African Caribbean People in Leicestershire
Afrikan Caribbean Support Group Research Project

Summary
of the
Final Report

Including synopsis of all key findings and recommendations

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African Caribbean People in Leicestershire

Afrikan Caribbean Support Group Research Project

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Introduction

1.1 Background to the Research

1.1.1 Introduction: This is a summary of the Final Report of the African Caribbean People in Leicestershire research project. Copies of the full Final Report are available from the Scarman Centre, University of Leicester, 6 Salisbury Road, Leicester, LE1 7QR.

1.1.2 Need for the research: The study was established because of the concern of members of the African Caribbean community that the needs of black people in Leicestershire were not being effectively addressed. The initiative came from the Afrikan Caribbean Support Group, the members of which wished to see an independent study of the experiences, needs and views of African Caribbean people in the county.

1.1.3 'Bottom up' study: The intention was to adopt a 'bottom up' approach, seeking to find out the views and needs of ordinary people, and endeavouring to discover their experiences. Consequently, the study used an action research approach, which entailed involvement in the community and flexibility in the methods employed. As far as possible, this meant letting members of the community speak for themselves.

1.1.4 Partnership research: The project was also partnership research, involving the researchers and African Caribbean people, and local and central government. The four sponsoring bodies were the City Action Team (which was subsequently subsumed into the Government Office for the East Midlands), Leicester City
Council, Leicestershire County Council and the University of Leicester. Each of these institutions supported the research financially and provided other assistance and advice.

1.1.5 **City Action Team:** The City Action Team, which was superseded by the Government Office for the East Midlands in 1994, was pleased to be able to support this Report. However, it should be noted that any views expressed are not necessarily those of the CAT or the Government Office.

1.1.6 **First Interim Report:** The study began in mid-summer 1991 with the data collection due to be completed by late 1993. After revisions, the *First Interim Report* was published in January 1993. It included chapters on the history and development of the African Caribbean community in Leicestershire, urban policy and equal opportunities in the county, the development of local projects and organisations, African Caribbean businesses in Leicestershire, housing, and education and youth services. It contained 58 interim recommendations, for central and local government, local organisations and other bodies, and the community itself, some of which have subsequently been acted on but many of which remain to be adopted.

1.1.7 **Final Report:** The *First Interim Report* was generally welcomed by the African Caribbean community and the funding bodies, but the *Second Interim Report* was criticised for having too many detailed recommendations and insufficient empirical data to substantiate the findings. Consequently, the research team completely revised its structure, contents and presentation and incorporated it into the *Final Report*. In addition, the researchers included a large amount of empirical evidence to support the findings.

1.1.8 **Education Matters:** A separate report on African Caribbean people and schools in Leicestershire has been published, entitled *Education Matters* (Leicester: Scarman Centre, 1996). This includes an outline and assessment of relevant data and 14 recommendations.

1.1.9 **Business Matters:** A separate report has also been published on African Caribbean people and business enterprises in Leicestershire, entitled *Business Matters* (Leicester: Scarman Centre, 1996).
1.2 Aims and Methods

1.2.1 Broad goals: The goals of the project, in their broad terms, were to examine and assess the experiences and needs of African Caribbean people, and their opinions on what action should be taken to improve matters. The project also aimed to undertake an evaluation of the responses of people to services provided by the county council and the city and district councils.

1.2.2 Particular aims: Within the broad goals, the project had three particular aims:

1. To make an inventory and undertake an independent audit of African Caribbean needs, opportunities and services.

2. To provide a basis for more informed policy making, to enable more efficient use of resources, and to increase levels of trust and collaboration.

3. To promote the necessary action to develop African Caribbean services, skills and opportunities.

1.2.3 Staffing: The study was undertaken by a research team under the direction of Professor John Benyon, Director of the Scarman Centre for the Study of Public Order at the University of Leicester. For the first two-and-a-half years, the research team was led by Dr Bola Dauda, Senior Research Fellow. The research and administrative staff have involved in the project, at various stages and in various roles, included: Marcella Burgess, Pamela Charles, Karen Fairbrass, Liz Flynn, Carol Francis, Jon Garland, Trudy Green, Shirley Henry, Yvonne Jewkes, Gurmit Kaur, Stephen Lyle, Anna McClure, Mark Mizzen, Jude Ranasinghe, Donna Ridley, Earle Robinson, Mike Rowe, Jim Smith, and Cathy Wilson.

1.2.4 Documentary sources: Extensive use was made of documentary sources, such as papers and reports, pamphlets, newspaper articles, and books and articles.

1.2.5 Interviews: The project made considerable use of interviews with key figures, including officers in African Caribbean organisations, other voluntary bodies, and Leicester City Council and Leicestershire County Council. Interviews were also conducted with business people, officers in housing associations and church groups, teachers, youth workers, teenagers and school children, and individuals.
1.2.6 **Group discussions:** Discussion groups were organised as part of the research project and proved to be a useful method of gathering data, and of collecting criticisms and suggestions about existing services. They also generated important information about needs and concerns.

1.2.7 **Aggregate data:** The study made use of aggregate data from a number of different sources, including statistics on housing, education and employment, the 1981 Census information and the 1991 Census data.

1.2.8 **Observations:** Researchers devoted considerable time to observation of groups and community activities, participating in these as appropriate, and supplementing their observations by asking questions and taking part in discussions.

1.2.9 **Postal questionnaires:** To supplement data gathered by other methods, the project made some use of postal questionnaires.

1.2.10 **Sample survey:** The project undertook a comprehensive sample survey of African Caribbean people in Leicestershire. The survey used quota sampling and aimed at a minimum sample size of 400, although in the event this was considerably surpassed, with a total of 547 respondents, representing nearly 9 per cent of the total African Caribbean population in the county. The questionnaire sought the views, experiences and opinions of people on a wide range of issues, services and activities. A summary of the main results was published as *Community Experiences and Opinions* (Leicester: Scarman Centre, 1994).

1.3 **Definitions**

1.3.1 **Problems with definitions:** There are inherent problems with all attempts to classify people according to their ethnic origin or background. No single approach is totally satisfactory. If 'African Caribbean' is taken to mean people from Africa and those of African descent from the Caribbean, it includes Asian people from Africa, who do not necessarily regard themselves as African (although some do), and it excludes Asian people from the Caribbean, for example from Guyana, who do regard themselves as Caribbean. There is also, of course, the complex issue of the identity of people of mixed race.
1.3.2 'African Caribbean people': After considerable consultation and discussion, the research project adopted a definition based on the Commission for Racial Equality guidelines and very similar to the 1991 Census definitions: *African Caribbean people are those who classify themselves as black-African, black-Caribbean or black-other.* The study has thus placed the emphasis on self-definition.

1.3.3 Common interests: The project recognises that there are many differences between African people and Caribbean people from different countries. In British society, however, there are many common interests and common experiences between all African Caribbean people, not least as a result of racism and discrimination.

1.3.4 'Black people': The term 'black people' is often used to describe all people of African, Asian and Caribbean descent. It is adopted by many as a term of positive identity and political solidarity. However, this has become increasingly controversial and has been criticised for obscuring differences and diversity and for presenting 'a false, dangerously simple homogenety' (M. Cross, 'Moving targets: the changing face of racism', *New Society*, 7 April 1989, p. 35). In the research project and in the *Final Report* the term 'black people' is used to refer to African Caribbean people.

1.4 Structure of the *Final Report*

1.4.1 Chapter I – Introduction: The *Final Report* begins with an outline of the aims and methods of the project, details of consultation and communication, definitions and research difficulties, and acknowledgements.

1.4.2 Chapter II – African Caribbean people in Britain: This Chapter examines the national context of African Caribbean people in Leicestershire. It outlines the history of black people in Britain, the British role in the African diaspora and the migration of African Caribbean people to Britain. It also briefly looks at racism and prejudice. The bulk of the Chapter provides an account of the experiences of African Caribbean people in contemporary British society, making use of national studies and data to examine issues such as employment, education, housing, the criminal justice system, social services and welfare, and health. The Chapter ends with some observations on the experiences of black people in Britain, and the continuing problems of racism and discrimination.
1.4.3  **Chapter III – African Caribbean people in Leicestershire: socio-economic profile and needs analysis:** Making use of Census and survey data, and information from other sources, Chapter III undertakes an analysis of the socio-economic circumstances of African Caribbean people in the county and seeks to identify their particular needs. It examines the demographic profile of the black population, focusing on the age and sex structure, and looks at area of residence. The Chapter includes an analysis of socio-economic characteristics of the wards in Leicester with above-average proportions of African Caribbean people. The economic position of black men and women is examined and compared with that of white and Asian men and women. The Chapter includes a comparative analysis of levels of unemployment, socio-economic groups and social class, and households with access to a car. The composition of households is analysed, and a comparative assessment is made of people living in medical and care hospitals and homes, and of people suffering from limiting long-term illnesses. Chapter III also includes a comparative examination of the rates of black children in children’s homes and black people in prisons in Leicestershire. Following a summary of key findings, the Chapter concludes with recommendations for action by central and local government and other bodies.

1.4.4  **Chapter IV – African Caribbean people in Leicestershire: views, opinions, experiences and needs:** Chapter IV analyses the experiences, opinions and needs of black people in Leicestershire in a range of different fields. Data were collected using the different methods described in section 1.4 and this Chapter makes particular use of the sample survey of African Caribbean people. The Chapter includes an analysis of black people’s experiences and opinions on education (which is considered in greater detail in the separate report entitled *Education Matters*) and reports the findings of the research on housing. It includes a section on equal opportunities and racial discrimination, which is a recurring theme of the Report. The Chapter also includes sections on safety, security and neighbourhoods, health and social services, provision for youth, and leisure services. The findings on the local authorities are reported and analysed and a further section considers information, consultation and representation. The Chapter includes a summary of the key findings and ends with conclusions and recommendations for action by local and central government, the health and police authorities, and the black community itself.
1.4.5 Chapter V – African Caribbean people in Leicestershire: empowering the community: The final Chapter aims to provide an overview of the central findings of the research and to highlight the principal action which needs to be taken to improve matters. It includes a section on social and economic disadvantage and this is followed by a discussion of discrimination and racism. The Chapter includes sections on the role of the public authorities and political representation and influence. Chapter V concludes with a discussion on empowerment of the community and the need to establish representative and organisational structures to promote unity, common purpose and effective political voice among African Caribbean people in Leicestershire.

1.4.6 Appendices: The Final Report includes three appendices. Appendix A provides a summary of the recommendations and Appendix B is the bibliography, listing documentary sources used during the research. Appendix C lists the principal publications arising from the project.

1.5 Acknowledgements

1.5.1 African Caribbean community: Many different people contributed to the study and it is unfortunately not possible to thank them all by name. The researchers would like to record their deep thanks to the members of the Afrikkan Caribbean Support Group and to all the members of the African Caribbean community who participated in the survey, interviews and discussions.

1.5.2 Public, voluntary and private-sector bodies: The research team wishes to express its gratitude to all those officers in the local authorities and other public bodies, and in voluntary and private-sector organisations, who took part in the research.

1.5.3 Survey assistants: Particular thanks are due to the ten interviewers who assisted in implementing the Leicestershire African Caribbean survey: Nellig Abotchle, Maria Bailey, Carley Buchanan, Sandra Liburd, Winston Nurse, Camleta Ramratan, Donald Stabanner, Beverley Thomas, Steven Tuit and Jackie Wright.
1.5.4 **Sponsoring bodies:** It is also a pleasure to record the research team's gratitude to the sponsoring bodies and to the members of the project Steering Group, particularly Jean Lee and John Ashwood of Leicestershire Training and Enterprise Council, Bob Anderson and Bob Brennan of the City Action Team, Gill Taylor and Clement Ayisa of Leicester City Council, and Chris Traill, Andy Thomas and Andy Taylor of Leicestershire County Council.
African Caribbean People in Britain

2.1 Conclusions

This section provides a summary of the conclusions to Chapter II which appear as paragraphs 2.6.1–2.6.9 in the Final Report.

