Migrant-friendly services

Introduction to Migration

Guidance booklet #5

Who is this guidance for?

Migrant-friendly services is part of the *Introduction to Migration* series from the Integration up North project. The series provides a basic guide to migration for people working in public sector organisations: local authorities (including health services), police, fire and rescue services, probation services, Jobcentre Plus, Trades Unions and others. It should also be useful for those working in the voluntary and community sector.

The guidance aims to improve the knowledge and understanding of migration among service providers, so that they can shape their service to support the integration of new arrivals to the benefit of both the newly-arrived migrants and the wider local community. Throughout the guidance there are examples from practice across the northern region, and experiences of new arrivals in these areas. While the focus is migration to the north of England, it should be useable in other areas.

This is intended to be an easy-to-use reference document. It does not provide legal advice or a detailed guide to immigration law and policy. In such a fast-changing context, information can quickly become out of date. All information should be checked with an expert or the Home Office if in doubt. We have highlighted other sources of information and guidance where it exists, for further reading and future reference.

About the contributors

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The *Introduction to Migration* series was edited by Pip Tyler, with most Integration up North (IUN) case studies written by Nahida Khan. The project and guidance documents would not have been possible without contributions and advice from our migrant volunteers, migration champions in our partner organisations, and our training delegates who commented on the materials.

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Introduction: why *Migrant-friendly services*?

This guidance booklet follows other booklets that have outlined: why services need to consider migration, how services can find out more about the profile of migrants in the local area and their needs, and some background understanding of immigration statuses and the impact of that status on migrant entitlements to work, family reunion and access to benefits and public services.

This guidance booklet addresses the issue of working with migrants as service users or as part of the local community. This does not entail outlining facts about migration or legal rights; instead it is about responding to migrants in the context of your service, and so in some ways is more challenging. Local communities are so different in terms of their population, services provided, successes and challenges, history, leadership and local government structures. Migrants are as different from one another as members of the receiving community are – the concept of 'the migrant community' itself suggests homogeneity that does not exist, that does not include or represent all of the migrants in the local area. It is not realistic to suggest any 'one-size-fits-all' approaches; instead, the booklet points to guidance, resources and practice that already exist and hopefully provides a range of ideas for services wanting to consider how to improve engagement with and access to their service by different people from overseas.

Many services already are very accessible to migrants. This booklet is for those services who feel they need to improve migrant access to their services, to make their service more migrant-friendly. This document provides ideas based on learning from migrant experiences in the north of England and from other services and projects that feel they have had some success. The structure of this guidance booklet is as follows.

- Firstly, it draws on a survey conducted by the Integration up North project with new arrivals and public services across the north of England, to identify the most common difficulties to access and engagement between migrants and services.
- Then three different approaches are outlined: providing information to new arrivals, communicating with non-English speakers, and consulting with migrant service users. Migrants may be service users, and some resources to address staff uncertainty about interacting directly with migrant service users are outlined.
- Other services need to consider how to make contact with migrant groups in the local community; libraries are a good example. Specific integration initiatives and adaptations that services have made to their approaches are outlined.

Examples from migrants and services are provided throughout the text and the key messages found throughout the document are collated at the end as a reminder.

Barriers to service use and engagement

<u>The public sector equality duty</u>

Public services are subject to the 'public sector equality duty' in the Equality Act 2010, partly reproduced in *Figure i*. This involves providing equal access to services, taking steps to tackle prejudice and promote understanding in order to promote good relations. For example, services may provide information in relevant languages or ensure new communities are aware of their services. They have a duty to consider what they should do to ensure that people with a specified 'protected characteristic' have equal access to all relevant services.

Race is a 'protected characteristic', and includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins. Direct or indirect discrimination against migrants on grounds of their nationality or ethnicity is illegal (exceptions exist where national legislation explicitly excludes certain people on the basis of their immigration status (which depends on nationality), such as allocations of social housing and for homelessness services provided by local authorities).

Figure i: Extracts from the Public Sector Equality Duty

'A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;

(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.'

c.15 Part 11, Ch1 Section 149(1)

….
'due regard, in particular, to the need to

(a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;

(b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;

(c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.'

c.15 Part 11, Ch1 Section 149(3)

Source: Equality Act (2010)[1]

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[1] Equality Act 2010 www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents

<u>Barriers to service use</u>

Key message 1: Some migrants struggle to access public services. Some public services struggle to engage with migrant service users or migrants in the community.

Despite some good progress, some migrants struggle to access public services. The Integration up North (IUN) 2012 migrant survey of over 100 new arrivals across the north of England revealed that a third had experienced problems with services they used in their first year in the UK. Common barriers described by migrants in the survey are listed in *Figure ii*. Saira's story in *Figure iii* describes in a little more detail a range of differences and difficulties experienced from the perspective of a recently-arrived migrant accessing services in the north of England.

Public service staff can experience difficulties in engaging with migrant service users. Four key issues faced by public service staff in the north of England identified by the IUN *public services survey* in 2012 are also highlighted in *Figure ii*.

