

Submission to the Sheffield Race Equality Commission on behalf of the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority

25th June, 2021.

Introduction

The Mayor, Mayoral Combined Authority, South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive and the Executive Team welcome this invitation and opportunity to make a submission.

This submission is made on behalf of the Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) which comprises the Mayor of South Yorkshire and the four South Yorkshire council areas of Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield as well as the private sector led Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTe).

This submission includes information on what we do; how our HR, procurement and governance systems approach equality, diversity and inclusion; the evidence base as it relates to the economy and how a focus on delivering our Strategic Economic Plan and emerging Inclusion Plan must contribute to the challenge of tackling all forms of inequalities, including racism and racial inequality, in South Yorkshire.

What we do

Our organisation's collective mission is to ensure the South Yorkshire economy prospers and that we effectively manage the 102 million passenger journeys made each year in South Yorkshire by bus, tram, train, and Tram Train. We work in collaboration with Local Authorities to attract new and more investment and enable new and creative ways of investing; creating the conditions for private sector led inclusive economic growth at pace and at scale, which makes a positive impact on South Yorkshire's places, businesses and residents.

We work closely with transport operators, local councils, and other key stakeholders to develop and deliver an integrated public transport network that connects people and places across South Yorkshire, whether they are travelling for work or leisure.

Our vision

Collectively, through our Strategic Economic Plan, the Mayor, the MCA Board and the LEP Board share a vision to grow an economy that works for everyone.

"We will develop inclusive and sustainable approaches that build on our innovation strengths, embrace the UK's 4th Industrial Revolution, contribute more to UK prosperity, to enhance quality of life for all."

In 2020, we developed a Renewal Action Plan in response to COVID-19, to provide immediate help for local people, employers, and places, whilst contributing to the longer-term vision for transformation of the City Region.

The way we work:

This work of the MCA and Mayor is supported by an Executive Team focused on the economy and a PTE Executive focused on public transport. These Executives are integrating during 21/22 into a single Executive. We take forward, in partnership with other stakeholders, the generation of evidence-based policy for further devolution or investment strategies to deliver the results required.

We develop programmes of investment at the behest of the Mayor, MCA and LEP and ensure that we operate in accordance with national statutory transparency and compliance frameworks.

Our Organisation:

As a public sector organisation, we uphold the obligations and expectations of all public bodies to be transparent, accountable and to demonstrate our commitment to equality and inclusion as an employer, funder and deliverer of the activity that falls within our purview.

We take these responsibilities seriously and ensure that across our Human Resources, procurement, and decision-making processes we do all that we can to show leadership on this agenda.

Human resources

As of 1st June 2020, 7% of our workforce were from the BAME community. Of this 7%, 18% are currently in senior manager roles.

Through our recruitment processes we:

- Ensure selection members receive no personal information about the candidates applying with progression to interview based purely on application and information the candidates provide.
- Ensure recruitment panels have a gender balance and we consider and look at targeted approaches to advertising roles.
- Monitor candidates through our application process – turning to intelligence led to understand where / who we are attracting to the organisation, roles across the group.
- Guidance and training and support on recruitment, panels, development of questions
- Ensure that job adverts are considered for 'bias'.

Diversity Policy / Dignity at Work

- Policies in place to ensure acceptable and appropriate standards of behaviour are identified and established within the workplace – this covers all protected characteristic.

Areas we want to improve on:

We are also actively exploring methods of reporting on BAME and other characteristics (currently only Gender is a requirement), targeted recruitment for job roles, encouraging candidates from BAME communities, and developing a better understanding, acknowledgement and awareness across the workplace of holidays, cultures and festivals.

We are also exploring the following:

- Awareness and learning environment around different cultures to encourage learnings of not just employees but the communities in which we serve.
- Working with local community groups to develop a work experience programme that will inform and build relationships, showing the roles the organisation has to offer its community members.
- Development of Employee Surveys
- Developing role models within our organisation who can help and support in reaching candidates and wider communities.

Procurement:

Our procurement processes and policies are robust and aim to ensure the elimination of discrimination. There are several supplier questions we expect organisations to respond to relating to fair and equal treatment of all employees. In addition, we require evidence of an organisation's internal policies relating to HR etc and ensure that through our monitoring and contracting processes these are applied.

