Established 1972

Mixing and Mixedness in Britain:

What has changed over the years 1972-2012

40th Anniversary Brochure

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Prologue

'My Thoughts and Memories of Carol and 'Harmony'' by Eve Manghani

Nearly 25 years ago I saw a poster on a board in Morley College, London. It said 'are you part of a multi-cultural family?'. I was instantly interested as my husband was Indian and we had two Anglo-Indian sons. I phoned the number given and spoke to a person with a lovely, friendly voice. That person was Carol. After the usual pre-amble we decided to meet and discovered that we lived a few streets away from each other. I knocked on the door and it was opened by a person with the most 'open, friendly, positive' smile you could imagine. I knew straight away we would be friends – never mind Harmony. For many years we were close friends and enjoyed lots of happy moments with our children. Over the years I watched Carol build up Harmony. She was such a positive person with a driving force. She had such a loving, giving nature that nobody could refuse her demands or squash her ideas.

Carol started a Harmony centre in Mitcham, a local based centre run by a formidable Cockney lady called Aunty Doll. Carol organised everything that went on there. Many families came to the centre for advice and support, some came just for Carol's "drop scones" or Aunt Doll's stew. Carol also started 'Multicultural lunches'. These were really wonderful. Everyone would meet at a different person's house once a month or each week during school holidays. We all took along our own special food according to our culture… The children all played together (or fought together!) as the parents sat around sharing thoughts and learning about each other's culture. Also we were able to seek support or friendly advice if we were experiencing difficulties in a mixed race union. My family have learnt tolerance and understanding of other cultures through Harmony. My sons have become proud of their dual heritage after meeting other mixed race children.

Carol set up yet another venue at Brixton at an enormous old church building. It was a great success. Carol has never been afraid to take risks! Carol has the inspiration, drive, commitment and most of all the love that helps conquer barriers. Everyone has benefited from knowing Carol. I feel privileged and grateful to have been her friend.

[Eve Manghani, 5/10/2005. Published in *PIH Newsletter*, January 2006, Issue 40. Sadly Carol, Harmony's founder, subsequently died from cancer]

1. Introduction

2012 is the fortieth anniversary of People in Harmony, a presence in this country equivalent to almost two generations. Much has changed over the course of these four decades.

The racial/ethnic composition of Britain has been transformed. Population mixing and the formation of inter-racial/ethnic unions have increased significantly and a new 'conviviality' witnessed across the country's various communities of descent in our metropolitan centres and cities. Britain now has a large and rapidly growing 'mixed' population, currently estimated at around one million persons. Around 7 out of 8 of this population had not been born in the year PIH was founded.

The mixed race population was virtually invisible in the workings of government in the early 70s. It has since 2001 received official recognition in the decennial censuses and now data is routinely collected on the census 'mixed' categories across all government departments and by many public bodies.

The social environment at the time of PIH's birth was very different: the 1970s was a decade of overt racism and political violence against black people. Race relations legislation was only 7 years old and yet to be strengthened by the 1976 Act. Enoch Powell's Rivers of Blood speech was fresh in people's minds and an emergent National Front cast a shadow over civil society.

The decades that have followed the era of anti-discrimination legislation have witnessed a gradual drift into a politics of informal multiculturalism from the mid-1980s, only to be followed by a sharp exit during the early years of the new millennium and an embracing of policies of integration and Britishness.

Attitudes in the wider society, too, have changed. Social attitude surveys chart how the hostility towards interracial marriage in the 60s and 70s diminished markedly during the decade of the 1990s to negligible proportions amongst cohorts of young people. The preoccupation of the print media in the early 70s with stories about the racism being experienced by those in interracial partnerships has given way in the electronic media to the reporting of the achievements of mixed race people in all fields of public life. The BBC's 'Mixed Britannia' programmes have recently celebrated this changed picture.

As PIH has grown over the decades its role has changed, too. The growing size and complexity of mixedness and the development of new policy agendas have presented fresh challenges, yet the persistent problems of racisms, old and new, and structured disadvantage mediated by poverty and socio-economic exclusion have not gone away.

2. History of People in Harmony

The founding of Harmony

The organisation was started as 'Harmony' in 1972 by Carol Kayira, a Cambridge graduate with a degree in Social Anthropology. She lived with her husband, a Malawi writer, with their two small children in Hove, Sussex, then a non-multiracial area. Although she did not encounter much racial prejudice (except on a visit to a local pub in 1971), she had an idea of starting an organisation to bring together interracial families for a positive reason, that is, to help destroy the frequently sensationalised media image of mixed marriages as problematic. She wanted to counter the prejudiced statements such as that of Enoch Powell in 1971 that mixed race children were a source of tension in the community. Although there were several ethnicity organisations in existence at this time, none represented the interests of mixed race children. On a personal level, she also wanted to make friends with other people who had a multiracial dimension to their lives.

Stuart Bentley in 1977 recalled the founding of Harmony in the pages of *New Community*:

> 'Four and a half years ago Carol Kayira wrote to Radio One's Johnnie Walker Show setting out her idea of an organisation to bring together people for whom, as she put it, multi-racial living is a normal everyday experience, something which the rest of society does not always appreciate. *Harmony* was the result.

