

Our Lives

An exploration of the lived experiences and future needs of North Lanarkshire's Black, Asian and other Minority Ethnic people.

Research

47 people told us about their experiences of living in North Lanarkshire. Participants were women and men from different ethnic backgrounds, age groups and religions.

Recommendations

1. Review interpreting services and recruit more interpreters
2. Ensure training for people in care roles incorporates different cultural needs
3. Recruit more carers from BAME backgrounds
4. Acknowledge alternative perspectives on mental health
5. Ensure service providers are trained to understand the impacts of trauma on our refugee communities
6. Meet the cultural needs of ethnic minority patients
7. Provide places of worship with more resources and support
8. Provide culturally sensitive activities in day care centres
9. Provide face-to-face opportunities to address the digital skills gap
10. Improve IT training, including in a variety of languages
11. Provide venues where BAME communities can access the internet and IT equipment
12. Investigate avenues of financial support.
13. Sign up to schemes that embrace equal opportunities in employment
14. Boost employment skills and opportunities
15. Investigate partnerships to support refugees wishing to engage in entrepreneurship
16. Ensure ESOL classes are tailored to learners' needs
17. Celebrate diverse cultures
18. Ensure schools showcase the rich ethnic and racial diversity
19. Ensure greater diversity of the workforce
20. Consider the safety of BAME families when offering housing

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Recommendations (continued)

21. Ensure transparency about criteria used to allocate resources to BAME groups
22. Ensure access to BAME communities which are poorly represented in this research
23. Invest resources in childcare to allow Congolese women to participate in training
24. Consider Syrian women for opportunities in the voluntary sector
25. Support Syrian women to report discrimination
26. Educate communities about diverse cultures and practices
27. Set up a support service staffed by those with appropriate cultural awareness
28. Invest in training to help improve interpersonal skills and empower women
29. Set up an organisation for women from the Indian sub-continent
30. Ensure services are responsive to the needs of the individual
31. Improve language skills of Syrian refugee adults
32. Celebrate the rich diversity of cultures in schools

Community planning partners endorsed the findings of the research, “...there is more that partners and public sector agencies need to do, and we cannot be complacent or defensive in our approach.”

North Lanarkshire Partnership Strategic Leadership Board: February 2023

This document can be accessed in over 70 languages on the Council website.

<https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/our-people/our-lives-research-partner-responses>

For further information please contact:

equality@northlan.gov.uk

More information on the recite me toolbar can be found here: <https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-council/communication-and-resources/website-guidance/accessibility/digital-accessibility-recite-me-toolbar>



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Digital and IT Skills and Support

What we are doing

CLD offer face-to-face digital learning to everyone. Classes are provided locally and are often combined with support for speakers of languages other than English. IT is often combined with employability courses.

New College Lanarkshire can offer a wide range of support measures and have specific resources available to assist NCL students with English language support.

Primary 6 and 7 pupils support residents in retirement complexes to learn how to use iPads.

Some community organisations provide digital classes.

NLC has a project with Commsworld to provide new services including Schools Internet Service and Public Wi-Fi across public buildings, key locations and town centres.

We are considering how we could redistribute, rather than dispose of, IT equipment through the Community Partnership Team to households.

The colleges and CLD provide access to creche and other childcare facilities to support the participation of women.

[New College Lanarkshire - Educational Learning support](#)

[UK training and development | Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire](#)

[The Skills Network](#)

Recommendations:

- Provide face-to-face opportunities to address the digital skills gap
- Improve IT training, including in a variety of languages
- Provide venues where BAME communities can access the internet and IT equipment
- Investigate avenues of financial support.

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Digital and IT Skills and Support

What we plan to do

Look at how training piloted by VANL with befriending organisations could be extended.

In our new town and community hubs we will consider how face-to-face delivery and support to use digital technologies can be used to access services.

The council's Adult Learning Team is reviewing Digital Learning.

Review Public Access Computing to see if we can use MS Windows accessibility options to recognise languages other than English.

We will make sure the current ESOL review considers what training is required and will ensure learners and potential learners are given the opportunity to take part.

Our libraries will improve awareness of the IT resources and services available.

Ensure Family Learning staff engage parents and carers in conversations around financial pressures and make appropriate referrals to services.

[Learning in the community | North Lanarkshire Council](#)

[English as a Second or Other Language \(ESOL\) | North Lanarkshire Council](#)

[Your Library – North Lanarkshire Council](#)

“If you look at the prices everything is high. What am I going to buy - a computer or pay for electricity or food .. you have to prioritise.”

