

INTEGRATED COMMUNITIES STRATEGY GREEN PAPER A CONSULTATION RESPONSE FROM HOPE NOT HATE

ABOUT HOPE NOT HATE

HOPE not hate uses research, education and public engagement to challenge mistrust and racism, and helps to build communities that are inclusive, celebrate shared identities and are resilient to hate.

1. INTEGRATED COMMUNITIES

1.1 HOPE not hate welcomes the green paper's move towards a two-way-street definition of integration based on shared rights, responsibilities and opportunities. We particularly appreciate the recognition that integration is more than a duty for newly arrived migrants, but is about whole communities and mutual accommodation.

1.2 However, the paper's extended definition of a well integrated society as, "a society in which everyone is a potential friend" is lacking context. Idealist definitions of integration based on interaction, which are unlikely to be realised, reinforce an idea that naturally, people segregate. Of course, integration needs facilitating, but our society is more cordial than many perceive. Integration in the UK has been an uneven success, but it is important that we celebrate the positives of community relations in modern Britain as well as acting to bridge divides.

1.3 Our research has highlighted a gap between perceptions and realities of integration in Britain. Our most recent YouGov poll of over 5,000 people¹ carried out earlier this year, found that the British public remains pessimistic about the state of multiculturalism and integration, and fears it will get worse. 41% believe that Britain's multicultural society isn't working and different communities generally live separate lives. An astonishing 40% of people thought Enoch Powell's grim predictions of conflict between communities have come to pass, compared to 41% who believe they have not.

1.4 Community relations are not without issues, but this pessimism sits at odds with reality; on the whole people feel happy in their communities, well integrated, and mix well with people of different ethnic backgrounds to themselves. Data from the community life survey² shows that 81% of people feel well integrated into their community. Our poll³ finds that most people have close friends of a different ethnicity to themselves, and almost a third of people say that they or a family member has been in a relationship with someone of a different ethnicity to themselves in the last few years. We should celebrate the successes of Britain's diverse communities, while asking why this optimism is so lacking from the public mood, as well as in political and policy responses to integration.

1.5 Further, the National Conversation on Immigration⁴ has found that integration often frames how immigration is seen. People who have more contact with migrants and people of different ethnic backgrounds to themselves are far more likely to hold favourable views on immigration, but social contact cannot be forced, and is not always possible.

1.6 Anxieties about immigration and multiculturalism are increasingly directed towards Muslims in Britain, and are often expressed through prejudice⁵. Persistent and widespread views that multiculturalism has not worked, that some people are too different to fit in, or that there is a limit to tolerance of diversity act as further barriers to integration.

1.7 A definition of integration based on mutual rights and responsibilities is one welcomed by HOPE not hate. But our research highlights the importance of a definition of an integrated society which is realistic and which recognises the success of community relations in the UK while acknowledging the challenges that need to be overcome.

2. LOCAL RESPONSES TO INTEGRATION

2.1 HOPE not hate's work through the National Conversation on Immigration⁶ has highlighted the importance of the local in informing attitudes to immigration and integration. We welcome the green paper's approach in addressing issues specific to particular places through tailored local plans and interventions. But our research has also shown disconnect between local views and national views on integration. While tailored local plans and interventions are important, these can only be effective alongside a confident national narrative and robust national interventions.

2.2 Concerns about immigration and integration are often seen to be a national issue. Our 2017 Fear and HOPE poll of 5,000 people⁷ found that 76% of people felt their local community was peaceful and friendly, but that on the whole, people were cautious about the success of integration on a national scale. People were more likely to say that Britain's multicultural society isn't working and different communities generally lead separate lives than they were to say that people from different backgrounds generally get on well together.

2.3 At the same time, an increasing amount of people (55% of our 2017 poll⁸ and 60% of our 2018 poll⁹) believe that immigration benefits the country, but do not feel these effects in their own lives. Our 2017 Fear and HOPE poll found that just 13% of people felt immigration had changed their local community for the better compared to 25% who felt immigration had changed their local community for the worse. These views are strongest in areas where there has been little immigration, in overwhelmingly white British areas suffering from economic isolation.

