EURO
CITIES

Draft ⁄ THE ROLE OF CULTURAL POLICY IN PROMOTING DIVERSITY AND BUILDING COHESIVE COMMUNITIES

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1.   OVERVIEW

This paper considers the contribution of cultural policy to promoting cultural diversity and building cohesive and inclusive communities, in support of the aims of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008.

Culture expresses who we are and how we live our lives. It has roots in tradition and finds expression in language, food, dress, music, sport and the arts, as well as in beliefs and values.
Culture is also dynamic, changing and evolving, reflecting the diverse peoples who make up our towns and cities. It is the social 'cement' which binds communities together.

This paper sets out the case that City authorities, through <u>cultural strategies</u>, are uniquely placed to promote harmony and understanding contributing to cohesive communities. This is achieved by pursuing policies which encourage the expression of cultural identity; develop a sense of place and belonging; enable people to better understand different cultures so helping to dispel the myths that exist; tackle racist behaviour and intolerance; promote social inclusion but, above all, by developing strategies which encourage interaction and integration and shared values. This will be shown through examples of good practice drawn from the member Cities of the Eurocities Culture Forum.

2.   EUROPEAN YEAR OF INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

The European Year of Intercultural Dialogue seeks to raise the profile of intercultural dialogue and to increase its visibility. Its essential message is to "alert all the people – and particularly young people - living in the European Union to the fact that dialogue represents the prerequisite for living in, and benefiting from, an increasingly multicultural environment" (1)

The Eurocities Culture Forum's contribution to the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue supports the overall Eurocities preparations as part of its work programme, with a major theme for Eurocities for 2007 being Demographic Change and Inclusion. Demographic change, including the central theme of migration, is a major issue for the European Union in a globalising world. A key factor contributing to cohesion and inclusion is the cultural life of the city. "Equal access for all to a wide variety of cultural activities, plays a crucial role in social cohesion by giving the opportunity to all to identify with the activities of their community." (2)

Demographic Change and Inclusion have significant implications for the other Eurocities themes for 2007, namely Integrated Urban Development and Economic Growth and Sustainable Development which are concerned to promote the attractiveness and accessibility of cities, including through culture, and to promote a sustainable environment for existing and future generations to enjoy.   Above all they seek to improve the quality of life for people from all cultures, racial backgrounds and religions.

We live in a changed and rapidly changing world. "The Enlargement of the Economic Union, coupled with increasing mobility linked to the Common market, new and old migratory flows, the new trade ties with the rest of the world, the education, leisure and globalisation in general, have led to increased contacts between cultures, religions, ethnic groups and languages". (3)

Migration is, of course, not a new phenomenon, as each country's history over the centuries shows. However, the scale of migratory flows in the 21st Century is now a major feature of international life. Some 491 million people now live outside their country of origin, which is an increase of about 36 million since 1990. (4) Of these, 416 million people moved to wealthier countries, with 75 million moving from one developing country to another. In some countries, for example the Phillipines and Serbia and Montenegro, money sent home from abroad, accounts for a large proportion of national income.

Thirty four per cent of all migrants in 2005 were hosted by Europe. In the United Kingdom, for example, the number of foreign nationals working in the country topped 1.5 million in that year. Government figures show that an estimated 565,000 people arrived to live in the United Kingdom in 2005 and 380,000 left to live in other countries including Australia, Spain and France.
The net inflow into the United Kingdom in 2005 meant that the population grew by 500 people a day. (5) This continued the trend of high immigration that began in the late 1990s and which was accentuated following the enlargement of the European Union in 2004, with the arrival of numbers of foreign national workers from the Eastern European Accession countries. Germany has admitted 500,000 Eastern European workers.

