Dame Donna Kinnair

Realising the hopes of the Windrush Generation
By Lynda-Louise Burrell - Museumand, The National Caribbean Heritage Museum

Many young women arrived in the UK from the Caribbean with a dream to be a nurse. It was a dream that many had to wait a while to realise, for a reason most did not expect. Racism.

Quite a few of these young hopefuls got jobs in hospitals, not as nurses, but as “orderlies” as they were called then. These were the people who cleaned the hospitals.

Disappointment may have been their immediate emotion but all used the opportunity to learn about hospital life, and the reality of life in the UK through the reactions and reluctance of many patients and visitors to seeing Black hospital workers.

After many applications and requests for nurse training, the door was opened for some, but only as State Enrolled Nurses – a second-tier position below State Registered Nurses.

Many young nurses worked their way up enhancing their employability and chances for promotion, but they were still blocked by racism most of the time. Their resilience, courage and determination sustained them.

Roll on twenty years and in 1964, Daphne Steele was appointed the first Black Matron at a hospital in Ilkley, Yorkshire. Another 20 years on and another young woman started her training in Whitechapel, London. Her name – Donna Kinnair.

Kinnair started her academic life pursuing a degree in mathematics, but took to nursing with enthusiasm and vigour. She widened her healthcare experience by working with HIV patients, and by working in an intensive care hospital setting and as a Health Visitor in the community.

Kinnair was following in the footsteps of the pioneering Windrush Generation who became nurses and showed that their professional competence could extend outside of the hospital and upwards towards leadership.

Kinnair didn’t stop there though. She continued her academic and professional development with a Masters’ Degree in Medical Law and Ethics and focused on child protection work, becoming an expert adviser.

A Windrush Generation descendant, Kinnair was making a hugely valuable contribution to Britain in greater ways than those who came to England to be nurses could have hoped for.

She was showing what could have been achieved if racism hadn’t been a hurdle for Black nurses of the Windrush Generation.

Kinnair held a number of senior positions in both the healthcare and education sectors, underlining her talent, passion, belief and years of hard work.
Kinnair's professionalism and commitment to innovation and a quality service has had a tremendous impact already. 2020 has been a year in which her skills have been tested, as have those of the Government and others helping the country to deal with major and far-reaching issues. From the Covid-19 pandemic and its disproportionate impact on Black and Asian communities, to the urgent need for equality and inclusiveness in all areas of society – highlighted by Black Lives Matter protests around the world.

Kinnair acknowledged these issues and how they impacted on Black nurses when she marked Windrush Day on 22 June 2020.

"While it would be nice to think that the prejudices and barriers faced by the Windrush nurses were firmly established as a thing of the past, the reality is that change is painfully slow. The results of the Workforce Race Equality Standard tell us that there is still much more work to be done to create sustainable change in organisations.

Nurses still tell us about their experiences of racism and at RCN Congress this year we learned much about the importance of understanding the impact of race on health..."
Kemi Badenoch’s Speech is the Latest in a Multi-Pronged Attack on Anti-Racism

Liam Shrivastava

Equalities Minister Kemi Badenoch speaking in the House of Commons. Photo: UK Parliament/YouTube

Liam Shrivastava, of the Institute of Race Relations, tackles new right-wing efforts to quash the campaign for racial equality.

In a Black History Month debate in Parliament on Tuesday, the Equalities Minister Kemi Badenoch spoke of a “dangerous trend in race relations… that sees my blackness as victimhood and their whiteness as oppression”.

She was referring to an academic field of study that, until recently, was mostly found in social sciences faculties, particularly those in the US from where it originates.

‘Critical race theory’ emerged in the 1980s when black Harvard law professor Derrick Bell highlighted the incongruities between legal rights won during the Civil Rights Movement and the racial injustices that still permeated America – the practices in law and wider society that result in racist outcomes in employment, education and the justice system.

In the UK, this is understood as ‘institutional racism’, a concept used to describe the Metropolitan Police by Sir William Macpherson in his inquiry into the investigation of the death of Stephen Lawrence, who was murdered in a racist attack in Eltham, south-east London, on 22 April 1993. Most of us have never heard of critical race theory. I myself only came across it when studying for a Master’s degree in social sciences. So to suggest, as one Conservative MP has, that this is an ideology which is being taught within UK classrooms is complete nonsense.

Significant, however, is the regularity with which this theory is now being deployed by right-wing conservatives to warn about the supposed threat to British values – and a rather selective British history – that the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement poses. In the face of deadly racial inequalities, which have been exposed by the Coronavirus pandemic, BLM, a youth-led anti-racist movement, is articulating a form of politics that is sorely needed.

Last week, another line of attack – this time from within academia – was used against the racial equality movement. University of Kent Professor Matthew Goodwin, in evidence to Parliament’s Education Committee and then on Times Radio, argued that focusing on racial diversity and inclusion threatens the social mobility of white working-class boys. They suffer a “status deficit” due to “historic grievances within black and minority ethnic communities,” Goodwin claimed.

Whether it be critical race theory, unconscious bias or the catch-all term ‘identity politics’, these phrases are mobilised to quieten the campaign against structural inequality.

Ironically, both Badenoch and Goodwin have used their own identities – as a black woman and white working-class man respectively – to bolster their arguments. As Badenoch reflected on the history of black people in Britain, she proudly declared that “I should know, I am one of them”. As others have pointed out, Badenoch exemplifies the limitations of relying too heavily on an individual’s lived experience as a marker of anti-racism. Whether it be critical race theory, unconscious bias or the catch-all term ‘identity politics’, these phrases are mobilised to quieten the campaign against structural inequality.

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Following the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on black and minority ethnic communities and the BLM protests this summer, the Government – led by key advisor to the Prime Minister Munira Mirza – set up a new Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, chaired by Dr Tony Sewell.

Both Mirza and Sewell have questioned the efficacy of institutional racism as a concept. Much like Badenoch describing critical race theory, Sewell has previously suggested that institutional racism has led young black boys to see themselves as victims, while Mirza has argued that anti-racism fosters a “culture of grievance”. Sewell’s appointment to the commission is subject to a legal challenge by The Monitoring Group.

Spot The Signs

Cuckooing:
- Missing appointments / avoiding contact with people in a position of authority.
- Not allowing access to the premises, e.g. Police, housing association, mental health teams.
- Intelligence reporting / increased number of visitors to the address / unusually high key fob activity.
- Loss of bank card / indication that someone else is using their account.
- New friend / friends from out of town.
- Number of people in the property.
- Resident appears uncomfortable.
- Relapsing into drug use.

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#SafeguardingAdultsWeek
Why are Africa's coronavirus successes being overlooked?

Afua Hirsch

Examples of innovation aren’t getting the fanfare they would do if they emerged from Europe or the US

Muslim worshippers at a mosque in Dakar, Senegal, 15 May 2020: ‘Senegal is in a good position because its Covid-19 response planning began in earnest in January.’ Photograph: John Wessels/AFP via Getty Images

emember, early on in the Covid-19 pandemic, the speculation as to how apocalyptic it would be if this disease hit the African continent? I do. There was deep anxiety about what it would mean for countries with lower income populations, dominant but harder-to-regulate informal economies and far fewer healthcare facilities than the UK or Italy.

There have been coronavirus mistakes and misjudgments, and deaths, and each one is a tragedy. And no one knows the course the pandemic may take next – the continent, like the rest of the world, isn’t out of the woods yet. But what has also happened is that many African nations, realising early on that large-scale, expensive testing and hospitalisation was not an option for the populations, had no choice but to take a more creative approach.

