

‘Young Voices’

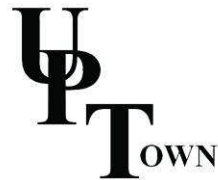
Report on the BME Video Research Project



Michael Frean
Housing Strategy Team
London Borough of Merton
December 2008

andrewjenner.com

bold creative 



Young Voices



<u>Contents</u>	Page
Acknowledgements	4
1. Introduction to the BME Video Research Project	5
2. The Making of the Films	
▪ How the Films were made	7
▪ Film Launch Event	10
3. Research Findings	
▪ Case Studies	13
▪ Questionnaire Survey	15
▪ Detailed Survey Findings	17
▪ Merton Data on Youth and Ethnic Minority Homelessness	23
4. Other Project Activities	
▪ Accreditation	25
▪ Web Design Training & the 'Skeen' Website	25
▪ Peer Education Programme	26
▪ Merton Youth Housing Forum	26
▪ Next Steps	27
Appendix I – Research Questionnaire	28

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge contributions from the following people, which made the project possible.

Young People from Up-Town Youth Club and Merton College students

Jade Reid, Karrim Willis, Rosanna Ross, Jr. Mattis, Abdul Mohamed, Kacie Hatton, Lynette Peck, Samara Blackford, Frank Tchonag, Mohamed Abdullahi, Stacie Ball, Peris Edwards, Keisha Knight, Andrew Bradley, Anosha Saberi, Jessica Rooney, Promise Koko, Georgie Stephanou, Amie Donerty, Michelle Luke- Bannerman

The Multi Agency Partnership team

Bert Hyde, (Christian Care)
Charles Kyazee, (South London African Women's Organisation)
Ann Obayuwana, and Andy Redfearn, (Kingston and Wimbledon YMCA)
Colin Bascom and Maxine Green, (Pathway Housing Association.)
Joan Simms, (Up-Town Dance Club)
Mr Hassan, (South London Somali Community Association)
Elaine Tomlin, Penny Leslie, Maureen Branch-Davis, Karen Hutchinson, Angela Chu, Elliot Brunton, Tracy Stanley, Michael Frean, Steve Langley, Suzie Rollins, Meechele Bowes, Donna Brown, (all London Borough of Merton)
Seini Haynes, (Wandle Housing Association).
Ife Painkhi, (Merton Volunteer Bureau)

Organisations appointed to work with young people

Bold Creative: (Martin Orton, Greg Villalobos Lindsay Knight, Belen Bueson-Alberdi)

Merton College and Andrew Jenner

Contacts

If you have any questions or comments about this report please contact the Housing Strategy Team at Merton Council on 0208 545 3305 or email HousingStrategy@merton.gov.uk

1. Introduction to the BME Video Research Project

The BME Video Research Project was the idea of the council's Ethnic Minority Housing Strategy Team. They were concerned to find out that young people from ethnic minorities were more likely to become homeless than white young people. The team was a multi-agency partnership, led by Merton Council's Housing Strategy section with the remit of examining ethnic minority housing issues. They wanted to find a way to tackle this issue, and to communicate with young people in a way that was meaningful to them, and explore the reasons why they become homeless.

The partnership came up with the idea of young people interviewing other young people and making their own films on this subject. This approach is known as 'Participatory' Video and Peer Research. Many young people lack the confidence to take part in projects organised by statutory agencies. This innovative project provides the means to involve them through activities that appeal to them. In order for the project to be a success, the partnership thought that it would be a good idea to appoint a company that specialises in film production and also has experience of working with young people.

To help develop the project, the Ethnic Minority Housing Strategy Team formed a sub group involving other local organisations that work with young people. This included Pathway Housing Association, Wandle Housing Association, Merton Race Equality Partnership, London & Quadrant Housing Trust, Kingston and Wimbledon YMCA, Merton Connexions and Merton Youth Service. These partner organisations played a key role in encouraging young people to take part in the project and provided them with support.

The next thing that needed to be done was to apply for funding to run the project and an application for funding was made to the Ethnic Minorities Innovation Fund at Communities and Local Government (CLG). The CLG approved the application in 2006 and the group was then in a position to appoint a company to work with young people and run the project.

The main aims of the project are as follows:

- To reduce and prevent homelessness amongst young people, particularly BME young people who are over-represented in homeless people who approach the Council for assistance, by identifying the reasons and risk factors of homelessness through research.
- By raising awareness of the reality of homelessness through a 'participatory' video project, targeting those who are at risk of homelessness.

- To raise the skills level of young people at risk of homelessness, which will help improve their life chances and will help them gain employment and find their own housing solutions.

The project targets young people aged between 16 and 25, who face housing problems or are at risk of homelessness. Key elements of the project include the following:

- Provide multi-media (video, music etc.) training for young people, as well as training of other key skills such as research, communications, and web development.
- Run a 'participatory' video project to engage young people in the making of films that focus on homelessness.
- Enable participants to undertake a research project on housing issues faced by their peers.
- Assist young people to set up a Youth Housing Forum. This will ensure that young people will continue to have a 'voice' on housing issues, and to provide an opportunity for young Forum members to develop leadership skills.
- Run a Peer Education programme to raise awareness of housing and homeless issues amongst a wider group of young people.



2. The Making of the Films

2.1 How the Films were made

The project started with a pilot, with the Council's Housing Strategy Team making contact with the Media Studies Department at Merton College. Following a meeting, it was agreed that 'A' level Media Studies students would make a pilot film on homelessness as part of their coursework. The students received training in research techniques, and as part of their project preparation, devised questions that they asked of council officers in the Housing Department. The interviews appeared in what was to become the pilot film for the project "**Problems at Home**", which has since won an award for best foreign film at '**Corto in Stabia**' an international film festival in Italy.

After **Problems At Home** was made, the partnership sub group selected 2 organisations, Bold Creative and Andrew Jenner, to work with young people to make three more films, involving members of a number of youth organisations including the UpTown Youth Club, and the Wimbledon YMCA. Participants were given training on the use of equipment, filming and editing, and learned to work in teams to plan the contents and the presentation of the films. In total four films were made and a summary of each film follows:



1. Problems At Home

This film tells the story of a group of young people under 18 who were having 'problems at home' and left to live independent lives. The film explains that you are not legally entitled to a tenancy until you are 18, and this may mean staying in a temporary hostel with very little privacy or support and that you have to "grow up fast" and that "it's hard living by yourself".

The lack of affordable housing in Merton makes it increasingly difficult for the council to offer young people accommodation and some of the young people felt they could have been treated more sympathetically. The interviews took place at local agencies - Aiming High, YMCA, MASH and Grenfell Housing.

2. Like it is, Souf Weezay



This film describes the feelings of young people from the YMCA that they are being unfairly portrayed by society. Media stories picking out isolated cases distort the true reasons that make young people homeless. The same media coverage also gives the impression that the young people are on an extended holiday.

'Like it is, Souf Weezay' is a short musical film that will change your perception of these homeless people. It focuses on the stories of two young women, Michelle and Promise.

