ACCESS TO JUSTICE
FOR
ETHNIC MINORITIES

A REPORT TO THE SCOTTISH CONSUMER COUNCIL

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CHAIRMAN’S PREFACE

Everyone is equal before the law, but this is of little consolation to the individual consumer who is denied access to the justice system because he cannot find a solicitor with the particular expertise he needs or he feels reluctant to approach a solicitor who may not understand the cultural context within which his problem has arisen or if, as a result of language problems, the solicitor may not understand him.

Our concern with the consumer, particularly the disadvantaged or inarticulate, led us to ask how well the ethnic minority groups in Scotland are served by the legal system. Ethnic minority groups in Scotland make up less than 2% of the population, but that population is concentrated in the urban areas and Glasgow in particular is estimated to have 38% of the Scottish total.

Since no research had been done in this area, the Scottish Consumer Council decided to commission this small-scale pilot study, to try to answer certain questions. Do the ethnic minorities use the services of solicitors in private practice? Are they happy with the service they received? If they do not use solicitors, where do they go for advice, and why? In-depth interviews were conducted with individuals about their experiences and their views. A questionnaire was given to clients of the Glasgow-based Ethnic Minorities Law Centre, asking them why they had taken their case there rather than to a solicitor in private practice. Finally, solicitors themselves were asked how many of their clients and their staff came from ethnic minority groups.

The report suggests that where there were no language problems and where the client was using services within the traditional expertise of the solicitor, such as conveyancing or in relation to business matters, there was a reasonably high level of satisfaction. However, there do appear to be people who are less likely to go to a solicitor, either because solicitors are perceived to lack the necessary expertise in particular areas, for example cases involving discrimination or immigration problems, or because of language problems or a feeling that solicitors will not understand the cultural context within which a legal problem has arisen.

There are various ways in which the provision of legal services to people from ethnic minority groups could be improved. For example, there are practical things that can be
done, such as putting increased resources into interpreting services and ensuring that any documents relating to courts and tribunals and any leaflets and publicity about proceedings in courts and tribunals are available in a wide range of languages.

We believe that it is time that the Law Society of Scotland and the Faculty of Advocates adopted a policy in relation to the provision of legal services to the ethnic minority population. Such a policy would involve collaboration with the Law Schools in Scotland to encourage more young people from the ethnic minorities to enter the profession, and also to encourage all solicitors to develop skills and understanding in areas such as immigration and discrimination law, or at least to know where to refer clients to get expertise in these areas. On a more practical level, solicitors must be encouraged to make their offices more accessible and user-friendly, perhaps by employing more non-legal staff with an ethnic minority background.

Where advice and representation are more effectively provided by advice agencies we believe that the government should ensure that such provision is widely available for all who require it.

I hope this report will encourage debate and a reassessment of the extent to which our legal services are meeting the needs of all Scotland’s people.

Deirdre Hutton
CHAIRMAN

MAY 1993
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The SCC acknowledges the assistance provided by Strathclyde Community Relations Council, who supplied information about ethnic community groups in Glasgow. We are extremely grateful to the groups themselves for their help, and to the individuals who agreed to be interviewed. We would like to thank the firms of solicitors who responded to the questionnaire.

Special thanks go to Maggie Chetty of Strathclyde Community Relations Council who read and commented on the draft report.

The text was edited by Katie Carr, with Elizabeth Macdonald and Lynne MacMillan. Typescript: Muriel Adam and Jackie Stalker.
INTRODUCTION

This is the report of a pilot research project which investigated the experiences which ethnic minorities in Glasgow had in relation to legal services, and their satisfaction with services which they had used. We were commissioned by the Scottish Consumer Council to carry out a limited piece of research. This is the first time that such research has been undertaken, and while the project has been limited by time and resources, we nevertheless believe it has been possible to identify certain key issues and to reach some preliminary conclusions about the extent to which the legal needs of ethnic minorities in Glasgow are being met.

