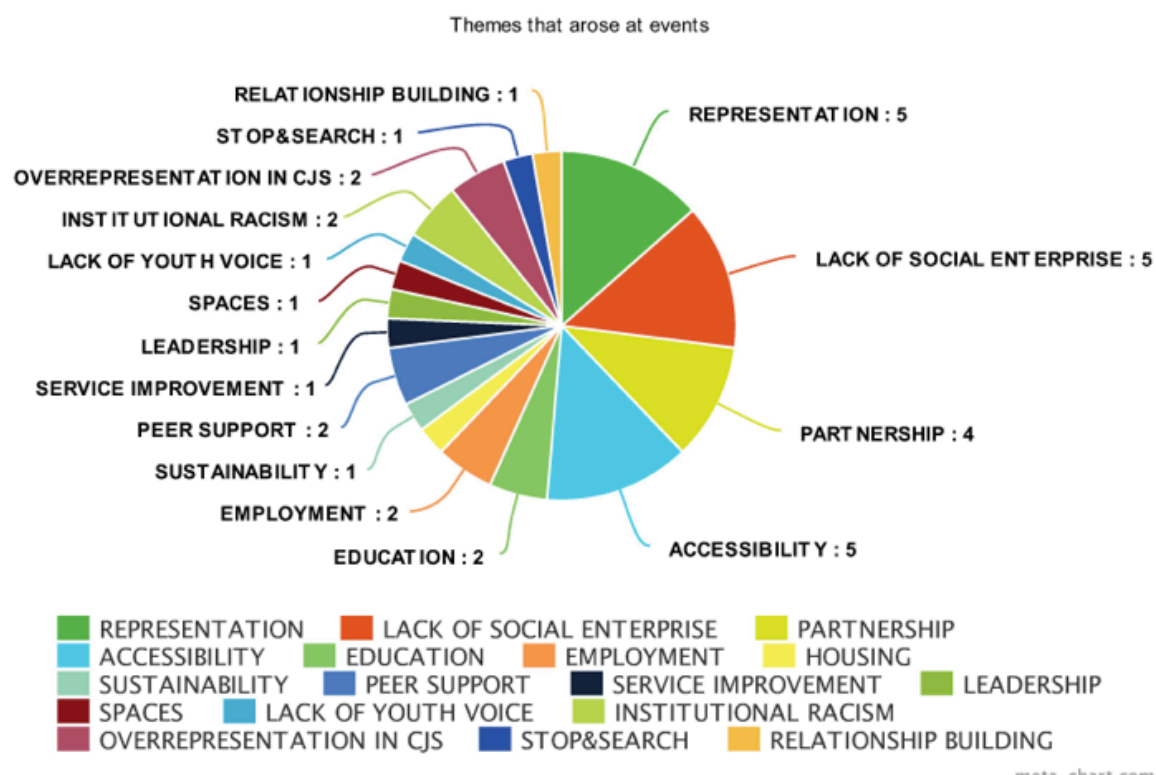


We have thought it important to place these events in the context of our BSWN Strategic Business Plan 2017-2020. At Section 2.6 we set out the following priorities for the next five years:

1. Policy Development.
2. Research and data-gathering on communities in Bristol and the South West to inform our voice, and influence the work we do.
3. To develop the delivery of an Economic Delivery Programme driven by our Economic Inclusion Strategy.
4. To develop a cultural inclusion programme to publicise knowledge of the culture and heritage of our various communities.

You therefore see that opposite each event we have allocated a number relative to the above four priorities to indicate the context within which each event can be placed. The pie chart below also further categorises the subject area into which the topics covered at each event fit into our strategic plan.

BSWN Events



Below is a breakdown of the events we hosted over the course of the fiscal year.

Bristol's Mayoral Candidates Questions Time on Race Equality (5/04/2016)
Number of People Engaged: 250 (2)

Black South West Network in partnership with Up Our Street organised a Mayoral Hustings in April 2016, to look specifically at issues of race equality in Bristol. The event was held in the Fielden Theatre at the City Academy in Bristol's ward with the highest percentage of BAME residents and at a school that has 70% of its roll from BAME families. The event was covered locally by BCfm and regionally by BBC Points West.

The audience of residents and community members was provided with red and green cards in order to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with what the candidates were saying. Voting devices were also provided to the audience to get their opinion on two questions in particular:

1. What do you consider to be the biggest concern/issue currently in Bristol?

An overwhelming majority indicated they considered Institutional Racism to be the greatest issue/challenge the communities currently face.

