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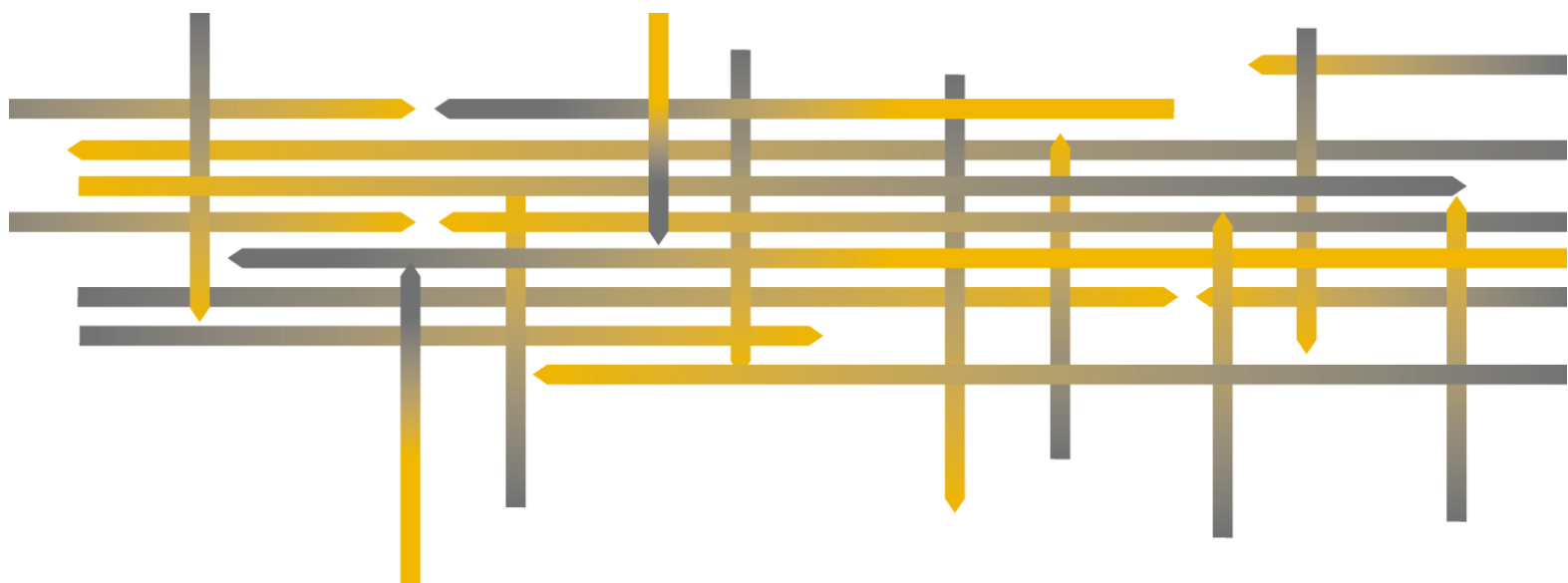
At Middlesex University



## Enfield Citizens' Advice Bureau Clients Profile & Needs Gap Analysis

SUMMARY REPORT – JUNE 2012

Alessio D'Angelo and Neil Kaye



Middlesex  
University

### **The Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC), Middlesex University**

The social policy research centre (SPRC) was established in 1990 to provide a focus for research in the social sciences at Middlesex University and supports high quality research of national and international standing. Members of staff are involved in a wide range of projects funded by research councils, the EU, government departments and the major charities. The Centre supports postgraduate research students, including students funded by research councils, and a number of well-established masters programmes. The Centre runs events, including conferences, seminars and short courses. Main areas of interest include: migration, refugees and citizenship; welfare restructuring; service provision and third sector organisations; urban policy, regeneration and communities; drug and alcohol policy; human security and human rights; tourism policy. For further information and to view reports from our recent research projects visit our webpage: [www.mdx.ac.uk/sprc](http://www.mdx.ac.uk/sprc)

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## **Summary Report**

*Alessio D'Angelo and Neil Kaye*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Enfield Citizens' Advice Bureau aims to provide advice to the community, in all its diversity and for all its needs as well as to improve the policies and principles that affect people's lives in the London borough of Enfield.

The financial downturn of the last few years has resulted in a large increase in the number of people seeking advice, and there have also been an increasing number of policy changes in both local and national government affecting the various sections of the community.