The research was carried out from July to September 1992, and funding from the Scottish Consumer Council enabled us to employ two part-time research assistants, Anita Khurana and Irim Hussain, both graduates of Strathclyde University Law School. In our investigation we contacted two different sets of people. The first and most significant group were those with whom we conducted in-depth interviews. We wrote to ethnic community groups in Glasgow whose addresses we obtained from Strathclyde Community Relations Council. We informed the community groups about the research, and asked them to help us by introducing us to people who would be willing to be interviewed. As a result we contacted 37 people whom we interviewed. While many had had satisfactory experiences, others had had painful ones and it was not easy for them to speak about them. Everyone took the trouble to think about the wider issues as well as sharing their own experiences with us. All the interviews were conducted by the two research assistants. The interviewees were asked about any experience they had of taking a legal problem to a solicitor, and to any other legal agency, and were asked to express their degree of satisfaction with the service they obtained and to comment generally on legal service provision. We found that our sample tended to be in employment and in general of middle class background, and we did not obtain access to those with acute legal problems. The results of these interviews are described in Chapter 3.

Secondly, we contacted the recently established Ethnic Minorities Law Centre in Glasgow, which agreed to assist the project by giving a questionnaire to each of their clients, which they would be asked to fill in, and which would invite them to give us an interview, if they were willing. The questions asked in the questionnaire were of a similar nature to those posed at the in-depth interview, with the addition of questions asking why the respondent had approached the Law Centre for assistance. In the event we did not undertake any interviews with the clients, although 14 questionnaires were returned. Unlike most of the people in the first group, all of the people here were involved in a current legal problem, which would have made any in-depth involvement in our project difficult, and perhaps intrusive. When it became clear that we were not going to get a high return on these questionnaires we approached the Law Centre staff and some members of its Board of Directors, who were well placed to give us their views on the subject of the research, to confirm some of our tentative findings from the data, and to help us form our conclusions. The findings from the questionnaires and the discussions are described in Chapter 4.

The third stage of the research was to send questionnaires to a number of legal firms in Glasgow. We received replies from 28. The results of this part of the survey are discussed in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER 1: THE ETHNIC MINORITY POPULATION IN SCOTLAND

1.1 Introduction

The population of Scotland in general, and Glasgow in particular, is composed of people from various ethnic backgrounds. Immigration to Scotland has a long history. Over the past two centuries there has been significant immigration not least by groups such as Irish, Jewish, Italian, Lithuanian and Polish people. Since the 1940s many immigrants have been of African, Asian, Caribbean or Chinese origin, and problems faced by these groups are likely to be exacerbated by colour and cultural differences. This research is particularly concerned with these groups, who are sometimes described in political and cultural studies as "black" or "of colour". We have used broadly the same definition of ethnic minorities as used in the Scottish Office survey Ethnic Minorities in Scotland.

1.2 Ethnic minorities in Scotland

Since the Second World War most immigrants to Scotland have come from Asia, in particular Bangladesh, Hong Kong, India and Pakistan. There has been a great expansion in numbers since the 1940s. One estimate of the size of the Asian population in Scotland in 1950 is 600. The estimated total size of the ethnic minority population in Scotland in 1981, according to the Scottish Office, based mainly on an examination of names on the electoral register, was 38,000, or 0.8% of the total population. The 1991 census included a question about ethnicity, so that it should be possible to obtain an accurate picture of numbers once the results are finally produced. On the basis of initial information about the census returns it is estimated that the total ethnic minority population in Scotland is in the region of 50,352, or 1.2% of the total population.

1.3 Ethnic minorities in Glasgow

Historically Glasgow and its surrounding area has been where the largest numbers of people from ethnic minorities live, with other significant populations living in the three other main cities in Scotland. It is estimated that in 1991 60% of the ethnic minority population lived in Strathclyde Region, while Glasgow District itself has an estimated ethnic minority population of 19,223, or around 38% of the estimated total ethnic minority population in Scotland.

