



*The* ROYAL COLLEGE *of*  
OPHTHALMOLOGISTS

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Annual Report 2020

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# From the President

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**Bernard YP Chang**  
President

The year 2020 has certainly been unexpected and very challenging for all us. However, I believe that one positive consequence is that it has brought us together as a profession and enabled the College to build closer links with you. Ophthalmologists especially our trainees have also stood out during the initial stages of the Covid-19 pandemic, continuing to deliver care for eye patients despite the uncertain risks to ourselves and serving the wider needs of patients when redeployed.

We at the College have strived to be supportive by issuing guidance and recommendations on how to deliver safe and efficient care during the first and second wave of infection. We used virtual platforms to run meetings, webinars and seminars to further help members to set up and run their service using available technology and innovative ways of working. We have tried to respond promptly, sensitively and appropriately to concerns raised by our membership. We ran a successful webinar on Racism in the NHS, initiating a timely debate on this vital issue even before the publication of the report by the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities and the review on its diversity and inclusion by RCS England. We will continue to monitor our own College's profile and do our utmost to be fair and equal to everyone and to promote diversity.

We at the College recognise the need for improved collaboration, working early on with our specialist societies and the College of Optometrists to find workable solutions across all four nations

to prevent avoidable sight loss. This covered issues ranging from PPE to setting up CUES (Covid urgent eye services) and writing guidance on how to restore and deliver services safely including increased use of virtual consultations.

We have been busy sending regular communications and will continue to do so in order to keep members informed of important matters such as the National Eyecare Restoration and Transformation Programme.

We have been working jointly with HEE, NHSE/I and the independent sector (IS) to get training embedded in the IS. This will take time but early discussions have been positive and we recognise the need to ensure the standards and quality of training are equitable wherever they are being delivered.

As the vaccination programme continues to make it safer for us all, we hope to be able to focus our energies on the huge task to catch up with the backlog in our service which is vital to reduce the rate of avoidable sight loss which has inevitably occurred.

The College chairs, officers, staff and I are working hard to improve what your College can offer. This includes committing College resources to tele-learning, setting up a learning management system to enable us to deliver essential educational packages remotely. We are also exploring new sources of funding and sponsorship to strengthen our financial position but not compromise our independence and integrity. This is particularly important due to our current budget deficit as a consequence of being unable to run Congress and other meetings and courses.



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Another important development is the potential new SAS career grade post. Our College had a significant role in its implementation via our work with the Academy of Royal Colleges.

We have unfortunately lost ophthalmologists this year, notably Nicholas Wilson-Holt, our Honorary Treasurer, David Laws, the Welsh Llywydd and recently, Wallace Foulds, our first President. We also lost Dr Paul Kabasele, a SAS ophthalmologist to Covid. I had the sad task of writing letters of condolence to their families.

I'd like to conclude by giving thanks. I owe so many people who have helped me navigate through this difficult year. Firstly, thank you to Jo Longden, my Executive Assistant, who ensures that I meet my commitments with her clever scheduling and diary management.

My thanks also to my predecessor, Mike Burdon for helping me transition into the role and to my fellow members of the College Covid-19 Action Team, who initially met with me daily – Kathy Evans, CEO, Declan Flanagan, VP and Mel Hingorani, chair of PSC. Alison Davis, London GIRFT ambassador, was an invaluable ally in helping us to formulate our response and my thanks go to her too.

Garry Shuttleworth and the examinations team deserve special thanks for working tirelessly under significant time pressures to design an exam which met GMC requirements without face to face interaction with patients.

Thank you to John Sparrow for making NOD such a success.

There has been great effort to ensure that training and education can continue during the pandemic by Fiona Spencer and Melanie Corbett, their committees and staff.

Mohit Gupta has done a sterling job with the membership and in ensuring College staff are supported. Christopher Liu stepped in early into the role of Honorary Treasurer.

Thank you to all College staff and committee/subcommittee members for your continued hard work and commitment to College work.

To our trainees who were exemplary in the way you contributed during redeployment, again I say, you have made us proud.

Finally, I owe my gratitude to all of you who are battling daily to deliver eyecare despite the restrictions caused by Covid. Thank you also for the support you have shown me and for supporting the College. We hope you will continue to do so and consider taking on the roles which ensure the College's continued viability.