Spain's Canary islands have seen an influx of African migrants, seeking to make their living in mainland Europe. There were some 30,000 illegal immigrant arrivals there in 2006, half of these from Senegal, and several hundred more people lost their lives whilst attempting to make the perilous sea journey. (6)

As global instability, war and political repression continues, asylum is also likely to remain a key issue. Asylum applications across Europe, in 2002, ranged from around 100,000 to the United Kingdom, 70,000 to Germany, 58,000 to France and 8,000 to Spain. The total number of applications for the whole of Europe was 430,000. (7)

The presence of many workers from foreign countries and their families has greatly increased the religious diversity of host countries, with representation of faiths that were previously barely evident. This is especially the case with Islam. In France for example, 77%

of the population are Roman Catholic, 2% Protestant, 7.5% Muslim, and 1% are Jewish. (8) In Britain, the 2001 Population Census shows that there are 41 million Christians, (71.6%), 1.6 million Muslims (2.7%), 558,000 Hindus (1%), 333,000 Sikhs, 267,000 Jews and 152,000 Buddhists.

(9) About 67% of the German population, more than 55 million people, belong to a Christian

Church, fairly evenly split between Protestant and Roman Catholic. Approximately 3 million Muslims from 41 nations live in Germany, most of them from Turkey. The Jewish community in Germany numbers nearly 100,000 people. (10)

3.   BUILDING HARMONY AND UNDERSTANDING LEADING TO COMMUNITY COHESION

Against this complex background of migration, promoting harmony and understanding between peoples of different cultures, racial backgrounds, religions and traditions and the contribution this makes to both economic and social stability, which we describe as 'community cohesion', is a major issue. Regrettably, separateness and divisiveness, features throughout the history of migration, appear to have become more entrenched. 'Community cohesion' is also undermined by the disadvantage, discrimination and disaffection experienced by minority communities.

The definition of 'community cohesion' adopted in Guidance issued by the British Government and others, (11), is that a cohesive community is one where:

- There is a common vision and sense of belonging for all communities;
- The diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued;
- Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities;   and
- Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

4. THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT

This paper will begin by taking a candid look at attitudes to race and cultural minorities within some European Countries since the second world war when countries looked to supplement their labour force to regenerate their economies.

Britain looked to its colonies and ex-colonies and was in a different position to other European Countries, in that immigrants from the New Commonwealth were settlers not guest workers – they were British citizens with an absolute right to settle in the UK. However, by the early 1950's, the
ideology that 'too many' black immigrants were a potential 'problem' had become institutionalised.

In 1962, the British Government passed the first Act to control black immigration – the Commonwealth Immigrants Act, the first of many such pieces of legislation.

British policy towards immigrants settling here has seen a number of laws passed making racism illegal and the promotion of multiculturalism based on the premise that a diverse range of cultures and identities are welcomed and valued within British society.

Most other industrialised European States introduced guest worker systems. A Government Department, such as the French Office National D'Immigration, the ONI, and the German Bundesaushalt fur Arbeit, BfA, recruited the workers on behalf of employers.

In the immediate post-war period, the first workers to arrive in large numbers in France were Algerians. Algeria was of course the colony most closely linked to France both close geographically and with a large French settler population.

From 1946 onwards, France's National Office of Immigration entered into agreements with sending countries but this tended to slow down the supply of workers and many employers continued to recruit clandestine labour who were also cheaper to employ.

Immigration was a central political issue in France throughout the 1970's culminating in 1980 in the 'Bonnet' law under which deportations took place. These were curbed following a change of Government in 1981. The accepted ideology had been that 'clandestines' were a key destabilising factor in French Society.

France has tended towards a policy of assimilation with little differentiation between incomers and the host population in French Law. The assumption being that immigrants will have little opportunity for the preservation of their own cultural background and that they will become bonded to French society. This approach was highlighted most recently with the banning of headscarves being worn by Muslim young girls at school and in other public buildings.

Germany had what it called Auslandergesetz – foreigner's law. Those who wanted to enter the Country needed to obtain a residence permit and, if they wished to work, a work permit before entry. Germany's guest worker scheme regarded immigrants as simply temporary workers who would retain their own identity and nationality and return home. West Germany took refugees from Eastern Europe, (1945 – 1962), and then looked to the Mediterranean with recruitment offices in Italy, Greece, Yugoslavia and Turkey, followed by North Africa in the early 1960's, (1955 – 1973). Guest worker schemes like Germany's were not sustainable as over time the host country became home for immigrant families and particularly their children born there.