3. Not For Good

This animated film was made by the young people of UpTown Youth Club with support from Bold Creative. It tells the story of Jessica and her experience of living in Hall Place, a temporary hostel accommodation in Mitcham. Jessica left home at 16 after an argument with her Mum and explains that life in a hostel is not as exciting and glamorous as many may think.



4. The Making of Not For Good

This film was also made by the young people from Up-Town and explores in more detail some of the issues that came up in “Not for Good“. It includes interviews with senior staff at Merton Council, who explain why young people have to stay at Hall Place, and why council staff may appear strict and unfriendly. An explanation of the benefit levels is also given. The issue of training for young people is explored and a representative from Connexions explains their role. The MPs for the borough, Siobhain McDonagh and Stephen Hammond also give their views on the issues raised.

The film ends with Samara, the 14 year-old narrator, explaining that homelessness can affect your mind as much as your circumstances. It can make life difficult and affect many future choices young people make. ‘Not for Good’ and the making of not for good have been nominated for various awards including a Unicef Short Film Award, and One Dot Zero.

2.2 Film Launch Event



In January 2008, all four films were shown to the public for the first time at a special screening that was organised by Merton Council, and hosted by its Assistant Chief Executive Abdool Kara. This event was held at Wimbledon Odeon and attended by over 130 young people and a representative from the Communities and Local Government (CLG) who had funded the project.

Young people who had participated in the project gave speeches on why they had chosen to take part and what they had learned from the experience.



At the end of the evening, Councillor Diane Neil Mills, Merton Council's Cabinet Member for Housing and Regeneration, presented all the young filmmakers with a Certificate of Achievement to acknowledge their contribution to the project. The event was also filmed and a mini film has now been produced that can be seen on the DVD.



young voices

heard in

4 short films

on homelessness
& housing issues made by

young people

sponsored by
merton council

'not for good'

the harsh reality of life living in a hostel through the eyes of 17yr old jessica.

'the making of... not for good'

a documentary charting the research project that lead to the animated film.

'like it is, souf weezay'

stories and frustrations, behind the scenes of hostel life in this mini musical.

'problems at home'

students from merton college won 'best foreign film' at an international film festival in italy with this film. It allows the young people to tell you first hand of their lives as a homeless person.

contact

michael frean on 0208 545 3305

Michael.Frean@merton.gov.uk

Wimbledon Odeon

16th January 2008

6pm, by invitation only

Refreshments provided

Contact Michael Frean for any
child care needs

bold creative



andrewjenner.com

3. Research Findings

The research work is one of the key elements of the project. It aims to identify risk factors that led to homelessness amongst young people, so that measures can be developed and introduced to minimize those risks to help prevent homelessness. This was achieved through case studies and a questionnaire survey, undertaken by the young project participants once they have received training on research skills.

3.1 Case Studies

The research project included detailed case studies of young people who have become homeless. Nearly all of the case studies are of young women. This was because they were more willing to be interviewed and take part in the project. While young men were approached by the filmmakers they were less willing to participate. However, young men completed 31% of the questionnaires. Some of these case studies outlined below appear on the films. In some cases names have been changed.

Kirsty

Kirsty left home at 17 after her mother beat her up and she didn't feel safe staying at home. She phoned the police and was sleeping on the street for a while but didn't have any money. She felt the council put pressure on her to go back to her mother even though she felt under threat of violence and treated her like a "dumb ass". She was eventually given a place in a hostel in Mitcham.

Jessica

Jessica who is featured in 'Not for Good' left home at 16 after an argument with her Mum. Jessica says that life in a hostel is not as exciting and glamorous as many may think. After leaving home she approached the council and was seen by a woman who she described as "not nice at all" even though she now realises she was "like doing her job".

Jessica was provided with temporary accommodation at the Hall Place hostel in Mitcham on a temporary "not for good" basis while her case was investigated. She found the facilities at Hall Place hostel very basic and there were many rules such as not being able to decorate, or change the locks. Also she was not allowed heating appliances in the rooms for her hair straighteners. She found the place very noisy with other guests playing loud music every night until 5.00am. After paying for her rent and food Jessica found that she had very little money left for anything else.

However Jessica knew that she was a strong person and went on to study Performing Arts at college. As Elaine, the Temporary Accommodation Manager of Hall Place explains, seeing some of the other residents at the hostel gave

Jessica the “extra push“ to motivate her in life and she is now renting a flat and is working towards becoming an actress.

Alice

Alice left home at 14 to stay with a family friend because her mother was an alcoholic. After approaching the council, she was given a place at the YMCA in Wimbledon. She misses living with her parents and finds hostel life hard as you cannot choose whom you live with and there are always adults around. She also finds curfews restrictive.

Susan

Susan didn't get on with her father and eventually left home at 16. She found a Connexions worker to be helpful. She said that you sometimes had to tell lies to get the council to help you with accommodation although she was initially living with “crack heads”. Susan found it lonely living alone and would have ideally liked to have lived with her parents.

Deborah

Deborah tells the story of how she left home. On one occasion they were having an argument and Deborah turned to walk away and her mother started ‘lashing out’ at her. She felt unable to defend herself because it was her mother, and her sister had to intervene and ‘come and pull her off me’

On another occasion Deborah's mother asked where she had been. Deborah accused her mother of only caring for her when it was convenient i.e. when she had money. The arguments continued apace until finally when she took her younger brother for a walk without her mother's permission, she was accused of being ridiculous and disrespectful and told to leave by the end of the week.

Rachel

Rachel grew up in Africa but her parents died in a car crash when she was 11. She moved to London to live with her aunt who did not treat her well and was abusive and threatened violence. Her aunt threw her out at 16 and Rachel ended up at the YMCA and began studying at college.

John and Sonia

John and Sonia are a young couple who are staying at the Hall Place hostel. Sonia can't remember when she came to the UK but had a bad experience staying with relatives so she left home. She fell pregnant and was originally a priority for rehousing but then had a miscarriage and has now been waiting for two years. She is now 20 and suffers from depression and has been reassessed as vulnerable under the homelessness legislation. She doesn't like where she is living or feel safe and John says there is no motivation for them to leave. As soon as a resident gets a job they have to pay over £200 a week rent. Also they can't afford a deposit to rent in the private sector.

Leroy

Leroy is a long term resident at Hall Place who has been there for over two years. He doesn't like his room and originally stayed with a friend. He is hoping to get a flat soon.

Julie and Kath

Julie and Kath are both young mothers. They were asked if they fell pregnant to get themselves a council property. While Julie has a flat she isn't that happy with it because the windows are low down and her young son could climb out of them. Kath does not have her own flat. Both young women are slightly shocked that the question is being asked and said they did not become pregnant intentionally.

3.2 Questionnaire Surveys

In addition to interviewing homeless young people as part of the research for the film, the project also aimed to find out about the housing issues facing a larger number of young people in the area. This was done by means of a short questionnaire designed by the young project participants following a training session.

