

2021

PROJECT T.R.U.T.H

Telling, Restoring,
Understanding (OUR)
Tapestry (AND) History

**A report commissioned
by Bristol City Council
and the Bristol Legacy
Steering Group. Produced
by Black South West
Network in partnership
with Afrikan ConneXions
Consortium.**

Recommendations by Afrikan
heritage communities on how
the ramifications and legacies
of Bristol's involvement in the
Transatlantic Trafficking and
Enslavement of Afrikans (TTEA),
should be recognised in the city.

PROJECT
TRUTH



“The door is a place, real, imaginary and imagined... It is a place which exists or existed. The door out of which Africans were captured, loaded onto ships heading for the New World. It was the door of a million exits multiplied. It is a door many of us wish never existed.

There is the sense in the mind of not being here or there, of no way out or in. As if the door had set up its own reflection. Caught between the two we live in the Diaspora, in the sea in between. Imagining our ancestors stepping through these portals one senses people stepping out into nothing; one senses a surreal space, an inexplicable space.

One imagines people so stunned by their circumstances, so heartbroken as to refuse reality. Our inheritance in the Diaspora is to live in this inexplicable space. That space is the measure of our ancestors’ step through the door toward the ship. One is caught in the few feet in between. The frame of the doorway is the only space of true existence... For those of us today in the Diaspora this door exists as through a prism, distorted and shimmering.

As through heat waves across a vast empty space we see this door appearing and disappearing. An absent presence. Though few of us have seen it, or consciously attach importance to it, this door in its historical connectedness was the point of departure, not only physical departure but psychic renting, of our ancestors.”

Door of No Return - Notes to Belonging - Dionne Brand

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Executive summary

Project T.R.U.T.H (Telling Restoring Understanding our Tapestry and History), was an education and consultation initiative commissioned by the Legacy Steering Group. The Legacy Steering Group was founded in 2019 and consists of city partners, individuals and organisations, is convened by the Culture Department of Bristol City Council and is Chaired by Deputy Mayor for Communities, Cllr Asher Craig. The purpose of the steering group is to provide advice and strategic direction to Bristol City Council concerning the legacy of the Transatlantic Trafficking of Enslaved Africans (TTEA) and associated projects and programmes.

Project T.R.U.T.H began in November 2020 and was overseen by the community's subgroup, which has three members: Barbara "Tunga" Witter from Black South West Network (BSWN), Jendayi Serwah from Afrikan ConneXions Consortium and Ruth Pitter Project Manager for One Bristol. It has consisted of a launch event, a survey, a weekly radio show and eight focus group meetings. For the duration of the Project, BSWN provided administrative and research support, as the accountable body.

Whilst discussions, legal actions, protests and petitions on the matter of Bristol's connection to TTEA have existed over decades, recent events such as the toppling of the Edward Colston Statue and the passing of an Atonement and Reparations Motion in Bristol have further added to the topical and pressing nature of atonement, repair and justice. There have to our knowledge been no formal recommendations in Bristol documented to include the views of Afrikan Heritage Communities (AHC) in recent years, if ever. As such, the Project T.R.U.T.H initiative and this report therefore stands as an unprecedented attempt to shape a way forward with AHC at the centre.

Having been marginalised in their own story and subject to a sanitised Eurocentric narrative about this history and its impact that still plagues us today, it was imperative that AHC voices were central to any process of city action going forward. Noting that AHC are not one homogenous group, and that understanding would vary, the consultation successfully attracted a reasonable sample size and a broad spectrum of participants, especially with regard to age and country of birth, through the launch event, survey and focus

groups. This report is therefore representative of some of the views of AHC, but we acknowledge that other views may exist and that there will be other opportunities including through the implementation of recommendations, where other AHC members may be further involved.

This initiative and report therefore signal an ongoing process of readying towards a healing destination 'sewn together' by the community itself, based on the West Afrikan Adinkra symbol of Pempamsie. The intention is that this report may formally set out various recommendations and ideas to lay part of the groundwork towards an AHC Bristol Pempamsie Reparations Plan (B-PReP) so Bristol can contribute its own part in a local and global (Glocal) repairs process.

1. How we carried out Project T. R.U.T.H: Consultation methods

Timeline

- Consultant recruited and background work undertaken November 2020
- Survey preparation
- Launch event January 2021
- Survey launched February 2021
- Weekly radio show commenced February 2021
- Focus groups undertaken throughout March 2021
- Survey closed 31st March 2021
- Findings, report writing and recommendations April - June 2021

As an education focused consultation, this initiative began publicly with a launch event featuring poet Malizah and a detailed presentation by leading reparations campaigner Esther Stanford-Xosei, from the Maangamizi Education Trust (MET). Excerpts from the launch event, further information, interviews and explorations were shared through dedicated social media, a web page and a weekly radio show on Ujima.

Data to inform recommendations was collected by:

- Opinions expressed in the breakout rooms at the launch event. Quotes from the event also informed 3 street poster design slogans kindly sponsored by 'Building Hollywood' and were pasted up around the central area of the city ahead of the reparations motion going to Full Council on March 2nd.

- An online survey which opened on February 10th and officially closed on March 31st. The survey was widely promoted and distributed in order to capture general quantitative data about participants, plus answers and opinions to more substantial questions. Further suggestions and ideas were actively encouraged via comments sections assigned to particular questions and at the end of the whole survey. The survey questions can be found in the appendix.

- In order to establish more in-depth conversations and opinions, there were eight focus groups set up to explore three additional questions. The aim was to appeal to various sections of the communities and the focus groups were as follows: two general focus groups, the first of which was intergenerational and consisted of participants based in Bristol (and some born in Bristol) but from various countries of origin. This was mirrored by the creatives focus group, set up in acknowledgement that one of the major ways cultural information had been retained in the diaspora was through the arts, and was a uniting element in itself.

- In addition, there were two elders' groups, a youth focused group and two small academic meetings. Each focus group included a presentation / introduction and the same three questions which were carefully considered in part inspired by the interim results of the survey. The questions can be found in the appendix.

- The lead consultant produced and presented a weekly radio show on Ujima providing a promotional and educational platform for the duration of the process. The purpose of the radio show was to fulfil the information sharing aspect of the consultation as well as to promote the project and survey. The recordings are available via the BSWN website. The hour-long radio show began on February 10th and ran until March 31st coinciding with the survey.

The survey responses, comments and focus group discussions have been categorised into various chapters and informed the associated recommendations which feature at the end of each chapter and at the end of the report.

2. First things first: Unity, identity & re-recognition of self

I have a level of ignorance. That level of ignorance was exacerbated by 400 years. So, it's not that I can't pick a name, it's more like how do we as a community work together to give those of us who were taken many, many, many years ago away, to help them know their name, if that makes sense? I could make up my own thing but if you have a grandmother who can give you that answer that's one thing, but I cannot tell you before the 1600s who we were. That's all I'm just saying, you know. (Creatives focus group participant)

The survey had an even spread of how people described themselves across the various options in the survey, but with most participants (28.66%) describing themselves as Afrikan-Caribbean versus Black British (26.11%), Black (19.75%), Dual Heritage (14.01%), Afrikan (14.01%), Other (12.74%), Afrikan descent (11.46%). A significant number who carried out the survey identified their racial identity with being Afrikan. What is crucial is that there appears to be a significant group who did not identify themselves in a racialised way, i.e. Other. It is clear that for some generations, there still exists skewed ideas about being Afrikan, an identity paradigm and a 'hyphenated identity', for example Black-British, Afro-Caribbean, African-Caribbean, African American. Those who identified as being Afrikan-Caribbean or Afrikan appeared to be more likely to say they were knowledgeable of Bristol's role in the TTEA, versus those who identified as Black, Black British or Dual heritage who were more likely to say they were less knowledgeable. However, many survey participants identified with more than one racial identity making an analysis of this connection difficult.

A discussion point in the focus group was around the importance of reconnecting Afrikan heritage communities across the diaspora and on the continent, in order to instigate a global repair process that could be a tool to restore group identity, future prosperity and humanity but there currently exists no intentional community space or

forum for this to be facilitated. The purpose of such a space would be to foster better understanding between the various sections within AHC. Understanding separations, differences and changes but reclaiming and synthesising differences in a way that is authentic and a 'blueprint of what we can be.'

3. Beyond a statue: a living site of memorial: Ritual and remembrance in a central space

We as living descendants of our African ancestors and their future generations living in this city owe a huge debt to those trafficked and enslaved. We are here because of them. We are their dreams of tomorrow. So, let's hold them up in our midst, in a monument or monuments (why one?) that honours and dignifies their memory, their lives, humanity, and struggles. We might then remember their courage, bravery, resistance and survival as part of our shared past and continuing struggle in the city today. (Survey comment)

Many in the focus groups suggested that a memorial site would best be served by having a functional aspect and ritual attached to the site, animated through significant dates and events. The survey results revealed all respondents agreed that the contribution and sacrifice of Afrikans should be significantly acknowledged in the city and that there was not an adequate acknowledgment to date. Respondents also clearly felt that any action going forward should be led by AHC. Despite the topical aspect of statues, most opinions steered away from the idea of erecting a statue in the city, often citing the need to have more education first to underpin the understanding of what a statue might represent.

4. Decolonisation in action: Towards an Afrikan Heritage centre of excellence / Pan Afrikan Community Education Complex

...what I think is important, is actually the architecture of the city. The landscape of the city because I think, it's something like that we need to truly mark our contribution

and we tend to sometimes focus too much on slavery and forgetting that history. Not just even before but from slavery to now. Those are the ideas to me that because we're doing two things, when we're going through those kinds of ideas. For example, a building. Something substantial. Whether it be for cultural heritage or whatever. It creates employment. It creates all that type of stuff, which the biggest memorial we could do, for those were enslaved, is for us, to survive and progress. (General focus group participant)

Underpinned by the survey question: *Do you think Bristol needs a permanent resource or dedicated facility that charts Afrikan history and its connection to the city?* responses and further exploration in the focus groups show that this aspect of development is key. Attracting 66 comments, many felt that a dedicated facility was long overdue. Opinions ranged from the sentimental and nostalgic, to significant frustration, an appetite to revive them, the desire to have a new centre. Many acknowledged the lack of sustained and substantial funding (ever) to realise institutional success.

5. Reframing education on our own terms

Right now, we've got no legacy of history because we're reliant on their history which is incorrect. We need to create our own history and get our children and their children's children to plug into that to promote it. Then it grows like a tree. (Elder focus group member)

Unsurprisingly, education was a trending topic in both the comments sections and within the focus groups. Accurate knowledge of Afrikan (Black) history and culture amongst those born on the continent and those in the diaspora was key, with almost everyone recognising that the mainstream education system had failed to ever explain or acknowledge an accurate world history, causing a skewed understanding of self and one's place within the world or an accurate depiction of the reality of British history of which

Afrikan contributions to world history is an integral part. Solutions and opinions included better connections between AHC students and academics and the community in terms of knowledge production and knowledge sharing.

6. Accountability & Agency

Given that much of Bristol's wealthy financial roots and huge historical development was directly generated by the mass trafficking of enslaved Afrikans, and the horrific inhumane acts it entailed, has led to many, some of whom are the hereditary beneficiaries, wanting such truths to remain hidden or untold, as intended. (Survey participant comment)

As indicated by the findings the opinion of most respondents ranged from important, to extremely important with a majority of almost 60% citing this dialogue as extremely important. Having this conversation around the trace and flow of wealth from TTEA coincides with various other pieces of research in recent years University of Bristol has just announced a major reparatory project 'We are Bristol' of which one aspect led by Dr Richard Stone from the Department of History, will be collaborating with 'citizen researchers' to identify Bristol's 'slave owners' and find out how their money has shaped Bristol's built environment, businesses and charities using records of compensation awarded when enslavement was abolished in 1834.

7. Recommendations

Bristol must create an Afrikan Heritage Centre of Excellence where AHC can embed their own Afrikan Centred curriculums of repair within an autonomous space designed, governed and managed by the said community by resources that have been redistributed from those who have benefitted from the unjust enrichment borne out of the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved Afrikans. Unconditionally.

The Afrikan Heritage Centre of Excellence also referred to by some as a Pan Afrikan Educational

Community Complex is the name of a provision where holistic repairs take place addressing areas such as Economics, Education, Health, Spirituality, Law, Arts, all from Afrikan Centred pedagogy, epistemology and praxis. The centre must have within its programme a clear approach to trans generational succession planning to ensure the integrity and longevity of the facility for generations to come. The planning for this facility must begin in 2022 and converge with wider reparatory justice endeavours taking place in the city and are referenced in recommendations for chapter 7.

Recommendations: Unity, identity & re-recognition of self

- The centre of excellence/community complex must develop curriculums of psychological, spiritual and cultural repairs, utilising Afrikan centered models of application such as the Nguzo Saba, the principles of Maat and other core value systems derived from our heritage.
- Leaders of Institutions (churches, schools, healthcare etc) where Afrikan heritage people frequent must have access to the centre as students who are committed to supporting the rehabilitation of Afrikan identity and self-determination.
- The centre must include immersion activities as part of its curricula ensuring young people and families have access to their heritage and thus restoring of identity through visits to Afrika as part of rites of passage and immersion programmes.
- The centre must work with other Afrikan centered agencies and structures around the UK and beyond, in order to enrich the curriculum and share good practice globally.