'Foreigners' may apply for German citizenship if they have been living permanently in Germany for at least 10 years but subject to many conditions, including the need to show that they are committed to Germany and German culture and that they have integrated themselves into German society. Since 1973, non-residents of the European Community have, with a few limited exceptions, not been allowed to enter Germany to work.

In Switzerland, there is a residence requirement of twelve years before citizenship is considered and local committees judge whether applicants are 'Swiss' enough. Switzerland has the highest proportion of foreign residents in Europe, comprising 1.5 million people out of a total population of 7 million. (12)

5) 'PARALLEL LIVES' AND LACK OF CROSS CULTURAL CONTACT

As with earlier civil unrest in Britain, racism fuelled by the extreme right, was a key feature of the disturbances that took place in the Northern Cities of Bradford, Burnley and Oldham in 2001 involving mainly young people. But 2001 was also different from previous riots. What came out of the subsequent enquiries was that, although on this occasion it was largely Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslims targeted by white racists in a similar way to the black community in previous riots, the major reason for the riots was that they were the product,

over many years, of "lack of any meaningful contact between white and Asian Communities and the absence of any real stake in their local communities". (13)

The Independent Review, found that, "Whilst the physical segregation of housing estates and inner city areas came as no surprise, the team was particularly struck by the depth of polarisation of our towns and cities. The extent to which these physical divisions were compounded by so many other aspects of our daily lives, was very evident. Separate educational arrangements, community and voluntary bodies, employment, places of worship, language, social and cultural networks, mean that many communities operate on the basis of a series of parallel lives." (14)

This paper will argue that the lack of cross cultural contact and 'parallel lives' exists whatever model of Immigration countries have adopted. 'Parallel lives' is inherent in the 'guest worker' systems operated in countries like Germany, Austria and Switzerland. But it is also a feature of Britain's multiculturalism and France's assimilation approach.

The independent review of the riots in British Northern Cities, found that the extent to which communities were living 'parallel lives' was almost total. "These lives often do not seem to touch at any point, let alone overlap and promote any meaningful exchanges". (15)

These riots were also triggered by disadvantage, discrimination and disaffection.

These factors also exist in other European countries, for example in France. In Clichy-sous-Bois, a small town in the north-eastern outskirts of Paris, segregation has occurred through 'white flight' and the authorities grouping all foreigners together. The people of the outskirts are "packed into overcrowded, decaying high-rise blocks covered in graffiti; up to half of them unemployed and living on state handouts; nothing to do all day except watch television, or kick a football around in the yard; or do drugs; cut off by poor public transport and poverty". (16)

Clichy-sous-Bois is the town where two young boys died in the town's electricity plants while trying to avoid the police, which sparked off three weeks of rioting in November 2005. "The world's TV screens and newspapers were filled with images of french suburbs in flames, 10,000 burnt out cars, and police fighting hand to hand, street to street, with disaffected young people". (17)

Opinion now seems to suggest that, over the years, successive Governments across Europe failed to build in the need to integrate immigrants into society including providing information for the host community to contribute to harmony and understanding.This is a massive task but one that is essential to creating harmony and 'community cohesion'. Such an approach still needs to take into account the endemic nature of racism in societies.

The 'fear of difference' is most recently evidenced in the development of Islamophobia, provoked by political events and reporting in the media, in the wake of September 11 and other terrorist attacks in Madrid and London.

6. LACK OF CROSS CULTURAL CONTACT FUELLED BY RACISM AND THE EMBODIMENT OF MYTHS

A truly multi-cultural society would be one where all cultures interact, with all groups in society respecting and valuing cultural diversity.

In Europe, we are in theory multi-racial societies but in reality we are racist societies, with intolerance breeding nationalism and exploitation and in some cases inter-racial or inter-religious feuding.

How can better relations be built between communities?   How can we improve a social situation which is fuelled by centuries of racism and the embodiment of myths most notably in relation to anti-semitism and increasingly Islamaphobia?

