Neighbourhood, community and housing in Bradford: building understanding between new and settled groups

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Aims

The report, commissioned by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, evaluates the use of community based forums to engage new and settled populations in discussions around local housing, community and neighbourhood issues in 3 areas of Bradford to build shared understanding between groups with different backgrounds.

Methodology

Firstly, the study used 14 poster forums [including posters that posed questions on attitudes to housing and neighbourhoods in the context of ‘changing communities’] to engage with a wide range of residents to identify local concerns, commonalities and tensions – 171 residents in total.

Then 4 interactive discussion forums took place to bring together new and settled groups in 3 localities: 2 diverse, mixed tenure inner city areas where established white, Afro/Caribbean and Asian residents were brought together with new Slovak and Czech migrants; and one new zone of ethnic diversity where established white social tenants participated in a forum with new Filipino migrants.

The attendance at each forum event varied between 14 and 23 people. Two of the events were women only and one focussed on 18-25 year old Asian and Eastern European men – a traditionally hard to reach group.

The forums were evaluated though entry and exit questionnaires, observations during the forums and follow up, in depth interviews with a sample of 19 of the 63 participants.

Key issues

The project found that participants valued the opportunity to discuss issues, challenge misconceptions and identify areas of commonality. Participants felt that the forums were a worthwhile experience – with women, in particular wanting to engage more with other groups. Asian participants felt the forums helped them learn more about their new Eastern European neighbours.

Despite the positive outcomes, the report acknowledges that there are limits to what can be achieved and that is may be unrealistic to expect such diverse groups to agree and collaborate fully on local issues.

Conclusions

The forums provided an insight into how local engagement might be approached to develop shared understanding and visions for the future, and opened up potential for community building and neighbourliness.

However, they also highlighted to risks of leaving local communities to manage the challenges posed by new immigration alone – particularly due to the racial prejudices that exist between these groups.

Recommendations

The report offers a number of recommendations around the need for additional support for communities, frontline workers and vulnerable groups.

Web Link
Neighbourhood, community and housing in Bradford: building understanding betwee...
Migrant Group
EU migrants
Non-EU migrants
Topic
Community and society
Housing and welfare
Community cohesion
Housing needs
Integration
Place
Bradford
Year
2010
Resource Type
Report
Contact Name
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Source URL: *https://www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/research-entry/neighbourhood-community-and-housing-bradford-building-understanding-between-new-and*