2.4 Our research through the National Conversation on Immigration¹⁰ has highlighted how views on immigration and integration are built by national narratives, but shaped through a local lens that reflects their everyday experience. Often in our conversations, concerns about immigration focussed on specific neighbourhoods which were seen to be in decline. Areas with cheap and poorly-regulated rental accommodation where new communities are likely to move in, and with high population-churn were frequently seen as 'problem-areas'. Overflowing bins, street drinking and groups of young men who "hang around"- usually Roma, migrants working anti-social hours, or asylum seekers unable to work with nothing to do- often added to the sense that integration was not working. This often feeds cultural concerns about immigration, and a sense that people of different backgrounds are 'too different' to get along.

2.5 Getting integration right at a local level is key to resolving community tensions, and building tolerant and cohesive communities. Closer regulation of private rental accommodation, planning public services and ensuring local infrastructure can adapt to and support growing populations, are important to address local integration issues. While these issues are local, effective solutions will require legal enforcement and forward-planning in budgeting from a national level. Dealing with local impacts to better facilitate integration will require commitment to resource and support cross-departmental efforts from central Government.

2.6 Further, addressing these local issues will require central leadership, drive, resourcing and support from central Government. Many of the integration issues named above have been felt all the more acutely as a result of austerity measures. Placing responsibilities on under resourced local authorities, who are not all equally equipped to deal with the issues may result in a more tokenistic approach to social integration. Further, a lack of consistency across local authorities could result in a postcode lottery whereby more deprived areas, and local authorities with fewer resources and more issues, will be unable to cope.

2.7 Getting integration right will require an integrated approach that combines responses to localised issues with addressing the drivers of anxiety at the national level. This will require strong leadership. Tackling the disconnect between local views and national views on integration, as highlighted in our research, demands challenging economic isolation of white communities, a confident national narrative as well as targeted local interventions.

3. GOOD PRACTICE ON INTEGRATION

3.1 HOPE not hate's approach to integration is one that focuses on all communities, not just those which are predominantly migrants and minorities. Facilitating good integration means reaching out to those in overwhelmingly white British communities, too. Our research highlights how economic isolation in white, working class communities, creates fertile ground for extreme far right narratives to take hold. It is important we have real engagement in these communities. Our work in Bradford exemplifies this approach well.

3.2 On June 16th this year, we will be holding our third family fun day in the city centre. The location, in City Park is an important one as it is perhaps the best place in the city where you can observe families of all backgrounds coming together to enjoy the park. It is a symbol of a Bradford more at ease with itself than it is often credited with. City Park shows that integration, albeit on a small scale, is possible if a space for families that is seen to be 'neutral' and non-threatening is available.

3.3 However, we believe that over the years too many 'multicultural' events have been too narrow in focus, have not been really multicultural and have largely called out to the usual suspects, to those groups and individuals who have already bought into an image of a multicultural city. We need to do so much better, we need to provide an opportunity for people from different parts of the city, who might otherwise not have any contact to be able to come together and in time forge new and ongoing friendships. This is the aim of our city centre event. It means that the event, colourful and joyous as it may be, is not the end in itself but rather the culmination of a process of reaching out and building relationships and trust in some of our harder to reach communities.

3.4 Earlier this year for instance, we held a smaller version of the event on Buttershaw Estate in Bradford South. This is what commentators describe as a 'left behind' white working class area that has in the recent past been susceptible to far right extremist explanations. We want families to come to our event in town, but we know that we have to earn trust and credibility for them to feel secure enough to attend. Hundreds attended this event and many of them were pleased to enjoy food cooked for them by Syrian refugees resident in Bradford.

3.5 Schools, community groups, Sikh Temples, the Emergency Services, Youth Services, other council departments and a host of different organisations from right across the district will be coming to City Park for the day. We will celebrate together with food from around the world as well as performances from people of many backgrounds. Many children's groups are involved in this providing an opportunity to bring parents from different backgrounds together. We plan to run many more satellite events in future so that many more of Bradford's communities can not just get involved but can feel a sense of ownership over the event. We will seek to recruit volunteers at these events to help work towards better integration across the city. Our event brings people together and the next stage is to make meaningful and long term friendships out of these contacts.

