

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARTY MANIFESTOS

FEBRUARY 2021



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PREAMBLE

The following document explores Intercultural Youth Scotland's concerns and recommendations for political parties partaking in the 2021 Scottish Parliament election. As an organisation, we have continuously fought for racial justice in Scotland; we work with young Black People and People of Colour on a grassroots level, advocating for positive change that would improve their lives. All of our work is developed with and alongside Black and PoC communities, in order that their voices and concerns can be heard. In this document, we bring these concerns to you. We hope that your public commitment to the fight against racism will be honest, and seek the necessary and radical long-term change this country certainly needs. We hope you can put this commitment on the public record in your manifestos, and that the promises you might make will be followed through upon election.

Going into 2021, Scotland is in the midst of a global pandemic, against the backdrop of an empowered Black Lives Matter movement, a possible fight for (or against) independence and is attempting to settle into the UK's departure from the European Union; these large scale processes have exacerbated and highlighted the continued presence and history of structural racism in our country. It is clear that existing policies and practices have gone nowhere in addressing racism at its core. There are few policies and practices in place to ensure Scotland becomes a country where being Anti-Racist and Pro-Black is integral to civil society. This change needs strong support from our political and governmental powers. We do not need another quick fix to make minimal and symbolic change; rather, we need visible, measurable, and immediate action to change the daily lives of Black People and PoC and investment in, and commitment to, long-term change that will ensure that future generations know a Scotland that does not deny racialised peoples their basic dignities and liberty.

We are asking that all policy, policy changes, and proposed practices are based on **consultation** with young Black People and young People of Colour. This consultation must be led by individuals with both a lived experience of racism and racialisation, and a knowledge of how to support those who have experienced racism and related racial traumas. This process works on the framework of Anti-Racism and evidence of effective recent engagement with Black and PoC communities. Consultation needs to be

genuine and not tokenistic or exploitative, ensuring the communities a policy might concern are involved in every step of the process and are safeguarded and supported throughout. For too long, anti-racist action has been performative and merely symbolic. Black People and PoC are rarely included in decision-making processes that shape their lives. When we are, it is often to share experiences of trauma, in a performance of 'anti-racism' that does little to help us, rather than to contribute to actual decision-making. True good practice is, for example, a Black Youth worker leading a consultation on the introduction of the 'Hate and Public Order (Scotland) Bill' with young Black People.

The practice of ensuring meaningful consultation with Black and PoC communities will be ensured by our second ask: the introduction of a **Young People's Expert Reference Group on Race**. This reference group will comprise members from Black and PoC communities; varying in age, background, and careers. This will serve as a link between the political parties, the government and the citizens and communities of Scotland, contributing to a truly democratic decision-making process. The introduction of new policies and practices and changes to those which already exist will be run past this group to ensure the success of their implementation, ensuring that essential resources are not mis-appropriated.

Beyond these two core asks, the following document offers recommendations in relation to Mental Health and Youth Work, Police and Justice, Education, Employment, Environment, Housing, Poverty, and Refugee and Migrant Rights.



A note on terminology: throughout this document, we use the phrase 'Black People and People of Colour' in order to make clear that we are referring to people who suffer from racism rather than discrimination because of their ethnicity. While there is often overlap between race and ethnicity, they are not the same thing. We also refer to 'racialised groups', this refers to groups who have been made into a certain race, and reflects the fact that race is a shifting construct we continuously re-produce through our structures, language, behaviour, and so on.

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MENTAL HEALTH AND YOUTH WORK

Our central Ask for these areas is ring-fenced funding. Funded, facilitated and specialised services which means investment in equitable resources that will directly support and improve the lives of Black People and PoC. We need appropriately-funded services and resources, which will actively engage the communities they are designed to serve. The availability of ring-fenced funding for all areas of race equality reform from housing, mental health, youth work, education needs to come proportionately from the redistribution of funding from the police and criminal justice system.