Figure ii: Key barriers to service access by migrants	
For migrants	For services
Lack of knowledge about available services, their location and registration processes ***Lack of appropriate services*** ***Lack of entitlement*** due to legal restrictions ***Language and communication difficulties*** ***Trust*** in service providers ***Discrimination.***	***Staff knowledge about the migrant population*** Lack of knowledge about new arrivals, difficulty in identifying if there are any community groups to engage with, and about migrant entitlements ***Communication*** Language, interpretation, cultural differences, trust, engaging women and engaging a small migrant community dispersed across the area ***Migrant knowledge and take up of services*** Concerns that migrants not accessing services initially reduces further signposting to other services ***Service capacity*** Staff may need more time to ensure equality of outcomes for migrant service users; cost of translation; lack of joint approach to migrant service users.
Source: IUN migrant survey and public services survey, 2012	

Some of these issues, such as service capacity, resources and joint working need to be addressed at a strategic level.

At the point of service delivery, two key ways of reducing access barriers relate to information giving and communication. When planning services, consultation with migrant service users is key to improving service access.

These three options (information provision, communication and consultation) are explored in more detail in the following section.

Figure iii: From Morocco to Leeds - Saira's story

Saira arrived in the UK in 2008 from her home in Morocco to come and live with her husband in the Isle of Man; they later moved to Leeds. She is well educated, with a degree in Islamic studies and Arabic language. She is a new mum and employed as a part time carer. Despite initially being lonely having left her family back in Morocco, Saira is happy and feels settled in Leeds.

There were lots of times when Saira accessed or needed support from different services. She found health services particularly accessible. She really likes her GP practice and is happy and confident to use their services. She has found it easy to register and since becoming pregnant she has had a positive experience in the hospital and maternity services. She also found changing her GP when she moved to Leeds a smooth and easy to handle process.

'Many opportunities are well managed here, local community centres have activities which have been helpful in helping me learn and make new friends'

However, there have been many experiences that could have been better for Saira as a new arrival. She struggled with finding suitable housing that was not expensive and where she did not have to share with students. Accessing free English language classes has proven difficult since she was told she couldn't access them until she had lived in the UK for a year.

'I have still not managed to get a council house, I know there is a waiting list, so I might never get one. I was confused by the bidding system, but now I know what to do'

Saira felt the Jobcentre Plus would have been helpful to find a job but thought her spoken English was not good enough for her to benefit fully, and instead used employment agencies for help and guidance in finding employment. She was not aware of where to get her national insurance number from and why it was so important; she was intimidated when called for a meeting, and waited a long time to receive it.

Finding an NHS dentist was not possible and Saira could not afford private treatment. She has only managed to visit the dentist since her pregnancy.

Saira feels lucky that she has a supportive family-in-law in the UK, but is also aware of the more serious domestic difficulties that other spouses can experience in a new country. Her advice to anyone moving to the UK is to be prepared for struggle and hard work, but to live happily.

'I think when you arrive in UK, they should give you an information pack with all the information you need, even things like: emergency numbers in case you have a problem with your husband, if you can work and how to find a job, the bills you have to pay'

Source: Integration up North (IUN) volunteer project

Three ways of overcoming barriers

> **Key message 2: Barriers to service access can be reduced by providing basic information, appropriate use of interpreting and translation and consultation with service users.**

Providing information about services

Migrants can struggle to find out what services are available locally, or how services differ from those in their country of birth. Some migrants can be very isolated, particularly if they have young children, which can prevent them from improving their English, finding out information about support that is available and making initial contact with public services. Some migrants in the IUN *migrant survey* said that they did not manage to find local information they needed when they first arrived.

Figure iv describes how two new arrivals in the north of England struggled not knowing certain information that we may take for granted. In these cases not knowing how to contact emergency services or how to explore options for effective pain relief could have had significant consequences.

Figure iv: The costs of not knowing – Rukhsana's story

Rukhsana was very isolated for the first few years of living in West Yorkshire and was unable to improve her English as she was expected to work hard and could only rely on her new husband's family for information. *'On most days I was stuck with the house work and looking after my sister in laws kids from around 10am till about 7pm. I was never told about ESOL classes, I only found out about them once I left the home and came to live in Leeds.'*

'I was never told about ESOL classes'

Rukhsana did not know basic service information such as the contact number for the police

Rukhsana did not know basic service information such as the contact number for the emergency services. She was fortunate that her friend called the police to alert them when she was suffering a domestic violence incident.

Rukhsana found out valuable information once she began accessing services. She did not know where to buy affordable food, and only found this out once she had a support worker: *'they even advised me on where to shop. I never really went shopping before so I had no idea of where the cheap places were to buy everyday items from. My health visitor was great, she gave me all the advice and guidance I needed. She introduced me to the children centre and advised me on healthy eating and healthy living.'*

Source: Integration up North (IUN) volunteer project

Figure iv: The costs of not knowing - Phong's story

Phong found that health services in York were quite different from those back in Taiwan. It was through a friend that she discovered that she could get a second opinion about her health problems: *'I didn't believe my friend as I thought all of the doctors in the same practice would have the guidelines to follow.'* To her surprise, a second doctor suggested physiotherapy to relieve her pain. *'Many migrants don't know about little information like this. It can mean a difference of pain relief or suffering for a long time with something that can be treated easily.'*

Although Phong has not used maternity services herself she is aware of women returning to their country of origin during their pregnancy and also to have their baby there. She contrasts her understanding of the health systems in the UK and at home: 'In Taiwan women see the doctor as soon as they are pregnant and see them whenever they want. Women feel really insecure and want to see a doctor regularly. In the UK [I am told that] you only see a specialist a few times or only when things have gone wrong.'

