Considering Housing Needs of BME Groups

As part of South Ayrshire’s Housing Need and Demand Assessment process, BEMIS - Black and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure in Scotland - was contacted for advice on the housing needs of BME households. The following text is a facsimile of their response.

**Question**

In terms of physical characteristics – including housing type and location – would you consider the BME community to have any specific requirements which should be highlighted in the Housing Need and Demand Assessment?

**Answer**

In order to meet the needs of diverse ethnic minority communities in relation to physical characteristics; it is essential that these communities are involved in the consultation process from early stages when building new houses.

The house size is a big issue for the diverse ethnic minority communities due to their life styles, cultures, and religious needs and other needs such as adaptations which they may require for elderly parents or people with disabilities.

Most diverse ethnic minority communities live as extended families and require large size apartments etc. There hasn’t been very many houses built with 5-6 bedrooms; yet there is a big demand from diverse minority groups for bigger houses and has to wait decades to be able to get a house of that size.

It is important that the housing need of these diverse community groups is highlighted in the Housing Need and Demand Assessment policies and local housing providers. An effective community engagement processes should also be in place.

**Question**

In terms of social characteristics – including support needs – would you consider the BME community to have any specific requirements that?

**Answer**

In terms of social characteristics as explained in the above point BME communities often live in extended families. Often, older and frailer family members require support, e.g size of bathroom with adaptations for the elderly or disabled (religious reasons for washing etc).

Ramps may need to be put in place when designing any new build for the elderly and disabled. Again my suggestion will be to consult communities from the start.