"Our identities and perceptions of others' identities are dynamic, constantly changing, responding to individual and societal events and developments. For example, the awareness of the Muslim faith and the subsequent development of Islamaphobia in the Western World after September 11, has nothing to do with a 'natural' instinct based on religious differences, and can only be explained by new fears and prejudices provoked by political events and the response to them in the mass media." (18)

Following the Madrid bombings, there has been a growing incidence of Islamaphobia in Spain. Around 800,000 Muslims live in Spain, with the majority originating from Northern Africa, notably Morocco, with major settlements of workers taking place in the 1980s and 1990s. A number of attacks on mosques and other Muslim targets have taken place, with police reports stating that extreme rightwingers and skinhead groups have been responsible for almost all of the attacks.

In France, the continued presence of racism is clearly demonstrated by the fact that Jean-Marie Le Pen, leader of the far-right Front National, got through to the second round of the 2002 presidential elections and political parties of the right have secured significant support in many French and Dutch cities.

In Britain, the murder of Stephen Lawrence, a young black youth, on the streets of London, in 1993 was, "simply and unequivocally motivated by racism". (19) The unanimous verdict of the inquest jury was that "Stephen Lawrence was unlawfully killed in a completely unprovoked racist attack by five white youths". (20) No one has been convicted of this awful crime. A more recent case was the murder of Anthony Walker in Liverpool. The young black athlete who dreamed of becoming a lawyer was murdered in July 2005 with an ice-axe by two white young men who were subsequently jailed for life.

Hate crimes and xenophobic violence persist across Europe for example there were nearly 13,000 such crimes in Germany in 2002, 3,500 prosecutions in Sweden and 7,300 in the United Kingdom. (21)

Events have shown how nationalism and cultural intolerance have led to war, brutal acts against minority communities and economic and social instability. Sudan, Rwanda and Bosnia are testaments to the lack of willingness to co-exist, the absence of ethnic tolerance and dismissal of multicultural civilisation. The war in Iraq has also resulted in a series of incidents across Europe linked to Islamic Fundamentalism and encouraged a "fear of difference".

7.   THE ROLE OF CULTURAL POLICY IN BUILDING - BRIDGING SOCIAL CAPITAL AND AN UNDERSTANDING OF DIVERSITY

To meet the challenges set out in this paper and to address the overarching aim of building harmony and understanding contributing to cohesive communities, the major aims of cultural policy should be:

(a) to promote cultural diversity through cross cultural contacts;

(b) to tackle racism and extremism and;

(c) to tackle social exclusion and as part of this promote citizenship, identity and belonging for all citizens.

To achieve the above, this paper will consider each aim in more detail, but firstly there are two stages that need to be addressed and understood.

The first of these is to build social capital by encouraging participation in cultural activities by people from varying communities, many living in disadvantage. Building social capital is inherent in much of the outreach working that takes place with all age groups. It is also crucial to work in partnership with schools to develop and sustain the interest of children and young people. It also needs to be noted that people often engage in sport, arts and cultural activities just because they enjoy them. These activities can have an impact on connecting people to one another and thereby create what is termed 'bonding social capital'.

The second stage is to consider how do we get people from varying communities to participate together in cultural activities through building 'bridging social capital'. As Robert Putnam, author of 'Bowling Alone' , (22), points out, " bridging social capital is harder to create than bonding social capital, but it is especially important with the increasing social diversity of our communities. Arts and sport are very prominent domains for building bridging social capital. A particular important quality is that they are non verbal so they can often allow people to begin on a more level playing field." (23)

Participation is important, through for example people working together and creating and performing a production. Being a spectator has fewer benefits but, "nevertheless provides a commonality which provides a topic of conversation and a reason to start one between people who are otherwise strangers." (24)

Bridging social capital therefore can be built through attendance at events which bring together people from different communities with a deeper building process taking place through people jointly participating in cultural activities.