Carol also appeared in other radio and television programmes as well as writing magazine articles emphasising the advantages of living in a multiracial family environment (children being enriched by the two cultures of their parents) and dispelling misunderstandings about the cultures of Britain's different communities of descent. In an interview in SHE magazine in 1974 for example, she said: 'For

instance, in many African languages there aren't any words for please or thank you, and they use gestures instead. So when an African goes into a shop here and says "Give me this, give me that" he sounds arrogant, but that's not his intention at all'.

Fig. 1. Carol Kayira_and_children, April/May 1976

With the help of her friends in the London area Carol managed to make contact with other families throughout the country and abroad. To keep in touch with this growing network, she started a quarterly newsletter to which she and others contributed accounts of their own personal experiences, the difficulties they faced, and the steps they took to overcome them. Practical tips on such matters as how to care for Afro-hair and recipes from other countries, reports of holiday events, and competitions were also included.

A surviving copy of the Summer 1973 Newsletter gives a flavour of Harmony's emerging focus with items on: the foundation of the Commonwealth Students' Children Society and the fostering of Commonwealth children; a Private Member's Bill to amend the 1971 Immigration Act; 'Brown Childhood'; the Evangelical Race Relations Group; a selection of books for children (including the *Evans Readers*); 'Fostering' (the personal view of a Harmony foster mother); Vitamin D (and rickets); a summary of London meetings, recipes, letters (on the ITV programme 'Love Thy Neighbour', circumcision, and the attitudes of white in-laws), Fair Isle Knitting; new Harmony groups in Scotland, Manchester and Windsor; and births announcements.

One of Harmony's first major conferences was held in June 1976 on 'Mixed Marriage: What about the Children', attended by over 60 people including Harmony members, teachers and social workers. Interestingly, one of the speakers was Mrs Ros Howells (then a West Indian Family Community Worker, now Baroness Howells) who has maintained a continuing relationship with People in Harmony throughout its life. One of the topics discussed by the conference was the terminology to be used in referring to mixed race children.

By 1977 there were local groups or contacts in seven areas of London, twenty-two in the provinces, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, and two overseas, in Nigeria and Sweden. At this time 600 copies of the newsletter were being distributed.

Drawing on her experience in setting up the national organisation, Carol helped other members to establish local groups. Often run by just a handful of people, some of these groups flourished and recruited several hundred members. Although a national management council was set up, with members from local groups joining, Carol believed in 'open' councils where unelected members could voice their opinions and feel that they were contributing to the running of the organisation. Many council meetings were held in association with local groups at their own local meeting places. As the demands of running Harmony grew, Carol

could not pursue her career as a teacher and decided to devote all her time to running the organisation.

Harmony Aims

1. To bring together interracial and intercultural families and people who share our ideals and want to work actively with us.
2. To collect information on all matters relating to interracial families.
3. To share experiences through a Newsletter, local, regional, national and international meetings.
4. To provide playgroups, schools, other organisations and young people with material to help them develop a world outlook.
5. To use the experience of HARMONY families to help:
   Young people seeking advice
   Single parents with mixed race children
   Families moving from one country to another
   Families considering adopting or fostering
   To link isolated families with a wider group of interracial contacts
6. To work tirelessly to bring about a just and fair multicultural society in Britain and the World.

Amongst the most important events in the Harmony calendar were the Annual General Meetings and an annual August picnic in London. Annual summer camps were also held to bring like-minded families together and to provide an opportunity for mixed race children brought up in an all-white environment to mix with black and mixed race families. In 1978 the London groups participated in 'London entertains', an event at which multicultural books, food from various countries, and multicultural greeting cards were sold. Other similar events followed, like Shepherds Bush Green Multicultural Festival, Anti-Nazi League

Carnival in Brockwell Park, Brixton, Haringey Show, and Harrow Multicultural Festival.

The Centre at Somerset and National Harmony

In autumn 1978 Harmony's application for charitable status was turned down by the Charity Commissioners. They stated: 'The promotion of a more balanced approach to a multicultural, multiracial society and particularly to education in that society is a very worthwhile aspiration but essentially promoting an attitude of mind. This is not a charitable purpose in law and there is a long line of cases to this effect'. However, an indirect benefit of the decision was that it gave Harmony greater freedom of action including the ability to respond to political issues.

The next few years brought important changes for Carol and Harmony. In the summer of 1979 Carol and Bert Carnall were married and a reception was held at Maria Assumpta College in Kensington Square, London, attended by several Harmony members. Carol then moved to Borehamwood in Hertfordshire from where she ran Harmony. Apart from acting as National Co-ordinator, Carol also tackled official bodies, institutions, and charities to convince them of the importance and necessity of the work Harmony was undertaking. By 1981 she felt that the organisation had reached a stage where developing some kind of residential base was the next logical step. In May 1981, at an open council meeting in Bedford, the Harmony Centre Appeal Fund was launched. By summer 1983 enough donations and interest-free loans had been pledged by members and other well-wishers to contemplate buying a property if significant grant aid was also forthcoming. Carol viewed a number of properties and selected one at Meare, near Glastonbury, Somerset.