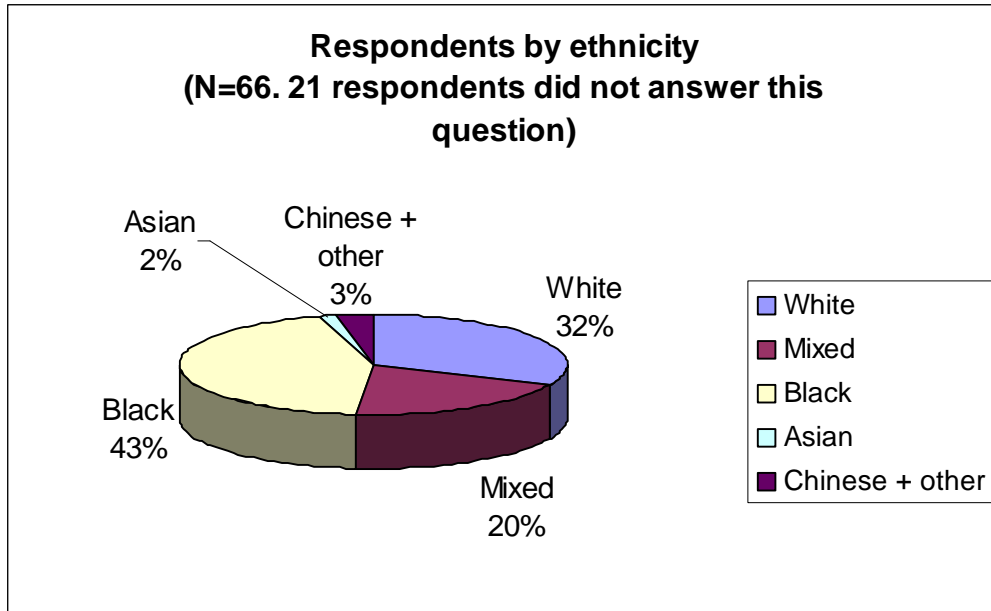
The questionnaire was then given out to other young people at youth clubs and at Merton College. The questionnaires were also given out to young people from the YMCA and Hall Place, which provide temporary accommodation for homeless young people. Approximately 80 questionnaires were completed. The questionnaire used in the research is set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

Respondents' Profile

Ethnicity

- Two-thirds (66%) of respondents were from an ethnic minority background. This compares with the Merton population in the 16-24 year age group where the proportion of ethnic minorities is only 31% and demonstrates that the project was successful in engaging with ethnic minority young people.
- However it should be noted that only one (1%) of the responses was from an Asian young person. The project steering group was aware of this low response rate among Asian young people and a meeting was held with the Asian Youth Association with a view to increasing the response rate.

Chart 1



Gender

- The majority of respondents (69%) were female. Additionally nearly all of the case studies were of young women. Young men were approached to be interviewed, but were less willing to take part.

Age

- The age of respondents ranged from 12 to 26, but only one respondent was above the age of 25. It should be noted that 29% of respondents did not give their age. Of those who did indicate their age, nearly half were 16-17 year-olds (49%). 31% of respondents were aged between 18 and 26, and the remaining 20% were aged between 12 and 15.

Key Findings

Outlined below is a summary of the Survey's key findings:

- The research sample shows a high proportion of young people experiencing homelessness. Almost one-third of respondents were living in temporary or supported accommodation.
- Respondents who lived at home were more satisfied with their accommodation than those living in temporary or supported accommodation.
- Ethnic minority respondents were more likely to be dissatisfied with their home, with 46% of respondents either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied compared to only 19% overall.

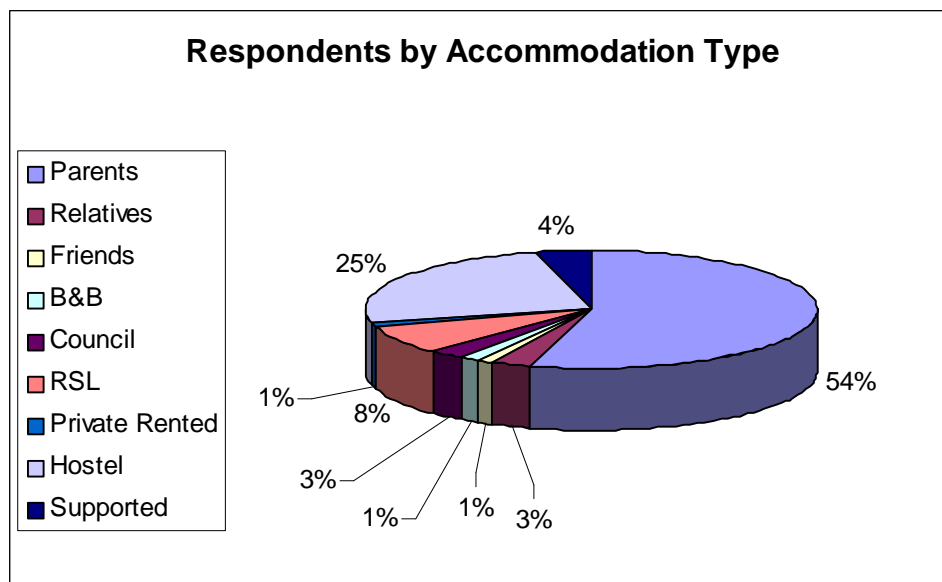
- Just under a third (31%) of respondents said they had experience of homelessness or not having anywhere to go at night. These incidences of homelessness were much higher among young male respondents. More than two-thirds of those living in temporary or supported accommodation and those renting from the council, RSL or privately had experienced homelessness, compared to 5% of those living with parents and relatives.
- Of particular concern was that almost one in four (24%) respondents, or 75% of those who had experienced no place to go at night, had slept on the streets as a result of homelessness.
- The vast majority of respondents (87%) who had experienced homelessness said it was because of conflict with their parents.
- Respondents who were living in a hostel or supported accommodation were more likely to be not in employment or training.

3.3 Detailed Survey Findings

Accommodation Type

- Over half of the respondents were living at home with their parents, making up the largest group. A quarter of respondents were living in hostels, and the remaining 21% of respondents either lived with relatives or friends, in B&B or supported accommodation, or renting from council, RSL or privately.