'Many migrants don't know about little information like this. It can mean a difference of pain relief or suffering for a long time with something that can be treated easily'

Source: Integration up North (IUN) volunteer project

Key message 3: Welcome packs are a good way of providing information to new arrivals, and can be placed at commonly used services to maximise opportunities for them to be accessed by new arrivals, or to reach friends who can pass the information on.

One way of providing basic information for newcomers is by providing welcome packs for new arrivals to an area. There are some online welcome packs provided by councils as shown in *Figure v*, although the number of these has declined during the last few years. You can draw on these for ideas of what to cover so you don't have to start from scratch.

Once you have decided what information is needed, the next step is to consider how to disseminate your information to reach (isolated) newcomers. Where do you put the information? The place is important - it is worth thinking about providing information at services migrants tend to commonly access such as health services and public transport. Service information could also be used within ESOL or citizenship classes at your local college.

Friends and family often provide a first point of contact with services, passing on information and recommending some services over others. The IUN *migrant survey* suggested new arrivals rely on family and friends as primary source of information over the internet, the media or an employer. Your dissemination plans could target families and friends too.

Figure v: Local welcome packs

There are online local welcome packs available for migrants. Examples include the following areas:

- *Welcome to Yorkshire*[2] (available in Czech, English, Hungarian, Polish and Slovak)
- *Salford migrant worker information pack*[3] (available in Czech, English and Polish)
- *Welcome to Lincolnshire*[4] (available in English, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish and Portuguese)
- *Refugee Transition: A guide for people who have just received refugee status and for their advisers*[5] (summary available in Arabic, French, Simplified Mandarin, and Somali).
- *New to Belfast? A guide of support services*[5]
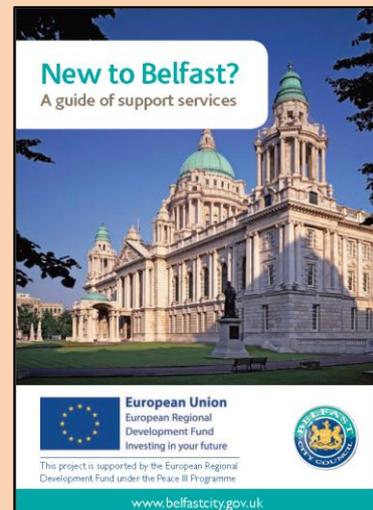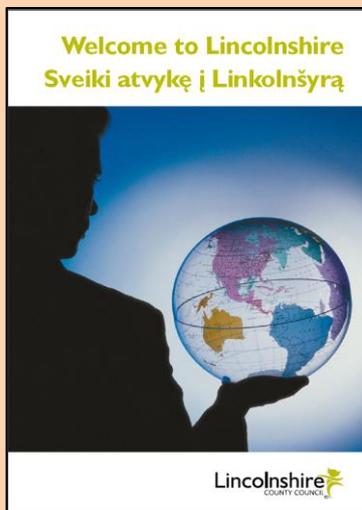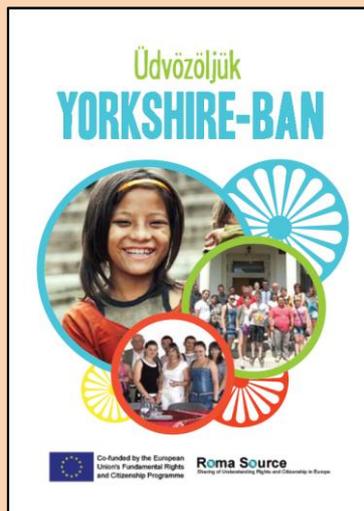
[2] Migration Yorkshire/Roma SOURCE project, *Welcome to Yorkshire booklet*
www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/?page=publications
[3] Salford City Council, *Salford migrant worker information pack* www.salford.gov.uk/migrantworkers-welcome.htm
[4] Lincolnshire County Council (2008) *Welcome to Lincolnshire* www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/jobs/migrant-workers-and-new-arrivals-welcome-pack
[5] Both available from: Belfast City Council (2014) www.belfastcity.gov.uk/community/advice/migrants.aspx

Another way of providing this basic information is through an orientation programme. *Figure v* gives an example of how new international students are inducted in Manchester, not only to be able to use University services, but to settle more quickly into the area.

Figure vi: Orientation – Esi's story

Esi came to live in the North West in 2009. She was born in Ghana, and came to Manchester to live with her husband whom she had met at university here. She found some minor cultural differences surprised her, around the weather and the level of littering.