Fig. 2. Meare Centre, Somerset

Fig. 3. East London Harmony sold books and went into schools with them and were still doing that when we the organisation had its 25th anniversary

Persuaded by the argument that a large number of Londoners would also benefit from the establishment of the National Office (there were at least seven London groups active at the time with a magazine known as *Harmonyase*), a generous grant was donated by the former Greater London Council which enabled Harmony to buy the property freehold. To provide the organisation with a formalised structure, four trustees were appointed (Soh-Khim-Brown, Claire Cooper, Ramish Chadwani, and Kenneth Strong) who owned the Centre on behalf of the members nationwide. Carol moved into the Centre as National Co-ordinator on 6th July 1983 and the Cadbury Trust kindly donated her salary. Residential work camps were held in association with youth workers from the Quakers and International Voluntary Service to make the property suitable as a national headquarters and a venue for workshops, discussions, and seminars and to sell books and artefacts. A separate committee – Harmony Centre Management Committee – was formed to manage the property and employ the national co-ordinator, all members of the committee being required to undergo antiracist training.

Carol's idea in starting the centre was than an 'educational trust' would be formed to own and manage the centre for Harmony that could apply for charitable status. The National Harmony would remain as the 'campaigning wing' of the organisation unrestricted by the terms of the Charity Commissioners and able to involve itself in 'political issues'. The need for a written constitution was acknowledged for the application for charitable status. A subcommittee that had been started in 1982 - with equal representation of both black and white members in all the 'official' positions, to reflect the multiracial concept – developed a suitable constitution. This was circulated to all members in June 1983 and put into use at the Centre. The same need for a constitution for the National Harmony was discussed in 1984 and the Centre's constitution was adapted for this purpose. It was presented to the full membership at the Birmingham AGM on 21st July 1984 and was adopted for use in November of that year. As the Centre's work and national organisation grew, others including local groups helped out at the Centre. For example, the members of the SE London Lewisham group produced one of the newsletters (the last of the newsletters in this series was produced in Spring 1986). The committee decided to appoint a full-time person and Mae Lee took over as the centre worker to relieve Carol from the heavy workload she had been undertaking.

New directions

The mid-1980s saw more organisational changes. In July 1985 Carol resigned and the Centre was vacant from the summer of 1985 to mid-1986. In April 1986 a steering committee was formed to run the organisation's affairs for six months until it could hand over to a National Co-ordinating Committee. Nina Hurst was appointed National Worker at the Centre. Writing in June 2012, she recalls: 'I put the newsletter together and roneoed it off – only people of a certain age will remember duplicators and the skins you had to type … The centre was really run down, the wind not only came through the cracks in the windows but the cracks in the walls … The work of Harmony included running residentials at the centre, which must have been a tour de force for some. Harmony offered a chance for my girls who were living in "White" Street to mix socially with a broader range of members'.

The expected and much hoped for support and participation by members and local groups was only partially realised. One of the reasons for this may have been the remoteness of the location of the Centre and another that the programme of events may have lacked appeal or judged too 'radical'. However, the local groups were still flourishing: the Hull group, for example, arranged conferences on the subject of children's education in schools and made representations to the Local Education Department as well as contributing articles to the Newsletter.

At the 1987 AGM it was felt that as the Centre committee was virtually running the national organisation as well as the Centre, a single committee should suffice to run them both. At that time the committee consisted of many members from the Southampton area and Lynda Malcolm, a committee member, undertook to run the office from her home. The first professionally produced newsletter with a separate section for the younger members was issued in December 1988 from Southampton. As the organisation's financial situation deteriorated, a caretaker committee was formed in 1988 and a decision reached at that year's AGM to sell the property and to use the proceeds to pay off monies borrowed from members and purchase of a new property. The AGM also decided to set up a National Office in Southampton and to embark on a venture to start a trading wing as a co-operative, known as 'Harmonization', to sell various items of interest to members.