Recommendations: Beyond a statue. A living site of memorial - Ritual and remembrance in a central space

The consultation sought to establish thoughts on a memorial, not to establish or decide what that memorial should be. Existing Afrikan centred organisations such as the Afrikan ConneXions Consortium, the John Lynch Afrikan Education Programme and the umbrella body Afrikan Voices Forum should be liaising with and resourced to coordinate on the matter of memorial and remembrance. I therefore recommend that:

¹<https://epigram.org.uk/2021/05/25/bristol-university-launches-new-project-exploring-the-legacy-of-transatlantic-slavery/>

- A process needs to be established by which Afrikan Heritage Communities can be sufficiently informed (of possibilities and potential) and engaged before opting for a memorial(s) and the location in which it/they should be. It is worth noting that this can be a range of things, not necessarily either/or, for example: murals, history trails, plaques, gardens, literary or artistic productions and a managed shrine. The memorial could also involve dedicated land managed by the Afrikan Heritage Community.

- The Memorial should reflect the best of what reflects memory and truth of history and reverence to our Afrikan Ancestors from an Afrikan perspective. Logistical and spiritual guidance should be sought in this respect.

- Whilst the process of deciding a memorial is in train and in fact beyond, Bristol Afrikan Heritage Communities should establish their own calendar event(s) and rituals of Ancestral remembrance, that will be enriched by a memorial.

- A facility available to all Bristolians and its visitors should be established to facilitate a place for learning, respectful remembrance and provides opportunities for non Afrikans to engage in work as allies in the quest for reparatory justice in fulfilment of the 4 resolutions of the atonement and reparations motion passed by full council in Bristol on March 2nd, 2021.

Recommendation: Towards an Afrikan Heritage centre of excellence/ Pan Afrikan Community Education Complex

- Existing community assets are resourced to become satellites of the Afrikan Heritage Centre of Excellence/Pan Afrikan Community Education Complex. We identify the Malcolm X Community Centre, Kuumba, the Coach House and Docklands as potential satellites where a memorandum of understanding or partnership agreement can be established with them as satellites. Resourcing will require capital and revenue investment. A round table exploratory discussion with all these different organisations will need to be held and can be facilitated by the Afrikan ConneXions Consortium.

Recommendation: Reframing education on our own terms

Building on our recommendations about engaging with institutions who wish to become students at the centre of excellence, there is a recognition that we should also influence existing spaces and meet them where they are to bring about substantive change and safeguard the progressive work being done within the centre. We therefore recommend that:

- The centre of excellence should establish AFRISTED - Afrikan Standards in Education as a means of providing scrutiny and support for mainstream education, learning, training and health institutions.

Recommendations: Accountability & Agency

- The city must actively work constructively with AHC to progress the 4 resolutions of the Atonement and Reparations Motion passed by full council on March 2nd, 2021 and commit to working within the spirit of the resolutions in working as allies and recognising the agency of Afrikan Heritage communities in defining and implementing our own visions of glocal community repairs.

- The Mayor's Commission on Race Equality and the 'We are Bristol' History Commission must be active allies in supporting the development of the Bristol Pempamsie Reparations Plan (B-PReP) which will encapsulate many of the recommendations of this report and establish other means and approaches for securing equity and reparatory justice for Afrikan Heritage Communities within the city whilst serving as a glocal model of good practice. The B-PReP will be formed out of a wider range of AHC led activities such as educational activities, people's assemblies, educative consultation processes and cultural enrichment opportunities.

- Institutions and bodies committed to atonement for this history must continually assess their own practice as allies and ensure that mechanisms of consultation and accountability are embedded in their institutions to mitigate against acting on their own neo liberal Eurocentric volition under the guise of equality, diversity and inclusion.

1. Foreword

It is no secret that Bristol is recognised as one of the most desirable places to live and work in the UK, with its diverse arts and cultural scene celebrated across the country. This is in complete contrast to the experiences of people from the African diaspora here in the city who experience greater disadvantage in education, employment and economic prosperity, and who have now been further and more disproportionately impacted by Covid 19. Before statues were being toppled, there had been many calls from community activists to move forward the debate on Bristol's role in the Transatlantic Trade in Enslaved Africans (TTEA). The city and its merchants grew rich on the profits of trading in enslaved people and the call for action was clear.

In March 2019, I convened a roundtable discussion, chaired by Professor Olivette Otele, which brought together a wide range of stakeholders from the voluntary and community sector, academia and other interest groups, as well as campaigners. As a result, it was agreed that Bristol City Council would lead and convene the Legacy Steering Group, with the aim of delivering both permanent legacy and support to projects that explore this city's historic role in the TTEA. This will act not only as an instrument of education, but as a tool of social change to challenge many of the misconceptions generally held towards the subject of slavery and its legacy here in our city.

The Legacy Steering Group agreed and accepted very early on that we would lead a full and thorough city-wide conversation about what Bristol's legacy should be in relation to its history and continued benefit as a result of the TTEA, and that the voice and views of African and Caribbean Heritage Communities (ACH) are paramount to these conversations. **Project T.R.U.T.H** brings to the fore and lifts those voices and opinions that have been overlooked in consultation processes and shunted to the margins of history.

The groups progress was hampered by Covid 19, so meetings were suspended whilst we tackled the pandemic in our city and in June 2020, Black Lives Matter protestors tore down the statue of Colston and the Mayor announced a new Bristol History Commission. The Legacy Steering Group

re-convened its meetings in September 2020 and agreed to support a 6-month period of educational consultations, led by Black South West Network on behalf of the Legacy Steering Group, with members of the diverse communities of Afrikan Caribbean and continental Afrikan heritage people. The findings and recommendations of Project TRUTH are set out in this report.

I understand this is a topic that will resonate with some and not others. With over 30 years' experience of working in community activism, and a long career in the public and voluntary sector resulting in my current role as Deputy Mayor of the city, I understand that the struggle is not exclusively Black. It is precisely because of this that as a woman of Afrikan-Caribbean heritage who has experienced racism and understands that the fear of the other often stems from a place of ignorance, that Project Truth is particularly important to ensure that young people know the contributions and sacrifices of those on whose shoulders we stand.

Bristol may be a city of contradictions, but it is the first city in Europe to elect a Black Mayor and continues to lead the conversation around confronting inequality and fighting for justice - whether that be economic, environmental or indeed racial. Let us continue to be trailblazers. This research will help to inform how the legacy of the TTEA is carved out for Bristol that represents truths, acknowledgment, healing and empowerment.

Cllr Asher Craig

Deputy Mayor of Bristol

Chair – Bristol Legacy Steering Group



2. Acknowledgements & background to report

Project T.R.U.T.H was an education and consultation initiative commissioned by the Legacy Steering Group. The Legacy Steering Group was founded in 2019 and consists of city partners, individuals and organisations, is convened by the Culture Department of Bristol City Council and is Chaired by Deputy Mayor for Communities Cllr Asher Craig. The purpose of the steering group is to provide advice and strategic direction to Bristol City Council concerning the legacy of the Transatlantic Trafficking of Enslaved Africans (TTEA), and any associated projects and programmes.

Project T.R.U.T.H began in November 2020 and was overseen by the communities sub group, which has three members: Barbara "Tunga" Witter from Black South West Network (BSWN), Jendayi Serwah from Afrikan ConneXions Consortium, and Ruth Pitter Project Manager for One Bristol. It has consisted of a launch event, a survey, a weekly radio show and eight focus group meetings. For the duration of the Project, BSWN provided administrative and research support, as the accountable body.

We wish to thank everyone who completed, shared and helped to promote the survey that has informed this report and recommendations. In addition, we would also like to thank those who were able to attend one of the eight focus groups. The purpose of the focus groups was to expand upon the themes of the survey question to get more in-depth discussion and opinions.

The work was led by, and this report is written by lead consultant Cleo Lake. Cleo is an experienced community engagement worker, social and racial justice activist and artist, experienced in outreach and radio presenting. This project was supported by Jendayi Serwah and Angelique Retief from BSWN who wrote the initial research proposal (which has formed some of the background context to this research), assisted with survey design and analysis, drafting the recommendations and scrupulously revised various draft versions of this report. Many thanks also to Chiara Lodi from BSWN who assisted with aspects of the survey design and analysis.

This report uses 'we' and 'our', as the consultant is part of the communities subject to this research. Thanks also to Ujima Radio for their part in ensuring the weekly Project T.R.U.T.H show was broadcast bi-weekly.

Respect also to all of those who have gotten us to this point, the many generations of freedom fighters, campaigners and our ancestors themselves. This report therefore acknowledges this work to be in essence a continuation of 'the struggle' and as such an intergenerational and collective work.

More recent but often forgotten milestones on this journey include the success of the community-based Operation Truth 2007 Campaign and its challenge of the mainstream abolitionist narrative, on the 200th anniversary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act in 1807, that was felt to marginalise the voices of the Afrikan Heritage Community who were the living legacy of that period¹.

The Bristol 1996 'Festival of the Sea' commemorations were also contentious and problematic and were boycotted by artists and members of the Afrikan Heritage communities (AHC) as expressed and documented in a film produced in 2000 titled, 'Under the Bridge', featuring an interview with the now late Bristolian artist Tony Forbes. His artwork, 'Sold Down the River', was commissioned for the City's first major exhibition, 'A Respectable Trade? Bristol & Transatlantic Slavery', held at the City Museum & Art Gallery in 1999. There was also contention about 'Brunel 200' in 2006 and the prominence the city gave this, resources including book reading in schools, etc. Citywide education or citywide awareness on neither the TTEA, nor our centuries of achievements have been afforded the same focus or resources.

¹https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/Data/Cabinet/200801101600/Agenda/0110_5.pdf

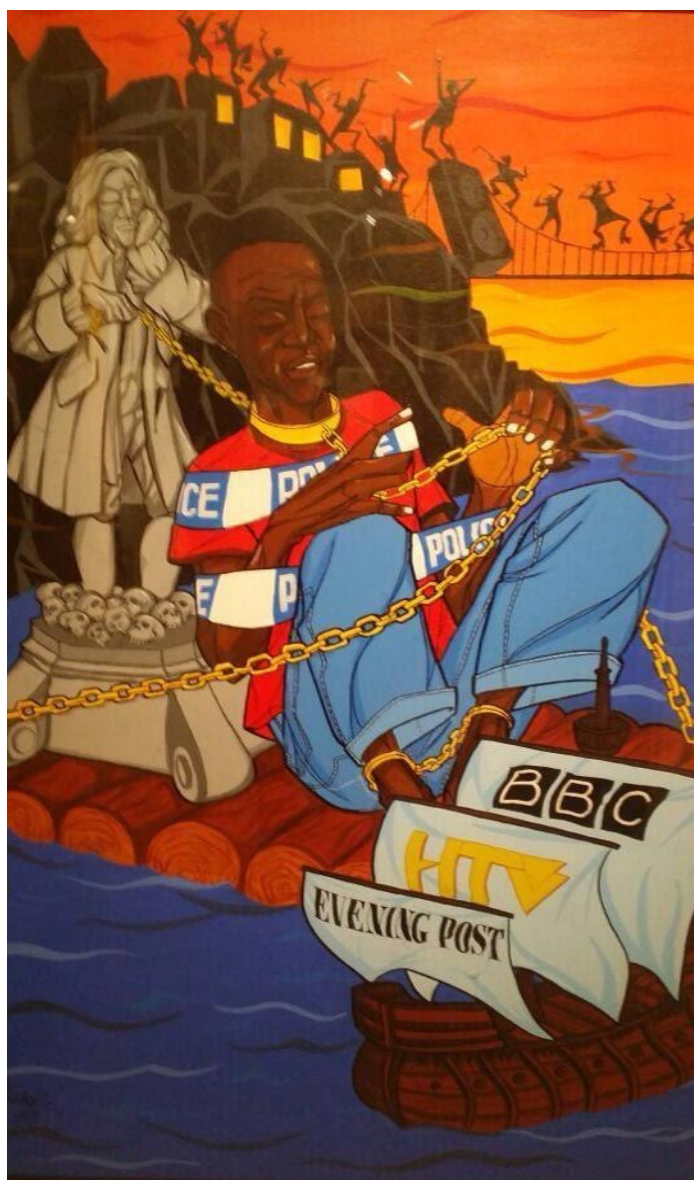


Figure 1: 'Sold Down the River', Tony Forbes, 1964-2019 Bristol

Whilst discussions, legal actions, protests and petitions on the matter have existed over decades, recent events such as the toppling of the Edward Colston Statue and the passing of an Atonement and Reparations Motion in Bristol have further added to the topical and pressing nature of atonement, repair and justice.

There has to our knowledge been no formal recommendations in Bristol documented to include the views of AHC in recent years, if ever.

As such, the Project T.R.U.T.H initiative and this report therefore stands as an unprecedented attempt to shape a way forward with AHC at the centre. This has not been a consultation for consultation's sake or a tokenistic tick box for inclusion, but rather more like the title of Esther Stanford-Xosei's keynote address at the launch event '**Beyond consultative data-gathering, how Bristol's Afrikan Heritage Communities can build real community power to effect and secure the reparatory justice changes you wish to see.'**

Esther's keynote address centred on concepts like the right to memory, community collective gains above that of the individual, the tapestry of our stories, our history, our contemporary experience, and the necessity to tell our stories as part of a healing process.