Esi felt that she had few difficulties accessing services, describing them as 'structured and seamless'. She praised her induction programme at University for helping her settle in:

'Regarding the "orientation" for new arrivals, I must mention that I found that organised by the University of Manchester for international students very useful during my time there. It was even more important when I finally arrived here as an immigrant. Apart from giving me details of how to access facilities on campus and social services (accesses to Emergency Services, GP registration, etc.), it also highlighted cultural differences in acceptable social behaviour, e.g. you do not jump a queue, the importance of giving personal space and having eye contact when speaking to people.'

Esi believes that these kinds of orientation programmes and information should be provided to migrants in the area to facilitate their integration:

'Apart from giving me details of how to access facilities, orientation also highlighted cultural differences in acceptable social behaviour. It gave me the social skills that helped boost my confidence in social settings '

'From my experience, I think an "orientation" of some sort whether a refugee/asylum seeker or a "family" migrant (such as myself) will help integrate migrants more effectively into the communities in which they live. I believe the orientation I was given … gave me the social skills that helped boost my confidence in social settings while I was a student and even more so since I came to stay.'

'Some form of "orientation" would save both migrants and services a lot of time and money by providing basic information - on "what to do", "where to go", acceptable social behaviour, etc., – perhaps a voice recording on a USB for those who cannot read their own language. It would be of immense support to have 'welcome booklets' containing some basic vital information/instruction about how to access services such as GPs, school placements for children, emergency services, etc. – or perhaps "welcome classes".'

Source: Integration up North (IUN) volunteer project

Communication with migrant service users

Good quality translation and interpreting can make a big difference to improving service access for newly-arrived migrants whose first language is not English.

Figure vii describes incidents that have taken place locally where new arrivals were not able to report crime properly due to their language difficulties; similar difficulties could occur in any service.

Figure vii: Language matters - Lyn and Rukhsana's stories

Lyn and Rukhsana have both experienced times where they have felt that they could not communicate properly with the police in the early stages of settling into the UK, and where their English was insufficient to clearly explain the problem.

Lyn was disbelieved about her experience of being mugged in Bradford because of a simple difference between Chinese and English. She did not realise the importance of using singular and plural forms in English. She explains: *'We were in the city centre, but we were not familiar with the area. We had been travelling and it was late at night. From nowhere a group of men came and mugged me and my friend. They took our money and phones. We contacted the police and told them what had happened.'*

'The problems started when I retold my story to the police again. In my language we do not use plurals and so when I retold my story I said there was one man. The police thought I was lying as I said there was one man and previously I said there were more. I tried to explain the situation about my language but it was too late, they did not believe me anymore.'

'In my language we do not use plurals and so when I retold my story I said there was one man. The police thought I was lying as … previously I said there were more'

'I'm not saying it's the fault of the police but you can see how problems can happen for people from another country with a completely different language.'

'I felt frustrated as I could not explain anything and they were not getting me an interpreter'

Rukhsana was very upset and scared when she was being cared for by the local police. She could not explain her story properly in English, and was unable to access a translator to explain herself.

She didn't know if the police had really understood what had happened to her. She explains: *'I asked the police if I could have an interpreter as I wanted to explain what had happened and that he (her husband) might take the baby from me and send me back to Pakistan. The police said "No, it's fine we understand everything don't worry." I felt frustrated as I could not explain anything and they were not getting me an interpreter. I wanted them to know what he was threatening me with. I'm not sure how much they did understand.'*

Source: Integration Up North (IUN) volunteer project

> **Key message 4: Translation is not appropriate in every instance. Existing resources provide advice when making this judgment.**

It is not practical or appropriate to translate all service information into every language. Lyn and Rukhsana (in *Figure vii*) were capable of understanding and expressing themselves in English, but precision mattered in Lyn's case, while an interpreter would have enabled Rukhsana to articulate her worries more fully. The Commission on Integration and Cohesion advised a selective approach driven by need and set in the context of communications strategies for *all* residents rather than automatic translation. It raised four key points:

- *'There is no legal reason for all materials to be translated.*

- *Translation can never be a substitute for learning English.*

- *Translation should be reduced except where it builds integration and cohesion.* …*where new migrants do not speak English then clearly they need initial information in appropriate languages*

- *Translation should be considered in the context of communications to all communities. Materials that are not in English can be alienating to existing communities.'*[6]

Government advice includes a translation 'checklist' which may be useful when making a decision (reproduced in *Figure viii*).

Once you have decided you need to use translation or interpreting you may be able to access in-house support which will be an invaluable source of expertise on communication issues and meeting the Equality Duty.

Online language resources are also available, for example Language Line's *Language Identification Card*[7] (*below*) and the Refugee Council's *Language Identification Chart*[8] (*right*).

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[6] Commission on Integration and Cohesion (2007) *Our Shared Future.* Annex E: *translations - efficiency and integration* http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Education/documents/2007/06/14/ourbharedfuture.pdf pp167-170
[7] LanguageLine *Telephone Interpreting Service Language Identification Card* www.languageline.co.uk/customer-service/support-tools
[8] Refugee Council, *Language ID Chart* www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/languages/language_id_chart

Figure viii: Translation Checklist

Is it essential that this material be translated?