This represents a considerable task because of the general decline in civic engagement and social capital that has taken place in societies, as illustrated by Robert Putnam, (25) , and particularly in relation to engaging younger people. Putnam found that the effect of electronic entertainment, primarily television and computer games is promoting more individual pursuits and accounts for about 25 per cent of the decline. The main reason for the decline in engagement, however, is generational change with "the slow, steady and ineluctable replacement of the long civic generation by their less involved children and grandchildren" (26). This has been a powerful factor accounting for possibly over half of the decline.

Culture has an important role to play in bringing people together and promoting identity, belonging and citizenship. Guidance on community cohesion issued by the British Government and others states that, "Art, sport and leisure services can be a powerful tool to engage all sections of the community and to break down barriers that exist between them. People take part in leisure and cultural activities through choice and marginalised groups are often more willing to engage with such activities than other locally/nationally government funded activities. It can provide personal and community development through different avenues and the personal space to express and share experiences. The sector is also one of the fastest growing areas of the economy and therefore provides job opportunities." (27)

8.   TACKLING THE PROMOTION OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY THROUGH CROSS CULTURAL CONTACTS

City authorities can help to promote cultural diversity and cross cultural contacts in a number of ways, both through direct service provision in the areas of cultural services such as museums, libraries, arts and entertainment, sports and leisure and through grant aiding and supporting voluntary sector groups and organisations in delivering services.

Some examples include:

- A programme of <u>public events</u> highlighting the diversity of the communities we serve and bringing different communities together. A good example of this is the Carnival of Cultures in Berlin which attracted around 1.3 million visitors in 2006. Events held throughout the year across the City of Nottingham which raise awareness include Mela, Pride, the Caribbean Carnival, Diwali and the South Asian Arts Festival. The 'One City, One World' festival, which is launched in Nottingham's Market Square, brought together a wide range of performances from over 30 local groups and was attended by 25,000 people over the May Festival Weekend and this Festival seeks to integrate a wide range of events and promote cross community activity.

- Promoting '<u>Positive Images</u>' – many Cities involve children and young people from all communities in annual programmes of arts based activities in support of events celebrating cultural heritage, with Black History Month in October, Chinese New Year events in January and February and Refugee and Asylum Seeker week in June.

- Youth <u>Exchange Programmes</u> to enable young people to travel abroad and experience other people's cultures, gaining a greater understanding in the process. The Cities of Stockholm and Dusseldorf have organised such exchanges through the Culture Forum.

- <u>Music</u> in vogue is very important to young people and cultural diversity can be promoted through workshops and concerts featuring music which crosses cultural divides. The Cities of Berlin and Munich have schemes linked to classical music. Other Cities use Hip Hop and popular music to bring young people together.

- Celebration of cultural diversity through <u>museum and art exhibitions</u> which explore traditions, identity and contemporary issues.

- On-going support and <u>funding for groups</u> and organisations which promote multi-cultural   Arts and Events which bring communities together.

- Seeking to ensure a <u>representative workforce</u> of the different communities served at all levels of the organisation – City authorities are major employers and the main focus of local communities, affecting everyone who lives or works in their area. Representation of members of black and minority ethnic communities within the workforce at all levels contributes to cross cultural contact and understanding.

9. <u>TACKLING RACISM AND EXTREMISM</u>

Racism is so deeply ingrained in societies that City authorities should also seek to provide or support <u>anti-racist initiatives</u>, examples of which include:

- <u>Monitoring</u> users and non-users of cultural services and identifying the extent to which racism and perceived cultural barriers play a part in the take up of these services by members of ethnic minority communities.

- With funding from the Commission for Racial Equality, Nottingham's Sport and Leisure Centres are putting together a marketing campaign <u>role modelling</u> members of Black and Minority Ethnic Communities taking part in different sports using photographs of local people and local venues. The campaign aims to increase access and usage by Black and Minority Ethnic Communities to tackle health inequalities and to contribute to reducing racism in sport.

- <u>Drama</u> can be really powerful in exploring attitudes and prejudices 'Kick racism out of football' programmes use drama to work with the football supporters and tackle the sort of racist behaviour which has been apparent in recent Euro 2008 matches in Eastern Europe.

