



NNS Citywide Gap Analysis

Full Report

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With thanks to Allies Network, Bid Services and Birmingham LGBT for contributions towards the research

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Executive Summary

This Gap Analysis was conducted in order to identify key gaps in the existing NNS structure across Birmingham, and which could be addressed by NNS Citywide. The research itself was comprised of three distinct phases:

- During Phase One, available data was used to identify potential target communities based on population and need;
- During Phase Two interviews were conducted with stakeholders in order to refine and further identify potential target communities and the needs of relevant community assets;
- During Phase Three, focus groups and interviews were held with citizens from target priority communities in order to better understand their needs.

A large number of potential target groups were identified during Phase One, although the highest priority target groups, who both met the criteria for support and were rated as having the highest level of need, are listed below:

- White Irish ethnicity
- Black Caribbean ethnicity
- Other Religion
- Roma and Irish Traveller ethnicity
- Any minority sexual orientation
- Transgender gender identity
- Specific disabilities (i.e. Learning Disabilities)
- Specific carer subpopulations (i.e. unpaid carers with high caring responsibilities)

Interviews with stakeholders during Phase Two highlighted what role and structure they felt NNS Citywide should have. Whilst providing grants to community assets was undoubtedly a fundamental part of that role, many interviewees highlighted that it was not only about providing grants, but also about having an effective structure through which small citywide organisations supporting dispersed communities can be linked in with other small organisations, broader strategy and some of the other types of support which locality-based community assets enjoy through the existing locality-based NNS structure. Another key issue highlighted by these interviews was that “¹NNS Citywide” was a potentially misleading name as it led them to interpret it as addressing “citywide” issues such as transport.

Phase Three focussed on particular target communities, and as such most of the recommendations are relevant to specific communities, as opposed to being of general relevance to NNS Citywide. That said, community specific training for higher skilled employment and more awareness training for other NNS community assets were both suggestions made by multiple independent groups.

¹ During the period that this research was done (and in part due to findings presented during interim reports) NNS Citywide was renamed as NNS Connecting Communities. For the sake of the consistency and clarity, the initiative is referred to as NNS Citywide throughout.

Context

The Birmingham Neighbourhood Network Scheme (NNS) is a constituency-based strategic network funded by the Adult Social Care department of Birmingham City Council (BCC). The NNS supports voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise organisations across Birmingham to provide preventative support for citizens and communities, in line with BCC's Prevention First approach.

There are 10 constituencies served by the Birmingham NNS. An anchor organisation, responsible for the administration of small grants and capacity building to smaller, community assets exist in each constituency. For the most part, the anchor organisation is a larger voluntary or community sector (VCS) operating within the constituency although two of the ten constituencies are supported through departments within BCC.

The small grants distributed through the Birmingham NNS structure are intended to fund activities that meet the needs of the specific constituency in which they are based. Initially, the NNS was intended to deliver preventative support for over-50s, however the expansion of this to over 18s with specific relevant needs (i.e. Learning Difficulties) is currently being piloted in two constituencies.

NNS Citywide is a new initiative that aims to supplement the current model, targeting preventative support to communities not served through the constituencies who may nevertheless be an important priority for the city as a whole.

The aim of the gap analysis is to support the introduction and implementation of NNS Citywide. The gap analysis will consist of three phases. Phase One uses available quantitative data to identify candidate priority groups and further refine these based on measures of need within those groups. Phase Two will engage with relevant stakeholders to provide qualitative data to further refine the proposed priority groups. Phase Three will cover focus groups with citizen from the refined priority groups. Following suggestions made during Phase Two, an additional review of relevant documents was made during Phase Three.

Aims And Methodology

Phase One

The method taken as part of Phase One is comprised of two parts:

- identifying plausible candidate groups based on estimated populations
- further refining and prioritising those groups based on estimated level of need

Population

NNS Citywide aims to serve groups who, due to their size, are unlikely to be served through the NNS constituency structure but who in aggregate may make up a substantial number of people across the city.

A suggested threshold at which a group or demographic may be too small to access support is where they make up less than 5% of the population within a given constituency, referred to in the report as '*constituency super minorities*' (CSM). For the purpose of robustness, we have applied two additional thresholds – 2.5% and 7.5%.

A further aim is that the city-wide support is provided to groups who are spread widely across the city, defined as those spread across three or more constituencies. If over 50% of the overall population can be served by two adjacent constituencies working together, they are deemed not in scope for NNS citywide prioritisation.

A worked example of the constituency super minority analysis

Across Birmingham as a whole, Christians are the largest individual religious group, comprising nearly half a million people (46.1% of the population). In contrast, there are a little over twenty thousand Hindus in Birmingham as a whole, making up 2.1% of the population.

Whilst the total number of Christians in Birmingham is large, there are also **zero** constituencies in Birmingham where Christians make up less than 5% of the population. In contrast, there are no constituencies in Birmingham where Hindus make up *more than* 5% of the population, so the Constituency Super Minority population of Hindus in Birmingham is a little over twenty thousand people (i.e. all of the Hindu population). Similarly, comparing Christians to Birmingham using the 5% definition of a Constituency Super Minority, 0% of Christians are a Constituency Super Minority, whereas 100% of Hindus are Constituency Super Minorities.

These numbers would suggest that of the two groups, Hindus make a better candidate priority group for NNS Citywide.

Finally, BCC is keen to ensure that the NNS citywide initiative provides services for all demographic groups and so it was important that we also reported against the proportion of the whole population of a defined group who are living in areas where they are a CSM.

Need

Once candidate priority groups are identified, they are further refined by considering the level of need demonstrated by that group. Demand for Adult Social Care (ASC) is a key measure but the available data in this context is limited, and there are a large number of other relevant social indicators, such as subjective well-being and social isolation.

Previous work (Castro-Bilbrough, A 2019) suggested that a key role the NNS can play is in early identification of need, helping individuals access support and engage in services before their needs are already very developed. If a particular group has very high costs when first receiving support, this would suggest they could benefit from earlier intervention and identification.

In the context of ASC outcomes, two types of measure were used:

- the total number of people and total cost associated with the group in question
- the median cost of people who have just started receiving services from ASC.

To further identify groups with higher need we supplemented local data with regional and/or national figures on the health and happiness of various groups relating to the core objective of supporting individuals “to lead happy healthy and independent lives.”

Data

Unless otherwise stated, all constituency level data is taken from the 2011 census. In a few cases, data was available using the 2018 ward level projections made by BCC.

All figures for the number and cost of demand to the ASC were provided by BCC in an aggregated form such to protect the anonymity of individual clients, and reflect demand over a one-month sample period. As individual level data was not available, it was not possible to calculate confidence

intervals or any other measure of uncertainty, although adjustments have been made wherever possible to account for this.

Due the limitations of the data, all of the findings should be approached with an appropriate degree of caution.

The data itself contains a level of uncertainty for several reasons. Firstly, the population estimates used for the demographic makeup of constituencies may misrepresent the true figures. Given that the task is to identify small subsets, small divergences in the estimates from true figures at the population level could lead to large divergences in the estimates for subsets of that population.

Secondly, in some areas the data used is not specific to individual constituencies within Birmingham and is drawn from regional and national data sets. Thirdly, there is uncertainty in the thresholds used. There are likely to be smaller groups who *do not* struggle to receive specific support through their constituency NNS and larger groups who do struggle because of other factors - such as the specific constituency anchor organisation, perceptions about the prevalence of various groups, and so on.

Finally, the structure used in data collection does not necessarily reflect the structure of the cultural, social and economic identities which would impact the type of needs that would be served by the NNS. The relevant cultural identities could be broader than, narrower than, or cut across the categories used by official statistics.

Phase Two

This report comprises Phase 2a of the NNS Citywide Gap Analysis. For further details on the context and background of this project, please see the Phase 1 report.

In order to support the findings from Phase 1 of this report, in-depth interviews were conducted with 14 different stakeholder groups.

Interview Number	Number of interviewees	Organisation type
1	1	Ethnicity based community asset
2	1	BCC - Refugees and Migrants
3	2	NNS anchor organisation
4	2	NNS anchor organisation
5	1	Disability based community asset
6	1	LGBT+ community asset
7	2	Disability based community asset
8	1	Faith Based organisation
9	1	BCC - Adult Social Care
10	2	City-wide community asset
11	1	NNS anchor organisation
12	1	Regional policy network
13	1	BCC – Adult Social Care
14	1	BCC – Adult Social Care

All interviews were conducted online by video call by one of three interviewers. Comprehensive notes made during those interviews were used as the basis for these findings.

Phase Three

Aims

The aim of this element of the gap analysis was to further identify needs and priorities in target groups, as they relate to the priorities of NNS Citywide.

It is worth noting that during the focus groups, participants referred to local issues which are beyond the scope of this project. However, we felt that there was still value in including this information if specifically relevant to the demographic group (i.e. difficulties deaf people face in railway stations), Problems identified by the focus groups which were more general in scope (i.e. not specific to demographic group) and outside the scope of NNS have not been included.

Methodology

Focus groups were conducted, in person, with three of the priority groups identified. The groups comprised:

- 7 Roma men (aged 18-30 and with familial links to Romania), arranged through contact with a member of the Roma community.
- 8 members of the LGBT+ community (7 male and 1 female), arranged with Birmingham LGBT Centre and hosted at BVSC
- 10 deaf or hearing-impaired individuals (a mix of ages and genders and including one BID Services staff member), supported by two interpreters, arranged by and hosted at BID services

In addition, short interviews with four women from the Somali community were conducted by Allies Network, with questions provided by the research team. This method was chosen because the stakeholder expert said that this would be much more likely to be successful in gaining feedback. Interviews were conducted in Somali and translated to English by Allies Network. As the sample size was small, and the interviews relatively short, the findings from this group are not as extensive as from the focus groups, and verbatim quotes are not included as the responses were collected by a third party.

Finally, a review of the quarterly monitoring reports was undertaken with the aim of identifying any other suggestions or findings from the NNS Constituency Leads day to day activities.

Findings

Phase One

Ethnicity

Priority Groups by Constituency Super Minority (CSM)

In order to identify the priority ethnicities eligible for NNS Citywide, we considered the ethnicities with the largest CSM populations against the three thresholds (shown in Table 1).

Table 1: the population size of various ethnicities in Birmingham, showing the total count of the population as well as the Constituency Super Minority population at all three thresholds (largest five groups in bold). Figures based on census data.²

Ethnicity	2.5% Threshold	5% Threshold	7.5% Threshold	Total Population
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	2507	16591	32532	32532
Asian/Asian British: Chinese	8321	12712	12712	12712
Asian/Asian British: Indian	3355	17813	17813	64621
Asian/Asian British: Other Asian	7960	25030	31148	31148
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	1869	13745	13745	144627
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African	9554	19899	19899	29991
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean	5650	18779	24805	47641
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black	12704	18728	18728	18728
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: Other Mixed	8476	8476	8476	8476
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian	11186	11186	11186	11186
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African	3223	3223	3223	3223
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean	14726	24720	24720	24720
Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	10894	10894	10894	10894
Other ethnic group: Arab	6571	10910	10910	10910
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	408	408	408	408
White: Irish	10153	22021	22021	22021
White: Other White	7286	28990	28990	28990
White: English/Welsh/Scottish/ Northern Irish/British	0	0	0	570217

Using the 7.5% threshold as the definition of what it means to be a CSM, the ethnicities with the five largest populations (in descending order) are:

- Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi
- Asian/Asian British: Other Asian
- White: Other White
- Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean
- Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean

Using the 5% threshold as the definition of what it means to be a CSM, the ethnicities with the five largest populations (in descending order) are:

- White: Other White
- Asian/Asian British: Other Asian

² 2011 Census: Key Statistics for Birmingham and its constituent areas: KS201 Ethnic Groups, 2018. Available at https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/9741/2018_ks201_ethnic_group, last accessed 30/11/2021.

- Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean
- White: Irish
- Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African

Using the 2.5% threshold as the definition of what it means to be a CSM, the ethnicities with the five largest populations (in descending order) are:

- Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean
- Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black
- Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian
- Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group
- White: Irish

We then considered the different ethnicities in terms of what proportion of the entire population of these groups were considered CSM (as show in Table 2).

Ethnicity	2.5% Threshold	5% Threshold	7.5% Threshold	Total Population
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	8%	51%	100%	32532
Asian/Asian British: Chinese	65%	100%	100%	12712
Asian/Asian British: Indian	5%	28%	28%	64621
Asian/Asian British: Other Asian	26%	80%	100%	31148
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	1%	10%	10%	144627
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African	32%	66%	66%	29991
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean	12%	39%	52%	47641
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black	68%	100%	100%	18728
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: Other Mixed	100%	100%	100%	8476
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian	100%	100%	100%	11186
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African	100%	100%	100%	3223
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean	60%	100%	100%	24720
Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	100%	100%	100%	10894
Other ethnic group: Arab	60%	100%	100%	10910
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	100%	100%	100%	408
White: Irish	46%	100%	100%	22021
White: Other White	25%	100%	100%	28990
White: English/Welsh/Scottish/ Northern Irish/British	0%	0%	0%	570217

Table 2: the percentage of various ethnicities in Birmingham that are super minorities within their own constituency and the total population of that ethnicity across the city as a whole.