In December 2011 Enfield Citizens' Advice Bureau (ECAB) commissioned Middlesex University's Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) to conduct a research study aiming to:

- Map the characteristics of ECAB's clients, their level of satisfaction and the impact of ECAB's work on their lives.
- Carry out a comparative analysis between ECAB's clients and the Enfield population's profile to identify differences in terms of demographic and socio-economic characteristics.
- Explore need gaps among ECAB clients and in the wider Enfield population.
- Contribute to the identification of challenges and opportunities for ECAB in the current economic and policy environment.

Through extensive **statistical analysis** of ECAB databases – and a comparison with a number of secondary datasets – this study revealed the richness of information collected by ECAB about its clients and provides examples of how these can be used to explore the profile and needs of clients, identify trends, highlight differences between specific groups and obtain indications in relation to the types of clients more likely to use the service and those whose needs are not fully addressed. These quantitative data have been integrated with a number of interviews with clients, ECAB members of staff and other key informants.

This summary report presents some of the study's key findings. Further details are included in the full "Project Report", which is available electronically online [[www.mdx.ac.uk/sprc](http://www.mdx.ac.uk/sprc)] or upon request [[info@enfieldcab.org.uk](mailto:info@enfieldcab.org.uk)].

## **1 – OVERALL TREND IN CLIENT NUMBERS**

Between 2009/10 and 2010/11 Enfield CAB saw a 73.9% increase in the total number of its clients (from 4,445 to 7,731), the most significant of all London CABs. However, the first two quarters of 2011/12 registered a slight decrease (-8.7%) on the equivalent period of the previous year. In relation to the size of Enfield population as a whole, ECAB has over 25 clients per 1,000 residents (compared to e.g. 47 for Camden CAB and 13 for Islington CAB).

**Figure 1 – North London boroughs' CAB total unique clients seen**

Bureau	Total Unique Clients (2009/10)	Total Unique Clients (2010/11)	% increase
<b>ENFIELD</b>	<b>4,163</b>	<b>7,428</b>	<b>78.43</b>
BARNET	7,064	9,493	34.39
ISLINGTON	2,504	2,547	1.72
CAMDEN	10,955	11,075	1.10
HARINGEY	7,242	7,271	0.40
<b>LONDON CABS TOTAL:</b>	<b>190,214</b>	<b>188,705</b>	<b>-0.79</b>

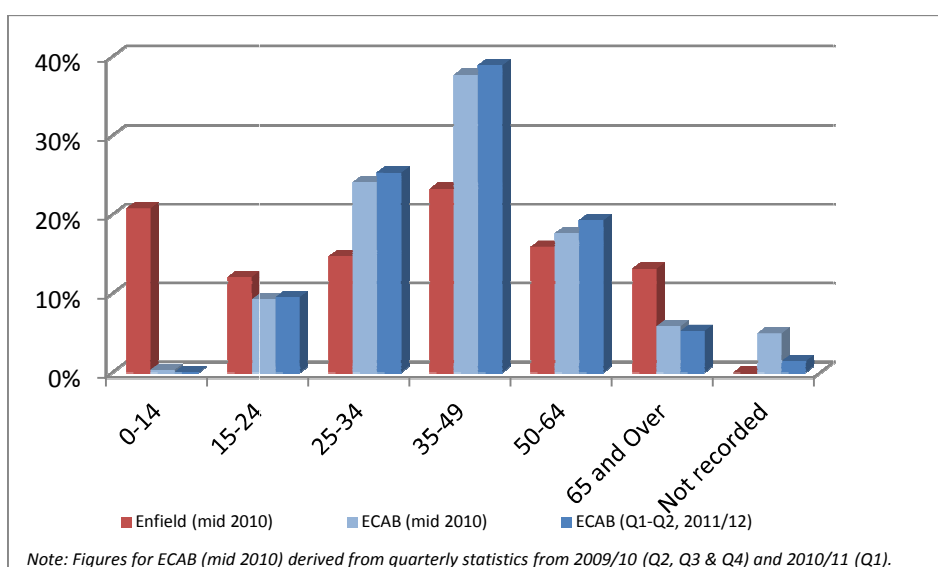
*\*These figures show only those clients starting a new enquiry in the period and so do not include those clients seen by the bureau in relation to enquiries begun in previous years*