Mental health among Black People and People of Colour is particularly salient at this moment in time. COVID-19 has a disproportionately negative effect on these communities through isolation, education attainment gaps, digital poverty, higher deaths rates from COVID-19, anxiety driven by increased police presence, increased attacks against people from east and south-east Asian communities, Black Lives Matter and continuous images in the media of violence against the Black people. The aforementioned has put a particular strain on the mental health of young Black People and PoC. Historically, mental health services in Scotland for young Black People and PoC have only been provided with short-term or insufficient funding. Subsequently, they have only been short-lived, stop-gap measures. An example of this is a specialised mental health service operating in Edinburgh and Glasgow called Saheliya. Saheliya has recently lost its funding, which means that they now largely rely on donations. Saheliya supports young Black women and women of colour through a range of mental health services, strategies, and measures designed to promote positive mental health and wellbeing through group-work, individual counselling, support work and more.

We are calling for:

1. Funded mental health services: The current mental health crisis has been passed on to and made the responsibility of the police, but it is clear that their training and resources are not adequate or appropriate to deal with our current crisis. This distribution of mental health cases to the police has led to deaths, imprisonment, and criminal records

when all that was needed was mental health support. We are calling for a divestment from the police as the primary responder to mental health crises, and an investment in and development of wide-ranging measures to support our young people, with an equitable approach to mental health support.

2. Specialised mental health services: Racial trauma is a well-documented and researched psychological trauma (see [here](#)) that affects those who experience racism and racialisation. The impact of this cannot be understood or dealt with by regular training on trauma-informed practice by white professionals and practitioners. This needs to be addressed and supported by individuals who have lived experience of racism and racialisation and who have undergone anti-racism training and cultural proficiency training. This service would be facilitated by Black and PoC mental health professionals and would be for Black and PoC individuals.

Youth Work is the key cornerstone of engagement with Black and PoC communities. As of recent, it is clear that there is a serious lack of funding in the youth work sector, with adequate equitable funding and resources not reaching Black and PoC young people. Youth work has been overlooked for too long as being survivable on donations, with many Black and PoC youth work organisations remaining on charitable status. This means often low salaries with heavy workloads, ensuring that the young people who need support the most, especially Black and PoC young people do not get the necessary support. Additionally the pre-existing white led youth work services have little to no engagement with Black and PoC young people, due to lack of training in cultural proficiency and anti-racism. With this gap in expertise it means that white led organisations engagement with Black and PoC young people is tokenistic and often perpetuates more harm, often retraumatizing the young people. Due to this current failure in needs our ask is that ring fenced funding for youth work provides:

1. Funded Youth work for Black and PoC young people: Adequate, equitable funding for organisations working directly with young Black people and PoC. The distribution of funding for the

youth work sector is incredibly limited when it comes to the Black and PoC community, as often equalities groups will receive funding to address the needs of marginalised groups together.

2. Specialised services: This funding needs to be for organisations who are run by and for the Black and PoC community evidenced by recent effective engagement with young Black People and PoC. It is simply not good enough to provide key funding to the youth work sector for organisations that have no successful engagement with Black and PoC young people. Simply creating events targeted at Black and PoC young people is not engagement without sufficient evidence of successful youth work practice to which organisation run by Black and PoC youth workers can indeed evidence. It is necessary for Black and PoC youth workers to be at the forefront of this work. Their ability to provide facilitated Youth work using unique lived experiences of being racialised and of racism place them in a position to relate to and understand the needs of Black and PoC young people to which white youth workers simply cannot. This understanding of Black and PoC young people's experience is crucial in establishing a trusting relationship with them and maintaining engagement with them.



POLICE AND JUSTICE

Police in Scotland are not trusted. In many instances, they deal with problems that would be better dealt with elsewhere. We need to ensure that our resources are properly-appropriated, and that the conversation around criminal justice is radically transformed. Crime, more often than not, is a social failure of an entire society. We are proposing a radical transformation of how we think about and engage with 'justice'.