4. STRENGTHENING LEADERSHIP

4.1 HOPE not hate supports the paper's vision to place the promotion of integration at the heart of all policy and public service delivery, and to build partnerships between national and local government, the faith, voluntary, community and business sectors. We also support the paper's aims to bring in voices which are not always heard in political and policy debates and to ensure leadership is representative of our diverse population.

4.2 However, over a decade of working in communities has shown us that all too often, established community leaders are not best placed to engage with those whose voices are heard less often- such as young people. It is essential that the Government also supports efforts to encourage and support new local leaders to emerge rather than just relying on the same community leaders who might not always be effective or reach the groups in society we most need to engage with.

4.3 We welcome an approach in which the Government will be 'leading by example' to incorporate integration through its policy making and service delivery.

4.4 We feel it is important that responsibility for integration is not completely filtered off onto community leaders, but is also carried and supported by central government. The commitment to celebrating diversity as laid out by May and Javid in the paper's introduction needs to be followed through at every level of leadership. This will also require confident and positive leadership on immigration and integration from political leaders.

5. SUPPORTING NEW MIGRANTS AND RESIDENT COMMUNITIES

5.1 A focus on equipping new migrants and refugees with the information necessary to understand and exercise their rights and responsibilities is welcomed by HOPE not hate. Ensuring the rights of everyone in the UK are upheld is an incredibly necessary element of inclusion, to build stronger, more integrated communities. It is also important that individuals uphold their responsibilities, within the limits of the law.

5.2 However, while the focus on new arrivals is important, this should not detract from the paper's broader definition of integration, in which the rights and responsibilities of all people in the UK, new migrants or otherwise, should be upheld. Integration is about all of us, not just new arrivals.

5.3 Further, the paper stresses the importance of "British values", though what these values are remains vague. Enforcing an adherence to an undefined set of values limits the ability of people to uphold their responsibilities as residents and citizens. However, values are fluid and multi-layered, and what constitutes 'British values' varies from person to person.

5.4 Our 2017 Fear and HOPE poll¹¹ found that while people's nationality remained important to around a third of English people, other factors such as people's neighbourhood or community, or their town or city remained important to people's identity. While it needs to be clear what is meant by British values in order for people to understand these values and their responsibilities in upholding them, we cannot rely on a strict definition. Instead, it may be more fruitful to tap into local or regional values and traditions, as many people identify more with the community around them than a set idea of 'Britishness'.

6. THE CONTROLLING MIGRATION FUND

6.1 The challenges identified in this paper which accompany the pace and scale of change which has hit some communities more than others are very real. Our work with the National Conversation on immigration¹² has highlighted the prevalence of these and their importance in shaping broader public opinion on immigration.

6.2 However, through the National Conversation on immigration, we have also found many local authorities have been wary of applying to the fund- as they want to deal with local impacts but do not feel they can do so while fulfilling the obligation to 'control' migration.

6.3 Further, though the controlling migration fund can target specific issues, it cannot replace key services and in itself, it will be unable to address local pressures. Strains on local authorities and austerity measures mean key services are being cut and cannot cope with growing populations. Rapid migration adds to pre-existing pressures. For example, school places are calculated on resources available and not based on population projections, not accounting for where migration has been rapid. Education policies have been slow to react, and since 2001, Governments have cut back on empty school places in primary schools. Further, the introduction of free schools and academies means local authorities can't build new schools without first seeking proposals for a free school and don't have the authority to tell academies to expand.

6.4 We need a longer-term solution to ensure adequate public infrastructure is planned well for the future, and so that local authorities can adapt to rapid change. This will require high level political commitment and policy change across many different areas, beyond those directly related to immigration. The controlling migration fund will not be able to address local problems in isolation.

7. EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE

7.1 The National Conversation on Immigration has highlighted the positive role of schools in actively promoting diversity and facilitating positive mixing between students and staff across different backgrounds¹³.

7.2 However, school segregation has emerged as an issue, often arising as a result of residential segregation. School exchanges have generally been received very positively, but root causes need addressing.

8. BOOSTING ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS

8.1 HOPE not hate welcomes the promotion of opportunities to learn English. A common language is an essential element of building integrated communities.

8.2 Our work with the National Conversation on immigration has consistently highlighted the need for increasing opportunities for English language provision as well as showing how community tensions increase where there are not sufficient opportunities to share a common language.