Fig. 4. Harmony girls at Southampton meeting

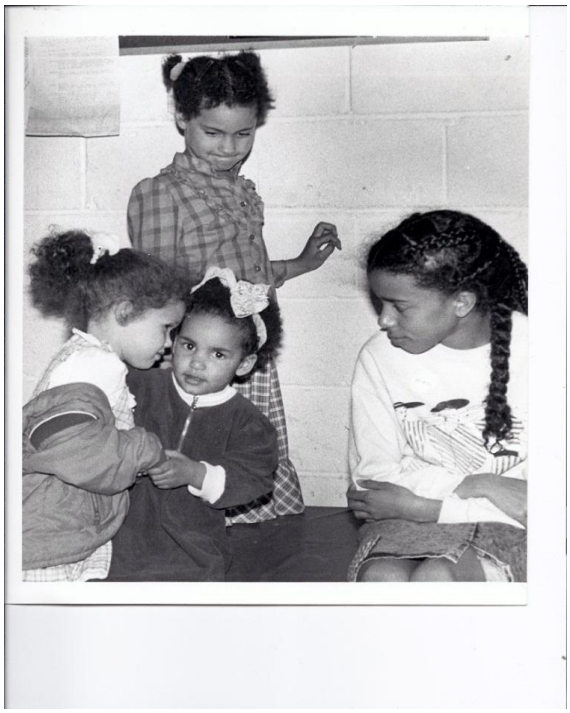

Fig. 5. Harmony boys at Southampton meeting

The committee donated a sum of money towards it and a National Office was established at 46 St Mary's Road, Southampton, in 1989. The official inauguration was conducted by the Southampton City Councillor, Mr Alan Lloyd, on 18th November 1989, and Pauline Bellamy took over as Chairperson. Lynda Malcolm offered to resign from the Committee for a year to work as a National Co-ordinator, to organise the office, and to promote the organisation.

The move to Slough

At that point the opportunity arose to completely revise the way Harmony was run and a new constitution – Memorandum and Articles of Association – was drawn up. It was also decided to make the organisation into a limited company so that the financial liability of the committee members would be reduced to a nominal sum. As the name 'Harmony' had already been taken up by another company, the name 'People in Harmony' was adopted. The premises used by the National Office had to be vacated in January 1988 and the office was temporarily run from Lynda Malcolm's home. However, Lynda was not able to carry on the work and it was decided to move the office yet again. At the 1990 AGM a proposal was put forward by the management company to use the proceeds from the sale of the property at Meare to purchase another property as soon as possible. In selecting an area in which to buy the property, proximity to an urban area with reasonable transport facilities and the availability of a cluster of members to form a committee were important considerations. Properties near London were too expensive, but Slough was considered favourable as the Thames Valley local group (started in 1978) could help undertake committee work. Diane Richards ran the organisation from her home for a number of months while a search around Slough was made to find then refurbish a suitable property.

The 1991 AGM was celebrated in style in Slough with a number of workshops, book and greeting card stalls, hair style demonstrations, a fashion show, and a performance by a Bhangra dance company. As building work was completed, PIH held a house warming party in its new premises – 49 Ledgers Road - in March 1992. By the end of that year a database had been created on the office computer to facilitate quick retrieval of information about membership and other information. To encourage the local community to join the organisation and eventually run it, Slough Harmony was established by Diane Richards with a steering group.

Fig. 6. Ledgers Road, Slough

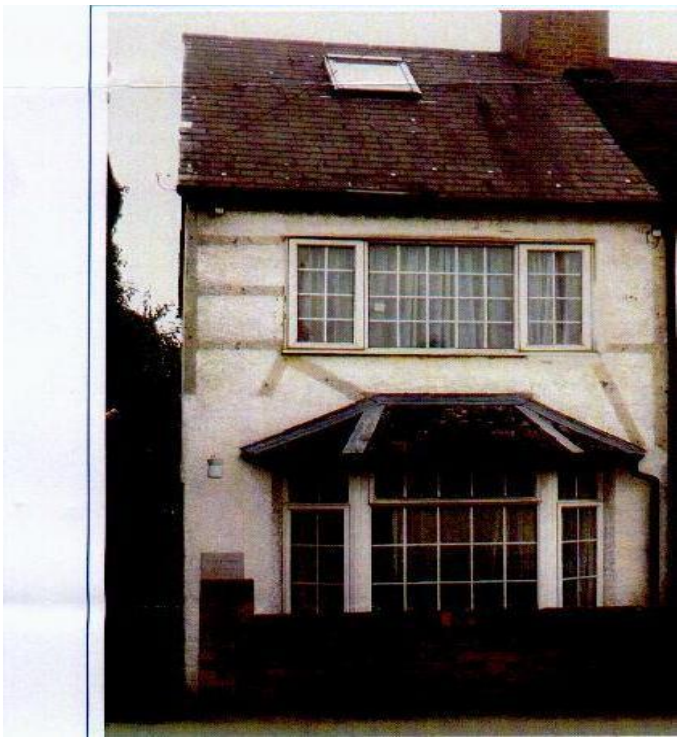

Fig. 7. Krishnan Iyer

Around this time Krishnan Iyer ran PIH and made significant contributions over many years as a committee member, co-chair and treasurer. For example, he extracted skin care and hair care articles and comments from the 1970s and 80s newsletters and typed into separate documents, took on the newsletters for a while, and set up the database and e-groups.

The last twenty years

The last two decades have seen further changes. People in Harmony obtained charitable status in 1995. Workshops, AGMs and Annual Conferences were held at Slough, Reading and London with meetings and social events organised at the Slough premises. Members' children enjoyed the various meetings with the garden, toy room and loft room used for play and entertainment. Local multicultural groups were able to use one of the rooms for their meetings in return for donations to cover costs.

