



# **BSWN** Impact Report

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2021- 2022

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## Terminology

BSWN moved away from the acronym “B.A.M.E.” in early 2020 as communities across the South West and nationally deemed it inadequate and limiting in identifying the variety of heritages and cultures facing racial discrimination. In this report, we will utilise ‘Black and Minoritised’ people, which will be a synonym for ‘people who are racialised as a non-white minority in the UK society and therefore it can refer to all people from African, South Asian, Middle Eastern, and Latin American backgrounds, heritage and/or descents, including mixed-race individuals.

BSWN is also committed to using more specific terminology for each group whenever possible.

Please understand that the terminology discussion is always evolving and there is currently no fixed term accepted equally by all communities. BSWN will keep engaging with the discussion led by communities and operate to ensure our communication and terminology is developed as the discussion evolves.



# Introduction

2021-2022 has been a turbulent year for Black and Minoritised communities in the South West, for community organisations responding to the pandemic and one in which BSWN's activities have further intensified.

In April 2021, the country moved into a new phase of living with COVID-19. As phase two of easing lockdown measures was introduced, it allowed shops and many other businesses to open properly to the public again. The country began to heave a collective sigh of relief and look towards what the 'new normal' might really look like. That same month, Derek Chauvin was found guilty of the murder of George Floyd, and the ripples from the Black Lives Matter movement flowed globally. Some saw it as a step forward towards racial equity: President Joe Biden referred to the verdict as a "giant step forward in the march towards justice".

However, the UK's context was somewhat different with human rights experts from the United Nations commenting on the Sewell Report: "In 2021, it is stunning to read a report on race and ethnicity that repackages racist tropes and stereotypes into fact, twisting data and misapplying statistics and studies into conclusory findings and *ad hominem* attacks on people of African descent". The reality of systemic racial injustice continued to be played out in the statistics from the government itself and, often brutally, in the day-to-day lived experience of Black and Minoritised people in Britain.

In 2021, Black and Minoritised people were:

- Unemployed at twice the rate of white people.
- Earned on average 10% less than white workers.
- 3x as likely to live in social housing than white people.
- 3x more likely to rent than white British people.
- 4x as likely to be living in overcrowded housing.
- Experienced disproportionate rates of hospitalisation and death from COVID-19.
- Black women were 4x more likely than white women to die in pregnancy or childbirth.
- Women from Asian ethnic backgrounds faced twice the risk of dying in pregnancy or childbirth.
- Asian males received on average a 54% longer custodial sentence than white males.
- Black people were nearly 10x more likely to be stopped and searched and four times as likely to be arrested than white British people.

Bristol is now and has been for decades at the centre of debate around inequality generally and racial inequality specifically. It stands as a microcosm of the issues of global inequality and the legacies of colonialism. Socio-economic inequality is evident in many parts of the city which sit alongside areas of privilege and wealth. Documented differences in opportunity and outcome extend to education, employment, and health resulting in lower living standards, life expectancy, and aspiration.