I hope you all stay well and look forward to a better year ahead as we continue to navigate through the challenges.

**Bernard YP Chang**

President



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# Foreword from the Chief Executive



**Kathy Evans**  
Chief Executive

Anyone interested in the use of English will find much to consider in the analysis produced by Oxford Languages 2020 – *Words of an unprecedented year*.

[www.languages.oup.com/word-of-the-year/2020](http://www.languages.oup.com/word-of-the-year/2020)

It concluded that this year “cannot be neatly accommodated in one single word”.

I disagree and my word of the year is Covid-19, first known to be used in February 2020 by the World Health Organisation. While this report is peppered with words that would have been unfamiliar in 2019, the coronavirus disease has dominated our thinking and our actions since March when we closed the College for an initial 30 days. The transition to working from home went remarkably smoothly and we quickly adapted to Zoom meetings and the need to unmute before speaking.

In the event we kept the College closed completely until September when we returned on specified days for core business purposes, mainly to run courses and for some exam admin. The building had been well maintained by the Facilities Manager and everything worked satisfactorily. The refurbishment of building opposite was largely completed in our absence but the area remained dominated by HS2 preparations and was strangely empty.

Remote working brings challenges; while many enjoy the freedom from commuting and some reported in a staff survey enhanced feelings of wellbeing, there is the danger of social isolation. In response, the College increased its training opportunities and we have had a series of webinars on topics such as managing mental

health, equality and diversity, privilege and unconscious bias, leavened by a smattering of quizzes, social gatherings and, on one of the hottest days of the year, a chocolate making session.

Early on in lockdown we set up the COVID-19 Action Team. It initially met daily to produce guidance and step in to resolve local problems. It now meets on a weekly basis and its focus is on restoring ophthalmology services.

**[www.rcophth.ac.uk/about/rcophth-guidance-on-restoring-ophthalmology-services](http://www.rcophth.ac.uk/about/rcophth-guidance-on-restoring-ophthalmology-services)**

Of particular note, this year we have:

- Transformed the way written exams have been delivered. In a couple of years we have gone from a format that 19th century surgeons would recognise to computer-based exams taken at a place of the candidates choosing.
- Delivered the FRCOphth Part2 Oral using videos of patients rather than actual patients; trainees have appreciated the care this required from the Exams Team.
- Continued to run courses in the Skills Centre where we have been able to maintain social distancing (another 2020 word) and the feedback has been very positive.
- Learned to run webinars, seminars, the AGM and committee meetings on-line. We had to cancel the Annual Congress planned for May 2020 which was a great shame but we are making plans to come back stronger in 2021.



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- Ramped up plans to start an AMD National Audit, whilst maintaining the Cataract National Audit.
- Developed the Cataract Workforce Project, soon to be published.
- Introduced a new HR system and a new database.

And all the while we have continued to:

- Regularly communicate with members via EyeMail, social media channels and College News.
- Produce monthly issues of the journal EYE.
- Support CESR and Dual Sponsorship Scheme Applicants.
- Develop the Ophthalmic Community Clinical Competency Framework (OCCCCF) into the Ophthalmic Practitioners Training (OPT) programme for the allied graduate professionals.
- Support Advisory Appointment Committees.
- Pay suppliers, collect subscriptions and other fees, process the payroll and attend to all the regulatory commitments of running a Charity.

Throughout this unprecedented and extraordinary year, the contribution of the staff team, the clinicians connected with the College, the Lay Advisors, Council and Trustees has been immense.