8.3 However, our conversations with stakeholders across the country also showed that ESOL provision was under resourced, and that often provision was inadequate to meet skill levels as well as catering for those who work long and anti-social hours or those in need of childcare. ESOL provision has been greatly affected by successive cutbacks to the adult skills budget over the last 8 years. Funding for ESOL classes fell from £203 million in 2010 to £90 million in 2016¹⁴. The proposed new English language fund must more than make up for this loss, if we are to see development in English language acquisition.

8.4 Through the National Conversation, we also heard about good community efforts, including informal language clubs and volunteer run classes. However, the Government should be wary of becoming over reliant on these, not only as they are precarious being volunteer led, but teachers do not always possess necessary time nor skills to adequately further ability of students.

8.5 The Government should take an innovative approach to English language provision, perhaps offering online or app-based classes which offer incentives.

8.6 There is also a role for employers of migrants to assist their integration through offering English language support and assistance. This is particularly relevant for employers of large numbers of migrant workers who are often housed on-site and thus isolated from the wider community.

9. PLACES AND COMMUNITY

9.1 The green paper's approach to increase opportunities for people of different backgrounds to come together and play a part in civic life is welcomed.

9.2 However, the realities of this need to be looked at in more detail, as the approach moves away from the paper's two-way street approach to integration and instead places the responsibility for residential segregation on migrant and ethnic minorities.

9.3 The paper states that "*ethnic minority communities are increasing in concentration with growing isolation from White British communities*", which overlooks the fact that White British people are most likely to live in ethnically homogenous communities, and that white Britons are the least likely ethnic group¹⁵ to take up opportunities to mix socially with those from a different ethnicity to themselves. Further, a 2016 Open Democracy report¹⁶ found that while many areas have become more diverse, the white British minority have become increasingly isolated from minorities in urban areas, a rapidly increasing trend.

9.4 This paper's original definition of integrated communities is one where people of all backgrounds live, work, learn and socialise together, based on shared rights, responsibilities and opportunities. Challenging residential segregation demands more than targeting areas where there are large proportions of migrants and ethnic minorities. It should also be acknowledged that often, these areas are diverse.

9.5 Challenging residential segregation also demands addressing root causes. Residential segregation often results from economic inequality, and is fuelled by a lack of affordable and mixed-tenure housing. We welcome the paper's aims to support economically disadvantaged areas, and to frontline integration into housing and planning. We hope to see this enforced through tighter legislation and funding commitments from central government.

9.6 We also support the paper in highlighting the importance of shared community spaces. However, to "*challenge libraries and other community hubs to maximise their contribution to building integrated communities*" feels a little short-sighted. It overlooks the fact that hundreds of the UK's libraries and community centres have closed at the mercy of austerity cuts- disproportionately those in disadvantaged areas where integration concerns are most acute¹⁷. Integration issues are most often a result of socioeconomic inequality, which no depleted local authority will be able to counter in this climate.

10. INCREASING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

10.1 Economic opportunities are essential for thriving communities, and we support the paper's suggestions for improving economic opportunity.

10.2 However, integration is not just about minorities and migrants, it is a socioeconomic issue which affects everyone. Solutions need to address broad economic inequalities across the UK, as well as tackling barriers such as discrimination which holds BME individuals from finding work that meets their skills and abilities.

10.3 We particularly welcome the paper's aims to equalise opportunity across the country. Our research has consistently shown links between economic pessimism and hostile attitudes towards others which pose further barriers to an integrated society.

10.4 A sense of dissatisfaction with peoples' own lives often translates into resentment of others, but attitudes are flexible and change with external conditions. Our fear and HOPE polls have tracked growing liberalism where there is access to opportunities, and a drift towards hostility where there is declining living standards, joblessness, casualisation of labour, and public sector cuts¹⁸.

10.5 Through the National Conversation on immigration¹⁹, we've heard a lot of unease about immigration and integration, but people do not always take about immigration, they tell you about their lives. From these conversations, the links between economic decline and resentment to an increasingly diverse country are clear. Changing economic models- which focus on cities, leaving areas that were once hubs of industry dependent on precarious low skilled work –twinned with rapid migration has led to a feeling of lost identity, of lost hope.