1.4 Ethnic minority population

While most of the ethnic minority population come from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Hong Kong, there are significant numbers whose ethnic origin is African or West Indian, or who come from an Asian country other than those mentioned above, or some other origin. The Scottish Office estimated that in 1981 65% of the total ethnic minority population in Scotland was from India or Pakistan, 15% from China (mainly Hong Kong), 4% from Africa, and 3% each from Vietnam and the West Indies. The initial estimate from the 1991 census is (rounding down the figures) that 42% are Pakistani, 20% Indian, 20% Chinese, 8%
African and West Indian, 1% Bangladeshi and 6% other Asian. In 1991 the Scottish Office published the results of a survey they undertook in which they interviewed members of the ethnic minority population and of the white population.6 The survey found that 54% of Glasgow’s ethnic minority population classified themselves as of Pakistani origin; 29% as of Indian origin; 15% as of Chinese origin; 3% classified themselves as UK; 2% Bangladeshi; 2% African Asian and 1% mixed race. The survey did not include people of African ethnic origin.

1.5 Language

The Scottish Office survey found that 75% of the men they surveyed said they spoke English fluently, 16% a little and 2% did not speak English at all. Amongst women the declared rate of fluency in English was lower: 52% said they spoke English fluently; 29% a little, and 11% did not speak English at all. Age was another factor which was strongly related to fluency in English. While 91% of the 16 to 24 age group spoke English fluently, the figures fell to 74% of those aged 16 to 34, 61% of those aged 35 to 44, 49% of the 45 to 64 age group and only 23% of those aged 65 or over. Amongst those aged 65 or over 31% spoke English a little, and 35% not at all. Reading fluency in English is also of interest in relation to access to legal services. Those surveyed were asked which language they read most fluently. English was the language most fluently read by 67% of Indian men and 52% of Indian women; by 46% of Pakistani men and 38% of Pakistani women; and by 31% of Chinese men and 21% of Chinese women. These figures strongly suggest that language is still a barrier for many ethnic minorities, particularly among older people, women and the Chinese community.

1.6 General

The Scottish Office survey covered many aspects of the lives of Scottish ethnic minorities, and highlighted differences between the ethnic minority and white populations they surveyed. Some of these differences are relevant to this research. The survey showed that in Glasgow ethnic minority households were twice as likely to own their own homes as white households, while the proportion renting from local authorities was very much less (9% as opposed to 43%). Self-employment was much more common among the ethnic minority population surveyed, with 50% of male and 35% of female householders in work being self-employed, with the equivalent figure for the white population being 9% and 7%. In line with these statistics, our research found that the heaviest reliance on solicitors amongst those we interviewed had been in relation to conveyancing and business matters. In relation to household income, it was estimated that 74% of the ethnic minority population surveyed and 57% of the white population surveyed had an income of under £10,000 a year. This suggests that questions of cost and the availability of legal aid or advice and assistance would be of importance. Finally, the survey found that ethnic minority men were more likely than white men to have suffered verbal abuse at work, the comparative figures being 19% and 7%, although the survey did not ask whether there was any racial motivation. While discrimination was not an issue on which the respondents to our research had consulted solicitors, nevertheless a number of our respondents reported instances, and we found that a significant part of the Ethnic Minority Law Centre’s case load has concerned discrimination.
REFERENCES


3 Bashir Maan, op.cit, p.160

4 By Dr Singh of the Scottish Ethnic Minorities Research Unit, who is currently working on a detailed analysis of the results of the census. We are most grateful to him for allowing us to see his work at this stage.

5 Information provided by Dr Singh of SEMRU.

CHAPTER 2: LEGAL SERVICES AND LEGAL NEEDS

2.1 Legal services

Lawyers are trained to provide legal services, but legal services can be provided by a number of other agencies\(^1\), including advice centres, law centres, trade unions, community organisations, and Welfare Rights Offices. Research has shown that conveyancing in relation to house purchase is the most common reason for people to approach a solicitor, with matrimonial and criminal cases being major grounds for applications for legal aid\(^2\). Research has also shown that there is most likely to be a lack of expertise amongst solicitors and a lack of solicitors willing to undertake such work in the area of welfare law\(^3\). This is an area of professional practice where remuneration may be low for solicitors. Clients tend to need legal aid, which in any event is not available for representation at tribunals. In many cases this gap is filled, often more than adequately, by advice agencies such as Citizens Advice Bureaux, Shelter or UKIAS\(^4\) or by a Law Centre where one exists, or by a Welfare Rights Office.