“Elderly people living on their own are struggling to access important online information.”



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Employment, Skills and Training

What we are doing

NLC has signed up to the Race at Work Charter and has an Executive Sponsor for Race.

We meet the requirements of Fair Work and have an NL Employer Charter for Fair Work.

Partners have targeted recruitment events.

We have an anonymous recruitment process to the interview stage.

International recruitment project for nurses and Allied Health Professionals is on-going.

Police Scotland Entrance Test has been reviewed to ensure suitability for people whose first language is not English and vacancies are advertised on Black Professionals' Scotland website.

Routes to Work has a Case Worker to assess if qualifications gained abroad are recognised in UK, and at what level. They can then signpost to retrain, upskill or requalify in Scotland.



New College Lanarkshire is connecting communities with the right service to support their individual development. Individual and group sessions around personal development, vocational qualifications and employability skills take place.

CLD offer and support volunteering opportunities to all learners.

Recommendations:

- Sign up to schemes that embrace equal opportunities in employment
- Boost employment skills and opportunities
- Investigate partnerships to support people wishing to engage in entrepreneurship
- Invest in training to help improve interpersonal skills and empower women
- Provide opportunities for Syrian women to volunteer

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Employment, Skills and Training

What we plan to do

Employability programmes for 2023-24 will be aimed at the career development of all within the BAME community.

Employ a consultant to provide community-based advice and support. This will include support to establish businesses and help build skills and training.

New College Lanarkshire can offer a wide range of support and have resources available to assist students with English language support.

VANL will explore volunteering with Syrian women.

[Employability Support | Routes To Work | Scotland](#)

[Welcome to NCL Business Gateway | Business Gateway](#)

[Support for businesses in North Lanarkshire | North Lanarkshire Council](#)

[New College Lanarkshire - Educational Learning support](#)

[Search for a Volunteering Opportunity | Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire](#)

“You get your CV done, you go to work and you tell them that you have these qualifications and experience from back home... at the end of the day you get a job in a factory and it is nothing related to your experience.”



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Language Support and Skills

What we are doing

NHS Lanarkshire's face-to-face Interpreters are provided by NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Interpreting services and they provide interpreters in over 90 languages.

Video and telephone interpreting is provided by Language Line in over 240 languages.

NLC uses Language Line to provide on the spot access to interpreters and we use face-to-face interpreters when required.

Plans are in place to contract a face-to-face, remote video and telephone spoken language interpreting service for the Council.

Partners work together to understand the need for ESOL and have tailored and increased ESOL provision.

Online twilight 8-week ESOL course for working adults.

ESOL programmes such as Women's Health and Young Mums take place.

There are 3 ESOL classes offered to Syrian people every week in different areas.

The ESOL offer is continuously reviewed in response to learners needs.

The colleges and CLD provide access to creche and other childcare facilities to support the participation of women.

Recommendations:

- Review interpreting services and recruit more interpreters
- Ensure ESOL classes are tailored to learners' needs
- Improve language skills
- Invest in childcare to support learning



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Language Support and Skills

What we plan to do

Continue to work with our interpreting suppliers to ensure interpreters meet the needs of Lanarkshire's patients, carers and communities.

VANL will investigate the level of interpreting support.

[English as a Second or Other Language \(ESOL\) | North Lanarkshire Council](#)

[New College Lanarkshire Welcome to NCL](#)

[Learning in the community | North Lanarkshire Council](#)

[LanguageLine UK - Interpreting & Translation Services](#)

“I would like to meet more friends and go to different clubs and whatever but due to language barrier I am not able to do that.”

“I think the main area is the language barrier ... it is quite hard to get the necessary support if the service provider cannot provide the language support.”



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Cultural awareness and celebration

What we are doing

Our social media shares information about religious and cultural events throughout the year.

The Youth Council organised a Culture Fest event to bring together different cultures and share experiences.

CLD worked with the Syrian community on a story book to share their journey from Syria to Scotland.

2 Syrian young people received their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh award.

Ukrainian community hosted a social event to welcome newly resettled Ukrainian families.

Schools monitor and track incidents of racial discrimination and appropriate action is taken.

A session was offered to school leaders called Anti-Racist Education: The School Leader's Role.

We have advancing race equality in our schools action plan.

Motherwell Youth Voice group are conducting a survey about racism in schools as this has been raised as an issue by youth group members.