☐ What is your evidence of a need or demand for this translation?

☐ What is your evidence that people will be disadvantaged without this translation?

☐ Who is the target audience? – for example is it young mothers, pensioners, workers etc and do those target audiences include people who don't speak English?

☐ Are speakers of particular languages being targeted?

☐ Are you using the right data to select the languages to translate this material into?

☐ Have you got information about who cannot speak English locally, and is it being updated as intelligence comes in about local changes?

Does the document need to be translated in full?

☐ Are you confident that people across all communities will have the literacy skills to understand this document?

☐ Should it first be simplified into a plain English version?

☐ Would a short summary do with signposting to further information? – or could it be translated on request rather than proactively?

☐ Could this message be better delivered by engaging with community groups directly or through credible partners, or by using alternative media?

☐ Have you considered the cost/benefit analysis for this translation?

☐ Will these materials be used in full, or is it likely that this form of communication will sit on the shelf?

☐ What would be the cost of not translating these materials – would there be an additional burden on public services?

☐ Have you explored whether other local agencies might already have these materials available in translated form?

☐ Have you networked with other authorities to share leaflets?

☐ Might the police or other partners already be translating similar things?

☐ Is there any national best practice?

Are there practical ways you can support people to learn English even while producing this translation?

☐ Can you use pictures?

☐ Is there an English summary at some point in the document?

☐ Could you include adverts for local English lessons?

☐ Could the whole leaflet be bilingual or multilingual?

☐ Are there practical ways you can keep up with changes within the community?

☐ Have you got a welcome pack for new migrants that can be updated based on their experiences – is it produced electronically, or in a format that is easy to update?

☐ Does translation form part of a wider communications strategy?

☐ Are you translating something that is about specific services to one community? – have you considered whether they will feel alienated from mainstream provision by having to have this?

☐ Have you considered whether other communities might feel disadvantaged by not having access to similar materials?

☐ Does this material fit well with your communications strategy to all residents, both settled and new?

Source: reproduced from CLG (2007)[9] *pp8-9.*

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[9] CLG (2007) *Guidance for local authorities on translation of publications*.
http://resources.cohesioninstitute.org.uk/Publications/Documents/Document/Default.aspx?recordId=60

Consultation with migrants

Consultation mechanisms that specifically engage migrants are a further way of developing accessible services. *Figure ix* provides a case study of improving service access in this way, where service user needs did not turn out to be as anticipated by library staff in Leicester – the outcomes included greater library membership and more appropriate provision of resources.

Figure ix: A case study of improving migrant service access through consultation

In the 'Refugees into Libraries' project, Leicester library services sought to involve refugees and asylum seekers in a volunteering scheme as a direct means of getting information about the needs of these communities in Leicester. This information was used to plan for and deliver library services in Leicester.

The involvement process led the library service to revise their assumptions about what people wanted. They had expected that migrants and refugees would like to see more books and resources available in their own languages, but what they found following was that people actually wanted resources to help them to learn English.

'We're a library and information service and we have a duty to meet the needs of all sections of the community. Who better to understand these needs than people themselves?'

'It's not about ticking the boxes, I hate that. It's about the desire to actually involve those communities in the service.'

The refugee volunteer group has been successful in influencing the development of new services in the library to address previously unmet needs. The volunteer group influenced development of study groups for English language practice, citizenship courses and IT skills, and stock and software choices.

The library has increased membership from target communities and provides more services and products that better meet the needs of refugees and asylum seekers.

Source: Equality and Human Rights Commission[10]

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[10] Equality and Human Rights Commission, *Improving library services through involving refugees and asylum seekers. Local authority Case study 14* www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-equality-duty/case-studies/sector-case-studies-local-authority Accessed 19.06.15

Key message 5: Concerns about 'getting it wrong' when interacting directly with migrants are valid. Being honest, asking questions and doing some background research is a good place to begin.
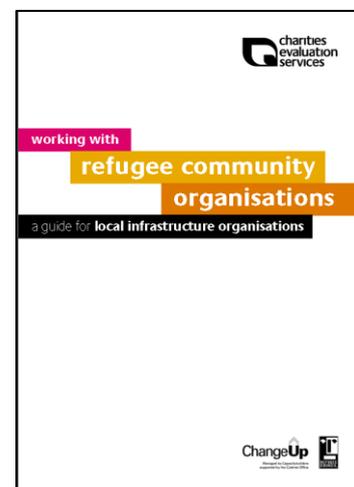
Frontline staff can understandably feel anxious about engaging directly with migrant service users for fear of 'getting it wrong' around issues such as different attitudes to gender, eye contact, and dress. Remember, not all migrants have barriers to service access. Many come from countries where English is the first or official language for example.

An easy start to looking at direct engagement with migrants in your service is to identify the particular cultures among your migrant service users or in the community, and find out more about them. Of course, migrant communities are not homogenous and there is no single 'correct' way to engage with people. Equality teams and other service areas already engaging with migrants locally will be good sources of expertise and advice.