Take the two African countries I have called home – Senegal and Ghana. Senegal is developing a Covid-19 testing kit that would cost $1 per patient, which it is hoped will, in less than 10 minutes, detect both current or previous infection via antigens in saliva, or antibodies. It’s hard to know exactly how this compares with the price of Britain’s tests, but many of them use polymerase chain reaction, or PCR, to detect the virus, and cost hundreds of dollars. And I can testify that a leaflet that came through my door in London this week offered me a private testing kit for £250.

Senegal is in a good position because its Covid-19 response planning began in earnest in January, as soon as the first international alert on the virus went out. The government closed the borders, initiated a comprehensive plan of contact tracing and, because it is a nation of multiple-occupation households, offered a bed for every single coronavirus patient in either a hospital or a community health facility.

As a result, this nation of 16 million people has had only 30 deaths. Each death has been acknowledged individually by the government, and condolences paid to the family. You can afford to see each death as a person when the numbers are at this level. At every single one of those stages, the UK did the opposite, and is now facing a death toll of more than 35,000.

Ghana, with a population of 30 million, has a similar death toll to Senegal, partly because of an extensive system of contact tracing, utilising a large number of community health workers and volunteers, and other innovative techniques such as “pool testing”, in which multiple blood samples are tested and then followed up as individual tests only if a positive result is found. The advantages in this approach are now being studied by the World Health Organization.

Across the African continent, the lack of access to expensive pharmaceutical products, not to mention a well-founded historic lack of trust, has fuelled interest in whether traditional herbal remedies have anything to offer. One plant in particular – Artemisia annua, or sweet wormwood, which belongs to the daisy family – is drawing particular attention after the president of Madagascar, Andry Rajoelina, claimed it was a “cure” for Covid-19.
That may sound Trumpian, and the WHO has cautioned that further trials are needed before it can be advocated as a treatment for the disease. But I contacted the respected Max Planck Institute of Colloids and Interfaces in Germany, which is currently conducting clinical trials on a different breed of the same plant, in this case grown in Kentucky. This specially grown, more potent variety of sweet wormwood is being tested on cells to determine its effectiveness in fighting coronavirus infections and the results so far, the institute’s director, Prof Peter Seeberger, told me, are “very interesting”. Human clinical trials are likely to follow.

More than 20 African countries have already ordered the Madagascan version, a vote of confidence for Rajelina, who has taken to showing up at meetings and TV appearances with a bottle of a brown herbal drink made from the plant, touting its benefits. The reason you probably haven’t heard about this, he says, is because of patronising attitudes towards African innovation. “If it was a European country that had actually discovered this remedy, would there be so much doubt?” he asked on French TV. “I don’t think so.”

The scientists will have to say whether his “cure” actually works (among those calling for better evidence of its safety and effectiveness is Madagascar’s own National Academy of Medicine). But on Eurocentric attitudes, he has a point. The African continent has a stellar history of innovating its way out of problems – just look at how mobile money and fintech has turned it into one of the most digitally savvy regions in the world.

It has been well documented how a patronising attitude towards east Asia is what allowed European countries to be caught by such surprise at the spread of this disease. Now a similar mindset seems set to ensure we don’t learn the lessons Africa has to offer in overcoming it.

• Afua Hirsch is a Guardian columnist
Why one Black adoptive mum is on a mission to encourage more people of colour to adopt

Laura Abernethy

We need more BAME adopters
(Picture: Ella Byworth for Metro.co.uk)

With Black, Asian and mixed ethnicity children waiting longer to be placed for adoption and less than 5% of adopters in England coming from BAME communities, a Black adoptive mum has spoken out about why she’s keen to dispel cultural myths surrounding adoption. Talking to Metro.co.uk for Adoption Month, Veronica* explains that while she understands children should be offered a loving home first and foremost, it is also important for them to be placed with a family who looks similar to them and understands their cultural heritage. Veronica adopted her son in September 2017 and says: ‘Identity and belonging are culturally important. There can be challenges with being a minority ethnicity in the UK and the ability to support a child through these challenges is invaluable. ‘From small things like understanding how to care for hair to teaching about food and music – everyone should have the opportunity to embrace one’s culture.’

While she and her partner decided to adopt after struggling with fertility issues, Veronica says it was something that had always been on the agenda. She explains: ‘We’d discussed adopting alongside having a biological family, as we both come from families and cultures where having additional non-biological family members is fairly normal. Following conception challenges, we explored the route to adoption alongside fertility treatment. ‘Our process was quite simple – from start to end it was twelve months until we had our son join our family. We made an enquiry with the agency and attended an information evening, proceeded through the screening and checks, training, approval and then, finally, matching with our son. It’s thorough and emotional but completely worth it.’ As Black adoptive parents, they were sought after and throughout, they stressed the importance of an ethnic and cultural match, which was supported by the professionals they worked with. Veronica and her husband adopted through Coram, an independent adoption agency working across Greater London and the surrounding areas. Their son was only a baby when he came to them but over the last three years, they have worked to educate the now four-year-old son in issues around race, at an age-appropriate level. She explains: ‘We have elected to teach him about his history, heritage, culture and instil pride in who he is and where he comes from. We use books and music primarily. We teach him about Nigeria and Jamaica. ‘We have spoken to him about racism and to let us know if anyone makes remarks about his skin colour – we always planned to do this when he started school. ‘We teach him about Black leaders and role models to give him a holistic view of our culture and to counter any pigeon-holing that can be experienced through the school system. We want to ensure he feels capable of applying himself to any experience he wishes to pursue.’ BAME adoption statistics.

*Name has been changed for privacy.
Veronica adds that there are lots of things adoptive parents who are matched with a child of a different race can do to help a child understand their background, but fundamentally, it is difficult to explain the complexities of racism without going through those yourself. She says: ‘Black (and other ethnic groups) contributions and achievements in UK society are consistently undermined and not valued. ‘The glossing over of slavery and the depiction that the black race was uncivilised until the Empire saved us by enslaving us and bringing us to the UK to build the country is is not one that I want my child adopting. ‘Growing up in a deprived south London area and going to a diverse school, my experience of racism was little to none, however I understand that the system is systemically racist and set to disadvantage particular social groups by not giving the same access to opportunities and resources. ‘Racism and any other type of prejudice is wrong. As parents to a young Black boy we are concerned for his safety and any future interaction he has with the justice system. ‘Teaching him about these issues allow him to understand how society may perceive him. Education in this area allows him to make informed life decisions. At this young age we want to prepare him for the future and equip him with the correct knowledge – not necessarily what is presented in mainstream media. Racism can be presented in many ways – often implicit. ‘Many have accepted it historically. Our son may form part of a generation that are empowered to challenge the status quo.’

Veronica wants to see more of a push to encourage people from these groups to consider adoption so more children can be matched with parents of similar backgrounds who can help them navigate these issues. The You Can Adopt campaign is currently focusing on getting more people from BAME to come forward as adopters. Veronica adds: ‘We need to highlight the simplicity of the adoption process and entry requirements, have sound bites from successful families (such as this interview), remove the incorrect perceptions around adoption such as only wealthy couples with big houses can adopt and highlight the difference adoption can make to a child’s life. ‘Black kids (boys in particular) wait in care the longest and are seen as less desirable. I’d like to see something like can you raise the next Usain Bolt, Obama, Kelly Holmes, etc – we have some really solid role models out there and this can be used to seek adopters.’ "Veronica’s name has been changed to protect her and her son’s identity.