2.1.1 The evidence reveals that African Caribbean people in Britain experience considerable disadvantage and inequality. Whichever dimension of economic and social life is examined, one finds black people disproportionately affected by deprivation. These cumulative inequalities mean that African Caribbean people in Britain are being prevented from realising their potential and from enjoying the benefits of full citizenship.

2.1.2 The principal reason for the exclusion of African Caribbean people appears to be racial discrimination. Public bodies including government departments and local authorities and private companies have failed to implement policies to tackle discrimination and overcome disadvantage. This failure is revealed in study after study, and report after report, some of which are cited in this Chapter.

2.1.3 Black people also experience unequal treatment because of the areas in which many of them live. These inner-city areas have tended to be neglected during the last 15 years or more, partly because of central government decisions on the allocation of resources and partly because local authorities have not devoted sufficient resources to them.

2.1.4 The evidence shows that African Caribbean people experience inequality in political representation as in other social and economic respects. In Parliament, there are only three African Caribbean MPs, while black people are under-represented on councils, at both county and district levels. African Caribbean
are similarly under-represented at senior levels in the civil service and amongst local government officers and leaders of pressure groups. Black people thus experience a lack of political voice and inequalities in power and influence.

2.1.5 The national context of African Caribbean people in Leicestershire is one of discrimination and disadvantage. This is evident in terms of unemployment, types and level of employment, education, housing, social service provision, health and the operation of the criminal justice system. It is also apparent in data on types of household, income, and the locations in which black people live.

2.1.6 Britain has a long history of racist ideology as a result of the slave trade and colonialism. These ideas, describing black people as inferior, are deeply entrenched in British culture and permeate different spheres of society. The effects of racism are evident in the discrimination against African Caribbean people in Britain, both in the past and today.

2.1.7 Racism may be quite open, as experienced by Learie Constantine in 1943 and by people arriving from the Caribbean in the postwar period who found a widespread colour bar in housing, employment, places of entertainment and elsewhere. Open racism was evident in the campaign of the Conservative candidate in Smethwick in 1964 and in subsequent comments by some politicians and the portrayal of black people in the mass media.

2.1.8 Racism may also be covert and in some cases may be unintended or unrealised. This insidious racism is in many respects more dangerous and difficult to tackle as it is not as visible as open racism. It may occur as institutional racism and in policies which discriminate against black people without appearing to do so. The results of such discrimination are, however, all too visible in the social, economic and political disadvantage which African Caribbean people as a group suffer, evidence of which is reported in Chapter II of the Final Report.

2.1.9 The national context of African Caribbean people in Leicestershire is one of discrimination and disadvantage. The conclusion from Chapter II of the Final Report is that public and private-sector organisations must take positive action to combat the disadvantage and discrimination. This action must be vigorous and sustained. The local authorities and other public agencies must take the lead in promoting equality of opportunity and in implementing positive action policies to overcome the disadvantage which African Caribbean people continue to experience.
3

African Caribbean People in Leicestershire: Socio-Economic Profile and Needs Analysis

3.1 Summary of Key Findings

This section provides a summary of the key findings in Chapter III, which appear as paragraphs 3.6.1–3.6.25 in the Final Report.

3.1.1 Just over six out of ten (61.4%) of African Caribbean people in Leicestershire were born in the UK. Of people in the county who were born in the Caribbean, 32 per cent were born in Jamaica, 11.4 per cent were born in Barbados, 5.3 per cent were born in Trinidad and Tobago and 4.7 per cent were born in Guyana. Other Caribbean countries of birth of Leicestershire citizens include Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St Kitts and Nevis and St Lucia.

3.1.2 The 1991 Census reported that the total black population in Leicestershire was 8,528, representing just under one per cent of the total number of people in the county. Other ethnic groups amounted to 87,822 or 10.1 per cent of the total.

3.1.3 There is evidence that up to 30 per cent of young men in some inner-city areas were missing from Census returns. It has been estimated that some five per cent of the black population was not included in the Census. Undercounting of young black men (aged 20–34 years) is likely to have been particularly pronounced. There are thus good reasons to believe that the Census figure of 8,528 is an underestimate of the African Caribbean population in Leicestershire.

3.1.4 The Census question on ethnicity appears to have yielded ambiguous results, especially for the three black categories. Some people of mixed descent may have identified themselves (or their children) as white. This may also have contributed to an underestimate of the Leicestershire African Caribbean population.
3.1.5 The age structure of the African Caribbean population in Leicestershire differs from that for the whole Leicestershire population, with relatively few black people aged over 65, and lower proportions aged 35–49 and 10–19 than in the whole population. The data show that a significant rise in the number of black people over retirement age can be anticipated early in the next century by which point the number of African Caribbean teenagers will have risen by over 40 per cent.

3.1.6 The Census data reveal a shortfall in African Caribbean men aged between 20 and 34, which is particularly pronounced in the 25–29 age group. The most plausible explanation is that they were not counted in the Census (see section 3.1.3 above) and it appears that the Census data for Leicestershire (as elsewhere) underestimate the number of African Caribbean young men, perhaps by as much as 20 per cent.

3.1.7 Over three-quarters (77.5%) of the county’s African Caribbean population lives in the City of Leicester, with 6.5 per cent in Charnwood, 4.9 per cent in Blaby and 4.1 per cent in Oadby and Wigston. The survey of African Caribbean people in Leicestershire closely reflected this distribution.

3.1.8 African Caribbean people live in each of the 28 wards in the City of Leicester, but in 18 wards they constitute less than the Leicester average of 2.4 per cent of the population. In Wycliffe ward black people make up 8.9 per cent of the total ward population and the figure for Coleman is 5.2 per cent followed by Spinney Hill (4.9%) and Charnwood (4%).

3.1.9 The nine wards in which black people constitute more than the city average of 2.4 per cent of the population show considerable variety in terms of age-profile, unemployment, housing and other socio-economic variables. However, unemployment is above the average figure in the five wards with the largest proportions of black people and car ownership is below average in the four wards with the highest African Caribbean proportions of the population. Six of the wards have above-average numbers of young children and eight of the nine wards have above-average proportions of the population aged 5–19 years. In five of the wards the percentage of households which are lone parents with children is above the Leicester average. The proportion of owner-occupiers is below the Leicester norm in four of the wards and the percentage of overcrowded households is above average in four of the wards. The aggregate Census data are indicative of the particular problems and special needs of the nine wards in Leicester in which above-average numbers of African Caribbean people live and which one would expect to find this reflected in additional resources from central and local government and other agencies.
3.1.10 Wycliffe ward stands out as having particularly acute problems: unemployment is much higher than the Leicester average, self-employment is lower; there are more young children and teenagers and a much higher proportion of lone parents; the figure for car ownership is only half the Leicester average; owner-occupation is much lower and council housing much higher, as is the level of overcrowding; the percentage of permanently sick is also well above the Leicester average. The ward with the highest proportion of black residents (8.9%) is, according to every single measure taken, suffering from deprivation, low incomes and wealth, and particular social needs and requires a high and sustained level of public investment and resources.

3.1.11 The economic position of African Caribbean men in the county and the city is considerably worse than their white counterparts. This is particularly evident in terms of unemployment, summarised below in sections 3.1.13 to 3.1.17. The economic position of African Caribbean women is in some respects similar to men, but also shows important differences. The proportion of black women in the county found by the Census to be unemployed was four times greater than the figure for white women, while the figure for black men was three times greater than that for white men. The proportions of black men and women who were retired reflected the quite different age structure of the black population when compared to white people. However, unemployment among black women was much lower than for black men and the proportion of African Caribbean women in full-time employment (39.3%) was significantly higher than the figure for white women (28%) whereas the proportion of African Caribbean men in full-time employment (51.6%) was lower than the figure for white men (54.7%).

3.1.12 The figures reveal that African Caribbean men and women suffer from economic disadvantage when compared with the population of Leicestershire and Leicester as a whole. However, the economic position of black women appears to be rather better, when compared with other women, than that of black men compared with other men.

3.1.13 The levels of unemployment of African Caribbean people in Leicestershire are nearly three times greater than those for white people. The Census showed that 15 per cent of economically active black women were unemployed compared with 4.9 per cent of white women. The position for black men was even worse, with 22.4 per cent unemployed compared to 8 per cent of white men.

3.1.14 The position is worse in the City of Leicester, with Census data showing 17.1 per cent unemployment for black women and 26.6 per cent unemployment for black men. The actual position may have been worse than this, given the Census undercounting of young black men in urban areas, who may have been unemployed.
3.1.15 The levels of unemployment among young African Caribbean people are particularly high in both the county and the city. In Leicestershire, the Census reported that of black people aged under 25 years nearly a quarter (22.4%) of women and a third (33.8%) of men were without a job. The levels were even higher in Leicester with 26.3 per cent of black women and 38 per cent of black men under 25 years out of work. Given the Census undercounting, it should again be noted that the actual level of black male youth unemployment may be even higher than the reported level of nearly four in ten.

3.1.16 Findings from the Leicestershire African Caribbean survey show that the majority of unemployed black people have been out of work for at least six months.

3.1.17 Data on the socio-economic grouping of different ethnic groups in Leicestershire show that greater proportions of African Caribbean people who do have a job are in manual occupations and lower non-manual positions when compared with white people. Whereas 11.7 per cent of black employed people are 'employers and managers' the figure for white people is 15.5 per cent and 2.7 per cent of black people are 'professional workers' compared to 4.7 per cent of white employed people. In total, 53.2 per cent of African Caribbean people with jobs are in manual jobs compared with 45.5 per cent of white people.

3.1.18 There are dramatic differences between the availability of a car in a black household compared to other ethnic groups, in Leicestershire and Leicester. In the county, while 71 per cent of all households have one or more cars only 47.3 per cent of black households are in this position.

3.1.19 Analysis of the household composition of Leicestershire residents shows considerable differences between ethnic groups, reflecting the different age profiles and other factors. While 14.7 per cent of white households consist of a single pensioner the figure for black households is 4.8 per cent and, conversely, while 10.5 per cent of white households are single people under retirement age the figure for black households is 24.8 per cent. Nearly one third of white households consist of a man and a woman living together whilst the figure for black households is 15.8 per cent. The greatest difference is in the proportion of households which consist of a single adult with one or more dependent children, with 3.7 per cent of white households in this category compared to 15.2 per cent of black households.

3.1.20 Data for the composition of households with children in Leicestershire show that 44.9 per cent of black households with children consist of a man and a woman
whereas the figure for white households is 69.1 per cent. Conversely, 36.8 per cent of black households with children have just one resident adult compared with 12.2 per cent of white households with children. The figures for lone-parent families are even higher in the City of Leicester, with 24.3 per cent of white families in this category and 43.1 per cent of African Caribbean families headed by a single adult. Given the links between lone-parent families and poverty established by national studies, the high proportion of black single-parent families in Leicester is likely to be related to socio-economic disadvantage among African Caribbean people.

3.1.21 Census information shows that black people are over-represented as non-staff residents in medical and care establishments in Leicestershire, given the different age profiles of the white and black population. This is particularly evident in the rate (7.04) per 10,000 people resident in psychiatric hospitals and homes and this over-representation accords with national data and concern about the diagnosis and treatment of African Caribbean people with problems of mental health.

3.1.22 The data on residents in medical and care establishments may be supplemented by information on people with limiting long-term illnesses. In view of the different age profiles, it might be expected that the figures for black people would be around one third those for the white population but the percentage of the African Caribbean population suffering from long-term illness (11.8%) is actually higher than the proportion of the white population (11.3%).