Online resources can add more detailed information and advice on this issue, and include:

Some good advice is:

'Don't expect to know exactly what to do in every situation. Being overly concerned about being appropriately sensitive can cause apprehension. Don't let this become a barrier. Instead, we suggest that you are honest about your limits and expectations.'[1]

- ***Working with refugee community organisations*** *- a guide for local infrastructure organisations*[11] (*right*) is one of the few resources to directly address staff fears around engagement with particular community groups. It discusses how to engage with local refugee community organisations. Unit 5 '*How do we build a relationship'* and Unit 8 '*How do we communicate effectively?*' are particularly helpful and practical.

- ***A mini good practice guide to communicating effectively with migrants***[12] by Cambridgeshire county council covers preparation, development, delivery and learning from activity.

Existing training resources such as cultural awareness training may be available through your learning and development section. Some training providers also offer free materials; QED Training Services[13] for example provides *cultural awareness* training among other courses on equality and diversity. The website also offers some free materials upon request.

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[11] Charities Evaluation Services *reference as above.*

[12] Cambridgeshire County Council (2008) '*Communique': A mini good practice guide to communicating effectively with migrants*'. www.idea.gov.uk/idk/aio/8941018

[13] Equality Matters - Training Works. QED Training Services, www.qedworks.com

An example of how to approach cultural differences in relation to women, children and child protection is given in *Figure x*.

Figure x: How to address cultural differences and inclusivity

'There are some core cultural issues which you may need to seek agreement on when you work with RCOs (refugee community organisations). These are fundamental issues which cannot be ignored. Examples of these issues include the role and involvement of women, and attitudes towards children and child protection.

The role and involvement of women
Some cultures separate the genders, either formally or informally. Looking beyond this to the roles that women are playing in the community, and ensuring that 'being separate' does not mean being excluded, can require clear communication and agreement. If women are not involved in the organisations you are working with, you need to ask why, and to find ways to secure that involvement. This may mean organising separate meetings with women, or raising issues that women may be particularly interested in – for example, their own or their children's health, or access to education.

Asking about the different experiences of women is a good way to open up the issue of their participation and to ask about their inclusion in community organisations. Exchanging ideas about how this has changed in the UK over the last few decades, and how it may have changed in other countries and why, is a sensitive way of raising the issue. How funders and potential partners will view an organisation that cannot show evidence of the active involvement of particular groups such as women, the young, disabled people, or people from ethnic minorities can also be discussed. Equally, refugee communities may be able to provide new and interesting ways of encouraging participation and voice.

Attitudes towards children and child protection
This includes issues of child safety and protection. A good way to start this discussion is by explaining that most organisations that work with children need to have a child protection policy. Refugee families may have come from situations where children work from an early age, and so may be surprised to find that there are rules (some informal, but some based in law) against leaving children alone or in the care of young siblings.'

Source: Reproduced from Charities Evaluation Services pp.56-57

Migrants as part of the local community

> **Key message 6: Migrants in the local community may not be easily identifiable. They may not feel welcome in the local area. Some interventions and service adaptations have helped to foster integration within a local community.**

Some migrants do not feel very welcome in their new surroundings. This may be due to perceptions or actual open hostility. *Figure xi* (overleaf) describes how one new arrival has mixed feelings about living in the UK, valuing certain aspects such as diversity and her new family, but struggled particularly finding it difficult to use her skills and experiences to contribute to her new community in York.

Finding out about the local migrant population

If your service proactively seeks out the local community, you may need to build on your existing knowledge about migrants in the area.

- A huge range of services are community-based and may encounter migrants or need to work with them: police and hate crime projects, fire and rescue services, neighbourhood and community cohesion teams, leisure and waste management services and community health are just some examples. Some councillors have new communities within their wards while others have responsibilities that include or overlap with migration issues. This is good news if you need support in this area, as there will be lots of local expertise for you to draw on if you haven't already made contact across service areas.
- *Who are the migrants in my area?*[14] suggests ways of learning more about the local migrant community from statistics, local knowledge and local research.
- Visible indicators of change (such as shops specialising in food for specific communities, or use of other languages in public) are also good indicators. These are a good starting point to identify and access local migrant service users and migrant community organisations.
- The previous section also gives resources on engaging with migrant community organisations, although some will be more formalised, resourced and developed than others. Newer ethnic or nationality groups may not have their own associations yet, but informal ones may already exist.