**Kathy Evans**  
Chief Executive



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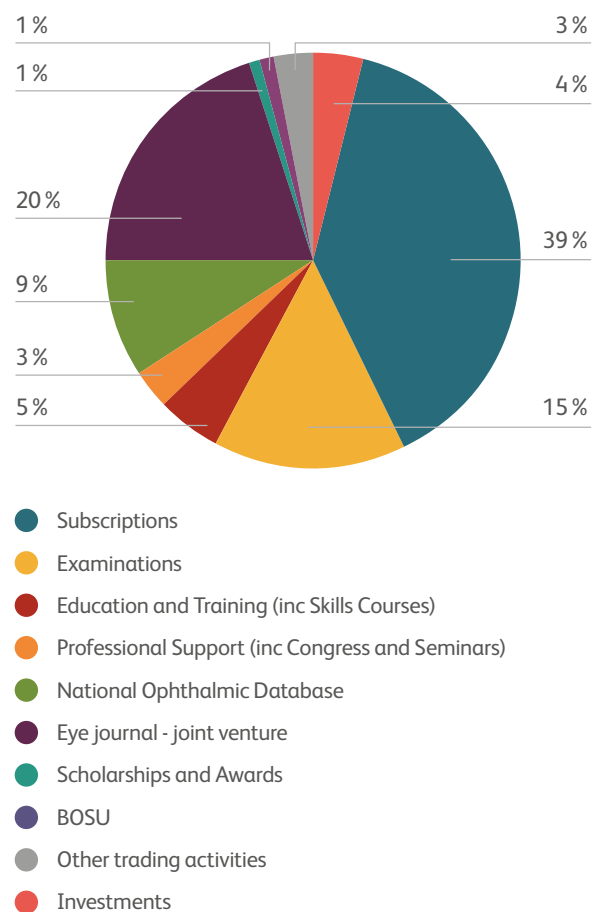
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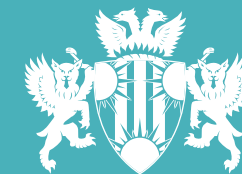
## Income 2020

	2020 £'000s	2019 £'000s
Subscriptions	1,466	1,442
Examinations	553	764
Educations and Training (inc Skills Courses)	199	340
Professional Support (inc Congress and Seminars)	111	830
National Ophthalmic Database	339	300
Eye journal - joint venture	748	710
Scholarships and Awards	28	29
BOSU	29	28
Other trading activities	108	132
Investments	131	136
<b>Total income</b>	<b>3,712</b>	<b>4,711</b>



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Statement of financial  
activities for the year ended  
31 December 2020.

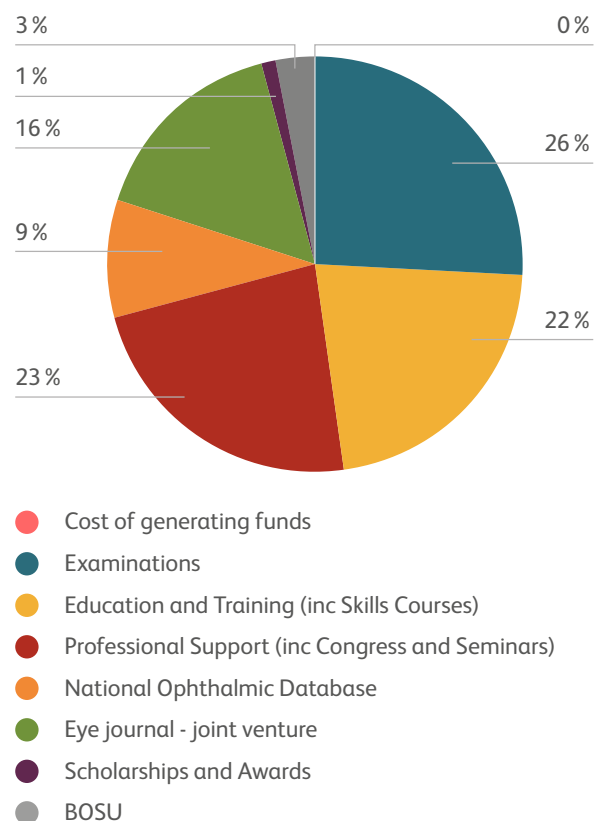


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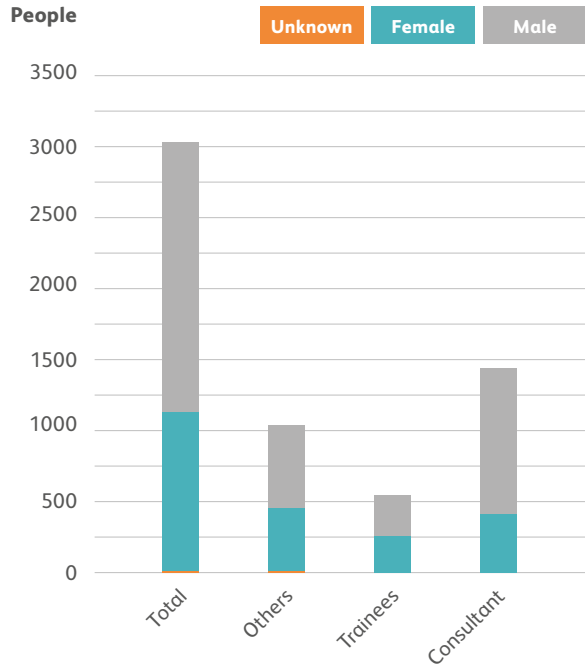
## Expenditure 2020