- <u>Mentoring</u> projects – 'Build', a black mentoring project based in the heart of Nottingham's Inner City in Radford undertook racial equality training of young white people in a town in North Nottinghamshire.

- Providing valuing <u>cultural diversity training</u> for employees of City authorities – this is particularly important for staff on the 'front-line' with direct contact with customers so they understand and respect cultural traditions.

10. <u>TACKLING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES</u>

The Cultural Sector has a key role to play in <u>connecting people to learning, training and work</u>. The rapidly growing creative, leisure and tourism industries provide economic benefits, both to communities, with increased employment opportunities and to individuals, by equipping them with transferable skills. Experience in these industries can help to develop the social, organisational and marketable skills, which, in the ever changing employment market, people increasingly require.

- Nottingham City Council uses a number of ways to <u>improve recruitment</u> of Black and Minority Communities and disadvantaged groups as part of its 'Local Jobs for Local People' campaign to ensure that the workforce is representative of the communities served and to reduce levels of worklessness in the City, particularly in the most deprived areas. This is being achieved through pre-employment training courses for long-term unemployed people, the use of community based advertising and local Job Fairs. The Libraries and Information.

Service identified the need to have a more diverse workforce and has successfully held open days in local Libraries and advertised posts in local Black and Minority Ethnic Community venues.

- Nottingham is also using <u>trainee posts</u> to tackle under-representation of Black and Minority Ethnic Community staff in the Museums and Galleries Service.

- <u>Work experience</u> for young black and other ethnic minority people in arrangement with Schools and Colleges. The 'Tap the Gap' work experience scheme offers 16 year old

- Black and Minority Ethnic school students the opportunity to undertake 4 weeks employment with Nottingham City Council during the Summer holidays. A range of opportunities including sports development work, working in a Library, theatre work experience and work in the Museums and Galleries Service are made available. Eighty two Black and Minority Ethnic school students have taken part in the scheme since 2002 and nine young people have subsequently achieved employment with the City Council.

- City authorities need to consider ways of increasing <u>senior representation</u> throughout the authority, in areas where black and other ethnic minority groups are under represented, which could include mentoring, career development, secondment opportunities and management development and to set specific equality targets at management level.

- Measures to encourage <u>retention of ethnic minority staff</u> including ensuring that training development opportunities are open to all staff, using ethnic data to monitor the number of staff leaving the City authority and their reasons for leaving, establishing networks and support groups for ethnic minority staff for example self-help groups and mentoring schemes, allowing flexibility in staff leave requirements in recognition of religious and cultural needs.

11.   <u>TACKLING SOCIAL EXCLUSION INCLUDING THE PROMOTION OF CITIZENSHIP, IDENTITY AND BELONGING</u>

A characteristic of the street riots that have taken place across many parts of Europe has been the high degree of <u>social exclusion</u> experienced by many young people, from both white and Black and Minority Ethnic communities, living in the Inner City areas where the disturbances took place. The areas have been characterised by high unemployment, widespread deprivation and lack of opportunity.

The racial discrimination and disadvantage suffered by Black and other ethnic minority young people is apparent, in particular, in the education system, in levels of youth unemployment, homelessness and in the criminal justice system.

In Britain, for example, the proportions of Black African and Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi children who achieve good exam results at the end of the formal education system, at age 16, are at least ten per cent lower than the national average. Among those of Black Caribbean origin, almost one in ten are unemployed compared to less than one in twenty five among the population as a whole. (28) In many Cities, there continues to be very low levels of representation of members of Black and Minority Ethnic Communities in key institutions such as City governments, school teaching and the criminal justice system.

From an economic standpoint, eradication of conditions which produce poverty and racism, must be a priority, if such areas are to be attractive to long-term investment and provide a

boost to the economy at both a micro and macro level. Prevention of the conditions that cause civil disturbances makes obvious economic sense.