**BAME adoption statistics**

National statistics reveal that black children are disproportionately represented in the care system.

Figures from Department for Education show that of the 78,150 children looked after at the end of 2019, 8% were of Black or Black British ethnicity.

Just 3.7% (60) of the 3,570 looked after children who were adopted in England during 2019, were Black or Black British.

According to a study in 2012, in comparison with white British children (919 days from entry to care to legal order), adoptions for Asian children are quicker (835), those for children of mixed parentage slightly longer (996) but those for Black children substantially so at 1302 days.

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*Image of Kemoy B: Kemoy B is back! This Saturday playing all the latest bangers and one of you can win a £20 voucher. Tune in and get involved @12PM-2PM*
Complaints of racism and discrimination within Home Office teams set up to address the Windrush scandal prompted the launch of an internal investigation and the resignation of a senior official, the Guardian has learned.

The most senior black Home Office employee in the team responsible for the Windrush compensation scheme resigned this year, describing the scheme as systemically racist and unfit for purpose, it can be revealed.

The Guardian has also learned that a separate set of complaints about discrimination within a different Home Office team researching the causes of the Windrush scandal led to an earlier internal investigation.

About 20 members of staff working on the independent Windrush Lessons Learned review by Wendy Williams were interviewed by a civil service “equality, diversity and inclusion” officer after allegations of racially discriminatory treatment were made by minority ethnic staff members.

Alexandra Ankrah, a former barrister who worked as head of policy in the Windrush compensation scheme, said she resigned because she lost confidence in a programme that she alleged was “not supportive of people who have been victims” and which “doesn’t acknowledge their trauma”.

Several proposals she made to improve the scheme were rejected, she said. “The results speak for themselves: the sluggishness of getting money to people, the unwillingness to provide information and guidance that ordinary people can understand.”

She was troubled by the fact that several Home Office staff responsible for the compensation scheme had previously helped implement the hostile environment policies that had originally caused claimants so many problems.

By the end of October, the compensation scheme had been running for 18 months and only £1.6m had been paid out to 196 people. Officials had originally expected thousands to apply and estimated that the government might eventually have to pay out between £200m and £570m. At least nine people have died before receiving compensation they applied for.

The Home Office said it rejected any suggestion that the scheme was discriminatory. Ankrah’s concerns were echoed by whistleblowers from the Lessons Learned review, who felt uneasy that entrenched Home Office styles of working made staff insensitive on the issue of race. “The irony was that the very review team that was investigating what the Home Office thinks is past injustice was doing it in a way that was upholding all the systemic racism that exists in the Home Office,” one team member who was interviewed as part of the internal investigation said.

Ankrah worked as a head of policy in the Windrush compensation scheme from its launch in March 2019 until April 2020, when she resigned and moved to another Home Office department. She left the Home Office entirely in August 2020 to take up a job in the NHS.

She said she raised concerns to her bosses on several occasions about what she felt was systemic racism within the scheme. “It’s not just racism. It is an unwillingness to look with any curiosity or genuine concern at the situation of victims, many of whom were elderly and unwell,” she said. As a result, a group of predominantly black and Asian people were being “re-traumatised” by the compensation scheme, she said.
Burberry partners with Marcus Rashford to fund youth centres

Footballer publishes letter to his 10-year-old self to encourage people ‘to dream’

Lauren Cochrane The Guardian

Everyone wants to be connected to Marcus Rashford these days, including Burberry, which today announced a partnership with the footballer for a series of initiatives to help disadvantaged young people.

The high end fashion house is providing grants for Norbrook Youth Club and Woodhouse Park Lifestyle Centre, two youth centres Rashford attended as a child. In addition, Burberry will be providing support for arts-after-school non-profit Wide Rainbow in New York and the International Youth Foundation, which works with community leaders and young people across the world.

In London, 15 youth centres selected by Burberry and the organisation London Youth will receive grants. The brand anticipates that this project will help tens of thousands of young people worldwide. London Youth will use the money for meals and support with school work, while Norbrook will be improving their outdoor space.

The announcement of the 22-year-old England striker’s partnership with Burberry today will be accompanied by the publication of a moving letter the footballer wrote to his 10-year-old self. “When you fall, which you will,” he says, “there will always be neighbours and friends to catch you. There is no need to feel ashamed because they will catch you without judgment and comment. No questions asked. Feel the warmth of those around you and know that one day, you are going to have the platform to repay them.”

He adds: “For a young boy who says so little, one day you will have a voice that speaks for many.”

Pam Batty, vice-president of corporate responsibility at Burberry, said the organisations they were funding were “at the heart of so many young people’s lives”.

“We believe, especially now, it is so important to help them empower the emerging change-makers of tomorrow and continue their efforts to sustain and protect the vulnerable,” she said.

Burberry has provided donations for vaccine research, donated 160,000 pieces of PPE and turned a Yorkshire factory making trench coats into one to make non-surgical gowns for medics and care workers. They have also contributed to FareShare, the Rashford-endorsed food distribution charity, meaning over 200,000 meals can be financed.

This is not Rashford’s first brush with fashion. He appeared on the cover of September’s Vogue, alongside model Adwoa Aboah. In his Editor’s Letter, Edward Enninful described the footballer as “a shining example of how to harness influence for good”.

The Burberry Foundation, the brand’s charity arm, was set up in 2008. As part of this, Burberry Inspire launched in 2018 – bringing art and culture into schools. More than 5,000 students from Yorkshire to New York have been involved. The brand also provides scholarships at universities including Parsons in New York and Central Saint Martins in London. Like most fashion brands, Burberry has been affected by the pandemic. Retail sales fell by 48% in the three months to the end of June, and it was announced in July that they would cut 500 jobs worldwide.

The brand launched the first official designer face mask – for £90 – in August. They were awarded a £573,000 government contract to make PPE in September.

Part of the grants will be provided to two youth centres Marcus Rashford attended as a child. Photograph: Courtesy of Burberry
She said a senior colleague criticised her for always seeing “things through the prism of race” and she was censured for “standing outside and throwing stones in”.

As the only black senior member of the team, she was “irritated” by these rebukes, asking: “[If] I was throwing stones from the outside – who put me on the outside?” She felt her role on the compensation team was marginalised and that her “experiences as a black person, as a professional, were diminished or devalued”.

“I am not a disgruntled employee; I am not bringing an employment tribunal claim – this was not about my job. It was about meeting this government’s promise to put right the harm that many people had suffered,” she said.

She described accepting the role because she wanted to help with the process of ensuring justice for the Windrush generation, but quickly becoming concerned about the team’s capacity to deliver it.

Ankrah proposed a simplified, plain-English version of the compensation application form, as well as greater understanding towards the families of those people who died before completing a claim. She also made suggestions about how to assist widows and children.

She said she wanted to help people to prove that their treatment had a detrimental impact on their lives but that her recommendations were ignored. “The scheme was intended to allow people to make their own applications, without the need for legal advice. But the guidance was poor; this meant it was not fit for purpose.”

Ankrah’s main concern was that many in the team working on compensation had immigration enforcement backgrounds, or were still working in that section of the Home Office. “These were the very same people who hadn’t questioned the Windrush situation in the first place,” she said. “It is unusual, is it not, to have the same bit of the organisation in charge of the complaints? You normally have some type of separation at least to show credibility.”