Ethnic minorities need the same legal services as the rest of the population, and some additional services. Ethnic minorities need the traditional services provided by solicitors, in for example conveyancing, family law and personal injuries law, as well as the welfare law services less commonly provided by firms of solicitors. Additionally in many of these traditional areas, particularly in the area of family law, there may be an extra cultural dimension which may both complicate the legal position and require understanding of the cultural context, thus demanding expertise and understanding from the solicitor. Ethnic minorities may also require assistance in connection with immigration and citizenship, including asylum, for themselves and their families. In addition people from ethnic minorities may suffer discrimination, and may wish to seek legal redress. Immigration and discrimination law are complex and specialised areas, requiring expertise on the part of the adviser, and yet they are the very areas where traditionally solicitors’ expertise has not been strong. Legal aid is not available for representation at tribunals, and research has shown that about two-fifths of applicants to industrial tribunals in cases involving race discrimination receive no advice at all\(^5\).

2.2 Legal needs

There has been a lot of debate and research on the issue of legal needs, and particularly unmet legal needs\(^6\). The difficulty with the concept is in determining whether or not a "need" exists - whether this is defined subjectively (according to whether individuals believe that they have a need) or by objective criteria (reflecting the perceptions of a researcher) - and further in deciding whether or not the need is a legal one. Even where problems of definition can be overcome, undertaking an investigation of the unmet legal needs of ethnic minorities would require a sample survey of ethnic minorities focusing on specific needs, involving intensive and time-consuming research.
The primary task of this research was to examine the level of take-up of and satisfaction with legal services. Traditional services are used by ethnic minorities but a crucial area of service provision is in relation to immigration cases and cases with a discrimination or cultural dimension. There are problems about access, including the lack of legal aid, but if solicitors are to offer a proper service to ethnic minorities they must develop skills in these areas. If those skills are lacking there will be an unmet legal need and, therefore, a serious problem for the individual involved.

REFERENCES

1. Royal Commission on Legal Services (Hughes Commission) (1980) p.19


4. United Kingdom Immigrants Advisory Service See Appendix 1.


CHAPTER 3: LEGAL SERVICES PROVIDED BY SOLICITORS AND ADVICE AGENCIES

3.1 Research aims

Since the aim of the research was to obtain the views of members of ethnic minority communities about the provision of legal services, the central part of the research involved interviews with individuals. The two research assistants personally interviewed 37 people. The ethnic, sex and age composition of the interviewees can be seen in Table 3.1. All of our interviewees, with one exception (a student), were either in employment or business, or were retired. Their occupations can be seen in Table 3.2. As described in the Introduction, the people we interviewed were introduced to us through ethnic community organisations.

Table 3.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic origin</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Female 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Male 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian*</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani*</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>50-59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenyan/Asian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* includes Scottish-Pakistani, and Scottish-Indian

Table 3.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local govt, health service, police</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and professional</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2 References to solicitor

Of the 37 people interviewed, all but two had used the services of a solicitor at some time, some more than once. Of those who had used a solicitor, all but one had gone to the solicitor in relation to domestic conveyancing, although many had also used solicitors for a variety of other services.

While our interviewees had approached solicitors on a number of issues, and many of them had also approached other agencies with legal problems, perhaps not surprisingly given their employment status, few of the references were about welfare issues. Four out of the 37 had consulted a solicitor over immigration issues. The subject matter of references to solicitors can be seen in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3

Subject matter of reference to solicitor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conveyancing</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Debt</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Discrimination</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Criminal</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Consumer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landlord</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tax</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Will</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number of references 70

Other research on legal services has shown that most people choose a solicitor through the network of family and friends. The majority of interviewees had chosen their solicitor on this basis (Table 3.4.)

