



# **“Join Us, Join In” More Accessible Summary of Manchester People First Equalities Board Research Project**

**Clare Bonetree  
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*Led by:*

**Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisation**

St Thomas Centre  
Ardwick Green North  
Manchester M12 6FZ  
[www.ambitionforageing.org.uk](http://www.ambitionforageing.org.uk)

0161 277 1000  
[ambitionforageing@gmcvo.org.uk](mailto:ambitionforageing@gmcvo.org.uk)  
[@afageing](https://twitter.com/afageing)



## Glossary / List of new terms

- AFA** = Ambition for Ageing  
= a new Greater Manchester programme that aims to make communities more age-friendly and improve older people's quality of life
- audit** = check
- BAME** = Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic  
= anyone in the UK who does not identify as White British
- Commissioning**  
= choosing someone to do a special piece of work
- EB** = Equalities Board
- Equalities Research Co-ordinators**  
= the AFA staff supporting the Equalities Board
- LDL** = Local Delivery Area: the areas around Greater Manchester where the Ambition for Ageing community development projects are working
- Manchester People First**  
=
- marginalised**  
= not noticed by the majority, or treated as if they are not important by the majority

## Background to the research projects & timeline

In 2017 the Equalities Research Co-ordinators visited the LDLs and noticed that there were gaps in how well the projects were reaching people from Black and minority ethnic (BAME) and other very marginalised communities.

AFA gave £1,500 each for research by community-based organisations into issues that they wanted to understand better. The Equalities Board held a commissioning process to decide which research project ideas should get funding.

July  
2017

- Call for research project proposals.

Aug  
2017

- 9 research proposals submitted, 8 shortlisted.
- EB Executive Group selected 5 proposals for presentation at event.

Sept  
2017

- 5 organisations presented research proposals at AFA event.
- Audience vote for 3 projects to fund.

Oct  
2017

- GMCVO decided to fund all 5 shortlisted projects.

Nov-  
Feb 18

- Projects carried out: Interviews, focus groups, workshops, training.

# “Join Us, Join In”

## Manchester People First accessibility research project

### What did Manchester People First want to find out?

- How to make meetings better for people with learning difficulties.
- How to develop training and resources about making meetings more accessible for people with learning difficulties.
- How to develop training for people with learning difficulties to take part in meetings

### What was the context for this research?

Over the last 25 years it has become more common and usual to ask people with learning difficulties for their views about services.

This means service providers often invite people with learning difficulties to come to meetings, but the meetings are not always easy to understand, so they cannot play a full part in them.

**“It has become more common and is now usual to ask people with learning difficulties for their views about services.”**

### How they did the research and what they found out

6 staff from the MPF accessibility audit team went to 3 meetings to see how the meetings were run, and how information was given before and during the meetings. 4 of the staff have learning difficulties. The team identified a few barriers for people with learning difficulties taking part in meetings.

After doing the research:



- MPF held a workshop for members to try out ways to avoid issues that had made observed meetings less accessible & develop skills for effectively participating in meetings.



- MPF produced a guide called Making Information Easier For Everyone that explains things like:
  - How to keep language short and simple
  - How to make layout clean and simple
  - How to use images to make information easier to understand

Link to guide online here: <https://lgbt.foundation/ambition-for-ageing/publications>



- MPF produced a guide called Ideas for Better Meetings, that explains:
  - How to publicise meetings
  - How to choose a venue
  - How to conduct meetings, write agendas, schedule agenda items
  - How to produce minutes

Link to online guide here: <https://lgbt.foundation/ambition-for-ageing/publications>

- Gave a presentation to the Equalities Board on how to make meetings accessible.

## Main conclusions

Meetings can be made more accessible and better for everyone by thinking about how to present information clearly and simply.

### What next?

In May 2018, MPF held a second members' workshop to build their members' meeting skills. During the summer they will hold a third members' meeting to develop a set of Manchester People First 'house rules' for meetings.

## Equalities Board next steps

### Sharing the research results

We aim to make the research results accessible to people who can use them to improve life for older people in their communities, and people who can use them to improve the work of Ambition for Ageing. All the full reports and accessible reports will be available to read on the Equalities Board website: <https://lgbt.foundation/ambition-for-ageing/publications>

### More community-based research

These projects showed that community-based research is an important way to find out about the needs of the most marginalised people. AFA will be funding more research like this later in 2018.