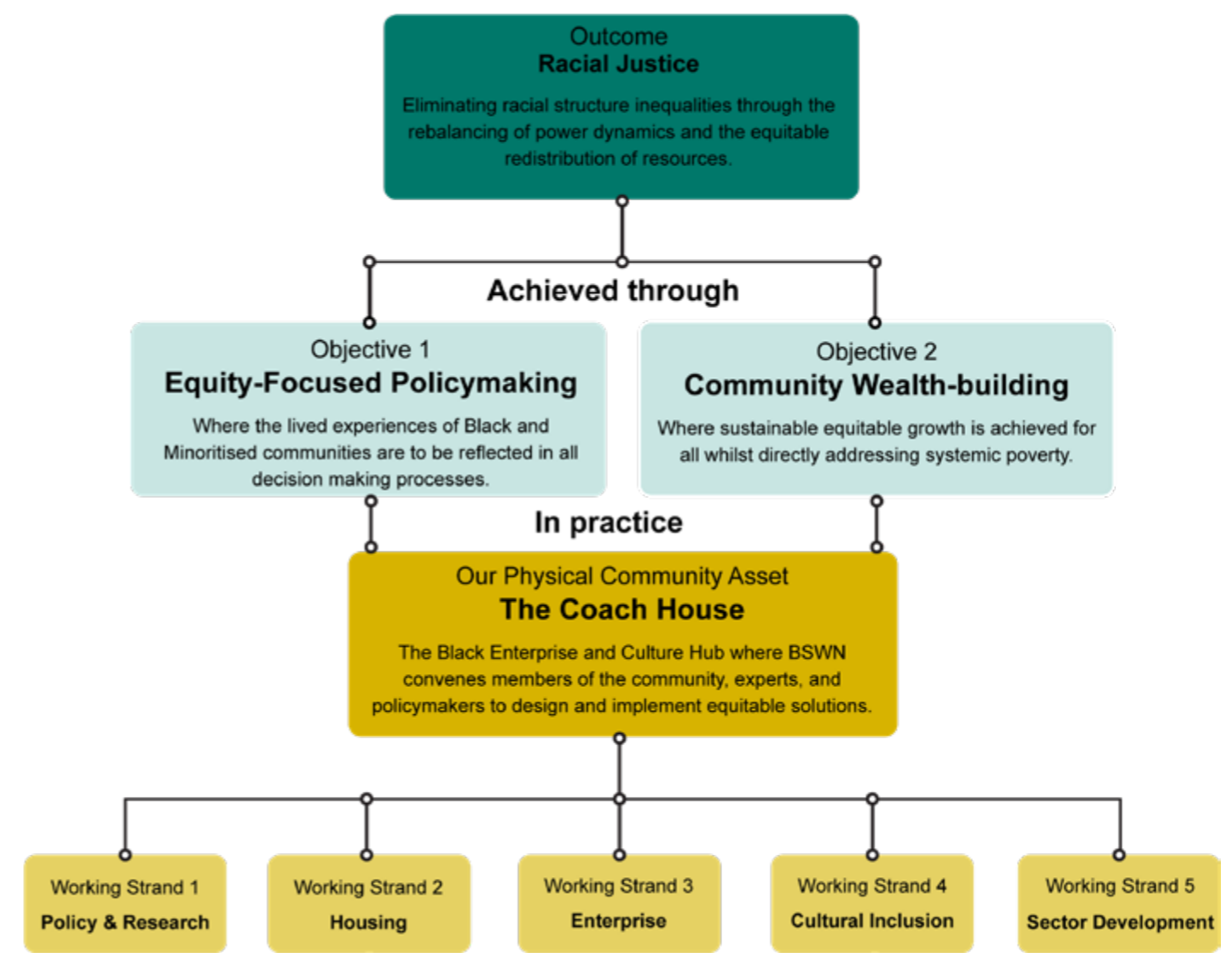
Currently, the unequal impacts of the cost-of-living crisis on Black and Minoritised communities, the continued impacts of the government's hostile environment, the global protests about climate and racial injustice, the events of the past year and more have only sought to highlight the issues of racial inequality in society. It is in this context, in which many challenge how young Black women are having their dignity stripped away by Metropolitan Police, as schoolgirls stripped and searched, or as victims of murder posed as objects in selfies taken by officers. These real-life experiences have highlighted how the work needed to achieve racial justice is our paramount concern. To this end, BSWN has continued to strive to create contexts of racial justice in Bristol and the Southwest. Our conversations with colleagues in organisations across the region have highlighted significant difficulties in addressing these challenges, but also reveal commitment and potential for movement-building toward our shared aim of racial justice.

Our approach is driven by a belief in the centrality of the lived experiences, voices, and perspectives of those we represent to ensure that advocacy messages not only reflect but also respond to the real needs of the community in order to recognise inequalities. Our priorities include, but are not limited to, removing barriers to accessing finance and investment, equipping Black and Minoritised youth with in-demand skills, and addressing inequalities in health, housing, and employment. We believe that these can be achieved through the realisation of two overarching objectives:

1. Equity-focused policy-making where the specific experiences of Black and Minoritised communities are to be reflected in all decision-making processes.
2. Community wealth-building to produce sustainable equitable growth whilst alleviating systemic poverty. Wealth here does not only refer to monetary wealth but in addition to income and assets, we also refer to the knowledge, data, and the provision of spaces for intellectual reflection and retelling of cultural heritage and histories.