There are thirteen ethnicities, where the entire population of that ethnicity is a CSM in their constituency in the city using the 7.5% definition:

- Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi
- Asian/Asian British: Chinese
- Asian/Asian British: Other Asian
- Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black
- Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: Other Mixed
- Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian
- Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African
- Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean
- Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group
- Other ethnic group: Arab
- White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- White: Irish
- White: Other White

There are eleven ethnicities, where the entire population of that ethnicity is a CSM in their constituency in the city using the 5% definition:

- Asian/Asian British: Chinese
- Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black
- Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: Other Mixed
- Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian
- Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African
- Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group
- Other ethnic group: Arab
- White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- White: Irish
- White: Other White

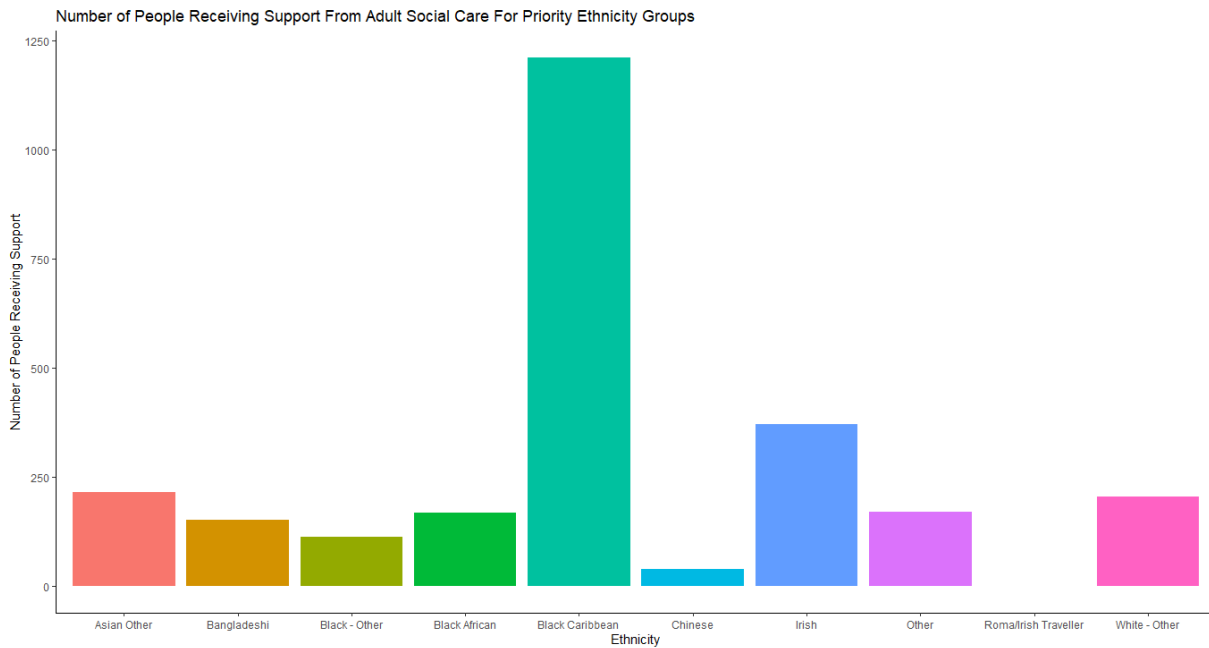
There are five ethnicities, where the entire population of that ethnicity is a CSM in their constituency in the city using the 2.5% definition:

- Black: Other Black
- Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian
- Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean
- Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group
- White: Irish

Of these ethnicities, one (Other ethnic group: Arab) would be better served by a cross constituency partnership. A two-constituency partnership, made up of Hall Green and Ladywood would cover 56% of Arab citizens across the city, and a three-constituency partnership, made up of Hall Green, Ladywood and Hodge Hill, would cover 69% of Arab citizens across the city.

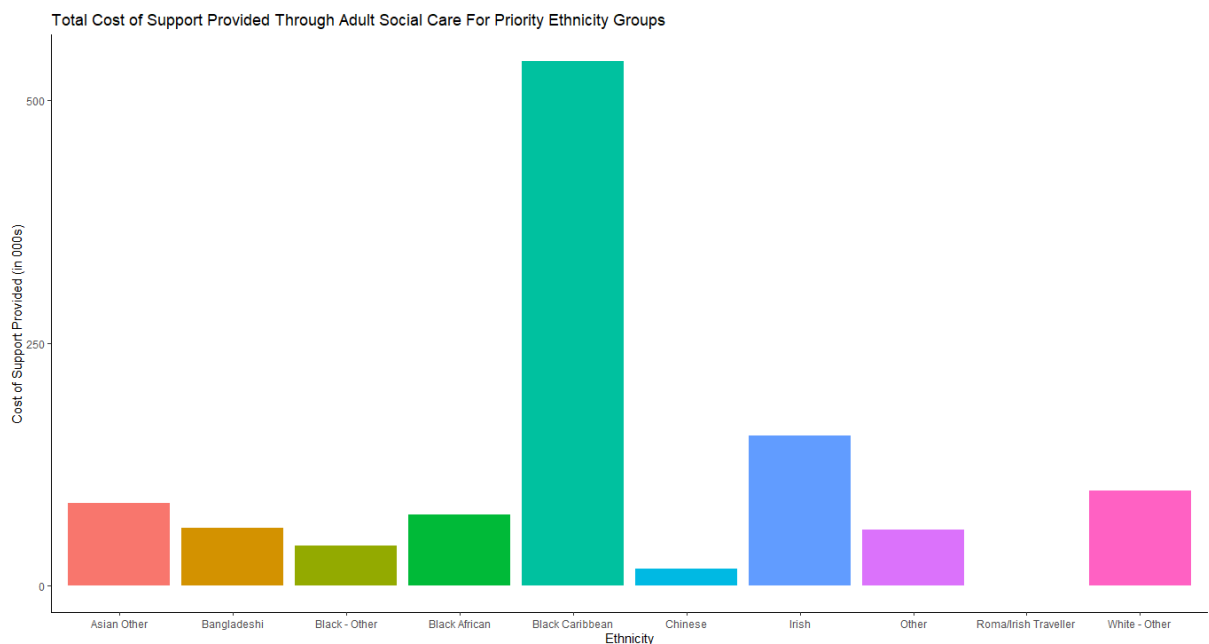
Ethnicity and Total Demand For Adult Social Care (ASC)

Now that the priority ethnic groups have been identified, it is possible to further refine this list by identifying high priority groups using demand data from ASC.



Of the priority groups identified, the ethnicities with the highest number of people receiving support from ASC during the sample period was the Black Caribbean population (1211 service users), White Irish (372 service users) and Asian Other (216 service users).

Using the priority ethnicity groups, and refining this further using the known cost to ASC we find a similar picture emerging. The Black Caribbean population was by far the most costly (£540,000), followed by White Irish (£150,000) and White Other (£98,000).



NB. For both cost and number of service users, data was not available for the Roma/Irish Traveller ethnicity as there were too few users to share information without compromising data protection.

Ethnicity		All usual residents	Under 50	Over 50
All people		1073045	780480	292565
White	Irish	22021	7460	14561
	Gypsy/Irish Traveller	408	321	87
	Other White	28990	24868	4122
Asian	Bangladeshi	32532	29353	3179
	Chinese	12712	11190	1522
	Other Asian	31148	27008	4140
Black	African	29991	28123	1868
	Caribbean	47641	32699	14942
	Other Black	18728	17158	1486
Other	Other	10894	9300	1594

Table 3: Population over 50 and under 50 for the priority ethnicity groups identified, as well as for the total population of Birmingham as a whole. Based on calculations using 2011 census data³

The fact that demand for ASC by Black Caribbean citizens far outstrips that of any of the other priority ethnicities is not itself surprising. The Black Caribbean population is by far the largest of the priority ethnicities. However, even adjusting for total population, the demand for ASC by Black Caribbean citizens is substantially higher than would be expected.

During the sample period, the total number of Black Caribbean citizens who accessed services through ASC amounted to 2.6% of the Black Caribbean population as a whole. The same figure for White Irish citizens was 1.8%. No other priority groups surpassed 1%.

The elevated level of demand by Irish citizens is likely to be explained predominantly by their age. Older people typically engage with ASC more regularly, and Irish citizens are substantially older than any of the other priority groups. For example, amongst the Irish population of Birmingham there are roughly twice the number of over fifty-year-olds as there are under fifty-year-olds. In every other priority ethnic group, under fifty-year-olds outnumber over fifty-year-olds. Relative to other priority groups, the Black Caribbean population also has a slightly higher proportion of older citizens, but the difference in age is much smaller and goes only a small way to explaining the very large gap in demand for ASC.

Based on this data there is a strong case to be made for Black Caribbean citizens and older Irish citizens being prioritised.

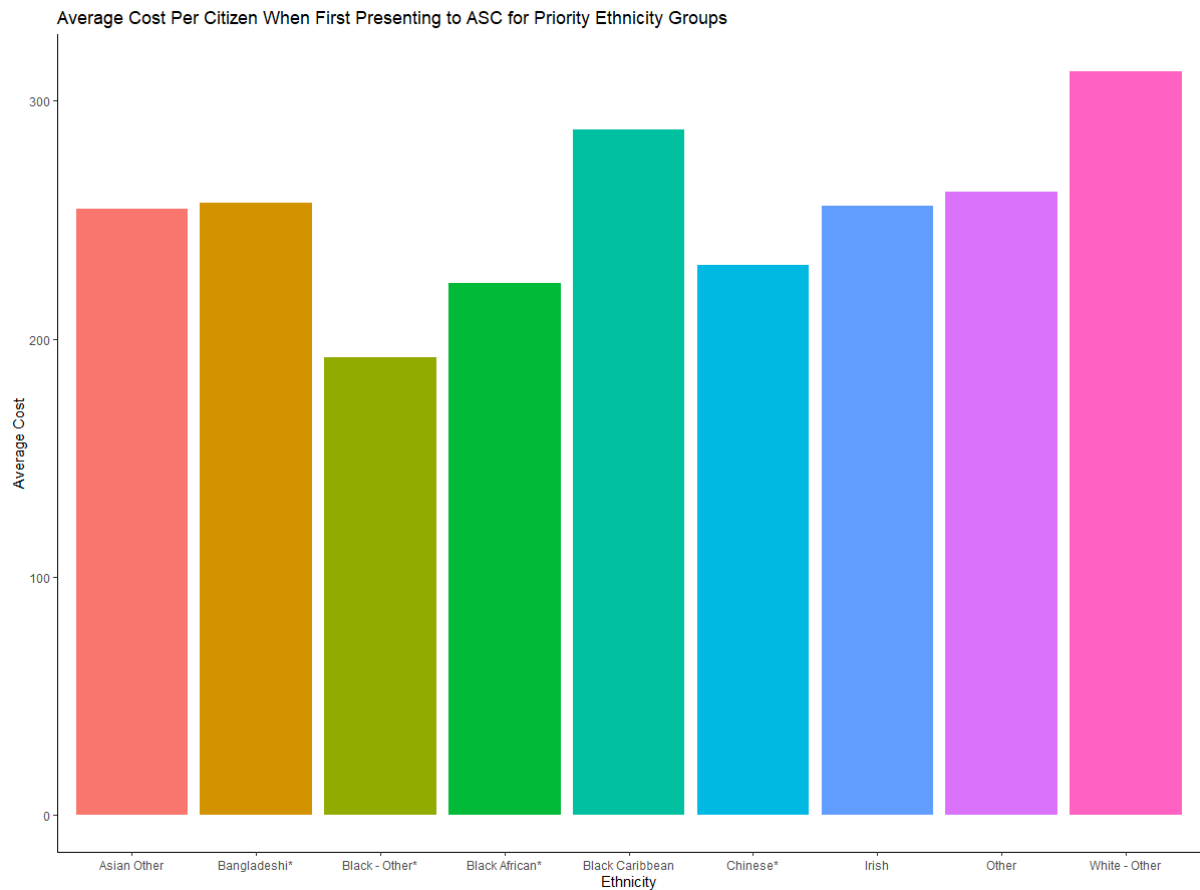
Ethnicity and early identification of need

Given the role of the NNS in the early identification of need, we tried to appraise the needs of priority groups in terms of how high their need is when they first present to ASC. Citizens of

³ 2011 Census Local Characteristics: Table LC2101EW Ethnic group by sex by age, 2018. Available at: https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/9843/2011_ethnic_group_by_age_and_sex_ward, last accessed on 30/11/21.

ethnicities who have a very high average cost during the first month of presenting to ASC are likely to benefit from services which would support them accessing services before their needs escalated.