Chart 2



- The nine different accommodation types are categorized into three main groups for analysis purpose, to help compare the different experiences of

young people living in more settled accommodation and those living in temporary accommodation:

Young people living as part of a settled household

- Living in parents home
- Living in relatives home

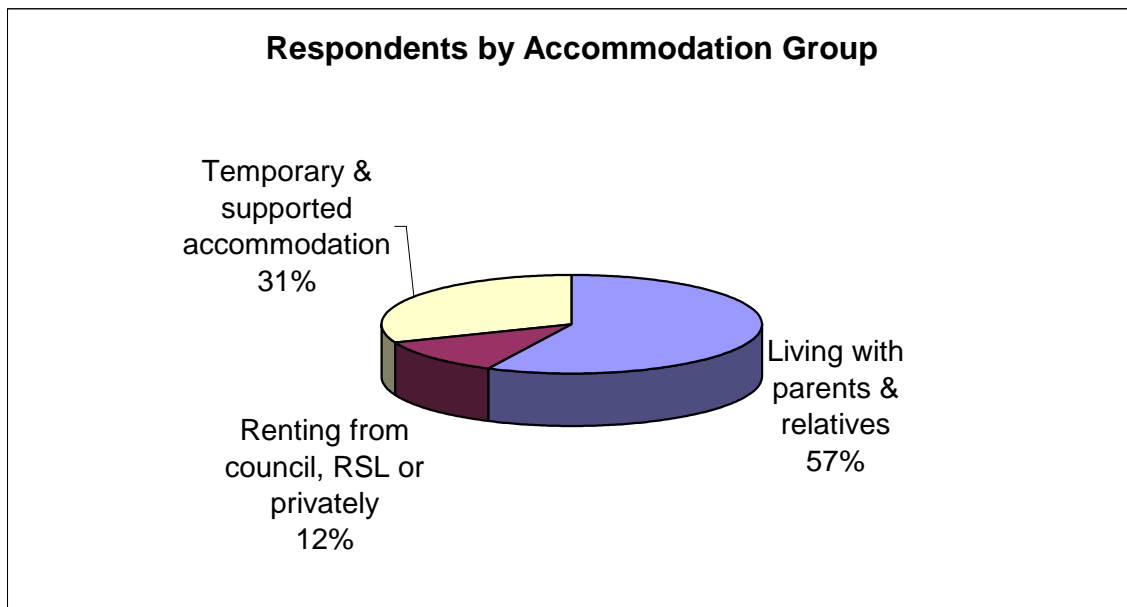
Young people who have their own tenancies

- Rented from Council
- Rented from Housing Association
- Private rented

Young people who live in temporary accommodation

- Living with friends or temporary accommodation
- B&B
- Hostel
- Supported accommodation

Chart 3



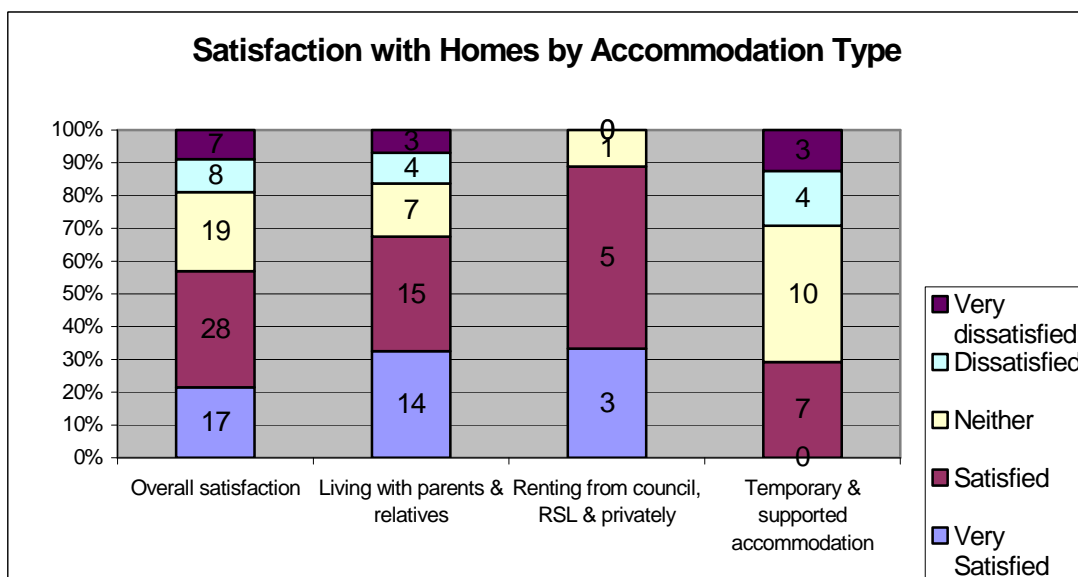
- The above chart shows that just under a third (31%) of the respondents were living in temporary accommodation. Just over one in ten have a social housing or private sector tenancy, and over half of the respondents were living with their parents or relatives.
- All white respondents lived at home with their parents or relatives, and only 50% of ethnic minority respondents lived with their parents or relatives. This means that all respondents living in temporary and supported accommodation, or having their own tenancies, were ethnic minorities.

- Almost a third (30%) of the ethnic minority respondents lived in temporary or supported accommodation. This reflects the ethnicity profile of homelessness applicants in Merton, which shows that ethnic minorities are more likely to be affected by homelessness.
- Exactly 50% of female respondents lived at home compared with only 39% of male respondents. Only 22% of female respondents lived in a hostel compared with 39% of male respondents. 44% of respondents over 16 were living with their parents, while 41% lived in a hostel or supported accommodation.

Satisfaction with Home

- Overall, 57% of respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with their home, compared to 52% of ethnic minority respondents. Ethnic minority respondents were more likely to be dissatisfied with their home, with 46% of respondents either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied compared to only 19% overall. This is because ethnic minority respondents were more likely to be living in temporary or supported accommodation.
- Satisfaction level also differs depend on the type of accommodation respondents were living in. Respondents renting from the Council, RSLs or privately had the highest level of satisfaction. Those who live at home with parents were also more satisfied with their accommodation than those living in temporary or supported accommodation.

Chart 4



- Almost all respondents who have their own tenancies were satisfied or very satisfied with their current home (eight out of nine), compared with 65% of respondents living with parents or relatives who were satisfied or

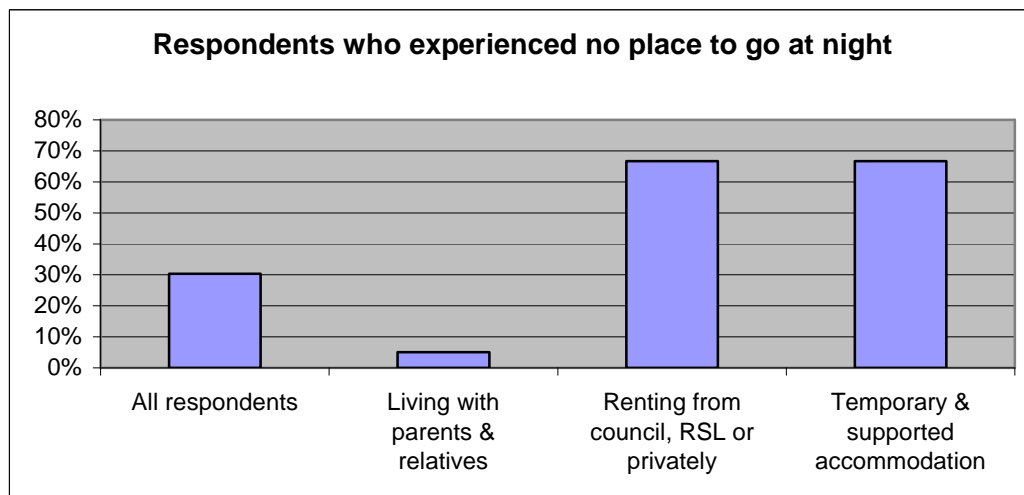
very satisfied. Only 33% of respondents who live in temporary or supported accommodation were satisfied or very satisfied with their home and 29% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

- This gives an indication of the harsh reality of homelessness. Young people who become homeless often have to stay in temporary accommodation that they are not happy with for a lengthy period, as they are not eligible for a permanent social housing tenancy until they reach the age of 18.