We now have the capacity within the Public Contracts Regulations to exclude an organisation from any activity or terminate a contract if they are found to be in breach of any policies, such as Human Rights.

One of the first actions of the Mayor was to instruct that the MCA Exec and PTE became Living Wage accredited, leading to improvements in wage rates for some employed officers and major sub-contractors supplying core services.

In our procurement and supply chain policies, we recognise the need to go further in processes to ensure better practices, so we are developing an Ethical and Social Outcomes-Led Procurement policy.

Embedding equality impact assessments in our work

In line with statutory guidance, we carry out Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) when we introduce any new policy or make a change which will have an impact on our communities. This is in line with the Equality Act 2010. As an example, most recently an Equality Impact Assessment was carried out on the extension of concessionary travel entitlements. This demonstrated that more young, disabled females and lower waged people rely on public transport to travel - and as such we were able to implement the policy and generate benefits for people with protected characteristics.

The economic and inclusion challenges within the region.

Although different cities have different heritages, with differing experiences of race inequality and racism, Sheffield shares a complex relationship with race. This is often demonstrated in labour market data which shows differences between different ethnic groups. We have used two primary economic measures (employment rate and unemployment) to show that the 97,000 ethnic minorities^[1] in Sheffield face several challenges across health, employment and education agendas.

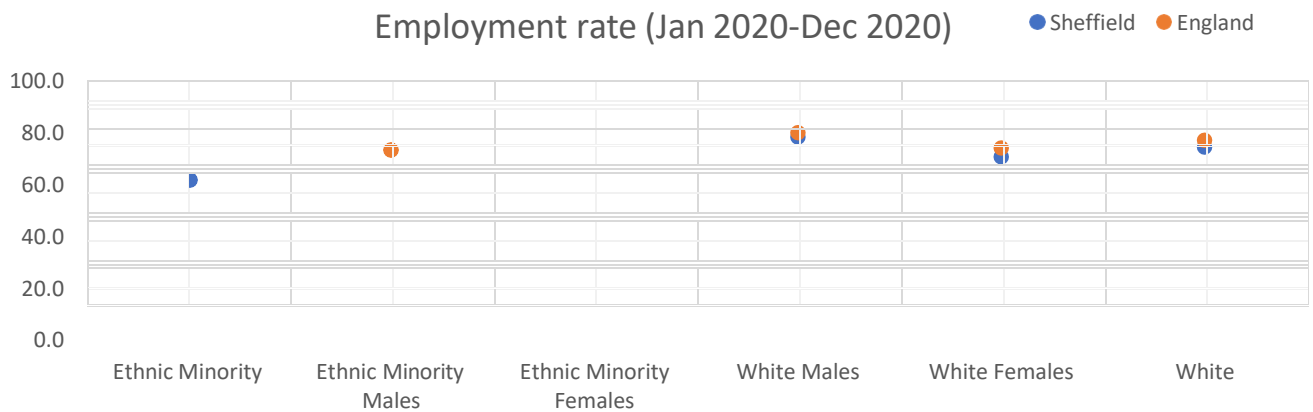
[1]

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/articles/researchreportonpopulationestimatesbyethnicgroupandreligion/2019-12-04>

Employment rate

The employment rate is a basic indicator of how well different groups are integrated into the labour market. Data on the employment rate for Sheffield, shows a gap to the England average and whilst in the UK many ethnic minorities have a lower employment rate, the rates in Sheffield are lower on average (apart from Indian men).

Figure 1: Employment Rate (Jan 2020-Dec 2020)



Source: ONS Annual Population Survey

There are several possible reasons for differences in employment rates. National level research¹ shows that:

- Employment rates between ethnic groups appear to be narrowing but large gaps remain.
- Lower female employment rates reflect how many in ethnic minority families particularly from some South Asian groups (Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi) women are responsible for caregiving (child and adult dependents) in line with traditional attitudes to gender roles.
- It is believed that cultural norms prevalent in ethnic minorities can prevent women from entrepreneurship or progression within businesses.
- Economic inactivity may also reflect that some individuals are 'discouraged workers' who have dropped out of the labour market because of a perceived lack of employment opportunities.
- Students and those who are long-term sick or ill are also classified as inactive, which means that groups with high proportions of students tend to have lower activity rates (e.g., Chinese and West African groups).
- There are higher economic activity rates among the white ethnic minority groups which may be explained by their relatively high proportion of labour migrants, their relatively young average age and lack of caregiving commitments.