	2020 £'000s	2019 £'000s
Cost of generating funds	-	26
Examinations	1,110	1,368
Education and Training (inc Skills Courses)	948	1,411
Professional Support (inc Congress and Seminars)	1,001	1,065
National Ophthalmic Database	377	356
Eye journal - joint venture	668	634
Scholarships and Awards	40	46
BOSU	114	141
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>4,258</b>	<b>5,047</b>
<b>Gains on investment</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>378</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>(355)</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Funds brought forward 1 January 2020</b>	<b>12,917</b>	<b>12,874</b>
<b>Funds carried forward 31 December 2020</b>	<b>12,562</b>	<b>12,917</b>

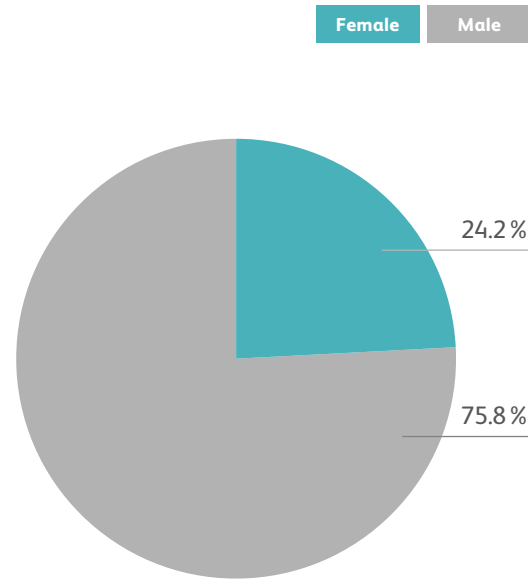


# EDI Report 2020

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Total membership by gender



Council members by gender



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Equality, Diversity &  
Inclusion Report

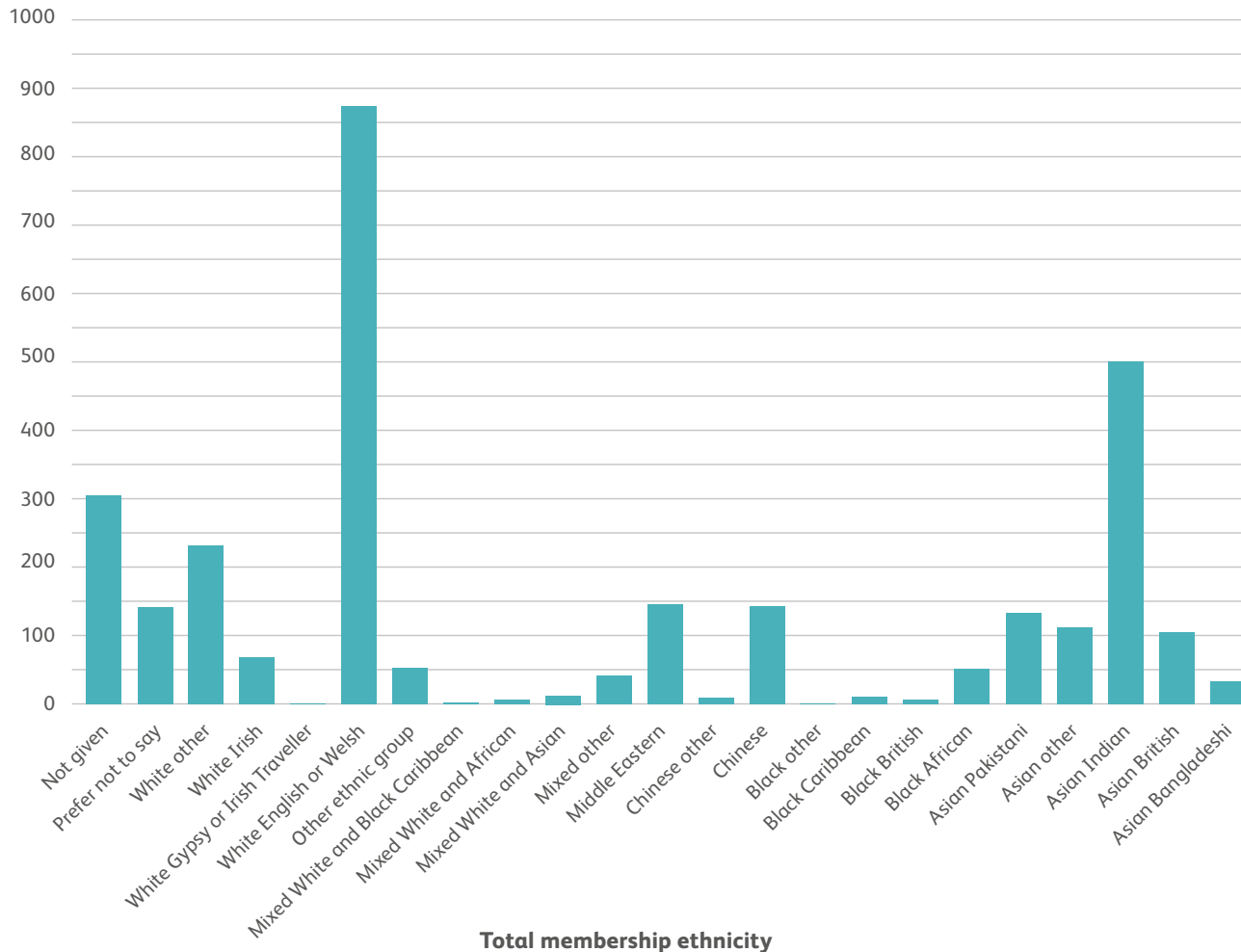
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# EDI Report 2020