## **2 – COMPARISON BETWEEN ECAB CLIENTS' PROFILE AND ENFIELD POPULATION**

The statistical analyses undertaken during the research project revealed that those client groups who are under-represented in terms of ECAB clients include:

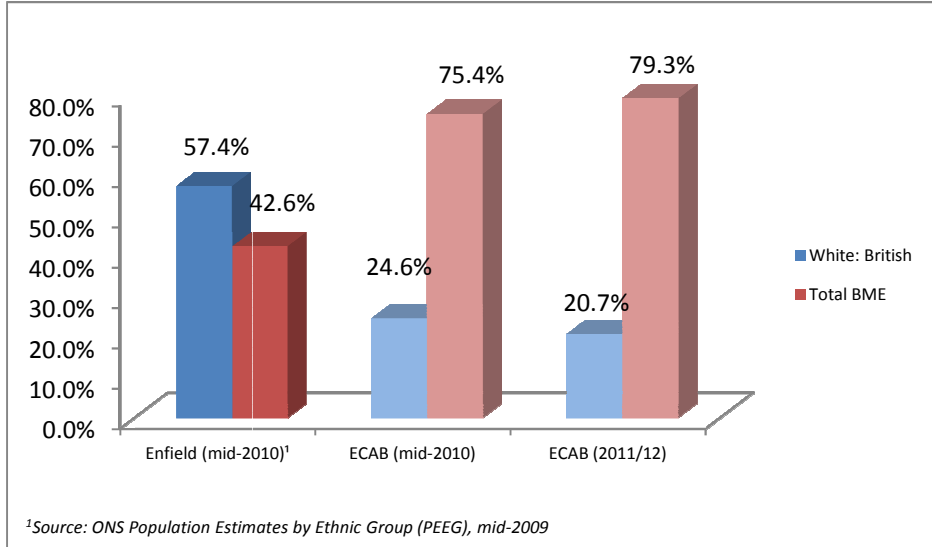
- Men;
- Clients aged under 25 and those over 65;

**Figure 2 – Age Groups (%)**



- The “White: British” ethnic group.

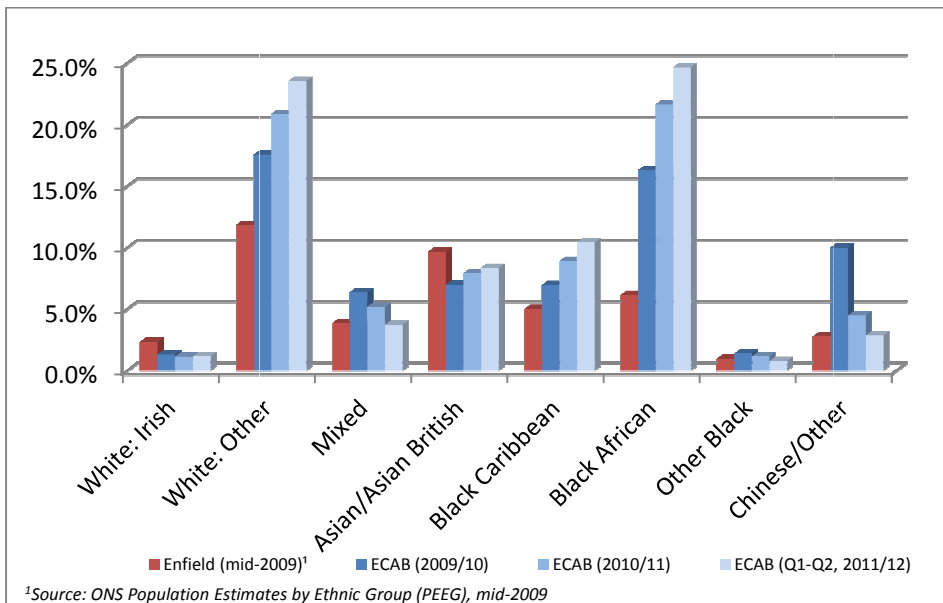
**Figure 3 – White: British and Total Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups (%)**



Over-represented client groups, on the other hand, include:

- Women;
- Clients aged 25-49;
- Black African, Black Caribbean, and “White: Other” ethnic groups.

**Figure 4 – Black and Minority Ethnic Groups (%)**



The most widespread community languages spoken amongst ECAB clients are Turkish, Somali, Polish and French.