3.1.23 An examination of data on people living in miscellaneous establishments in Leicestershire reveals an extraordinary disparity in the rate per 10,000 black people compared to the rate for white people. In total, for African Caribbean people 146.57 per 10,000 were reported in the Census to be living in various kinds of institutions compared to 29.45 per 10,000 white people and 14.31 per 10,000 Asian people. For those in prison, the rate was 38.7 per 10,000 black people and 5.15 per 10,000 white people, which accords with national data showing much higher rates of imprisonment of black people. In educational establishments, the rate was 73.87 for black people compared to 4.16 for white people. In children’s homes, the rate was 10.72 per 10,000 African Caribbean children compared to 2.78 per 10,000 white children in the county. This again accords with national data.

3.1.24 There are considerable differences in the housing tenure of African Caribbean people in Leicestershire compared with the position of the whole population of the county. Whereas 73.8 per cent of all households are owner-occupied, the
The figure for black people is 53.1 per cent. 29.5 per cent of African Caribbean households live in local authority accommodation compared to 17.1 per cent of all households in the county and 10.4 per cent of black households rent from a housing association compared to just 2.8 per cent of all Leicestershire households.

3.1.25 Data on selected characteristics of households in Leicestershire, broken down by ethnic group, show that black households are more than twice as likely as white households to suffer from overcrowding.

3.2 Conclusions and Recommendations

This section provides a summary of the conclusions to Chapter III, and the accompanying recommendations, which appear as paragraphs 3.7.1–3.7.12 in the Final Report.

3.2.1 The findings of the research reported in Chapter III show that African Caribbean people in Leicestershire suffer disproportionately from inequality and social and economic disadvantage. This is particularly evident in the very high levels of unemployment experienced by men, and particularly by young men, but disadvantage is apparent in all the socio-economic and household variables which have been examined.

3.2.2 The high levels of unemployment amongst African Caribbean men and women is undoubtedly the most pressing problem. It is clear that with levels of unemployment of 20 per cent or over significant numbers of black people and their families will continue to suffer from social and economic deprivation as a result of low incomes. The lack of jobs also adversely affects power and status in the community and undermines the hopes and aspirations of individuals. The position of young African Caribbean men is particularly acute with unemployment of at least 38 per cent.

Recommendation: A concerted campaign to combat the high levels of African Caribbean unemployment is required, particularly concentrating on the very high levels of unemployment of young black men. To be effective, such a campaign needs the wholehearted involvement of local and central government, the TEC and other agencies, private-sector companies and the African Caribbean community itself. It would seem appropriate for Leicester City Council to take the lead in this concerted effort.
3.2.3 The data on the economic position and ethnic group of the male and female populations also reveal the low proportions of black people who are self-employed, with or without employees. The local authorities and central government agencies, as well as private-sector organisations, should take much greater positive action to help African Caribbean people overcome the obstacles to setting up their own businesses.

Recommendation: The local authorities and central government agencies, and private-sector organisations, should take much greater positive action to help African Caribbean people overcome the obstacles to setting up their own businesses. Leicester City Council has a major role to play in facilitating this by establishing appropriate mechanisms for support and advice.

3.2.4 The information on the socio-economic group (SEG) for each ethnic group in Leicestershire shows that the proportions of black people, who do have a job, who are classified as employers and managers and professional workers are significantly lower than those for white people. Overall, the data indicate that not only do African Caribbean people experience much higher levels of unemployment, but of those who do have a job disproportionate numbers are in manual occupations and lower non-manual positions, which tend to be less well-paid and less influential in terms of power within organisations. As considered further in Chapter IV of the Final Report, these findings show that discrimination remains a serious problem and equal opportunities policies are not yet having the desired effects.

3.2.5 The data on the composition of households in Leicestershire highlight the high proportion of African Caribbean families with children which are headed by a lone parent. The reasons for this are complex and not fully understood and there is a strong argument for research to investigate the phenomenon. Whatever the reasons, there is a proven national correlation between lone-parent families and low incomes and deprivation. One way of assisting single black parents is by providing better child-care facilities so that the parent can go to work or to further study and training. This was chosen as a priority by respondents to the Leicestershire African Caribbean survey and to a MORI poll of Leicester residents, and is discussed further in Chapter IV of the Final Report (see sections 4.1.25 and 4.2.14 of this summary).

Recommendation: The local authorities should take positive action to assist single African Caribbean parents to overcome the disadvantage which they and their children experience, for example by providing enhanced child-care facilities to enable them to pursue employment and career opportunities.
3.2.6 The evidence of inequality, low incomes and other social and economic disadvantage is underscored by the striking differences between car ownership in the black community (under a half of all households) and car ownership in the white and Asian populations. As a consequence, reductions in public transport impinge much more directly on the African Caribbean population.

Recommendation: In view of the low levels of car ownership by black people, Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council should examine the effects of transport policies on African Caribbean people.

3.2.7 The data reported in Chapter III of the Final Report suggest that African Caribbean people suffer from greater ill-health than the rest of the population. The percentage of black people with long-term illness is considerably higher than the demographic profile suggests it should be, by comparison with white and Asian people. The data on residents in medical and care establishments show that black people are over-represented by comparison with white and Asian people, given the differing age profiles. As discussed briefly in Chapter IV of the Final Report, African Caribbean people are particularly affected by a number of health problems and have special needs. It is not clear, though, that these are currently being satisfactorily addressed. There appears to be a lack of information with which to assess equal opportunities in the health service (see sections 4.1.21–4.1.22 and 4.2.11 of this summary).

Recommendation: Leicestershire Health Authority should undertake a detailed investigation of the health of the African Caribbean population in light of the Census data which indicate that black people suffer greater levels of ill-health than the rest of the population. Policies to overcome this disadvantage should be implemented vigorously.

3.2.8 Information on black people in Leicestershire living in miscellaneous establishments shows much higher rates per 10,000 people in institutions than are found amongst the white and Asian populations. This is particularly evident in the disproportionate numbers of black people in Leicestershire prisons and the numbers in children's homes.

Recommendation: Leicester Social Services should investigate and provide explanations for the Census data which show disproportionate numbers of black children in children's homes. The Probation Service should examine the disproportionate numbers of black people in prisons in Leicestershire. Both investigations should provide explanations and suggestions on how these inequalities might be resolved.
3.2.9 Inequality and disadvantage are also evident in the data on housing and selected characteristics of households. As recommended in Chapter IV of the Final Report (see section 4.2.4 of this summary), there is a strong case for the establishment of a housing task force, led by the housing department of the City Council and involving other local authorities, housing associations and mortgage lenders, which would investigate the much lower level of owner-occupation amongst African Caribbean people in the county and report on why this has occurred and what can action be taken. With nearly 30 per cent of black households living in council housing and a further 10 per cent renting from housing associations, policies on public-sector housing have a pronounced effect on African Caribbean people. The extent of overcrowding and the types of property allocated to black people also warrant investigation. These issues are discussed further in Chapter IV of the Final Report (see sections 4.1.4–4.1.10 of this summary).

3.2.10 The demographic data reported in Chapter III of the Final Report indicate a significant rise in the number of black people over retirement age by early in the next century. The data also show a rise of over 40 per cent in the number of African Caribbean teenagers. Both these developments have policy implications for the local authorities, in terms of provision of facilities and support, and should be considered by the relevant council committees.

**Recommendation:** Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council should examine the policy implications of the demographic data which shows large rises in the numbers of retired African Caribbean people and in the numbers of black teenagers.

3.2.11 The data in Chapter III of the Final Report accord with the national evidence of unequal treatment reported briefly in Chapter II (see section 2.1 of this summary). The levels of disadvantage and discrimination call for a concerted campaign led by the local authorities to combat racism and to overcome the inequalities. This can only be achieved, it is suggested, by establishing bodies and institutions specifically committed to such a task and designed to bring about a co-ordinated, focused set of policies. As discussed in Chapter IV of the Final Report, one important step is for Leicester City Council and other local authorities to establish African Caribbean Policy Units, to ensure that the Council's activities consistently seek to combat the racial discrimination and disadvantage experienced by black people (see section 4.2.21 of this summary).
Recommendation: As a matter of priority, Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council, and other district councils as appropriate, should each establish an African Caribbean Policy Unit. Each unit should include black officers with expertise in a range of relevant areas of policy, including education, housing, social services, arts, sports and leisure, and community safety and security. The brief of each unit would include liaison with African Caribbean organisations, groups and the wider community, the provision of specialist advice to council committees and departments, and the implementation and monitoring of policies which promote equal opportunities for black people.

3.2.12 Another institution which would help to promote positive action is an African Caribbean Consultative Forum, which would include key service providers and representatives of the black community and organisations. This Forum should be established by Leicester City Council and serviced by its African Caribbean Policy Unit. As outlined in section 4.2.21 of this summary, such a Forum would serve to improve the flow of information between black people and the local authority and other service providers and to increase the political voice of African Caribbean people. By bringing all major service providers together with representatives of the African Caribbean community, the Forum should also help to promote the development of a coherent approach and complementary policies to tackle the high levels of black disadvantage reported in this Chapter.

Recommendation: Leicester City Council should establish an African Caribbean Consultative Forum, which should include other key service providers and representatives of the black community and organisations. Serviced by the City Council's African Caribbean Policy Unit, the Forum should meet regularly to discuss the experiences and needs of African Caribbean people and to act as a two-way channel between black people and the local authority and other service providers. The establishment of such a Forum should serve to improve the flow of information, and to increase the political voice and influence of the black community, and may assist in promoting the selection of African Caribbean people as candidates for election to the City Council. By bringing major service providers together with representatives of the black community, the Forum should act as a means of promoting and developing complementary policies and a more coherent approach for tackling the high levels of disadvantage and discrimination experienced by African Caribbean people, evidence of which is documented in this Report.
4

African Caribbean People in Leicestershire: Views, Opinions, Experiences and Needs

4.1 Summary of Key Findings

This section provides a summary of the key findings in Chapter IV, which appear as paragraphs 4.13.1–4.13.41 in the Final Report.

4.1.1 Education is the issue of greatest concern to African Caribbean people in Leicestershire and was chosen by 53 per cent of survey respondents. The majority (55.7%) said that the educational system is failing black children, while 32.5 per cent did not believe this (11.8% said they did not know). Of those who believe the educational system is defective, two-thirds (67.5%) said the basic problem is racism and discrimination. Others identified stereotyping (12%) and teachers’ ignorance of black culture and history (7.4%) as major problems.

4.1.2 The most popular solution to the problems faced by African Caribbean schoolchildren was to appoint more black teachers (selected by 42.9% of respondents). Other suggestions were improved training for teachers (31.2%), greater parental involvement (7.3%) and the inclusion of black history and culture in the curriculum (5.4%). Three out of five parents (61%) said they did not have sufficient involvement in the education of their children.

4.1.3 A significant minority (31.2%) of parents said that they were not satisfied with the education their children were receiving (or had received). 38.3 per cent said a good reputation was what most influenced their choice of which school their child would attend. 39.3 per cent of respondents to the survey said they supported separate schooling for black children. Reasons in favour were better educational results (54.9%), black children should be educated together (30.5%) and avoidance of stereotyping (14.6%), while reasons against were black children should mix
with others (62.2%), separate schools would get less resources (20.2%), improvements should be made to existing schools (9.8%) and it would cause more prejudice (7.8%).

4.1.4 Nearly one in three black households (Leicestershire African Caribbean survey: 31.1%; Census: 29.5%) rent their home from the local authority, with a further one in ten (survey: 12.3%; Census: 10.4%) renting from a housing association. As shown in Figure 3.15 in Chapter III, these proportions are significantly higher than those for the whole population (local authority rented: 17.1%; housing association rented: 2.8%). Conversely, whereas 73.8 per cent of the whole Leicestershire population lives in owner-occupied property, the Census figure for African Caribbean households is 53.1 per cent (survey: 45.8%). These figures show the much greater dependence of black people on local authority and housing-association accommodation.

4.1.5 Only 8 per cent of those black people surveyed lived in detached housing, compared to national levels of 20 per cent. One in five African Caribbean people in the survey lived in a flat (national figure: 17%) and one-third lived in terraced housing (national figure: 27%). As shown in Table 3.21 in Chapter III of the Final Report, 3.49 per cent of black households live in overcrowded accommodation compared to 1.26 per cent of white households in Leicestershire.