Every story I write adds to me a little, changes me a little, forces me to reexamine an attitude or belief, causes me to research and learn, helps me to understand people and grow. (Octavia E. Butler)

This aspect of 'our story' telling and truth telling is fundamental. It is fundamental in terms of a new institutional understanding and narrative concerning the reality of experiences historically and contemporarily endured by Afrikan Heritage Communities (AHC), summed up by the concept of the Maangamizi, the continuum of the Afrikan Hellocaust from chattel enslavement, colonialism and neocolonialism. The stories of AHCs have been denied and silenced. Many have been lured at various junctures into suppressing their own memories, thoughts, emotions and struggles in order to 'fit in' or to present a picture of our lives that is false, in part as a survival strategy. Indeed to also quote Esther herself, "Public truth-telling must be undertaken before real healing can occur".



Figure 2: Consultant, Cleo Lake - Project TRUTH promotion, St Paul's, Bristol (2021)

This initiative and report therefore signals an ongoing process of readying towards a healing destination 'sewn together' by the community itself, based on the West Afrikan Adinkra symbol of Pempamsie. The approximate translation of Pempamsie into English means 'to sew in readiness' and is a symbol of readiness, steadfastness, hardiness. The design of this symbol resembles the links of a chain, and implies strength

through unity as well as the importance of being prepared.

The intention is that this report may formally set out various recommendations and ideas to lay part of the groundwork towards an AHC Bristol Pempamsie Reparations Plan (B-PReP), so Bristol can contribute its own part in a local and global (Glocal) repairs process.



Pempamsie is the Adinkra symbol for sewing together in readiness preparatory actions for reparatory justice. Building our future of our principled operational unity despite our diversity.

3. Context

Project T.R.U.T.H was born out of the agreed necessity to attempt to gather the views of Afrikan Heritage Communities (AHC) through an educative consultation that could extend understanding and better inform opinion and decision making. Having been marginalised in their own story and subject to a sanitised Eurocentric narrative about this history and its impact that still plagues us today, it was imperative that AHC voices were central to any process of city action going forward. Noting that AHC are not one homogenous group, and that understanding would vary, the consultation successfully attracted a reasonable sample size and a broad spectrum of participants especially with regards to age and country of birth, through the launch event, survey and focus groups. This report is therefore representative of some of the views of AHC, but we acknowledge that other views may exist and that there will be other opportunities including through the implementation of recommendations, where other AHC members may be further involved.

The way individuals, families and communities identified themselves, understood their historic connections to each other and their various journeys of how they got to Bristol, varied a

great deal. The process aimed to include individuals from whatever their starting point was in terms of their understanding of TTEA, although the majority of survey participants said they were 'slightly knowledgeable' or 'knowledgeable' (Figure 3). The focus groups were far more varied.

Bristol occupies a unique position both in terms of its historic involvement and enrichment by the TTEA and in relation to significant acts of resistance and cultural influence by AHC activity in the city. In addition, it is also of significance that Bristol has Europe's first elected Mayor of Afrikan descent of a major city, Marvin Rees, who is currently serving his second term in office, and a Rastafarian Deputy Mayor of Afrikan descent, Asher Craig. Whilst not the first council to pass a reparations motion (Islington and Lambeth passed motions in July 2020), Bristol is the first core city to pass a motion for Atonement and Reparation for Bristol's role in the Transatlantic Traffic in Enslaved Afrikans (TTEA²) and demonstrated an exemplary process in collaboration with longstanding reparations to galvanise understanding and support from AHC (and allies).

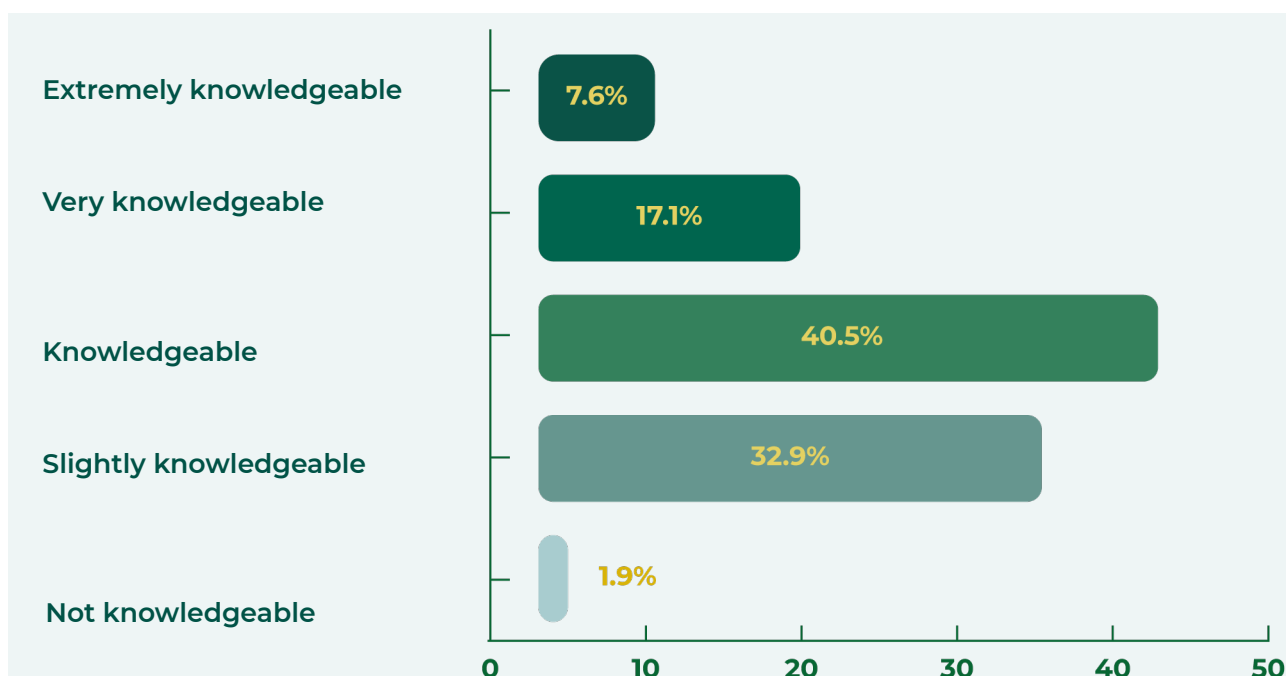


Figure 3: How would you rate your knowledge on Bristol's involvement in the Transatlantic Trafficking and Enslavement of Afrikans (TTEA)?

² <https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=22977>

This approach had the aim of explaining the concept of holistic reparations and importantly, enabling an inclusive approach led by AHC in a way that was grassroots led. This principle is echoed in resolutions two and four of the motion itself:

Support Afrikan Heritage Community (AHC) organisations in Bristol to galvanise support for the emerging Bristol AHC led 'Reparations Plan' from, and in collaboration with, wider stakeholders including institutions, city strategic leaders corporate leaders, key strategic programmes/initiatives and cross-party politicians.

And

Recognise that reparative justice should be driven by Afrikan Heritage Communities experiences, voices and perspectives to ensure that advocacy messages not only reflect but also respond to the real needs of the community in order to recognise inequalities.

The impetus for the motion came via a long thought-out strategy by leading campaigners led by the 'Stop the Maangamizi! We Charge Genocide/Ecocide Campaign', and whilst initially presented as a motion by the writer of this report and the then Green Councillor Cleo Lake, the Mayor Marvin Rees, Deputy Mayor Asher Craig, and the Afrikan ConneXions Consortium were instrumental in enabling a wider community reach ahead of the motion going to council. The way ahead for reparations must indeed be a collaborative process and a collective effort which again speaks to the Bristol Pempamsie Reparations Plan (B-PReP).

Bristol is now, and has been for decades, at the centre of debate around inequality generally and racial inequality specifically. In 2017 the Runnymede Trust³ evaluated Bristol as the most divided city in terms of economics and opportunity, with 'Black Africans' experiencing the worst life chances, followed closely by 'African-Caribbean'. A significant number of our Windrush generation settled in the city, Bristol being among one of the

major UK cities; their contributions made the city what it is today. Despite this, the Runnymede report signifies the ongoing inequalities the city has metered out to them and their descendants.

To educate the masses politically does not mean, cannot mean, making a political speech. What it means is to try, relentlessly and passionately, to teach the masses that everything depends on them; that if we stagnate it is their responsibility, and that if we go forward it is due to them too, that there is no such thing as a demiurge, that there is no famous man who will take the responsibility for everything, but that the demiurge is the people themselves and the magic hands are finally only the hands of the people. (Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth)

Bristol stands as a microcosm of the issues of global inequality and the toxic legacies of colonialism and empire. Whether that be the buildings and public statues that came into being out of the economy of empire; the language of propaganda and demonisation of the 'exotic' enemy, the continued control of Afrika's resources, and the fact that many of today's conflicts in the world are the result of the arbitrary borders created by European empires.

TTEA was part of the network of human trafficking which existed between Britain, West Africa and the Caribbean. This activity also serviced Virginia and other British colonies in North America. Although Spain and Portugal had originally dominated the TTEA, by the eighteenth-century Britain had become the most prominent nation of industrial enslavers in the world. Between 1501 and 1866, over 12 million Afrikans are estimated to have been exported to the New World, around two million of whom are said to have died enroute and more still who resisted and were tortured and murdered on the shores of West Afrika and never even made

³ <http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/CoDE%20Briefing%20>

it on the ships. Although slavery has existed in various forms for centuries, the chattel aspect of the TTEA was unique in its form and in relation to the continued impact over centuries, has expressed itself in the racial injustices experienced by descendants today.

Before this becomes a legal question, there's an ethical one, which is Why are you allowing the effigy of a trafficker to sit inside a community where the descendants of the traffic (sic) are now living their lives? It's like having an effigy of Adolf Hitler in Jerusalem. You do that because you don't think the past matters, or you don't think the act of remembering it or reliving it matters. And that's usually always said to powerless people. Can you just get over it and move on? It's funny, the powerful never get over anything. It's that amnesia that still is a characteristic feature of late-capitalist society. (John Akomfrah)

The convergence of past and present culminated in Bristol on the 7th of June 2020 during a Black Lives Matter protest sparked by the murder of George Floyd in America, during which the statue of enslaver and Maangamizi criminal Edward Colston was toppled and thrown into the Bristol docks, the very site that ushered ships out to capture, exploit and take lives and saw them return with the commodities that enabled great wealth and a prosperous city, and served as a gateway to modern capitalism.

Whilst tools such as the principles of Ma'at, and the Afrikan pledge exist on the fringes, there is

no one source of information, no manual of being an Afrikan (in the diaspora), no community guide on self-repair, or code of community conduct that exists or that is widely adopted. **The Nguzo Saba** seven principles of Afrikan Heritage (**Umoja (unity), Kujichagulia (self-determination), Ujima (collective work and responsibility), Ujamaa (cooperative economics), Nia (purpose), Kuumba (creativity), and Imani (faith)**) also serve as year-round lifestyle-guiding principles brought out through the annual festival of Kwanzaa, but these also exist on the fringes and are not widely known or adopted by the breadth of AHC.

Without a recognised reparatory city space for Afrikan heritage citizens that recognises their differences as well as shared histories, this consultation served as a welcomed opportunity to

There was a thrust to raise the consciousness of the people and we argued that in order to free ourselves we must be ourselves, Afrikans, a people oppressed and in struggle. And we must be self-conscious about this. (Maulana Karenga)

talk and rebuild relations across Afrikan Heritage communities in Bristol. Many participants held the view that unity and regular dialogue was a priority going forward, and to that end many of the findings centre on an inward community focus.

This research attempts to create a focus towards city repair and atonement, community repairs, family repairs as well as the psychology of the city and Afrikan Heritage Communities who continue to be disenfranchised as a result of this history, its ramifications and legacies today. It is part of a reparatory justice process where the past and present are connected in order to build a just future for posterity.

The African Pledge

We will remember the humanity, glory, and suffering of our ancestors and honour the struggle of our elders;

We will strive to bring new value, and new life to our people

We will have peace and harmony among us

We will be loving, sharing, and creative

We will work, study, and listen, so we may learn;
Learn so we may teach.