Experience of Homelessness

- Respondents were asked if they have experienced having no place to go at night, and if they had slept rough on the streets or in a park. 31% of respondents had experienced not having anywhere to go at night. These incidences of homelessness were much higher among young male respondents. 50% of young men had experienced having no place to go compared with 20% of young women. 37% from the 16 plus age group had experienced not having a place to go at night.
- As young people staying in temporary or supported accommodation are likely to be placed there by the local authority following a homelessness application, it is not surprising that a high proportion of these respondents, 14 out of 21 (68%), had experienced not having a place to go at night. Four out of six (67%) of those who have their own tenancies also had this experience. In contrast, 5% of those living with parents and relatives, or two respondents, had experienced having no place to go at night.

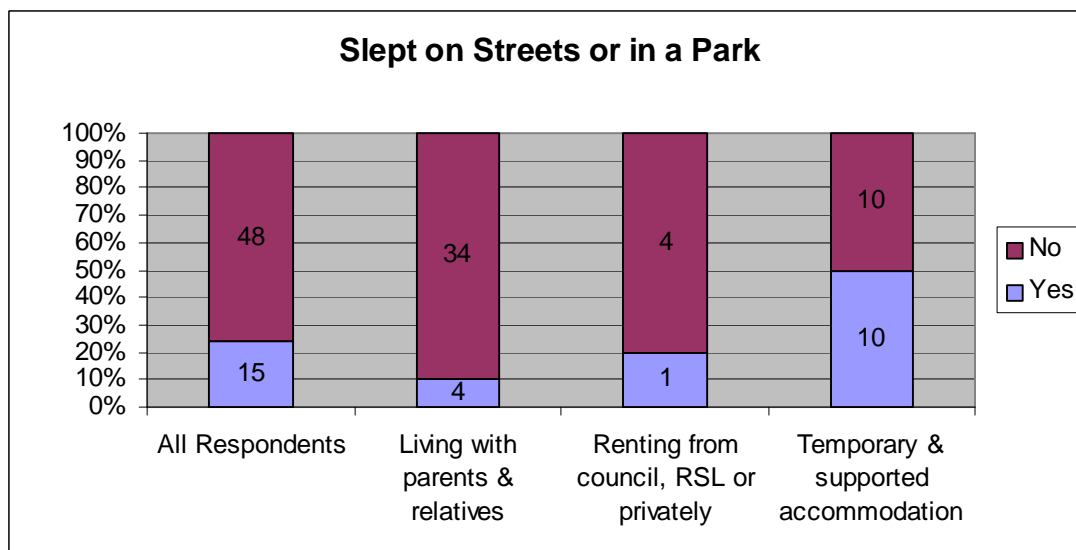
Chart 5



- One particular concern highlighted by this research was that almost one in four (24%) respondents, or 75% of those who had experienced no place to go at night, had slept on the streets. Sleeping rough not only affects the

health and well-being of the homeless persons, but also compromises their safety. This finding shows that although rough sleeping is not visible in Merton, it is indeed a problem that affects many young people.

Chart 6

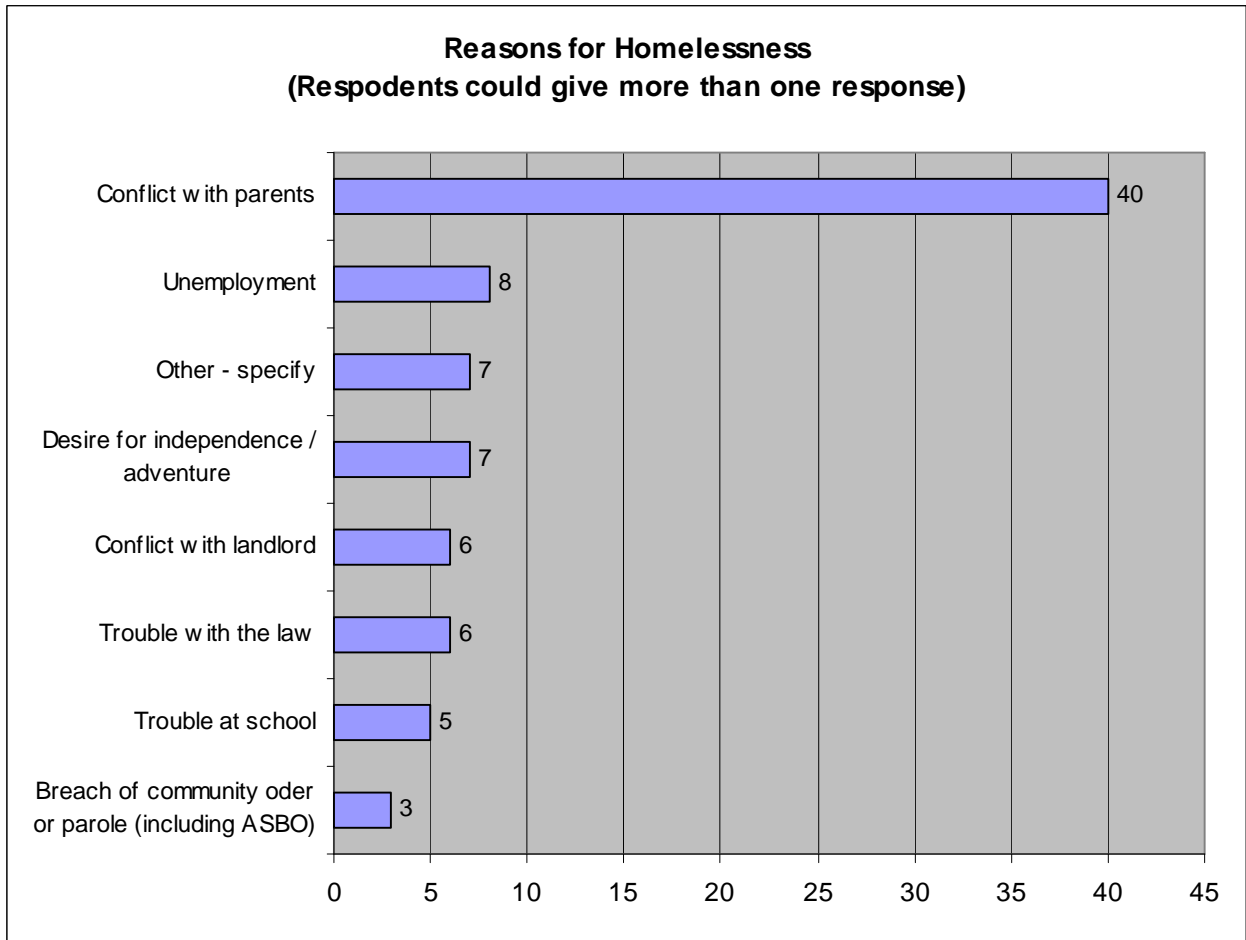


- Again, rough sleeping had affected a significantly higher proportion of those who were living in temporary or supported accommodation, although the number involved was quite small. 50% of those living in temporary or supported accommodation had slept rough, compared to 20% of those renting from council, RSL or privately, and 10% of those living with parents or relatives.
- 42% of young men had slept rough compared with 12% of young women, and 27% of those over 16 had slept rough.