The Resettlement Team has begun a series of Resettlement Awareness sessions to schools.

Police Scotland use the You Judge! school resources for secondary school pupils. This resource has 5 individual lessons, covering all strands of hate crime legislation.

24 schools have completed the racial equality and inclusion audit and/or training.

Recommendations:

- Celebrate diverse cultures
- Ensure schools showcase the rich ethnic and racial diversity
- Educate communities about diverse cultures and practices
- Celebrate the rich diversity of cultures in schools

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Cultural awareness and celebration

What we plan to do

The voluntary sector will support celebration of cultural diversity in NL.

Museums and Libraries will engage with BAME groups to learn what activities they would like to see.

Continue to raise awareness through central communication of report recommendations and resources to support.

Heads of Establishment Session offered in each locality to raise awareness of report findings.

Equality awareness raising session for Parent Councils.

[Maintaining school standards | North Lanarkshire Council](#)

“The girls suffer more bullying because of the hijab. Schools would benefit if they had an awareness of other cultures and showed the positive of each religion.”

“Diverse cultures are not celebrated in Lanarkshire. I think Glasgow is more welcoming that way.”



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Culturally competent and sensitive services

What we are doing

There are multi-faith reference books in all healthcare settings.

Training for the in-house Home Support workforce incorporates a focus on cultural needs and requirements.

We have a spiritual assessment tool used in wards and with teams which helps encourage person-centred care by identifying cultural needs (including dietary, religious and social aspects).

Action plans and strategies are in place across partnership organisations to increase BAME representation including – anonymous recruitment, unconscious bias training, targeted recruitment campaigns positive action teams in place etc

Equality and diversity training is offered to employees across the partner organisations.

Recommendations:

- Ensure training for people in care roles incorporates different cultural needs
- Recruit more carers from BAME backgrounds
- Meet the cultural needs of ethnic minority patients
- Ensure greater diversity of the workforce
- Ensure services are responsive to the needs of the individual



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Culturally competent and sensitive services

What we plan to do

Consult with organisations that provide care services to identify training needs for the current workforce and also the recruitment of paid care workers from BAME communities.

We will restart engagement events in the NHS with faith and belief communities to re-connect after the restrictions of Covid.

We will host the annual Spiritual Care Forum in September where the focus will be on community development.

The NHS will share the spiritual; assessment tool with the wider workforce and make it part of training for new staff.

First Steps to Youth Work training course is planned to be delivered to adults from resettled communities.

“Before they (social and personal care services) send people to support the person, they need to make sure that person has at least the knowledge of the culture.”

“There are not enough people from our culture to understand what the elderly will go through during the time when they need personal care”

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Culturally competent and sensitive services

What we are doing

We have recommended all ethnic minority communities should be involved in mental health delivery plans. We will ensure a safe space for people to contribute ideas and share their experiences.

A dedicated Healthcare Resettlement Team in the NHS. There is a programme of work to ensure that all staff deliver trauma informed care.

There is a team of resettlement staff in the Council who have the necessary qualifications and training to support refugees.

We are developing a trauma informed and trauma responsive workforce to help refugees experience a greater sense of stability and security.

Recommendations:

- Acknowledge alternative perspectives on mental health
- Ensure service providers are trained to understand the impacts of trauma on our refugee communities



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Culturally competent and sensitive services

What we plan to do

We will organise a workshop on alternative perspectives on mental health and wellbeing. VANL and members of the NL Community and Voluntary Sector Mental Health and Wellbeing and wider voluntary service organisations will be involved.

The resettlement team are in discussion with the Scottish Refugee Council regarding training gaps and future training.

The NHS will carry out a detailed enquiry into the health and wellbeing experiences of people who have settled in Lanarkshire over many years.

VANL will work with community groups to increase their capacity to support refugees and asylum seekers.

[Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire](#)

[Scottish Refugee Council](#)

“There are spiritual issues involved which need to be looked at when dealing with mental health issues.”

“We want to work with something that is giving back to the community. I would love to volunteer on anything to do with care or mental health”.

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Culturally competent and sensitive services

What we are doing

We engage with people in places of worship, to assist with funding applications and other forms of support and assistance

Integrated Day Services ensure that they meet the needs of service users from BAME backgrounds including the provision of culturally appropriate meals, however there are low numbers of BAME people participating in these services and referrals are low.

Aura provides domestic abuse services for North Lanarkshire. Aura is an inclusive support service for anyone over the age of 16 who is affected by domestic abuse. Women from all ethnic backgrounds are referred to the service.

