Government consultation on the *Integrated Communities Strategy* green paper: A response from The Challenge

About The Challenge

1. The Challenge is the UK's leading charity for building a more socially integrated society. Through designing, delivering and rapidly growing a number of social mixing programmes, we have brought together over 175,000 young people from different backgrounds to develop their confidence and skills in understanding and connecting with others. In 2017 alone, over 45,000 young people participated in our programmes - this includes National Citizen Service, of which we are a major provider.

2. Alongside our role as a programme delivery organisation, we also develop ideas to forge a more integrated Britain. During 2014 and 2015, The Challenge convened the Social Integration Commission. Following the Commission's conclusion, we set up the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Social Integration, which is chaired by Chuka Umunna MP.

3. The responses set out in this submission are informed by our experience of designing and delivering programmes which promote meaningful and positive social mixing between people from different backgrounds and growing them to scale; of discussing issues of social segregation and integration with young people, employers, practitioners and parliamentarians; and of conducting original research on themes of connection and cohesion.

4. The Challenge strongly welcomes the government's Integrated Communities Strategy, which we believe to be a significant step forward in integration and cohesion policy – not least as it acknowledges the importance of social mixing to the goal of creating a society in which people feel able to confidently and comfortably connect with those from different backgrounds. We believe that our tendency to surround ourselves with 'people like us' poses a tangible and potent threat to the strength, health and prosperity of our society. We also believe that, when people from different ethnicities, socio-economic backgrounds and generations meet, mix and lead interconnected lives, trust grows, prejudice declines and communities flourish. To this end, we welcome the launch of an Integration Innovation Fund and the government's statement that this fund will be used in part to pilot new social mixing initiatives aimed at creating opportunities and incentives for Britons from all walks of life to meaningfully engage with one another and discover points of commonality. The Challenge has a number of resources to offer in this regard, which we highlight throughout this response and which we would be delighted to share with the Ministry in support of this vital work.

5. This briefing responds to a number of questions raised in the green paper, which relate to the work and expertise of The Challenge.

Building Integrated Communities

We define integrated communities as communities where people - whatever their background - live, work, learn and socialise together, based on shared rights, responsibilities and opportunities. Do you agree with this definition?

6. We agree broadly with this definition, in particular the emphasis placed on creating opportunities for social contact in all spheres of life. We consider the fact that this strategy includes a definition of meaningful social mixing - and outlines the positive impact which encounters across difference can have when they take place under the right conditions (p.12) - to be hugely positive. This approach must sit at the heart of any indicative measures of social integration, and we welcome the opportunity to support ways in which this definition of meaningful - rather than tokenistic - contact can be shared across government, and with local authorities, businesses and programme delivery leaders in the Integration Areas. We expand on this this point further in the section of this briefing on Strengthening Leadership - see paragraph 16.

7. Whilst the above definition itself is positive, the green paper focuses almost exclusively on bridging divides between people of different ethnicities and, to a lesser extent, faith groups. However, these are not the only dividing lines in our society. Social segregation can occur along a number of, often intersecting, factors such as age and generation[1], politics[2], gender[3], and increasingly along the lines of class[4] and education. Many of these social differences can feel impassable, as exemplified in the confusion and mistrust engendered between those who voted to leave, and those who voted to remain in, the European Union. This event highlighted the disconnect between overwhelmingly working class, older, less educated voters and their younger, more middle class, educated counterparts.[5] Each of these divides has been shown to undermine social trust and to reinforce prejudice.

8. Building a more integrated UK is about enabling everyone in our society to experience a sense of belonging, to feel connected to the people who make up their community and country, and - crucially - to understand and empathise with one another's experiences. The government's goal in this respect should be to cultivate and maintain an ecosystem of trust - ensuring that social and community bonds are sufficiently strong so as to withstand the impacts of demographic and cultural change. Thus, for a social integration policy programme to be truly impactful, it must seek to build bonds of trust across a range of social fault lines. As discussed in the strategy, integration is a 'two way street', and we cannot begin this important project if it is viewed as the responsibility of only some groups and individuals within our society.