Table 3.4

Source of reference to solicitor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation by friend/family</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Random</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business reference</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow Pages</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency referral</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others*</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 35

*don't know, nearest home
3.3 References to other advice agencies

As well as solicitors many of our interviewees had also consulted other agencies for legal services, most notably UKIAS on immigration. Solicitors had evidently been consulted far less often on this issue. The numbers of references to such agencies can be seen in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agencies</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK Immigrants Advisory Service</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizens Advice Bureaux</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Minorities Law Centre</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strathclyde Community Relations Council</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commission for Racial Equality</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish Consumer Council</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade Unions</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number of references 35

References to UKIAS concerned, naturally, issues relating to visas and passports, matters of immigration and in addition a bail application. References to CABx were on a variety of matters, including poll tax, insurance, discrimination, landlord and tenant, rates, and criminal law. The references to the Scottish Consumer Council were in the mistaken belief that SCC could assist with individual problems. The references to SCRC and CRE were in relation to discrimination in employment, as were the two references to trade unions. In these four cases, respondents were satisfied, sometimes very satisfied, with the service provided although the small numbers make it impossible to come to any general conclusion about satisfaction with these services. One of the two cases dealt with through a trade union was referred to the union’s solicitors and the respondent expressed satisfaction with this solicitor’s service, contrasting it with the service he had previously received from his own solicitor, who, he said, had acted without consulting him. This is the only apparent reference by an agency to a solicitor, with the exception of a referral by a CAB, which was not acted on.

3.4 Satisfaction with service provision by solicitors

What we were most interested in was the interviewees’ feelings about their experience with legal agencies, particularly solicitors in private practice, and also with hearing their views as to the adequacy of service provision. The interviewees were all involved in their communities, some of them very deeply involved, and it was clear that their views were not based solely on their own experience. Many of the interviewees suspected that although they might have had satisfactory treatment this was probably aided by their fluency in English, and, one interviewee suggested, by ability to pay. Indeed our interviewees were almost all first or second language English speakers (Table 3.6). This meant that one of the possible barriers to communication was greatly reduced.
Table 3.6

**Fluency in English**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First language English</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluent in English as second language</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not fluent in English*</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* First language Punjabi; Ewe; Urdu

We asked our interviewees to rate the services they received on a five point scale, and we asked them to elaborate on their answers. The figures, as expected, cover a range of responses, from the generally satisfied to the extremely dissatisfied. Most of the interviewees were rating solicitors for their provision of conveyancing or business services, and many gave satisfactory ratings, as can be seen in Table 3.7. Two interviewees recounted extreme dissatisfaction both with the initial service (one in relation to conveyancing and the other in relation to family law), and with the "closing ranks" of the rest of the legal profession when they tried to obtain any redress. In both cases they felt that the initial problem with the solicitor arose because they were black and female and, therefore, seen as being vulnerable. Another interviewee who had approached a solicitor about conveyancing and an immigration matter gave a lower rating to the solicitor in relation to his knowledge of immigration. One interviewee who was satisfied with the service provided by his solicitor in relation to conveyancing, business and his will, commented that if he had been complaining of racism the solicitor might not have understood the nature of his complaint.

Table 3.7

**Rating of satisfaction with service provided by solicitor**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Fairly Satisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Very Dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendliness</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample size 35
3.5 Discrimination

Only one of the interviewees had approached a solicitor with a problem arising from racism or discrimination. Another eight identified a discrimination problem which they had not taken to a solicitor: two had taken the matter to their trade union (see paragraph 3.3); one to Strathclyde Community Relations Council (SCRC); one to Commission for Racial Equality (CRE); one to a Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB); two had dealt with the problem themselves; and one said that she had done nothing as her employer was in too powerful a position. One of those who tackled the problem himself said that a legal agency would not have understood the problem. The interviewee who approached SCRC said that he lacked confidence in a solicitor handling the case. Another person who tackled the matter himself said that his reasons for not using a legal agency were cost, unwillingness to exacerbate the problem, and a feeling that white solicitors would not be able to understand discrimination.

We asked our interviewees whether they thought that their ethnic minority status had affected the service they had received from their solicitor. Six thought it had: two of these six stated that their treatment was seriously exploitative. One of the six said that she was unsure whether the solicitor patronised all his clients regardless of ethnic background. The other 29 interviewees did not think their ethnic minority status had affected the service they received.

3.6 Satisfaction with service provided by other agencies

We also asked our interviewees to rate their satisfaction with other agencies. The numbers were much smaller, and while in general there was satisfaction with the service provided by agencies like CABx and UKIAS there was some variation (Table 3.8). The five cases where CABx were given the lowest rating for knowledge included one immigration and one undisclosed problem, while the rest were varied (consumer, divorce, poll tax).
Table 3.8

Satisfaction with service provided by agency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAB</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Fairly Satisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Very Dissatisfied</th>
<th>No Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendliness</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample size 12

*One respondent gave two responses as a result of approaching a solicitor twice.

