



# Coming in From the Cold

## Greater Manchester BAME Heritage Audit

Executive Summary

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## Introduction

### The project

'Coming in from the Cold' is a project by the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust designed to increase the representation of local Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities in our archive.

Phase one – Feb to Aug 2017:

An initial grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) allowed us to audit Greater Manchester BAME heritage projects from 2000 to the present day. We also recorded information about BAME-related work under taken by museum, libraries and archives, and relevant collections in their care. This document is a summary of the research findings. A full copy of the audit report is available to download free from our website:

<https://aiustrust.wordpress.com>

Also available to download free is a parallel report by CoDE at the University of Manchester, summarising the geographical distribution of the main 11 ethnic groups identified in the 2011 Census.

Phase two – Jan 2018 to Jan 2021:

If the HLF approve our plan, phase two will support targeted BAME communities identified through our research to develop and deliver their own heritage projects, providing advice, training and resources. We will also archive collected material and help groups to share their work and findings with others.

### The research

This document provides an overview of the phase one research. For more detailed information please consult the full audit report. It has been arranged under the headings 'strengths' and 'weaknesses' to indicate both areas of good practice and areas where we have identified a need for improvement. This system was used by the project team to distinguish targets and develop a proposed strategy for phase two.

We hope that our findings may be of wider interest, to those already working in the field of BAME heritage and those who have yet to do so. Thank you to all those who responded to our request for information and shared their knowledge and insight of the subject.

The report was written by Jennie Vickers, Research Associate and Kevin Bolton, Consultant with input from Marzuqa Iffat, Project Intern.

## Strengths

### **BAME community heritage projects have increased**

The audit identified 97 BAME heritage projects led by third sector organisations across Greater Manchester since 2000. These involved a range of budgets, communities and settings. The number of projects funded has increased, the main funder being the HLF, supporting 94 of the 97 reported.

### **The role of AIURRRC is important**

The AIURRRC has been a key player. Of the 97 projects generated by third sector organisations, 25 (26%) have donated collected material and/ or outputs (publications, DVDs, evaluation reports etc.) to the AIURRRC since 2000. Most of these were in the City of Manchester where the Centre has developed good working relationships with communities. In addition, the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust generated its own 6 HLF projects, all archived at the Centre. The Centre occupies a unique position within the sector as it both generates projects (via the AIUET) and collects project outputs.

### **There is a diverse range of projects by ethnic groups**

Projects involving 9 of the 14 ethnic groups identified on the 2011 Census have taken place in 2000-2017. Further projects have been delivered with ethnic groups not specified in the data - including Jewish people and Kosovans - and also with participants from a 'range of backgrounds'.

### **There is a diverse range of projects by type of organisation and budget**

A variety of organisation types have delivered community-based projects. Projects were awarded grants under seven different HLF funding streams, ranging from small grants (under £10,000) to large grants (Over £50,000).

### **Some BAME communities are very active**

Several of the third sector led projects have been conducted by groups representing people from African background, 'Asian' backgrounds and 'a range of backgrounds'. A significant proportion of projects have been generated by African communities given their relatively small population size. Surprisingly few projects have been led by Pakistani community groups, despite being the largest ethnic group at 4.86% of the overall GM population. However, anecdotal reporting suggests that many projects under the wider 'Asian' ethnic group heading are led by or include significant numbers of Pakistanis.

### **There is a diverse range of collections held by museums, libraries and archives**

There is a spread of different types of archives (e.g. photographs, documents, oral histories) representing all the ethnic groups in the GM Lives catalogue. Other museum collections have been flagged up anecdotally by a significant number of libraries, museums and archives. 27 of the 54 (50%) organisations we contacted reported that they had BAME related material.

### **Oral history is popular**

There is a strong interest in oral history as a method of documenting BAME achievements and experiences. 15 of the 54 museums, libraries and archives contacted (28%) also reported an element of oral history in their BAME-related project work.

### **Libraries, museums and archives organisations have become more BAME aware**

29 of the 54 organisations contacted (54%) have facilitated some kind of BAME-focused project work. One gallery alone reported 22 BAME-related projects (out of a total of 60 reported across all organisations). Projects generated by archives often involve staff who work across collections development and public engagement. Projects generated by museums and galleries are usually led by staff in the learning team, for engagement rather than collecting purposes.

## Weaknesses

### **Certain ethnic groups are under-represented in BAME heritage project work**

There have been no third sector led projects generated by certain communities: Arab, Polish, Baltic States, Sri Lanka and Turkey. It is also worth noting that just 2 of the 97 third sector led projects and 1 of 67 culture and heritage organisation led projects focused on Indian heritage. Indians are however, the second largest ethnic group in Greater Manchester, making up 2% of the overall population. The largest Indian communities are concentrated in the boroughs of Bolton and Trafford.