Against the Backdrop of Black Lives Matter, there has been a significant movement to restructure the responsibilities and funding of the Police and Criminal Justice System. With a reinvestigation into the death of Sheku Bayoh, Public trust and confidence in the effectiveness of the police verging near only 50% of the population, now is a time for Scotland to act, to set a precedent for good practice for other countries in the UK and beyond. For too long, Police Scotland have been responsible for dealing with things for which they do not have the relevant expertise, resources, or training: mental health, domestic violence, sexual assault, education, and so on. We are calling for restructuring and re-appropriation of Resources towards: **a model of Transformative Justice.**

Transformative Justice has evolved from 'restorative justice', seeking to adequately ensure that key societal needs are being met. It is an abolitionist framework for alternatives to the current policing and criminal justice system. Transformative Justice seeks to respond to violence without perpetrating more violence and/or engaging in harm-reduction to lessen existing violence. Transformative justice does not rely on current state apparatuses: police, prisons, the criminal legal system. It also actively cultivates the things we know prevent violence such as healing, accountability, resilience, and safety for all. State responses to violence reproduce violence and often traumatize those who are exposed to them, especially Black and PoC communities who are already targeted. This model means:

1. Divestment from the police: in the short-term, we are calling for a re-appropriation of resources from the policing and criminal justice systems to other types of social improvement. Current spending on patrol officers is a mis-identification of both the problem of crime and its solution. Patrol officers do not work as a deterrent to crime. In fact, they actively make many young Black People and People of Colour feel unsafe in their own societies. We need to ensure

that the roots of crime are dealt with, rather than the symptoms. Policing does little in this regard.

2. A redistribution of resources and funding to community, grassroots, and social justice organisations to respond to social needs; and an increased investment in society in general in order that the livelihoods of our most marginalised peoples are improved. As stated above, adequate crime prevention comes from ensuring that the key needs of society's citizens are being met, and that crime is dealt with by appropriately qualified respondents. The First responders should be mental health providers, social workers, victim advocates and other community members in less visible roles. For example, a case of domestic violence would be dealt with by a qualified domestic violence advocate and crisis manager. This individual would work in the best interests of the victim whilst ensuring the perpetrator had the appropriate means and support to be rehabilitated. This would also ensure that for mental health crises, a trained mental health professional would deal with an individual facing an extreme mental health crisis, ensuring there is no death, harm, or conviction of this individual whilst responding to their needs.

With this model, the housing, education, and the health sectors would have greater funding and resources so that they can adequately deal with the society's needs, with specialised expertise in each area, ensuring maximum support with the resources and funding provided. As we have already stated, the police are not qualified and are wholly inappropriate first responders to many of the issues with which they might be faced.

These models exist globally in the practice of community networks such as The Oakland Power Project. This organisation trains residents to build alternatives to police by helping them prevent and respond to harm. Redistributing police funding is one step on a longer journey toward abolition. Our country can reduce the size and scope of police and thus limit their opportunities to come into contact with civilians, preventing harm before it happens.

EDUCATION

With regard to race, Scotland's education has three key problems: schools are a hotspot for experiences of racism; staff have little knowledge of how to identify and respond to racism; and the curriculum is overwhelmingly 'white' – students are not taught enough about Black history, Scotland's role in empire, the reality of racism in society, and the positive histories of the Global South, especially Africa and the Caribbean.

The Education system lies at the centre of experiences of racism by young Black People and PoC. Our recent [In-Sight report](#) makes this clear. School statistics on racism often underplay the problem: underreporting is significant for a number of reasons including the racism of teachers and staff, fear and distrust of police, and a lack of trust in school staff and procedures to deal with racist incidents.

Further, there is a significant underrepresentation of Black and PoC communities in educational staff. Teachers, headteachers, educators, support staff, career and guidance staff, and administrators are overwhelmingly white. Institutional racism is clearly manifest in education. This also has the future effect of steering Black People and People of Colour away from careers in education, continuing this cycle of underrepresentation.