Reasons for Homelessness

- The 61% of respondents who had experienced not having anywhere to stay were asked to answer the question “What led to you not having a place to stay?”. For this question respondents could give more than one response.
- Conflict with parents was the most common response, given by 82% of respondents who had answered the question. Unemployment was the next most common response as provided by 16% of respondents followed by desire for independence (14%) of respondents.

Chart 7

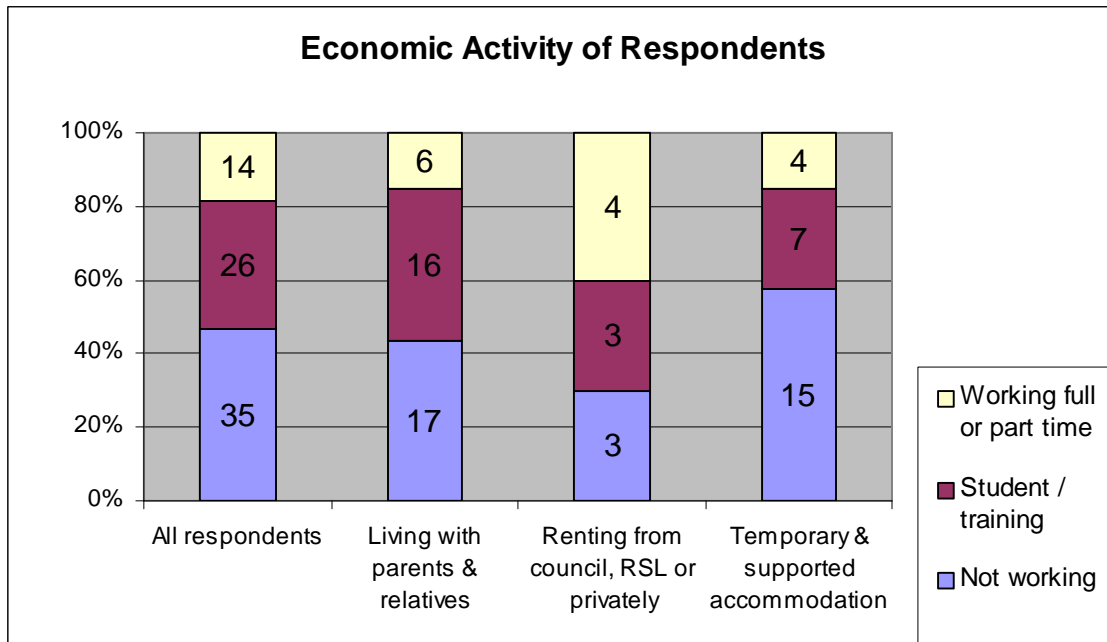


- The majority (87%) of respondents living in temporary or supported accommodation left home because of conflict with their parents. 21% of those living in temporary or supported accommodation gave unemployment (21%) as a reason, followed by trouble with the law, and desire for independence (both 17%). Male respondents were more likely to have conflict with their parents, with 85% of male respondents giving this as a reason for homelessness compared to 78% female respondents.

Economic Activity

- Overall, about one in five (19%) respondents were working and 35% were either studying or on a training course. The remaining 46% of respondents were not in work or education.

Chart 8



- Respondents who were living in temporary or supported accommodation were more likely to be not in employment or training than other respondents. 58% of those who live in temporary or supported accommodation were not in work or education, compared to 44% of respondents living with parents or relatives, and 30% of respondents renting from council, RSL or privately. This indicates that those living in temporary or supported accommodation have poorer life chances than those living in more permanent homes.
- Of the 46 respondents who were 16 or over, only one respondent (2%) worked full time, while eight (17%) worked part time. 33% of those over 16 were students or in training. Of the 35 respondents (48%) of this age group who were not working, 38% said they were looking for work while 4% said they were not looking for work.

3.4 Merton Data on Youth and Ethnic Minority Homelessness

Merton had the lowest number of homeless acceptances of all outer London boroughs for the year 2007-08 with only 95 households accepted as homeless. Proportionally Merton accepted more young applicants who were 16-17 year-olds and 18-20 year-olds formerly in care (16%), than other outer London boroughs (11%), and in the rest of the country (8%) (Source P1E data)

However these figures should be treated with some caution due to the low number of households accepted as homeless in Merton of which only 15 households were young persons households.