We will cultivate self-reliance

We will struggle to resurrect and unify our homeland;

We will raise many children for our nation;

We will have discipline, patience, devotion and courage;

We will live as models, to provide new direction for our people;

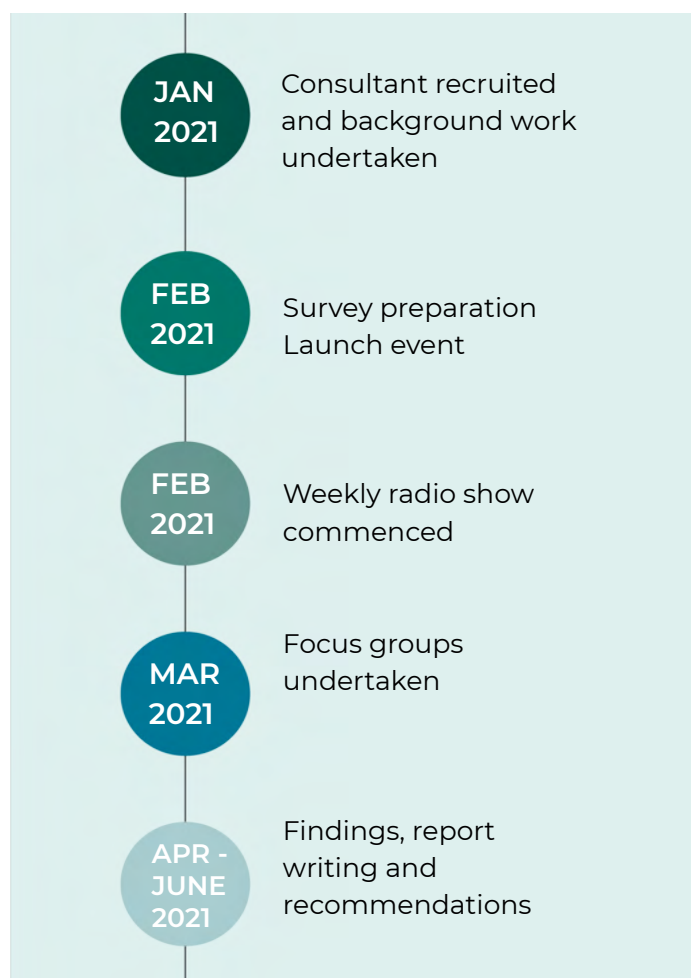
We will be free and self-determining;

We are African people....

We will win!!!

4. How we carried out Project T.R.U.T.H: Consultation methods

As an education focused consultation, this initiative began publicly with a launch event featuring poet Malizah and a detailed presentation by leading reparations campaigner Esther Stanford-Xosei, from the Maangamizi Education Trust (MET). Excerpts from the launch event, further information, interviews and explorations were shared through dedicated social media, a web page and a weekly radio show on Ujima.



4.1 Data to inform recommendations was collected by:

- Opinions expressed in the breakout rooms at the **launch event**. Quotes from the event also informed 3 street poster design slogans kindly sponsored by 'Building Hollywood' and were pasted up around

the central area of the city ahead of the reparations motion going to Full Council on March 2nd.

- An **online survey** which opened on February 10th and officially closed on March 31st. The survey was widely promoted and distributed in order to capture general quantitative data about participants, plus answers and opinions to more substantial questions. Further suggestions and ideas were actively encouraged via comments sections assigned to particular questions and at the end of the whole survey. The survey questions can be found in the appendix.

- In order to establish more in-depth conversations and opinions, **eight focus groups** were set up to explore three additional questions. The aim was to appeal to various sections of the communities and the focus groups were as follows:

- Two general focus groups, the first of which was intergenerational and consisted of participants based in Bristol (and some born in Bristol) but from various countries of origin:
- Two elders' groups
- One youth focused group
- Two small academic meetings
- One creatives focus group.

Because, as Claudia Jones notes, "A people's art is the genesis of their freedom", this was mirrored by the creatives focus group, set up in acknowledgement that one of the major ways cultural information had been retained in the diaspora was through the arts, and was a uniting element in itself. Bristol also has had a rich more recent history within Afrikan arts and culture, hosting the Sankore Library³, the region's best Afrikan and Caribbean resource. Under the vision of Guyana born Bristolian Reynold Duncan, the pioneering youth empowerment Arts Opportunity Theatre company⁴ was established and ran from 1981-1988. Bristol was also the birthplace of the UK's first Afrikan dance and drumming company, Ekome founded by Barrington Anderson, which successfully reconnected individuals with their Afrikan roots. The role of arts and culture in healing

³ <http://www.kuumba.org.uk/sankorelibrary.html>

⁴ <https://sites.google.com/view/artsoportunitytheatre>

and empowerment and a tool of embedding cultural knowledge cannot be understated.

As Barrington Anderson of Ekome notes, “In a society full of poverty and problems, dancing gave me a means of expression, a sense of my roots and a profession”⁵. It was important therefore that the ideas and voices of creatives were included by way of the focus group.

Subservient beings cannot experience the fullness of freeness, so self-reparations must begin. Rebel unapologetically. Be in the fullness of you. I will not be at a loss, whilst I wait for someone else to recognise what has been taken. I will not be at a loss whilst I wait for the system of oppression to give me back what I have lost, or whilst being in the process of taking back, what I aim to take back. (Poet Malizah)

Each focus group included a presentation / introduction and the same three questions which were carefully considered and in part inspired by the interim results of the survey. The questions can be found in the appendix.

- The lead consultant produced and presented a **weekly radio show** on Ujima providing a promotional and educational platform for the duration of the process. The purpose of the radio show was to fulfil the education and information sharing aspect of the consultation, as well as to promote the project and survey. The recordings are available via the BSWN website. The hour-long radio show began on February 10th and ran until March 31st coinciding with the survey. Guests and

topics included:

Speaking your truth section with various community voices including: **Christelle Pellecuer** from Razana Afrika, **Mena Fombo** of Blak Wave Productions, **Dr Olivette Otele**, Professor of Slavery at University of Bristol, and **Lawrence Hoo** from Cargo Movement and Cargo Classrooms multimedia initiative. Topics also included health, healing and supplementary schools and featured a short weekly quiz.

Guests were asked what legacy and memorial meant to them and the speaking your truth section was inspired by the Stop the Maangamizi! We Charge Genocide/Ecocide Campaign's (SMWeCGEC) 'I AM Witness' appeal⁶. This appeal sought people to come forward to tell their stories about how the Maangamizi currently impacts their lives and threatens their future. These testimonies would be significant contributions to a UK wide All-Party Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry, which Bristol resolved to support within the Atonement and Reparations Motion passed on March 2nd, 2021.

When we speak, we are afraid our words will not be heard or welcomed. But when we are silent, we are still afraid. So, it is better to speak. (Audre Lorde)

4.2 Language and terminology

Where possible the consultation and report adopts an Afrikan centred lens, in order to add Afrikan agency instead of Eurocentric norms. For example, the term 'slave trade' was not used even though it is still the most widely used description of this history. The decision to move away from the term 'slave trade' is in part because 'slave'

⁵<https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/obsessions-drumming-up-custom-for-some-it-is-therapy-for-others-it-is-a-community-kneesup-elizabeth-winkler-puts-her-back-into-african-dancing-1378520>.

⁶[html?fbclid=IwAR2Exsg9gwa0Z8aEVkLpASpvI0gGLGw0RV8tS8m1xmQmNhoaeIZdGAP-nq4](https://stopthemaangamizi.com/i-am-witness/)
<https://stopthemaangamizi.com/i-am-witness/>

is a condition, not an identity, and that 'trade' gives a false sense of mutual equity and doesn't come close to explaining the background and underlining colonial realities. This form of chattel enslavement was unprecedented. A currently more progressive preferred terminology is TTEA - the Transatlantic Traffic in Enslaved Afrikans, and this has been adopted in this report. The report also adopts the 'K' in Afrika. This report refers to Afrikan Heritage Communities (AHC). Afrikan Heritage Communities are a diverse group who may also identify or describe themselves as the following but not limited to: Afrikan, Caribbean, Afrikan-Caribbean, Afrikan descent, Black-British, or of a dual heritage.

As well as utilising quotes from the survey comments and focus groups, the report includes aspects of poetry, quotations, images and references from throughout the diaspora, out which support and embellish the consultation findings in a way that intends to promote this report as an educative tool in line with a key purpose of the project itself.

5. First things first: Unity, identity & re-recognition of self

I have a level of ignorance. That level of ignorance was exacerbated by 400 years. So, it's not that I can't pick a name, it's more like how do we as a community work together to give those of us who were taken many, many, many years ago away, to help them know their name, if that makes sense? I could make up my own thing but if you have a grandmother who can give you that answer that's one thing, but I cannot tell you before the 1600s who we were. That's all I'm just saying, you know. (Creatives focus group participant)

Britain and Bristol played a central role in displacing Afrikan people, taking us away from Afrika and scattering us around the globe to North, South, Central America, the Caribbean and Europe. Of course, the realities of migration stretch much further back and span a massive narrative and geographical area, the stories of which have been largely lost in the diaspora, consequently erroneously and harmfully, often resulting in placing enslavement as our starting point, and our identities and memories distorted as a consequence.

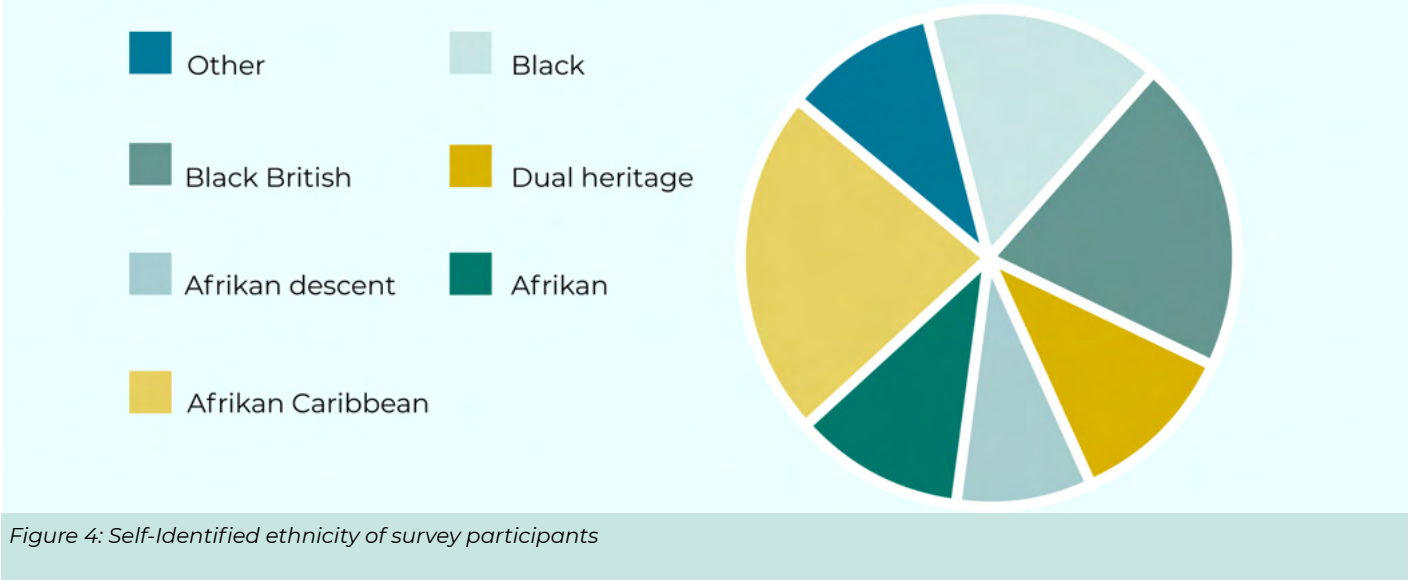
What would you rather focus on? 400 years of slavery or 7500 years of perspective? The slavery stereotype defines black history and black people worldwide. It's not to be ignored but being stuck on this topic seriously damages self-esteem... We've seen it countless times with people of all ages, especially with children. Once they have a fresh perspective, they never go back. (Paul Obinna creator of Lineage Timeline)

Whilst not a primary focus or a substantive question in the survey, the sense of identity was a major topic of discussion within all the focus groups. The survey itself had an even spread of how people described themselves across the various options in the survey but with most participants (28.66%) describing themselves as Afrikan-Caribbean versus Black British (26.11%), Black (19.75%), Dual Heritage (14.01%), Afrikan (14.01%), Other (12.74%), Afrikan descent (11.46%) (Figure 4).

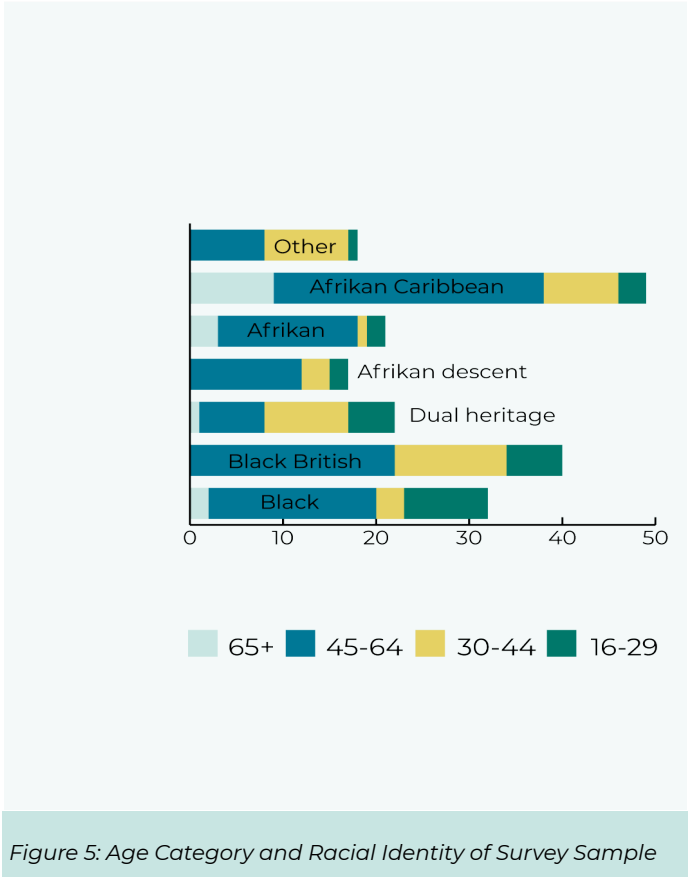
A significant number who carried out the survey identified their racial identity with being Afrikan and perhaps what can be read into this that there was more of a connection with historical and present links to continental Africa. What is crucial is that there appears to be a significant group who did not identify themselves in a racialised way, i.e. Other.