In 2000 'Mixed Race Matters', an all-day conference, was held at the Diana, Princess of Wales, Memorial Fund, County Hall, London. It was chaired by Baroness Howells of St Davids and included speakers Oona King MP and Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, journalist and author. Workshops were also held, focusing on education, relationships, social care, and personal journeys. The conference attracted people from the mixed race community, one woman being recorded as saying: 'I've been waiting 25 years for something like this'. Professionals working in the field also attended and a report of the event was subsequently published.

In the 2000s, trustees and members spoke at seminars at the Institute of Education on the inclusion of 'mixed' in the 2001 Census, contributed to Runnymede and Commission for Racial Equality symposia/e-conferences on 'mixedness and mixing', and attended meetings with the Department for Communities and Local Government about growth of the mixed race community, voices of the 'mixed' population, and the work of PIH. A consultation exercise amongst the mixed race population on the categorisation for the 'mixed' group in the 2011 Census was conducted via PIH and the findings hosted on the charity's website and supplied to the census agencies in the UK.

Annual conferences such as 'Mixed Race and Education' were organised which increased knowledge and awareness of issues facing PIH membership and the public, with a report published and a campaign to interest local education

authorities and MPs in the educational attainment of mixed race pupils. Presentations and training were delivered on other topics such as social care. Public sector conferences on such topics as mental health were organised with CCC Ltd to raise the profile of mixed race experiences and ongoing research within the public sector and attended by delegates such as teachers, social workers, and health professionals.

PIH also worked with other mixed race organisations to produce a Joint Statement setting out objectives to provide a stronger and more representative voice for mixed race people, families and couples. This was presented to the Children's Commissioner.

In 2008 with upkeep and running costs of the premises taking up much time and funds in short supply, a decision was made to sell the property and relocate with a view to employing a worker. The property was sold in 2009, a registered office address set up in London, and venues in central and east London used for the trustees/committee members to meet. Elaine Pearson, Operations and Communications Manager, has recently become PIH's first part-time worker during these decades and revived PIH's role in organising social events. PIH have also launched a new website: http://www.pih.org.uk/. Since the 1990s new stalwarts such as Val Hoskins and Gillian Olumide have guided PIH's interests along with a core of long-serving and some new committee members.

Recognition for Harmony's work

From the early 1970s Harmony rapidly gained recognition for its work across many different constituencies. Firstly, Carol Kayira's idea was of an organisation to bring people together for whom, in her words, 'multi-racial living is a normal everyday experience, something which the rest of society does not always appreciate'. It sought to create a sense of community amongst interracial couples and their children who frequently shared an experience of rejection by family and friends and stigmatisation by the wider society.

The 2nd July 1976 issue of the *Catholic Herald* gave extensive coverage to Carol's work:

> `Harmony is the result of positive concern for coloured children in Britain. Most of its 500 members are mixed-race couples, single parents with a

> child of mixed race, or couples who have adopted or fostered black children. They are a growing group in British society and have to come to terms not only with racial prejudice and the special problems of mixed-race children but often the extra difficulties imposed on a marriage whose partners share different cultural and religious beliefs…Last month more than 150 members, mainly women, braved a small group of National Front members demonstrating against racial mixing to hold a conference on children of mixed race at the Friends' Hall. Euston, London…It was to be a group which would offer a warm welcome to multi-racial parents and children, and today does so in some 15 groups all over Britain, organising everything from an Eastertime "hunt the egg" children's party to occasional formal conferences… "Being a multi-racial society has crept upon us in Britain, we have to come to terms with it," said Carol Kayira. "The opposition to multi-racial marriage was part of the birth-pains of our new society"… "Harmony" meetings and the excellently produced newsletter both reflect the happiness of very many mixed-race marriages: but there are also many problems'.

In 1977 Stuart Bentley, an active member of Harmony and a principal lecturer in sociology at Sheffield City Polytechnic, wrote a number of articles about Harmony in *Social Work Today* and *New Community*, noting that: 'Through its activities and especially its newsletter, the organisation serves the very important function of reminding people that they are not curiosities in a shop window display, however much they may be made to feel like one'. In similar vein, one London correspondent wrote in the early 1970s: 'Honestly, you have no idea what a difference Harmony has made to me. It has given me a better outlook on life itself. There have been times when I've felt so cut off from everyone, a complete outsider. Now I know that I am not alone and that Harmony is helping so many people like myself'.

Harmony has played an important educational role throughout its 40 years, including the much needed provision of teaching material for schools and colleges. From its beginnings the organisation had published several reviews of books in the Newsletters which the members felt were most suitable for use in schools and at home. These reviews were compiled in a booklet 'Multicultural Books for Children' by Jan Knott in 1978. It was expanded and republished in 1980, being very well received by educational establishments and other organisations. Over the years such activities have been sustained by an active publication programme and the holding of workshops, seminars, and conferences.