Chart 9

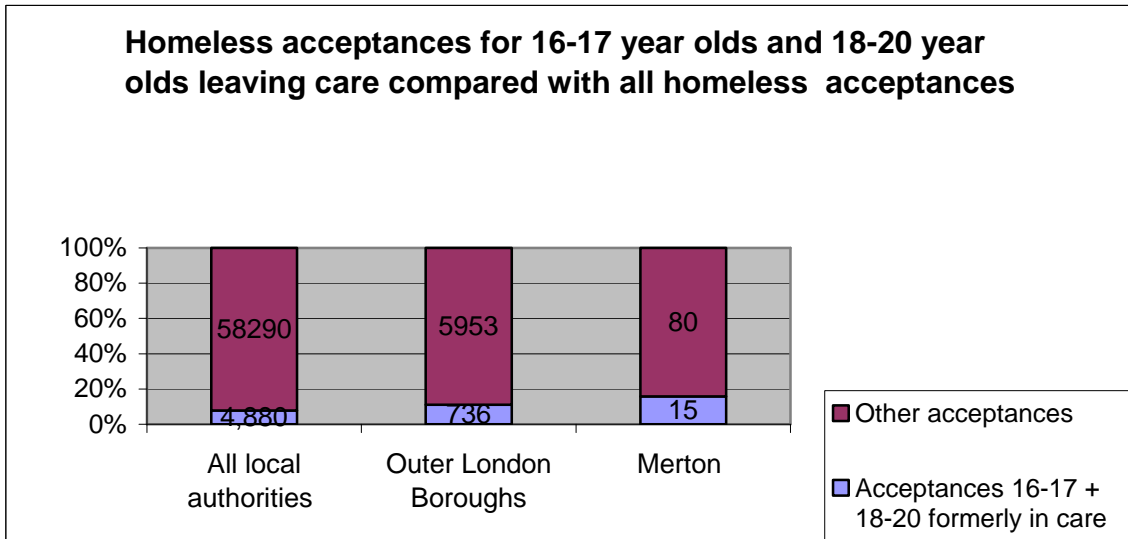
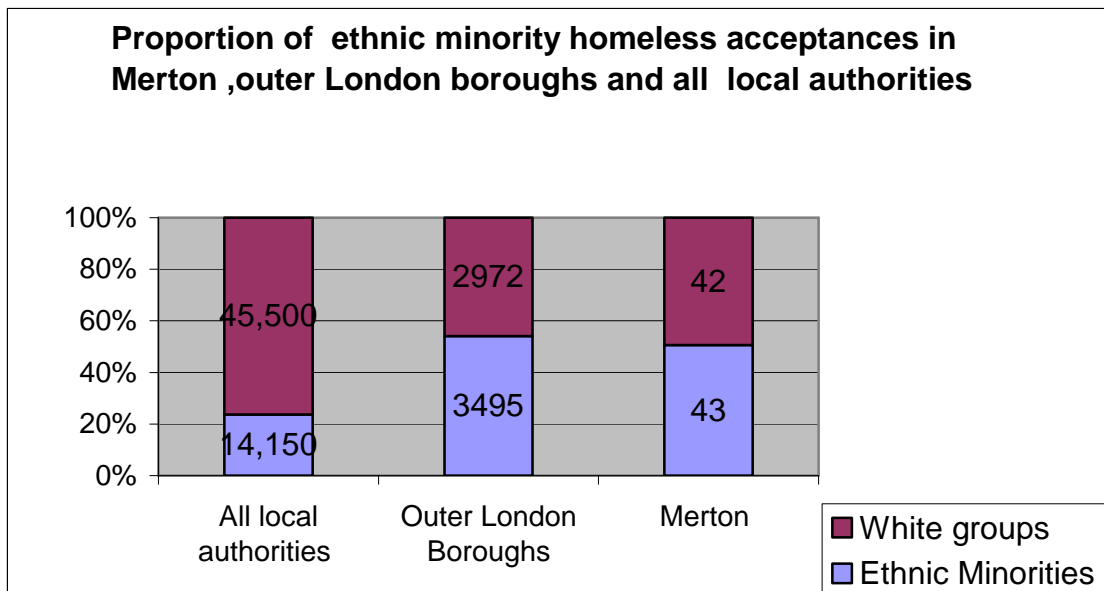


Chart 10 below shows that there was proportionally fewer ethnic minority households accepted as homeless in Merton when compared with all other outer London boroughs. 51% of homeless acceptances in Merton were of ethnic minority households compared with an average of 54% for outer London boroughs. However in the rest of the UK the figure was only 24%.

Chart 10



4. Other Project Activities

One of the main aims of the BME Video Research Project is to raise the skills level of young people, in order to help them gain employment and find their own housing solutions. As well as receiving training on video production and on research skills, project participants also gained a recognized accreditation for their work. They participated in website design training which resulted in the setting up of the 'Skeen' website, and have been encouraged to develop leadership skills through a Youth Housing Forum. The project also aims to raise awareness among young people of the reality of homelessness, by running a Peer Education programme at schools and youth clubs, using the films as a resource. More information on these activities is set out below.

4.1 Accreditation

The project includes a programme, which enables the young participants to gain formal recognition of their achievements through an accredited award, by recording what they had learned from taking part.

While the students from Merton College who made 'Problems At Home' were already studying for their 'A' levels in Media Studies, the young people from Up-Town who made 'Not for Good' and 'The Making of Not for Good' received an AQA (Accredited Qualification Alliance) accreditation award for **Participation in A Citizenship Activity**.

To achieve this they had to demonstrate that they had:

- worked in a group to discuss and produce a plan for an appropriate citizenship activity and,
- commented on the success of the event and its benefits to those involved and suggested changes or improvements that could have been made.

4.2 Website Design Training & The 'Skeen' Website

Having produced the four films, the young participants were encouraged to create their own Website where the films can be viewed and to keep some of the issues raised live. The website will also provide a forum for young people to air their views on housing issues. Bold Creative were appointed to advise the young people on setting it up and created a Myspace page at www.myspace.com/skeemerton.

Skeen Merton now has over 70 online friends and it includes space for blogs, forums and online chat as well as showing the four Young Voices films.



4.3 Peer Education Programme

One of the aims of the project was to use the films as a resource for schools to run workshops with Year 10 and Year 11 students, so that some of the issues raised can be explored with a view to preventing a new generation of young people in the borough from becoming homeless. All the secondary schools and youth clubs in the borough have been contacted and two workshops have already taken place at Ricards Lodge School and Pollards Hill Youth Centre. It is envisaged that more workshops will take place in 2009. The films were also shown at a Freshers' event at Merton College and workshops are to be rolled out to students.

4.4 Merton Youth Housing Forum

A Young Persons Housing Forum has been set up to engage with young people on housing issues and to consult with them on the emerging Children's and Young Persons Housing Strategy as outlined below. It is also envisaged that young people who are council tenants will be consulted on the council's proposals to transfer its housing stock to a new landlord organisation under the Better Homes programme. The Council has selected a RSL (registered social

landlord) partner, Circle Anglia, to provide advice and assistance in the formulation of the new landlord organisation.

Members of the Youth Housing Forum are encouraged to work together to develop a fun project with a housing theme. At the time of writing the Youth Housing Forum has met once and those attending showed a lot of enthusiasm and expressed an interest in organising a musical and fashion show with a homelessness theme.

At the meeting the “Young Voices” films were shown followed by a discussion on some of the issues raised. Those who attended also agreed to encourage more of their friends to become involved.

4.5 Next Steps

Over the next 12 months and beyond, as well as running the Peer Education programme and setting up a Youth Housing Forum, the project sub group will focus on issues identified through the research work, and develop measures to address these issues. Tackling youth homelessness is one of the key objectives in Merton Council’s Homelessness Strategy for 2008-2013, and the Council will ensure that all actions set out in the strategy are implemented.

It is however recognised that more work will need to be done through consultation with young people, in particular through the planned Youth Housing Forum, and with statutory and voluntary agencies working closely with young people, to address some of the underlying causes of homelessness as identified through this research project. This will be achieved through the development of a Children’s and Young Persons Housing Strategy, a commitment set out in the Council’s Housing Strategy 2008-2011. A Steering Group involving organisations working with young people has now been set up.

APPENDIX ONE: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Section 1 Your Accommodation

1 What type of accommodation do you currently live in?

Tick one box only ...