Where these two key objectives are met, the ultimate outcome of eliminating racial structural inequity can be achieved through the rebalancing of power dynamics and the equitable redistribution of resources.

As a racial justice organisation, BSWN's work covers many areas and connects with a variety of sectors but these three points underpin every aspect of our work.



# Key Impact

**209°**  
businesses, social enterprises, and organisations supported.



**838**  
hours of support delivered through programmes.



**20**  
events and workshops held for local businesses and for 313 members, 6% more than last year.



**£1,083,317**  
raised in funding - a 29% increase from last year.



**53%**  
increase in followers across all social media platforms.



**Secured a lease°**  
for the Coach House in St Paul's from Bristol City Council via Community Asset Transfer.

**45%°**  
increase this year in newsletter and mailing list subscribers.

# Our work in 2021 – 2022

Transforming the cultural context in which we work, live, and breathe, is going to be a long journey and BSWN needs to ensure it has built a sustainable operation to continue it. Crucially, in terms of our future and seeking to increase our reach and impact, we secured a lease for the Coach House in St Paul's from Bristol City Council via Community Asset Transfer.

This historic building from the 1850s has become the hub of our work and serves Black and Minoritised businesses and communities across Bristol and the South West. In the coming years, we will strive to raise the funds to refurbish the Coach House into a regional centre for Black enterprise and culture. In seeking to secure our impact for the longer term, we were successful in raising £1,142,000 in funding, a 58% increase in turnover, to deliver our Racial Justice objectives, including multi-year funding to work across the South West.



Throughout 2021-22, BSWN delivered work on influencing research & policy, ameliorating housing, providing enterprise support, improving heritage & cultural inclusion, and developing the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector. All programmes and work were designed to further our work on racial justice and equitable inclusion.

The impact of this work is detailed in the following sections.

## Research and Policy

Producing democratised and accessible knowledge on how our communities experience life in the UK society, and how race is defined and understood. Research work affords the opportunity to shape whose voices are heard the clearest and loudest, and what questions are asked to gather data. It has been important to do this collaboratively within communities, Universities, and with the VCSE sector.



In 2021-2022, we have:

- Launched the [Research Action Coalition for Race Equality \(RACE\)](#), a strategic collaborative co-designed space between BSWN and the University of Bristol with two broad aims of democratising access to data and decolonising knowledge production. To realise these aims we have:
  - Created a [data hub](#) to centralise the regional data on racial disparities in a variety of formats.
  - [Mapped](#) the race equality space in the city and wider Southwest region.
  - Drafted a charter for co-production in collaboration with colleagues in the third sector and academia in the UK and abroad. This will be launched in the new year.
  - Carried out research into the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the health of Black and Minoritised communities which can be [viewed here](#).

**"Our sector organisations have not been passive...many have diversified, filled service gaps, found ways to bring communities together and survived against the odds. In some instances, assets and income-generating strategies have been devised."**

### Dorset Race Equality Council

- Established the South West Race Equality Action Group (SWREAG) to address racial justice through a strategic/collaborative approach driven by data with a focus on scrutiny and accountability of public sector bodies, community-building and infrastructure, and strengthening of the sector by leveraging resources to deliver impact on the ground.
- Funds have already been secured for a Regional Capacity Building Manager role, who will be BSWN's lead for this work.
- On the back of the success of SWREAG, a Gloucester version was created, the Gloucester Race Equality Action Group, who secured funds for a development worker and p/t director.
- Worked collaboratively with the University of Bristol to deliver the [Everyday Integration Research Project](#) to explore how civic integration takes place within the community-led ecosystem and collect good practices for inclusive civic engagement. A toolkit was launched in summer 2022 and more evidence will be published in the new year.
- Provided updated evidence for the review of the Bristol International Strategy through the delivery of the Bristol International Diaspora Research Project, which investigated the business, cultural and educational links the diasporic population of Bristol holds internationally.
- Worked with Bristol City Council's political leadership, with Bristol's funders and key VCSE partners to build on the ['Designing a New Social Reality'](#) city-wide research project and implement transformative action in response

to its [recommendations diagram](#). This work's ultimate objective is to strategically organise the Bristol VCSE sector's work into an equitable response to its communities' needs.