Unemployment

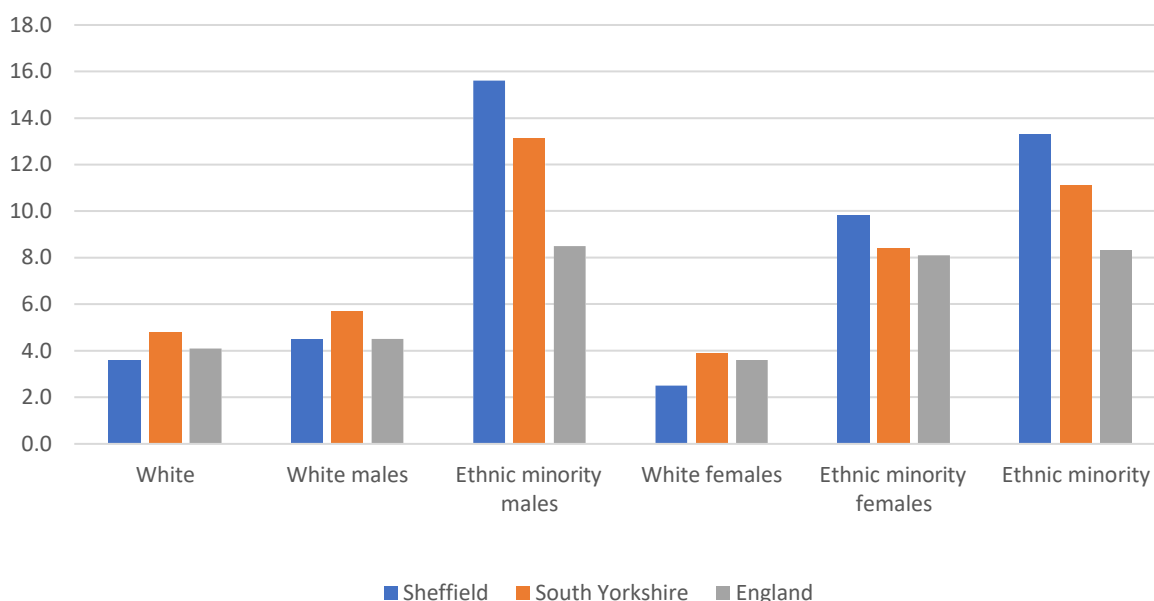
Among those active in the labour market, the proportion that are unemployed is a key measure of barriers to labour market success. High rates of unemployment amongst the population can be devastating to individuals and communities over the long terms.

Available data on unemployment rates suggests that the ethnic minority groups in the UK, Sheffield and South Yorkshire experience higher rates of unemployment than White groups. Detailed unemployment data on different ethnic groups is not easily publicly available and results are suppressed due to the methodological techniques of collating them.

Figure 2: Unemployment Rates (16+) (Jan 2020-Dec 2020)

¹ See amongst others:

<https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/22310/9781447351269.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y>



Source: Annual Population Survey 2021

Joblessness is a powerful predictor of poverty and the analysis of unemployment and employment rates suggests disadvantage in the labour market for ethnic minorities compared to their White British counterparts.²

At a local level, analysis and insight of employment rates and unemployment is restricted by available data and research. The MCA is not aware of research which differs from the above but there is evidence which suggests employment rates and unemployment issues may be more acute in Sheffield and South Yorkshire. The reasons for the enhanced issues could be linked to some of the reasons mentioned above related to employment rates but also the following:

- **Deprivation:** Sheffield has higher levels of deprivation than many other cities. Those areas of deprivation are also areas where more ethnic minorities are more likely to live (see maps in appendix).
- **Economic Mix:** Sheffield (and South Yorkshire) can be characterised as a low wage economy and lower rates of pay than the national average and others. As such, entrenched poverty, in-work poverty, and exclusion from certain sectors appear to remain issues for a section of the population.
- **Economic Development:** Sheffield has seen its economy and employment grow over the past 10 years. However, this has been at a slower rate compared to other core cities meaning that progress in reducing racial inequality could be held back by economic development.
- **Rise in atypical employment:** There has been a rise in atypical employment (including part time and 'gig economy' working) in Sheffield. This type of work has some benefits (e.g. flexibilities) but also wider challenges such as pay and conditions. There is evidence to suggest that the growth of the gig economy has placed pressure upon ethnic minorities with several wide-ranging reports suggesting that this makes ethnic minorities more likely to have a lack of rights and entitlements, a lack of guaranteed hours and pay at lower wages.
- **Poverty persists:** Child poverty rates in the South Yorkshire have remained virtually unchanged between 2012 and 2016 (at around 21 per cent) despite increases in both GVA

² <https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12657/22310/9781447351269.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y>

per worker and the employment rate during the same period. There are higher child poverty rates among ethnic minority households at a national level.

In addition to these, legacy issues also persist. Sheffield and South Yorkshire continues to experience patterns of deindustrialisation and the move to a service-based economy which has led to changes in the economic profile, affecting many communities. This includes communities which experienced in-migration during economic expansion with economic change meaning that many of these sectors that expanding are seeing decline or reprofiling of the skills requirements.

There is evidence at a national level that discrimination and bias is part of the reason that ethnic minorities have a lower employment and unemployment rate.³ Within Sheffield there is no reason to disagree with this conclusion, but there is insufficient data to back this up.

Health

Whilst the MCA does not have a statutory role for public health, we recognise that all our work has an impact on population health and wellbeing, either directly or indirectly. Differences in health are rooted in differences in living and working conditions. The health inequalities we see between communities are amenable to change through creating the social and economic conditions and local environments that support health.

We know that patterns of disease and levels of risk factors can vary by ethnicity. One example is physical activity. The Active Lives Survey 2015-2019 demonstrates differences in physical activity levels by ethnicity. At a national level a higher percentage of Mixed, White British and White other ethnicity reported being physically active, compared to those from Asian, Black and Chinese ethnicity. Data for Yorkshire and the Humber reflects this national trend with the lowest percentage for physical activity being reported by those of Chinese ethnicity. We have a focus on supporting active travel as a viable option for people across South Yorkshire and it is important that we consider how accessible active travel is for people of different ethnicities.

Percentage of people aged 16 years and over who reported being physically active							
All	Asian	Black	Chinese	Mixed	White British	White other	Other
63%	48%	54%	42%	73%	64%	67%	76%

<https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/health/diet-and-exercise/physical-activity/latest>

COVID-19 has shone a spotlight on the impact entrenched socioeconomic disparities between different ethnic groups has on health risks and health outcomes. Minority ethnic groups tend to have poorer socioeconomic circumstances the consequences of which are poorer health outcomes. People from ethnic minority backgrounds may have been more at risk of being infected with COVID-19 due to their living and working conditions - being more likely to be in a key worker role, being less able to work from home, being more reliant on public transport and living in over-crowded housing. Many ethnic minority groups also have a higher incidence of chronic diseases and long-term conditions, which can increase the risk of becoming seriously ill with COVID-19.

Education

It is known that different groups of the population have seized on the opportunities afforded by the education system and outperform the national average for certain metrics. However, other ethnic

³ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974507/20210331_-_CRED_Report_-_FINAL_-_Web_Accessible.pdf

groups experience lower than average educational outcomes which can have a significant impact on employment rates, earnings and general wellbeing.

Utilising the % of pupils achieving grades 5 or above in English and Maths, White ethnic groups outperform all other ethnic groups apart from Chinese. At a national level, Asian ethnic groups often outperform the White group but this is not the case in Sheffield.

Figure 3: Percentage of pupils achieving grades 5 or above in English and Mathematics GCSEs 2019-20

Geography	Asian	Black	Chinese	Mixed	White	Total
England	58.3	46	79.6	50.2	49.1	49.9
Sheffield	46.8	42	60	36.7	47.8	46.4

Source: DfE 2021

There is also disparity in attainment between different ethnic groups in Attainment 8 scores, which measure a student's average grade across eight subjects. In England and Sheffield Attainment 8 scores were higher in Chinese and Asian pupils than the average and White pupils, whilst Black and Mixed performed lower than the average and White pupils. It must be noted that there are several sub classifications within the broad ethnic groupings used in tables 3 and 4. There is evidence at national level which shows that some of the sub-groups match or outperform the national average. Unfortunately, this data is not available at a local level.