### **Collections development does not reflect BAME heritage**

BAME histories are still missing from archives collections across Greater Manchester. While searches in the GM Lives catalogue yield a variety of material, the majority is generic information, unrelated to local populations. Specialist and non local authority repositories in Greater Manchester hold little, if any material for BAME communities. The following communities appear to be under-represented: Arab, Caribbean, Eastern European e.g. Polish, Baltic States, Irish (mid to late 20th century), Italian, Turkish, Somali, Sri Lankan. Some archives and museums responded to the audit research saying that they held no BAME material. However, our research shows that they do hold material but it is not known about and poorly catalogued. Lack of knowledge about collections and the way they have been catalogued can make BAME heritage appear invisible.

### **BAME heritage projects are not taking place in some boroughs**

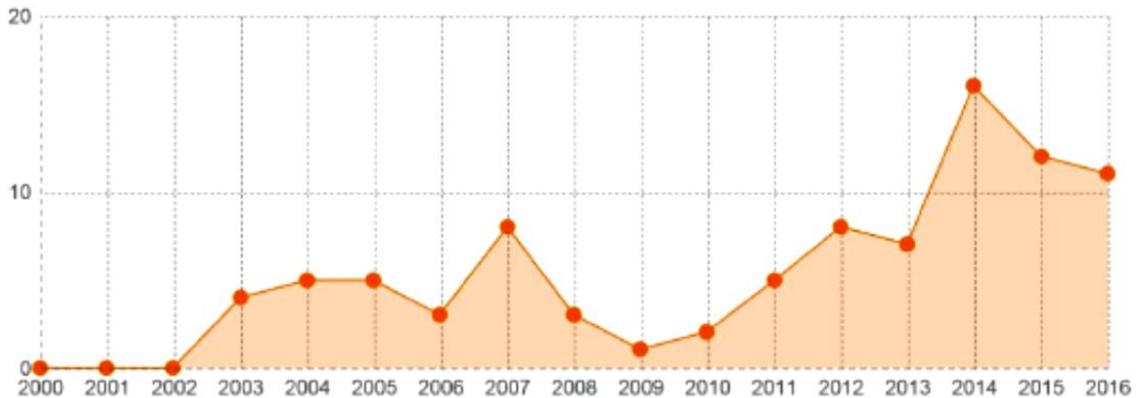
A low number of third sector led BAME projects have been identified in some boroughs – particularly Bury, Stockport and Wigan.

### **Outputs from HLF supported projects are not being collected**

Outputs from HLF supported projects are ephemeral. Libraries, museums and archives tend not to collect the outputs of HLF-supported projects. Of the 97 third sector led projects identified just 36 (37%) donated material to a library, museum or archive. Of those 20% made full donations (including project outputs and associated research material) and 17% donated outputs (publications, DVDs, evaluation reports etc.) alone. Only 31 out of 97 projects led by third sector organisations (32%) appear to have worked directly with a heritage partner during the course of their activities. Just 13 of the 54 libraries, museums and archives we contacted (24%) confirmed that they have accessioned material generated through project work into their collections.

## BAME Heritage in Greater Manchester

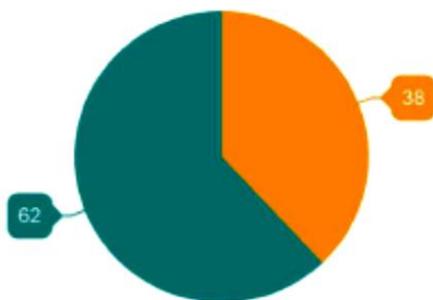
Number of heritage projects delivered by BAME Community Group 2003-2016 (total 97)



Some BAME communities are very active



14 ethnic groups in GM. 9 have delivered a heritage project



38% of projects have an oral history element

Of the 39 projects that collected oral histories 26% reported that they had discarded the original interview recordings

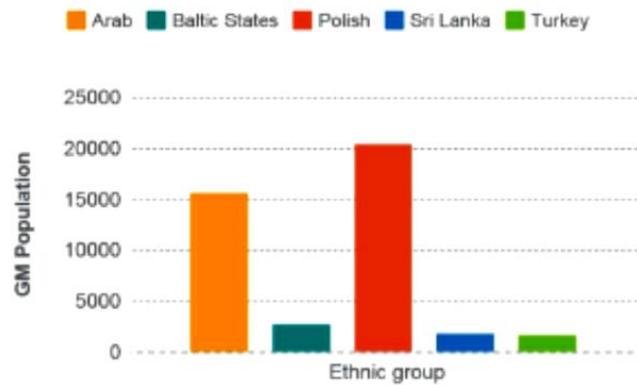
68% of projects had no active heritage partner

"I think a lot of the time organisations don't know that they can archive projects with us so they don't contact us."

Project outputs are not always deposited with libraries, archives and museums.

## BAME Heritage in Greater Manchester

### 0 projects for some communities



### Some boroughs are more active than others



### Barriers and challenges

Lack of awareness & skills – communities

Lack of awareness & skills – museums, libraries and archives

Reduced capacity

Sustainable digital access and digital preservation

Organisational structures of museums, libraries and archives

Policies and procedures

### The Coming out of the Cold project will:

Ensure collections across Greater Manchester become more representative

Develop a strategic approach to collecting BAME heritage

Deliver training and develop skills of communities

Create networking opportunities

Help BAME community archives be better interpreted