We believe that the varied nature and scale of integration challenges means that tailored local plans and interventions are needed to tackle the issues specific to particular places. Do you agree?

9. Yes, The Challenge believes that targeted local programmes - bolstered by national influence, resources and scale - have the greatest impact. This approach mirrors the work

[1] Intergenerational Foundation and Legal & General (2016), *Generations Apart? The growth of age segregation in England and Wales*, London: Intergenerational Foundation
[2] Huber, G A and Neil, M, 'Political Homophily in Social Relationships: Evidence from Online Dating Behavior', *The Journal of Politics*, 79:1 (2017), p. 269-283
[3] Stehlé, J, Charbonnier, F, Picard, T, Cattuto, C, and Barrata, A,'Gender homophily from spatial behavior in a primary school: A sociometric study', *Social Networks*, 35:4 (2013), p. 604-613 ; Swales, K and Tipping, S (2016), *Fragmented Communities? The role of cohesion, community involvement and social mixing*, London: NatCen
[4] The Challenge (2016), *British Integration Survey*, London: The Challenge
[5] Ipsos MORI (2016), How Britain voted in the 2016 EU referendum, London: Ipsos MORI

and values of The Challenge, using local knowledge to work with communities in order to increase the number of people benefiting from our programmes for national impact. We take a place-based approach where possible, for example within our Work Placements pilot programme, which we are delivering in partnership with the Department for Education. This initiative is outlined further in paragraph 15. In addition, our HeadStart programme (outlined in detail in paragraph 13) promotes integration through greater place-based connectedness – last year, it supported young people to undertake over 49,000 hours of volunteering in their local communities, gaining soft skills whilst giving back to their local area.

10. The Challenge currently delivers social integration programmes in four of the government's five Integration Areas. This includes National Citizen Service (NCS), which is highlighted as a case study in the green paper. Below we highlight the available participation and impact statistics for our programmes in these five areas[6]:

    a. In Bradford, 85% of the young people who completed NCS in 2017 reported that they had made friends through the programme from different backgrounds to their pre-existing friends, and 87% stated that they were more confident working with people from different backgrounds after undertaking the programme.

    b. In Waltham Forest, 414 young people signed up to participate in NCS, and a total of 589 participated in the programme in the borough (including young people who travelled from neighbouring boroughs.) This highlights the extent to which the programme creates opportunities for young people to forge friendships with others from outside their immediate area. Across North East London, 75% of young people said that they felt more comfortable engaging with people from different backgrounds having completed the programme; and 78% reported that they had formed friendships with those from other ethnicities, faiths and socioeconomic backgrounds through NCS.

    c. In Blackburn with Darwen, 287 young people completed the programme in 2017, and 324 are expected to participate in 2018. In the Lancashire region as a whole, 79% of young people surveyed said they had made friends with people from different backgrounds, and 76% felt better able to collaborate with people different to them.

    d. We are unable to provide data specifically for Walsall, but believe that examining the programme's impact across the Birmingham region - in which Walsall falls - is nonetheless instructive. Across this region, 78% of young people who participated in NCS made new friends with people from a range of different backgrounds, and 73% of those surveyed said they had become more understanding of the challenges and experiences of people different to them as a result of the programme.

11. In order to support policy makers and social entrepreneurs to develop solutions tailored to local needs, The Challenge has developed a set of Design Principles for Meaningful Mixing[7] (which are outlined in chapter 3 of the green paper). Through drawing on our experience of designing, delivering and rapidly growing social integration programmes which have brought 175,000 young people together to meet, mix and connect, we have identified nine techniques and practices which we believe sit at the heart of impactful initiatives aimed at creating positive and powerful social mixing experiences. We believe that, through considering how these essential components of successful social mixing programmes might be applied within their sector and delivery area, practitioners might