It also makes sense from a social standpoint to tackle barriers to the development of harmony and understanding between communities. Tensions created through people living in disadvantaged communities, and these are not necessarily linked to racism, include the perception of incomers as being competitors for scarce resources such as housing and for lower level jobs in the employment market.

The current British Government established a Social Exclusion Unit to develop integrated and sustainable approaches to the problems of the worst housing estates, including crime, drugs, unemployment, community breakdown, and bad schools etc. which led to the Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal. 'A New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal' was produced in 2001, with the overarching principle that within 10 to 20 years no-one should be seriously disadvantaged by where they live. The vision is one of cohesive communities – places that people are proud of and where anti-social behaviour and disrespect for people and the local environment is no longer tolerated.

Delivery of this commitment is through local Community Plans developed by Local Strategic Partnerships with membership from public, private, community and voluntary sectors. The 'One Nottingham' Plan includes a number of actions to tackle social exclusion and promote regeneration through cultural services.

Examples of how cultural services promote social inclusion including the promotion of citizenship, identity and belonging include:

- Providing support for the development of <u>English Language skills</u> by Refugees and Asylum Seekers through a weekly conversation class run by the Libraries and Information Service at Nottingham's Central Library, as part of the Building Bridges project.

- 'Moving Minds' brought together museums and galleries from Bradford, Leeds and Manchester with communities and artists to create work that reflects their <u>ideas on religion, culture and identity</u>. Community groups used the collections of the participant museums to stimulate discussion about their lives today and in the past. Themes for exploration ranged from leaving home, songs, dance and storytelling, cooking and food, prejudice and belief, danger and safety, environment and architecture.

- Operation Noah, a community run multi-faith project involving 8 to 14 year olds from Jewish, Christian and Muslim communities across the City is supported by Nottingham City Council's Nature Conservation Service. The project focuses on <u>caring for the environment</u> which is a common theme running through all three of these religions.

- The Threads Gallery at Nottingham Castle Museum and Art Gallery, which opened in July 2004, contains a diverse selection of artefacts from other Countries; Africa, Afghanistan, China, Egypt, India, Japan, Morocco, Poland and one of Nottingham's twin cities, Minsk.
  The Gallery continues to be developed <u>working with diverse communities</u> who assist in collecting items for purchase or loan which reflect their cultural heritage. Since 2004, work has taken place with the Polish community, the Bosnian Group and the Asian Women's Group.

- <u>Media</u> is a powerful way of engaging children and young people with heritage of all kinds. 'Wordz Out' is a series of short films made by a group of African Caribbean 16 to 21 year olds from across Nottingham, working with story teller and poet Panyo Banjoko and film maker Jes Hill. The films explore aspirations, racism, inspiration and the all too familiar stereotypes that go with being young and black.

- Race equality issues need to be integrated into <u>mainstream service planning</u>, service delivery and service reviews. The 'Equality Standard' for City Authorities in England,

- launched in 2001, sets out six levels of achievement, which provide the benchmark against which progress can be judged. Nottingham is currently working to achieve Level 4. Key to effective service delivery is consultation with communities and this is built into the Equality Standard.

- City authorities can also use their <u>purchasing power</u> from outside suppliers to promote equalities. By only dealing with businesses with good equality practices, contractors can be encouraged to improve equalities.

- A further way of promoting racial equality through service delivery is to ensure that appropriate <u>translation and interpreting</u> services are provided to enable ethnic minority service users to have full access to all services, but the over-riding aim should be to encourage migrants to learn and use the language of the host community to promote integration.

12.   <u>SUMMARY</u>

Building harmony and understanding, leading to community cohesion, is about identity and a sense of place and belonging – these are the very issues that are also at the heart of cultural policy.

Valuing diversity enriches culture, recognises the contribution made by minorities to the social and economic life of communities and tackles racism at its core.

City Governments, through their support to arts, sports and leisure, can promote cultural diversity and encourage tolerance and better understanding between peoples, helping to build cohesive and inclusive communities.

Our services are at the centre of the debate on promoting integration and contacts across communities and will have a major role to play during the Year of Inter-Cultural Dialogue 2008.

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City of Nottingham
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