Ankrah was also troubled by numerous comments that she believed were revealing about attitudes of Home Office employees. She said staff were grudging about payments and told her: “People should be happy with whatever they get.” She added: “A Home Office lawyer was telling me: ‘If they die without a will then too bad, they should have made a will.’”

When she tried to help speed up payment for a terminally ill claimant, colleagues began “discussing whether he should be paid a trifling sum or a very trifling sum”. She felt some of the comments “betrayed a complete lack of humanity”.

Amid growing concerns about the running of the programme, the Commons home affairs committee announced on Wednesday that it was launching an inquiry into the compensation scheme. The first evidence session is expected next month.

Three separate teams were established to right the wrongs against the Windrush generation in 2018. Alongside the compensation scheme, the Windrush taskforce has been widely praised for swiftly giving documentation to about 13,000 people who had wrongly been designated as illegal immigrants.

Separately, BAME staff working on the Windrush Lessons Learned review – the third unit established in the wake of the scandal – said they were concerned they were not invited to key workshops and were given non-speaking roles at meetings, whistleblowers told the Guardian.

After staff members attempted to raise concerns internally, a complaint was made to the chair of the Home Office’s race board. As a result, a Home Office human resources team was instructed to do some work to ensure that the team was “leading the way in creating inclusive working environments”.

An internal investigation was also launched, and about 20 members of staff working on the review were interviewed at length in early 2019 by a civil servant with a responsibility for equality and diversity. The conclusions of the internal investigation were not shared with the team, though it is understood to have looked at the lack of inclusion.

The Wendy Williams Lessons Learned review into the causes of the Windrush scandal was published in March 2018 and is highly critical of the Home Office, although there was controversy about a decision not to describe the department as institutionally racist – a term reported to have been present in earlier drafts.

The final version does, however, condemn “institutional ignorance and thoughtlessness towards the issue of race” within the Home Office, and includes four recommendations for how the department can improve its record on race, diversity and inclusion.

A Home Office spokesperson said the department would not comment on individual staffing matters, but added: “We take any allegations of racism very seriously and any accusation is thoroughly investigated by the department.

“We reject any suggestion that the Windrush compensation scheme is discriminatory or that it does not support victims. It was designed with victims’ interests at heart and to cover every conceivable circumstance in which a person may have found themselves. The scheme is more inclusive and open than any other compensation scheme in the UK.”

Amelia Gentleman The Guardian
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A parliamentary committee is demanding an explanation from ministers for the "disproportionate" incarceration of Black and minority ethnic (Bame) teenagers, after a report found they make up more than half of inmates youth custody.

A drive to keep young people out of the justice system by offering social, psychiatric and educational help or drug rehabilitation has been successful in dramatically cutting the numbers of cautions and convictions handed out to 10-17 year-olds in England and Wales over the past decade, found the House of Commons Justice Committee.

But it has benefited white youngsters dramatically more than those from Bame backgrounds, who now make up twice the proportion of children in the youth justice system as in 2009. Crime reduction charities gave evidence to the committee’s inquiry that the change was driven partly by increased use of stop-and-search, a “gang narrative” which defined black teenagers as a risk and mandatory sentencing for possessing knives.

The disproportionate use of custody for black youngsters was highlighted in 2017 in a report for then PM Theresa May by Labour MP David Lammy, who said ministers must explain the disparity between the treatment of white and ethnic minority youths or reform the system.

The Justice Committee echoed Mr Lammy’s concerns, stating that "we are not convinced that disproportionality has satisfactorily been ‘explained or reformed’" and calling on the Ministry of Justice to set out its research on the issue, including explaining whether unconscious bias may play a part.

The inquiry heard that the number of white children receiving a caution or conviction decreased by 79 per cent over the past 10 years, compared to 55 per cent for those from Bame backgrounds. As a result, the proportion of ethnic minority youngsters in the system doubled from 14 per cent to 27 per cent over the period. And among those actually held in custody, some 51.9 per cent were from a Bame background in May this year - 29 per cent Black, 11.7 per cent mixed race and 11.2 per cent Asian and other - compared to 27 per cent in 2009. The ethnic make-up inside youth custody centres was way adrift from the general 10–17 population, where 82 per cent are white, 4 per cent Black, 4 per cent mixed race and 10 per cent Asian and other, said the report.

Chief inspector of probation Justin Russell told the inquiry: “Over the last 10 years… the number of arrests of young people of all races has been coming down, as has the number of cautions and the number of young people going into custody, but it has been coming down much quicker for white children than it has for Bame children, in particular for Black boys."
“That is a real concern. Somehow the system seems to be better at diverting white children away from the formal criminal justice system than it is for Bame children and young people. That is the big thing that needs exploring, I think, going forward”. Calling on ministers to fulfil Mr Lammy’s call to “explain or reform”, the Justice Committee said: “Race disproportionality is significant and fundamental, visible in every part of the youth justice system … We are not convinced that disproportionality has satisfactorily been ‘explained or reformed’.”

The committee welcomed a dramatic reduction in the raw numbers of children being sentenced for crimes in the youth courts of England and Wales from around 130,000 in 2009 to 21,700 in 2019 – a drop of 83 per cent. The number sentenced to custody fell from 2,625 to 737 between 2009 and 2020.
But committee chair Sir Bob Neill said: “The smaller number of children coming through the system these days tend to have more complex vulnerabilities and so higher needs. Many have suffered neglect and abuse which have led to mental health issues or learning difficulties. This is not an excuse for their behaviour, but it does go some way to explaining it.
“If we want better outcomes for these children – and that also means lower re-offending rates, which is better for society – we need to adopt a much broader approach. The criminal justice sys-
em needs to draw on a range of public agencies for help in this area. We need to bring in social, health and psychological services. Much greater priority should be given to this whole-system approach in the development of future policy and practice.”
A Ministry of Justice spokesperson said: “We’ve made great strides in improving the youth justice system and, as a result, there are 83 per cent fewer children in it than there were 10 years ago. “Those who remain are particularly vulnerable and challenging and we are focusing on ensuring they have the support they need to turn their lives around.
“Sadly, there’s no quick fix to tackling the deep-rooted racial disparities in the criminal justice system, but government investment in education and early intervention will help.”
Lewis Hamilton named most influential black person in UK

The list of most powerful people of African, African Caribbean and African American heritage in the UK. This year, there's been a special focus on two of the biggest themes of 2020 - coronavirus and racial injustice.

Here’s the top 10 in full.

1. Lewis Hamilton
The award is not just for his awesome driving ability. He’s Formula 1’s only black driver and has been very vocal in support of the Black Lives Matter movement, especially since the death of George Floyd. Back in June, he encouraged his fellow F1 drivers to take a knee before races - and has launched The Hamilton Commission, aiming to increase the number of black people in motor racing. After grabbing the top spot on the list, he said: “I am so proud to be acknowledged, especially within the black community”. “I like to think that I’m just a part of a chain of many people trying to push for change.”

2. Professor Kevin Fenton
In the year that Covid-19 has changed our lives - Professor Kevin Fenton has been at the forefront of the fight. He is the Regional Director of Public Health England (PHE) and has been recognised for his work helping London to fight against the virus. He also helped with the government review in to the impact of coronavirus on BAME communities. The review confirmed coronavirus kills people from ethnic minorities at disproportionately high rates.

3. Stormzy
Big Mike, Wicked Skengman, grime superstar. This year, Stormzy pledged to donate £10m to UK organisations to fight racial inequality. The first donation of £500,000 went to The Black Heart Foundation - funding higher education for people from underprivileged backgrounds.