10.6 Recently we developed a heatmap, mapping our six Fear and HOPE tribes onto small geographic areas of around 300 houses. This allows us to see national trends, to understand how the environment influences attitudes and look in greater detail at the drivers of hostility. It is perhaps no surprise that hostility is concentrated in areas where there is little opportunity, predominantly towns which have seen major decline and post-industrial areas. Conversely, the most liberal views are concentrated in cities, in middle class areas nearby universities, areas with a wealth of opportunity.

10.7 We welcome the paper's drive for 'place transformation', though we recommend that this looks beyond devolution models such as city-mayor regions which reassert a model of economic development based on core-cities. Towns and rural areas suffering from ageing populations are among the most impacted by economic isolation, and will only suffer further under city-centric economic modelling.

10.8 If economics continue to be a central driver of negative attitudes towards others, no amount of alternative narratives, community work to build resilience or integration initiatives will be able to counter the tensions and fears exposed in our polling unless we also take economic equality seriously.

11. RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

11.1 As an organisation committed to challenging hate and building communities, we welcome the government's aims in promoting and protecting equal rights and freedoms. We especially welcome the recognition of far right extremism as well as broader attitudes and practices a barrier to integrated communities.

11.2 The paper explicitly mentions both Islamist and far-right extremists pushing an agenda which asserts that being Muslim is incompatible with British values and our way of life. We wish to highlight how widely this view is held. In our most recent YouGov poll of over 5,000 people conducted in January 2018, just 33% of people felt that Islam and British culture were generally compatible, compared to 37% who felt they were not²⁰. The paper's responses in supporting faith communities are welcome, but clearly more needs to be done to address anti-Muslim prejudice, which extends beyond a minority of extremists.

11.3 We believe that the Government could do more to address anti-Muslim prejudice, not only through initiatives to tackle extremism, but through its broader approach. A dominant narrative that conflates a failure of integration with violent extremism threads through the Government's current approach, including the new Commission for Countering Extremism. By conflating asserting British values over religiously and culturally conservative values with challenging extremism and terrorism, it is mixing two

quite different issues. By focusing almost exclusively on the dangers of Islam it risks alienating the Muslim community whilst simultaneously reinforcing the widely held public view that Islam is incompatible with a British way of life.

11.4 Further, the paper makes recommendations for the promotions of shared values and practices, but these are undefined and unclear.

11.5 At the same time, the paper aims to challenge undefined “influences from overseas”. It is unclear how this protects rights and freedoms. The paper is right to assert that some cultural norms and values can be damaging to individual freedoms. But keeping this unclear and open to interpretation risks asserting an assumption that some cultures are incompatible with the dominant.

11.6 We welcome the paper’s drive to eradicate hate crime, and to challenge hate on the internet. We appreciate the efforts being made to challenge online hate which is often the gateway to extreme attitudes and behaviours that limit rights and freedoms. However, there is room to do more, and we need greater efforts to tackle the mainstreaming of anti-immigrant and especially anti-Muslim prejudice which (low-level) has been normalised.

11.7 One route we would like to see the government take would be greater regulation to ensure social media companies take greater responsibility for the content they host, and that content which meets the threshold of hate criminality is swiftly removed. While hate speech and hate content are challenged, it is often not dealt with quickly enough, and remains exposed on social media channels for long enough to hold influence. Further, the Government should consider action on hate content which does not meet the threshold for criminality. We would recommend movement towards a model whereby social media companies are held accountable for the content they host.

11.8 Our work challenging hate in communities means we engage closely across different faith organisations. The strength in faith organisations built on their membership and as community spaces make them assets in bringing people together. It is encouraging that the Government has recognised the importance of faith organisations and institutions, and is committing to supporting faith organisations working independently or together.

11.9 However, we feel that more could be done so that faith organisations are not working in a silo, to ensure positive community actions have the greatest possible reach. We support the Government’s efforts through Faith Forums for London, and the Near Neighbours programme, both of these initiatives do fantastic work in diverse urban areas. However, these are areas where people are already likely to mix well with people of different ethnicities and backgrounds. We need to do more to connect people who are less likely to interact with people who are different to themselves.