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People



Total membership ethnicity



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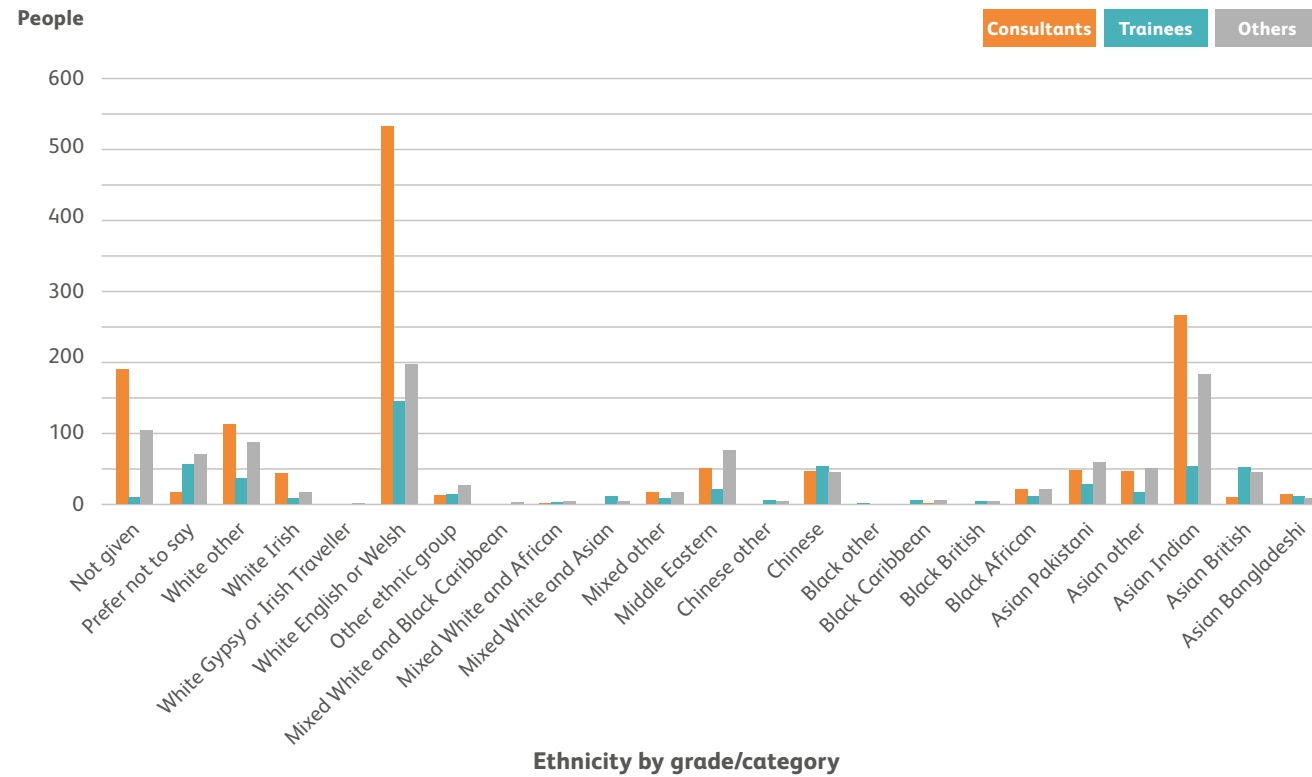