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[6] This data is derived from The Challenge's own impact evaluations conducted with participants of NCS as delivered by The Challenge. In some areas, data is collected at the regional level only.
[7] The Challenge (2018), *All Together Now: Meaningful mixing for a more integrated society*, London: The Challenge, available at https://the-challenge.org/uploads/documents/TC-All-Together-Now.pdf

effectively map local considerations onto a nationally recognised best practice framework. Later this year, we will additionally publish a toolkit to support government departments, local authorities, charities, community groups and social entrepreneurs to build a focus on bridging community divides into existing services and interventions. We would welcome the opportunity to share and clarify these resources with the government, and would be very happy to support the local authorities and delivery partners within the Integration Areas to explore how they might utilise these tools most effectively so as to unlock or maximise the potential of their programmes and activities in this regard.

Do you have any examples of successful approaches to encourage integration that you wish to highlight, particularly approaches which have been subject to evaluation?

12. Across the areas in which The Challenge delivers NCS, 74% of young participants surveyed said they felt the programme encourages people to respect the viewpoint and experiences of others from different backgrounds; 76% agreed or strongly agreed that NCS has helped them to feel more confident about working with people different to them; and 79% agreed or strongly agreed that NCS has helped them to make friends who are from different walks of life compared to their friends outside of the programmes. When asked about the most surprising skill learned on NCS, the ability to make friends was most often cited. Importantly, appreciating difference was also considered by the young people to be a significant and surprising outcome. Crucially, young people report finding it easier to imagine what life is like for those different to themselves having completed the programme; whilst 65% of participants agree or strongly agree that NCS encourages people to become more aware of their biases about people from different backgrounds and walks of life. These impact findings come from a representative sample survey conducted in 2017, when over 45,000 young people participated in our programmes. In addition, The Challenge delivers a number of other programmes to develop young people's interpersonal and professional skills, which have been specifically designed as to promote integration through enabling different people to have positive and powerful social mixing experiences.

13. HeadStart incentivises NCS graduates to continue giving back to their communities by providing a guaranteed job interview in exchange for 16+ hours of volunteering. HeadStart is offered in London, Birmingham, the Black Country, Solihull, Greater Manchester and Preston. Participants can access workshops and training after giving only one hour of their time, although most go on to give much more than this. Over two thirds of HeadStart participants were considered immediately employable by the organisations that interviewed them, and in one such case HeadStart candidates were up to four times more employable than the average candidate of a comparable age. In addition to employability skills and CV references, 93% of participants said they interacted with people from different backgrounds during the course of their volunteering experience. In 2016/17, HeadStart brought about 49,054 hours of volunteering in local communities, and inspired 2,456 young people to complete 16 hours of volunteering.[8] As outlined in paragraph 9, this programme provides benefits for all - young people gain critical skills for work, employers gain skilled up new recruits, and the local community becomes better integrated through engaged and motivated young people volunteering for charities in the area.

14. Step Forward provides young people aged 17-20 in London with apprenticeship training and a paid position with a quality employer for 12 months, across six employment pathways. This programme provides a school-to-work pathway for young people, many of

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[8] The Challenge (2018), *Annual Report 2016-2017*, London: The Challenge, available at: https://the-challenge.org/uploads/documents/2383-The-Challenge-AR-17_v13-ONLINE.pdf

whom are from less advantaged backgrounds and who otherwise would not have been signposted to these opportunities. Indeed, participants come from socially diverse backgrounds and tend to vary significantly in levels of educational attainment – creating a valuable form for social mixing. Nine out of ten Step Forward graduates go directly into full time work or education, and more than four out of five participants consider themselves to be better at understanding other people as a result of the programme. In 2016/17, 87% of our IT apprentices successfully completed the programme and gained a recognised qualification. Three months after graduating, 50% of Step Forward participants were still in employment in a technology based role, whilst 35% went on to higher education or to study through an advanced apprenticeship qualification.[9] Whilst this programme is drawing to an end, it is a positive example of the ways in which social mobility and social integration objectives can be married together.