2. Who will you vote for to be the next Mayor of Bristol?

The current Mayor Marvin Rees received the majority of votes at just over 52%, the most out of the 10 candidates.

Police and Crime Commissioner Hustings 2016 (27/4/2016)
Number of People Engaged: 60 (2)

This event was organised by Black South West Network in partnership with Up Our Street and supported by Babbasa, Bristol Somali Forum, BCfm radio, StopWatch UK and BTEG. Candidates included: Sue Mountstevens (Independent); Mark Weston (Conservative); Kerry Barker (Labour); and Paul Crossley (Liberal Democrat).

The discussion focused on BAME-specific issues such as over-representation of Black and Muslim young men in the Criminal Justice System, Stop & Search and institutional and historic racism within the police which prejudiced the building of trust between the police and communities.

EU Referendum Debate (26/05/2016)
Number of People Engaged: 120 (2)

This event was held before the date of the EU Referendum in June 2016, in order to provide an opportunity for a discussion on how the EU referendum result would impact on BAME communities in Bristol and nationally. BSWN ensured that the panel was balanced and contained speakers from both the Remain and Leave camps.

The event was opened by Mayor Marvin Rees and Councillor Hibaq Jama of Bristol City Council, followed by a discussion chaired by Patrick Hart from BCfm. The panel included:

Lee Jasper (Remain) ; Amina Leone - the Stronger in Europe Campaign; Anna McMullen, former Green Councillor (Remain); Kunle Ololude, Voice4Change England (Leave) ; John Petley - Campaign for Independent Britain (Leave),

and responded to the following themes: Institutional Racism; Immigration; and Employment. Audience members were given red and green cards, which they held up or waved at the panellists to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with what was being said. At the end of the event, the audience of approximately 120 attendees was asked how they would vote in the upcoming referendum: 97 indicating a Remain vote and 23 a Leave vote

Bristol Somali Festival 2016 (26/10 - 29/10/2016)
Number of People Engaged: 400 (4)

This event was part of our Heritage Lottery Funded (HLF) Somali Diaspora Identity Project which focused on the heritage of the Somali community in Bristol. In particular, the events focused on Somali identity as both a pastoralist community by culture and as a diaspora community by circumstance. The Festival brought together a mix of artists, young and old, who used a variety of mediums to explore the themes of identity, heritage, and belonging in the context of a multi-ethnic city in a globalized world. Key figures in Bristol and some of the most renowned Somali scholars were brought together in conversation with one another, as well as some of the ground-breaking and innovative young writers, bloggers, and artists who are moving Somali heritage and identity into new realms of expression.

The programme lasted four days, starting with a launch event focused on the theme of 'The meaning of Soomaalinimo'. The Key Note speaker for the evening was Professor Jimale Ahmed, who lectures in Comparative Literature at Queens College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York.

This launch event was followed by a screening of a documentary titled Broken Dreams by Fathia Absiye, a former Voice of America (VOA) broadcaster and reporter, which tells the story of a group of teenage Somali-American boys who left their families in Minneapolis to join Al-Shabab in Somalia. The third day of the festival was the result of a newly established partnership between the Poetry Translation Centre (PTC) and Somali Week Festival, and showcased the literary work of Somali artists who have fought for their right to speak, write, think, and perform. The event was opened by the launch of a book entitled 'From a Crooked Rib', a Somali translation of poetry by Nuruddin Farah by Abdisalam Hereri.

The festival was closed with a half-day family Saturday event that welcomed families and children to the M Shed with craft stalls, the Somali kitchen, henna and a story teller of Somali fairytales.



BCC Corporate Strategy consultation (4/1/17)
Number of People Engaged: 26 (1+3)

Following the launch of Bristol City Council's draft Corporate Strategy consultation seeking people's views on a draft five-year plan for the city, Black South West Network working with Cllr Asher Craig & the Bristol City Council (BCC) Policy Team, decided to host a Race Equality focused consultation to explore challenges and opportunities for the BAME community that could be fed into the proposed plan. Speakers included Deputy Mayor, Cllr. Asher Craig, and our Director of BSWN, with the event being chaired by Dr. Marie-Annick Gournet, Director of MAG Consulting UK

'Intercultural City'- a Conversation event (9/1/2017)
Number of People Engaged: 20 (1+4)

Bristol City Council in partnership with Bristol Cultural Development Partnership and the Bristol Cultural Steering Group appointed Tom Fleming Creative Consultancy (TFCC) to lead on Bristol's Cultural Future - a plan for culture in the city. In partnership with TFCC, we were able to consult 20 residents and VCS organisation representatives about the challenges to the creative industry in Bristol. We asked the audience four key questions and their responses have been used to inform future work in the area.