The average cost when first presenting to ASC does not vary substantially by ethnicity. All of the figures were slightly lower than shown below when using the median, although the pattern was similar.



Note: ethnicities marked with an asterisk are based on a sample of fewer than fifty citizens.

Ethnicity and health and happiness data

Available data for the West Midlands region grouped self-reported health into three categories: good or very good health, fair health, and bad or very bad health. There were three priority ethnic groups who reported being in good or very good health at a lower rate than the average (80%).

Those ethnicities are:

- Irish (65%),
- Roma and Irish Traveller (66%) and
- Black Caribbean (75%)

Those three ethnicities were also the only priority ethnicity groups who reported being in bad or very bad health at a higher rate than the average (6%):

- Irish (12%),
- Roma and Irish Traveller (17%) and

- Black Caribbean (8%)

The most recent data on happiness by ethnicity is from 2018⁴, but the grouping of ethnicities slightly differently to the census, with all Black Ethnicities grouped together under a single category. There were insufficient respondents to make accurate estimates about the Roma and Irish Traveller ethnicity. Only two priority ethnicities had a lower average happiness than the global average (7.54 on a 10 point scale). They were:

- Black ethnicities (7.52) and
- Chinese respondent (7.53).

However, for both these groups the confidence intervals suggested that such a small difference (0.01-0.02) was well within the range of random sampling error.

The most recent national data on Life Expectancy by ethnicity⁵ also found that none of the priority groups identified here had a substantially lower life expectancy, either for men or women, than the white population, although this data groups ethnic groups slightly differently – for example, there is no separate estimates provides for the Roma and Irish Traveller population. Data on citizen’s satisfaction⁶ with their health showed that three of priority groups identified were less likely to rate their own health as good and more likely to rate it as bad than the average (Black Caribbean, Gypsy and Irish Traveller and Irish).

Summary of Ethnicity-based Priority Groups

There are multiple ‘mixed’ ethnicities highlighted as CSMs – both using the total count and percentage as a criterion. This poses an interesting question about the extent to which mixed ethnicity individuals have specialised needs that would need to be addressed separately and specifically from either of their two individual ethnic identities? For example, it might be expected that to some degree at least, a person of mixed Irish and Black Caribbean ethnicity who would benefit from culturally specific support and activities, would benefit from similar types of support as wholly Irish and wholly Black Caribbean citizens. The data cannot answer this question and the structure of the ethnicity categories is particularly ill-suited in this context.

For this reason, mixed ethnicity categories have been excluded as priority groups at this stage but will be explored further in Phase 2.

- One ethnic group (Arab) was identified as a candidate for a cross constituency approach.
- Ten ethnic groups were identified as potential priority groups (Bangladeshi, Chinese, Other Asian, Black African, Black Caribbean, Other Black, Any other ethnic group, Roma or Irish Traveller, White Irish, Other White).
- Of these groups, the data suggests that Black Caribbeans, Older Irish, Roma/Irish traveller citizens are high priority groups.

⁴ Personal well-being and protected characteristics, 2017. Available at <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/datasets/personalwellbeingandprotectedcharacteristics>, last accessed on 30/11/21.

⁵ Chris White, *Ethnic differences in life expectancy and mortality from selected causes in England and Wales: 2011 to 2014*, 2021. Available at <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/lifeexpectancies/articles/ethnicdifferencesinlifeexpectancyandmortalityfromselectedcausesinenglandandwales/2011to2014>, last accessed 30/11/21.

⁶ DC3204EW - General health by ethnic group by sex by age (regional), 2011. Available at https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/DC3204EWR/view/2013265925?rows=c_health&cols=c_ethpuk11, last accessed 30/11/21

Religion

Priority Groups by Constituency Super Minority

In order to identify the priority religious groups eligible for NNS Citywide, we considered the religious groups who comprised the largest constituency super minorities by populations (shown in Table 4) and by percentage (shown in Table 5)

Religion	2.5% Threshold	5% Threshold	7.5% Threshold	Total Population
Buddhist	4780	4780	4780	4780
Hindu	6788	22362	22362	22362
Jewish	2205	2205	2205	2205
Muslim	4122	4122	18519	234411
Other religions	5646	5646	5646	5646
Sikh	7806	21534	21534	32376
Religion not stated	0	0	70086	70086
Christian	0	0	0	494358
No religion	0	0	0	206821

Table 4: Total count of various religions in Birmingham with the constituency super minority population at all three definition. Numbers in bold are one of the highest largest. Figures are based on those found in the 2011 census.⁷

Leaving aside the category Religion Not Stated the two largest religious CSMs are Hindu citizens and Sikh citizens (at all three thresholds).

The Sikh population could potentially be better served by a cross constituency partnership. A partnership between Ladywood and Perry Barr would cover 50% of the Sikh population, and a three-constituency partnership between Ladywood, Perry Barr and Hall Green would cover 63% of the Sikh population.

Religion	2.5% Threshold	5% Threshold	7.5% Threshold	Total Population
Buddhist	100%	100%	100%	4780
Hindu	30%	100%	100%	22362
Jewish	100%	100%	100%	2205
Muslim	2%	2%	8%	234411
Other religions	100%	100%	100%	5646
Sikh	24%	67%	67%	32376
Religion not stated	0%	0%	100%	70086
Christian	0%	0%	0%	494358
No religion	0%	0%	0%	206821

Table 4: Total count of various religions in Birmingham, as well the percentage of each religion who are a constituency super minority at all three definition.

⁷ 2011 Census: Key Statistics for Birmingham and its constituent areas, KS101 Usual Resident Population – Religion, 2018. Available at https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/9740/2018_ks209_religion, last accessed on 30/11/12.

Considering religious groups in terms of the percentage of the whole population who are a super minority within their constituency, there are four religious groups whose entire population are constituency super minorities: Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and 'Other Religions'.

Of these, Judaism is likely to be better served as a cross constituency partnership. A partnership between Selly Oak and Edgbaston would cover 50% of the Jewish population of the city, and a three-constituency partnership between Selly Oak, Edgbaston and Hall Green could cover 65% of the Jewish population.

In total therefore, the three religious priority groups for NNS citywide are Hinduism, Buddhism and 'Other Religions'.

Religion and Total Demand For ASC

Theoretically religious groups can be cross referenced against total demand as well as new starter demand for ASC. However, in terms of total demand, there were insufficient Buddhist service users during the sample period to have stable estimates either for total demand or demand by new starters.

Of the two priority groups identified, the higher cost was associated with the Other Religion category, with a much smaller cost and number of Hindu service users. During the sample period data, there were 157 Hindu service users in total, who cost a total of £63,000, whereas there were 1009 service users of an Other religious group, which cost a total of £468,000.

Relative to the population across the city, a very high proportion of Other Religion citizens are accessing ASC support (current usage is approximately 18% of the size of the total 2011 Other Religion population) whereas the number for Hindu citizens is much lower (1%). It is worth noting that the relevant data for population groups religions slightly differently to that of the ASC data. ASC categorization has more religious categories explicitly stated so it would be expected that a lower proportion of people would select the category Other Religion. It could be however, that as the ASC religion question asked users which denomination of Christianity they are, Christians who didn't wish to identify as any specific subcategories listed (i.e. Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox) instead chose the category Other Religion.

Compared to the relevant figures for ethnicity, the Other Religion category is fairly expensive to ASC. The most expensive priority ethnicity group in terms of total demand was Black Caribbeans (1211 service users, cost £540,000), which is higher than the Other Religion category, but no other priority ethnic groups are more costly than the Other Religion group.

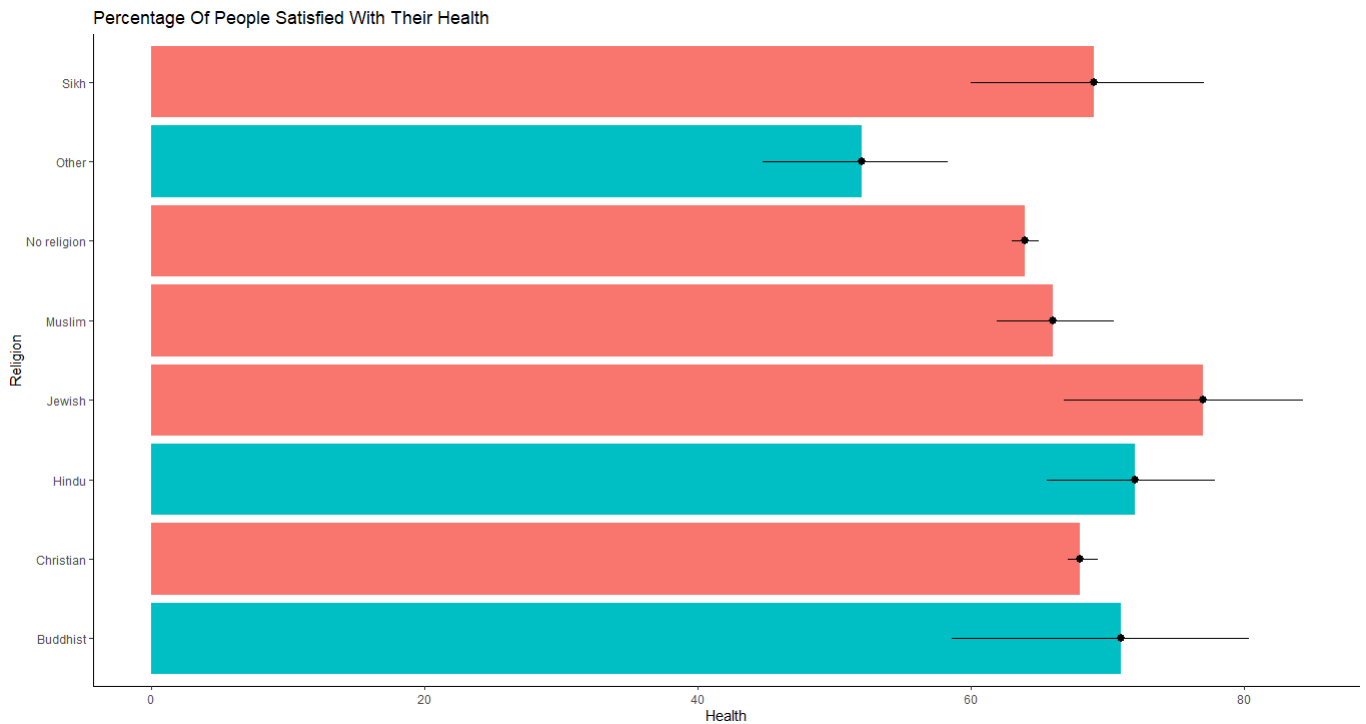
Religion and early identification of need

In terms of the level of need demonstrated when first presenting to ASC, the average cost was higher for the Other Religion population (£329) than for Hindu citizens (£242). The average cost when first accessing services was particularly high for Hindu citizens under the age of 65, but as the total number accessing services in this category was small, we cannot be certain that this is not due to random variation in the sample.

These figures are comparable to the new starter cost for the priority ethnicity groups. The highest average cost when first presenting of any ethnic group was for White Irish, with an average cost of £312. Whilst this is slightly lower than the average cost for Other Religion citizens, as the difference is relatively small, we cannot be certain that it is not merely due to random variation during the sample period.

Religion and health and happiness data

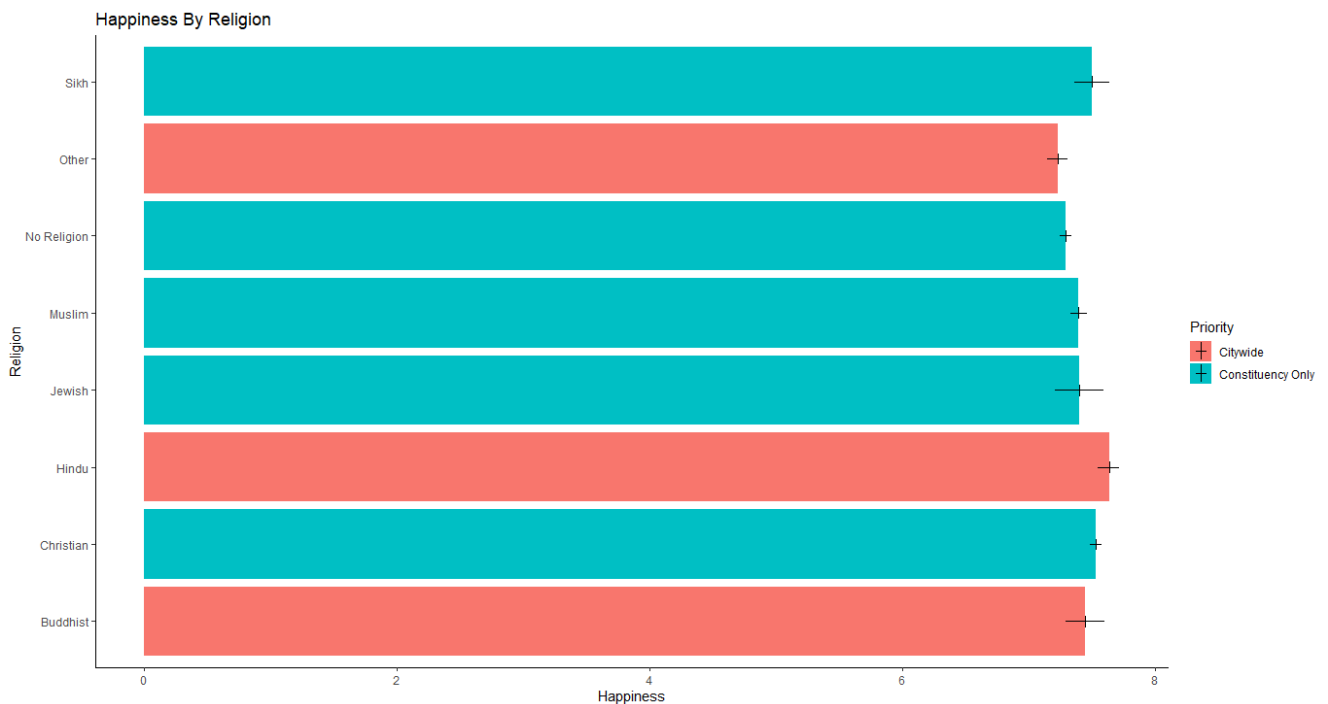
At the national level, the proportion of people satisfied with their health doesn't vary substantially by religion, with the exception of the other religion population who are satisfied with their health at a significantly lower rate.