15. Additionally, The Challenge is working in partnership with the Department for Education to deliver its Work Placements pilot programme, through which 16-19 year old Level 2 or 3 Technical Education students in London, the West Midlands and the North West are gaining the opportunity to put their training into practise with an employer. At the same time, employers gain resources, help to address skills shortages, and derive CSR impacts through supporting local young people into work. Our experience in this regard has led us to believe that taking a place-based approach to connecting young people from underrepresented groups with major employers can yield significant benefits.

Strengthening Leadership
The Green Paper proposes that we need to build the capacity of our leaders to promote and achieve integration outcomes. Do you agree?

16. As outlined in paragraph 6, the extent to which a focus on meaningful social mixing as a means of building a more integrated society is embedded across government and within the Integration Areas should be understood as a key benchmark against which the success of the government's strategy should be judged. This requires all five areas to adopt a definition and conceptualisation of social integration consistent with that set out in the green paper into their own plans. Adherence to this definition in the parameters of specific activities and interventions will ensure that resources are directed at the most appropriate programmes. Furthermore, it is incumbent on the government to lead local authorities, schools, charities and others within the Integration Areas through this journey, which will require different tools and modes of communication beyond the publication of this green paper. It is also recommended that the mechanism for distributing funding within the Integration Areas should reflect this need for government to 'lead the way' with clear criteria and expectations for new programmes. Pre-existing programmes operating within Integration Area plans should clearly demonstrate how they fulfil the criteria for meaningful mixing as set out by the government, or should be able to present a clear plan outlining the changes which they will make in order to do so going forward.

17. To build on this point, The Challenge is ready and willing to work with the government and local authorities in the Integration Areas - drawing on the Design Principles for Meaningful Mixing and toolkit described above - to embed and operationalise a practical definition of social mixing derived from contact theory[10], so that local authorities can confidently design and implement integration activities, or refine existing activities to deliver social integration objectives. With these resources, local authorities, charities and other delivery partners can

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[9] *Ibid.*

[10] *The Nature of Prejudice.* (1954; 1979). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co

assess their existing language, apparatus, policies and programmes, with a view to developing clear, practical area-based strategies for the promotion of meaningful social mixing experiences.

18. In addition, a final point on leadership relates to the following section on young people. The Challenge's work has, thus far, centred on young people and social action projects. We welcome the launch of the Cohesion and Integration Network, and would encourage a focus on developing young people as the next generation of leaders and "changemakers". Effective social action programmes empower young people and support them to garner leadership skills (particularly where initiatives are shaped to give all participants a chance to hold the reins, as is the case with NCS as provided by The Challenge), to develop strong interpersonal skills and to gain confidence in engaging with others from different backgrounds.

Education and Young People
The Green Paper proposes measures to ensure that all children and young people are prepared for life in modern Britain and have the opportunity for meaningful social mixing with those from different backgrounds. Do you agree with this approach?

19. The Challenge enthusiastically welcomes this approach. We particularly welcome the government's objective to "encourage pupils from different communities, faiths and backgrounds to work together, learn about each other's customs, beliefs and ideas and respect each other's views". The Challenge's own research on school segregation shows that, in 2016, 26% of primary schools and 40.6% of secondary schools were found to be ethnically segregated or potentially contributing to segregation; while 29.6% of primary schools and 27.6% of secondary schools were found to be segregated by socio-economic status, using eligibility for Free School Meals as a proxy.[11]

20. We found that Blackburn with Darwen was considered ethnically segregated in 2011 and that this trend worsened in 2016 to include over 71% of primaries (an increase of 7.8%) and 83% of secondaries (a 3.3% increase) in this category. In addition, many schools in Peterborough also experienced worsening ethnic segregation between 2011 and 2016 - with 49% of primaries (an increase of 2.6%) and 75% of secondaries (an increase of 11.3%) contributing to this pattern. There were reductions in ethnic and socioeconomic segregation in the other three Integration Areas, but it must be noted that some of these changes are very small, such as in the case of primary schools in Walsall across both measures.