**The recommendations are featured at or towards the end of each following section and again at the end of the report.

It is clear that for some generations, there still exists skewed ideas about being Afrikan, an identity paradigm and a ‘hyphenated identity’, for example Black-British, Afro-Caribbean, African-Caribbean, African American. ‘Afro’ is a hair style, hence the terminology ‘Afro-Caribbean’ does not signify or identify heritage. Those who identified as being Afrikan-Caribbean or Afrikan appeared to be more likely to say they were knowledgeable of Bristol’s role in the TTEA versus those who identified as Black, Black British or Dual heritage who were more likely to say they were less knowledgeable. This is however due to the fact that many survey participants identified with more than one racial identity making an analysis of this connection difficult.



The survey was able to capture a significant number of Afrikan Heritage communities from a wide age range (Figure 5). The greater number being from the 45-65 age range, with a comparable number from the combined 16-29 and 30-44 groups. This should suggest that in future, further involvement should reach out to the latter age group who have greater investment with any planning for the future. The 45-65 age group largely racially identified themselves as being Afrikan Caribbean, but there was a fairly even spread between those who also identified as being Afrikan, Black British or Black. Those aged 16-29 were more likely to identify as Black, Black British or Dual Heritage. The 30-44 age group were most likely to identify as Black British, but again, there was a fairly even distribution between those who identified as Dual Heritage, African Caribbean and Other. No one in the 65+ age group identified themselves as Black British, Afrikan Descent or Other. The 65+ age group were also more likely to say they were knowledgeable of Bristol’s role in the TTEA than the 16-29 group.



Most of the sample identified with Christianity (n=69) and no religion (n=45), with less participants identifying with Islam (n=4), Rastafarianism (n=12), Afrikan traditional practices (n=12), Buddhism (n=3) and other (n=13). There was great variation amongst those who identified with Christianity in terms of their knowledge of Bristol's role in the TTEA, whilst those who identified with Rastafarianism and Afrikan Traditional Practices were more likely to say they were very or extremely knowledgeable.

One could argue that one of the major legacies of TTEA relates to the question of identity and the severed connections of a collective view of nationhood/belonging across the diaspora and on the continent. A discussion point in the focus group was around the importance of reconnecting Afrikan heritage communities across the diaspora and on the continent, in order to instigate a global repair process that could be a tool to restore group identity, future prosperity and humanity.

I am not African because I was born in Africa but because Africa was born in me. (Kwame Nkrumah)

Whilst there is an aspiration to connect globally, it is also important to act locally, recognising that more community conversations between those diaspora born (in Bristol's case primarily those born in the Caribbean or Britain / Europe) and those born on the Afrikan continent. Whilst this sounds so straightforward, simple and obvious, and of course exists on both interpersonal levels and to an extent through existing forums such as Afrikan Voices Forum and Afrikan ConneXions Consortium, there currently exists no intentional community space or forum for this to be facilitated. The purpose of such a space would be to foster better understanding between the various sections within AHC.

...you're disconnected from people who are like you, who are of you, who are from you and that's the thing, that's why I talked about it as a re-recognition because that for me is the biggest lie, you're looking at the biggest lie and if you can break that

lie, our education improves, our business improves, our connection improves, our shared humanity improves, our shared heritage improves. (Academic focus group participant)

Conversations need to be honest, recognising that identity and culture have adapted and changed but have a common root. There are separations, differences and changes but we need to reclaim and synthesise these differences in a way that is authentic and a 'blueprint of what we can be'.

We need a new blueprint of what we can be and that blueprint actually lies in the reconnection to the rediscovery of being Afrikans, but not in a nostalgic way, we have to do the work of what was good and what we want to leave, but we can map a new modernity based on that trajectory ... science isn't white, science is Africa, science is West Indian, we can own this stuff and push it and map it and create our own modernities based on an empowered and dignified self and screw this historic racism. (Academic focus group participant)

The discussions really spoke to this idea of the **tapestry**. Bringing what we know and what we have from where we are from, and now trying to weave something from all the pieces into a new way to go forward in an understanding of our unique journeys, in a way that can unite, empower and strengthen our collective agency. How TTEA is taught and understood here, in the Caribbean, the Americas and on the Continent varies considerably. Physical freedom from those that were enslaved was a battle lasting generation, however the battle to free the mind and rid self of those influences remains. Those of us brought up in the Western Education system have been denied truth and were taught to view our heritage from negative perspectives, its damaging impact and processes of un-doing is long term.

Freeing yourself was one thing. Claiming ownership of that freed self was another. (Toni Morrison - Beloved, 1987)

5.1 Recommendations: Unity, identity & re-recognition of self

- There is an urgent need for a centre of excellence/community complex that must develop curriculums of psychological, spiritual and cultural repairs, utilising Afrikan centered models of application such as the Nguzo Saba, the principles of Maat⁸ and other core value systems derived from our heritage.
- Leaders of Institutions (churches, schools, healthcare etc), where Afrikan heritage people frequent, must have access to the centre as students who are committed to supporting the rehabilitation of Afrikan identity and self-determination.
- The centre must include immersion activities as part of its curricula, ensuring young people and families have access to their heritage and thus restoring of identity through visits to Afrika as part of rites of passage and immersion programmes.
- The centre must work with other Afrikan centered agencies and structures around the UK and beyond, in order to enrich the curriculum and share good practice globally.

6. Beyond a statue. A living site of memorial: Ritual and remembrance in a central space

We as living descendants of our African ancestors and their future generations living in this city owe a huge debt to those trafficked and enslaved. We are here because of them. We are their dreams of tomorrow. So, let's hold them up in our midst, in a monument or monuments (why one?) that honours and dignifies their memory, their lives, humanity, and struggles. We might then remember their courage, bravery, resistance and survival as part of our shared past and continuing struggle in the city today. (Survey comment)

Sculptures and monuments have existed throughout the ages across Afrika and the diaspora. There have been various modern iterations, some in connection to TTEA, for example the arc of return in New York unveiled in 2008. Also, Gilt of Cain, which is situated close to the heart of the financial district of the City of London, and was a collaboration between the Scottish sculptor Michael Visocchi and poet Lemn Sissay.

Many ancient Afrikan monuments had an active purpose in ritual and reverence to ancestors, and to that end were functional as opposed to purely decorative tributes. European cultures have echoed and replicated some of these monuments, for example the original obelisks of

ancient Egypt connecting the cosmos with the departed dead, are now littered across the western world commonly found in graveyards and at war memorials. A significant obelisk is situated next to The National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington D.C which opened in 2018.



Figure 6: Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture

The grave of Scipio Africanus (whose real name we may never know) in Henbury cemetery, the unmarked grave of Fanny Coker in Greenbank Cemetery, Pero's bridge and plaque, do not stand as appropriate memorials to the many thousands who were trafficked into enslavement on Bristol ships. The suffering and sacrifice of trafficked

⁸ <https://www.majoritynotminority.co.uk/principles-and-practice-of-maat.html>

Afrikans has never been adequately recognised or honoured. Bristol's Black (Afrikan) history is centuries old and yet many of its stories are lost, hidden, or shrouded in myth.

History is not reliable; it is the narrative of the powerful. History has many perspectives, and memory can be multidimensional.

It is imperative to have sight of statues and monuments that reflect the true history, but this is only one part of visibility and if not done with no real corresponding actions, this can simply be seen as a token gesture. (Survey comment)



Figure 7: One of the UK's first and only public sculptures of an Afrikan descent person was erected in St Paul's Bristol in 1987 to playwright Alfred Fagon.

So, I'm thinking definitely, the black public in Bristol, want something permanent on that landscape but I think if (it needs to be supported) by a visitation ... I think ritual has a role, some kind of event has a role; an annual way in which we visit that space and so we are reminded as to why it's there, what it's about and what it stands for... So, I think a statue on its own, when we are dust and bones, has the risk of just being something on the landscape that people don't acknowledge... I don't know what that ritual will be, but I kind of like the idea of modern rituals because I think we're lacking them as ways of binding people, and they have a poetic language that can take us away from the accusatory and in a symbolic way it says all that needs to be said through motion and dance and whatever else. (Academic focus group participant)

statue. Whilst aspects of this history are found within the city's museums (Georgian House Museum and smaller permanent display in MShed based on the 1999 exhibition 'A Respectable Trade?'), the lack of adequate memorial or centre to educate and document this history is a glaring omission. The Georgian House Museum has shifted its perspective and narrative in recent years with reinterpretation boards reimaged, and several interventions, including 'Daughters of Igbo Woman' by Bristol based Afrikan Heritage artist Ros Martin.

Many in the focus groups suggested that a memorial site would best be served by having a functional aspect and ritual attached to the site, animated through significant dates and events. The question of memorial was central to this consultation, with a global spotlight on Bristol, in particular following the toppling of the Colston

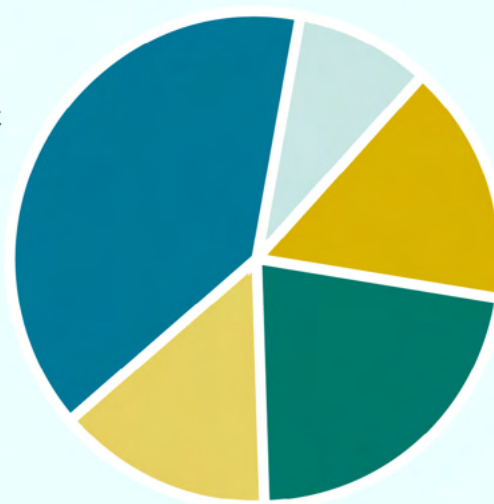
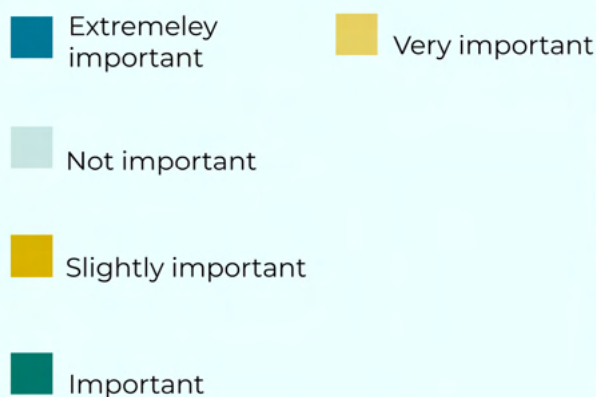


Figure 8: How important is it to you that there is a permanent memorial such as a statue or monument in the city?

Excerpt from 'BEING RENDERED VISIBLE IN THE GEORGIAN HOUSE' by Ros Martin



'Like the wind on the ocean, violent, then eerily absent.
Gone.
Events dot,
an ever-moving timeline
Here, now, time stands still,
a Georgian time,
This room, this house, this city, globally
Eighteenth century gentility
merchandise extracted like cane juice
the sinews of sugar cultivation
in field, in house,
Invisible woman.
Objects,
These (holds out palm of hand)
Memories...,
clay pipes,
Smooth, meditative, comforting,
distracts from rumblings in an ever-hungry
belly...
Ancestral spirits come.'

In contrast, Liverpool with a similar history and multi-cultural city demographic, opened The International Slavery Museum on the 23rd of August 2007, to coincide with Slavery Remembrance Day⁹ and the 200th anniversary of the passing of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act (which made TTEA but not chattel slavery illegal). Liverpool formally acknowledges Slavery Remembrance Day annually with a public programme. Some comments and conversations sought a reframing and an alternative to the concept of 'museum', opting for terms such as 'Interpretation centre' that could also be more interactive.

If you think of the museum paradigm, it has barely changed. You go into a space, and you look through glass, you read a label and then you leave. If you look at so many other areas of cultural practice, they've been transformed over the course of the past 20 years by digital engagement, by demands for interactivity. (Gus Casely-Hayford, Director of the forthcoming V&A East)

Participants in the youth focus group also reiterated a need for digital accessibility.

...but also, we also need to have online resources that people can look to in their own time so if like I'm just sat at home in like the summer holidays and I wanna learn something like I can do that because they are resources there so, yeah I think we also need to think about digitising things as well. Everything is technology for me. (Youth focus group participant)

There have been various community attempts in Bristol over the years by individuals and collectives from AHC to honour our ancestors through memorial events, including Ros Martin's

Fanny Coker memorial at Greenbank Cemetery and the more recently established Enslavement Remembrance Ritual led by //Kabbo that includes a guided walk near the harbour and central area of Bristol, with tributes to ancestors by artists and opportunities for individual and collective reflections.