- Undertook a mapping of the Gloucestershire Black and Minoritised VCSE sector to build evidence for an equitable and strategic rebuilding of the sector, which will allow for Black and Minoritised communities' health and care needs to be met with a more culturally appropriate provision and open opportunities with One Gloucestershire's Integrated Care Systems. This report will be launched early in the new year.
- Commenced the [Make it Work](#) Research Programme in partnership with Bristol City Council to provide evidence on the benefits of a relational approach when engaging with Black and Minoritised Health and Care providers and explore alternative methods for commissioning and procurement practices that enable the sector to maximise on its strengths.
- Delivered the [Explainable AI Research Project](#) in partnership with Bristol Digital Futures Institute to explore what barriers are hindering Black and Minoritised individuals' engagement with Artificial Intelligence (AI) both at user and developer's levels. Findings will be published early in the new year.

**"The programme helped us get funding, get onto the BCC and NHS framework, with direct payments to help us support our local black and minoritised community, especially in deprived areas."**

**Sierra Healthcare  
MIW programme**

Alongside our team's contribution to key national policy conversations in housing, the economy, and cultural heritage at panel discussions and roundtables, we have submitted several evidence submissions and recommendations, including:

- A [submission](#) of evidence to the government's Race and Ethnic Disparities Commission.



- [Submission](#) to the Public Bill Committee for the Police, Crime, Sentencing, and Courts Bill.
- Fed into the [consultation](#) of Bristol's Clean Air Zone.
- We responded and provided evidence for the government's problematic proposals to change its ethnicity facts and figures website.
- We [responded](#) to the government's proposed new bill of rights.
- We [submitted to Just Fair's call for evidence](#) on behalf of civil society organisations in England and Wales on the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.
- In addition, we have drafted several policy briefings on the spring budget, the cost-of-living crisis, the new social housing bill, and the Windrush compensation scheme alongside our statements on key issues such as the government's Inclusive Britain report, and the vaccine rollout.

**'The disadvantages that ethnic minorities face in terms of education and employment in Bristol are much greater than what is generally experienced by ethnic minorities throughout England and Wales.'**

**[Cost of Living Policy Brief](#)**

## Housing

Housing has become a key strand of BSWN's work because confronting the inequalities in housing is central to tackling the inequalities in health, employment and education, and wealth. As with all our other work, our housing projects are based on our research (Housing BAME Communities in Bristol: A Community-led Initiative) and recommendations drafted in collaboration with the community.

To realise these aims we have:

- Started our Housing Rights Workshop capacity building programme in partnership with Shelter to develop community expertise in housing advice. This programme will deliver long lasting housing knowledge and expertise in the community on information-sharing and advice-giving around housing options and access to support.
- Bid for several sites in partnership with WeCanMake as part of Bristol City Council's Land Disposal Scheme. We are working to bring forth a practical contribution to addressing some of the issues of the impact of gentrification on long-standing communities.
- Supported Bristol Somali Resource Centre with their bid for Tenants Hall as a housing and community space - a copy of the engagement report [can be found here](#).



Watch the Youtube Video: [Tenants Hall Community Engagement Session](#), Illustrations and video by [Drew Sinclair](#).

- In addition, we have drafted policy briefs around the new social housing bill, we are a member of Bristol City Council's living rent commission whose aim is to explore options for how Bristol can become a living rent city, and we have held a number of consultation events in partnership with Bristol Somali Resource Centre & Malcolm X Community Centre to inform the Council's review of the housing allocation scheme.

# Enterprise

A significant strand of our work has involved enabling opportunities for enterprise. This support was formed to support Black and Minoritised founders and wealth creators and unlock their ambitions to drive and increase economic growth across the South West region. We provide expert advice, personal and business development coaching, mentoring, focused programmes, peer-to-peer learning, and expert-led workshops. For the first time, we have been able to achieve this on our own community asset at the Coach House, where we have:

- Launched our Social Enterprise Incubator, with 16 desks for collaboration and hot desking, utilised by local entrepreneurs.