21. We welcome the positive focus placed on the NCS, in particular, and the importance of youth social action as a powerful tool for social integration more generally. Especially as social action programmes often involve activities and dynamics which are particularly conducive to integration, as per our Design Principles for Meaningful Mixing. These activities provide clear benefits for the participant, such as skills development opportunities, fun summer activities, the chance to make new friends and to give back to their communities. Importantly, the activities create active and intense mixing experiences, and thus go beyond simply creating a shared space for young people from different walks of life. Participants are placed (in the case of The Challenge's programmes) into groups with other

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[11] The Challenge's methodology compares intake in terms of ethnicity and FSM take-up with that of the ten closest schools of the same phase. The proportion of the White British pupil cohort in each school is also compared to the local area to provide insights into patterns of immigration and internal migration: The Challenge, SchoolDash and the iCoCo Foundation (2017), *Understanding School Segregation in England: 2011 to 2016*, London: The Challenge

young people other than their pre-existing friends, and the rotation of leadership roles facilitates equal status interactions. Crucially, the activities are focused on a shared challenge wherein success hinges upon cooperation and teamwork and through which young people from different backgrounds come to lean on one another. We also support the inclusion of youth social action in the delivery plans for the government's 12 Opportunity Areas, of which we already operate in four: Blackpool, North Yorkshire Coast, Oldham and Bradford.

22. The government's ambition to scale up NCS must be matched with targeted resource, certainly in order to promote greater participation from young people in communities experiencing particular challenges. As highlighted in a recent report by the House of Lords Citizenship and Civic Engagement Committee, the government's commitment to expand the NCS programme must not lead it to lose sight of inclusion criteria. Furthermore, as the report notes, targeting underrepresented and hard to reach groups may raise the cost of the programme.[12] The Challenge takes seriously the objectives of ensuring that our programmes are socially mixed and inclusive in both recruitment and delivery. We strive to ensure that as wide a range of young people as possible are able to benefit from NCS, and are appropriately supported to complete the NCS journey. This is the golden thread running throughout our processes, staffing structures and innovation work. In the 2017 summer and autumn seasons, we provided one-to-one support to 338 young people through our Support Worker and Personal Coach interventions, and our Learning Behaviour Mentors supported a further 1017 young people. Some of the young people with the most to gain from our programmes are those with the highest levels of need, both physically and emotionally. Thus, inclusion activities - whilst often resource intensive - are vital to our mission.

23. The Challenge is well placed to support the development of interventions in the Integration Areas using our Design Principles for Meaningful Mixing, as well as our forthcoming toolkit. We are also able to share learning from the development and continued improvement of our impact evaluation process. This has been designed for young respondents - our NCS participants - in consultation with experts from Oxford University. We discuss our impact evaluation further in paragraph 35.

The Green Paper sets out proposals to support parents with their choice of out-of-school education settings. Do you agree with this approach?

24. Home education limits interaction with peers, and generates fewer opportunities to meet, mix and connect with others from different backgrounds when compared with a classroom setting. We do agree with this approach, and would particularly highlight the role of collaborative social action projects, such as those run by The Challenge, #iwill and others, in bringing young people together outside of school settings. Participation in such activities should be strongly encouraged amongst children educated at home, to ensure they have the same opportunities to engage and build bonds of trust with other young people of different faiths, ethnicities and social backgrounds. A number of studies have sought to assess the social integration of children educated at home in other countries (with mixed findings), but more rigorous research is required, particularly in the UK context.

Places and Community

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[12] Select Committee on Citizenship and Civic Engagement (2018), *The Ties that Bind: Citizenship and Civic Engagement in the 21st Century*, London: House of Lords, p. 44-45

The Green Paper proposes measures to ensure that people, particularly those living in residentially segregated communities, have opportunities to come together with people from different backgrounds and play a part in civic life. Do you agree with this approach?

25. As described in paragraphs 21 and 24 above, giving young people the opportunity to design and deliver social action projects within their local community fosters meaningful and positive contact with other young people from different backgrounds. Many of the social action activities run through The Challenge's programmes also put young people into contact with older people, providing opportunities for participants to connect across with those belonging to different generations. The Challenge has also worked extensively with organisations which utilise sport to bring people together within a community. We have delivered a sport curriculum to over 26,000 young people, in partnership with sports education organisation Let Me Play.