4. Michaela Coel
Michaela caused shockwaves with the BBC series I May Destroy - a totally fresh, original and unapologetic look at young black lives - which she wrote, directed and starred in. Michaela has previously revealed she was a victim of sexual assault herself. The Guardian described it as “an extraordinary, breathtaking achievement without a false note in it, shot through with humour and with ideas, talent and character to burn at every perfectly plotted turn.”

5. Edward Enninful OBE
The Editor-In-Chief of British Vogue; advocate for better representation in the fashion industry. He is the only black editor in history to lead any Vogue magazine. This year, he focused Vogue’s September issue on activism- it featured powerful black-and-white images of activists including Marcus Rashford and Adwoa Aboah.

6. Dame Donna Kinnair
Dame Donna Kinnair is the head of the Royal College of Nursing. During the pandemic, she pushed for better protection for NHS workers, including more testing and more consideration in to the risks that ethnic minority nurses may face.

7. Jacqueline McKenzie
The Windrush scandal saw hundreds of Caribbean immigrants wrongly threatened with deportation by the UK Home Office. It uncovered systemic racism and ignorance behind the treatment of people who had spent most of lives working in the UK. She’s known as the ‘Windrush Lawyer’ and represents over 200 of the victims.
8. David Olusoga OBE
David Olusoga is a British-Nigerian historian and writer. He presents BAFTA award-winning Britain’s Forgotten Slave Owners and is author of Black and British. His work mostly explores the complex relationship between the British empire and Africa.

9. Afua Hirsch
As a journalist and broadcaster, Afua has always used her platform to write and speak on important issues in the black community. You might remember her asking: “Why should we trust Boris?” on Question Time last year. She’s also author of Brit(ish) - a book on race, identity and belonging.

10. Richard Iferenta
Richard Iferenta closes the top 10. He is Vice-Chair of KPMG - a massive accounting organisation and has been on the list for three years in a row now.

A few honourable mentions: The Powerlist 2021 featured loads of other influential black Brits, including:

- **Marcus Rashford**
  His campaign led to government reversing their decision on providing meals, twice.

- **Jason Black or J2K**
  UK grime artist/successful black businessman.

- **Dina Asher Smith**
  Fastest woman in British history and the first British woman to win a major sprint title. She was hoping to win gold at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.
Fela Kuti Receives London Plaque
To honour his time in the city...

Afrobeat pioneer Fela Kuti has been honoured with a commemorative plaque in London. Earlier this year Clash noted the paucity of representative by British heritage organisations of Black history, and pointed out a few examples. Pleasingly, Fela Kuti has been honoured with a new plaque, and it’s fantastic to see some progress on this issue. The installation is part of the Black Plaque Project, which will see 30 plaques honouring key Black figures around the city. A plaque for Trinity Laban alumni Fela Kuti was unveiled earlier today - November 20th - a temporary memorial at the conservatoire’s Faculty of Music at Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich. Dele Sosimi was at the installation, alongside Trinity Laban’s Director of Music Havilland Willshire, Founder and Producer of Black Culture 365 Juliet Jackman, and Nubian Jak Founder Dr Jak Beula. Fela Kuti’s son Femi sent a message of thanks, alongside grandson Made Kuti - like his grandfather, Made Kuti is also a Trinity Laban alum, having graduated in 2018. “Words fail me. I am buzzing, I am glowing, I am so proud. It’s a lovely thing… I feel like the plaque represents my joy and pride.” "Fela was a live and let live guy, he had so much love and respect for art. He was a true artist. He always said to me ‘it’s all about holding down the groove’ so as his rhythm pianist, I always held the groove. Right from day one, I was hooked. I teach afrobeat here at Trinity Laban, so to see this here, now – hopefully it will encourage more students to participate in afrobeat and spread the horizon of up and coming musicians.”

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Windrush victim refused British citizenship despite wrongful passport confiscation

Former teacher Ken Morgan’s passport was confiscated as he travelled back from funeral in Jamaica in 1994

A former English teacher who was blocked for 25 years from returning to his home in Britain after his passport was wrongly confiscated has been ruled ineligible for British citizenship due to the length of his absence from the UK. Ken Morgan, 70, described the decision as a “ridiculous catch-22”, and said the sole reason he was absent for such a protracted period was because he was barred by British officials from travelling to the UK. He has requested a review.

Morgan moved aged 10 from Jamaica to the UK in 1960, before Jamaican independence, travelling on a British passport. He attended school in London and lived and worked in the UK for more than 30 years until 1994 when he travelled to a relative’s funeral in Jamaica. On his way back to London he was stopped at check-in and his passport confiscated. He was unable to persuade officials at the British high commission that they had made a mistake, and he remained stuck in Jamaica for a quarter of a century until the Windrush scandal broke, when British diplomats called him out of the blue to offer him a temporary visa to allow him to travel back to the UK. He applied for British citizenship in 2018, during his first visit home. His application was rejected, after a delay of almost two years, on the grounds that he had been out of the country on a date five years before he made the application (at a time when he was barred from being in the UK because of the decision to confiscate his passport), and that he had spent more than 450 days out of the country during the application period (a period when he was not allowed to be in the UK).

“I am sorry to tell you that you do not meet the requirements for citizenship and you do not have an entitlement to the right of abode in the United Kingdom,” the decision letter states.

Morgan said he was horrified by the decision. “How can you prevent someone from returning, then turn their application down and tell them you were not in the country and therefore are not eligible? Hello? Hello? Why was I not in the country? It makes no sense,” Morgan said, by telephone from Jamaica. He said he had become sceptical about repeated Home Office commitments to righting the wrongs experienced by the Windrush generation. “The promised change of culture hasn’t happened. When we take the limelight away from the Home Office, they revert back to their old ways.”

After being barred from returning to the UK, Morgan was destitute on the streets of Kingston for a while before managing to start a small business, and retraining as a graphic designer. He ended up working for the University of West Indies, and notes that he “survived the odds and flourished”. He is nevertheless anxious to secure his British citizenship. Morgan’s lawyer, Irène Nembhard from Birnberg Peirce, said the home secretary had the right to exercise discretion in exceptional circumstances. “There is no recognition that the sole reason for Mr Morgan being unable to meet the requirements set, was due to the unlawful act of the British official in the high commission in Jamaica, confiscating his valid British passport,” she states in the letter requesting a review.

“It is deeply disturbing that a taskforce precisely set up to right the wrongs done to Windrushers could make such a fundamental error. Neither Ken nor his lawyers can now have any confidence in statements by a succession of home secretaries that they are committed to providing justice for those who have been so severely injured by decades of hostile policies implemented by the Home Office,” she said.

A Home Office spokesperson said: “An independent review, which was requested last month into Mr Morgan’s case, is ongoing. All citizenship applications are considered on their own merits in line with the requirements set out in nationality legislation.”
These little Black geniuses have the highest IQs ever in the world

The world has seen a few true geniuses over the course of time. Some of the most well-known brains are, of course, Isaac Newton, Albert Einstein and Stephen Hawking. Could a third emerge from today’s young generation of thinkers? Clearly, a good memory is important for children to learn and retain new information, both in school and at home. In fact, according to psychologist and author Tracy Packiam Alloway, "working memory is linked not just to learning (from kindergarten to college), but for decision making in everyday activities."