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[14] Integration up North (2015) *Who are the migrants in my area?* Introduction to Migration series, Guidance booklet #2. www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/introductiontomigration-iun

Figure xi: **Integration or exclusion? Phong's story**

Phong was an English lecturer in Taiwan and worked in business relations. She came to the UK as a student then returned home after completing her studies as she had no intention of living in the UK. She changed her mind when she married a UK national so returned to York in 2011. Phong feels that her attitude and experience of living in the UK were very different this time: *'When I came the second time, I came with the mindset that this will be my home now and I will have to try to integrate as much as possible… I had an expectation that I will be very welcome in the UK, but I didn't feel welcome at all, only my husband's family welcomed me.'*

'Many migrants like me feel like we are nothing here'

Phong really likes the physical environment in York. *'It is very beautiful and green, not like where I lived in Taiwan*.' She is also very appreciative of the emphasis here on human rights and how social inequalities are dealt with. She contrasts this with Taiwan. *'People have a kind nature (well, on their faces they do!) and there is public discipline here, I like that… I really enjoy living in an international country, you meet people from all over the world that would just never happen in Taiwan.'* However, Phong did not realise how much she would be affected by the weather here. *'I have headaches, I get depressed, I never experienced this in Taiwan.'*

Her main struggle has been to find appropriate employment. *'I felt I had a good education and I would not really struggle to find employment but I have not found a job yet, not even a low paid one… I am willing to consider any job… I have worked as a cleaner in café and a nursing home through an agency… Companies expect very high qualifications for even being a cleaner.'* The question of integration then becomes a vicious circle *'If we [migrants] don't get a job we don't settle, and we can't settle because we can't find jobs. Many migrants like me feel like we are nothing here. Our jobs and skills are not recognised or accepted.'*

'I felt like I was being pushed out of my job'

Phong felt uncomfortable in the cleaning job she took due to the attitudes of her colleagues. *'I have found that some native English people are not happy about foreigners having jobs. People I worked with were not very nice sometimes and I felt like I was being pushed out of my job. I decided to leave myself in the end as I thought my mental health was more important.'*

Phong believes that new arrivals need to prepare themselves better for living in the UK. *'I feel that the 'Life in the UK' test should be done before people come here so that they avoid mistakes and understand the system. It is usually too late after two years. People should be encouraged to read books on inter-cultural studies before they come to the UK so that it helps understanding between people.'*

Source: Integration up North (IUN) volunteer project

<u>Welcoming new arrivals - new and existing services</u>

Integration is usually understood as a two-way process of change between new arrivals and the host community, involving both participation in the life of the community and a sense of belonging and membership for all. Facilitating an integrated community is important for a number of community-based services.

There are two broad ways in which services can facilitate migrant integration. Firstly, services can adapt to ensure that the services they offer to the general public are accessible to different migrant groups, considering for example the issues covered in this booklet such as provision of service information, translation and consultation; an example of responding to community change in Halifax is given in *Figure xii*. Secondly, initiatives specifically designed for migrants and helping them to settle into life in the UK. Some examples follow in this section.

Figure xii: A case study of developing services that are responsive to the local community - Halifax

The Halifax Central Initiative provides neighbourhood-based support in accessing services, advice and developing community initiatives. Five years ago, they observed that the community was changing. They organised a period of outreach and engagement where they spoke with new communities moving into the area, invited them to visit services and ran a range of engagement activities to listen to their experiences and needs.

To improve migrant access, they decided to employ a new member of staff to improve their engagement further and put in place an apprentice who could speak relevant languages and who is now employed. The service also translates relevant materials and information, and supports community events that the community want to run. They provide an informal, professional generic service that will support an individual with any issue:

'People, all people, can come in and see one of the staff one to one if they have any issues at all - everything from benefit applications, debt, setting up a direct debit or a bank account, applying for a school place, understanding a letter from a GP, ringing employers where someone hasn't been paid, domestic abuse referral - a huge variation.'

Over five years the service drop-in has shifted from almost no migrants and majority Pakistani clients to over 75% EU migrants. They continue to work with the Pakistani community but this community is now much more self reliant, accessing mainstream services and working with the council on neighbourhood developments rather than seeking individual advice.

Source: Halifax Central Neighbourhood team (HCI), Calderdale Council

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Lessons from libraries

Libraries are an important resource and space for many migrants, particularly providing internet access that enables migrants to maintain links with home, and could be a useful channel of communication and point of engagement for public services. Libraries are a key resource for many migrants seeking to learn English. The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) gives good ideas for libraries as well as for ESOL tutors.[15]

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[15] See for example, NIACE (2008) *Reading for pleasure; ideas to inspire ESOL learners*
http://readingagency.org.uk/adults/Final%20Ideas%20to%20inspire%20ESOL%20learners.pdf

Examples of libraries' past work on migrant issues include:

- The *Libraries for All* project.[16] It looks at opening up libraries to migrant groups via a four step approach; needs assessment, making partnerships, using a range of tools to discover different groups needs, and ways of reaching out and making contact.
- *Welcome to your library* project.[17] This project looked at libraries working with a range of newcomers. Liverpool library was among the official participants. The website with resources and case study examples is still available.

Projects that directly facilitate integration

Some projects work directly with migrants to overcome cultural and linguistic difficulties that new migrants face in settling into life in the UK.

Examples include the Integra project tackled the potentially dry subject of financial inclusion by running drama-based workshops with new migrants on subjects such as 'opening a bank account' to improve their vocabulary on financial matters. Resources from the project are available online,[18] including suggested scripts and a toolkit including financial tips for living in the UK.

The South Yorkshire Active Integration Project[19] (flyer, *right*) is aimed at newly arrived migrant women, providing opportunities to improve their English language, make friends and learn about the local area through day trips.