4.1.6 Of those surveyed, 7.6 per cent of black people had lost their home in the previous year. The principal cause was family break-up (69.8%), followed by eviction (23.2%). 2.3 per cent of those who had lost their home said it was a result of repossession.

4.1.7 Two-thirds (66.7%) of the African Caribbean people surveyed said they were dissatisfied with council housing, giving a satisfaction rating of minus 33.5 per cent. The MORI survey (of a much smaller sample of black people in Leicester) found that 36.2 per cent were dissatisfied with council housing (excluding the 42% who expressed no opinion).

4.1.8 Four out of ten people in the Leicestershire African Caribbean survey who expressed a view were satisfied with housing benefit services (41.5%) and housing improvement grants (45.8%), but only 30.9 per cent were satisfied with the provision of hostels for the homeless.

4.1.9 The MORI survey found that of those people who had contacted a Leicester City Council department in the previous year, 68 per cent of African Caribbeans had
contacted the Housing Department compared to 41 per cent of whites and Asians. Higher proportions of black people than whites or Asians found the officials 'unhelpful', 'inefficient' and 'uninterested' and 60 per cent said they were dissatisfied with the outcome (compared to 44% of whites and 48% of Asians). MORI found the main cause of complaints to the council for black people was council housing (60% for black people compared to 41% of complaints from all groups).

4.1.10 The biggest cause of dissatisfaction among all ethnic groups in Leicester was repairs to council houses, with 19 per cent of African Caribbean people saying repairs should be carried out more quickly, 11 per cent asking for the quality of repairs to be improved and a further 11 per cent saying more notice should be taken of requests for repairs. Other suggestions included more modernisation and renovation of properties, an improvement in the allocation processes, and that council housing should not be left empty.

4.1.11 A central finding from the survey, confirming other evidence from the research project, is the continuing experience of unequal treatment of, and opportunities for, African Caribbean people in Leicestershire. 65 per cent of the respondents to the Leicestershire African Caribbean survey reported that they have experienced racial discrimination and 57 per cent said black people experience more discrimination than other groups in the county. The principal area in which discrimination had been experienced was employment (selected by 42.1% of those who had suffered discrimination), followed by housing (31.2%). Others reported discrimination in education (10.2%), policing (7%), leisure (6.1%), banks and financial institutions (2.2%) and immigration (1.2%).

4.1.12 In the field of employment, 22.3 per cent of African Caribbean people interviewed in the survey stated they had been unfairly overlooked for promotion and of these 66.7 per cent said the reason was racial discrimination. 35.3 per cent of respondents reported that they had experienced difficulties in finding work and the great majority of them (86.9%) said the reason was racial discrimination. This also appears to be a major factor in explaining the much higher rates of African Caribbean unemployment and the findings, reported in Chapter III of the Final Report, that black people are disproportionately employed in manual work and lower-waged jobs and are not proportionately represented in management and in higher grades.

4.1.13 The survey of African Caribbean people in Leicestershire found that only 25.5 per cent of black people were satisfied with their city or district council's equal
opportunities policy with 75.3 per cent dissatisfied (excluding don’t knows who accounted for 23.6%). The survey also found that 80.2 per cent of those with an opinion (26% were don’t knows) were dissatisfied with the help offered to ethnic minorities by the local authorities. 52.7 per cent of black people surveyed said Leicestershire is racist or very racist, with 23.2 per cent saying the country is racially unbiased (24% had no opinion). The most favoured suggestion for decreasing racism was improved multi-cultural and multi-racial education, for children and adults (38.2%), followed by strengthening of equal opportunities policies (19.1%), greater unity and common purpose amongst the ethnic minority groups (14%) and fairer employment practices (13.2%).

4.1.14 When asked whether they intended emigrating from Leicestershire to the Caribbean or Africa the largest number of respondents said they didn’t know (36.5), but 32.8 per cent said that they did intend moving. The responses varied considerably according to age, with those between 36 and 55 years the most likely to emigrate, with over 40 per cent saying this was their intention, followed by people aged 26 to 35 years. Of those planning to emigrate, family connections, retirement and a better lifestyle were each chosen as reasons by significant numbers of people, but the biggest single factor, chosen by 34.9 per cent of black people, was ‘I feel I do not belong in Britain’. Overall, the survey findings confirm the evidence, reported in Chapter III of the Final Report, that African Caribbean people in Leicestershire continue to suffer discrimination and high levels of disadvantage.

4.1.15 The Leicestershire survey found that 27 per cent of African Caribbean people had been a victim of crime during the previous two years and of these 42 per cent had experienced more than one incidence of crime. The MORI survey of Leicester residents found that 16 per cent of black people had been burgled during the last year while 11 per cent reported that their property had been vandalised. One in ten said they had experienced racial harassment and a similar proportion had experienced theft of their property. These figures are in line with national data which also show that higher proportions of black people suffer from household crime (33%) and personal crime (16%) than white people (30% and 10% respectively). The MORI survey found that the greatest concern of African Caribbean people, as with other groups, was being burgled (66%), followed by being mugged or robbed (42%), people hanging around on the streets (28%), assault (24%) and racial harassment and abuse (23%).

4.1.16 Racial harassment is a serious problem for African Caribbean and Asian people in Britain and the MORI poll found that one in ten of the black people interviewed in Leicester had experienced racial harassment during the previous 12 months. 23 per cent of African Caribbean people said they were fearful of racial harassment.
4.1.17 The MORI poll found that 57 per cent of African Caribbean people would like the City Council to provide locks, bolts and security equipment to make homes more secure, offer grants to buy crime prevention equipment (48%), deal with empty and derelict properties (37%) and provide advice on crime prevention (30%).

4.1.18 African Caribbean people (72%) were marginally less satisfied with the neighbourhood in which they lived than white people (79%) or Asians (86%). The Leicestershire African Caribbean survey asked about the best and the worst aspects of each respondents' neighbourhood. 31.9 per cent chose privacy as the best feature followed by the local amenities (27.9%) and their neighbours (25.6%). Top of the list of worst features was noise and pollution (22.9%), followed by crime and vandalism (18.2%), parking and traffic problems (15.8%), poor amenities (11.9%) and bad neighbours (10.7%). The MORI survey found that the improvements that African Caribbean people would most like to see in their neighbourhoods were removal of litter and dirt (15%), a reduction in crime (10%), better facilities for children (8%), prevention of vandalism and graffiti (6%) and more police on the streets (5%).

4.1.19 Over eight out of ten respondents (83.1%) said drug use is bad for the community, because drugs are associated with other crime (37%), corrupt young people (21%), stigmatise the community (19.7%), cause health problems (14.9%) and are associated with general nuisance in the area (7.1%).

4.1.20 A high proportion (83.1%) of black people who had been a victim of crime (27%) told the survey they had reported it to the police. Those who had not done so said it was because they had no faith in the police (61.1%), it did not seem worth reporting (27.8%) or they were afraid of repercussions (11.1%). Over half (54.4%) the people who had reported the matter to the police were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, because of the length of the response time (51.3%), the action taken (29.8%) or the attitude of the officers (18.9%). Nearly half of all respondents (48.4%) said they were dissatisfied with policing in their area.

4.1.21 The survey of African Caribbean people in Leicestershire found that 73.4 per cent of respondents were satisfied with health service provision. Reasons for dissatisfaction included the length of waiting lists (44.5%), inadequate resources (13.5%), dental fees (11.5%), prescription charges (10.9%), poor facilities (9.4%) and ignorance of black-related issues (3.9%).

4.1.22 Over one in ten (12.4%) of the sample reported that they or a member of their family had sickle cell trait and slightly fewer (10.7%) suffered from, or had a family member with, sickle cell anaemia. Smaller proportions reported that they or a
family member had thalassaemia (1.4%), or lupus (2.4%). Eight per cent reported they or a family member suffered from a mental health problem. 8.3 per cent of respondents knew of a group to approach for advice on thalassaemia, with larger proportions knowing where to get advice on HIV and AIDS (18.4%) and mental health problems (24%). The largest number of people (35.4%) knew of a support group on sickle cell anaemia. Smaller numbers of people (16.3%) knew where to turn for advice or help on drug abuse.

4.1.23 Nearly two-thirds (63.9%) of those surveyed said they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the provisions by the county council for care of the elderly. This received a satisfaction rating of minus 27.8 per cent, which was worse than for any other service provided by Leicestershire County Council.

4.1.24 The Leicestershire African Caribbean survey found that 46.8 per cent considered local authority services for the disabled were satisfactory, but 53.1 per cent said they were unsatisfactory or very unsatisfactory.

4.1.25 Excluding the people who expressed no opinion, 60.8 per cent of black people said they were satisfied with play groups and play schemes. However, the research also found significant numbers of African Caribbean people requesting improved play groups and schemes and when asked what they would most like to be done to improve their neighbourhood the MORI survey found that black people placed ‘improved facilities for children’ as the third highest priority. Furthermore, African Caribbean people chose ‘facilities for young people and teenagers’ as the second in the list of things they would like the Council to spend more money on, with improved play schemes and crèche facilities as the fifth priority.

4.1.26 The operation of social services by the county council received a satisfaction rating of plus 20.8 per cent, with 60.4 per cent of respondents saying they were satisfied.

4.1.27 The Leicestershire African Caribbean survey found that 60.8 per cent of respondents were satisfied with county council provision of youth services. Only 10.2 per cent of respondents aged 16 to 25 years were members of a youth club. Reasons for not attending youth clubs included being too old (58%), family commitments (13.8%), lack of youth clubs in the area (10.8%), lack of interest in the activities (14.5%) and that not enough other black youths attended (2.9%). Suggestions for improvements included more varied activities (29.7%), more educational schemes (18.9%), better sports teams and facilities (13.5%), more travel (10.8%) and the involvement of more African Caribbean young people (8.1%). The MORI survey found that African Caribbean people chose facilities for young people and teenagers as the second highest priority for greater expenditure by the City Council.
The survey of African Caribbean people in Leicestershire found that 68.4 per cent were satisfied with sports and leisure facilities provided by their district council. The MORI survey reported that 48 per cent of black people were satisfied with swimming pools and sports facilities (whites: 58%; Asians: 53%). 31 per cent of African Caribbean people had visited a sports or leisure centre in the previous six months (whites: 26%; Asians: 28%) and 89 per cent of black people had found the staff to be helpful.

The MORI survey found that African Caribbean people were rather less satisfied than Asians or white people, with parks, play areas and open spaces in Leicester, although they still gave a satisfaction rating of plus 46 per cent. The Leicestershire African Caribbean survey found similar levels of satisfaction, with provision by both district and county councils.

The highest levels of satisfaction in the Leicestershire African Caribbean survey on any services were for libraries and museums, with respective satisfaction ratings of plus 66 and plus 65.4 per cent.

The MORI survey found that 31 per cent of African Caribbean people interviewed used their local neighbourhood centre. Two-thirds (65.4%) of respondents to the Leicestershire African Caribbean survey said the services and facilities available in their area did not meet the needs and requirements of black people. The majority of people (54.5%) said more and improved community facilities were needed, while others (13.4%) wanted to see more African Caribbean staff and 11.4 per cent said improved communication was needed between neighbourhood centres and local people. Some respondents (7.9%) called for more black participants in local facilities and 5.4 per cent said that matters would be improved if there were more black councillors.