HLF EVENT 'Heritage is For Everyone', for Gloucestershire equality groups (31/1/2017)
Number of People Engaged: 40 (2 + 4)

This event was organised by BSWN in partnership with Gloucestershire VCS Alliance and Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to host an HLF Information Event for equalities groups and organisations. The agenda aimed to provide a forum for various community groups and organisations to discuss HLF's grant schemes: Sharing Heritage; First World War: then and now; Young Roots; and Our Heritage and some of the inspiring projects which equalities groups are running using HLF funding.

Attendees also had the opportunity to ask questions, meet other groups and discuss potential heritage project ideas. 1:1 HLF surgeries were also made available for groups to discuss specific heritage project ideas.

“ We were able to consult 20 residents and VCS organisation representatives about the challenges to the creative industry in Bristol ”

Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Review: Health and Social Care support for the voluntary sector (7/2/17)
Number of People Engaged: 27 (1+2)

The aim of this event was to provide information about the big developments in health and social care and how the VCSE Review of health and social care should be supporting the voluntary sector (<https://vcsereview.org.uk/>). Furthermore, the event aimed to inform attendees about local developments in Bristol and the South West and to share examples of key developments in social prescribing, health and justice, and new models of healthcare. The event was attended by NHS staff, voluntary sector organisations in the sphere of health and social justice, and BME-led VCS organisations affected by the VCSE

Addressing BAME Economic Inequality (3/3/2017)
Number of People Engaged: 41 (1+3)

Black South West Network (BSWN) together with Voice 4 Change England (V4CE), Social Investment Business (SIB) and the legal firm Burges Salmon hosted a half day event to look at exploring the role of social investment across the BAME sector in Bristol, to address BAME economic inequality and the viability of this route for our communities

For detailed information about above events and their outcomes, please visit our website: <https://www.blacksouthwestnetwork.org/our-events/>



BSWN is in a strong position going forward both locally and nationally. It now needs to build on its success and, develop its capacity to deliver real change on the ground for BAME communities in the South West through the following:

1. Implement our strategic plans for 2017/18.
2. Strengthen our relationship with academic institutions to increase our research capacity to respond to policy developments in a robust and timely way and build our evidence base in highlighting the impact of racial inequality on the BAME community in the city/region.
3. Carry out a comprehensive scoping exercise to establish the state of the BAME sector in Bristol and the South West, to fully understand what the emerging needs are and how best might the sector work together in the context of decreasing resources and increasing needs to address challenges but also utilise opportunities where they exist.
4. Continue to argue for investment of resource into the sector/community to accelerate ideas and innovation often ignored yet very effective in addressing complex systemic issues.
5. Ensure the voices of the BAME community/sector are fully incorporated into strategic plans for the city/region; Bristol City One Plan and West of England Strategic plan through our own initiatives and the newly formed Bristol Commission for Race Equality.
6. Working with both Mayors, the LEP, private sector and our partners Ashley Housing, Babbasa and the wider BAME sector/ community in implementing our ambitious Economic Development plan for the West of England region to address chronic economic inequalities.
7. Continue to work with our national partners and the Coalition for Race Equality (CORE) to ensure racial inequality remains on the agenda following the publication of the racial disparity data by the Prime Minister.
8. Strengthen the relationship with our main funder HLF and cultural institutions in the city to expand our cultural inclusion programme in the South West and seek further resources to help deliver our 2017 – 2018 strategic plans and core funding for the organisation.

**Balance Sheet
as at 31st March 2017**

	2017		2016
	£	£	£
Tangible assets			
Fixed assets	0	0	0
Current assets			
Cash at bank and in hand	34,201		10,980
		34,201	10,980
Current liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within 12 months		865	865
Net Current assets		33,336	10,115
Net assets		33,336	10,115
Unrestricted funds			
General funds	336		6,381
Restricted funds	33,000		3,734
Total funds		33,336	10,115