Harmony has maintained a continuing concern about the large number of mixed race children looked after by local authorities and awaiting adoption or fostering. It has taken practical steps to make those performing key roles in social work and education more sensitive to the issues through research, organising conferences, and link-ups with adoption agencies (such as Adoption Resource Exchange and Parent to Parent Information and Adoption Services in the 1970s). C Bagley and L Young (in a book on *Social Work and Ethnicity* (1982)) expressed regard for the work of the Harmony group:

> '…members of an important and growing organisation in Britain which is committed to multiracialism, and multicultural children, as important ends in themselves. Harmony contains many members of black-white mixed marriages who because of the extra commitments to identity and sharing of cultures which such marriage involves would probably be important sources of adoptive homes, especially for mixed-race children. It is members of the Harmony group who are most fully committed to the pluralistic future of Britain, in which the rights and cultural integrity of all ethnic groups would be protected. The ultimate fulfilment of pluralism is in the mixed marriage, in which the partners respect not only one another's personalities, but each other's culture as well'.

Finally, Harmony has provided a bulwark against racism. Indeed, it was on a hot June evening in 1976 when Bentley first encountered Harmony outside the gates of the Friends Meeting House in North London, opposing a picket of National Front members. He wrote: 'Harmony's aims include the intention to campaign for the rights of black people in this country where these are denied and to make its presence felt wherever racialism is encountered so that a truly multi-racial society can be established'.

3. What has changed in mixing and mixedness over the 40 years

Over the four decades People in Harmony has been in existence, the centrality of mixing and mixedness in British society has been transformed.

3.1 Interracial Unions and the Emergence of the 'Mixed' Group

At the time of PIH's formation, we did not know how many people in the country were in inter-ethnic/racial unions and marriages and how large was the population of 'mixed parentage' children. There was even a vacuum with respect to how this latter population should be described, 'half-caste' being salient with sporadic instances still occurring of its official use.

One of the first estimates of those in interracial marriages came in DJ Smith's *The Facts of Racial Disadvantage: A National Survey* (the second of four pioneering studies of Britain's ethnic minorities that spanned the years 1966-1994), showing that among married Asians, 5% of men and 2% of women were married to a white person in 1974. Amongst West Indians these figures were 8% of men and 1% of women. It was not until the launching of representative large-scale national government social surveys that we started to get reliable estimates. Analyses of the Labour Force Surveys (by Raya Muttarak) for 1981 and 2002-3 show a dramatic increase in the proportions of interracial marriages … from 21.7% to 35.9% of intermarried Caribbean men, 10.4% to 22.5% of women; 12.1% to 16.8% of intermarried Chinese men, 24.4% to 35.5% of women; and an increase since 1991 of intermarried Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi women, driven by the second generation.

Knowledge about the size of the mixed group remained equally elusive. The first reliable estimate of the size of the mixed race population in Britain was made using the 1985 Labour Force Survey which indicated an already sizeable population of 232,000. While this was smaller than that for West Indians/Guyanese (547,000), Indians (689,000) and Pakistanis (406,000), it was larger than Bangladeshis (99,000), Chinese (122,000), Africans (102,000), and Arabs (61,000). The 2001 Census recorded 237,420 White and Black Caribbeans, 78,911 White and Black Africans, 189,015 White and Asians, and 155,688 in the 'Other Mixed' group in England and Wales, around 660,000 in total.

Since mid-2001 there has been dramatic growth in some of the 'Mixed' groups: by mid-2009 the mixed White and Black African group had increased by 63% and the White and Asian group by 57%, amongst the highest growth rates of all minority ethnic groups. The entire 'mixed' population was estimated at 986,000 people.

The 2011 Census is widely predicted to enumerate in excess of one million mixed race persons in Britain when findings are published in November 2012. By 2020,

the ‘Mixed’ group is predicted to grow to 1,306,000 persons (a 93% increase over the two decades 2001-20), by which time its share of the total population will have risen to 2.0%. However, it will still be substantially smaller than the ‘Black’ and ‘Asian’ groups.

3.2 Belated official recognition of ‘mixed’ in 2001

The 1971 decennial Population Census – taken the year preceding PIH’s foundation – did not count ethnic groups. Indeed, a very long series of field trials and tests to include such a question hadn’t even begun. That census recorded a person’s country of birth and (as an innovation) also added parents’ country of birth. The era of official ethnic group data collection had not started.

The last 40 years have witnessed significant changes in attitudes to collecting ethnicity data and in the inclusion of the ‘mixed’ group in the categories used in ethnicity data collection and monitoring. In one of the earliest trials or tests for a Census ethnicity question, held in April 1979, there was strong resistance to answering the question, only 14% of the West Indian and 34% of the Asian households contacted providing valid answers. This was on the grounds that the proposed collection of ethnicity information was linked to proposals to change the nationality laws in a way that would jeopardize minority ethnic groups.

By contrast, in 2001 ethnic group was invalid or not recorded on only 2.9% of Census forms. The different communities now wanted to get on to the list of official ethnic groups: in 2011, for example, there was strong competition for inclusion, 22 candidates chasing only two additional ethnicities that could be added to the list. The widespread view was that recognition by the Census would result in inclusion in equality and diversity agendas and a share of associated resources and funds.