11.10 Further, social action should cross faith lines. While interfaith work is important, it assumes faith. We also need to make efforts to connect with people of no faith, and to invest in intrafaith work.

11.11 It is also important to find more innovative ways to engage with existing faith infrastructure. Mosques, Churches, Synagogues and Gurdwaras all offer community spaces which are more than places of worship. Using these spaces as nurseries and after-school clubs, places for hosting inclusive events, all help to open up institutions to the wider community, and forge connections.

11.12 Further, while the paper pledges Government support for and joint-working with faith leaders, it is important that this is done in such a way that these efforts expand beyond ‘the usual suspects’ and filter down to congregants.

11.13 Support for women and girls should be welcomed, however, too often it is minorities- specifically Muslim women- who are framed as the problem, or as helpless victims. Political and policy discourse which asserts this position reaffirms a perception that Islam and British culture are fundamentally incompatible, which as our research highlights is a widely held belief²¹.

11.14 Systematic disadvantage and misogynistic cultural norms all serve barriers to integration, but it is unfair to pretend that integration ‘failures’ weigh so heavily on Muslim- especially Pakistani/Bangladeshi- women.

11.15 Inaccurately claiming ‘most’ of those in the UK who do not speak English are Muslim women only serves to reaffirm islamophobic bias that it is Muslim women who need ‘saving’. Further, the greatest uptake of ESOL classes has consistently been by women. An Association of Colleges survey²² found that of 187,00 ESOL students in England, 128,000 were women.

11.16 The Casey review was right to highlight the impact harmful attitudes and behaviours can have in limiting the abilities of everyone to participate in society equally, and especially the impact of these on women and girls. Too often, the progressive world shies away from addressing these issues in order to protect further scrutiny of marginalised communities. However, we need to ensure harmful attitudes and behaviours are addressed in all communities. Domestic violence, for example, affects all communities. The recent pay gap audit highlighted that women across all communities in Britain are held back from opportunities afforded to their male peers.

NOTES:

- 1 Carter. R and Lowles. N (2018) Britain Divided? Rivers of Blood Fifty years On, available <https://www.hopenothate.org.uk/research/rivers-of-blood/>
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- 3 Carter. R and Lowles. N (2018) Britain Divided? Rivers of Blood Fifty years On, available <https://www.hopenothate.org.uk/research/rivers-of-blood/>
- 4 Rutter, J. And Carter, R. (2018) National Conversation on Immigration: an interim report to the Home Affairs Committee, available <http://nationalconversation.uk/interim-report/> London: British Future and HOPE not hate
- 5 Carter. R and Lowles. N (2017) Fear and Hope 2017: Race, Faith and Belonging in Today's England, London: HOPE not hate
- 6 Rutter, J. And Carter, R. (2018) National Conversation on Immigration: Immigration and Integration: Getting it Right Locally, London: British Future and HOPE not hate
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- 15 The Challenge (2016) British Integration Survey, 2016, available <https://the-challenge.org/uploads/documents/TCN-British-Integration-Study.pdf>
- 16 Cantle. T and Kaufmann. E (2016) Is segregation on the increase in the UK? Open Democracy, available <https://www.opendemocracy.net/wfd/ted-cantle-and-eric-kaufmann/is-segregation-on-increase-in-uk>
- 17 Public Libraries News (2018) List of Withdrawn libraries, available <http://www.publiclibrariesnews.com/about-public-libraries-news/news-topics>
- 18 Carter. R and Lowles. N (2017) Fear and Hope 2017: Race, Faith and Belonging in Today's England, London: HOPE not hate; Ford. R and Lowles. N (2016) Fear and Hope 2016: Race, Faith and Belonging in Today's England, London: HOPE not hate; Painter. A and Lowles. N (2011) Ford. R and Lowles. N (2016) Fear and Hope 2011: Race, Faith and Belonging in Today's England, London: HOPE not hate
- 19 Rutter, J. And Carter, R. (2018) National Conversation on Immigration: an interim report to the Home Affairs Committee, available <http://nationalconversation.uk/interim-report/> London: British Future and HOPE not hate
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- 22 BBC News (2011) Women most affected by English language funding cuts, available <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-13412811>