Happiness at the national level is shown below⁸. There is a substantial amount of uncertainty in the estimates given for some of the groups (shown by the line), but two of the identified priority groups (Buddhist and Hindu) actually appear to be one of the happier groups. The category Other Religion is

⁸ Personal well-being and protected characteristics, 2017. Available at <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/datasets/personalwellbeingandprotectedcharacteristics>, last accessed on 30/11/21.

the lowest, but it is within the uncertainty range that it is similar to other groups, such as people with no religion.



Summary of priority groups based on religion

In summary, there are two religious groups which are candidates for cross-constituency partnerships (Judaism, Sikhism) and three religious groups which can be considered priorities for NNS Citywide (Hinduism, Buddhism and Other Religions). Of these priority groups, only the Other Religion category can be considered high priority.

It is unclear exactly what religions are being covered by people who identify as Other Religion, so this is an area which is worth exploring in further detail in the qualitative phase.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender

Priority Status by Constituency Super Minority

The constituency level data on sexual orientation in the West Midlands is very limited. In the most recent ONS survey⁹ across the West Midlands as a whole, 94.6% of respondents identified as straight, with 2.1% refusing to answer or saying they don't know, 1.8% of people identified as bisexual, and 0.7% of people identified as homosexual, and 0.8% people identifying as other.

Whilst we cannot know the distribution at the constituency level, it is reasonable to expect that minority sexual orientations are more evenly distributed across the city than ethnic minorities, and even grouping all non-straight sexual orientations as one category, they would still make up only 6.1% of the population, which is below the 7.5% definition of a CSM.

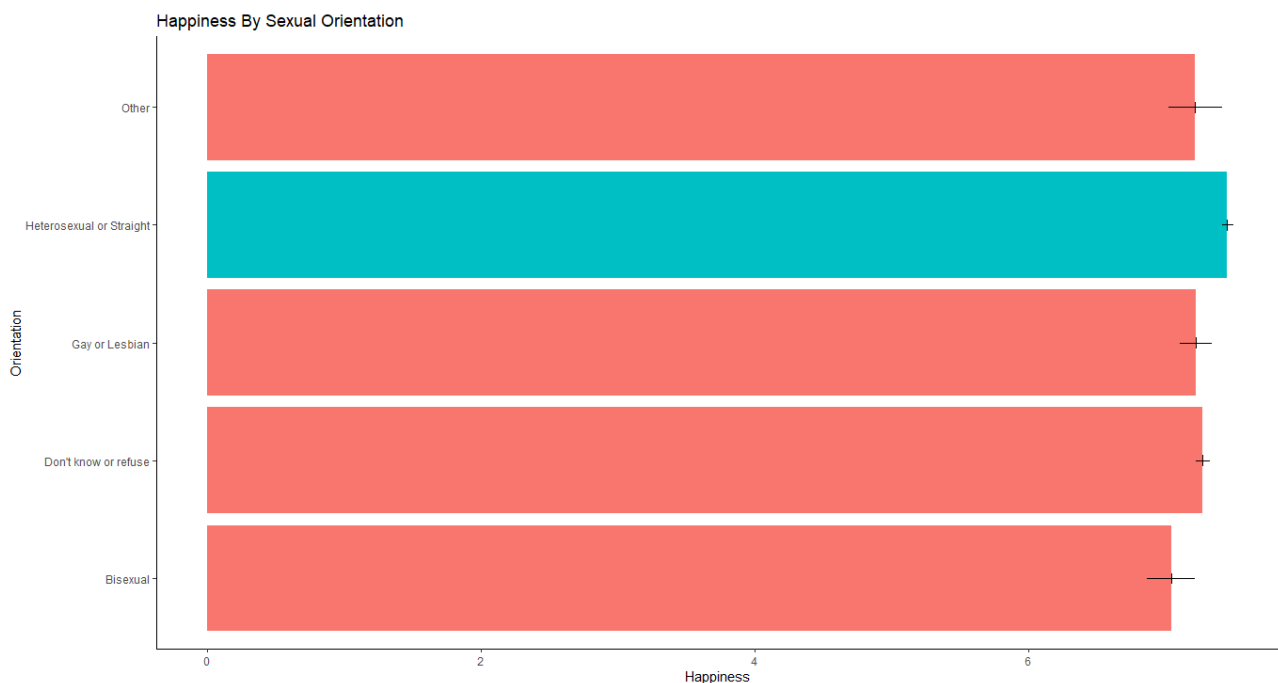
⁹ Sexual orientation by sex and age-group, England, 2017 and 2018, and sexual orientation by sex and English region, 2017 and 2018. Released 2020. Available at <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality/adhocs/11408sexualorientationbysexandagegroupengland2017and2018andsexualorientationbysexandenglishregion2017and2018>, last accessed on 30/11/21.

Even with very dramatic and large variation by constituency, any specific sexual minority (i.e. bisexual) would be small enough within their own constituency that they would meet the definition for a constituency super minority.

No robust data was available for the number of trans people by constituency however estimates suggest that between 0.35% and 1% of men and women (ie excluding non-binary people) in the UK are trans¹⁰, so even if there was substantial variation by constituency it would seem highly improbable that there are any constituencies where trans people are not a CSM by any definition.

LGBTQ and health and happiness data

The prevalence of health-related impairments is slightly higher in LGB adults (26%) than heterosexual adults (22%)¹¹. In terms of happiness, there is substantial uncertainty for some of the less prevalent groups (in particular for people who described their sexual orientation as other or bisexual), all minority sexual orientations have significantly lower happiness than the straight population¹².



¹⁰ National LGBT Survey, Research Report. Released 2018. Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721704/LGBT-survey-research-report.pdf, accessed 30/11/21.

¹¹ National representative data on the health of lesbian, gay and bisexual adults in England published for the first time. Released 2021. Available at <https://digital.nhs.uk/news/2021/lgb-health-statistics>, last accessed on 30/11/21.

¹² Personal well-being and protected characteristics, 2017. Available at <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/datasets/personalwellbeingandprotectedcharacteristics>, last accessed on 30/11/21.

Similar data was not available for trans individuals, although data from the LGBT survey¹³ found that in terms of life satisfaction, trans respondents had particularly low scores (around 5.4 out of 10) compared to the LGBT population as a whole (6.5) or the straight cisgender population (7.7)¹⁴.

Summary of priority groups based on sexuality

All sexual minorities and trans individuals should be considered priority groups. Furthermore, though the relevant data is at the national rather than the local level, there is evidence of a substantially elevated need and therefore there is a reasonable preliminary case for all of these groups to be considered high priority.

Disability

Priority Status by Constituency Super Minority

Over one in five people report being disabled (22%)¹⁵, and across the West Midlands it is slightly higher (24%). This suggests that at the constituency level, it is unlikely that disability as a whole is sufficiently uncommon for it to be a priority for NNS Citywide.

This means that in terms of 'disability' as a whole, the focus should be on all constituencies ensuring that they are supporting services to be accessible for disabled citizens.

However, if we consider specific disability subcategories (i.e. Learning Disabilities) then the number in any given constituency would be so small as to be a CSM. For example, looking at learning disabilities specifically, GP registrations would suggest that 0.5% of adults have some form of learning disability although this is likely to be a gross underestimate. The relevant figure in children (who are registered through schools and therefore likely to be more accurate) is 2.5%¹⁶. Even assuming that the figure in adults is around this higher figure of 2.5%, it is unlikely that there are any constituencies in Birmingham where people with learning disabilities make up more than 1% of the population.

Disability and health and happiness data

In general, there is very large (and statistically significant) reduction in happiness reported by disabled citizens relative to the non-disabled¹⁷.

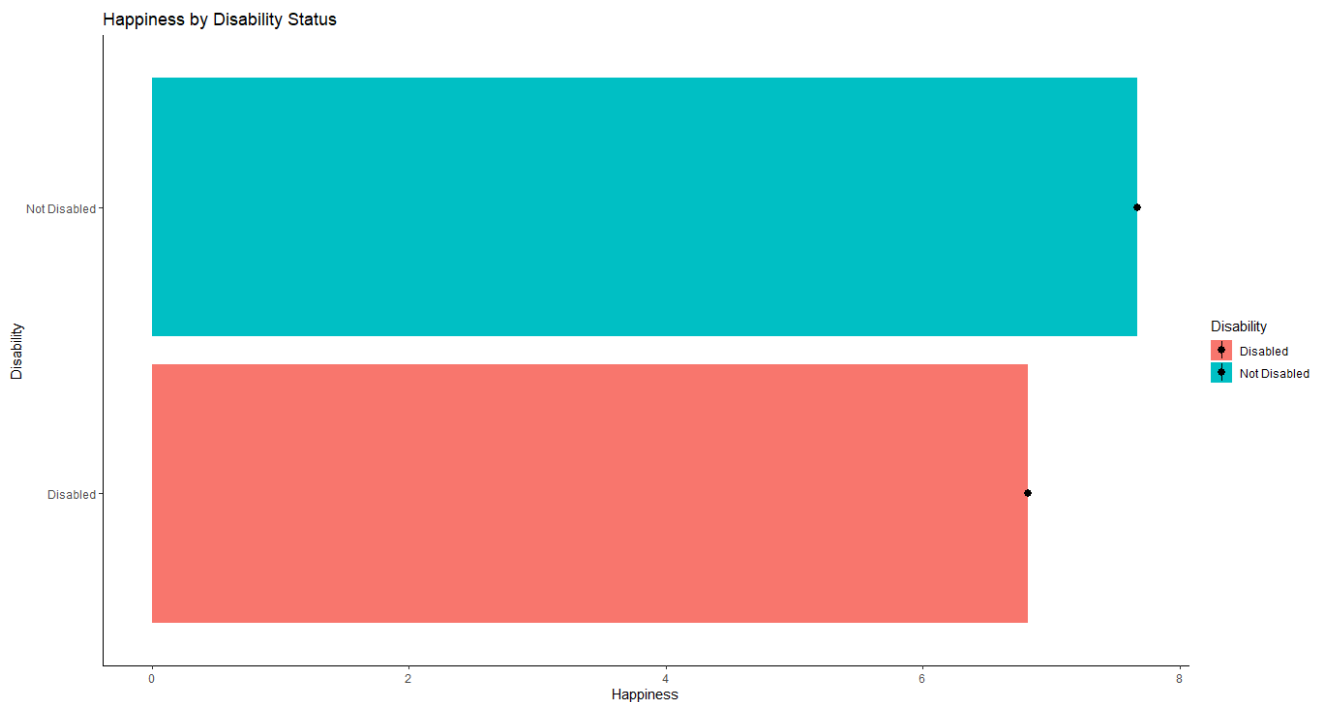
¹³ National LGBT Survey, Research Report. Released 2018. Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721704/LGBT-survey-research-report.pdf, accessed 30/11/21.

¹⁴

¹⁵ Family Resources Survey: financial year 2019 to 2020. Released 2021. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/family-resources-survey-financial-year-2019-to-2020/family-resources-survey-financial-year-2019-to-2020#disability-1>, last accessed 30/11/21

¹⁶ People with learning disabilities in England 2015: Main report. Released 2016. Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/613182/PWLDIE_2015_main_report_NB090517.pdf, last accessed on 30/11/21.

¹⁷ Personal well-being and protected characteristics, 2017. Available at <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/datasets/personalwellbeingandprotectedcharacteristics>, last accessed on 30/11/21.