Aura have established relationships with Amina Muslim Women's Resource Centre, Shakti Women's Aid and Gryffe Women's Aid who provide specialist support.

Recommendations:

- Provide places of worship with more resources and support
- Provide culturally sensitive activities in day care centres
- Set up a support service staffed by those with appropriate cultural awareness



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Culturally competent and sensitive services

What we plan to do

We will map out places of worship to identify how engagement could be more targeted.

We will consider how places of worship could be used for planned engagement and consultation events (e.g. budget consultations).

We will explore how we can work with the Amina Muslim Women's Resource Centre – Best of Men project. Amina work with an Islamic Scholar, who delivers workshops to Muslim men from a faith-based perspective.

Encourage volunteers from culturally diverse backgrounds into Aura to support women from the Indian sub-continent to access the service.

[Aura | An inclusive domestic abuse support service in North Lanarkshire](#)

[Amina – The Muslim Women's Resource Centre](#)

[Hemat Gryffe](#)

[Shakti Women's Aid](#)

“Domestic abuse I would say is very much hidden but it is very much there and there is no specific services here in Lanarkshire to provide that sort of cultural support as well.”

“A lot of Asian women in Lanarkshire can only access services if men are ok with it.”



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Safety and security

What we are doing

The Council considers the needs of BAME people and families when offering housing. This could include harassment or abuse, social, community or family support.

The safety and security of every applicant is considered when making an offer of housing and where potential safety concerns are known these are actively considered and addressed.

A review of the Grant Award Programme is underway including exploring where a more targeted approach to funding may be required (ie certain services for BAME community).

Lanarkshire has almost 40 Third Party Reporting centres, where victims and witnesses can report hate crime, without contacting the police directly.

The Resettlement team has provided sessions to one school who made contact and further awareness sessions will be offered to schools.

We have a partnership with the Ethnic Minority Law Centre to provide access to legal services and justice for our BAME communities.

We support NL Muslim Women and Family Alliance.

Recommendations:

- Consider the safety of BAME families when offering housing
- Ensure transparency about criteria used to allocate resources to BAME groups
- Support Syrian women to report discrimination
- Set up an organisation for women from the Indian sub-continent



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Safety and security

What we plan to do

We are keen to explore how we could work with and support an approach to resourcing specific BAME activity and approaches to enhance decision making through the lens of equalities groups including allocation of resources

The partners will support women from the Indian Sub-continent who wish to form such a group.

[Housing | North Lanarkshire Council](#)

[Reporting hate crime - Police Scotland](#)

[Ethnic Minorities Law Center - Providing Access to Justice](#)



“There is racism and some kids have felt the wrath of it more than others but also if the ladies are in the hijab it’s worse.”

“My neighbours are very good and they have been here for a long time. They have become good neighbours so I feel safe in this community.”

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Resources List

Amina – The Muslim Women’s Resource Centre

<https://mwrc.org.uk/>

Aura

<https://www.aura.scot/>

Business Gateway

<https://www.bgateway.com/>

Ethnic Minority Law Centre

<https://emlc.org.uk/>

Hemat Gryffe

<https://www.hematgryffe.org.uk/>

Language Link UK

<https://www.languagegeline.com/en-gb/>

New College Lanarkshire

<https://www.nclanarkshire.ac.uk/>

<https://www.nclanarkshire.ac.uk/students/supporting-you/educational-learning-support>

North Lanarkshire Council

<https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/our-people/our-lives-research-partner-responses>
<https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-council/communication-and-resources/website-guidance/accessibility/digital-accessibility-recite-me-toolbar>
<https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/learning-in-the-community>

<https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/learning-in-the-community/adult-learning/english-second-or-other-language-esol>

<https://culturenl.co.uk/libraries/your-library/>

<https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/business/support-businesses-north-lanarkshire>

<https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/maintaining-school-standards>

<https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/housing>

Police Scotland – Reporting Hate Crime

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/contact-us/reporting-hate-crime/>

Routes to Work

<https://www.routestowork.co.uk/>

Scottish Refugee Council

<https://scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/>

Shakti Women’s Aid

<http://shaktiedinburgh.co.uk/>

Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire (VANL)

<https://www.voluntaryactionnorthlanarkshire.org/>

<https://voluntaryactionnorthlanarkshire.theskillsnetwork.com/>

<https://www.voluntaryactionnorthlanarkshire.org/index.php/volunteering-opportunities/>