Other community cohesion resources

- **Toolkits and case studies** are available from the Institute for Community Cohesion (ICoCo).[20] The tookits include: communications, intercultural dialogue, health, and workforce cohesion. *'A sense of belonging': The Cohesion Communications Toolkit* discusses issues around communication, including parallel lives, perception and image, and white communities feeling marginalised.
- **Guidance from government** includes *Guidance for local authorities on how to mainstream community cohesion into other services*[21] and *Building Cohesive Communities: What frontline staff and community activists need to know.*[22]

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[16] *Libraries for All* www.librariesforall.eu

[17] *Welcome to your library* www.welcometoyourlibrary.org.uk/ - Note that any updates now go through the network, which covers a wider range of inclusion issues for museums and libraries www.seapn.org.uk

[18] DHE Solutions Ltd (2014) *Migrants' Integrating Kit* www.dhesolutions.co.uk/INTEGRA/INTEGRA-materials.asp - download both the kit and the *Facilitators Manual*

[19] Northern Refugee Centre / Northern Welcome, 'Integration and ESOL Support for Women!' http://nrcentre.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=491:integration-and-esol-support-for-women&catid=12:nrc-news&Itemid=9

[20] www.cohesioninstitute.org.uk/Resources/Toolkits

[21] CLG (2009) *Guidance for local authorities on how to mainstream community cohesion into other services* http://resources.cohesioninstitute.org.uk/Publications/Documents/Document/Default.aspx?recordId=118&ntextFullTextSearch=mainstream+community+cohesion

[22] CLG (2009) *Building Cohesive Communities: What frontline staff and community activists need to know*

- The *Cities of Migration* project encourages learning on migration and integration practice across cities. Issues they feature include inter-faith dialogue, fire services, mapping cohesion, maternity services, and migrant transnational networks in business and education. Five UK places with positive immigrant integration initiatives have been profiled on the site; *Figure xiii* reproduces an example from Blackburn. This is a companion report to a report which profiles 40 examples of practice across the western world including Sheffield's City of Sanctuary initiative.
- *Migration, community safety and policing*[23] deals with policing and community cohesion issues in more detail.

Finally, *Figure xiii* illustrates a specific initiative in Blackburn to promote community dialogue.

Figure xiii: A case study of integration initiatives – Blackburn's Meet Your Neighbour programme

What happens when you take a group of girls from different schools – one Muslim, one Roman Catholic and one secular – on a two-day trip to get to know one another? They talk.
In 2007, 18 teenage girls from different backgrounds spent a weekend together in Darwen, Lancashire, for that very purpose: to discuss their religious beliefs and cultural traditions and discover the similarities between them.

The 'Meet Your Neighbours' programme was developed by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council after a 2006 report found Blackburn to be one of England's most segregated cities. The borough has a large, established and growing Asian community and half of all schools are at least partly segregated on religious grounds. With a population of 145,000, the area has the highest proportion of Muslims (19%) outside of London.

'Meet Your Neighbours' was designed to build bridges across faith groups through intercultural dialogue. Ice-breaking exercises helped the girls discover shared interests, participate in group activities, and have conversations about cohesion and difference. Two weeks after their weekend program they reunited to share the experience with funders, teachers, school governors and parents. They were also encouraged to share what they had learnt with their peers at school.
Following overwhelmingly positive feedback, the program was rolled out again in the following year, this time with 24 boys and resulting in similar outcomes.

Open and honest dialogue builds understanding and relationships across perceived differences and opinions shaped by misconceptions and stereotypes. The project has fostered lasting inter-faith friendships and produced a toolkit that can be used by other local authorities with potential for building lasting links between schools. As one teacher stated, 'There is so much more that unites them than divides them.'

Source: reproduced from Cities of Migration[24]

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http://resources.cohesioninstitute.org.uk/Publications/Documents/Document/Default.aspx?recordId=126&ntextFullTextSearch=building+cohesion
[23] Integration up North (2015) *Migration, community safety and policing.* Introduction to Migration series, Guidance booklet #8. www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/introductiontomigration-iun
[24] *Blackburn (Lancashire) Meet Your Neighbours: Promoting friendship and understanding among young people through inter-faith dialogue in:* Cities of Migration (2012) *United Kingdom country report* http://citiesofmigration.ca/publications/ p7 accessed 19.06.15

Migrant-friendly services

Summary of key messages

1. Some migrants struggle to access public services. Some public services struggle to engage with migrant service users or migrants in the community.

2. Barriers to service access can be reduced by providing information, appropriate use of interpreting and translation and consultation with service users.

3. Welcome packs are a good way of providing information to new arrivals, and can be placed at commonly used services to maximise opportunities for them to be accessed by new arrivals, or to reach friends who can pass the information on.

4. Translation is not appropriate in every instance. Existing resources provide advice when making this judgment.

5. Concerns about 'getting it wrong' when interacting directly with migrants are valid. Being honest, asking questions and doing some background research is a good place to begin.

6. Migrants in the local community may not be easily identifiable. They may not feel welcome in the local area. Some interventions and service adaptations have helped to foster integration within a local community.