**“It really is an incredible space for people like me who want to be around other entrepreneurs. I love that this is a part of it and maintains a resource for the cohort!”**

**Dana Saxon  
Ancestors Unknown**

- Supported 209 businesses, social enterprises, organisations, and groups across several programmes, delivering 838 hours of support.
- Delivered the “Make it Work” programme to support 17 Black and Minoritised led organisations from the healthcare sector by engaging with Bristol City Council’s Adult Social Care commissioning frameworks. As a

result, registration to the Pro-Contract system has increased by 30% across the cohort and 3 organisations have already secured new contracts.

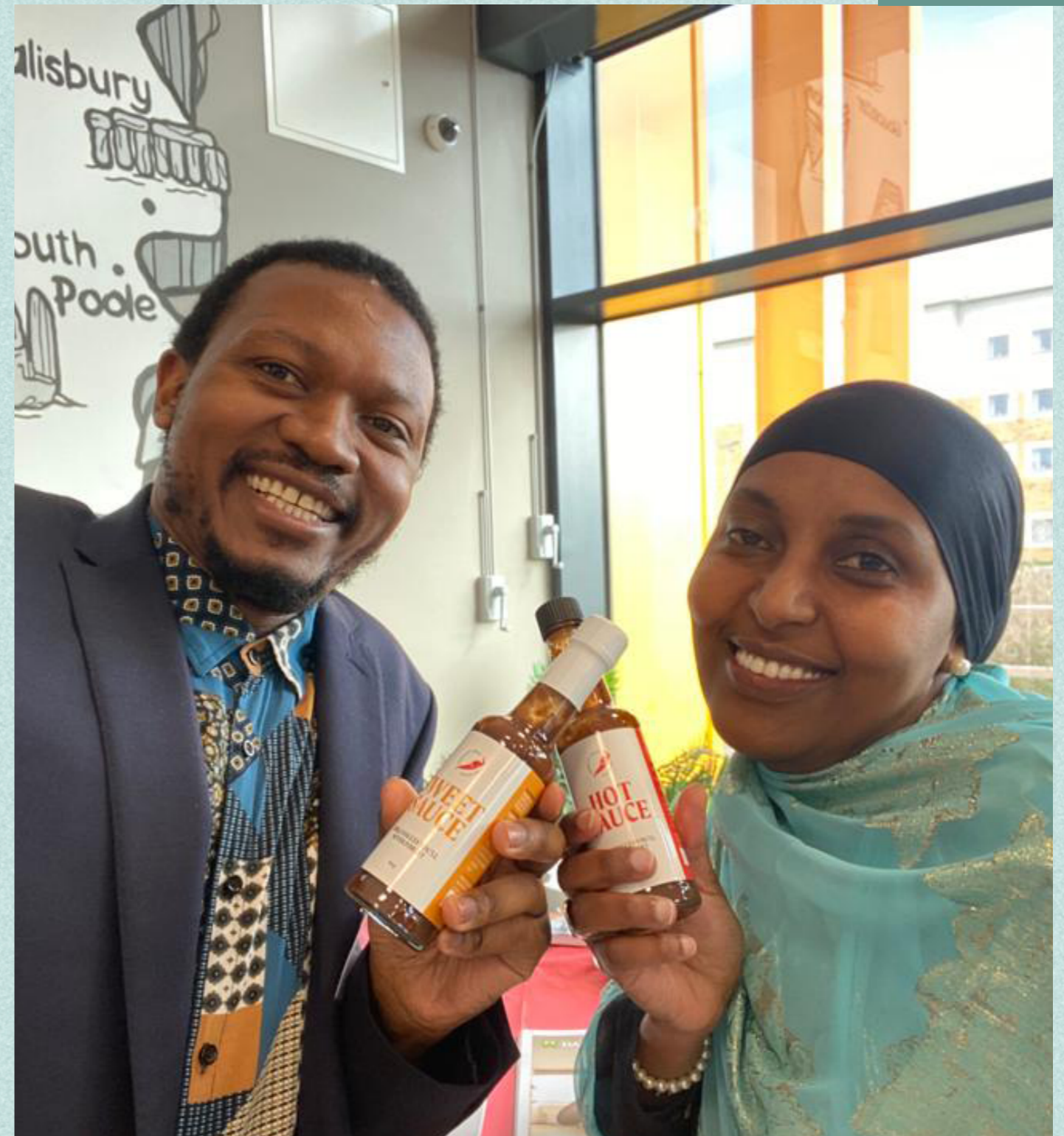
- Delivered our enterprise expert workshops, a series of business support workshops aimed at delivering growth in social enterprise, business, innovation, and employment.