Importantly however, disability as a general category is enormously heterogenous – both in its impact on health and happiness, but also in the type of support that would be well-placed to receive support through the NNS.

Furthermore, there are many specific subcategories that are not only CSMs, but also would count as a high priority group.

Considering Learning Disabilities as an example of a specific subcategory, people with learning disabilities have a life expectancy much below that of the national average (14 years for men, and 17 years for women)¹⁸. They also had a substantially lower self-reported happiness with an average rating of 6.65 out of 10, as opposed to 7.58 out of 10¹⁹.

Summary of priority status based on disability

Whilst a thorough review of every subcategory of disability is beyond the scope of this report (and impossible based on publicly available data), there is a clear role for support of specific disabilities to be a high priority for NNS Citywide.

¹⁸ Health and Care of People with Learning Disabilities, Experimental Statistics: 2018 to 2019 [PAS]. Released 2020. Available at: <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/health-and-care-of-people-with-learning-disabilities/experimental-statistics-2018-to-2019>, last accessed on 30/11/21.

¹⁹ Disability and well-being – Annual Population Survey. Released 2021. Available at <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/datasets/disabilityandwellbeing>, last accessed on 30/11/21.

Carers

Priority Status by Constituency Super Minority

According to 2011 census figures²⁰, there is only one constituency where carers make up less than 7.5% (Ladywood), meaning that carers as a whole are not priority for NNS Citywide. That said, many subcategories of carer groups would nonetheless be a reasonable target for NNS Citywide.

In the context of NNS Citywide, there may be good reason to have support targeted towards specific types of carers, based around the type of needs the carer is supporting or the level of caring responsibilities. When considering these specific subgroups, it is highly likely that they do meet the threshold to be a CSM. For example, although carers as a whole are a super minority in only one constituency, considering only carers who engage in over 20 hours of unpaid care per week, they are a CSM in every constituency.

Carers and health and happiness data

In general, carer subpopulations are likely to be strong candidates to be priority groups. At the national level, unpaid carers are less likely to be satisfied with their life as a whole than non-carers (74.2% as opposed to 65.9%) and they are more likely to be dissatisfied with their life as a whole (21.0% as opposed to 15.5%). Furthermore, relative to non-carers, unpaid carers are more likely to be dissatisfied with their health (28.6% as opposed to 22.9%), and less likely to be satisfied with it (60.0% as opposed to 68.7%)²¹.

Summary of priority status regarding carers

Carers as a group are too prevalent across the city as a whole to be a target of NNS Citywide, however specific carer subpopulations are likely to be strong priority candidates. This requires further exploration in Phase 2 of the gap analysis.

Summary of Priority Groups

There are three groups which have been identified as potential candidates for multi-constituency partnerships:

- Other ethnic group: Arab
- Religious group: Judaism
- Religious group: Sikhism

In total, all of the priority groups identified are as follows:

- Bangladeshi,
- Chinese,
- Other Asian,
- Black African,
- Black Caribbean,
- Other Black,
- Any other ethnic group,
- Roma or Irish Traveller,

²⁰ 2011 Census, Key Statistics: Health and provision of unpaid care. Released 2018. Available at https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/9749/2018_ks301_health_and_provision_of_unpaid_care, last accessed 30/11/21.

²¹ Characteristics of unpaid carers, various years (from Understanding Society). Released 2018. Available at <https://www.ons.gov.uk/file?uri=/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/socialcare/adhocs/11424characteristicsofunpaidcarers/unpaidcarefinaltables1.xlsx>, last accessed on 30/11/21.

- White Irish,
- Other White
- Hinduism,
- Buddhism,
- Other Religion,
- Any minority sexual orientation
- Transgender gender identity
- Specific disabilities (i.e. Learning Disabilities)
- Specific carer subpopulations (i.e. unpaid carers with high caring responsibilities)

Of all the priority groups identified, the following are suggested as high priority groups.

- White Irish ethnicity
- Black Caribbean ethnicity
- Other Religion
- Roma and Irish Traveller ethnicity
- Any minority sexual orientation
- Transgender gender identity
- Specific disabilities (i.e. Learning Disabilities)
- Specific carer subpopulations (i.e. unpaid carers with high caring responsibilities)

Phase Two

The purpose of NNS citywide

Interviewees had differing levels of familiarity with NNS. Where necessary the interviewer provided background and context on the NNS structure and outlined the purpose of NNS Citywide as focussing on supporting geographically dispersed minority communities within Birmingham.

Interviewees were broadly positive about the concept of NNS Citywide and offered different purposes that they believed it could fulfil. Some proposed functions extended decidedly beyond supporting dispersed communities; suggesting a role which included overseeing citywide VCFSE strategy or citywide projects (see below). In some cases this was because whilst interviewees understood the *proposed* role of NNS Citywide they felt that its scope should be widened. In other cases, it is unclear whether interviewees had simply misunderstood what was being proposed. Indeed, it is easy to see how interviewees could interpret a programme called 'NNS Citywide' as being one which addresses 'citywide' issues, rather than one which focusses on geographically dispersed communities.

- **Recommendation:** Think about the way in which the NNS City-wide Programme is 'marketed', including a possible re-name to be more reflective of its key objective to support dispersed or under-represented communities

While some issues are outside scope (and budget) of NNS Citywide, they were an important focus within stakeholders' responses. These are summarised below:

Distributing demand fairly between NNS constituencies

Two interviewees highlighted that community groups supporting dispersed communities were disproportionately likely to approach certain constituencies (specifically, Ladywood) for support and funding due to their organisational base. It was suggested that NNS Citywide could help ensure constituency NNS's are able to focus their grants on organisations serving their constituents,

rather than some constituencies having to spend it on citywide activities simply because of the location of an organisation's headquarters.

However, both interviewees were keen to highlight the importance for any NNS Citywide funding process to acknowledge and utilize the link that NNS anchors have with organisations based in their constituency (even if those organisations serve a community spread across the city). They suggested representation of the local NNS anchor on citywide funding panels would provide useful insight and context. For example, the Chinese Community Centre serves the Chinese community across the city – but is physically located within the constituency of Ladywood. The suggestion was that when assessing any funding application made by the Chinese Community Centre, Ladywood NNS should feed into this process.

- **Recommendation:** Constituency based NNS leads should, where appropriate, support the city-wide grant-giving decision making process by providing context and knowledge about applicants who are based in their constituency

Importantly, both the interviewees who raised this issue, raised it only in the context of grants. NNS anchor organisations provide a fuller role than merely administering grants (and indeed in two constituencies, the grants process is separate from the NNS anchors) – namely, providing capacity building support and strategic oversight within their own constituency. Neither of the interviewees were suggesting that NNS anchors don't have a responsibility to fulfil this role for all organisations based in their constituency, regardless of their geographic or demographic reach.

Achieving NNS constituency level outcomes for dispersed communities

A common response by interviewees was to describe the purpose and desired role of NNS Citywide as being to achieve a similar range of outcomes as the existing NNS, albeit targeting geographically dispersed minorities. A way of achieving this was through the NNS city-wide grants providing stability and support to community assets working with dispersed communities, who in turn could focus on reducing isolation, increasing well-being and supporting integration of these communities. It was suggested that this would have the longer-term desired impact of reducing demand for Adult Social Care.

A number of interviewees talked about the way in which NNS City-wide could help to bring communities together – both in the sense of bringing dispersed communities together who are sometimes not internally unified, and also in the sense of bringing together communities described as having “bubbling resentment” towards each other.

One interviewee also suggested that a formalised NNS Citywide would provide a stronger way of engaging with, and understanding the needs of, dispersed communities who are sometimes difficult to reach.

Addressing 'citywide' issues

The final common strand in a number of interviewees' responses was the idea of NNS Citywide being a way of addressing 'citywide' issues. One interviewee pointed out that the issues facing dispersed communities are the same issues facing other communities; namely a lack of accessible activities, digital exclusion and a lack of access to carer support.

Some interviewees also focussed on structural issues within the city, such as housing and transport, or more complex issues such as domestic violence and drug addiction, which they suggested NNS Citywide could work to address. Whilst these are undoubtedly important issues, many of them appear to be beyond the scope of NNS Citywide.

Another type of 'Citywide' approach some interviewees advocated was for a focus on supporting community assets to make the jump from being single constituency or multi-constituency organisations to being city-wide organisations. In the same way that a single NNS constituency will support and fund a community asset to fill an identified gap within a locality (ideally in the hope that they will become the kind of organisation who will attract funding from other sources), NNS Citywide could, in cases where a citywide gap has been identified, support and fund community assets who have been successes in specific constituencies to expand to becoming citywide organisations.

This was felt to be particularly relevant in cases where activities could be more efficiently provided in a centralised fashion. One example was wiping clean the memories of electronic devices (for redistribution) which have been lent out by NNS constituencies (a service which has been offered in some form in every locality).

- **Consideration: Should NNS City-Wide be open to grant applications aimed at 'scaling up' successful projects and community assets**

How can NNS Citywide help?

Interviewees suggested several ways that the NNS City-Wide could achieve its agreed purpose:

Funding

The most obvious form through which NNS Citywide could support dispersed communities is through the provision of grants to community assets, to support the development and growth of community assets as well providing support for members of the dispersed communities they serve.

"It's not always about grants [but] sometimes it is to be honest."

It was however noted that it might be more difficult to run activities working with communities who do not all live within the same broad location, which might mean that larger grants may be required.

- **Consideration: Does the size of available grants need to reflect the additional costs of serving dispersed communities?**

Another interviewee emphasised the importance of having funds which are accessible to small groups who aren't constituted or don't have any paid staff members, which they were worried may not be the case for NNS Citywide.

Upskilling Community Assets

Interviewees talked about the importance of upskilling community assets and community leaders. A number of interviewees talked about how often communities are only engaged when they're in crisis, or how the loudest voices who get heard within a community aren't necessarily the most important voices to be hearing – and by upskilling individuals and community assets to become more independent and stable, a greater focus can be placed on prevention across the needs of a community.

Strategy And Connections

It was noted that many of the dispersed communities highlighted in phase 1 of the report are very isolated and their voices are often 'not heard' by decision makers and statutory providers. Thus, interviewees talked about the importance of linking new city-wide community assets in with broader strategies across the city, other community assets and wider networks. One interviewee said that *"connections and influencing policies is equally important"* [to grants] for community assets.

What criterion should be used when prioritising communities?

Interviewees gave reasons for selecting specific communities as priority groups for NNS Citywide. Broadly the reasons grouped into one of four. Two of these reasons (the degree of dispersion and the level of need) were reflected in Phase 1 of this report, however a further two (degree of engagement with existing structures and funding sources, and how specialised the type of need is) are additional considerations.

Degree of dispersion

Interviewees cited the level of dispersion across the city as a key factor in determining what types of communities should be considered for NNS Citywide, with communities who are spread across the whole city as having a strong case for being supported through NNS Citywide, compared to communities who are very localized.

Degree of need

A number of interviewees spoke about the level of need in communities. Typically, this was done in reference to the level of need of individual members of those communities, citing for example high levels of social isolation. In a few cases it also focussed on the level of need for the community to have a stronger community asset.

Degree of existing engagement with/access to funding

The degree to which community assets were already engaging with strategic partnerships and other funding sources was also highlighted. Dispersed communities with assets who accessed other sources of funding were seen as lower priority in the context of NNS Citywide.

Specialisation of support

Finally, some interviewees made the point that groups with more specialised needs should be considered a higher priority. For example, one interviewee stated that certain disabilities require very specialised support which mean that they are entirely unable to access other types of support, which is not necessarily as true for all the other dispersed communities identified.

What specific communities should be targeted?

Interviewees broadly agreed with the groups identified during Phase 1 of the gap analysis – with the only exception being that many didn't find the 'Other' categories to be particularly useful.

Ethnicity Groups

Across the ethnicities, interviewees identified support with language as a key area of focus.

Irish

In line with findings from Phase 1, many interviewees said that the Irish ethnicity would be a reasonable candidate group – due to being spread across the city and there being many older Irish citizens. It was acknowledged that Irish citizens are one of the more established dispersed ethnicities within Birmingham relative to many others, and three interviewees mentioned the Irish Centre in Digbeth as a specific community asset which is linked in, particularly, to the older Irish community.

Chinese

Similarly, interviewees agreed that the Chinese Community would be a reasonable candidate group as they are spread out across the city, which is in line with findings from Phase 1. Several interviewees cited the Chinese Community Centre as a good candidate community asset to support this group.

An interviewee from the Chinese Community Centre identified language classes and befriending for older people as particular areas of focus.

Arab

During Phase 1, the Arab ethnicity was not considered a priority group because over 50% of the Arab ethnicity lived within just two constituencies rather than across the whole city. During interviews, one stakeholder who regularly works with the community emphasised the elevated level of need in the community as a whole. In particular, this community have high level of mistrust towards services which can act as a barrier to accessing services.

They also identified specific subpopulations – Yemenis, and older men who don't have families – who may be considered a priority group based on their distribution across the city. Available statistics (particularly those based on the 2011 census) are unlikely to capture this accurately.