Figure 4: Average Attainment 8 scores- 2019-20

Geography	Asian	Black	Chinese	Mixed	White	Total
England	54.5	48.9	67.6	50.8	49.7	50.2
Sheffield	48.5	45.3	57.1	44.7	48.1	47.7

Source: DfE 2021

The gaps in attainment and the potential slight variations between the situation in Sheffield and the national picture suggest that further research is required.

There is evidence that, nationally, educational attainment for some groups of ethnic minority young people is improving. There is also evidence that ethnic minority young people are “over-represented in pupil referrals units and exclusions and, while they enter higher education in greater numbers, they remain under-represented at Russell Group universities and on apprenticeship schemes, and over-represented in the figures for unemployment and the prison system”. It is not known by the MCA to what extent these conclusions are also true for Sheffield, but it highlights the need for a rigorous and detailed evidence base.

How We Can Work Better in The Future:

The MCA’s role in tackling these societal injustices must focus on delivering the region’s Strategic Economic Plan and in particular, the emphasis on inclusive growth and connecting people from across the region to opportunity. We look forward to receiving, and are open to, the Commission’s views on how we can do more as an organisation.

By investing in places that are underperforming economically, and by tackling some of the underlying structural inequalities in skills, employment and health – as well as ensuring that our most deprived communities are better connected to affordable and reliable public transport – and creating jobs and progression routes for individuals, we can make a significant contribution to the inequalities that persist in Sheffield and South Yorkshire.

This year the MCA became responsible for the devolved Adult Education Budget. The strategy is on progressing lower educated and skilled residents. We will be monitoring and collating data on all beneficiaries and could track the type of training and the starts and completions for different racial groups. Control over this budget gives the MCA the ability to directly target and address continuing inequalities if we see provision is not connected to the local community needs.

Central to getting this right will be the focused work on our Inclusion Plan. This work is in its infancy – but will be looking at several areas of focus including health and wellbeing; social value through procurement; community wealth building; access to public services; attainment and more. The plan will focus on outcomes which align with our strategic priorities of a fairer, stronger, greener South Yorkshire, measuring diversity in workforces, abolishing modern slavery, and ensuring air quality is improved.

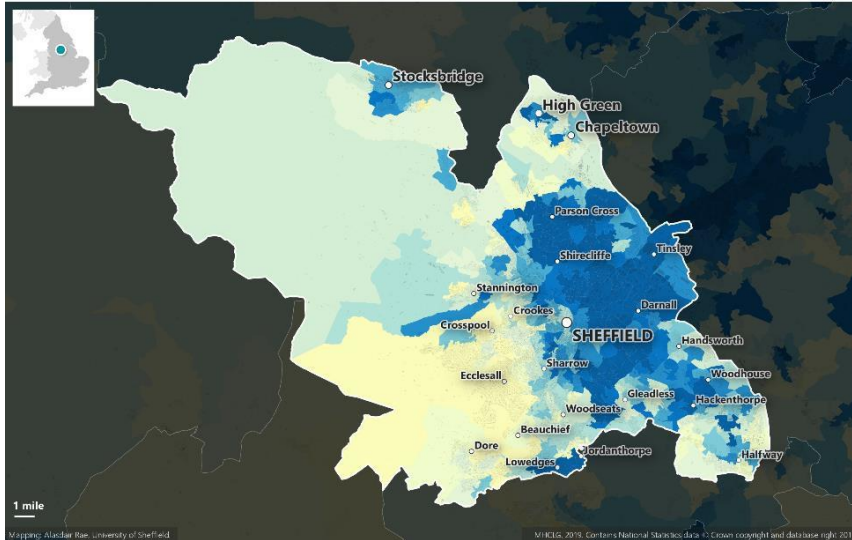
There is more work for us to do on ensuring we better understand the problem in front of us and on ensuring that our data and policy insight work helps inform our approach to inclusion and tackling racial inequality.