UKIAS

| Knowledge        | 4              | 5         | 3                | -            | 1                | -          |
| Friendliness     | 2              | 6         | 3                | -            | 2                | -          |
| Understanding     | 2              | 6         | 2                | 2            | 1                | -          |
| Accessibility     | 1              | 6         | 2                | 2            | 2                | -          |
| Language          | -              | 7         | -                | -            | 1                | 5          |

Sample size 13

3.7 General

As indicated, most of our interviewees were very interested in the question of adequacy of service provision, and had views about what was needed to improve matters for ethnic minorities, suspecting that those less fluent in English might be poorly served by the legal services available. We did not supply them with a list of suggestions, nor did we prompt them. Most interviewees responded spontaneously on this issue. Nineteen of our 37 interviewees thought that there should be more ethnic minority lawyers (variously expressed as black, Asian, Chinese or ethnic minority lawyers).

3.8 Language

Ten out of the 19 who thought there should be more ethnic minority lawyers specifically stated that the biggest difficulty for ethnic minorities was language. There was a strongly held view that bilingual lawyers were needed. Most respondents admitted that although language may not have been an issue for them in their particular dealings, it was seen as being a general problem. One of the four interviewees who was not fluent in English, but
had a reasonable understanding, described the language barrier as "the major deterrent", a phrase shared by another interviewee who was fluent in English. Three other interviewees stated that the existing interpreting services should be more accessible and better resourced, and bilingualism was mentioned by three interviewees as being preferable to interpreting services, because of cost and the desirability of direct communication.

3.9 Culture/understanding

Language was not the only reason for the view that more ethnic minority lawyers were needed. The greater understanding, not simply of language, but of culture, of the community and of discrimination was frequently referred to. One respondent pointed to the need for ethnic minority lawyers where sensitive issues of discrimination arose. One (male) interviewee argued that female Asian lawyers were needed to provide a proper service for Asian women including language and "understanding and a sympathetic ear". One of the interviewees felt that sympathy was important, and that this could be developed by any solicitor. It was also stated that more ethnic minority lawyers would bring an expertise and build up confidence within communities.

3.10 Immigration law

Criticism was also made of the law itself, particularly of immigration law. It was referred to as "horrible and built on racism ..... undignifying", "hopeless.. the questions asked are very silly", "discriminating against commonwealth citizens", "discriminatory ..... complex and intimidating", and as leading to British Asians being treated less favourably than Americans, Australians and South Africans. Several interviewees identified a lack of expertise amongst solicitors in relation to immigration, and also in relation to discrimination - which is the reason that they went to UKIAS (which provides a free service). Another area identified by one interviewee where there was a lack of expertise was in relation to domestic violence. This interviewee advocated specialised training in this area. Three other interviewees advocated training of ethnic minorities themselves, by publicising their rights, so that they were aware of their rights and what services were available to them. People will only approach legal agencies with confidence if they are aware of their rights and the existence of legal remedies.

3.11 Difficulties facing ethnic minority lawyers

A very small number of all respondents took such a pessimistic view of the legal system that they stated that at present they would prefer not to consult an ethnic minority solicitor. One interviewee considered that judges were "more likely to discriminate" against an ethnic minority lawyer in court. Two interviewees believed that racism and discrimination within the profession meant that ethnic minority lawyers found it difficult to act combatively. A contrast was made by another respondent with the position in London where there are many solicitors with an ethnic minority background, and where a person from an ethnic minority group could have confidence walking into a solicitor's office. Only one of these respondents
did not advocate the need for an increase in solicitors drawn from an ethnic minority background.

3.12 Conclusions

1. The respondents were likely to take legal problems relating to conveyancing or business to a solicitor.

2. Respondents in general selected their solicitors through personal recommendation.¹

3. Respondents were more likely to contact UKIAS for immigration advice. There was a perception that solicitors do not know immigration laws.