We are calling for:

1. An increase in the racial diversity of teaching staff: First, Students must be taught by teachers who represent Scottish society. Second, we are calling for Black and PoC educators in schools to specifically teach anti-racism. These educators will teach from a position of lived experience as well as having a particular expertise in anti-racist and pro-black education.

2. Greater Diversity in the Curriculum: Teaching on race, anti-racism, and Black history (beyond slavery and struggle). This should be delivered by qualified educators in consultation with young Black People and PoC to determine which histories are missing. It is clear that the curriculum for excellence does not provide the relevant depth needed to adequately cover issues related to race and racism. There needs to be a holistic, whole-school approach to anti-racism. This means mandatory lessons as part of each year group's core social and personal development content, with each year group advancing on what they had learnt in the previous year. This also includes

all subjects diversifying their curricula, from English to the sciences to geography. Beginning to include Black and PoC authors, scientists and adventurers into lessons and content to normalise the presence of Black and PoC contributions to Scottish society. This approach ensures that anti-racism is adequately built into education instead of only some schools deciding to spend the time and resources adopting it into the school. This approach requires significant funding to ensure the relevant Black and PoC educators can sufficiently and appropriately teach the core content required for each year group.

3. Greater diversity in support services: There must be specialised support available for all Black and PoC parents and pupils. And, there must be a Black- and PoC-led service to navigate and report racism. The current situation, with thousands of incidents of racism reported in schools, and many more going unreported, highlights that there is an institutional failure to deal with racism in schools and education. This is partly down to the failure of teachers to adequately address racist incidents. The first failure is in the inability to identify racist incidents; the second and related failure, lies in the fact that after the aforementioned misidentification, there are not appropriate measures in place to deal, specifically, with racism. Teachers, senior leadership, and guidance and support staff do not have enough knowledge on how to identify, record, and respond to racist incidents. A specialised service needs to be developed and implemented as soon as possible. As the COVID pandemic has made clear ([see our report](#)), young Black People and People of Colour require specific, tailored, and equitable support, which is thus far not being provided.

4. Greater Investment in the Arts and Cultural Awareness: as part of a diversified curriculum, the arts must be foregrounded as vital to the experience of cultural and social life. As our recent [UNCON report](#) has shown, COVID-19 has had a particular effect on young Black People and PoC's engagement with the arts industries. As a strong sector in Scotland's economy, and as a vital part of cultural life, the arts must be supported and there must be long-term investment in arts programs with specific focus on developing the skills and careers of young Black artists and artists of Colour.

EMPLOYMENT

Black students and students of Colour have disproportionately high educational attainment; however, outcomes of Black and PoC school leavers are lower than for white students. This gap in positive destinations will only continue due to the ongoing pandemic's exacerbation of the 'digital divide' between pupils from Black and PoC communities and others. Taking into consideration the current issues, this calls for the development of and investment in:

1. A specialised career support services: It is necessary for career advisors and support staff to have the relevant understanding of different cultural backgrounds and the expectations, practices and barriers related to this. This calls for anti-racism and cultural proficiency as necessities for DYW and SDS support staff, and other guidance counsellors. We are also calling for greater diversity of staff in these roles.

2. Better pathways into employment: Ensuring that all vacancies and opportunities for training and progression are advertised via open recruitment instead of word-of-mouth as these channels are very rarely accessible to those who are Black or PoC.

Internships: Firstly, internships must always be paid, and there must be sufficient support for employers who are unable to offer this payment, especially when employing young Black people or PoC (for example through Employer Recruitment Incentives). Secondly, ensure that employers are actively recruiting for internships in schools in lower socio-economic catchment areas and schools with a high proportion of Black and PoC students. It is essential that these practices change and improve to allow Black and PoC young people equitable access to pathways into wide-ranging employment, particularly greater access to high-skilled internships would be useful in order to encourage upward-mobility.