Thanks to the largest and oldest high IQ society in the world, Mensa, it has become possible to know the IQs of many children and trust me African American kids are not left out. Mensa, as a non-profit organization, is open to people who score at the 98th percentile or higher on a standardised, supervised IQ or other approved intelligence test. According to the organisation, which provides a forum for intellectual exchange among its members in more than 100 countries around the world, these are the Black kids with the highest IQs:

Ramarni Wilfred, a British teenager, has an IQ score higher than Einstein’s, Hawking’s, and even Bill Gates’. Ramarni achieved a 162 on his intelligence quotient test. The 16-year-old east London schoolboy is one of the 50 world smartest teens and was only 10 years old when he wrote a paper on the philosophy of fairness, and his unusually high essay score qualified him to take an IQ test at Birkbeck University. He has been invited and accepted into Mensa and has hopes of attending Oxford University and becoming an astrophysicist.

At just four years old, New Orleans native Anala Beevers possessed an IQ over 145. By 10 months old she could identify and point to each letter of the Alphabet. Reportedly by 18 months, Anala was reciting numbers in both Spanish and English and by her fifth birthday in 2014, she could recite the name of every North American state on the map, as well as every capital.

Alannah George
Four-year-old schoolgirl, Alannah George is UK’s second youngest Mensa member with an IQ score of 140.

She is obsessed with words and numbers and taught herself how to read before even starting school. She is obsessed with words and numbers and taught herself how to read before even starting school. George, a class pupil from Iver, Buckinghamshire, prefers reciting the alphabet and times tables than singing nursery rhymes.
MANCHESTER COMMUNITY QIGONG

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020

Qigong is an ancient Chinese practice which combines breath movement and meditation to stimulate the flow of energy within your body.

Manchester Community Qigong is a small charitable organisation which exists to provide access to Qigong for residents of Manchester.

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Financial report
Activity report
Election of Committee and Officers

Submission Guidelines for The Advocate Magazine

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- All adverts and submissions from community groups are free of no charge but if making a sale then there is a charge. Contact ACCA for more information.

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- Your full name and designation if you are writing through your organisation that you are representing.

- Each write-up should be as short as possible. You can attach photographs with your write-ups.

- Authors must ensure that permission have been obtained for all photographs submitted with the write-ups.

- It is the authors responsibility to ensure the accuracy of all submissions.

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Please note that the editor reserve the right to edit submissions.

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African & Caribbean Community Association (ACCA),
Centre for Independent Living,
23 High Street,
Stockport SK1 1EG.
Tel: 07901848504
Email. acca_stockport@yahoo.co.uk
More than 200 public tributes connected to slave trade found in Wales

Audit finds figures linked to colonial exploitation honoured in statues, buildings and street names

Mark Brown, The Guardian

More than 200 statues, street names and buildings in Wales have been identified as being connected to the slave trade, and many of the figures represented are shown as role models.

An audit commissioned in July by the first minister of Wales, Mark Drakeford, following the Black Lives Matter protests, identifies 13 monuments, buildings or street names commemorating people who took part in the African slave trade.

That group includes the Elizabethan explorer Sir Francis Drake, who has three streets named after him, and Robert Clive, the first British governor of Bengal, who is commemorated by one street.

The report found 56 commemorated people who had owned or directly benefited from plantations or mines worked by the enslaved; 120 individuals represented who opposed the abolition of slavery; and 20 people accused of crimes against black people, notably in colonial Africa.

The report describes the slave trade and colonial exploitation as being “embedded in the nation’s economy and society”, and noted that very few of the commemorations were accompanied by interpretation.

“The figures in question appear to be presented solely as heroes or role models – as may originally have been intended – rather than representatives of challenging aspects of the past or changed attitudes and values,” says the report, which does not advise on steps forward.

Gaynor Legall, who led the audit, said she would like to see the full stories told about the people portrayed by the statues. “Some could be moved to museums so people can see the links. I don’t see the point of destroying things, there’s enough death and destruction around as it is.”

Legall said she had been surprised by the number of people with slave trade connections who had been commemorated. “I didn’t know the extent of it. Lots of things are taken for granted and I learned that the slave trade touched every part of Wales.”

Drakeford said the audit provided evidence which helped establish “an honest picture of our history”, adding: “This is not about rewriting our past or naming and shaming. It is about learning from the events of the past. It is an opportunity for us to establish a mature relationship with our history and find a heritage which can be shared by us all.

“This is the first stage of a much bigger piece of work which will consider how we move forward with this information as we seek to honour and celebrate our diverse communities.” The report also highlights how few Welsh people of black or Asian heritage are commemorated. Another strand highlights the existence of commemorations of anti-slavery activists, such as a statue in Tregaron, Ceredigion, of the nonconformist minister Henry Richard.
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Policing Of UK Black Lives Matter Protests Was 'Institutionally Racist'

Research by the Network for Police Monitoring has uncovered evidence of excessive use of force, failures in the duty of care, and racial discrimination.

A new report has found that the policing of recent Black Lives Matter protests in the UK was "institutionally racist".

The research conducted by the Network for Police Monitoring has uncovered evidence of excessive use of force, failures in the duty of care, and racial discrimination.

In the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic, George Floyd’s murder sparked a resurgence of anti-racism demonstrations around the world. Some of the largest anti-racist protests in British history took place across over 260 towns and cities.

The study, named after the rallying cry of demonstrators – “Britain is not innocent: A Netpol report on the policing of Black Lives Matter protests in Britain’s towns and cities in 2020” – consists of evidence from over 100 witnesses, including protesters, legal observers, and arrestee support volunteers.

It examines demonstrations that took place from late May to August and focuses on events in London and Newcastle.

Dr Adam Elliott-Cooper, an academic and Black Lives Matter activist who authored the report, said: “There is a bitter irony in the fact that protests against racism in policing were themselves sites of disproportionate use of force and discriminatory practices.

“When taken case-by-case, the evidence in this report suggests racially discriminatory policing, but when viewed collectively, there can be little doubt that policing in Britain still has a serious problem with institutional racism.

“The evidence of this report makes it clear that police cannot and should not be tasked with managing protests of this nature, and have put the right to freedom of assembly at risk.”

Elliott-Cooper has called for an alternative model that engages non-police organisations to manage protests in future, arguing that this would help secure the safety of protesters.

Experiences and policing at the hundreds of protests across Britain varied significantly, with some examples of light-touch policing at safe and successful gatherings.

However, Black-led protests disproportionately faced excessive interventions by police, particularly those in large cities such as London and Newcastle.

The research identifies significant areas of concern including:

Excessive use of force and disproportionate targeting of Black protesters, with baton charges, horse charges, pepper spray and violent arrests.

Kettling, enclosing large numbers of protesters – including children and potentially vulnerable people – in confined spaces for up to eight hours, making socially distancing impossible and with no access to toilets, food or water.

Neglect of Black Lives Matter protesters experiencing violence from far-right organised counter-demonstrators, with examples of a seriously injured protester being searched rather than supported and others being ignored.
Witness statements indicated that young Black people were far more likely than their white counterparts to face arrest, excessive force, and the use of stop and search powers during and after demonstrations, while social distancing and Covid regulations were seemingly applied at random by police.

One protester said: “Look at what we have to endure in our day to day lives as Black people and what we see on the news and on social media. It all flashes before your eyes when you see another young [person of colour] on the floor bloody, all by the hands of police.”

A legal observer who was present at a demonstration described what they had seen: “Multiple individuals in visible distress are reaching out to legal observers in the crowd, a lot of which appear very young. Legal observers are made aware that an injured protester is denied necessary healthcare.