4. Respondents were less likely to take a discrimination problem to a solicitor than to another agency.

5. Respondents in general were satisfied with solicitors’ handling of business and conveyancing matters.

6. Six of 35 respondents felt that they had been treated less favourably by their solicitor because of their ethnic origin.

7. Four of the 37 respondents said that they did not believe white solicitors would understand the nature of discrimination or racism.

8. Eight of the 37 respondents said that the ethnic background of their solicitor would make no difference to them.

9. Half of the respondents said that there was a need for more ethnic minority solicitors.

10. Language difficulties were identified by many respondents as being a serious problem for ethnic minorities.

¹ See also para 5.2
CHAPTER 4: ETHNIC MINORITIES LAW CENTRE

4.1 Introduction

The Ethnic Minorities Law Centre was established in Glasgow at the beginning of 1992. It is funded jointly by the Scottish Office and Strathclyde Regional Council. While based in Glasgow City Centre, its focus is seven Areas of Priority Treatment (APTs) in Glasgow (Anderston, Garnethill, Govan, Govanhill, East Pollokshields, East Woodlands and Woodside) which have a comparatively high ethnic minority population. It is a community-based organisation and its management committee includes a majority of members elected by the organisations which are members of the Law Centre: these are community groups, in the APTs and in Glasgow generally, representing the wide range of ethnic communities in Glasgow. For the size of population which it serves, the Law Centre has a very small staff of only three, a solicitor, an advice/development worker and an administrative worker. The Law Centre was set up to address unmet legal needs, involving both a casework and a training function and deals with any area of law affecting ethnic minorities, but with the intention of specialising in those areas of law less fully covered by solicitors in private practice.

4.2 Research aims

The Law Centre agreed to give our questionnaire to their clients to fill in. However, the Law Centre is very new, and in the summer of 1992 did not have a bank of resolved cases, most of its clients having cases in progress. As a result it was considered inappropriate to interview any of the Law Centre's clients, so in addition to issuing the questionnaire we spoke to staff and individual management committee members of the Law Centre who were well placed to discuss our findings with us. Once the Law Centre has a bank of clients whose cases have been resolved an exercise such as this would perhaps be more productive.

Nevertheless despite these difficulties we still received 14 completed (and partially completed) questionnaires, filled in with the help of the solicitor. One questionnaire related to a husband and wife. The ethnic origins, sex and age of the respondents can be seen in Table 4.1.

The occupations of the respondents can be seen from Table 4.2. Although it is not a large number, there is a clear difference between the employment of the respondents here and those in chapter 3, with a larger proportion of manual workers and unemployed.
Table 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic origin</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td></td>
<td>20-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td></td>
<td>30-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td></td>
<td>40-49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>51-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>61+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business and professional</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catering workers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual and clerical workers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*housewife, retired, student, social worker

4.3 Language

The principal languages of the respondents can be seen in Table 4.3. Twelve of the 15 respondents did not have English either as a principal or as a second language. This contrasts with the respondents in chapter 3 where the majority were fluent in English. Two of the Law Centre workers are bilingual, one speaking Punjabi as well as English, and the other Punjabi and Urdu as well as English. It is obviously impossible that such a small staff could have language skills in all possible languages. Nevertheless the Law Centre has felt that in relation to the Chinese community language is for many a great barrier. Accordingly a Chinese sessional worker is to be employed because of need in that area, so long as funding can be obtained.
Table 4.3

Fluency in English

| First Language English       | 3 |
| Fluent in English as a second language | 2 |
| First Language Punjabi       | 7 |
| Not Fluent in English*       | 3 |

Total 15

* First language Malaysian, Urdu, Hindi

4.4 Subject of reference to the Law Centre

The problems which respondents came to the Law Centre with can be seen in Table 4.4. As would be expected the issues cover a different range of problems from those taken to solicitors in private practice. The practice of the Law Centre is that, where there is no race or culture dimension to a problem and it is one covered by the expertise of the profession at large, cases should be referred outside. A more comprehensive statement of the range of cases undertaken by the Law Centre can be seen below (Table 4.8).

Table 4.4

Subject matter of reference to Law Centre

| Discrimination | 4 | Conveyancing | 1 |
| Immigration    | 3 | Commercial   | 1 |
| Family         | 3 | Consumer     | 1 |
| Housing        | 2 | Negligence   | 1 |

Total number of references 16*

*One person made two references.