One-third (33.6%) of those interviewed for the Leicestershire African Caribbean survey said they were satisfied with the way their city or district council ran its services, but 43.3 per cent were dissatisfied (23.1% expressed no view). The MORI survey reported that 56 per cent of African Caribbean people in Leicester were satisfied, with 21 per cent dissatisfied and 23 per cent expressing no opinion. By comparison, MORI reported that 59 per cent of whites and 80 per cent of Asians expressed satisfaction. The most frequent criticism from black people in the Leicestershire survey concerned the way services were delivered (40.2%), while others felt that black people were ignored by the council or did not receive fair treatment (15.7%). One in ten respondents (10.9%) criticised their council's commitment to ordinary people, 6.7 per cent highlighted housing issues as the reason for their dissatisfaction and 5.5 per cent criticised the lack of information from, and contact with, their city or district council.
4.1.33 The survey found that black people in the county were rather more satisfied with Leicestershire County Council than with their city or district councils. One-third (33.3%) said they were satisfied with the way the county council was running its services and 31.8 per cent said they were dissatisfied (34.9% expressed no opinion). Reasons for the dissatisfaction included lack of participation and consultation, lack of sufficient resources, poor educational provision, too much bureaucracy and lack of information.

4.1.34 There is considerable variation in the views that black people have of the delivery of different city and district council services, as revealed in the Leicestershire African Caribbean survey. Relatively high levels of satisfaction are evident on the attractiveness of the city or town centre, local planning, the cleanliness of the town centre, parks and open spaces, recycling schemes, refuse collection, sports and leisure and buses. However, much lower, negative, satisfaction ratings are found on council housing and related issues such as hostels for the homeless, housing benefit and housing improvement grants and on support and advice for black people wishing to establish their own business. As noted in section 4.1.13 in this summary, the great majority of black people interviewed were dissatisfied with their city or district council's equal opportunities policy, with 73.4 per cent expressing dissatisfaction. 80.2 per cent were dissatisfied with the help and assistance for minorities provided by their local council.

4.1.35 The survey found that the greatest level of dissatisfaction (63.9%) with any county council service is with care of the elderly. Planning and the police service also have relatively low levels of satisfaction.

4.1.36 The most widely-read source of local information for African Caribbean people is the Leicester Mercury, which the survey found was read very often or sometimes by 90 per cent of respondents. Three Radio Leicester programmes, In the Spirit, Talking Blues and the Herdle White Show, were listened to on occasions by between 33.8 and 52.5 per cent of those surveyed. Two-thirds of respondents did not read Leicester Link. The Leicestershire African Caribbean Newsletter, published as part of this research project, was the second most significant local source of information, with 11.8 per cent reading it very often and 49.8 per cent reading it sometimes.

4.1.37 Over half (54%) the black people in Leicester interviewed by MORI said the City Council keeps them very well or fairly well informed, but this was a significantly lower figure than those for whites (64%) and Asians (66%). The Leicestershire African Caribbean survey found that 81.3 per cent of people interviewed were dissatisfied with consultation of black residents by their local council.
4.1.38 African Caribbean people were much more dissatisfied with their contacts with the City Council than white or Asian people, according to the MORI survey. 82 per cent of people in the Leicestershire African Caribbean survey did not know the name of their county councillor and 68 per cent did not know their city or district councillor(s). Over half (54.9%) knew the name of their MP. The MORI survey found 50 per cent of black people did not know how to get in touch with their local councillor. 59.7 per cent of people in the Leicestershire African Caribbean survey who were eligible to vote at the last general election said they had done so, but this figure varied considerably across age groups, with young people least likely to have voted.

4.1.39 Over a third (35.8%) of those surveyed belonged to a community organisation, but 56.9 per cent said they did not know of any local African Caribbean group. The organisations with the largest membership amongst the people in the survey were Highfields Rangers Sports and Social Club, Leicester United Caribbean Association, Imani Ujima, the West Indian Senior Citizens' Project and Ajani. Nearly five per cent of those interviewed were members of a church.

4.1.40 Data from the survey supported other evidence from the research project that black people do not consider they have effective political influence. 48.2 per cent said that African Caribbean people have less political voice than other groups and nearly three-quarters (72.2%) did not feel they had any say in what is decided by local government.

4.1.41 The most popular suggestion to improve the political voice of African Caribbean people is to elect more black councillors, which was favoured by 38.5 per cent of those in the survey. Other suggestions were to establish an African Caribbean Forum (36.3%), to appoint black advisers to council committees (15.5%) and to elect more black MPs (9.7%).

4.2 Conclusions and Recommendations

*This section provides a summary of the conclusions to Chapter IV, and the accompanying recommendations, which appear as paragraphs 4.14.1–4.14.21 in the Final Report.*

4.2.1 The data reported in Chapter IV of the *Final Report* show that African Caribbean people in Leicestershire experience considerable disadvantage and discrimination. In this respect, the information complements the powerful evidence of social and economic inequality documented in Chapter III. However, the data in Chapter IV
also show the extent to which black people in the county experience political disadvantage, compared with the white and Asian populations. Furthermore, the findings in Chapter IV reveal the levels of dissatisfaction black people have with the delivery of a number of services by central and local government, and the failure of the local authorities' policies and practices to address many of the needs of the minority African Caribbean population.

4.2.2 The issue of greatest concern to African Caribbean people in Leicestershire is education. Despite attempts by Leicestershire County Council to promote multi-cultural and multi-racial education, the findings from this research show that much more remains to be done. Increased attention towards, and improved policies and resources for, the education of African Caribbean children clearly needs to be a very high priority of the Local Education Authority (from April 1997, the three LEAs) and schools in order to address the concerns of black people in the county and to promote equal opportunities. These issues are considered in greater detail in a separate report on African Caribbean people and schools in Leicestershire, entitled Education Matters (Leicester: Scarman Centre, 1996), which includes 14 recommendations to tackle the problems.

4.2.3 The evidence reported in Chapter IV of the Final Report, from both the Leicestershire African Caribbean survey and the MORI survey, indicates high levels of dissatisfaction black people have with council housing, and with dealings with the City Council Housing Department. African Caribbean people are particularly dissatisfied with repairs and with provisions for homeless people.

Recommendation: The district councils, and particularly Leicester City Council, should analyse the problems experienced by black tenants to identify why there are such high levels of dissatisfaction and what action needs to be taken.

4.2.4 As reported in Chapter III of the Final Report, and in section 4.5 of Chapter IV, data from both the Census and the survey show that much higher proportions of African Caribbean households live in local authority and housing association property than is the case for white or Asian people. Conversely, there are low levels of owner-occupation by black households, in comparison with other groups, and one-third of African Caribbean people in the survey highlighted housing or dealings with banks and other financial institutions as the main areas in which they had experienced discrimination. As suggested in Chapter III of the Final Report (see section 3.2.9 in this summary), there is a strong case for the City Council to convene an investigation into the position.
Recommendation: **Leicester City Council should establish a housing task force to undertake an investigation of the low levels of black owner-occupied housing, involving building societies, banks and other housing organisations. This should include an examination of the difficulties experienced by black people in obtaining mortgages and the extent of discrimination by mortgage-lending institutions.**

4.2.5

The data in Chapters III and IV of the Final Report provide incontrovertible evidence of the inequality experienced by African Caribbean people in Leicestershire. A fundamental and continuing problem is racial discrimination, which affects black people in employment, housing, education and other respects. For example, racial discrimination must be a major factor in explaining the much higher rates of African Caribbean unemployment and also the findings, reported in Chapter III of the Final Report, which show that black people are disproportionately employed in lower-waged, lower-status jobs. The clear message from the research is that racism and discrimination remain major impediments to equal opportunities and treatment for African Caribbean people.

**Recommendation:** **Leicester City Council and Leicestershire County Council should take the lead in organising a concerted campaign to combat the continuing pernicious problem of discrimination and its nasty companion racism. This needs to entail a re-examination of the local authorities' equal opportunities policies, to ascertain the extent to which they are and are not proving effective and how they may be strengthened. It also requires the active involvement of other public and private bodies.**

4.2.6

As the previous recommendation states, the great inequalities revealed by the data in Chapters III and IV require positive action by the local authorities and other public and private bodies. A fundamental requirement is comprehensive and effective ethnic monitoring, not just of employment – important though that is – but of other dimensions of service delivery. The research project has found that there continues to be inadequate ethnic monitoring of different aspects of local authority services, for example of allocations of council housing and educational achievement. As highlighted in sections 4.2.9 and 4.2.11 of this summary, there is also inadequate ethnic monitoring by other public services, including Leicestershire Constabulary and Leicestershire Health Authority, and by private-sector organisations and companies.
Recommendation: The county and district councils should ensure that all dimensions of their activities and services are effectively monitored to ascertain the extent of racial inequality and all local authority councillors should require chief officers to make regular (at least biannual) reports to committees showing ethnic monitoring data. The police and health authorities should also receive regular and comprehensive information on the ethnic monitoring of their services. A central part of the campaign to combat discrimination and disadvantage (see recommendation in section 4.2.5 of this summary) should be to ensure that private-sector, in addition to public-sector, organisations conduct effective ethnic monitoring.

4.2.7

The findings show that African Caribbean people are particularly concerned about burglary, robbery and assault and place a high priority on the creation of safe and secure neighbourhoods. The evidence shows that black people would like to see the local authorities promoting crime prevention and community safety more actively.

Recommendation: The city and district councils should take the initiative in further developing local crime-reduction multi-agency partnerships and should take positive steps to involve African Caribbean people in them. The local authorities should also explore practical ways to promote crime prevention, such as the provision of security equipment for people's homes (particularly in higher-risk areas), and other steps to develop safer neighbourhoods.

4.2.8

Racial harassment and abuse are significant problems, with one in ten African Caribbean households experiencing racial harassment or abuse each year and nearly one quarter of those surveyed saying they were fearful of suffering from these crimes. As reported in the First Interim Report, the policy of Leicester City Council on racial harassment on local-authority housing estates, involving proactive steps to combat the problem and an emergency support team, has won national recognition and shows that effective action can be taken. This approach needs to be strengthened and extended to embrace other areas.

Recommendation: A high priority should be placed on monitoring and combating racial harassment, abuse and assaults. This necessitates developing appropriate mechanisms, involving the local authorities, police and other agencies, working in partnership with the African Caribbean community.
4.2.9 The evidence from the study indicates that African Caribbean people have relatively high levels of dissatisfaction with the police service. The survey found that over half those people who had been a victim of crime and had reported it to the police were dissatisfied with the response and nearly one half of all respondents said that they were not satisfied with policing in their neighbourhood. These findings reveal much higher levels of concern about policing among black people than among the whole population and merit serious attention by the police authority. There also appears to be inadequate ethnic monitoring of service delivery by the police.

Recommendation: Leicestershire Constabulary should examine the reasons for the high levels of dissatisfaction expressed by black people and should take the action necessary to improve their relations with African Caribbean people and the effectiveness of the service provided to them. The Police Authority should also reappraise the extent and quality of ethnic monitoring of employment, service delivery and police statistics to ensure that comprehensive information is available.

4.2.10 In addition to prevention of crime and vandalism, black people place a high priority on action by the local authorities to tackle noise and pollution, and parking and traffic problems, in order to create more pleasant neighbourhoods.

4.2.11 As reported in Chapter III of the Final Report, the available Census data indicate that African Caribbean people suffer from greater levels of ill-health than the rest of the population and the health authority should investigate these data to ascertain the extent to which the black population experiences inequality in health and what action should be taken (see section 3.2.7 in this summary). In general, there appears to be a paucity of information with which to assess equal opportunities in the health service, including the provision of health care to African Caribbean people, and the employment of black people in different areas of the health service.

Recommendation: Leicestershire Health Authority should ensure that comprehensive and accurate ethnic monitoring is practised throughout the health service in the county and should establish an African Caribbean Unit to investigate the provision of health care for black people and to liaise with the black community and organisations.

4.2.12 Only a minority of black people in the survey knew where to obtain advice and support on health issues such as thalassaemia, mental health, and the use of
drugs. A larger number – but still only just over one third – knew where to seek advice on sickle cell anaemia.

**Recommendation:** Leicestershire Health Authority, and other bodies such as the Health Promotion Unit, should investigate ways of increasing knowledge about sources of information and advice on black-related health issues.