Eastern European Ethnicities

Four interviewees cited Eastern European communities as priority groups for NNS Citywide, although they also highlighted important differences between groups within this broad category. For example, the Polish community is less internally integrated, whereas others (Romanian) are much more so. There are also important differences between first-generation migrants who are more likely to live in similar areas to each other, compared to later generations who may be more dispersed across the city.

One interviewee who worked at an NNS constituency level said that they had as a group tried to engage with the Eastern European community, but had struggled to do so because there were too few within their constituency.

Black African Ethnicities (incl. Sudanese)

A number of different Black African ethnicities were mentioned as potential priority groups: Eritreans, Zimbabweans, Nubians (an ethnic group which covers parts of Sudan and Egypt) and – in particular – Somali.

Somalians were the only Black African ethnicity mentioned by multiple interviewees – and were described as being very dispersed across the city, but with some pre-existing social networks.

Black Caribbean as an ethnicity was mentioned by one interviewee as a potential priority group although they said that they didn't know the group well. However, another interviewee who works with the community said that he didn't consider them as a priority *for NNS Citywide*. This inconclusive result is in contrast to Phase 1, where Black Caribbean ethnicity was not only a candidate group but was listed as high priority.

Asian Ethnicities

Interviewees mentioned that some Asian ethnicities are very small, but are often geographically grouped (i.e. the Thai community in Lozells) and therefore not a priority group for NNS Citywide. One interviewee who works with an Asian community also said that in general, there were not as high levels of vulnerability as other communities.

A number of interviewees cited the lack of good data in this context, particularly in relation to the number of women who come to the UK on a spousal visa. Given this lack of knowledge it is possible that there are a number of isolated women who would benefit from being targeted by NNS Citywide, but they are currently not known.

The two groups that were highlighted by interviewees as potential priority groups were the Kurdish community and the Vietnamese community.

Roma

The Roma and Irish Traveller communities were highlighted as a priority group, largely due to the fact that they rarely access services or support and speaking more broadly there were public health concerns in the context of Covid. Moreover, it was noted that there is a substantial lack of knowledge about the needs of this community, and very little connection with them (which in and of itself perhaps highlights why they should be a priority group).

Refugees

Multiple interviewees cited refugees as a priority group for the NNS City-wide, noting that once asylum is granted, refugees are often dispersed widely. Furthermore, the total numbers are sufficiently low to constitute being a Constituency Super Minority in every constituency within the city.

For refugees the key issues mentioned by interviewees are language, accessing and understanding available services, mental health issues and gaining recognition for training and skills acquired abroad. It was noted that there are already services targeting refugees, however often these focus on crisis support and there is a lack of early prevention and integrating refugees into non-refugee services.

It is worth noting that it is unclear whether all of these needs are best served by the NNS Citywide model. Integrating refugees into non-refugee services, for example, could plausibly be better achieved by services run through their locality NNS – whilst support with gaining recognition for training and skills acquired abroad perhaps is better done through the city-wide model.

Disability

A number of interviewees pointed to Learning Disabilities being a particular subcategory of disability which should be a priority for NNS Citywide, with employment being a key issue. One interviewee also said that specific types of physical disability should be a priority.

One interviewee said that ethnic minorities – particularly the Asian community tend to be less engaged on disability related issues – potentially due to stigma surrounding the issue, and this could be a potential issue to address through NNS Citywide.

Sensory Impairment

Sensory Impairment in some form was mentioned by a large number of interviewees. The two key forms were either visual impairment (VI) and the deaf community. Both groups were described as having had a very difficult time during the pandemic due to lack provision targeting their needs.

In the case of the deaf community particularly many features of the pandemic have particularly impacted them. For example, the prevalence of face masks makes lip-reading impossible, and deaf citizens who aren't tech savvy have had a particularly difficult time.

Whilst there are specialist services supporting the VI and deaf communities, in many cases they have struggled to access these services during the pandemic. A lack of accessibility in public health messaging (including government briefings) have severely impacted people who have sensory impairments leaving many of these communities feeling ignored and disregarded during the pandemic, increasing feelings of social isolation and reducing trust.

LGBT+

Many of the interviewees emphasised the need for LGBT+ communities to be considered as high priority groups for the NNS. In some ways the LGBT+ community are the paradigmatic example of who NNS Citywide should be targeting in that the LGBT+ community are dispersed across the city,

have a high level of need in terms of social isolation and well-being, and for various reasons may not want to access services in their own local area.

The lack of awareness of, and support for, LGBT+ citizens when engaging with carers and care homes (for transgender individuals in particular) was highlighted. Provision of care should be able to accommodate a client's sexuality and gender identity, but one interviewee described a situation where workers simply don't have an appropriate level of understanding. In addition, a number of interviewees felt that "levels of discrimination still exist."

The suggested support for the LGBT+ community was centred around bringing individuals together – for example one interviewee suggested a LGBT+ affirming community asset register, another suggested connecting older LGBT+ adults digitally.

Categorising Ethnicity

Following the methods used and data available in Phase 1, particular attention was paid during Phase 2a to the role of mixed-race and multiple-ethnicity individuals as well as the 'Other' categories (i.e. Black Other, White Other), to see if stakeholders had any insight on these issues.

Mixed Ethnicity

Across the board there were no interviewees who cited that there were any specific issues or needs felt by mixed-race communities which would require targeting and addressing as their own category within NNS Citywide, and a number of them were confident that this was not an issue.

One interviewee said that mixed race and mixed ethnicity people sometimes act as a bridge linking together smaller, newer communities with other communities and so can be very important to small organisations of newer migrants. However, he did not identify that they had any specific cultural needs.

Defining Ethnic Groups

As was noted in Phase 1, the ethnic categories used for statistical purposes often don't match onto the cultural identities which communities and individuals live and use. In many cases, the relevant ethnic identity is at a much more fine-grained level of detail than much of the statistics.

For example, one interviewee said of the category of 'Black African', "I think this is mixing up things. Those categories aren't how communities work - communities might be like, 'the Eritrean community', not 'the Black African community'.

Even categories which give a country of origin can be too broad due to the complex social and political context – for example, often a person from Azad Kashmir would not consider themselves as separate to other Pakistanis. This however can be a highly personal decision, and, as one interviewee said, "people will often disagree about how they think about their identities, even if they're from the same place."

Other

Few interviewees were confident about how to interpret any of the 'Other' categories. – least of all the 'Other' religion category.

In the case of 'White Other', many people suggested Eastern European nationalities, and one interviewee said that there was a small Greek population in their area.

'Black Other' was interpreted by some as being used to cover Black British in the context of the available options – although it is also possible that Sudanese Arabs respondents, being Black, African and Arab, chose to put Black Other and write an explanation as opposed to missing one out. Three interviewees also suggested that Somali citizens may identify as Black Other.

In the case of 'Other Asian', interviewees cited other nationalities which have some presence in Birmingham that do not have their category on the statistics (i.e. Vietnamese, Thai).

Of all of these, the communities who were seen broadly as most eligible in the context of NNS Citywide was the Somali community, the Sudanese community, the Eritrean community, and Eastern European communities (i.e. Polish, Romanian).

Challenges And Risks

There are a number of areas identified by interviewees as potential risks or challenges to the success of NNS Citywide.

Transport

A question that a number of interviewees had was about transport. Many noted that they felt that public transport links in the city made travel cumbersome in general, and NNS Citywide would presumably require members of a disperse community to travel to some central location. This may lead to low engagement, particularly if applied to a community who would struggle to pay the cost of transport or find it difficult due to disability or sensory impairment.

If you have to travel to get support, it's very, very hard. If someone has a physical disability, and they have to make a lot of arrangements - if you are getting a train, pre-booking etc, it would be really difficult. So whoever applies for city-wide grants, will have to think this through really, really carefully.

Weakening Local Integration

One interviewee was worried about the potential impact that NNS Citywide could have on local integration, suggesting that by focussing on integration within demographic communities across the city, this would detract from those groups engaging in their local area. In their words *"if you take people out of their community then how do you get community integration? This is the downside of looking beyond the borders."* For example, if the NNS was funding activities through NNS Citywide for Irish citizens would this lead to less Irish citizens engaging with their local NNS. Similarly, one interviewee said they there should be more work to support the integration of refugees into their local area, so services run through NNS Citywide might plausibly not be an effective way of achieving that specific aim.

This type of concern is not always relevant. For example, in the case of the deaf community it is possible that activities funded through their local NNS are not accessible to them, so it is highly unlikely that providing more accessible services through NNS Citywide would be entirely appropriate. Furthermore, in cases where citizens more realistically could attend local NNS activities, attendance at community events is not a zero-sum game – a member of a dispersed community could choose to go to both events in their local area and activities targeted towards their community funded through NNS Citywide.

In general, though, this kind of discounting effect outlined is possible and is something to be aware of.

Engaging Communities

Some interviewees expressed concerns about engaging communities. Interviewees pointed to a number of groups where there can be a cynicism or reluctance to engage with authorities in general or Birmingham City Council specifically and suggested that this could be a barrier.

Whilst there are no quick fixes, many interviewees spoke about how engaging with existing community organisations that know their own communities, or leveraging existing relationships between NNS anchors and community assets was a key way to engage them. If the provision is relevant and accessible and being advertised by an organisation who have a presence within that community, then engagement will follow, explained one interviewee.

Relationship to Constituency NNS Anchors

Interviewees from existing NNS anchor organisations emphasised the importance of the relationships that they have with organisations in their location (even if those organisations operate across the city) and highlighted that they didn't want those to be replaced or confused by NNS Citywide – in particular by any process which left community assets feeling “ping-ponged” between different organisations.

Similarly, a community asset serving a dispersed community said that they have a good relationship with their local NNS constituency and don't want NNS Citywide to complicate or confuse that. In this sense, NNS Citywide was seen as a potential risk to their relationships.

Both of the NNS anchors felt that NNS anchor organisations should play a key role in funding decisions in general, incorporating not only the understanding and knowledge that they had of those organisations when making funding decision but also gaps identified in quarterly reports from NNS constituencies across the city. One of the anchors suggested that applications should first go to locality constituencies who forward it on to NNS Citywide, rather than it being open to organisations directly who may think of it as simply an alternative means of gaining funding for constituency-specific activities.

*Please, please, please go through all the quarterly reports.
They're to be used precisely for this kind of thing.*

Data Availability

Some interviewees highlighted that much of the data used in Phase 1 is incredibly outdated, being based on figures from the 2011 Census, and some of it is inaccurate about Birmingham (because regional or national data was used where Birmingham data was not available). Furthermore, they highlight that certain groups are less likely to be well represented in official statistics if they're less likely to respond to official statistics.

- **Recommendation:** Following the publication of the 2021 census data, revisit the data to inform the ongoing prioritisation of the NNS city-wide grant programme

In addition to this, we do not currently have good information on the breakdown of users of NNS constituencies. For example, it is theoretically possible that the Polish community is relatively disparately spread across the city and do not have, comparatively speaking, many centralised Polish community activities – but are instead engaged with activities through their local NNS constituency and would rather engage with their local NNS. Without a breakdown of NNS clients it is impossible to tell, but such possibilities do limit the inferences that are based on this report.

- **Recommendation:** Develop more robust individual level data collation to establish current engagement of communities at a NNS constituency level

General Needs

During interviews, stakeholders raised a number of core issues as being the most pressing in the context of the NNS broadly. These issues do not necessarily relate directly to NNS Citywide specifically but are worth highlighting here:

Problems raised in relation to the needs of individuals

- Lack of support for hoarders
- Lack of support for domestic issues and family life
- Lack of activities (or capacity at activities) in general post-pandemic
- Lack of professional carers for agencies (due to refusal by carers to get vaccinated)
- Lack of activities targeting older men – in particular for those who have been bereaved (i.e. socialising, physical activities, but also skills such as cooking)

- Low income and number of people who rely on food-banks
- Lack of delivered hot food
- Care at home solutions for older people
- Low level support (i.e. taking somebody to the post office)
- Lack of day services or options that extend beyond 3pm
- Lack of support accessing housing system (i.e. help bidding on properties for people who struggle with reading and writing in English)

Support needed by community assets:

- Filling out forms
- Writing grant proposals (in particular contextualising need)
- More referrals and connections to CCG social prescribing link workers
- Vietnamese

Phase Three

The findings have been grouped by event, as the focus groups highlighted differing points of view in terms of the predominant issues for their community, locality and as individuals, as would be expected. All groups gave a unique view into their community, which we hope will enable commissioners to gain a good understanding of the priorities of these groups.

Roma Focus Group

Formal community activities within the Roma (Romanian) community

There is very little interaction with formal community groups, even within the Roma (Romanian) community. There are large informal group activities – for example, raffles and BBQs – but these tend to be within extended family groups.

“Once a month or whatever, they already organise social events within the community – people do that kind of stuff.”

Almost none of the events that take place are organised through formal community groups.

