

Business improvement: seeking to increase ethnic diversity of customers, with a specific focus on 3 Black, Asian and other minority ethnic communities in Bristol

Subitha Baghirathan, We Care Home Improvements

**Business improvement:**

**seeking to increase ethnic diversity of customers, with a specific focus on 3 Black, Asian and other minority ethnic communities in Bristol.**

Subitha Baghirathan  
Nov. 2018- July 2019



# WE Care Home Improvements

- Social enterprise covering West of England
- Part of national network of Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs)
- HIA of the year 2013, 2016, 2017
- 92% customers “very satisfied” in 2018
  
- Range of services for home-owners: some free, some subsidised
- Including award-winning Handy Person Service (2018); daily telephone line for IAG; adaptations and repairs; Showroom; project coordination; Making Spaces; OT staff; Home from Hospital

# Why bother?

- Successful business, no shortage of customers, high customer satisfaction- why take action on ethnic diversity?
- Anecdotal evidence that Bristol customer base not representative of local ethnically diverse population
- Commitment to improvement and learning
- Development for future new markets and commissioning
- Successful application to Dolphin Trust part-funded project
- SB recruited as p/t freelance Development Worker-known through previous research work at UWE/dementia inclusion work in South Glos.

# We need to do more BAME

- 3 Black, Asian and other minority ethnic (BAME) communities to be focussed on
- Selected using census information (2011)
- BAME home-owners/ older BAME people/disabled BAME people
- Establishing baseline of ethnic diversity of customers: a challenge
- Catalyst for positive internal discussion, reflection and change
- E.g. informal staff learning (huddles); action across all organisation

# Start with the basics



- Insight into knowledge and views of some people from the 3 BAME communities on:
- Home adaptations as well as the organisation
- Arranging short talks by WE Care staff; spending time more important; stalls at events; dealing with complaints
- Not a hit-and-run; commitment to long-term, realistic partnerships; e.g. named staff, regularly scheduled in advance

# Delegation

- External opportunities posted on Yammer
- Named staff partnered with certain organisations
- The cracks of staff handover; improving confidence and motivation across whole staff team- ongoing
- *Unconscious Bias* training by Simon Nelson
- Equalities monitoring in recruitment practices



Thank you for your interest.

WE Care Home Improvements  
1 Hide Market, West Street, Old  
Market, Bristol BS2 0BH.

Tel. 0300 323 0700

E. [info@wecr.org.uk](mailto:info@wecr.org.uk)

[www.wecr.org.uk](http://www.wecr.org.uk)