We must also do more with our own corporate efforts on procurement, human resources, and the commissioning of services, using the funding available to us deliver both our inclusion plan objectives and an organisation that reflects the society we serve.

Appendix:

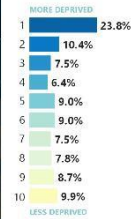
English Indices of Deprivation 2019

SHEFFIELD



Local deprivation profile

% of LSOAs in each national deprivation decile

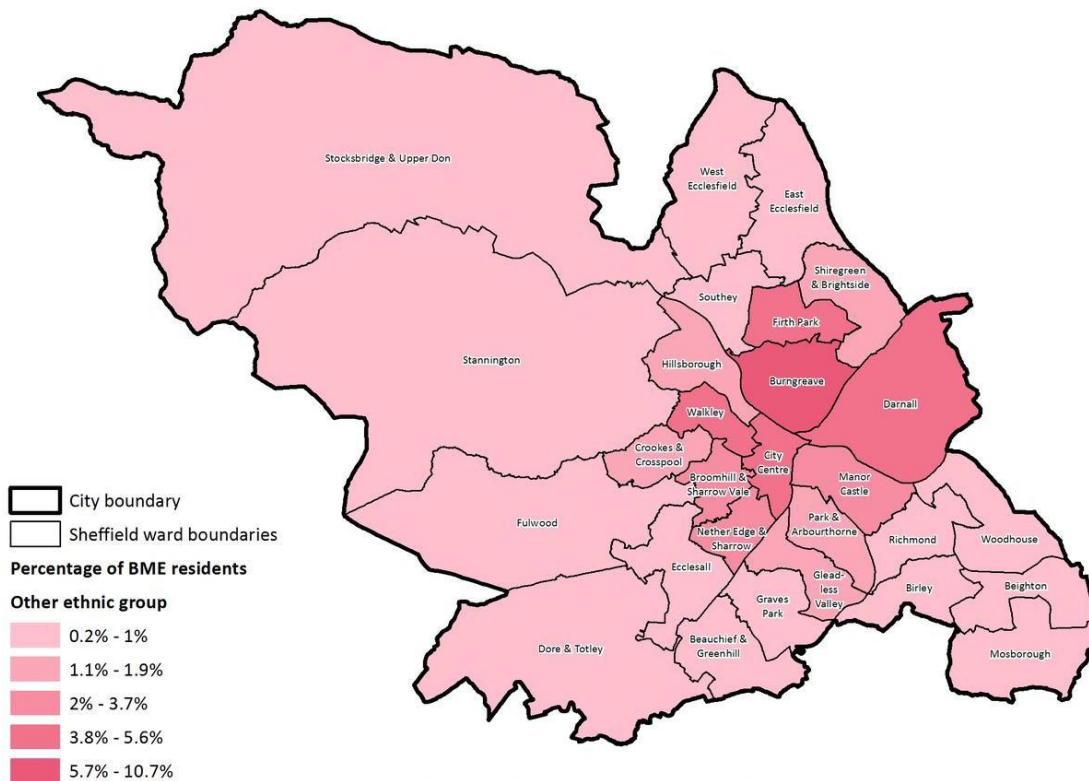


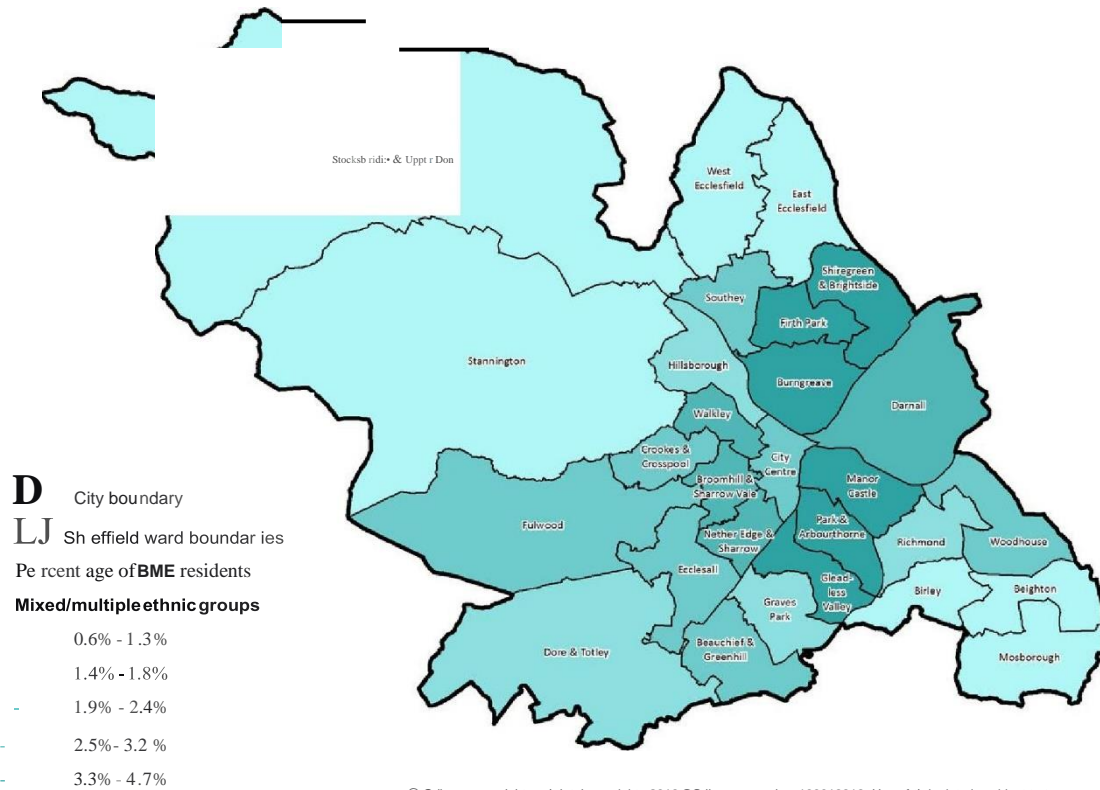
What this map shows

This is a map of Indices of Deprivation 2019 data for Sheffield. The colours on the map indicate the deprivation decile of each Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) for England as a whole, and the coloured bars above indicate the proportion of LSOAs in each national deprivation decile. The most deprived areas (decile 1) are shown in blue. It is important to keep in mind that the Indices of Deprivation relate to small areas and do not tell us how deprived, or wealthy, individual people are. LSOAs have an average population of just under 1,700 (as of 2017).