Apprenticeships: Ensuring that more organizations from a wider variety of sectors are actively seeking out these positions for young Black People and PoC. This includes seeking out alternative media, sites, and institutions through which to publicize vacancies rather than traditional channels (which thus far seem to have little engagement).

3. Improved childcare support: It has been identified that the current childcare services are inaccessible and insufficient for Black People and People of Colour. The quality of childcare in Scotland needs to

be improved significantly in order that staff can offer appropriate care to children from all backgrounds. Childcare needs to be more inclusive: there needs to be anti-racism training, greater cultural proficiency among staff members and administrators, and multilingual staff to ensure good-quality care that parents can trust, and that the needs of the children are being effectively understood.

4. The elimination of inappropriate use of zero-hour contracts: The use of zero-hour contracts is affecting young people and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, particularly those who are Black or PoC. Financial security is essential, something which has been laid bare by the current pandemic, and the use of zero-hour contracts cannot adequately support the most vulnerable communities. There needs to be a stronger commitment from businesses and organisations, with support from legislation, to ensure that the majority of employment is provided with guaranteed, contracted monthly wages, at the living wage or above.



ENVIRONMENT

There is a global climate emergency and ecological crisis which affects every single person on this planet. We all have our part to play in ensuring that the damage to our planet is repairable. Climate change and climate inequalities have a greater effect on the daily lives of Black and PoC communities than on others. Environmental racism is a widely-researched and well understood phenomenon which results in a lower standard of living for Black People and People of Colour. Thus far, climate justice conversations seem to have been dominated by white environmentalists, especially since the extinction rebellion campaigns entered Scottish society. It is fundamentally clear that the movement and focusing on climate justice from one perspective and narrative is not addressing the concerns of Black and PoC communities.

We must ensure that Scotland is at the forefront of the global fight against environmental racism and the ecological crisis more widely. We are calling for you to:

1. Ensure the voice of the Black and PoC communities are centred in conversations around climate justice. There needs to be Black and PoC communities involved in key decision-making processes, as currently their communities are disproportionately affected both locally, in Scotland, and internationally. The climate crisis, caused mostly by Western nations, is being suffered most greatly by those in the 'Global South'. The involvement of the Black and PoC community in the protests against the addition of an additional airport runway in London was vital to the success of this direct action, due to it directly affecting the Black and PoC community. Such direct action would have been unnecessary if their concerns were considered in the first place. White environmentalists have very publically co-opted the climate justice movement, both in Scotland and globally, by centralising concerns around individual acts to make changes to the environment rather than large global contributors to environmental harm. For example, the exploitation of labourers in the Global South who produce clothing for 'fast fashion' outlets in the UK shows the interrelatedness of fights for environmental justice and anti-racism. These workers suffer from human rights violations while the demand for cheap clothing contributes to mounting pollution levels, and a poor local quality of life.

2. To adopt a human rights based approach for climate justice. Adopting this perspective for climate

justice means that it becomes the responsibility of every citizen, business, and organisation to adopt an approach that actively fights for climate justice, rather than the fight being an 'addition' to governance. All government policy should be environmentally sustainable. Environmental injustices affect the lives of the Black and PoC community on a daily basis and this needs to be acknowledged and challenged. The effects of technological necessity for a functional society due to the colonisation of resources and coloniality of trade-relations means that we fundamentally impact climate change negatively in the things we use in our daily lives. We as a society need to ensure that every individual in the processes of buying, selling, and making products is sufficiently supported, paid properly, and has their human rights respected.

3. To acknowledge Scotland and the UK's contribution to [climate apartheid](#), and a more lenient stance towards migration and refugee status. The west has significantly ruined the environmental life of the Global South in irreparable ways from trade to war, and as such has caused the displacement of thousands of citizens. As such, the laws on migration, refugee, and asylum seeker status should be loosened to ensure that when necessary those seeking to build a new life in Scotland are able to do so safely and securely.



