

“Our Elders, Our Salford”

Equalities Board Ageing Equally? Research Project

by Visible Outcomes

Summary report

This is an easier to read summary of the Ageing Equally? research report by Visible Outcomes.

It contains some background to the research, the main findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

We have written it to help people understand the research more easily, and to make it easier to use the research findings to make places better for older people.



Glossary

Ambition for Ageing (AfA) = a Greater Manchester programme that aims to make communities more age-friendly and improve older people's quality of life

BME / BAME = Black and Minority Ethnic, or Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic. These are the usual terms used to describe people of non-white descent.

Communities of identity or experience = a group of people who share a common identity or experience (e.g. Bangladeshi people, LGBT people, or people living with dementia)

Data = information

Equalities Board (EB) = the group responsible for making AfA inclusive and accessible for everyone

GMCVO = Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisations, the organisation that is responsible for managing the Ambition for Ageing programme

Identity = your sense of your self

Inclusion = working in such a way that marginalised and minority groups are involved and able to participate in or benefit from a programme.

Interviewee = someone who is interviewed for a research project

Mainstream = catering for the majority, not specialised

Marginalised = the result of being pushed to the margins of society: excluded or ignored

Minority = a group of people who are different in some way from the majority of the population

Mosque = Place of worship for Muslims

Multilingual = able to speak more than two languages

Participant = someone who takes part in a project

Person Seeking Asylum / Asylum Seeker = A person who has fled her / his own country and applies to the government of another country for protection (asylum)

Refugee = A person who has sought asylum and has been given refugee status. This normally means being granted Leave to Remain in the UK for five years. At the end of that period can apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain.

1. Introduction and background

Visible Outcomes

Visible Outcomes is a social enterprise that was set up by Salford Refugee Forum to help its members with training and access to employment. It also conducts community-based consultations and research with BAME communities.

Context

According to the National Census 2011, BAME people are around 15%, or just under one sixth of the local population. Over 16,000 people in Salford do not speak English as their main language, and there are over 70 languages spoken in the area. The BAME population in Salford is very diverse and includes different communities.

In 2016 the BAME Salford Health Needs report estimated that the BAME population of Salford will double by 2051, with a large increase in the number of older people in BAME communities.

Since 2010 Salford City Council has made a lot of funding cuts. There are fewer community services and the council is not developing new services such as new specific services for new and growing communities.

Aims of the research

Visible Outcomes aimed to find out what asylum seekers and refugees aged over 50, and living in Salford, think makes a community age-friendly. They wanted to find out whether refugees and asylum seekers living in Eccles have a different experience from refugees and asylum seekers living in other parts of Salford. In Eccles there are settled communities from the same countries as the refugees.

No asylum seekers took part so the report focuses on refugees who have received leave to remain, or become British citizens.

Summary of findings

The researchers found that interviewees living in Eccles were more likely to feel that they had local services, could connect with their faith community, and were safer. They found that where people were living made no difference to their confidence in communicating in English, or to how often they interacted with family and friends or neighbours.

2. Method: How Visible Outcomes did their research

Visible Outcomes used experienced multilingual community researchers to interview 22 people living across Salford. Twelve were men and ten were women. Just under a quarter of the interviewees lived in Eccles. Just under one third lived in Central Salford, and around half lived in Swinton, Ordsall, Little Hulton or Higher Broughton. The participants were recruited through posters advertising the project in various locations, and through outreach.

All participants had refugee backgrounds. Thirteen of them had leave to remain and identified as refugees and nine had become British citizens. None of the participants were still seeking asylum at the time of the interviews.

3. Findings: What Visible Outcomes found out

a) Belonging and sense of community

The researchers found that participants living in Eccles all had a strong sense of belonging, and all agreed or strongly agreed that their neighbourhood was safe. People in other parts of Salford had more mixed responses to the question about belonging, and mostly felt that their area was not safe.

b) Local services and cultural and religious places

People living in Eccles rated their neighbourhood more highly as a place to grow older, than people in other parts of Salford. People in Central Salford gave their area a very low rating. Both Muslim and Christian interviewees living in Eccles felt that their religious needs were met. But many people living in other areas of Salford reported going out of their area into Manchester to find a place of worship. People in Eccles also gave high scores for the existence of local amenities and services, even though an important local service called Salford Link has closed down. Interviewees living in other parts of Salford gave lower scores for the question about local amenities.

c) Confidence and social interaction

There were two findings that were not related to where people lived in Salford: confidence in speaking English, and how often they interact with friends and family. Overall, about two thirds of participants said they had no problems communicating in English. The other third had come from non-English speaking countries and had little or no schooling.

About 40% of interviewees said they interact with family, friends and neighbours several times a week. Some said they interact with others once every two or three weeks, others said once a day, using social media and WhatsApp. The researchers also found that three interviewees had no local interactions nor used social media to keep in touch by distance.

Discussion

The researchers feel the research has shown that people's experience of where they live is connected with their sense of belonging and feeling safe. When people migrate to a new place their wellbeing is influenced by how easily they can go to places nearby where they feel they belong culturally. The researchers note that there are many religious differences between Muslims and Christians in different parts of Salford, and between Muslims from East Africa, North Africa, and Asia. This may affect people's choices about which mosque or church they feel comfortable going to.

The researchers also found geographical inequalities within Salford. People in newer BAME communities in areas other than Eccles felt that services did not meet their needs. When communities cannot effectively integrate and settle in an area, this affects their wellbeing, and wider community cohesion.

Visible Outcome's recommendations

1. The local authority should have a dedicated refugee and asylum seeker liaison officer to ensure different communities have equal support.
2. The local authority should engage better with refugees and asylum seekers as a community.
3. Services should provide interpreters and translators to ensure everyone can access the services they need.
4. Health services should provide mental health services that deal with isolation and trauma, as BAME and refugee communities are highly likely to be affected by trauma and more likely to be affected by dementia.
5. Community safety needs to improve in most areas.
6. There should be a dedicated outreach service to engage with isolated individuals.
7. There is a need for family-friendly and culturally-appropriate prayer rooms across Salford, not just in Eccles.

4. What does the research tell us about what makes a good place to grow older for people in minority communities?

- A sense of safety is related to feeling a sense of belonging and that your needs are met in the local area.
- Access to culturally-appropriate community spaces, including places of worship, is essential to a sense of belonging.
- Diversity within a local area may make a place feel more welcoming for new arrivals from other minority communities.
- However, The diversity within BAME communities can mean that even when there are places of worship and places to go for settled BAME communities, these may not meet the needs of new arrivals.

More information

The full report contains a lot more information about the background of the research, and other research into BAME communities in Salford. You can read and download this summary, the full report, and all the Ageing Equally? shorter project reports and summaries from the Equalities Board website here: <https://lgbt.foundation/ambition-for-ageing/publications>

About the “Ageing Equally?” Research Programme

Depending on their backgrounds, culture and life circumstances, different people need different things to feel socially connected and supported in their daily lives. People’s needs change as they age, and this can alter how they stay connected to their community of interest and identity. Ambition for Ageing funded the ‘Ageing Equally?’ research programme to find out more by asking “What makes a good place to grow older for people who belong to minority communities?” You can find out more about the Ageing Equally? research programme here: <https://www.ambitionforageing.org.uk/ageing-equally>

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