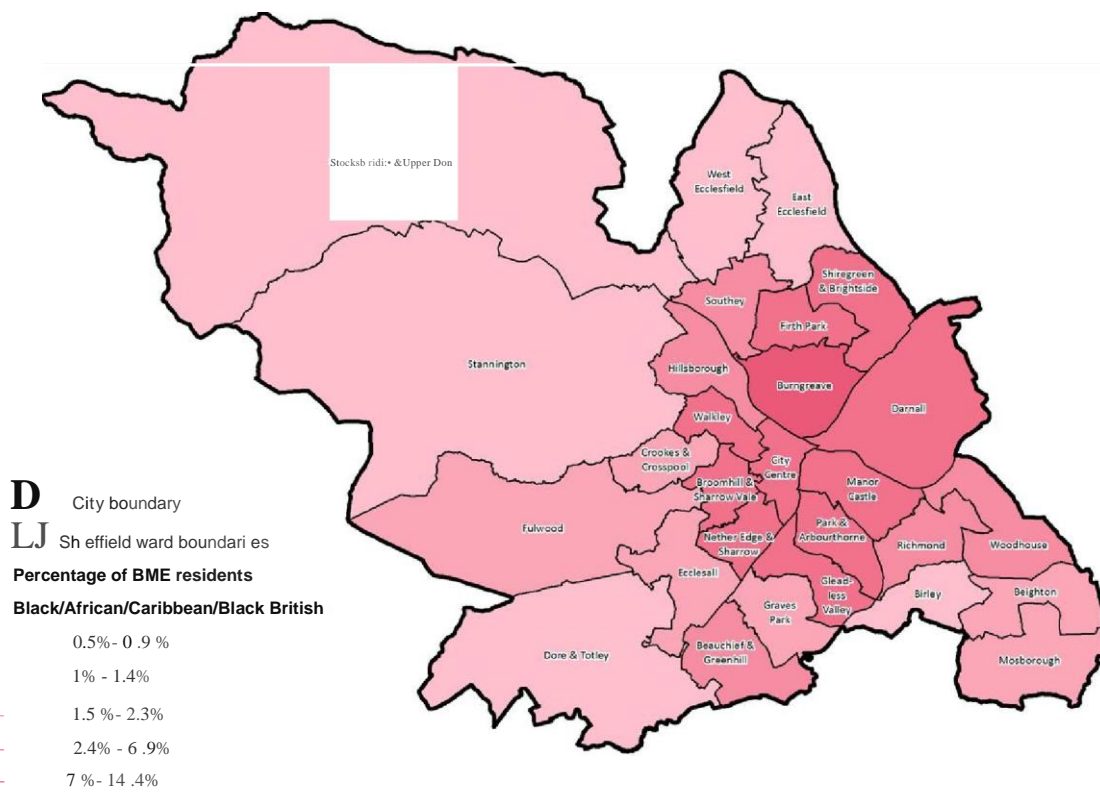


Maps of Sheffield's Ethnic Composition (source: Sheffield Joint Strategic Needs Assessment)

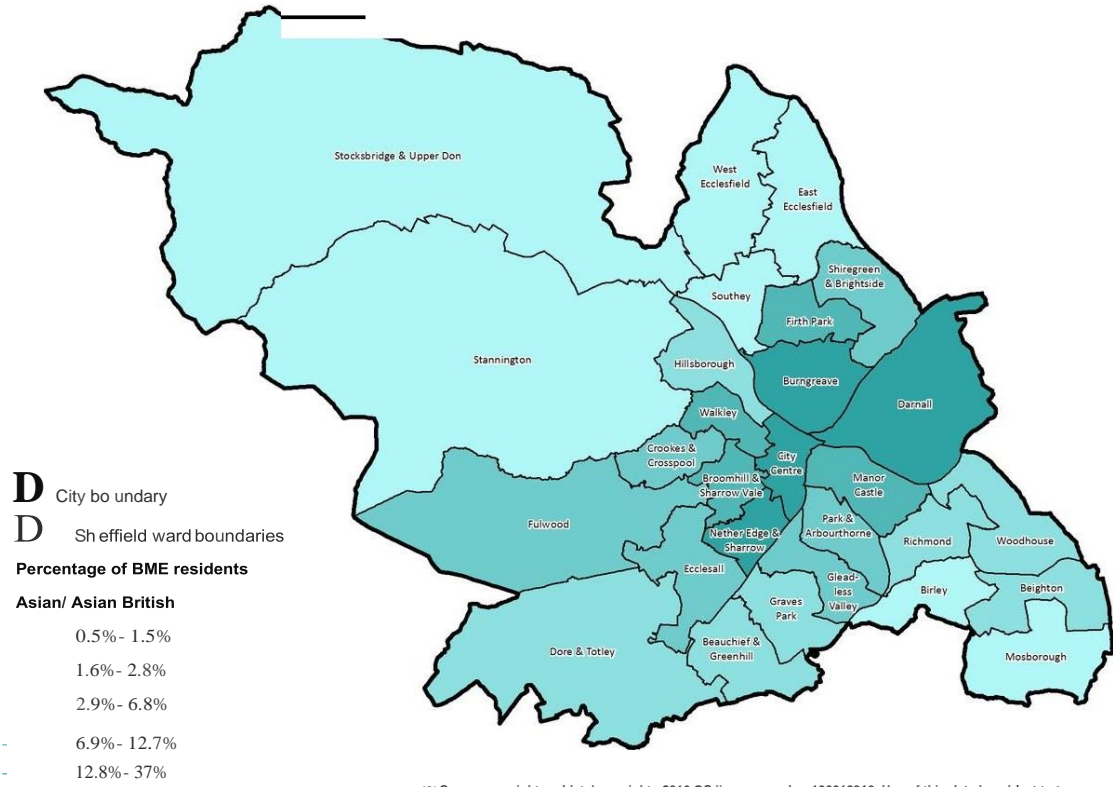




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