HOUSING AND POVERTY

The Covid-19 Pandemic has once again laid bare the need for radical improvements to housing in Scotland. The pandemic has brought to light areas of grave concern affecting the Black and PoC communities that have been allowed to continue for too long. Black people and people of colour face disproportionate homelessness, poor quality housing, over-crowded homes, and have limited access to social housing. The Black and PoC community has a lower rate of housing benefit uptake which is linked to proportionately lower engagement with housing advice services. Many do not know their rights or how the system works due to language barriers, or barriers related to migration. Furthermore, Black people and people of colour disproportionately live in privately-rented housing.

We are calling for:

1. An end to evictions that leave people without a home, and increased support for homeless people, with specific support related to language barriers and targeted support for refugees or those seeking asylum.

2. Improved quality of social housing and increased access to social housing for Black people and people of colour.

3. Diverse and inclusive funded and resourced housing advice services. Develop specialised advice services, staffed by individuals with the necessary expert knowledge of (anti-)racism and cultural barriers faced by Black people and people of colour. Additionally, an active drive in recruitment of those from Black and PoC communities to bring their lived experiences into the advice service. The advice-givers must be actively engaged in the communities they seek to serve.

4. Improved regulatory process for housing. The regulatory processes that review housing standards are not serving the Black and PoC communities in the same way as other marginalised groups in Scotland. This is clear from the evidential research that shows that the Black and PoC community is concentrated in poor quality housing for addressing these in partnership with local authorities, reporting regularly on progress. (Recommendations based on research from [‘Addressing Race Inequality in Scotland: the way forward’](#) and the Joseph Rowntree foundation’s Poverty and Ethnicity: Key Messages for Scotland.)

Poverty continues to be a significant problem in Scottish society. Class and race are closely related structures, and an intersectional approach is vital to understanding the problem of poverty in society. Overall, poverty is higher amongst Black and PoC communities than the white population of Scotland. It is clear that the Scottish government has made a significant effort to tackle poverty in Scotland, and that there has been somewhat of an effort toward race equality. These two efforts, however, have failed to overlap. A recent case of a woman by the name of Mercy Baguma, an asylum seeker from Uganda who died from extreme poverty in her Glasgow flat, lays bare the violence suffered as a result of poverty. The clear neglect of her needs as a mother, a black woman, and asylum seeker, left her dead. This cannot continue and as such we are calling for:

1. Greater Support in Employment: Employers must improve recruitment and progression for those in the Black and PoC community. Commit to develop measures to tackle low wage traps that disproportionately affect Black and PoC communities.

2. Improve childcare support. Affordable and accessible childcare is essential. Families should be appropriately supported. If parents cannot work due to their childcare commitments, they are unable to earn the necessary salary to ensure they stay out of poverty; and current unemployment support and childcare benefits are insufficient.

3. Inclusive services. Services that support individuals experiencing poverty, unemployment, homelessness, housing security, and so on, must commit to improved diversity and inclusion, as well as improved training and education on (anti-)racism and cultural proficiency. These services should actively engage with the communities which they hope to serve.

4. Commit to increased investment in support for young Black and PoC school leavers: equitable support in reaching a positive destination (in line with the YPG). The development and implementation of targeted measures to identify and remove the barriers which result in BPOC school leavers having worse outcomes despite higher educational attainment. These measures should be implemented with a view to improving upward mobility for Black people and people of colour and are exemplified in our [‘Restless Natives’](#) program.



REFUGEE AND MIGRANT RIGHTS

In the aftermath of Brexit, it is clear that refugee and migrant communities have been vilified in the media and have been used as a political bargaining chip through which to levy a vote to leave the European Union. With this in mind, along with the disproportionate effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on these groups, refugees and migrants have faced death and deportation due to such attitudes, and the policy they legitimise.