“Community organisations aren’t all run formally – we do lots of things as community but it’s informal, it’s just ‘call your family’. We won’t do anything organised.”

One person talked about a Roma football competition, and another mentioned daily raffles taking place. Although these are both national events, they are only open to the Roma (Romanian) community, and not advertised beyond closed social media channels.

The only exception is church activity: *“Lots of people respect the church.”* However even in this case, there weren’t formal activities outside of directly religious ones:

“Not regular social activities after each church, people might all go have lunch together within their families – but not the formal church activities, because we can’t hire the venue.”

Broadly, participants didn’t express a particular desire for more support for general activities within the Roma community.

Integrated community activities

The participants at the focus group had all grown up in the UK, and had attended school in Birmingham. They stated that whilst at school, they had mixed with people from different ethnic backgrounds, but since leaving school, they hadn’t stayed in touch with these friends. One stated

that his father has friends and neighbours outside of the community, but this seemed not to be particularly common.

One participant talked about playing football with a group that had started informally, but had become something more organised, due to the intervention of a member of the leisure centre staff.

“When we were younger, to be fair we did all go to the leisure centre in Saltley, and we would jump over the fence to play football – but then they linked us in somewhere else and we made a team and played against other teams.”

Football has always been enjoyed by the male population: *“to be fair, my dad used to play football with other people (from different backgrounds)”*. However, participants said that they didn't feel a need to engage with integrated community activities:

“I would rather go to Roma activity, most of us didn't keep us with friends from school who were from Somalia or other types of ethnicities.”

This was because they said that they would feel more comfortable around other Roma people:

“It would be better if it was targeted for Roma, Roma community would help each other. People would feel comfortable to ask for help - people wouldn't want to ask for help if it's with other people.”

“How we've been treated, it can be hard to trust other people.”

“People need to understand we're not all the same.”

Although all participants in the focus group were men, they highlighted that they thought there would be more appetite for integrated group activities targeting women:

“My auntie she loves all that, sewing - she would come to your sewing club.”

“I can only say for my own opinion. I know women that definitely would want to be in community groups.”

“Yeah they would love it if there was sewing group – women love sewing – they would come even if there were other ethnicities.”

“Women want to socialise more with other communities.”

It would be helpful to speak to female members of the Roma community, to probe this possibility further.

Language

All of the people in focus group were fluent English speakers. However, they said that especially among the older community, there was a need to learn English. *“They're more friendly, they want to socialise with people outside the community, the only main issue is the language barrier.”*

In terms of accessing employment, participants said *“it's harder for those that don't speak the language.”*

“For older people, when they get work it is dodgy – cash in hand. So, my uncle was working in a warehouse, but it was really far away, so we said why don't you find work closer – but the problem was he couldn't find somewhere closer that would work with his language barrier.”

However, they identified challenges to such classes being successful:

“People won’t come, that’s what younger people are for – they can use younger people to translate – older people who can’t speak now, they don’t want to.”

Participants believed that language classes, *“would work better if there was just Roma at the classes.”*

Employment

Participants talked about how the employment had changed substantially – broadly finding employment was less of an issue than it had been with previous generations, with many people working for the Big Issue, in warehouses, or doing deliveries.

“Employment is less of an issue, (than it was) with the older generation.”

“It’s not that hard to find employment, for the older generation it was.”

However, there was an acknowledgement that there needed to be more support with the type of work that was accessible to them, and indeed they would be open to help in this regard: *“Lots of the community don’t know the opportunities that they have in England.”* One person said they wanted to be involved in *“projects to help people get back into education and training.”* It was agreed that there is a need for:

“Employment support for like, office jobs – not just to get into warehouse jobs, we can get a warehouse job – big problem is you’re not making money when you’re training.”

Others said:

“For us, its employment support. It has to be real opportunities – not just working in Tesco’s – support for more like, estate agent, accountant, jobs where you dress smart.”

“I applied for Lloyds bank, I did all the tests, but I struggled in the interviews – I need more experience with interviews.”

In some cases, they felt that this due to racism:

“Some employers I feel like, they won’t take on Roma gypsy. Sometimes when I don’t get work you don’t know, but I think it’s because of that.”

LGBT+ Focus Group

Lack of groups for young adults

It was highlighted by the group, who were all over 50 years old, that historically there had been a heavy focus on older LGBT+ adults, which has meant a lack of attention on younger people and the issues they may face:

“Re: ageing – my friends are mainly gay men. With Rainbow Spirit (an organisation), a lot of people get in touch with us because they’re coming out in later life. What’s missing in Birmingham is a group for young people, including groups for over 20s.”

“For the last 7 years, many activities have been funded by Ageing Better so focus on 50+”.

“Very positive to mix the age groups. At the same time, the younger adults could do with an alternative than to meet on the scene, e.g. sports, personal development, arts, etc.

“There is a generational gap, could be cultural issues causing difficulties. There is support, but it’s not meeting the needs for targeted groups... The sports programme was there, but this has ended.”

In the main, it was commented that there are insufficient LGBT+ young adult services because there’s so little specifically for young adults, as a whole, in the city.

“In general, young people’s and youth services have been decimated in city...if there aren’t services for young people in the first place, you can’t get specialist services for LGBT youth.”

Safety

A number cited risk of violence and harassment as factors which act as barriers preventing engagement in some activities.

“Violence. Increase in attacks. Demo outside Nightingale; more activism and visibility to tackle that would be useful. People can’t claim we’re all equal, when vicious attacks within the Gay Village.”

“I’ve stopped going to play pool because of being harassed by straight couples. I don’t feel comfortable in the Gay Village anymore. I really feel I’ve restricted going out into town, in the dark. This is the first time I’ve admitted ‘weakness’. It’s made a difference.”

“If I tell someone I’m gay, someone can pick up a brick and hit me in the head. We live with this fear constantly.”

However, it was agreed that an approach to tackling these issues was not necessarily going to be easy to find, and that for safety reasons, it is often preferable to have events which aren’t immediately identifiable as such:

“To some extent, the fact of more openness can lead to more violence. Visibility can cause its own problems.”

“Birmingham Friend used to run a social. Wasn’t identifiably a gay venue, but it was known to be a gay event. Useful to have a ‘neutral’ meeting space.”

Participants agreed that currently only Moseley/Kings Heath are places outside of the gay village where it feels safe to be out, and that therefore centrally based activities would generally be more inclusive:

“There are areas in the city where it can be difficult for people to be seen to be LGBT, so they have to have an internal migration within the city.”

Needs for community groups

Several of the participants were involved in a number of other LGBT+ groups, in many cases as organisers. These groups were named as Rainbow Spirit and Journey Asylum Seekers Group, who were very active in the community, but always facing issues in terms of funding and lack of premises. These groups were discussed, along with the problems faced by LGBT+ community groups in general across Birmingham.

Holding events in physical venues has its challenges:

“We want a space with a big enough area, which is affordable. I’d not realised that to go back to LGBT Centre, the spaces are not big enough, even without Covid.”

“(Journey Asylum Seeker group) The issue of community space may become an issue for us again, as the church use is debatable. Useful for having city centre space.”

For many groups, the LGBT Centre performed the role of providing a physical space but due to the challenges of the pandemic, they are *“not yet ready to have community-led groups back; hopefully will be soon.”* It is true to say that some participants mentioned hesitancy about returning to in person events due to covid related risk. In some of these situations, groups had adapted to run online and were now finding it difficult to return to in person sessions as members don’t all necessarily live even in Birmingham, let alone the same locality.

Lack of income, access to and knowledge of funding was also a barrier: *“We run on a shoestring – in our most extravagant year we spent £4k!” (Journey Asylum Seeker group)*

Another issue was a lack of more formal groups, making funding more difficult to apply for:

“Before there wasn’t much funding around. Now there’s more awareness of funders, looking for LGBT groups to fund, but it’s hard to find organised LGBT groups – lots are informal, not structured.”

However, there was hope in a suggestion from one of the participants, to a group organiser - *“Comic Relief is a good place to apply to for funding – “LGBT” is the least asked-for category.”*

What is available? – getting information out

It was commented that there is a general lack of awareness around what is available to the LGBT+ community, due to a lack of pathways to network and get information out more widely.

“What keeps coming up is knowing about what’s going on... After the pandemic, some things have stopped, we don’t know what’s still going on and what is starting up again. It’s good that there are information distributors (such as Maria at the LGBT centre); knowing where to ask. Voluntary groups are quite busy so have a limited amount of time to network.”

“In terms of our organisation, “how people get to know about us/ how we advertise is another issue.”

Participants wanted to find out *“stuff about where is safe/ not safe in terms of areas in Birmingham.”*, but did not know where they could access this kind of information.

Unheard voices

There were concerns that there are certain people who are scared to come forward and engage in LGBT+ activities, or unable to do so. Therefore, a focus on how to engage these groups seemed important to participants.

“We still have so much invisibility and damage that happens that we can’t see.”

“Are there people out there who have needs that aren’t being met? There are people like us who have the confidence to speak, but what about the ones who don’t?”

“I want my supermarket to be reasonably local, but with other things, I assume I’ll need to travel. However, if my mobility is compromised, it may affect me and I may want to things more local to me.”

In particular, there was a worry that these are often people from ethnic minority backgrounds, and that they needed a voice:

“Sometimes there’s lack of representation of black, Asian, multi-ethnic people within the LGBT community, so where I can get involved I will, to put us on the radar”.

Deaf and hearing impaired

Accessibility of services

There were many problems identified with accessibility of services in general. Particularly emphasised were those in a medical context:

"Its barriers to do with access, you see tv adverts where people have screens with interpreters, so you go in, but then the doctor doesn't know anything about that. That's the information you're given, but there isn't any access."

Particular problems that were mentioned were a lack of interpreters or Video Relay Service (VRS), delays in receiving support in order to get interpreters, and health services only making bookings over the phone.

"I have the same problem, because I'm deaf. They always tell me to call to make a booking, but I can't speak on the phone."

"When I went to the GP I was very specific that I wanted a female interpreter to talk about my medical issues, and when I went it was a male interpreter. I keep on telling them and they didn't respect that."

Implications of the lack of accessibility has number of impacts: people have a narrower understanding of their own medical situation, the whole medical process is slowed down substantially, and in the worst cases, people are put at risk:

"My dad is profoundly deaf and he got a prescription he didn't understand, and ended up taking too much medication. Lots of deaf people are really at risk because the biggest barrier is communication."

"Same with pharmacies, even if I have a prescription, nobody there can actually explain things to me – we face this all the time."

There was acknowledgment that there is lots of variation, and in some cases, people had good experiences.

"It varies so much with GP's – my GP is really good. I have a medical review every six months – I always have a female interpreter."

Interacting with Birmingham City Council (BCC) showed some similar problems:

"I live in a bungalow, the front door was opened – a man came in but I couldn't understand what he was doing. He had a BCC ID badge, he was making notes, but I have no idea what he wanted or what he was doing. If BCC is sending people to people's houses, they should know I'm deaf and come with an interpreter."

One participant said they appreciated BCC's own VRS services, and had good experiences of using them: *"I use the video relay services for council services and don't have a problem."* However, one person living in council accommodation pointed out that the VRS wasn't very useful if your internet wasn't good enough to reliably use it, which was the case regarding his council accommodation. It was agreed that with *"any important venues like pharmacies, like GPs – these places should have VRS access in order to convey basic information."*

Similar difficulties accessing other services included difficulties in accessing electricians, plumbers and other maintenance services.

Lack of specialist activities and services

Some interviewees spoke about general activities which were targeted at the deaf and hearing impaired community – such as arts and sports or group trips, etc, which they had enjoyed accessing at BID services. They were keen to see more of this kind of offer in the future. However, there was also an emphasis on providing support for deaf people which enables them to be more independent, rather than solely focussing on “softer” activities. Some of this feedback was focussed on everyday practical skills to encourage independence.

“Dance and stuff are nice as a hobby – but I really think useful things, like DIY, they can make things themselves and they can build on those skills themselves.”

“There should be somebody who comes to explain to the deaf community about life skills, like processes to apply for a mortgage, the complexities of the process, about utilities, the water bill, the bills. It’s about providing those life skills to members of the deaf community – people often come here to ask for help, but it’s often a small thing...It’s about helping them to do things independently, how to save money, what to talk about with the bank, people don’t want to live in council flats forever, so it’s important to provide those skills.” (BID Services staff member)

In other cases, it was highlighted that there was a need for support with employment and economic activity. People wanted to see better opportunities for the deaf community.

“Support for deaf people to set up their own business in Birmingham. I want to see more deaf people that own their own business.”

“Support with employment services – I want more deaf people getting into good jobs – so many deaf people end up working as support workers, or low paid jobs.”

“A lot of deaf people can’t find a job, lots of deaf people don’t like claiming benefits but lots of people don’t want to give us a job...I see lots of deaf people working as a support worker, but why only a support worker – but why not other jobs, better jobs. I want deaf people to be managers, CEO’s...The job centre is just going round in circles, it’s a waste of time. I’m hard of hearing, and the job centre say that I don’t need an interpreter”.