**Figure 5 – ‘Preferred’ Languages among ECAB clients (% of valid responses)**

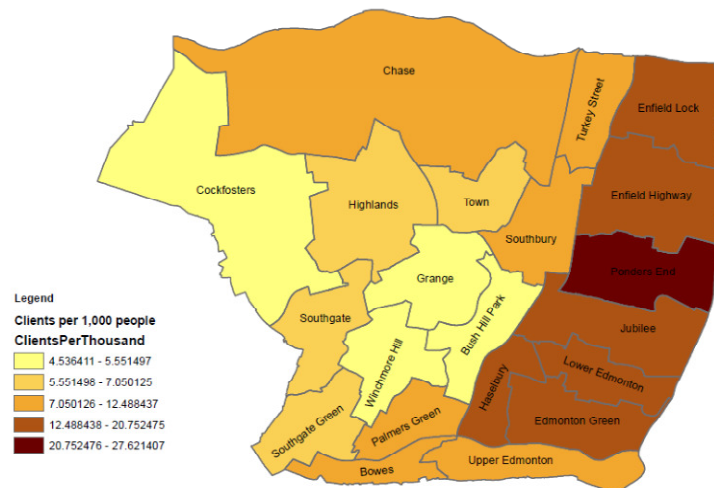
Preferred Languages	2009/10	2009/10 (%)	2010/11	2010/11 (%)	Q1-Q2, 2011/12	Q1-Q2, 2011/12 (%)
<i>English</i>	610	72.9	1564	80.0	787	72.5
Polish	77	9.2	86	4.4	65	6.0
Turkish	31	3.7	82	4.2	48	4.4
Somali	16	1.9	30	1.5	27	2.5
French	13	1.6	21	1.1	19	1.7
Farsi	6	0.7	6	0.3	6	0.6
<i>Others</i>	84	10.0	167	8.5	134	12.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>837</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1956</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1086</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The demographic characteristics of ECAB clients are more fully examined in the full Project Report (Section 1) and related to the general population profile in the borough in terms of over- and/or under-represented groups.

### 3 – GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF CLIENTS

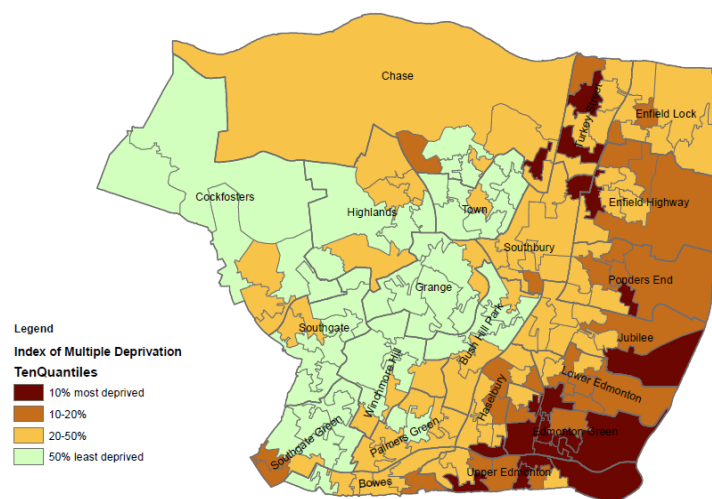
The highest proportion of ECAB clients are those resident in wards situated in the east of the borough, with clients from Ponders End (where ECAB is based) being the most over-represented.