“After lengthy negotiation, and insisting that officers have a duty of care to injured protesters, a few harmed individuals are being let out of the kettle, without any healthcare offered.” The report also challenged the “stereotypical and racist characterisation of protesters”, including by the home secretary Priti Patel, as “thugs and criminals”.

It also considered wider concerns around racism in policing including policing within the pandemic. Black, Asian and minority ethnic people in England were 54% more likely to be fined under coronavirus rules than white people under distancing regulations recorded from March 27 to May 11.
Emma Thompson adopted a child soldier and his life became better than any script

Dame Emma Thompson, 61, and Greg Wise, 54 adopted Tindyebwa Agaba Wise from Rwanda and gave him new life - now he's giving something back to victims of human trafficking

By Richard Simpson, Mirror

As a script, it might seem far fetched: Boy soldier escapes war zone, is adopted by famous couple... then aids refugees who still face hell. But this is not a Hollywood invention. It is the real-life tale of Tindyebwa Agaba Wise and the couple who gave him a new life in Britain – actors Dame Emma Thompson, 61, and Greg Wise, 54.

Tindy, 33, witnessed unimaginable horror in his native Rwanda. But today, he is a proud humanitarian who has just landed a prized job with a specialist arm of the Metropolitan Police, helping refugees just like him. And Greg, star of films such as Sense and Sensibility, tells how he and Emma couldn’t be prouder of their “remarkable son” and his work in war zones across the globe.

Greg said of the Met Police role: “Tindy is just about to start a job there and he’s doing some very interesting things for them – an adjunct of the work he was doing in war zones. “Helping struggling people, working with victims of trafficking and radicalisation... that kind of thing.

“It’s a very rewarding thing to have happened.”

Tindy’s achievements – he graduated with two degrees and speaks eight languages – are all the more remarkable when you understand his background. His biological father died of AIDS when he was just nine. And when Tindy turned 12, soldiers stormed his village to kidnap its children. Unimaginable violence ensued.

When the sound of machine-gun fire and screaming subsided, militia rounded up Tindy and nine other children and marched them across unfamiliar bush for days. The boys were separated from the girls and that was the last time Tindy saw his three sisters. They went missing, presumed raped. Almost certainly murdered.

His next memory is of arriving at a prison camp where he would remain for three years – to be radicalised, brainwashed and trained as a child soldier. Aged 16, having finally escaped Rwanda, thanks to the kindness of a charity worker at Care International, he boarded a flight for London to claim asylum.

But Emma tracked him down again and invited him round for a Christmas Eve dinner.

That dinner turned into regular stays at her £15million house in West Hampstead, North London, where he was given his own room.

Then there were whole weekends. Then whole weeks. But he ended up living a twilight life among drug addicts, prostitutes and drunks, sleeping rough on the streets around London’s Trafalgar Square.

It is perhaps not surprising, then, the mistrust and suspicion Tindy initially felt towards Emma, who offered him help at a Refugee Council event months later.

Dame Emma Thompson with husband Greg Wise, daughter Gaia Wise and son Tindyebwa Agaba Wise

Image: Alpha
“I wondered, ‘What does she want?’” Tindy later admitted. If the past had taught him one thing, it was that encounters with unfamiliar adults usually ended very badly. But Emma tracked him down again and invited him round for a Christmas Eve dinner.

That dinner turned into regular stays at her £15million house in West Hampstead, North London, where he was given his own room. Then there were whole weekends. Then whole weeks. In the end, Emma and Greg adopted him “informally” – Tindy by then old enough to make his own legal decisions.

Still unable to utter more than a few words of English, he moved in with Emma, Greg and their daughter Gaia, then two – and now 20. But it was a while before Tindy realised just who his new parents were. A year after he first came to London, in 2004, something extraordinary happened. Tindy, newly enrolled at college and learning to speak English, was in class, studying Shakespeare. His teacher pulled out a DVD of Henry V, dimmed the lights and pressed play.

Three scenes into the film, a woman wearing a crown appeared on the screen. Tindy blinked. It was the woman whose house, by this point, he’d come to think of as home. He’d even started calling her “Mum”. It was, of course, Emma. That was the first inkling of the new life he was getting into. Tindy embraced it. He soared through education, achieving a degree in politics at Exeter University and a second degree, in human rights law, at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

He now speaks English, Arabic, a bit of French and five African languages. It was after unspeakable horror during the Rwandan genocide – when some 500,000 were murdered – that Tindy put himself on a path to try and right the dreadful wrongs he had witnessed as a child.

Emma and Greg supported him all the way. Greg went on: “He is an absolutely extraordinary young man and he, of course, knows more than his fair share of death and grief having been a child soldier captured by the [Rwandan militia group] Interahamwe and then managing to escape.

“Because he has suffered, he can understand what others go through. That is a fantastically powerful force to have around at the moment.”

After university, Tindy worked for the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights before setting up a charity providing pastoral care to refugees and asylum seekers in Cairo.

As well as Egypt he has worked in Burma, Liberia and Palestine – and even studied again at university in Iran.

Speaking about the reasons they decided to informally adopt Tindy, Emma has previously said: “Sometimes being friends is not enough.

“You need family. I think we don’t talk enough about the happiness that it gives you to find new connections with strangers and people who aren’t familiar to you.”

Emma, famed for movies such as Harry Potter, Nanny McPhee and Love, Actually, has introduced Tindy to many of her celebrity friends including Hugh Laurie and Rowan Atkinson, who live nearby.

Tindy, of course, posed happily for a family picture at Buckingham Palace when Emma was made a Dame by Prince William two years ago.

And family is most important for him – memories of the one he left in Rwanda, and the one who rescued him in London.
Meet the Ghanaians making waves in Netflix’s Christmas film, Jingle Jangle

Netflix is reminding us all that Christmas is around the corner and the release of its new Christmas movie, Jingle Jangle: A Christmas Journey musical with an all-Black cast has created a lot of buzz, especially in the Ghanaian airwaves since its release. The movie features the music of Ghana’s high life singer Bisa Kdei and the acting and mostly dancing prowess of two young Ghanaian actresses, Diana Babincova and Princess K. Netflix is reminding us all that Christmas is around the corner and the release of its new Christmas movie, Jingle Jangle: A Christmas Journey musical with an all-Black cast has created a lot of buzz, especially in the Ghanaian airwaves since its release. The movie features the music of Ghana’s high life singer Bisa Kdei and the acting and mostly dancing prowess of two young Ghanaian actresses, Diana Babincova and Princess K.

The high life singer’s hit 2018 song, ‘Asew’, was remixed for this movie, a great way to carry on the Afrobeats movement taking over the world. The original version of the song is about a young man addressing his in-law but this remix, ‘Asew Jingle Jangle’, is about a grandchild talking to her grandfather.

Many Ghanaians took to social media to celebrate the win for the motherland. Bisa Kdei also took to his Twitter account celebrating his achievement and acknowledging the two other Ghanaians who featured in the movie.

Diana Babincova is born to a Ghanaian mother and Slovenian father. This talented young actress plays a young Jessica in Jingle Jangle, the daughter of Jeronicus Jangle (Forest Whitaker), the inventor.

The UK-based actress, Diana, is not new to the screens as she has made appearances in BBC’s Christmas Carol and Isolation: The Series. She has also starred in a Fly Emirates advert in 2019. Her movies ‘Don’t Breathe 2’ and ‘Becoming Everything’ is set for release in 2021.