**“The programme has helped us understand the more suitable business structure...It helped us shape our next step for solid sustainability and structure... We are transforming without disappearing.”**

**Oluwa Shittu  
Play Wooden**



- Delivered our Green Skills programme (in partnership with NatWest and the University of the West of England) to our sixth cohort.
- Our COVID-19 Recovery Business Support Programme supported 135 businesses and has broadened out into a Business Support Programme through which:
  - 30% of participating businesses are projecting growth within 12 months.
  - 19% of participating businesses created jobs and recruited new staff.
- We have met our milestones for our contract with the Local Access Partnership for 2021 and have begun to plan recruitment of next year’s cohort.



**“Without BSWN, I wouldn't be where I am today. I am now looking forward to the New Year and the future of my business. Running a business can be lonely and sometimes you have no one to talk to about how your business is doing...I am so happy with the support I am getting from BSWN...I consistently refer to how happy I am that the Job Centre now wants to refer other minority entrepreneurs to BSWN. It's easy to advocate for others when you are benefiting from their support.”**

**Sadia Yusuf  
Elephant Chilli Sauce**

## Cultural Inclusion

Our long-standing cultural strand of work is now bearing fruit with the development of dedicated spaces within The Coach House. The overarching strategic aim of our Cultural Heritage Programme is to impact upon a range of racial justice measures through culture and heritage work. In this programme, we have begun to develop a series of community archiving workshops, and develop the digital UnMuseum prototype - an online space to which community-based archivists and cultural producers can 'upload' content and curate 'collections' through Black and Minoritised lenses.



More specifically, we have:

- Continued the development work of our Intangible Cultural Heritage project to define and establish a physical and digital (Un) Museum of Black Culture and Heritage. We have undertaken 3 workshops, held an online panel discussion, and facilitated an online conference, aptly titled *Beyond Museums in the Aftermath of Colston: Re-imagining Black Pasts, Presents, and Futures* – in which 230 people have helped define and evolve the concept into tangible measurable reality for which we can now pursue funding.
- Established a broad group of stakeholders from across the country and from within the Black and Minoritised Culture and Heritage sector to add their ideas and professional and academic knowledge to further inform the theoretical

and practical development of the (Un)Museum project.

- Joined partnerships with the Bristol Digital Futures Institute at the University of Bristol and Auroch Digital, Bristol to support the development of the digital elements of the (Un) Museum.
- Developed a partnership with Exeter University on a GLAM-E (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums) project that includes the Royal Albert Memorial Museum and the New York State Museum that is researching issues of digitisation of collections and related IPR issues as they pertain to Black cultural producers. This is an interdisciplinary digitisation clinic for smaller and less well-resourced cultural institutions and community organisations.
- Established a partnership with WhoseKnowledge? to explore and deliver community archiving workshops.
- Published the findings of Project T.R.U.T.H (Telling Restoring Understanding our Tapestry and History) commissioned by Bristol City Council and the Bristol Legacy Steering Group. The project ran over 2 years and was delivered by BSWN in partnership with Afrikan ConneXions Consortium with input from the Council's Legacy Steering Group (LSG) Project TRUTH subgroup.