Figure 9: Publicity flyer for Enslavement Remembrance Ritual

The survey results revealed that all respondents agreed that the contribution and sacrifice of Afrikans should be significantly acknowledged in the city and that there was not an adequate acknowledgment to date. Respondents also clearly felt that any action going forward should be led by AHC. Some feared that the contributions of AHC, especially relating to the cultural legacies and contribution of 'African Caribbean' people generally to the cultural landscape of the city, was also in danger of being forgotten.

Responses in the survey and follow up discussions in the focus groups highlighted that what people understand by and consider an adequate memorial varied from ideas such as plaques to improved life chances of individuals and communities. Despite the topical aspect of statues, most opinions steered away from the idea of erecting a statue in the city, often citing the need to have more education first to underpin the understanding of what a statue might represent.

⁹<https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/stories/spotlight-slavery-remembrance-day>

I'd prefer more material changes rather than symbolic, but it is also important for to remember history adequately...What will a statue do for the people? What will it do for social economics? This is deeper than a statue. (Survey comment)

Whilst there was a clear steer away from a statue, with the further questions of '*what a memorial could be*' attracting 70 submissions, it was clear that there is a need for further dialogue to specify what a memorial or memorials could be. Respondents were also clear however that should a memorial be considered, it should be sited in central Bristol. Whilst a great number of the participants believed that a monument was important and that this should be central in Bristol, what has been a resounding response and wish amongst the participants is a dedicated resource that shows the city's link with Afrika and the past, systems addressing inequities whilst ensuring Afrikan heritage communities involvement throughout the process.

Murals were mentioned both in the youth focus group and one of the elders focus groups as positive and powerful form of memorial, visual representation, and accessible informal education tools that also embed history and place. The street art of St Paul's and St Agnes includes a mural of Empire Windrush delivered in 2012 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Jamaican independence.

Delivered by Iconic Black Britons (formerly Iconic Black Bristolians) under the vision of Michelle Curtis, the Seven Saints of St Paul's has been a welcomed and important project, honouring community pioneers, cementing the contribution of AHC in St Paul's and adding a visual aesthetic to the area at a time when it continues to be gentrified.

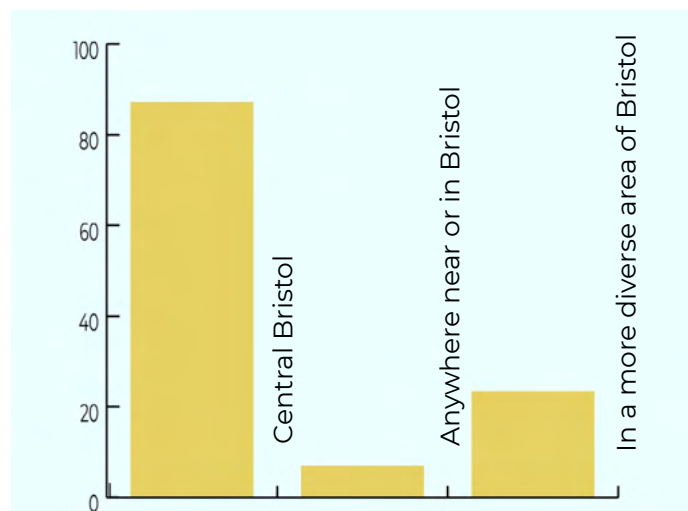


Figure 10: If there was to be a permanent memorial such as a statue or monument, where do you think this should be located?

Note as this report is being written, artist Helen Wilson-Roe has completed her statue of 'mother of modern medicine' Henrietta Lacks, partly commissioned by and to be erected on University of Bristol campus, to be unveiled in October 2021¹¹.



Figure 11: Windrush Mural St Pauls Bristol

¹⁰ <https://www.iconicblackbritons.com>

¹¹ <https://epigram.org.uk/2021/03/08/bristol-university-commissions-sculpture-of-henrietta-lacks-on-international-womens-day/>

6.1 Recommendations - Beyond a statue. A living site of memorial: Ritual and remembrance in a central space

The consultation sought to establish thoughts on a memorial, not to establish or decide what that memorial should be. Existing Afrikan centred organisations such as the Afrikan ConneXions Consortium, the John Lynch Afrikan Education Programme and the umbrella body Afrikan Voices Forum should be liaising with and resourced to coordinate on the matter of memorial and remembrance.

We therefore recommend that:

- A process needs to be established by which AHC can be sufficiently informed (of possibilities and potential) and engaged, before opting for a memorial(s) and the location in which it/ they should be. It is worth noting that this can be a range of things, not necessarily either/ or, for example: murals, history trails, plaques, gardens, literary or artistic productions and a managed shrine. The memorial could also involve dedicated land managed by the Afrikan Heritage Community.
- The Memorial should reflect the best of what reflects memory and truth of history and reverence to our Afrikan Ancestors from an Afrikan perspective. Logistical and spiritual guidance should be sought in this respect.
- Whilst the process of deciding a memorial is in train and in fact beyond, Bristol Afrikan Heritage Communities should establish its own calendar event(s) and rituals of Ancestral remembrance that will be enriched by a memorial.
- A facility available to all Bristolians and its visitors should be established to facilitate a place for learning, respectful remembrance and provide opportunities for non Afrikans to engage in work as allies in the quest for reparatory justice in fulfilment of the 4 resolutions of the atonement and reparations motion passed by full council in Bristol on March 2nd, 2021.

7. Decolonisation in action: Towards an Afrikan Heritage centre of excellence / Pan Afrikan Community Education Complex

...what I think is important, is actually the architecture of the city. The landscape of the city because I think, it's something like that we need to truly mark our contribution and we tend to sometimes focus too much on slavery and forgetting that history. Not just even before but from slavery to now. Those are the ideas to me that because we're doing two things, when we're going through those kinds of ideas. For example, a building. Something substantial. Whether it be for cultural heritage or whatever. It creates employment. It creates all that type of stuff, which the biggest memorial we could do, for those were enslaved, is for us, to survive and progress. (General focus group participant)

Whilst important, a material memorial of whatever kind did not outweigh the need to have better material outcomes, facilities and opportunities for AHC, as well as opportunities to bring the communities together as expressed in chapter 3.

Socio-economic inequality is evident in many parts of the city which sit alongside areas of privilege and wealth. Documented differences in opportunity and outcome extend to education, employment and health, resulting in lower living standards, life expectancy and aspiration. These factors are intergenerational, with many starting out financially on their own and from scratch. The lives of AHC have always been at the mercy of or under the (lack of) vision of others, trapped in a culture of dependency with virtually no AHC self-determined and flourishing institution currently in existence.

Underpinned by the survey question: *Do you think Bristol needs a permanent resource or dedicated facility that charts Afrikan history and its connection to the city*, responses and further exploration in the focus groups show that this aspect of development is key (Figure 11). Attracting 66 comments, many felt that a dedicated facility was long overdue:

There is a not a place in the city that you can walk into and find Afrikan resources that tells the story of its history in connection with our struggles.

We have nothing for ourselves. Everything we have they take it away. It is important for our generation and the younger generation to know where we have come from.

Most Definitely! It is time to Sit in Our Space on the Global Stage! Our contribution has been downplayed for way too long!!! But the work MUST Be carried out and managed by the PEOPLE OF COLOUR Communities.

So as information shared CANNOT be adapted in anyway or towards any other Agenda!

The world is so polarised right now because people aren't educated from an early age about the struggle for freedom for Africans. This would bring more acknowledgment to those that need educating and it would help Africans understand their history more. (Focus group respondent)

Many acknowledged the centres that we do have and have had, the Malcolm X Community Centre, Kuumba, and formerly The Mill and CEED. Opinions ranged from the sentimental and nostalgic, to significant frustration, an appetite to revive them, the desire to have a new centre. Many acknowledged the lack of sustained and substantial funding (ever) to realise institutional success.

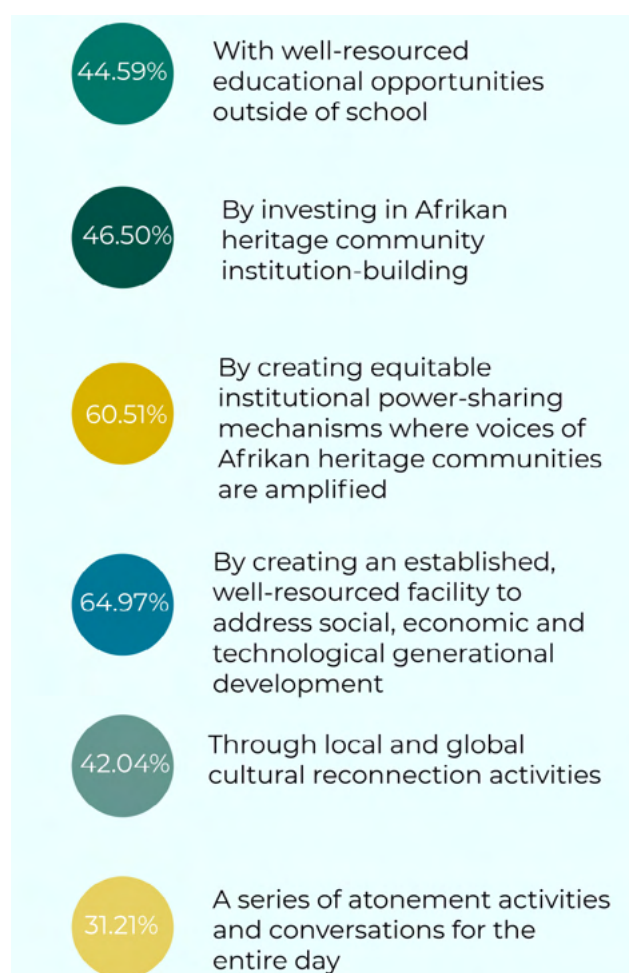
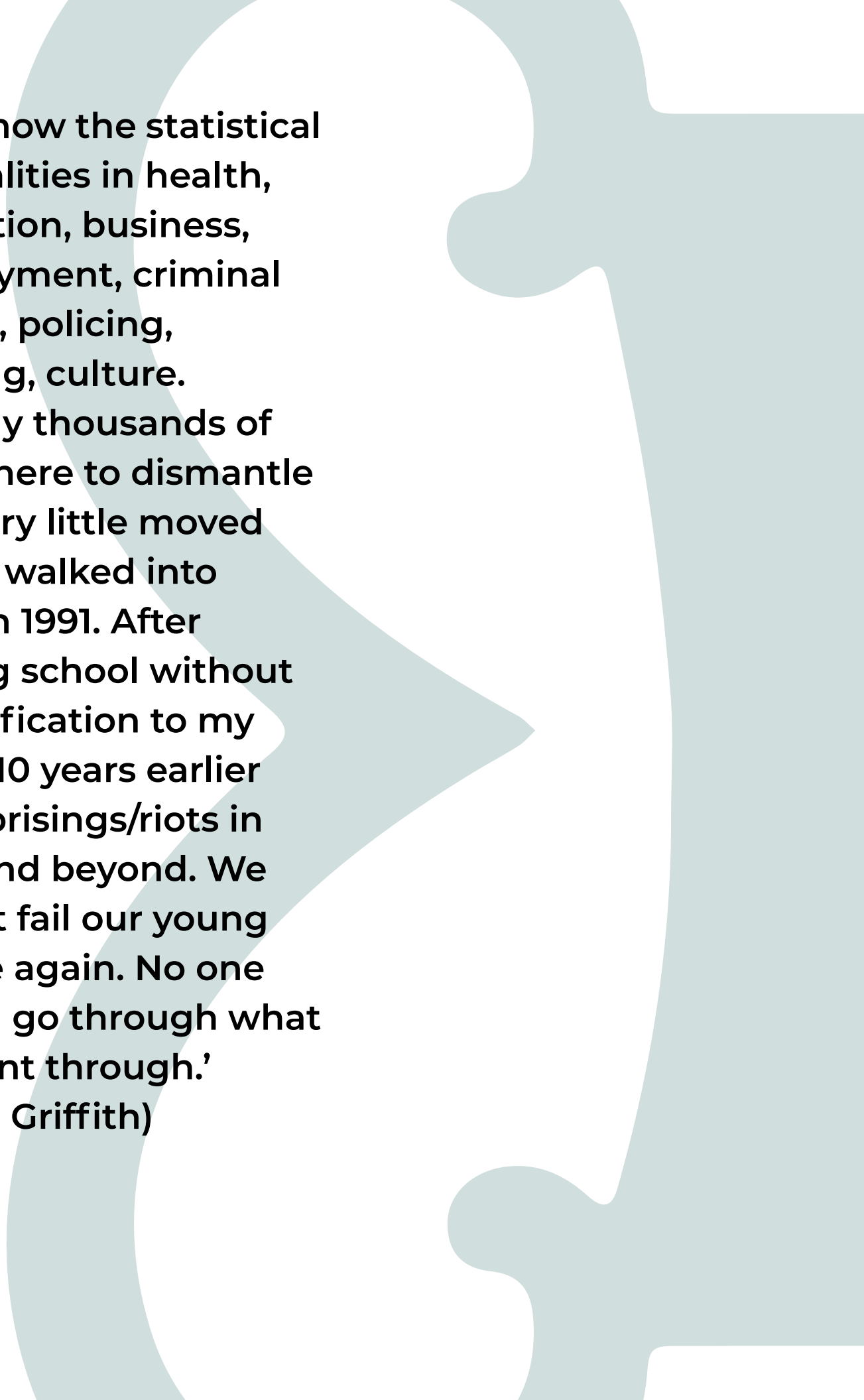


Figure 11: How should longer term systemic legacies of enslavement be addressed in the city? (Please select your top 3 from the following)

Bristol has a history of racial justice activism, responding to injustice as they present at the time. There was the Bristol Bus Boycott of 1963 and the St Paul's Uprisings of 1980, leading to the campaign to establish the Malcolm X Community Centre in 1985. An institution which would be a building and a mechanism for organising the communities, could also be a tool of self-determination, self-sufficiency and wealth creation, echoing and expanding upon the work of CEED*:



‘You know the statistical inequalities in health, education, business, employment, criminal justice, policing, housing, culture.

