



Information Governance Team

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Dear Sir/Madam

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)

Request ID: FOI606619577

Thank you for your request for information relating to race and culture in council area.

You have requested the following information:

I am interested in how race is addressed in the council area, with particular regard to cultural activities and the built environment.

For the last year up to date, but inclusive of information and documents from work which may have begun before this period and is still being pursued by the council.

(For example, a project to identify monument may have begun in 2020, but the list compiled from this project may still be used by the council now)

Please disregard requests to schools, galleries, museums libraries as appropriate - if the council does not control these

1. Could you please provide any list or review/research/report/survey of locations (streets/buildings/parks), or public art (such as statues), plaques, commemorations, graves, memorials that the council has produced in relation to slavery, colonialism, empire/British Empire, racism, white supremacy, Black Lives Matter, decolonising, racial justice.

The Council maintains a database of art in the public realm for curatorial and placemaking purposes, whilst a digital map of commemorative plaques across the city is publicly accessible via the Council website.

The commemorative plaques can be explored using the webpage below:
<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/heritage-ecology-trees/heritage-plaque-scheme>

All artworks and monuments in the public realm were inspected by responsible council officers in the context of the Black Lives Matter movement with no further follow up actions necessary (there is no formal document available for this).

In question form: “What in the built environment has the organisation, or a group working on its behalf, identified as being linked to racism, slavery, colonialism: that is, contested history?”

2. Could you please provide details of what being done to highlight, reinterpret, redisplay, or rename aspects of the environment in the council area identifying in Question 1 of this request

In question form: “What work (such as adding interpretation, or information boards, or plaques close to contested monuments) has been undertaken by the council to address these legacies?”

No locations in the built environment have been identified as having negative links to contested history, however opportunities have been sought by the authority to celebrate historic diversity, reveal hidden histories and inspire debate and reflection.

Examples include the transformation of medieval St Mary's Guildhall, which included a comprehensive interpretation plan alongside the capital conservation project. A feature of the new interpretation of this site includes a focus on 19th century abolitionist Frederick Douglass who gave lectures at the site, whilst elsewhere in the city street art and sculpture celebrate the place of the 19th century black actor Ira Aldridge in the city's history.

Walking tours, audio tours, street art and memorial plaques celebrate and educate on the two-tone musical heritage of the city, broadcasting its themes of racial harmony and equality.

A new heritage plaques scheme has been introduced to the city, allowing members of the public to nominate individuals who should be recognised with permanent memorials to encourage a greater diversity of representation.

3. If applicable, can you please provide information on what is being done to address issues of slavery, colonialism, empire/British Empire, racism, white supremacy, Black Lives Matter, decolonising, racial justice in council museums/galleries?

For example, what information boards have been added, what has been taken off display or put on display, what new plaques have been erected?

Not applicable.

4. The same as for Question 3, but can you provide information on how council libraries have addressed these issues

For example, have any books been specifically banned or removed from the library? Has a system of trigger warnings been established for sensitive topics?

Could you please provide details of any books which have been taken from public display and perhaps placed at the desk, or in a reserve stack, because they may be offensive or inappropriate?

(This can be broad, I do not need an full check of all items in the library; please do not get bogged won in this if it is likely to go over the limit)

While Coventry Libraries celebrate Black History Month in October each year, this is not about the issues of slavery, colonialism, empire/British Empire, racism, white supremacy, Black Lives Matter, decolonising or racial justice.

We have not banned or removed any Library books and/or items from any Library during the specified time period.

We do not have a system of trigger warnings for books on sensitive topics. All stock must comply with Coventry Libraries Stock Policy which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/libraries-1/library-policies/2>

5. For any council run or supported events in the area, how have these events been more inclusive or a greater focus on diversity?

For example, Bonfire nights or Christmas lights events

Our Coventry City Council Values around Inclusivity are upheld with Council public events, and we expect the same from third party organised public events on Council property.

For our own events, we are inclusive in terms of our approach to content reflecting the diversity of the city with a panel of external and internal colleagues helping shape the music content of the annual Godiva quasi commercial community event. We also seek to address gender balance and disability into our Equality, Inclusion and Accessibility principles as well as racial diversity.

The same applies with other Council events. We facilitate mass gathering Eid events in our Parks and other examples of facilitation are fair events, such as the Vaisakhi festival. We have also actively encouraged and sourced funding and supported the establishment of a mass gathering and procession to re-invent the Caribbean Carnival in the city with Reggae Fever, a new annual event in the city centre.

We have also supported the establishment of a community led Community Interest Company, and generated third party substantial funding to support it, with a cash flow agreement with the council.

6. For any schools affiliated with the council, could you provide details on how the curriculum has been diversified?

Council provide any details or advice to school provided by the council on design the curriculum

We confirm that we do not hold this information and are advising you as per Section 1(1) of the Act. The curriculum heads at schools meet to discuss the whole school curriculum. You may wish to contact them directly to request this information. Their contact details can be found at the link below:

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/schoolcontactdetails>

The supply of information in response to a FOI/EIR request does not confer an automatic right to re-use the information. You can use any information supplied for the purposes of private study and non-commercial research without requiring further permission. Similarly, information supplied can also be re-used for the purposes of news reporting. An exception to this is photographs. Please contact us if you wish to use the information for any other purpose.

For information, we publish a variety of information such as: [FOI/EIR Disclosure Log](#), [Publication Scheme](#), [Facts about Coventry](#) and [Open Data](#) that you may find of useful if you are looking for information in the future.

If you are unhappy with the handling of your request, you can ask us to review our response. Requests for reviews should be submitted within 40 days of the date of receipt of our response to your original request – email: infogov@coventry.gov.uk

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our review, you can write to the Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or email icocasework@ico.org.uk.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in your response.

Yours faithfully

Information Governance