**'Right now, we've got no legacy of history because we're reliant on their history which is incorrect. We need to create our own history and get our children and their children's children to plug into that to promote it.'**

### Project T.R.U.T.H Report

- Established partnerships with several Bristol-based cultural heritage organisations to explore and deliver events and spaces for intellectual reflection as they pertain to Black and Minoritised communities and individuals including: Bristol Old Vic, Bristol Ideas, Bookhaus, Bristol Improv Theatre, Stuart Hall Foundation, and Watershed.

## Sector Development

- Completed our support programme, entitled *'Delivering Inclusive Growth to the Black & Minoritised-Led Sector in Bristol'*, in collaboration with six Black & Minoritised-led organisations, who could develop their community business potential, and who have aptly named themselves 'The Super Six'.



- Super Six 2.0 – 6 more organisations were recruited and supported. Examples of tailored support taken up by the Super 6 2.0 includes:
  - Recruitment strategy to diversify their team
  - Developing a strategic plan with the board of trustees
  - Understanding legal structures and improving board governance
  - Exploring collaborative working and sharing assets
  - Devising a business plan focused on managing community assets
  - Considering community-led housing with sustainable community space
  - Learning about theories of change to align them to social impact
  - Strengthening funder relationships and managing funding
  - Identifying social impact and reporting effectively to funding bodies

Local relationships with Council employees by synergising the above 1-2-1 support with sessions co-facilitated with Merlin Jones from Bristol City Council's Business Services on project management and theory of change. With support

from Alice Norton, a wide range of other sessions on social value, procurement, and communications have tapped into BCC's skill set for local Black-led organisations to draw on.

Furthermore, over 10 organisations from both cohorts benefited from a comprehensive session on charitable legal structures facilitated by Morgan Lewis. This relationship was brokered by Quartet Community Foundation's John Steinlet, as part of the ProHelp Service.

Many organisations from the first cohort have also continued to stay in touch and have received advice and support on managing boards and securing funding:

- Through Saving Lives 24/7 which concluded in April 2021, we have been able to support a collaborative partnership with funding towards operational costs, back-office impact data systems, and resources for crucial frontline work supporting over 3000+ people with multiple needs including tackling the hidden poverty of children in times of food crises.
- Talking Inequalities – a Sports England Programme delivered in conjunction with VOSCUR resulting in 10 organisations being supported by BSWN and achieving an 80% success rate with funding applications.
- South West Race Equality Action Group (SWREAG) - Much development work on consulting, shaping, and developing the framework of SWREAG, which brings together the South West's race equality and racial justice organisations to hold the space for exploring what the support needs after more than a decade of austerity, COVID-19 and impact of Black Lives Matter.

**"I am building a consortium of business with my colleagues so that we can address health and social care in a holistic manner."**

**Anneloris Chacon  
Bristol Black Carers**



# Moving Forward



Our Research and Policy work will continue to focus on the issues that affect Black and Minoritised communities across the region. We will further advance the scope of our research, and working with SWREAG, we will develop a regional mapping piece to establish a cartography of Black and Minoritised organisations across the region.

To support these efforts, we are applying to the UKRI for funding to develop an approach to democratised research and knowledge development across the South West.

Our research focus will also turn to include the climate crisis and the impact of this on Black and Minoritised communities through a research partnership with Bristol Green Capital Partnership and the Cabot Institute at the University of Bristol. In addition, with the conclusion of the Explainable AI project, we will explore further development of this with the Bristol Digital Futures Institute and partners.

Our Sector Development work will enable Black and Minoritised organisations from Bristol to Cornwall to connect in a regional context, whether it be digitally or hybrid, to support leaders and VCSE organisations to strengthen their connectivity with communities, develop leadership skills and attract resources and investment.

Our Enterprise and Social Enterprise work will broaden with a regional focus, to provide support across the South West. We are developing a partnership with Allianz Personal to fund the delivery of incubation, growth, and business development services with a focus on green and tech industries. Lastly, our cultural heritage work will continue to create spaces and opportunities for Black and Minoritised people to equitably participate in the ownership, management, production, and consumption of their varied cultural heritages. To support this, we have applied to the National Heritage Lottery Fund to fund our (Un)Museum project which will re-tell and reimagine the histories and heritage of Minoritised communities in the South West.



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