Literally thousands of stats there to dismantle and very little moved since I walked into
ceed in 1991. After leaving school without a qualification to my name 10 years earlier and uprisings/riots in 1980 and beyond. We cannot fail our young people again. No one should go through what we went through.’

(Roger Griffith)

7.1 Recommendation: Towards an Afrikan Heritage centre of excellence / Pan Afrikan Community Education Complex

In addition to the overarching recommendation at the beginning of this chapter we recommend that:

- Existing community assets are resourced to become satellites of the Afrikan Heritage Centre of Excellence/Pan Afrikan Community Education Complex. We identify the Malcolm X Community Centre, Kuumba, the Coach House and Docklands as potential satellites where a memorandum of understanding or partnership agreement can be established with them as satellites. Resourcing will require capital and revenue investment. A round table exploratory discussion with all these different organisations will need to be held and can be facilitated by the Afrikan ConneXions Consortium.

8. Reframing education on our own terms

Right now, we've got no legacy of history because we're reliant on their history which is incorrect. We need to create our own history and get our children and their children's children to plug into that to promote it. Then it grows like a tree. (Elder focus group member)

Results from survey question: *How should longer term systemic legacies of enslavement be addressed in the city*, saw education as a priority, 'With a school curriculum that teaches more about global perspectives, enslavement and colonialism' getting almost 80% in survey options. Education unsurprisingly was a trending topic in both the comments sections and within the focus groups. Participants were asked to rate their top three from seven suggestions with an opportunity to add further suggestions in the comments section of which 37 gave further opinions. It was also a key feature in the breakout room conversations at the Project T.R.U.T.H launch event.

State schooling in Britain both today and when I was a child seems stuck in a Victorian-era paradigm, guided by notions of discipline, obedience and deference to one's betters, of becoming a good worker and getting a good job. The idea that we go to school to find our passions, our calling, to learn to be happy, to 'draw out that which is within', as the root meaning of the word 'educate' commands, is almost entirely absent. Let alone any sense that we plebs should contemplate participating in the governing of the country. (Akala, Natives: Race and Class in the Ruins of Empire)

8.1 Accessibility, relevance, empowerment. Reframing of education to suit the needs of the community

Accurate knowledge of Afrikan (Black) history and culture amongst those born on the continent and those in the diaspora was key, with almost everyone recognising that the mainstream education system had failed to ever explain or acknowledge an accurate world history, causing a skewed understanding of self and one's place within the world, or an accurate depiction of the reality of British history, of which Afrikan contributions to world history is an integral part.

The refusal to accept that the black presence in Britain has a long and deep history is not just a symptom of racism, it is a form of racism. It is part of a rearguard and increasingly unsustainable defence of a fantasy monochrome version of British history. (David Olusoga)

Solutions and opinions included better connections between AHC students and academics and the community in terms of knowledge production and knowledge sharing.

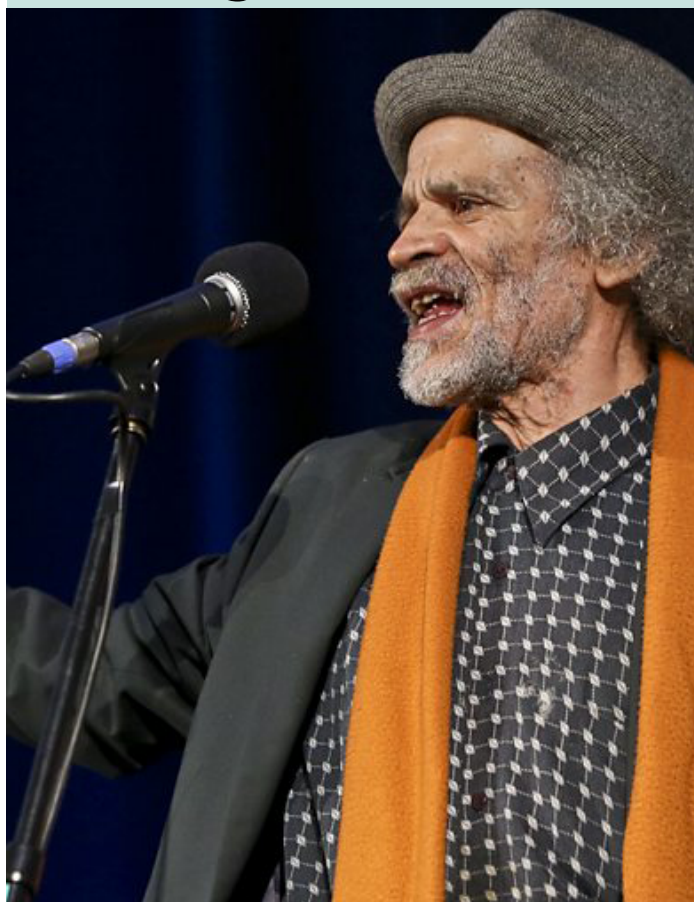
The black intellectual, the black academic, must attach himself to the activity of the black masses. (Walter Rodney, The Groundings with My Brothers)

The quest and thirst for more information and a more relevant accurate history came out in many of the survey comments and was agreed on by all of the focus group participants, with a reality check that whilst improvements could and should be made, it was highly unlikely that

mainstream education would adequately and promptly address, all aspects of education conducive to the empowering and healing for AHC. Acknowledgment was made of recent developments including through the Cargo Classroom¹² and The One Bristol Curriculum¹³.

We should start a Sunday school or something and then integrate a more relaxed education into that space instead of it being like you're sitting down at a desk and you're gonna be here for an hour learning but seeing like what the young people in the community might need or what their families might need and then integrate education into that instead of like starting with the – this is the curriculum. (Participant in the youth focus group)

Excerpt from Checking Out Me History by John Agard¹⁴



Dem tell me
Dem tell me
Wha dem want to tell me
Bandage up me eye with me own history
Blind me to my own identity
Dem tell me bout 1066 and all dat
dem tell me bout Dick Whittington and he cat
But Touissant L'Ouverture
no dem never tell me bout dat
Toussaint
a slave
with vision
lick back
Napoleon
battalion
and first Black
Republic born
Toussaint de thorn
to de French
Toussaint de beacon
of de Haitian Revolution

¹² <https://cargomovement.org/classroom/>

¹³ <https://www.onebristolcurriculum.org.uk>

¹⁴ <https://poetryarchive.org/poet/john-agard/>

8.2 Recommendation: Reframing education on our own terms

Building on our recommendations about engaging with institutions who wish to become students at the centre of excellence / Pan Afrikan Community Education Complex, there is a recognition that we should also influence existing spaces and meet them where they are in an effort to bring about substantive change and safeguard the progressive work being done within the centre. We therefore recommend that:

- The centre of excellence should establish AFRISTED - Afrikan Standards in Education as a means of providing scrutiny and support for mainstream education, learning, training and health institutions.

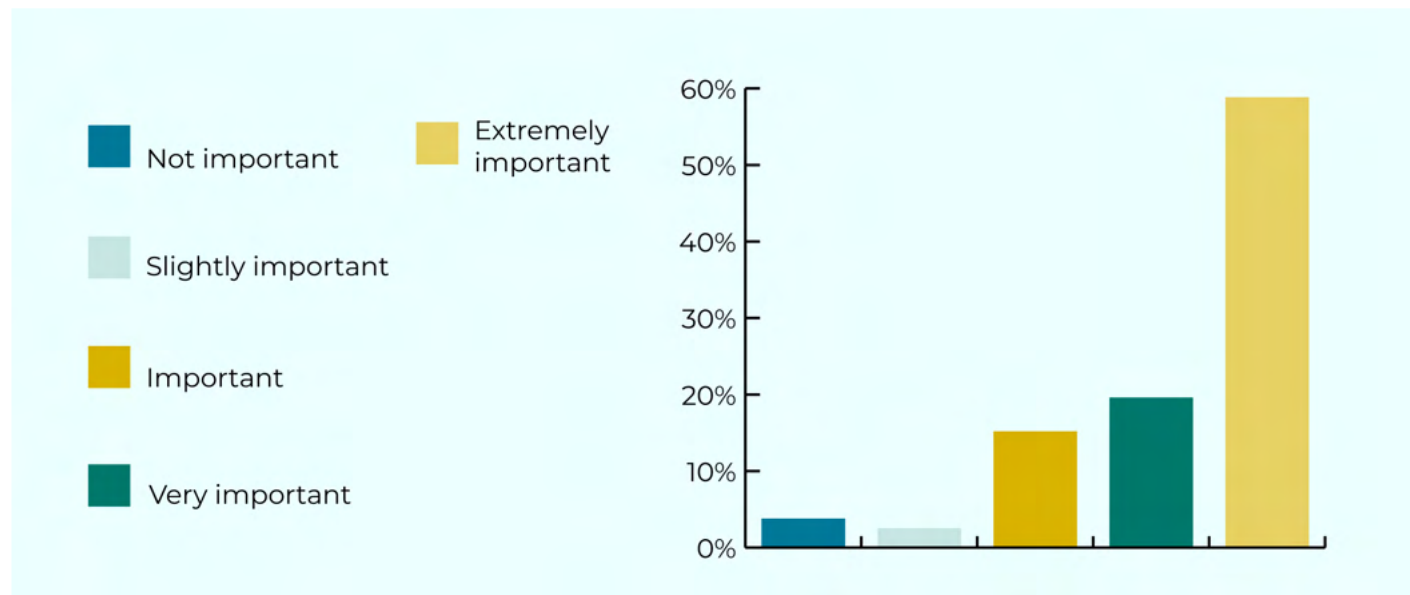


Figure 12: How important is it that Afrikan Heritage communities have a dialogue regarding addressing ongoing legacies with institutions such as Merchant Venturers, families and corporations, that financially benefitted from the trafficking of enslaved Afrikans and from compensation upon abolition?

9. Accountability & Agency

Given that much of Bristol's wealthy financial roots and huge historical development was directly generated by the mass trafficking of enslaved Afrikans, and the horrific inhumane acts it entailed, has led to many, some of whom are the hereditary beneficiaries, wanting such truths to remain hidden or untold, as intended. (Survey participant comment)

Earliest records of Britain's involvement in the TTEA documents this involvement as kidnappings of Afrikans led by Captain John Hawkins, cousin to Sir Francis Drake.



Figure 13: The coat of arms of kidnapping Maangamizi criminal pioneer Captain John Hawkins featuring a bound enslaved Afrikan

The coat of arms Hawkins (Figure 13) features the bound Afrikan and is echoed later in what became one of the most popular symbols of heraldry in European flags and coat of arms, the 'moors heads' as witnessed on the Canynges coat of arms (Figure 14). The Canynges brothers, were both several times Mayors of Bristol and London in the 15th century a period in the realm of Cabot and Columbus.



Figure 14: The Canynges coat of arms featuring three Moors heads, on the tomb of William Canynges in St Mary Redcliffe Church

The basic confrontation which seemed to be colonialism versus anti-colonialism, indeed capitalism versus socialism, is already losing its importance. What matters today, the issue which blocks the horizon, is the need for a redistribution of wealth. Humanity will have to address this question, no matter how devastating the consequences may be. (Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth)

Bristol's official involvement in the TTEA started in 1698 when the London-based Royal African Company's monopoly on the 'trade' was ended.

By the late 1730s Bristol had become Britain's premier enslaving port. In 1750 alone, Bristol ships transported around 8,000 of the 20,000 enslaved Afrikans sent that year to the British Caribbean and North America. The profits from the trafficking formed the basis of Bristol's first banks, and laid the foundations for some of the city's finest architecture (such as Queen Square). Many of the city's public buildings, educational and economic institutions (such as the Bristol Old Vic, Colston's School, and the tobacco and sugar industries), owe their origins to the wealth created by the trafficking of enslaved Afrikans and the commodities that were produced as a result.

Edward Colston served as deputy governor of the Royal Africa Company, effectively the 'CEO' and in part his reverence in Bristol was down to his ability to expand the trade beyond the RAC.