26. Community Centres are vital sites for social mixing and can thus help to offset the negative impacts of residential segregation, and the government is correct to draw attention to the role that such hubs can play in a local area. The strategy lists a number of services which could potentially be co-located or linked to community centres, such as children's centres, clubs and sports groups, youth social action projects, Jobcentres, leisure facilities, ESOL and other classes, as well as statutory support services for migrants, refugees and asylum-seeking persons.

27. Whilst many of these services are already co-located in different combinations across the country, they are also in some instances diffuse. Moreover, community centres sometimes serve more than one local authority area, with each having very different needs. The government's stated objective of combining the signposting to and delivery of multiple services within community centres is both welcome and commendable. However, community centres may be unable to operate in this way unless resources are dedicated to enabling this, so that centres are in a position to "support integration and [...] maximise their contribution to building integrated communities".

28. Partly because a community centre is not a clearly defined entity, we have yet to understand exactly how many there are across the country, and what condition they are in.[13] Much of what we know is wrapped up in national data about a wider range of civil society organisations.[14] If we are to understand and measure how a community centre can have positive impacts on integration in a given area, we need to know about the kinds of people who go through its doors to ensure the services and facilities offered match local needs. This does invite questions about potential resources - it would be beneficial to conduct an audit of such sites and a review of their use, starting in the five Integration Areas, in order to understand what is needed to deliver these objectives.

29. There is much to welcome in this section of the green paper. However, we would encourage the government to apply the same deliberate, methodical and evidence-based approach to creating positive and meaningful social mixing experiences which features in the section on Education and Young People to other age groups. Through better harnessing the power of place and our community resources, we might more effectively support people to build lasting and locally-rooted bonds with others from different backgrounds and with different life experiences. Going forward, The Challenge will consider

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[13] The last such report from the Charity Commission was in 2004 (RS9), highlighting over 9000 village halls and community centres recognised as charities, but this does not include those which do not include the terms "village hall" or "community centre" in the name, and these facilities are not clearly defined.
[14] NCVO (2018) *UK Civil Society Almanac 2018*, London: NCVO

how local authority-run services and community centres might be designed so as to create the conditions required to bolster social integration in this manner.

Increasing Economic Opportunity

The Green Paper proposes measures to provide tailored support to people, especially those who may not currently be active in the labour market, to build their confidence and skills to take up employment. Do you agree with this approach?

30. The Challenge agrees with this approach, particularly the commitments to build integration objectives into existing labour market programmes and services led by other departments. We particularly commend the cross-departmental nature of the proposals set out in this chapter - to build on this, some thought is required as to how labour market initiatives might incorporate promoting social mixing as a discrete goal. This would require policy makers and employers to view workplace diversity as a necessary, but insufficient, condition for positive, meaningful contact across difference.

31. This relates also to the clear statement included within the introduction to the strategy that integration is a 'two way street'. The section of the strategy to which this question refers outlines a number of important interventions aimed at addressing both individual and systemic barriers facing whole groups, but, arguably, does not adequately address the role of employers in building a more integrated society. The government might define this role as not only employing, promoting and valuing a diverse workforce, but ensuring that workplaces and working environments are sites wherein meaningful contact between all employees takes place.

32. The integration challenges raised in this section focus (quite rightly) on reducing disparities between different ethnic groups, however we would urge the government to also consider the importance of social factors in shaping people's economic opportunities and outcomes. It is well known that 'who you know' has an impact on your social mobility.[15] The absence of a wide pool of relationships is causally linked to reduced cultural capital - "the knowledge and capabilities we acquire from mixing with others about how to behave, how to dress or how to speak in certain situations".[16] Moreover, the ability to access a diverse network of social contacts has been shown to help adults to find new and better paid jobs, a finding that becomes significantly less surprising if we consider that, as recently as 2010, 40% of jobs in the UK were found through personal connections.[17] This truth - that people from different social and cultural backgrounds benefit economically when they have access to diverse networks - could be better built into the economic objectives set out within this strategy.