In the 1991 Census, the first to ask about ethnic group in Great Britain, the mixed race population missed out. The ethnic group question did not have a ‘mixed’ category but indicated that those of *mixed descent* should write in a description in one of the open response categories: 230,000 people did so! Up to this time the census agency had claimed that people of ‘mixed descent’ were happy to tick one of the single group boxes. Following this census, official ethnicity data collection began in other settings such as hospital inpatient treatment and workforce censuses but rarely including a ‘mixed’ option. People of mixed race had to wait till

the England and Wales 2001 Census to get their own categorisation: 'White and Black Caribbean', 'White and Black African', 'White and Asian', and a write-in 'Any other mixed background'.

This has since become the standard for all ethnicity data collection and there are now dozens of official datasets that collect ethnic group data. This wealth of data has not been matched by a commensurate increase in policy studies addressing the 'mixed' group. In the early years of the new millennium PIH became involved in consultation with the mixed race community to see if it wanted a change to the categories used in 2001. By and large they were happy with the question asked in 2001 but did indicate that the most preferred term was mixed race. The 2011 England and Wales Census has used the same categorisation as that for 2001 under a new 'Mixed/multiple ethnic groups' banner.

3.3 Attitudes to Interracial marriage

Attitudes in the wider society were hostile to interracial marriage throughout much of the 1960s, 70s, and 1980s. Over recent decades, however, academics have sought to answer the question: 'Is racial prejudice declining in Britain?'. Amongst this group, Robert Ford has reported strong evidence for an overall decline in prejudice and of a sharp decline in prejudices amongst generations who had grown up since mass black and Asian migration to Britain began in the 1950s.

One of the sources Ford used was the question set in the *British Social Attitudes Survey*: 'Do you think that most white people in Britain would mind or not mind if one of their close relatives were to marry a person of black or West Indian/Asian origin…. And you personally? These questions were asked repeatedly over a 13 year run of data (1983-1996). Though such questions would now be regarded as offensive, they show a marked decline in opposition over the period under examination, particularly in the 1990s. Hostility to inter-marriage falls rapidly amongst cohorts born after the 1930s, these cohorts expressing progressively more tolerant attitudes (opposition declines from over 60% in the oldest cohorts to under 20% in the youngest cohorts).

The increasing acceptability of interracial marriage is clearly reflected in the continual rise in the number of inter-ethnic marriages since data on these had started to be compiled from government social surveys in the early 1980s. This trend is now also becoming apparent in the South Asian groups, though the increase has been much more limited than in the black groups for socio-cultural

reasons. Now, out-marriage is higher in the second generation across all minority ethnic groups.

The high levels of in-migration since the early 1990s to certain parts of Britain, including many London boroughs, may accelerate the trend in intermarriage as research shows higher rates of inter-racial marriage and union formation in highly diverse towns and cities where no one ethnic group dominates.

3.4 Recognition of the 'Mixed' Group in Policy Development

From the 1970s there has been a strong focus on the over-representation of black and mixed race children in the looked after children population and this disproportionality remains an active area of policy interest. However, as ethnic group data collection for the 'mixed' group has increased, there has been a widening of policy interest. New areas of investigation and policy focus have included educational attainment of mixed heritage children, including barriers to attainment, and youth offending. However, the lack of a core body of work on the 'mixed' group in the policy arena, including consideration of socio-economic position and other structural factors like racism, has been disappointing given the amount of data that is now collected on this group. While there have been new studies of children looked after, there are few dedicated investigations of the mixed group in health and social care research, even though, for example, it has amongst the highest smoking rates and overrepresentation in the national drug treatment monitoring statistics. People in Harmony is active in trying to ensure that appropriate services are provided for mixed race people and couples through its educational programmes and lobbying activities.

There has, however, been a huge increase in the teaching of mixed race studies in colleges and universities. In the early 70s mixed race in Britain was not the subject of scholarly enquiry. Four decades later it is an essential component of critical race studies / theory and the topic of dozens of student projects and dissertations and of postgraduate theses. Research on mixed race is now routinely funded by Government Research Councils and other large-scale funders of the social sciences and the humanities.

3.5 The Emergence of Mixed Race Organisations

When People in Harmony was formed in 1972 it was the first community organisation in Britain to cater for the needs and interests of people in mixed racial/ethnic unions and their offspring. It was thus a pioneer in choosing to focus on the mixed race population and to provide a focus as a community and self-help organisation. The 1970s was a time that witnessed a growing level of overt racism against black people. Mixed race couples and their children were emerging as targets for some of this racism as they became more visible in British towns and cities following two decades of mass in-migration and consequential population mixing. Such racism even extended to the state in its surveillance of these new communities, a concern to establish through the police authorities the number of marriages and unions, the number of children born inside and outside marriage, and the condition of the families' housing. PIH was a child of the times, responding to these new stresses.

For several decades PIH remained the sole charitable/community group working with and for people in interracial unions and their mixed race children. Since the start of the 1990s other mixed race organisations have been set up, such that now there are probably a dozen catering for the mixed race population. The Brighton-based Mosaic group, Sharron Corby's Intermix, and Bradley Lincoln's Manchester-based social enterprise 'Multiple Heritage Project' (now called Mix-d:) were early arrivals and these have been joined by the Sheffield Multiple Heritage Service, MixTogether, Sputnik, the Birmingham-based Inheritance Project, the Exeter-based Planet Rainbow Project, and Starlight Black Child Mixed Heritage Group. In 2009 People in Harmony issued a joint statement with most of these UK mixed race organisations.