Others mentioned challenges around accessing existing services who they saw helping others:

“The Prince’s Trust – they offer support just for people who are 18-25 but we need (that kind of) support for other people who are older than that.”

Accessibility of non-specialist community activities

Many of the participants said that they only engage in formal activities at BID Services. Others said they engage in other activities such as sports and arts, some specially targeting deaf and hard of hearing. However, this was not easy. Fundamentally, participants felt that *“it’s all about signing, people learning basic signing.”* There was seen to be a lack of awareness of the challenges deaf and hearing impaired people face, which made people more hesitant to access services that are not specifically designed for deaf and hearing impaired people.

“Lots of people don’t have awareness of deaf people.”

“Every time I go out, some people aren’t aware that I’m deaf... I feel like I have to tell people over and over that I am deaf, and let them know that I can lipread but I am deaf. It’s very hard having to remind people. I don’t want to just be saying this kind of stuff forever.”

“In my area, there are classes which I could go to, but I’m the only deaf person, and I have to explain that I’m deaf and I can’t have an interpreter with me all the time. I don’t want to do that.”

Lack of ease to communicate makes joining in with non-specialist community activities very difficult, even more so in recent times:

“It’s harder with covid, because I can’t lipread when people are wearing masks.”

Most people said that they weren’t very engaged in community activities in their local area:

“In my area... lots of people have their own little group – it’s not friendly, people want their own kind to be with their own.”

Nevertheless, there was a strong preference for making community activities more accessible to the deaf and hearing impaired community, rather than developing separate activities which are only intended for deaf and hearing impaired. This was seen as having a number of benefits.

“Mix, and everyone can support each other together.”

“I prefer it being mixed, that’s only going to help people develop their confidence, and mix with other people. Mixing together will help people engage with other services, and will also help hearing people to learn to sign and support with deaf people.”

“I think everyone should mix.”

The focus group made some suggestions about how this might work, for example in a fitness context:

“We maybe need new organisations, some kind of organisation that can train personal trainers to sign, or access them.”

“Want for teachers and PT’s to learn basic BSL. They don’t have to be completely fluent – just knowing the very basics goes a long way, to give instructions so that we can get engaged, but any kind of teacher – sports, whatever. If I knew that there was somebody there who can chat just a little bit, that would make a big difference.”

Transport

Two key issues were brought up in the context of transport. One of the greatest challenges was around trains not showing appropriate display information when there are last minute changes.

“Trains as well need to change how they present information – on the platform it tells you the information that’s fine, but when there’s a last minute change that doesn’t come up on the screen what can you do?”

“That’s exactly the same, that is always the same for me – I see people moving to a different platform, but I can’t see why they’re going, where they are going.”

The other big challenge mentioned was around the Ring and Ride service. Participants told researchers that it is not possible to book too far in advance, they can’t book it themselves as there is no VRS service, and you can’t have recurring bookings. This is a challenge for BID as organisation:

“One of the biggest problems for deaf people in the area. So for example, here on a Friday we have events. So a member of staff here has to ring the day before to book the transport. Sometimes ring and ride will refuse it... Ring and Ride need to improve their system. We have regular bookings every week, so that should be booked in for them, but they don’t do it like that, you have to call again every

week. Ultimately I think Ring and Ride need more drivers, because sometimes they don't have capacity." (BID Services staff member)

There was also lots of discussion about whether public transport needed to be further discounted, with some saying that it was important, and others saying it wasn't a priority.

Somali women

The Somali women interviewed highlighted key issues that their community face, as residents of Birmingham. Answers recorded were impactful, and there would be great benefit to be had in commissioners talking to Nura Ali from Allies Network, to gain further insight.

Problems faced

There was a perceived lack of activities available in the women's local area. Some interviewees said that there were activities, but that they were not accessible either due to language reasons or cultural insensitivity, or that they never actually found out about them. Points raised were:

- Non-culturally sensitive support
- No services for my community
- (wanted:) More advertising of local community activities
- Lack of language skills

A lack of language skills was also seen as an impact on employment prospects. Lack of employment was one area impacting on financial concerns, as well as others mentioned many times:

- No money
- Unemployment
- Unemployment
- Language barriers lead to problems with employability

Women and girls were also suffering from violence against them, female genital mutilation (FGM) and domestic abuse. Services enabling them to access support were few and far between, and mainstream statutory services were not well informed in regard to the issues experienced as a result, particularly in regard to FGM.

Others had experienced racism. One participant said that she felt there was a lack of support with this, and also lack of knowledge about human rights within the community. Most people were unaware of the law on racism. Many had personally faced racism and discrimination in the workplace.

Types of support they want

There was an appetite for community specific activities including:

- African support groups
- Women's social club organised by local community
- Somali support group

Activities which would address issues raised as prevalent in their community would be welcomed. These could include:

- Unemployment support
- Financial support and food support
- Food projects
- Art sessions to tackle FGM

It was also felt that easier access to more general types of social community activities would be something that the women would like to participate in, if they were culturally inclusive. Possible activities that would be of interest were:

- IT classes
- Social Club
- Community supper sessions
- Gardening projects

Community group needs

The women interviewed said that they would like to see more resource support for organisations they already use. They would also be keen to welcome new activities created specifically for them. They also suggested that there could be culturally specific lessons that could be learnt by the NHS and women's rights organisations. And they would like to see pathways showing them how to better access financial support.

Additional Review

Following suggestions made by stakeholders during Phase 2 of the Gap Analysis, a review of available NNS anchor quarterly reports and overall NNS summary reports was made. This review looked to uncover recommendations mentioned by current NNS Lead organisations, which could be relevant to NNS Citywide/Connected Communities. This included over 50 documents in total, although many were partially or substantially repetitive.

In addition to reiterating the need for NNS Citywide for reasons already outlined, these documents highlighted that a substantial amount of successful cross-constituency working already happens, both between individual localities addressing boundary citizens and organisations, but also at a citywide level. Examples of this include not only strategic work to ensure consistency and efficiency across the city, but also one project, led by Age UK. This project, supporting individuals over the age of 60 with mobility issues with garden clear-ups and maintenance tasks, is supported by eight of the ten localities.

In a number of cases locality leads talked about the importance, to them locally, of having relationships with citywide organisations. Multiple localities talked about inviting and supporting citywide organisations to run activities in areas with low levels of local organisations present generally, or to address specific gaps identified. In some areas, specialist citywide organisations were used to support local organisations or localities in addressing specific gaps.

These reports outlined how existing NNS organisations already have relationships with citywide organisations (i.e. Centrala, the Czech and Slovak Club). In this context, one locality lead said that when looking for citywide organisations, there was a relative lack of organisations specialising in autism.

These factors emphasise the importance of NNS Citywide being linked in to locality organisations, so that locality based NNSs can benefit from the strengths of citywide community assets. This will also ensure that citywide community assets can be supported to develop through connections with locality NNSs.

In addition to this review, we have looked at a report published in March 2022 by Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisation. This report takes a different approach to this gap analysis but has recommendations for supporting community organisations to support older people in dispersed communities. A summary of the recommendations from the report can be seen below, and a link to the full report can be found here: [GMCVO report](#)

Funders should:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop longer term funding for small community organisations supporting dispersed communities. • Develop funding support for social infrastructure belonging to and used by dispersed communities. • Develop more accessible application and more proportionate reporting processes. • Support further research to uncover the work and support needs of community organisations supporting dispersed communities
Mainstream VCSE organisations should:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for the interests of organisations supporting dispersed communities and share advocacy opportunities so they can self-advocate. • Where possible channel funding to small organisations through partnerships / acting as responsible organisation. • Support small community organisations supporting dispersed communities to gather evidence and raise the visibility of their communities' needs. • Explore the development of mutually beneficial and egalitarian partnerships with community organisations, which recognise the potential to learn from their expertise and connections, and ensure that localities develop support structures that are open and accessible to members of dispersed communities.
Local authorities and policy makers should:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure vital social infrastructure is available for and accessible to dispersed communities. • Ensure that geographically-defined 'levelling up' and community development opportunities are complemented by policies that address the needs of dispersed communities. • Work together in partnership with other authorities and with small organisations to ensure that dispersed communities' needs are better understood in planning across the city region.

Recommendations

Phase One

Based on work done during Phase One, the following groups can be recommended as priority groups.

There are three groups which have been identified as potential candidates for multi-constituency partnerships:

- Other ethnic group: Arab
- Religious group: Judaism
- Religious group: Sikhism

In total, all of the priority groups identified are as follows:

- Bangladeshi,
- Chinese,
- Other Asian,
- Black African,
- Black Caribbean,
- Other Black,
- Any other ethnic group,
- Roma or Irish Traveller,
- White Irish,
- Other White

- Hinduism,
- Buddhism,
- Other Religion,
- Any minority sexual orientation
- Transgender gender identity
- Specific disabilities (i.e. Learning Disabilities)
- Specific carer subpopulations (i.e. unpaid carers with high caring responsibilities)

Of all the priority groups identified, the following are suggested as high priority groups.

- White Irish ethnicity
- Black Caribbean ethnicity
- Other Religion
- Roma and Irish Traveller ethnicity
- Any minority sexual orientation
- Transgender gender identity
- Specific disabilities (i.e. Learning Disabilities)
- Specific carer subpopulations (i.e. unpaid carers with high caring responsibilities)

Phase Two

Research conducted as part of Phase 2 has various implications for NNS Citywide, particularly in terms of how its core role is understood.

It is interesting that so many interviewees spoke about issues which are beyond the initially intended scope of NNS Citywide. In part this may be due to people commonly misinterpreting what NNS Citywide was attempting to achieve due to its name. It needs to be made very clear once NNS Citywide is running, both to NNS anchors and community assets, that this is a programme supporting communities who are dispersed across Birmingham, and not an NNS structure dedicated to Birmingham as a whole.

People need to know what is a plausible expectation.

Given this, renaming NNS Citywide before it is operational may aid in addressing these issues. One possibility is 'NNS Dispersed Communities' although 'dispersed' as a term might be perceived to have a negative word valence. Whatever name is chosen it should reflect that this project is about supporting minority groups who are dispersed across the city, and not a forum for addressing truly city-wide issues such as transport and housing policy.

It also interesting that so many interviewees emphasised the importance of NNC Citywide not being about grant-provision, but also about connecting and upskilling community assets. Whatever the precise structure of NNS Citywide it is important that it is able - in much the same way as locality-based NNS Constituencies do – to fulfil these roles. As a minimum this will require strong relationships between NNS Citywide community assets and the NNS anchor organisations in the constituencies, but it will require more than this – as NNS Citywide, community assets will also need to be linked or networked with citywide institutions and organisations.

A number of interviewees brought up limitations of the gap analysis. Some of these would be addressed by reassessing the Phase 1 candidate groups of this process when the 2021 census data becomes available. However more broadly, there are questions which data is not and will not be able to definitively answer. This gap analysis cannot claim to have captured all of the dispersed

minority communities that merit support and so the NNS Citywide programme must remain flexible to respond to needs as they are presented.

The priority groups identified during Phase 2 are highlighted below.

Priority groups highlight by multiple interviewees:

- Somali
- Sudanese
- Irish
- Chinese
- Roma and Irish Traveller
- Eastern European ethnicities
- Visually Impaired
- Deaf
- All LGBT+ groups
- Learning Disabilities
- Refugees
- Eritreans

Priority groups highlighted by at least one interviewee:

- Yemeni
- Nubian ethnicity (which overlaps strongly with Sudanese)
- Black Caribbean
- Zimbabwean
- Recent migrants

Phase Three and Additional Review

The following recommendations for priority areas which could potentially be funded through NNS Citywide have come from the focus group participants themselves, and from observations made by the two members of BVSC Research staff who attended each focus group.

- Community activities targeting young LGBT+ adults
- Support for small LGBT+ groups with sourcing and adapting to in-person activities
- Raising awareness of which groups exist and which are available for target demographics, such as LGBT+ groups, or the deaf and hearing impaired
- Creation of groups which either solely target Roma women or integrated community activities designed to be Roma-inclusive spaces
- Support with training for higher skilled employment, targeting Roma, Deaf and hearing impaired and African communities
- Deaf awareness training for NNS leads/community groups. This is available through BID Services
- LGBT awareness training for NNS leads/community groups. This is available through Birmingham LGBT

Overall, it was suggested that there are existing organisations providing support for the priority groups (Birmingham LGBT, Rainbow Spirit, Journey Asylum Seeker Group, BID Services and Allies Network for example), but that they need to be able to access funding in order to increase the support they can offer.

Whilst this is not the case for the Roma community, this should not be interpreted in a way that suggests there is no appetite for the support, particularly amongst the women in the community. Further engagement with this community, as with the others spoken to, will help commissioners understand how best to tackle this with existing NNS Leads, as well as through NNS Citywide.