The memorials to those voices, the reminders that the city is so dependent on the enslavement of Afrikan people for its wealth and status are scarce: a plaque on the wall of LShed (a warehouse adjoining MShed), a footbridge (Pero's Bridge), and a subdued display at MShed, a city museum, occupying a corner of a gallery on the first floor. Yet all around, the symbols of the trade are present: St Mary Redcliffe church, overlooking the thriving dockside bars and restaurants, from where the bells rang out in celebration of the defeat of the bill to abolish slavery in 1791; the Bathurst Basin, named after the family still prominent in the area today, who were investors with Colston in the Royal African Company and led the city's opposition to the abolition of the TTEA, and were among those to receive thousands of pounds in compensation for the loss of their 'property' following abolition.

Those who made a fortune out of human bondage received over £500,000 in compensation for the 'loss' of their enslaved 'property' when the Emancipation Act was passed, freeing the enslaved in 1834. Today, that could be worth up to £2,036,000,000.¹⁵ This compensation underwritten by the British State at that time was only paid back to the treasury by the UK taxpayer in 2015. Whilst some nuance in experience exists in

individual stories or indeed collective ones such as with the Maroons, upon emancipation the majority of Afrikans went into a period of indentured apprenticeship and certainly did not receive any state funding, compensation or any means to start a life for themselves. That legacy of poverty still ravages the Caribbean, ironically with Haiti the country that liberated itself from enslavement and colonial rule to become the world's first free 'Black Republic', is still paying France reparations today.

As indicated by the findings, the opinion of most respondents ranged from important, to extremely important with a majority of almost 60% citing this dialogue as extremely important. Having this conversation around the trace and flow of wealth from TTEA coincides with various other pieces of research in recent years, University of Bristol has just announced a major reparatory project 'We are Bristol'¹⁶ of which one aspect led by Dr

I used to think it was not important 'what's done is done', but when I learned that taxes, I've paid in my lifetime have been used in debt repayment generated from compensation to slave owners. That's not right! (Survey comment)

Richard Stone from the Department of History, will be collaborating with 'citizen researchers' to identify Bristol's 'slave owners' and find out how their money has shaped Bristol's built environment, businesses and charities using records of compensation awarded when enslavement was abolished in 1834. Similarly, the Legacies of British Slave Trade database compiled by UCL¹⁷, is an extensive resource that also gives details about the compensation paid to enslavers and plantation owners.

There were 47 comments for this question in the survey which included more than one opinion that the Merchant Venturers should be disbanded or challenged in some way at the least.

A signal needs to be sent, not to destroy, but to redistribute. People around the world are crying out for justice, we need systems that seek to bring people together in brotherhood and sisterhood. The only way this is going to happen is if we dismantle systems of oppression and domination and work to ensure they are never again erected - either socially, politically or economically. (Survey comment)

9.1 Recommendations: Accountability & Agency

- The city must actively work constructively with AHC to progress the 4 resolutions of the Atonement and Reparations Motion passed by full council on March 2nd, 2021 and commit to working within the spirit of the resolutions in working as allies and recognising the agency of AHC in defining and implementing our own visions of glocal community repairs.
- The Mayor's Commission on Race Equality and the 'WeareBristol' History Commission must be active allies in supporting the development of the Bristol Pempamsie Reparations Plan (B-PReP), which will encapsulate many of the recommendations of this report and establish other means and approaches for securing equity and reparatory justice for Afrikan Heritage Communities within the city, whilst serving as a glocal model of good practice. The B-PReP will be formed out of a wider range of AHC led activities such as educational activities, people's assemblies, educative consultation processes and cultural enrichment opportunities.
- Institutions and bodies committed to atonement for this history must continually assess their own practice as allies, and ensure that mechanisms of consultation and accountability are embedded in their institutions to mitigate against acting on their own neo liberal eurocentric volition under the guise of equality, diversity and inclusion.

¹⁵ <https://taxjustice.net/2020/06/09/slavery-compensation-uk-questions/>

¹⁶ <https://epigram.org.uk/2021/05/25/bristol-university-launches-new-project-exploring-the-legacy-of-transatlantic-slavery/>

10. Recommendations

*The passage from the ancestral line of slavery via feudalism and capitalism to socialism can only lie through revolution: it cannot lie through reform. For in reform, fundamental principles are held constant, and the details of their expression are modified. In the words of Marx, it leaves the pillars of the building intact. Indeed sometimes, reform itself may be initiated by the necessities of preserving identical fundamental principles. Reform is a tactic of self-preservation. (Kwame Nkrumah, *Consciencism: Philosophy and Ideology for De-Colonization and Development with Particular Reference to the African Development*)*

Preface to the recommendations

This section is prefaced with a note of recognition that what is before us is more than a report and is a culmination of a representation of voices that have seldom been heard or listened to. The process of Project TRUTH has been one that has illuminated the underlying pain, sense of loss, the silent trauma of not really knowing and the silent cries of some, who are not yet at the stage of consciously acknowledging what they know, don't know and have lost. In drawing up the framework for the education and consultation process, it was recognized that this process would be one that triggers emotions and lays bare traumas that one may have felt they had reasonably managed or were not aware that they could even be triggered. In spite of this, there is a spirit of resilience that

has typified the journey of Afrikan Heritage Communities (AHC). There is pride tinged with embarrassment but trumped by a spirit of strength and determination to recover a true sense of self and belonging to a past that was stolen and distorted. There is an expressed desire to heal, to restore, to remember, to learn and ultimately repair. The road map for this remains unclear for many, but I hope the recommendations that follow will go some way to creating a road map, not just for Afrikan Heritage People in Bristol but can serve as a wider contribution to repairs of a people worldwide who have been impacted by this history.

The recommendations laid out are as draconian as the crimes against humanity committed through the TTEA and its aftermath of impact on AHC today. They needed to be. The vision, the action, the resourcing all requires us to think outside of the box of usual custom and practice of how recommendations are realised. Because ultimately what has been experienced requires reparatory justice measures, and this requires us to look at a whole different model of creating and sustaining a legacy of restitution, rehabilitation and guarantees of non-repetition. All of which are reparatory justice principles under international law²⁰, alongside compensation and satisfaction.

The recommendations are listed according to the chapters they are derived from, each reflecting an area of inquiry/survey question. However, every recommendation requires a solid structure and foundation from which they are carried out.

¹⁷ <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs//>

¹⁸ <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/policies-plans-strategies/commission-for-race-equality-core>

¹⁹ <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/policies-plans-strategies/we-are-bristol-history-commission>

10.1 Recommendations: Unity, identity & re-recognition of self

The first recommendation is therefore:

10.1.1 - Bristol must create an Afrikan Heritage Centre of Excellence/ Pan Afrikan Community Education Complex where AHC can embed their own Afrikan Centred curricula of repair within an autonomous space designed, governed and managed by the said community by resources that have been redistributed from those who have benefitted from the unjust enrichment borne out of the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved Afrikans. Unconditionally. The Afrikan Heritage Centre of Excellence, also referred to by some as a Pan Afrikan Educational Community Complex, is the name of a provision where holistic repairs take place, addressing areas such as Economics, Education, Health, Spirituality, Law, Arts, all from Afrikan Centred pedagogy, epistemology and praxis. The centre must have within its programme a clear approach to trans generational succession planning to ensure the integrity and longevity of the facility for generations to come. The planning for this facility must begin in 2022 and converge with wider reparatory justice endeavours taking place in the city and are referenced in recommendations for chapter 7.

10.1.2 - The centre of excellence/ Pan Afrikan Community Education Complex must develop curricula of psychological, spiritual and cultural repairs, utilising Afrikan centered models of application such as the Nguzo Saba, the principles of Maat and other core value systems derived from our heritage.

10.1.3 - Leaders of Institutions (churches, schools, healthcare etc), where Afrikan heritage people frequent, must have access to the centre as students who are committed to supporting the rehabilitation of Afrikan identity and self-determination.

10.1.4 - The centre must include immersion activities as part of its curricula, ensuring young people and families have access to their heritage and thus restoring of identity through visits to Afrika as part of rites of passage and immersion programmes.

10.1.5 - The centre must work with other Afrikan centered agencies and structures around the UK and beyond, in order to enrich the curriculum and share good practice globally.

10.2 Recommendations: Beyond a statue. A living site of memorial - Ritual and remembrance in a central space

The consultation sought to establish thoughts on a memorial, not to definitely establish or decide what that memorial should be. Existing Afrikan centred organisations such as the Afrikan ConneXions Consortium, the John Lynch Afrikan Education Programme and the umbrella body Afrikan Voices Forum should be liaising with and resourced to coordinate on the matter of memorial and remembrance. I therefore recommend that:

10.2.1 - A process needs to be established, by which Afrikan Heritage Communities can be sufficiently informed (of possibilities and potential) and engaged before opting for a memorial(s) and the location in which it/they should be. It is worth noting that this can be a range of things, not necessarily either/or, for example: murals, history trails, plaques, gardens, literary or artistic productions and a managed shrine. The memorial could also involve dedicated land managed by the Afrikan Heritage Community.

10.2.2 - The Memorial should reflect the best of what reflects memory and truth of history and reverence to our Afrikan Ancestors from an Afrikan perspective. Logistical and spiritual guidance should be sought in this respect.

10.2.3 - Whilst the process of deciding a memorial is in train and in fact beyond, Bristol Afrikan Heritage Communities should establish their own calendar of event(s) and rituals of Ancestral remembrance that will be enriched by a memorial.

10.2.4 - A facility available to all Bristolians and its visitors should be established to facilitate a place for learning, respectful remembrance and

²⁰ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/remedyandrepairation.aspx>

provides opportunities for non Afrikans to engage in work as allies in the quest for reparatory justice in fulfilment of the 4 resolutions of the atonement and reparations motion passed by full council in Bristol on March 2nd, 2021.

10.3 Recommendation: Towards an Afrikan Heritage centre of excellence / Pan Afrikan Community Education Complex

Existing community assets are resourced to become satellites of the Afrikan Heritage Centre of Excellence/Pan Afrikan Community Education Complex. In particular we identify the Malcolm X Community Centre, Kuumba, the Coach House and Docklands as potential satellites where a memorandum of understanding or partnership agreement can be established with them as satellites. Resourcing will require capital and revenue investment. A round table exploratory discussion with all these different organisations will need to be held and can be facilitated by the Afrikan ConneXions Consortium.

10.4 Recommendation: Reframing education on our own terms

Building on our recommendations about engaging with institutions who wish to become students at the centre of excellence, there is a recognition that we should also influence existing spaces and meet them where they are, in an effort to bring about substantive change and safeguard the progressive work being done within the centre. We therefore recommend that:

10.4.1 - The centre of excellence should establish AFRISTED - Afrikan Standards in Education as a means of providing scrutiny and support for mainstream education, learning, training and health institutions.

10.5 Recommendations: Accountability & Agency

10.5.1 - The city must actively work constructively with AHC to progress the 4 resolutions of the Atonement and Reparations Motion passed by full council on March 2nd 2021 and commit to

working within the spirit of the resolutions in working as allies and recognising the agency of Afrikan Heritage Communities in defining and implementing our own visions of glocal community repairs.

10.5.2 - The Mayor's Commission on Race Equality and the 'We are Bristol' History Commission must be active allies in supporting the development of the Bristol Pempamsie Reparations Plan (B-PReP), which will encapsulate many of the recommendations of this report and establish other means and approaches for securing equity and reparatory justice for Afrikan Heritage Communities within the city, whilst serving as a glocal model of good practice. The B-PReP will be formed out of a wider range of AHC led activities such as educational activities, people's assemblies, educative consultation processes and cultural enrichment opportunities.

10.5.3 - Institutions and bodies committed to atonement for this history must continually assess their own practice as allies, and ensure that mechanisms of consultation and accountability are embedded in their institutions to mitigate against acting on their own neo liberal eurocentric volition

'Nothing About Us, Without Us'

Hollow, City Poet Vanessa Kisuule

In response to the toppling of the Colston statue (June 2020) by former Bristol

You came down easy in the end.
The righteous wrench of two ropes
in a grand pli  .
Briefly, you flew, corkscrewed, then
met the ground
With the clang of toy guns, loose
change, chains, a rain of cheers.
Standing ovation on the platform
of your neck.
Punk Ballet. Act 1.
There is more to come.
And who carved you?
They took such care with that
stately pose and propped chin.
Wise and virtuous, the plaque
assured us.
Victors wish history odourless and
static.
But history is a sneaky mistress.
Moves like smoke, Colston,
Like saliva in a hungry mouth.
This is your rightful home,
Here, in the pit of chaos with the
rest of us.
Take your twisted glory and feed it
to the tadpoles.

Kids will write raps to that
syncopated splash.
I think of you lying in the harbour
With the horrors you hosted.
There is no poem more succinct
than that.
But still, you are permanent.
You who perfected the ratio.
Blood to sugar to money to bricks.
Each bougie building we flaunt
haunted by bones.
Children learn and titans sing
Under the stubborn rust of your
name.
But the air is gently throbbing with
newness.
Can you feel it?
Colston, I can't get the sound of
you from my head.
Countless times I passed that
plinth,
Its heavy threat of metal and
marble.
But as you landed, a piece of you
fell off, broke away,
And inside, nothing but air.
This whole time, you were hollow.

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South West
Network

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