This process of organised representation has been much slower than in the USA: throughout the 1990s mixed race organisations were set up that lobbied strongly for inclusion in the 2000 US Census and other administrative data, while in Britain there was an absence of an organised lobby for the inclusion of mixed race in the 2001 Census. This new wave of mixed race organisations has come about via a politics of recognition, that has been further boosted by the inclusion of 'mixed' categorisation in the 2001 Census. Perhaps, too, the 'mixed' group in Britain is only now attaining a critical size to spawn and sustain mixed race community groups at a *local* level.

3.6 The Extent and Type of Media Coverage

In the early 1970s mixed race scarcely got a mention in the national press. In the *Daily Mirror* of 1972, for example, there were no mixed race feature articles; in the first 6 months of 2012 there have been 6. When mixed race did receive a mention, however, it was frequently in the context of disadvantage or racism. A preview of mixed race coverage in the *Daily Mirror* in the 1970s has revealed that the difficulties of achieving adoption for mixed race children was a recurrent theme. The *Daily Mirror* of 12 December 1971, for example, quoted the general secretary of the National Adoption Society: 'Our lists are closed for people who want to adopt first babies, but we are considering a small number of people who want to adopt mixed race or handicapped children into their own families'. Another theme was the racism experienced by couples in mixed race marriages. In one such item, a young John Pilger reported the struggles with racism of Rocky and Doreen Byron in their interracial marriage in Tyneside in the *Daily Mirror* of 11 April 1973. Newsworthiness was limited to a very narrow range of stories of this kind.

Over the last few decades there has been a huge shift in coverage by the print media. The focus is now on mixed race high achievers in the arts, literature, entertainment, and sport. A further catalyst for interest in the mixed race group has been the election of Barack Obama to the US Presidency and of figures such as Oona King and Chucka Umunna to the UK Parliament. Some have characterised this media interest as 'the "exotic" acceptable face of diversity' and no doubt this has played a part. There has also been a substantial increase in serious feature articles about mixed race identity written by a new genre of young journalists, some of whom are themselves mixed race. Interracial marriage, in itself, is no longer newsworthy as it was in the 1970s but has become quotidian.

3.7 "I decide my ethnic group and not officials and bureaucrats"

In 1972 the concept of 'racial/ethnic identity' was emergent but accorded only limited importance by officialdom, the media, and others. The idea that individuals could exercise choice in deciding their group - that they themselves were the arbiters of this – had not yet taken hold. A person's racial/ethnic group was frequently ascribed by others (that is, by observation) when it was collected in official settings. For example, the 1971 General Household Survey made a distinction between 'coloured' and 'white' by the interviewer. Things began to change in the 1970s. The National Dwelling and Household Survey (1978) asked respondents whether they were born in the United Kingdom and to which of a list

of ‘racial groups’ they considered they belonged. The many field trials for the Census question which began in 1975 and ran till 1989 also asked the respondent for their race or ethnic group.

Yet the assumption was made that those of mixed descent did not wish to declare this but preferred ticking a single box. This assumption was proved wrong in the 1991 Census when 230,000 persons wrote in ‘mixed’ descriptions in that census’s open response categories. Moreover, in public consultation exercises for the 2001 Census, it became clear that persons of mixed race/ethnicity didn’t just want a ‘mixed’ tick box but also the ability to say what their mix was. With an increased interest in identity in the last two decades and ever more varied patterns of population mixing, some have asked whether the 2001 Census categorisation (repeated in the England and Wales 2011 Census) can continue to be valid. Indeed, in some London boroughs where population mixing has been catalysed by large inflows of new migrants from a diverse range of countries, young mixed race children struggle to see the relevance of categories like ‘White and Black African’ and ‘White and Asian’ associated so strongly with Britain’s colonial past.

4. Conclusion

Like many voluntary sector organisations, PIH’s history over these four decades has been a little like a roller coaster ride. There have been vicissitudes in funding, many changes in the organisation’s premises, the introduction of various administrative arrangements, the coming and going of helpers and committee members, with not a few ‘champions’ along the way. However, there have been some constants, too. PIH has always been concerned with all those involved one way or another in multi-racial living: people in interracial unions and marriages, single parents of mixed race children, adoptive or foster patents of mixed race children, and people whose work brings them into contact with interracial families and their children. Throughout its difficulties with funding, PIH has continued to serve those in interracial relationships and the mixed race community. Like a judicious guardian, it has kept a watchful eye on this growing community, endeavouring to meet its needs through the provision of a dialogue, educational resources, events, advice, and support. Mixed race has now come of age and in the decades to come the organisation will no doubt make its mark in new and challenging ways to ensure that this rapidly growing population group is treated fairly, equitably, and free of disadvantage.