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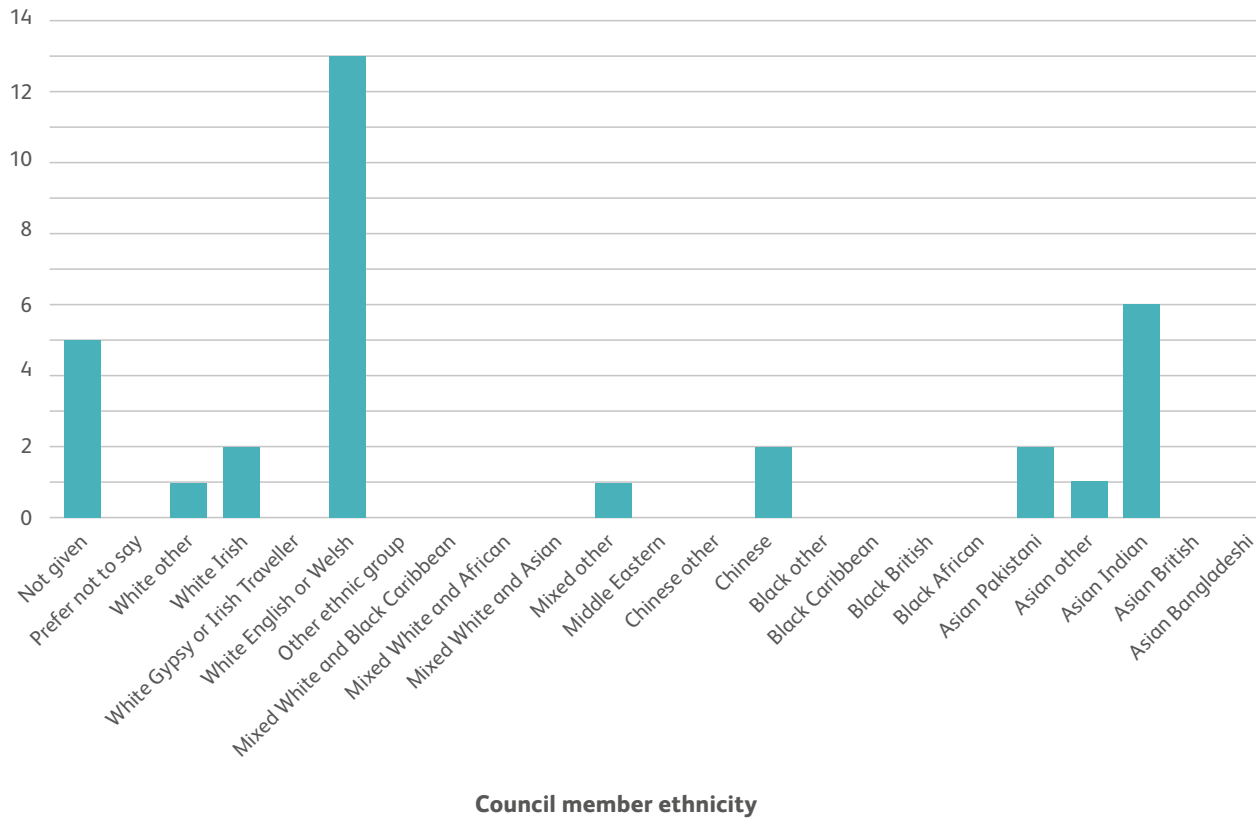
# EDI Report 2020



# EDI Report 2020

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People



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