Figure 6 – ECAB clients per 1,000 people by LA ward

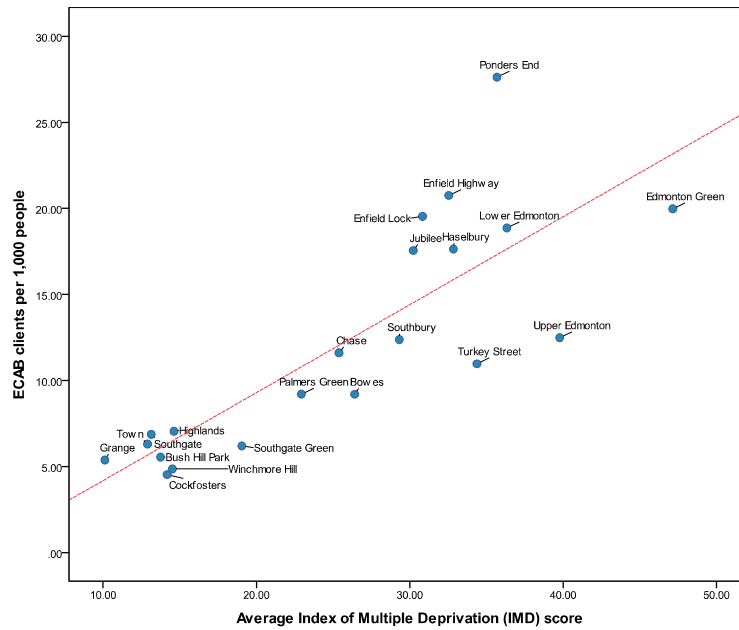


A significant correlation can be seen between a ward's Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) score and the proportion of clients from that ward seen by the CAB – i.e. the most deprived boroughs are also those with the largest number of ECAB clients per thousand residents.

Figure 7 – Average Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) score by Enfield LSOAs



**Figure 8 – ECAB clients per 1,000 people/Average Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) score**



Average IMD scores: Year 2010

Sources: Department for Communities and Local Government, Indices of Deprivation 2010; Office for National Statistics population estimates; Geoconvert look-up file of LSOAs to 2010 ward boundaries.

A more detailed account of the geographical analysis at the Local Authority (LA) ward level is available in Section 2 of the full Project Report.



#### **4 – ‘SOCIAL POLICY’ AREAS OF ENQUIRY**

As can be seen in the table below, Benefits, Debt and Housing, are the three most common social policy issues on which clients request assistance.

**Figure 9 – Social Policy Issues (% of total enquiries)**

Social Policy Issues	2009/10 (%)	2010/11 (%)	2011/12 (%) (Q1-Q2)
Benefits & Tax Credits	25.7	28.2	27.5
Debt	30.9	24.6	21.2
Housing	10.0	11.9	12.3
Signposting & Referral	8.8	6.0	8.8
Employment	5.9	7.1	7.8
Legal	5.2	5.1	4.8
Relationships & Family	2.8	3.6	4.2
Immigration, Asylum & Nationality	2.9	3.9	3.7
Financial Products & Services	1.9	1.6	1.9
Utilities and Communications	1.3	1.5	1.5
Consumer Goods & Services	1.1	1.6	1.5
Travel, Transport & Holidays	0.6	1.3	1.4
Education	0.5	1.0	0.9
Tax	0.7	0.8	0.8
Other	0.6	0.6	0.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

In the last few years there has been a fall in Debt enquiries as a proportion of the total and an increase in Housing and Employment related enquiries.

There are significant difference in the areas of enquiry in relation to demographic characteristics, e.g. female clients are four times more likely than men to make an enquiry concerning Education; younger age groups appear to be more affected by issues of Housing and Employment; and, although “Black African” and “White: Other” clients form a majority of clients in most areas of enquiry, “White: British” clients are the largest group in terms of Debt, Family and Health Care queries. (Section 3 of the full Project Report provides a more in-depth analysis of ECAB client groups in relation to these social policy enquiries).

## **5 – CLIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY**

The 2011 Client Satisfaction Survey undertaken by Enfield CAB showed that clients have overwhelmingly positive views in relation to most aspects of the service. The survey is discussed in greater detail in Section 4 of the full Project Report. The table below (Figure 10) provides a summary of the results for most of the questions included in the questionnaire. Looking at the responses it can be seen that overall there are very few clients who were “unhappy” or “very unhappy” with the service and advice they received from the CAB.

**Figure 10 – Clients Satisfaction Survey – summary results**

Question	Very Happy / Strongly agree	Happy / Agree	Unhappy/ Disagree	Very Unhappy / Strongly disagree
1.Easy to access our service	45%	38%	9%	8%
2.Easy to find out about us	60%	32%	6%	1%
3. Happy about where you come to see us	59%	35%	3%	3%
4.Happy about the times we are open	48%	44%	6%	2%
6. Happy about how long you had to wait	41%	45%	10%	4%
7. The adviser understood your problem	56%	34%	7%	2%
8. Happy about time to discuss problem	58%	37%	4%	1%
9. Happy about information received	54%	37%	6%	3%
10. Information easy to understand	67%	26%	6%	2%
11. Advice was useful	58%	34%	7%	1%
12. CAB made a difference to you	36%	42%	13%	9%
13. Happy about ECAB overall	54%	39%	5%	2%

However, issues of access – including opening hours, waiting times and telephone lines being often engaged – are sometimes the object of complaints. Interviews with clients revealed the important role played by ECAB not just in giving advice, but also in providing emotional support and improving self-confidence and empowerment. However, a measurement of the actual, tangible impact of CAB advice on the specific issues faced by its clients is difficult. This is due to limitations in the data currently collected and also owing to the complex, long-term nature of individual cases.