4.2.13 A majority of African Caribbean people surveyed said they were satisfied with the operation of social services by the county council, but two out of five were not satisfied. There is particular concern about the provision of care and support for elderly people, and the satisfaction rating (of minus 27.8%) was the worst for any county council service. There is a strong case for additional resources and greater support for voluntary organisations that provide facilities and services for elderly black people. These issues are particularly important in view of the significant rise in the number of retired black people during the next decade, which is discussed further in Chapter III of the *Final Report* (see section 3.2.10 of this summary).

**Recommendation:** Leicestershire County Council and, in preparation for the advent of unitary status, Leicester City Council should review provisions for the care of elderly African Caribbean people in light of the reported levels of dissatisfaction and the projected rise in the number of elderly black people.

4.2.14 The evidence shows that African Caribbean people wish to see an expansion of play groups, play schemes and crèches for children and a considerable improvement in facilities for young people and teenagers. The MORI survey found that black people chose better facilities for children as the third highest priority to improve their neighbourhoods, and one in five selected play schemes and crèches as a priority for greater expenditure by the City Council. Enhanced child-care facilities would assist black single parents to pursue employment and career opportunities, as recommended in Chapter III of the *Final Report* (see section 3.2.5 of this summary). Nearly one-third of African Caribbean people selected improved facilities for young people and teenagers as a priority for more resources, making it the second highest priority after job creation programmes. The findings from the research indicate that current levels of provision for young African Caribbean people are not effective or satisfactory and there is a strong case for a reappraisal of the extent to which the youth service meets the needs of black teenagers and, where appropriate, for increased resources.
Recommendation: Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council should each examine the provision of facilities and support for African Caribbean parents and children, in view of the survey findings and the recommendation in Chapter III that black single parents require enhanced child-care provision to overcome disadvantage through employment (see section 3.7.5). The provisions for black teenagers and young people should also be examined and this appraisal should include consultation with the African Caribbean community and key organisations and groups.

4.2.15 The study found that black people are relatively satisfied with the provision of sports and leisure services, and very high satisfaction ratings were recorded on libraries and museums. However, there is more discontentment with services and facilities in the areas in which black people live with two-thirds of those in the survey saying they do not meet the needs of African Caribbean people. Among the improvements that are required are more facilities of a higher standard, more black staff, and better publicity and communication between neighbourhood centres and black people.

Recommendation: The city and district councils should review neighbourhood services and facilities available for black people considering the comments and suggestions made in response to the survey. In particular, the suggestion for improved publicity, communication and consultation should be pursued.

4.2.16 The Leicestershire African Caribbean survey found relatively high levels of dissatisfaction with the operation of the city and district councils and the MORI poll found that black people were more dissatisfied than white or Asian people. The principal reasons for the dissatisfaction were the quality of service delivery, failure to consult sufficiently widely, and unfair treatment of black people. As would be expected, the levels of satisfaction of African Caribbean people vary considerably between services, with the lowest levels for council housing and support and advice for black people wishing to start their own businesses. There are also high levels of dissatisfaction with the operation of equal opportunities policies and help and assistance for minorities.

4.2.17 The data show higher levels of satisfaction with the county council, although nearly half the respondents to the African Caribbean survey said they were not satisfied. Reasons for this included lack of community consultation and participation, insufficient resources, too much bureaucracy and lack of information from the county council. In addition to education (see section 4.2.2 of this
summary), services about which particular concern was expressed were care of the elderly (see section 4.2.13), planning, and the police service (see section 4.2.9).

4.2.18 A common theme that has emerged from the research is the lack of information from, and consultation by, the local authorities. A majority of black people consider they are badly informed about local government issues and the MORI survey of Leicester residents discovered that 43 per cent of black people said the City Council provides a limited amount of information, or not much at all, which was significantly higher than the figure for white and Asians. Large majorities of people in the African Caribbean survey did not know their county and city/district councillors’ names, and half the black people in the MORI sample did not know how to contact their local councillor. The most important source of information for respondents to the African Caribbean survey was the Leicester Mercury, followed by the Leicestershire African Caribbean Newsletter. This was published as part of the research project but, with the end of funding, no longer appears. It is, however, clear that there is a great need for such a publication on a regular basis, to enable the more effective provision of information by the local authorities and other bodies, to publicise sources of advice and support, to facilitate publicity for events, and to promote debate within the African Caribbean community on central issues.

Recommendation: The local authorities should investigate how the provision of information for African Caribbean people can be improved. In particular, representatives of the black community and Leicester City Council should re-establish the Leicestershire African Caribbean Newsletter, on a firm organisational and financial foundation.

4.2.19 The evidence shows that black people are much less satisfied with their contacts with City Council departments than other sections of the population, with three out of five people in the MORI poll saying they were dissatisfied with the outcome of their contact. It is not clear why black people should have these less positive contacts, which could be related to the principal department involved (housing), or to discriminatory attitudes by officers, or to lack of information and guidance.

Recommendation: Leicester City Council should investigate the reasons for the higher levels of adverse contacts of black people with council departments, by comparison with white and Asian people, and take action to overcome the problems.

4.2.20 Over half the black people in the survey did not know of an African Caribbean organisation or group in their locality. This indicates the need for greater publicity
and improved levels of communication within the African Caribbean community and is further evidence of the need for the re-establishment of the Leicestershire African Caribbean Newsletter. It may also indicate the need for greater funding and support for African Caribbean organisations.

Data from the survey show that African Caribbean people consider they have low levels of political voice, in comparison with white and Asian people, and have little if any influence over what is decided by local government. A very high proportion of African Caribbean people in the survey (81.3%) said they were dissatisfied with the amount and quality of consultation by their local council. Other evidence, such as the lack of information on local government issues and on how to contact local councillors, and the low levels of turnout in the general election, support the view that black people have lower levels of political influence than other groups. The research has shown that African Caribbean people would like to see action taken to improve their political voice, including the appointment of black advisers to council committees, and the creation of an African Caribbean Consultative Forum. The most favoured suggestion in the survey was the election of more black councillors, which makes the absence of any African Caribbean councillors on Leicester City Council and other authorities particularly regrettable. It is therefore appropriate to reiterate the two recommendations that appear at the end of Chapter III of the Final Report (see sections 3.2.11 and 3.2.12 of this summary).

**Recommendation:** As a matter of priority, Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council, and other district councils as appropriate, should each establish an African Caribbean Policy Unit. Each unit should include black officers with expertise in a range of relevant areas of policy, including education, housing, social services, arts, sports and leisure, and community safety and security. The brief of each unit would include liaison with African Caribbean organisations, groups and the wider community, the provision of specialist advice to council committees and departments, and the implementation and monitoring of policies which promote equal opportunities for black people.

**Recommendation:** Leicester City Council should establish an African Caribbean Consultative Forum, which should include other key service providers and representatives of the black community and organisations. Serviced by the City Council's African Caribbean Policy Unit, the Forum should meet regularly to discuss the experiences and needs of African Caribbean people and to act as a two-way channel between black people and the local authority and other service providers. The establishment of such a Forum should serve to improve the flow of information, and to
increase the political voice and influence of the black community, and may assist in promoting the selection of African Caribbean people as candidates for election to the City Council. By bringing major service providers together with representatives of the black community, the Forum should act as a means of promoting and developing complementary policies and a more coherent approach for tackling the high levels of disadvantage and discrimination experienced by African Caribbean people, evidence of which is documented in this Report.
African Caribbean People in Leicestershire: Empowering the Community

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Independent study: As outlined in section 1 of this summary, concern that the needs of black people in Leicestershire were not being effectively addressed led to the establishment of the research project. The initiative came from the Afrikan Caribbean Support Group, which had campaigned for an independent study of the experiences, needs and views of African Caribbean people in the county.

5.1.2 Research aims: The basic aim of the project has been to examine and assess the experiences and needs of African Caribbean people, and their opinions on what action should be taken to improve matters. As such, the project has investigated a range of local authority services, other public-sector provision including health and policing, the effects of central government policies, and the role of some voluntary-sector bodies. Within the limitations imposed on the project by time and resources, it has not been possible to include a detailed examination of private-sector organisations, although it should be stressed that the evidence in the Final Report shows that the private-sector has a vital role to play if real racial equality and equal opportunities are to be achieved.

5.2 Social and Economic Disadvantage

5.2.1 Depth and scale of the disadvantage: The study has revealed the depth and scale of the inequality experienced by African Caribbean people in Leicestershire. The evidence in Chapter III of the Final Report shows that on every objective measure that is available black people as a group suffer economic and social disadvantage. Any impartial observer must surely find the strength of the evidence to be compelling – and the extent of the inequalities to be appalling.
5.2.2 Unemployment: The disadvantage of African Caribbean people is particularly evident in the very high levels of unemployment amongst black men, which the study found to be nearly three times greater than for white men. The position is especially acute in the case of young African Caribbean men, with the data showing nearly four out of ten (38%) black men under the age of 25 years out of work. As discussed in Chapter III of the Final Report, there are good reasons to believe that the Census data underestimated the scale of the problem. There is no evidence to suppose that the relative position of black people has improved, and the findings from the Leicestershire African Caribbean survey indicate that in fact the position may have deteriorated after the Census was taken.

5.2.3 Job status: Disadvantage is also evident among black people who do have jobs. The data show that greater proportions of African Caribbean than white people are in manual and lower non-manual occupations and correspondingly lower proportions are employers and managers, and professional workers. The figures also show that much lower proportions of black people than white and Asian people are self-employed.

5.2.4 Income and wealth: The evidence of the social and economic disadvantage of African Caribbean people in Leicestershire, documented in Chapter III of the Final Report, is overwhelming. It is found in every area examined. As revealed by both the Census and the Leicestershire African Caribbean survey, the economic position of black people is considerably worse than that of white people. On one generally accepted measure of income and wealth, only 47 per cent of black households have access to a car compared to 71 per cent of all households in the county. Whereas 12 per cent of white households with children in Leicestershire are lone-parent families, the figure for black households with children is 37 per cent and, given the links between lone-parent families and poverty established by national studies, the high proportion of black single-parent households is another indicator of socio-economic disadvantage.

5.2.5 Health: The available figures show that African Caribbean people are over-represented in medical and care establishments and higher rates suffer from long-term illnesses than in the rest of the population.

5.2.6 Other institutions: There is also a great over-representation of black people in prisons and children’s homes in the county.

5.2.7 National studies: The economic and social position of African Caribbean people in Leicestershire, revealed by the data in Chapter III of the Final Report, fully accords with the national picture outlined in Chapter II. The national studies and
data cited show that black people in Britain suffer inequalities in income, the labour market, education, housing, the criminal justice system, social services and welfare, and health. The data in Chapter III show that this is also the position in Leicestershire.

5.2.8 Other disadvantage: Chapter IV of the Final Report documents further evidence of the social and economic disadvantage of black people in Leicestershire. In comparison with white and Asian people, much higher proportions of African Caribbean households live in local-authority and housing-association properties and there are correspondingly lower levels of owner-occupiers. The available figures indicate that black people suffer higher levels of crime and racial harassment is a particular source of concern. This is mentioned further in section 5.3.5.

5.2.9 Education: The data reported in the Final Report show there is widespread dissatisfaction amongst African Caribbean people with the educational system in Leicestershire and the treatment that black schoolchildren receive. This is the subject of a separate report, entitled Education Matters (Leicester: Scarman Centre, 1996), which includes 14 recommendations for action.

5.2.10 Lack of action on unemployment: The findings of the study indicate that the high levels of unemployment amongst African Caribbean men and women is the most pressing problem. With unemployment rates of 20 per cent or more, significant numbers of black people will continue to suffer low incomes and the consequent economic and social deprivation. The lack of jobs also affects the power and status of black people and undermines hopes and aspirations. The position of young black people is particularly acute and it is not surprising that the survey found that education is the issue of greatest concern to African Caribbean people in Leicestershire, as this is seen as the means whereby young black people may improve their employment prospects. It must be reported that it is not clear that central government, the local authorities, the TEC or other agencies, are as yet tackling the problem of black unemployment, particularly of young people, sufficiently vigorously or effectively.