33. The Challenge strongly welcomes the focus on early years in this section of the strategy. This is both as we agree with the government's conclusion that strong early years provision is vital to improving the life chances of children from all backgrounds, but also as we believe that early years settings can provide valuable forums for meaningful social mixing both for children and their families. In fact, research conducted by The Challenge revealed a clear opportunity to promote positive encounters amongst new parents from different backgrounds. This research highlighted that 7-8 weeks after giving birth, many parents

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[15] Demireva, N and Heath, A (2017), 'Minority Embeddedness and Economic Integration: Is Diversity or Homogeneity Associated with Better Employment Outcomes?', *Social Inclusion*, 5:1, p. 20-31

[16] Robinson, D, 'Connecting Well: 5. Land of our Children', *The R Word*, 02.03.2018, available at https://medium.com/therword/5-land-of-ourchildren-9428a0f3a1a3

[17] The Challenge (2018), A*ll Together Now: Meaningful mixing for a more integrated society*, London: The Challenge, p. 5, available at https://the-challenge.org/uploads/documents/TC-All-Together-Now.pdf

experience significant stress and will prioritise the chance to discuss this with someone who they know will be able to relate to their circumstances above pre-existing social preferences.[18] Through taking part in a postnatal or early years programme designed to bring together new parents from different social and cultural backgrounds, participants might benefit from the opportunity to expand their support networks whilst building a more diverse social circle.

Measuring Success
The Green Paper proposes core integration measures for national and local government to focus on. Do you agree these are the right measures?

34. We look forward to learning more about the ways in which existing surveys will be modified to derive learning and impact towards the strategy's objectives, in particular whether there will be new questions in existing national surveys, and if so, what those might be. In particular, we look forward to understanding how specific measures of 'type and diversity of social networks' will be formulated and collected.

35. As highlighted in paragraph 23, The Challenge is constantly improving its programme impact evaluations, and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss our experiences and share our learnings with the Ministry, as well as with the local authorities in the Integration Areas. Through an iterative process involving logic models, we have raised end-line survey completion to 38% per summer cohort, and have developed tried-and-tested questions, which produce clear outcomes related to: skills learned and aptitudes developed on the programme; attitudes and levels of empathy towards others from different backgrounds; attitudes towards 'people like us'; and perceptions of the programme itself. We are continuing to work to improve the survey completion rate as well as to further refine the survey questions.

36. We also have sought over many years to build an understanding of best practice in designing and delivering programmes which develop the confidence and skills of young people to meet, mix and connect with others from different backgrounds. To respond in particular to the government's stated objective of developing a better understanding of 'what works' - and as noted above - The Challenge has recently completed an exercise through which we have identified the techniques and practices which we believe sit at the heart of impactful initiatives aimed at creating positive and powerful social mixing experiences - our Design Principles for Meaningful Mixing. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further with the government and its partners.

Concluding Remarks

37. Beyond this green paper, there is a need for the government, specifically the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, to emphasise and communicate the importance of creating meaningful social mixing experiences in any effort to promote social integration. Indeed, the government must clearly communicate the important distinction between diversity and social integration, and between tokenistic and meaningful cross-community contact to the Integration Area local authorities and their chosen delivery partners.

38. To conclude, The Challenge commends the government on the publication of this comprehensive strategy, which at its core prioritises the ambitious but achievable objective

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[18] Unpublished research produced for No 10 Policy Unit (2016).

of creating the societal conditions in which meeting, mixing and building bonds of trust with people from different backgrounds is the new norm. We would welcome the opportunity to draw on The Challenge's expertise and experience of designing and delivering interventions and programmes that promote positive social mixing so as to support the government to implement the strategy firstly in the Integration Areas, and then elsewhere in the country. This strategy represents an important and meaningful step in the right direction, and is to be welcomed.