## **6 – QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS**

In addition to statistical analysis of existing datasets, the study involved some exploratory **‘qualitative’ research**, in particular interviews with ECAB members of staff, clients and key stakeholders from the Council and the community sector. These provided insights into the changing scenario in terms of need gaps, policy and funding strategies and challenges and opportunities for the community sector as a whole, and Enfield CAB in particular. Some of the key findings discussed in Section 5 of the full Project Report are summarised below:

- Socio-economic deprivation, inequality and advice and welfare needs in Enfield are expected to increase significantly in the next few years (and by more than the London average). This would be a direct effect of both the recession and the changes in benefits and welfare regulations.
- The main areas of **increasing advice needs** include: debt, unemployment, housing, changes in benefits and welfare rights.
- Some key **groups with emerging needs** can be identified, such as:
  - New migrant communities;
  - New residents (due to Inner London to Outer London movements);
  - Current residents whose socio-economic condition is worsening;
- At the same time, welfare restructuring and reduction in available funding for public and community services will reduce the amount of resources to address these needs.
- The Council expects – and will support – a consolidation of the **local community sector**, with a small number of ‘high quality’ organisations getting increasingly involved in the provision of public services (in particular through commissioning). At the same time, there will be a push towards a ‘rationalisation’ of service provision, with more cooperation, mergers and – quite likely – a reduction of the number of organisations operating in the borough.

Within this context, the main **challenges and opportunities for Enfield CAB** include:

- Difficulty in ensuring sustainability and living up to a very high reputation.
- Addressing increasing and new demands with a reduced amount of public funding available for the sector overall.
- Increasing ECAB’s leading role within the local community sector and expanding the scope of its service provision.

More specifically, this research project has identified a number of **‘case study’ groups** whose needs may require further investigation, with a view to developing targeted support:

- Young people (under 25)
- Older people (over 65)
- Men (and women from some minority backgrounds)
- Ethnic minority groups (with an ‘intersectional’ approach)

## **7 – KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

In this respect, some **key recommendations** for the consolidation and expansion of Enfield CAB include to:

- Further assess needs of ECAB clients, their level of satisfaction and the impact of ECAB's work in the short-, medium- and long-term. This could be achieved by enhancing the methodology of the Satisfaction Survey, complementing that with in-depth case study analysis or sample 'boosts' as well as consultation with clients.
- Enhance the already strong reputation of ECAB (e.g. through wide dissemination of findings from the above and publication of exemplary client case studies) and to better advertise ECAB's services through communication targeted at specific groups.
- Explore ways to improve service access, e.g. including online booking of appointments and improved email advice, but also outreach surgeries and more extensive language support (working in coordination with BME communities).
- Further investigate outstanding and emerging needs in the borough, focusing in particular on the 'case study' groups and other groups mentioned above. This could be achieved through: commissioned, community-based and 'outreach' research; consultations with local stakeholders and local area meetings; agreements to share data and information with other local service providers and organisations.
- Promote more structured, regular and 'outcome-focused' consultation and coordination with the Council and other 'strategic' organisations within the borough.
- Establish working groups with other local service providers and community groups to enhance coordination and develop joint service provision. This could include further involvement of staff and volunteers from BME groups within the CAB (also as interpreters and translators).
- Explore ways for ECAB to provide capacity building to BME community organisations, ensuring higher quality of advice and promoting the re-discussion of the role of individual organisations and of the sector as a whole.

- Explore the feasibility and sustainability of additional services to address existing need gaps; in particular outreach work, case work and specialised advice on, e.g., welfare rights, equality and discrimination. This could also be developed through closer cooperation with other service providers (including joint funding applications).
- Ensure ECAB's work model develops to better fit with changing funding requirements, particularly in relation to service commissioning. This would involve enhanced procedures of internal/external evaluation, impact assessment and SROI.
- Explore additional funding venues – also working in cooperation with other organisations within and outside the borough for joint bids and provision.