Additionally, during the pandemic there has been no consideration for the wellbeing of refugees and asylum seekers. In Glasgow, those awaiting decision of their refugee status were kept in hotels for months at a time with inadequate support and resources. In one case, due to such failures, a 30 year old Syrian man lost his life due to the forced isolation of lockdown without adequate support. This man's life could have been spared if there was appropriate services and funding in place to support his needs. His life and the life of Mercy Baguma should not have been lost due to a neglect of asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants. Their needs were not met, their basic food security was not met, their employment needs were not met, their mental health needs were not met and as a result, they lost their lives. The process needs to ensure that asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants who have made Scotland their home receive equitable support and access to resources and finances. We are calling for:

1. A clear change in the UK's migration laws to make it easier to seek refugee status and migrate safely. The Scottish government should be at the core of any efforts to change these policies, particularly those that relate to the 'Hostile Environment'. The current stringent laws ensure that many individuals have to put their own and their family's lives at risk to attempt to seek refuge in Scotland. Many are fleeing war, persecution, torture, violence and the possibility of death, in the hopes of a better life in Scotland. It needs to be easier to get asylum status. We have a duty - as part of the contributors to the global south's climate hardships, economic struggle, and continued states of war, related to the continued effects of colonialism - to ensure we are able to allow people to live their lives freely in our country.

2. Specialist, anti-racist and culturally aware advice and support services: there needs to be a marked improvement in the advice services to help signpost individuals to the relevant information and specialised services. These services and information need to

be more accessible to people to help give them a positive start in their new environment. These advice services should adequately signpost to needs such as GP registration; access to education for children; vulnerability assessments; and help to find the best advice on their asylum claim, especially the provision of basic financial help. Blanket approaches to needs are not adequate. There will be instances where referrals to specialist support services, for example for survivors of torture and women survivors of gender-based violence, are necessary and require adequate signposting.

3. Better emergency support: It is clear that during the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been little to no emergency provisions either in the form of resources or financial assistance for refugees or asylum seekers, besides those in the third sector. There needs to be a framework established to ensure that in times of crisis, there is a structural response that ensures all key needs are met: housing, food, health, and social/support.

4. Adequate Housing: One significant concern is that people seeking asylum have no choice where they are housed, which means they are often placed in unsafe, poor-quality, and overcrowded housing. Asylum seekers should have the right to live in safe, secure accommodation while their applications for asylum are dealt with. It is time now for the Home Office to meet its statutory duty to accommodate people seeking asylum and Scotland must be at the forefront of the fight for improved conditions for refugees and asylum seekers. We must ensure that all those seeking asylum who are residing in Scotland and the UK have adequate housing, support, and resources.

We want to see adequate long-term solutions to ensure those fleeing persecution, torture and human rights abuses are provided with a safe and supportive shelter to begin to rebuild their lives in Scotland, and to ensure no further harm comes to them whilst attempting to do so.



CONCLUDING REMARKS

The recommendations which we have made in this document are by no means everything that is needed to deal with the problem of racism in contemporary Scottish society. However, we are certain that they would go a long way in improving the lives of young Black People and People of Colour in Scotland. Racism is a 500-year-old structure, a world without which we can only imagine. Every aspect of our social structure is designed and has manifested along its contours. For too long, responses to issues of racial inequality have been 'quick fix' solutions with empty promises and policies that do not address racism at its core, but simply act as a sticking plaster, treating the symptoms of a much wider problem. Our recommendations offer a starting point upon which we hope you can build, in order that the country can begin to ensure the lives of the Black People and People of Colour can begin to improve. These starting points will ensure that we are at the core of all decision-making, and can take part in the vital and necessary restructuring of our society.

We all deserve the freedom to Be in this world. Whatever we may think, our society has **never** offered freedom to all peoples. This will change, and we are calling for you to change with us.

– Intercultural Youth Scotland, 2021



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