Babincova has been performing for her family since age three. She is a student of the Sylvia Young Theatre School and is a bearer of The Stage 2020 Scholarship worth over £70,000 that caters to her training till age 16.

This is, however, the first feature film for dancer Princess K with Ghanaian heritage. Her skillful dance moves are seen in the scene where Bisa Kdei’s ‘Asew’ remix plays in the movie.

The 11-year-old has made appearances on CBeebies BBC and performed on big world stages and at concerts of prominent Afrobeats artistes like Davido, Yemi Alade and Ghanaian-UK grime artist Stormzy, group ‘Dem3Dancers’.
Princess K, who also lives in the UK, has been dancing from age six and is part of a dance group ‘Dem3Dancers’.

Jingle Jangle: A Christmas Journey musical is a feel-good story about toymaker Jeronicus Jangle whose popularity and fame capsized thirty years ago when his apprentice, Gustafson (Keegan-Michael Key), made away with his book of toy blueprints.

The Victorian-set musical with Sharon Martin’s Victoriana hairstyles inspired by natural afro hair follows sweet and kind Journey (Madalen Mills) as she tries to save her grandfather from losing the Christmas spirit and his reputation as the greatest toymaker of all time.
Edinburgh appoints Scotland's first black professor to lead review of statues and street names linked to slavery

Scotland’s first black professor Sir Geoff Palmer has been appointed lead a review of Edinburgh’s statues and street names which commemorate those with close links to slavery.

The city council announced Sir Geoff, who is a leading human rights activist, would chair the Edinburgh Slavery and Colonialism Legacy Review Group, which is due to meet for the first time before the end of the year.

The move comes in the wake of protests over the Melville monument in St Andrew Square, which commemorates 18th century Home Secretary Henry Dundas, 1st Viscount Melville, who is seen as responsible for delaying the abolition of slavery in Britain by 15 years from 1772 to 1807.

The group’s remit will cover any features within the council boundary which commemorate those with close links to slavery and colonialism, including, but not limited to, public statues and monuments, street or building names.

The group will be asked to make recommendations for a programme of actions and activities to rectify the glorification of slavery and colonialism which these commemorations represent to many people. It will consider all options, including the removal of statues.

Sir Geoff, who is professor emeritus in the school of life sciences at Heriot-Watt University and honorary president of Edinburgh and Lothians Regional Equality Council, said: “I regard this appointment as a great honour and duty to work with the group and the community to ensure the council’s aim of fairness and justice to all is realised.”

He will now recruit the other members of the group, with the aim of bringing together people from a range of backgrounds and expertise including community leaders and figures from the cultural and arts world, as well as academic representatives.

There is an expected emphasis on having a very strong BAME representation.

Council leader Adam McVey said: “We have a responsibility to face up to our city’s past, the good and the bad. While this review is about the story of our city, it’s not about statues of people long gone. It’s about people who live here now and their experience. " The Black Lives Matter movement shone a bright light on structural exclusions faced by people in all areas of life. We are committed to investigating, with communities and partners, where any such exclusions might exist in Edinburgh. Through this review group we hope to build an improved shared understanding of our Capital’s history by reviewing the origins of our public statues, monuments and street names and their context with events and meanings and making sure we share the true stories with future generations.

I very much look forward to hearing the review group’s findings.”

And depute council leader Cammy Day said: “This group will make sure we take action where we can in response to lessons learned from the Black Lives Matter movement. It’s important we listen to and act upon the views of the BAME community. “We have a duty to work to understand what the perception is now and what could make it better. We want the group to consider all options for rectifying the glorification of slavery and colonialism in our streets and elsewhere and for supporting diversity in our city.”
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Stop-and-search 'SAVES Black Lives', says Scotland Yard chief Cressida Dick who suggests George Floyd death has fuelled antagonism against UK police

BY JACK NEWMAN FOR MAILONLINE

Stop and search tactics target black people three times more than white people. It has led to accusations of police racism but Cressida Dick defended the tactic. She said young black men are nine times more likely to be killed than white men. The police chief also claims UK BLM protesters were misled by social media.

Cressida Dick has claimed that controversial stop and search tactics are saving the lives of young black men in London. The commissioner of the Metropolitan Police said black boys are nine times more likely to be murdered than their white counterparts. The Met Police have deployed stop and search tactics in an effort to rid the streets of knives and guns.

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Dick continued: 'Somewhere between 23 and 25 per cent of those we stop have something on them they shouldn't have and that's the same whether they're black, white or Asian.' The London mayor's office data shows that black people are three and a half times more likely to be stopped and searched than white people. This summer, in the wake of the Black Lives Matter protests, a number of viral videos showed black people being stopped by police.

This included the Labour MP Dawn Butler and Team GB athlete Bianca Williams. But the top police chief claimed that the BLM protests in the UK this year have been mistaken about perceived police brutality. She said many wrongly believe officers use the same tactics as those in the US, whose killing of George Floyd using a chokehold sparked the global demonstrations.

Dick said: 'Sadly some of the material young people may have seen on social media this summer, where what happens in America is confused and made to look like police here [are involved], may have alienated them. 'They misunderstand that what's happened in another country is what happens here. 'The George Floyd killing was absolutely awful to watch and has sparked this extraordinary global movement that has given some exciting opportunities, but also given people an impression of policing that is not the way things are here.'
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"WHEN AN OLD MAN DIES, A LIBRARY BURNS TO THE GROUND."

...AFRICAN PROVERB
There has been a number of assertions that Scotland had an ancient Egyptian connection. One of the most popular is the legend of Queen Scotia who founded present-day Scotland with her husband Gaythelos. According to the legend, Scotia was the daughter of one of Egypt’s Pharaoh including Ramses II, Friel, Nectanebo I, I, Necho II and Neferhotep I. Regardless of her father, it is clear that Scotia was of African descent. Gaythelos, the son of the king of Greece, was exiled in Egypt where he worked in the pharaoh’s castle. He met and married Scotia. They were however expelled from Egypt and they fled to Spain before finding their way into Scotland. The reasons for their expulsion are as diverse as the versions of the legend, including the death of Pharaoh in the Red Sea during Moses’s time; the upheavals in the country; and the invasion by Ethiopians.

The party moved from Spain and discovered an island, which they named Hibernia. They still travelled on and discovered a new island, where they settled with the natives. This was Scotland.

A different version of the legend states that they first landed in Scotland, but were forced out by the natives. They had no choice but to head to Ireland, where they found Scotti. They lived peacefully and their descendants became the kings of Ireland. Years later, the descendants of Scotia and Gaythelos went back to Scotland and defeated the natives called Picts and eventually hanged the island to Scotland, after the Egyptian princess.

While many still believe these are just legends, a historian has come out to say that it is actually a true story. Ralph Ellis has authored a new book, Scotia, Egyptian Queen of the Scots, where he says the story of Scotia is real and was the subject of the ancient text, The History of Egypt, written in 300BC by an Egypto-Greek historian called Manetho.

In his text, he says Scotia was really Ankhesenamun, daughter of Akhenaton and Nefertiti, and wife of Tutankhamen. He also states that Gaythelos was a pharaoh called Aye, who married Ankhesenamun after Tutankhamen’s death. It is believed that Scotia was killed at war in 1700BC. She had gone to fight against the Irish’s ancestors who had apparently killed her husband Gaythelos in a different battle. Her burial grounds remain a mystery although there have been rumours that she was buried in Glenn Scoithin in Tralee Town, Co. Kerry, Ireland.
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