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Living in parents home | 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Rented from council |
| 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Living in relatives home | 9 <input type="checkbox"/> Rented from Housing Association |
| 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Living in friends home | 10 <input type="checkbox"/> Private rented |
| Temporary accommodation: | 11 <input type="checkbox"/> Hostel |
| 4 <input type="checkbox"/> B and B | 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Supported accommodation |
| 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Refuge | 13 <input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping rough |
| 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Authorised site – Gypsy | 14 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please give details below) |
| 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Unauthorised site - Gypsy | |
| 15 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know | _____ |

2 In your home do you share some facilities, like a kitchen or bathroom with other people who do not live with you?

Yes 1 No 2

3 How many people live in your current home, including yourself?

i Total number adults

ii Number of couples

iii Number children

0-10 years

M

F

10-18 years

M

F

iv Number bedrooms

4 Do you live

Alone 1 With a partner 2 With your parent/s 3
or guardian

With friends or 4
housemates/flatmates

Other If Other Please give details _____

5 How long have you been in your current home?

1 0-6months

2 7mth – 1 yr

3 1-2 yrs

4 2-5 yrs

5 5+ yrs

6 Can you tell us how satisfied you are with your home overall?

Very Satisfied
1

Satisfied
2

Neither
3

Dissatisfied
4

Very Dissatisfied
5

Section 2: Your experience of housing need and the BME Video Research Project.

7 **We often hear stories about young people who don't have anywhere to stay, not just for a night but a place where they can settle. Have you ever experienced any of the following?**

- Having no place to stay at night? Yes No
- Sleeping on the streets/in a park? Yes No
- Staying at friends or relatives because you had nowhere else to go Yes No

If No to all of the above, skip the last question and end here. Thank them**

8 **Thinking back to the last time you had no place to stay, what do you think led you to be in that situation?**

Tick as many as apply...

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict with parents | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment |
| 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Trouble at school | 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict with landlord |
| 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Trouble with the law | 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Desire for independence/adventure |
| 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Breach of community order or parole (including ASBO) | 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

If Other Please give reasons below:

9 **We're doing some more in-depth research as part of a BME Video Research Project, where we invite you to talk about your housing experiences and record it onto a video/ DVD.**

The video is being made because we want to hear about the housing problems young people from ethnic minorities are going through. We hope to use the research to think of ways we can improve things.

Would you be interested in taking part? 1 Yes 2 No

10 **The BME Video Research Project is also looking to improve things by getting the views of young people on a regular basis. This will be done by setting up a new Youth Forum. Young people will be able to put forward their views to the council and other organisations on housing issues.**

Would you be interested in getting involved in the Youth Forum? 1 Yes 2 No

Section 3 – About you...

11 **Are you under 25?** Yes No
Do you mind telling us your age? write age in numbers
prefer not to say 99

12 **Can you tell me your ethnic group?**

<p>WHITE</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> White British</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> White Irish</p> <p>3 <input type="checkbox"/> White Travellers of Irish Heritage</p> <p>4 <input type="checkbox"/> White Gypsy Roma</p> <p>5 <input type="checkbox"/> White EU. Tell us (for e.g. Polish) _____</p> <p>6 <input type="checkbox"/> White other. Please specify _____</p> <p>BLACK</p> <p>11 <input type="checkbox"/> Black British</p> <p>12 <input type="checkbox"/> Black Caribbean</p> <p>13 <input type="checkbox"/> Black African. Tell us (for e.g. Somalian) _____</p> <p>14 <input type="checkbox"/> Black other. Please specify _____</p> <p>21 <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese</p> <p>22 <input type="checkbox"/> Any other. Please specify _____</p>	<p>MIXED</p> <p>7 <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed White/Black Caribbean</p> <p>8 <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed White/Black African</p> <p>9 <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed White/Asian</p> <p>10 <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed other. Please specify _____</p> <p>ASIAN</p> <p>15 <input type="checkbox"/> Asian British</p> <p>16 <input type="checkbox"/> Asian Indian</p> <p>17 <input type="checkbox"/> Asian Pakistani</p> <p>18 <input type="checkbox"/> Asian Bangladeshi</p> <p>19 <input type="checkbox"/> Asian Tamil</p> <p>20 <input type="checkbox"/> Asian other. Please specify _____</p> <p>23 <input type="checkbox"/> I don't wish to answer</p>
--	---

13 **Gender** 1 male 2 Female

14 **Are you working?**

1 <input type="checkbox"/> Not working and not seeking work	4 <input type="checkbox"/> Working part time (under 29 hours a week)
2 <input type="checkbox"/> Not working but seeking work	5 <input type="checkbox"/> Working full time
3 <input type="checkbox"/> Student/in training	

15 **Are you currently living in Merton?** Yes No
Can you give us the first part of your postcode... if we don't have the last 2 numbers, we can't actually tell where you live but it will give us the area within Merton....

				-	
--	--	--	--	---	--

16 **If you answered Yes to Question 9 or 10 above, about getting more involved in the research or the BME Youth Forum, please leave your name and phone number or email address below, so we may contact you**

Name _____ Contact Details _____

Thank you for filling in this questionnaire. If you have any questions please contact Michael Frean, Housing Strategy Officer on 0208 545 3305 or email michael.frean@merton.gov.uk

If you would like more information in your own

Arabic

إذا اردت معلومات إضافية بلغتك الأصلية الرجاء الاتصال بنا في العنوان المدون ضمن الإطار أدناه.

Bengali

যদি আপনার নিজের ভাষায় লেখা আরও তথ্য চান তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করুন, তলার বক্‌সে আমাদের ঠিকানা রয়েছে।

Chinese

如果你需要用中文印成的資料，請按低端方格內提供的地址與我們聯系。

Farsi

اگر مایل به اطلاعات بیشتر به زبان خود هستید، لطفاً با ما از طریق آدرس زیر تماس بگیرید.

French

Pour tout renseignement complémentaire dans votre propre langue, veuillez nous contacter à l'adresse figurant dans l'encadré du bas.

Polish

Jeśli życzy sobie Pan/i więcej informacji w swoim języku, proszę się z nami skontaktować pod adresem podanym w dolnej ramce.

Punjabi

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਲੈਣੀ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਖਾਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਪਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Somali

Hadii aad u baahan tahay faahfaahin intaa kabadan oo ku soobsan afkaaka hooyo ama Af Somali fadlan lana soo xiira cinwaanka hoos ku qoran.

Spanish

Si usted desea más información en su propia lengua, por favor contáctenos en la dirección al pie del formato.

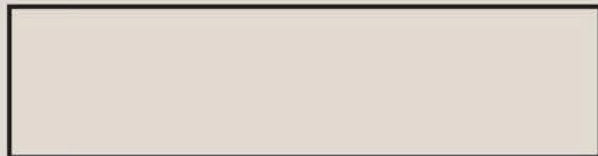
Tamil

உங்கள் மொழியில் மேலதிக தகவலைப் பெற விரும்பினால், அடியிலுள்ள பெட்டிக்குள் தரப்பட்டுள்ள விலாசத்தில் எம்முடன் தொடர்பு கொள்ளுங்கள்.

Urdu

اگر آپ اپنی زبان میں مزید معلومات حاصل کرنا چاہتے ہیں تو براہ کرم ہم سے اس پتے پر رابطہ قائم کریں جو کہ نیچے کے بکس میں درج ہے۔

You can also get this information in large print, in Braille and on tape.



**language, please contact us at the address shown in
the box below.**

Michael Frean

Housing Strategy Officer, London Borough of Merton
Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden,
Surrey SM4 5DX
020 8545 3305