5.2.11 Unacceptable levels of inequality: The extent of the African Caribbean disadvantage and inequality revealed in this Report is shocking and should be regarded as unacceptable by all Leicestershire citizens, and particularly by those in positions of authority. As things stand, black people are being prevented from realising their potential, from enjoying the complete rights and benefits of citizenship, and from making their full contribution to Leicestershire society.
5.3 Discrimination and Racism

5.3.1 Discrimination in Britain: One of the major reasons for the disadvantage and exclusion of African Caribbean people at both the national and local levels appears to be racial discrimination. There are many national studies which show that black people continue to be discriminated against in different fields, including employment, education, housing, and the criminal justice system. A number of the relevant studies are cited in Chapter II of the Final Report.

5.3.2 Discrimination in Leicestershire: The data in Chapters III and IV of the Final Report show that discrimination against African Caribbean people in Leicestershire continues to be a widespread problem. Nearly two-thirds of the survey respondents (65%) reported that they had experienced racial discrimination in areas such as employment (42%), housing (31%), education (10%), policing (7%), leisure (6%), banks and financial institutions (2%) and immigration (1%).

5.3.3 Employment: The principal field in which discrimination affects black people is employment. The data show that a significant number of African Caribbean people in the survey believed they had been unfairly overlooked for promotion because of racial discrimination and nearly nine out of ten of those who had experienced difficulty gaining employment said discrimination was the reason. Racial discrimination is thus a major factor in explaining the much higher rates of African Caribbean unemployment and the findings, mentioned in section 5.2.3 and reported in more detail in Chapter III of the Final Report, that black people are disproportionately employed in manual work and lower-waged jobs and are not proportionately represented in management and higher grades.

5.3.4 Education and housing: The findings also highlight the problems of discrimination which African Caribbean people experience in education and housing. A majority of the survey sample said that the educational system is failing black children and two-thirds of these (67.5%) identified racism and discrimination as the major cause. Despite the attempts by the Local Education Authority and schools to combat discrimination, and to promote multi-cultural and multi-racial education, it is clear that considerable problems remain. Discrimination in housing affects black people in a number of ways, ranging from allocation and repairs and maintenance of council housing, to dealings with banks, building societies and other mortgage-lending institutions.

5.3.5 Racial harassment: A particular problem raised during the research is racial harassment and abuse. Evidence reported in the Final Report shows that one in
ten of the black people interviewed in Leicester had experienced racial harassment during the previous 12 months. These figures accord with national data, which also show that higher proportions of black people suffer from household crime and personal crime than white people. Nearly a quarter of African Caribbean people in the MORI poll said they were fearful of racial harassment.

5.3.6 **Racism in Britain**: Throughout the *Final Report*, alongside the data on inequality and disadvantage, there is powerful evidence of the pernicious problem of discrimination against black people and its nasty companion racism. There has been a long history of racist ideology and this is deeply entrenched in British society. It has become clear during the course of the research that racism in Leicestershire is a continuing problem which affects African Caribbean people and underlies the discrimination which they experience.

5.3.7 **Racism in Leicestershire**: The study has found considerable evidence of the continuing problem of racism in Leicestershire and its impact. In the African Caribbean survey, over half the respondents said Leicestershire is racist or very racist, and this accords with information and examples from discussion groups and interviews. The effects can be seen in the views of the third of black people in the survey who said they intended to emigrate from Leicestershire to the Caribbean or Africa. When asked their reasons, the largest number (35%) said it was because ‘I feel I do not belong in Britain’. That such a significant number of black British citizens feel they do not belong in Leicestershire is surely a startling and disconcerting discovery, which is a telling indication of their experiences of racism and disadvantage.

5.3.8 **Covert racism**: As well as being open, racism may also be covert, and in some cases it may be unintended or unrealised. It may occur as institutional racism, in which the effects are discrimination and unequal treatment. In many respects, these insidious forms of racism and discrimination are more difficult to root out and eradicate and are thus potentially more dangerous and damaging. The results can be seen in the continued socio-economic disadvantage experienced by black people.

5.3.9 **Countering racism**: The results of the research show that, despite some claims to the contrary, racism remains a powerful force for harm in Leicestershire and adversely affects the lives of black citizens. This underlines the recommendation for the local authorities to institute a concerted and sustained campaign to combat discrimination and racism (see section 4.2.5 of this summary).
5.4 The Role of the Local Authorities

5.4.1 Locational disadvantage: Black people also experience inequalities as a result of the areas in which many African Caribbean people live. This geographical or locational disadvantage is clearly evident in Leicester, as discussed in Chapter III of the Final Report (see sections 3.1.7–3.1.10 of this summary). There are nine wards in which African Caribbean people constitute more than the city average of 2.4% of the population. These vary in terms of socio-economic characteristics, but there are certain forms of deprivation which many of the wards have in common. Unemployment is above average in the five areas with the highest proportions of black people and in the top four car ownership is below average. Six of the wards have above-average numbers of young children and eight of them have higher than average proportions of the population aged 5 to 19 years. In five of the wards the percentage of households which are lone parents with children is above average. The proportion of owner-occupied housing is below average in four of the wards, while the percentage of overcrowded households is above average in four of the wards. The Census data clearly indicate the particular problems and special needs of the nine wards in Leicester in which above-average numbers of African Caribbean people live.

5.4.2 Special needs of Wycliffe ward: The ward with the highest proportion of African Caribbean residents (8.9%) stands out as having particularly acute socio-economic problems. In Wycliffe ward unemployment is much higher than the Leicester average, whereas self-employment is lower; there are more young children and teenagers and the proportion of households which is lone parents is twice the Leicester average; the figure for car ownership is low; owner-occupation is much lower and council housing much higher than the average for Leicester; the percentages for overcrowding and the permanently sick are twice the city average. Thus, according to every single measure used, the ward with the highest proportion of black residents is suffering from high levels of deprivation and special needs, which require a sustained level of public and private investment and resources. In order to tackle the disadvantage of black people in Leicestershire, it would be sensible for central and local government to target the locational disadvantage revealed by these data and devote the necessary efforts and resources to improving matters in Wycliffe ward.

5.4.3 Inadequate action: These comments echo those in Chapter III of the First Interim Report, where it was found that despite various attempts by the local authorities and the City Action Team much more remained to be done. The First Interim Report noted that action had been piecemeal and lacked co-ordination and
policies were characterised by a short-term approach, inadequate resources and lack of consultation and involvement. One of the recommendations was for a more vigorous, co-ordinated campaign, with greater resources, and it seems clear that this continues to be needed, particularly in Wycliffe ward.

5.4.4 **Action on locational disadvantage:** It is clear that the public authorities at both local and central levels have a crucial role to play in the fight to overcome the disadvantage experienced by African Caribbean people in Leicestershire. One recommendation (see section 3.2.2 of this summary) is for a campaign to combat black unemployment and this could and should be extended to include a broader attack on black disadvantage in particular localities. There is a great deal that could be achieved if a real, co-ordinated, effort were to be made. However, the research project has found that at present the geographical causes of black disadvantage are not being overcome.

5.4.5 **Dissatisfaction with equal opportunities policies:** It is also clear from the evidence collected and analysed for this study that discrimination against African Caribbean people is not as yet being effectively tackled. Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council and the other local authorities have equal opportunities policies and some progress has been made, both in terms of recruitment to jobs and in changes to training and working practices. However, the survey of African Caribbean people in Leicestershire found that three-quarters of black people were dissatisfied with their city or district council’s equal opportunities policy.

5.4.6 **Ethnic monitoring:** The data in Chapters III and IV of the Final Report show that African Caribbean people do not experience equal opportunities in terms of employment or in terms of services and outcomes. It is essential that comprehensive and reliable ethnic monitoring is practised if equal opportunities policies are going to make any real progress, but it is unfortunately apparent that in many respects this does not yet occur. For example, the results of ethnic monitoring of educational achievements in schools, of different dimensions of council housing, of health provision and of policing, are not available. In the private sector it is difficult to find evidence of ethnic monitoring of employment, let alone service delivery. It cannot be stressed too strongly that serious attempts to overcome the disadvantage and discrimination of African Caribbean people in Leicestershire require effective and comprehensive ethnic monitoring and this is not happening.

5.4.7 **Combating racism:** As discussed in section 5.3.8, the local authorities also need to take the lead in combating racism. The survey of African Caribbean people found that the most favoured suggestion for combating racism was improved
multi-cultural and multi-racial education, for children and adults, followed by strengthening of equal opportunities policies, greater unity and common purpose amongst the ethnic minority groups, and fairer employment practices.

5.4.8 **Positive action:** Of central importance in any effective strategy to overcome disadvantage is positive action to assist those experiencing unequal opportunities. The Leicestershire African Caribbean survey found that four out of five black people with an opinion were dissatisfied with the help offered to ethnic minorities by the local authorities. The study has identified many ways in which local and central government could implement positive action to assist black people, and a number of these were highlighted in the recommendations in the First Interim Report. They include better support for people wishing to start businesses and improved training which is more widely available for black people. Another example, mentioned in section 4.2.14 of this summary, is to provide improved child-care facilities which would assist black lone parents to pursue employment and training opportunities.

5.4.9 **Action to overcome unequal opportunities:** Positive action does not mean positive or reverse discrimination. It entails taking action to overcome disadvantage to provide equal opportunities. This requires identification of the nature of the disadvantage, consultation with the affected group to ascertain their views, development and implementation of policies to assist them, monitoring of how the policies work in practice and modification where necessary. As such, positive action requires a strong political commitment, appropriate mechanisms for consultation and involvement, strong structures for implementation and monitoring, and sufficient resources. This study has gone some way towards the first two stages of positive action – identification of the extent and nature of the disadvantage and a survey of black people's views – but it now requires the development and implementation of appropriate policies, the establishment of effective monitoring procedures and the provision of the necessary resources.

5.4.10 **African Caribbean Policy Units:** As recommended in Chapters III and IV of the Final Report (see sections 3.2.11 and 4.2.21 of this summary), the basis for real action on black disadvantage and discrimination would be the establishment of African Caribbean Policy Units by the local authorities. These would provide the impetus for positive action. They would offer specialist advice to council committees, undertake liaison with the African Caribbean community and other organisations, and monitor the implementation of policies to promote equal opportunities for black people. The creation of an African Caribbean Consultative Forum (see sections 3.2.12 and 4.2.21) is also important.
5.4.11 **Support for African Caribbean projects:** The African Caribbean Policy Units would also play an important role in supporting and monitoring African Caribbean projects funded by the local authorities. Chapters III and IV of the *First Interim Report* highlighted the problems experienced by many black projects in Leicester as a result of short-term funding and the consequent uncertainty and loss of good staff to more secure jobs. Short-term and inadequate resources have meant that projects have been unable to meet expectations or to develop to meet the demands and the *First Interim Report* recommended that projects should be funded on a rolling, three-year basis (see *First Interim Report* section 3.8.6). As illustrated by a number of examples, of which the most notable recent case is Imani Ujima, African Caribbean projects have also suffered from lack of financial and managerial support and advice from the local authorities. The proposed African Caribbean Policy Units would have responsibility for ensuring that such specialist support is provided for black community projects.

5.4.12 **Demographic trends:** The African Caribbean Policy Units would also undertake appropriate research to ensure that the local authorities’ policies took account of special needs and projected developments within the black population. One example is the demographic data, reported in Chapter III of the *Final Report*, which show a significant rise in black people over retirement age and a rise of 40 per cent in black teenagers during the next ten years. Given the dissatisfaction with care of the elderly reported in Chapter IV of the *Final Report*, and the wish to see improved facilities for teenagers, the demographic data merit further analysis which should be used to inform the planning of relevant local authority services.

5.4.13 **Real commitment:** There is much that the public authorities can do to combat black disadvantage and discrimination, and to promote equal opportunities in the widest sense, but this requires a co-ordinated campaign, involving central and local government, the health and police authorities, private-sector and voluntary organisations, working with the African Caribbean community. Such a campaign will only succeed if it is based on a proper understanding of the problems and is effectively targeted. It requires rigorous implementation and monitoring, and adaptation as necessary. Above all, it requires real commitment by the local authorities and other agencies and the wholehearted support and involvement of the African Caribbean community.
5.5 Political Representation and Influence

5.5.1 Lack of influence: In addition to social and economic disadvantage, the study has found that African Caribbean people in Leicestershire also experience inequality in political representation and influence. This accords with the national position. In Leicestershire, black people are a minority within a minority and the evidence indicates that their views are frequently overlooked or ignored, while those of other, larger, ethnic groups are heard. In interviews and discussion groups, many black people drew attention to the lack of influence of African Caribbeans on the decisions of local councils and other public agencies and the survey found that the largest proportion of respondents (48%) did not believe that African Caribbean people have an effective political voice in comparison with other ethnic groups. It has become clear during the study that improved organisation and mobilisation by the black community is required, but positive action by the local authorities is also needed, to develop the means for more visible and effective political representation and influence of African Caribbean people. This is necessary to ensure that more account is taken of the needs of the black community and that better decisions are reached, and also to develop higher levels of legitimacy of the local political system.

5.5.2 African Caribbean Consultative Forum: Nearly three-quarters (72%) of the black people in the survey did not consider they had any say in what is decided by local government and these findings are supported by other qualitative data from the research which show that African Caribbean people believe the local authorities do not take notice of the views or needs of black people. The most popular suggestion to improve matters was the election of more black councillors and this makes the absence of any African Caribbean councillors on Leicester City Council particularly regrettable. Other proposals included the establishment of an African Caribbean Consultative Forum and the appointment of black advisers to council committees. The creation of a Consultative Forum is recommended in Chapters III and IV of the Final Report (see sections 3.2.12 and 4.2.21 of this summary) and the provision of appropriate advice to council committees accords with the recommendation, also made in Chapters III and IV, to establish African Caribbean Policy Units, as discussed further in sections 5.4.9–5.4.11 of the current Chapter.

5.5.3 Channels of communication: It is clear from the research that at present there is considerable dissatisfaction amongst African Caribbean people with the provision of information by the local authorities. This is evident in findings from the survey and in data from the MORI poll of Leicester residents, in which 43 per cent of black people said the city council did not provide sufficient information.
which was a significantly higher level of dissatisfaction than for whites or Asians. The study has also found dissatisfaction with the amount of information provided by the county, city and district councils on particular services and activities, such as neighbourhood centres and education. The evidence supports the view that the local authorities should take the necessary steps to improve channels of communication with black people and the proposed African Caribbean Consultative Forum and African Caribbean Policy Units would help to achieve this. Also of particular importance, in the view of this study, is the re-establishment of the Leicestershire African Caribbean Newsletter (see section 4.2.18 of this summary).

5.5.4 Dissatisfaction with consultation: The proposed measures would also assist the local authorities to increase the amount and quality of consultation with the black community. That this is needed is evinced by the survey finding that over four out of five African Caribbean people (81%) are dissatisfied with consultation of black residents by their local council.

5.5.5 Groups and organisations: African Caribbean groups and organisations are important means of enabling the local authorities to consult the black community. They also provide channels of communication so that black people can express their views and opinions and campaign for improvements. The survey of African Caribbean people found that over a third (36%) of the sample belonged to a community organisation, which is a relatively high level of participation, but over a half the respondents (57%) did not know of any local black group. This is further evidence of the need for the re-establishment of the Leicestershire African Caribbean Newsletter to enable greater publicity and communication within the black community. The importance of groups as channels of communication and means of consultation underlines the need for the local authorities to provide support, advice and, when necessary, resources to assist black groups.

5.5.6 Lack of political voice: The concern amongst African Caribbean people about the lack of effective political voice has been a recurring issue during the research project. The evidence indicates that this concern is well-founded. One obvious problem is that there appears to be no single organisation which is able to speak for the African Caribbean community. As noted in the First Interim Report, the local authorities and statutory bodies often have difficulty in identifying the individuals or groups with which they should deal and this makes communication and consultation difficult (see First Interim Report, section 2.6.7).

5.5.7 Community unity: The fundamental unifying features of African Caribbean people in Leicestershire are their common experiences, history and culture, but the community is also characterised by diversity (see First Interim Report, sections
2.7.1–2.7.3 and 4.3.1–4.4.5). Island loyalties are strong and rivalries between
groups and individuals may exist. As in any community, there may be differences
between people on the basis of factors such as sex, age, religion and politics. There
may also be differences on policy issues and decisions on particular proposals and
projects. Diversity is a feature of any vigorous community, but differences may
weaken the ability of black people to campaign effectively and exercise political
influence. The findings of the research show that a desire for greater community
unity is widely held amongst African Caribbean people.

5.5.8 Unifying body: As part of the research, people and groups were asked how they
thought greater unity and the means to speak with one voice when necessary
might be achieved. A frequent response was that an effective community
structure is required. One widely-favoured proposal was for a federal arrange-
ment which would involve different groups and organisations. Evidence pre-
sented to the study indicates that it is unlikely that any existing group would be
able to perform this role effectively and so it would appear that a new organisation
is required. Key issues about such a body include its constitution, membership
and structure, its role and responsibilities, and its resources, staffing and
management. The findings of the research show that without such a unifying
body black people will continue to experience low levels of political voice and
influence.

Recommendation: A new organisational structure should be established to
enable the African Caribbean community to speak with one voice when
necessary, and thereby to exercise greater political influence on decisions
made by the local authorities and other public and private-sector organi-
sations.

5.6 Empowering the Community

5.6.1 Exerting pressure: One of the principal conclusions of the research project is
that the black community needs to be empowered so that greater pressure can be
exerted for much-needed improvements and more influence can be applied over
decisions that affect African Caribbean people. As noted in the previous section,
if this is to happen there needs to be greater unity, so that black people together
have more political voice when necessary. There is much evidence to support the
view that unity increases strength for any minority group.
5.6.2 **Structures and leadership:** Unity does not, of course, mean agreement on everything, but it does entail a common purpose and the organisational structures to promote community development, to facilitate mutual assistance, to develop coherent strategies and to enable black people to speak with one voice. Unity and effective political voice also require good leadership by people who are prepared to listen to different views, develop common ground and approaches, and persuade others of the need for agreement in the common cause.

5.6.3 **Benefits for local authorities:** Empowerment of the African Caribbean community is also in the interests of the local authorities. If policies are to be formulated and implemented successfully the black community must be more fully involved and, as previously discussed, this requires improved communication and provision of information by the local councils and a willingness to listen and act. The efforts will need to be considerable but the potential benefits are great, in terms of better decisions, greater effectiveness, increased prosperity and more choice and opportunity.

5.6.4 **Positive approach:** The conclusions and recommendations in the Final Report are a starting point for a better future for African Caribbean people in Leicestershire. However, they require commitment and action to translate them into real progress. The local authorities, particularly Leicester City Council, need to adopt a positive approach and commit the necessary time and resources to improve the provisions for African Caribbean people. There are some encouraging signs, but there is much further to go in terms of building a real partnership between the local authorities and the African Caribbean community.

5.6.5 **Appropriate mechanisms:** The development of appropriate mechanisms and structures is crucial if genuine progress is to be made. African Caribbean people need the means to promote unity and effective political voice. African Caribbean Policy Units in the local authorities are required to facilitate liaison with black people, to develop and monitor appropriate policies, and to provide advice and assistance for black groups and projects. The African Caribbean Consultative Forum is needed to bring different service providers together to develop coherent approaches in consultation with the black community.

5.6.6 **Scepticism:** It should be recognised that there are high levels of scepticism amongst African Caribbean people in Leicestershire about whether central and local government really has the commitment necessary to set up the mechanisms, pursue the policies and earmark the resources that are required. The research has found frequent criticisms of the failure of the public authorities to implement
recommendations of previous studies. Attention has also been drawn to the Report of the Home Affairs Select Committee in 1981 which stated that Leicester's black community had been 'largely overlooked' and said that it was disturbing that the local councils had not bothered to act more vigorously (see First Interim Report section 4.6.1). Some people interviewed for the research project believe that the position is little different today.

5.6.7 **Mistrust and dissatisfaction:** The study has also found high levels of mistrust of central and local government, particularly amongst younger African Caribbean people. The low rates of turnout in the last general election, reported in Chapter IV of the Final Report, may be a reflection of this lack of faith and trust. Alongside these low levels of confidence in the political system are high levels of dissatisfaction in local government services and activities, reported in the Final Report. One reason for this dissatisfaction is almost certainly the failure to meet expectations, while other causes are the lack of adequate advice, support and resources, and the short-term funding and uncertainty, for black projects. The failure to develop meaningful community participation and involvement has also contributed to the high levels of mistrust and lack of satisfaction.

5.6.8 **Complacency on racial equality issues:** It must also be noted that the study has found that, to some extent, a somewhat complacent attitude on racial equality issues appears to have developed within local and central government. This perhaps reflects a view, which seems to be increasingly prevalent in wider society, that racial inequality is no longer an important issue and that the problems have been largely overcome. According to this view, which has been expressed in some of the mass media and by some politicians, opportunities are available for black people if only they would stop complaining and make the most of them. However, even a cursory examination of the evidence categorically refutes the assertion that racial equality has been established in Britain.

5.6.9 **Real freedom of choice and equal opportunities:** The evidence in Chapters III and IV of the Final Report shows the extensive socio-economic disadvantage of African Caribbean people in Leicestershire. This is caused by lack of opportunities, discrimination and racism, and in some respects by geographical location. The extent of the inequalities revealed in this study is shocking. It stands as an indictment of the failure of the political, social and economic system to ensure that real freedom of choice and equal opportunities are available to all citizens, regardless of their race. Disadvantage and discrimination undermine the ability of people to fulfil their potential and to make a full contribution to the wider society. In short, effective equal opportunities are necessary if Leicestershire and its people are to prosper.
5.6.10 **Time for action:** There is much that can be done to improve the circumstances of black people in Leicestershire and to create real choices and opportunities. This requires positive action to combat disadvantage, discrimination and racism, on the basis of focused policies targeted on particular problems. It needs appropriate mechanisms to ensure vigorous implementation of policies and comprehensive and reliable monitoring of their effects. It necessitates a partnership between black people and the local authorities, involving other public, voluntary and private-sector organisations as appropriate. Above all else, it requires a real commitment by local government and empowerment of black people, so that the impetus for reform can be sustained. With such an approach, there is no reason why equal opportunities should not become a reality for African Caribbean people in Leicestershire. It is now time for action.
Appendix: Publications from the Project

A large number of publications have been produced during the African Caribbean People in Leicestershire research project. The following is a list of the principal publications.

*Progress Report for the City Action Team*  
*Introduction to the Study*  
*Draft First Interim Report* ISBN 1 874493 05 7  
*African Caribbean People in Leicestershire* ISBN 1 874493 00 6  
*Leicestershire African Caribbean Newsletter* Issue 1 ISSN 0966 3088  
*Leicestershire African Caribbean Newsletter* Issue 2 ISSN 0966 3088  
*First Interim Report – Revised* ISBN 1 874493 05 7  
*Leicestershire African Caribbean Newsletter* Issue 3 ISSN 0966 3088  
*Leicestershire African Caribbean Newsletter* Issue 4 ISSN 0966 3088  
*First Interim Report – Revised and Updated* ISBN 1 874493 05 7  
*Leicestershire African Caribbean Newsletter* Issue 5 ISSN 0966 3088  
*Leicestershire African Caribbean Newsletter* Issue 6 ISSN 0966 3088  
*Leicestershire African Caribbean Newsletter* Issue 7 ISSN 0966 3088  
*Leicestershire African Caribbean Newsletter* Issue 8 ISSN 0966 3088

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