4.5 Previous experience of solicitors in private practice

We asked about previous experience of solicitors and other legal agencies, but only six people responded to this question so that we cannot generalise from these answers. One of the respondents had used a solicitor on two occasions.
Table 4.5
Satisfaction with service provided by previous solicitor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>Fairly Satisfied</th>
<th>Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Very Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendliness</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*One respondent did not give a rating to accessibility.

We asked those who had not taken their problem to a solicitor why they had not. We gave some possible reasons as prompts. Respondents were invited to give all reasons, not simply one. Again six respondents answered this question. The results can be seen in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6
Reasons for not approaching solicitor with problem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Felt intimidated</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt would not understand</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.6 Use of Ethnic Minorities Law Centre

We also asked why the respondent had chosen to approach the Law Centre. We gave a number of possible reasons as prompts, and again asked respondents to indicate all reasons. The results are shown in Table 4.7. Almost all respondents gave as one of their reasons for approaching the Law Centre the ethnic minority connection. Ethnic minority connection and language were two separate responses, and the numbers citing each do not coincide, 11 referring to the ethnic minority connection and five to language. The lack of coincidence between these two answers indicates that while language might be an element in what is understood by an ethnic minority connection it is by no means the only factor. This is a point that we developed in discussion with the Law Centre staff (paragraphs 4.8 - 4.11).
Five respondents cited the expertise of the Law Centre as a particular reason: these were respondents whose cases involved discrimination (3) and immigration (2). Again, although absolute numbers are small, this corresponds with the finding in Chapter 3 that interviewees were less likely to approach a solicitor in private practice with a problem connected with immigration or discrimination than to approach another agency.

Table 4.7

**Reason for consulting Ethnic Minorities Law Centre**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic minority connection</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfaction with previous lawyer</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total number of reasons** 36

4.7 Ethnic Minorities Law Centre case load

The Law Centre has itself been monitoring its caseload in its first year, both in relation to subject matter and the APT and other areas in which it operates. We have been allowed to use their own figures in order to get a fuller picture of the nature of the cases that the Law Centre has been dealing with (Table 4.8).

Table 4.8

**File per subject matter**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debt</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Social Security)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total** 143 100%

(Ethnic Minorities Law Centre 5 October 1992)

This confirms the dichotomy in the use of legal services between conveyancing and business problems on the one hand, and cases with an ethnic element on the other hand. The problems being taken to the Law Centre would seem to be largely of a welfare nature, with a striking emphasis on immigration problems and, to a lesser extent, discrimination matters
which, from our interviews reported in Chapter 3, were less likely to be taken to a solicitor than to another agency. Several people had been ringing up from outside the Law Centre's area of operation seeking advice about discrimination. Together immigration and discrimination make up 55% of the files. Debt, family and housing are all broadly welfare issues in which there is likely to be an ethnic dimension. An example of where cultural differences could play a part would be where a child was referred to a Children's Hearing, where sensitivity to different approaches to discipline, marriage, etc might be relevant.

To explore these issues further, we talked to the staff at the Law Centre, and three Management Committee members. We discussed with them their view of legal service provision for ethnic minorities. Four main points emerged.

4.8 Language

Firstly, language is still an important factor for many, particularly older people, and while it is a factor that affects all ethnic communities it is particularly acute in relation to the Chinese community, where there is a sizeable number of people who have little or no English. This barrier was particularly emphasised by a Committee member who was from one of the Chinese community organisations. In addition, language is also an important issue for women who have come from Asia. In the absence of bilingual solicitors, the use of interpreters is very important. Both the staff and one of the Committee members suggested that even where there was no ethnic minority solicitor, legal offices could be more multi-racial in character in general, so that clerical or support staff might both have a language skill and also create an encouraging atmosphere. The solicitor at the Law Centre is white Scots while the advice worker and administrative assistant are of ethnic minority origin.

4.9 Culture/understanding

Language was not the only barrier to communication identified. There are also cultural barriers. Like our interviewees the Committee members saw a need for bilingual lawyers, not solely for the language skills, but because they would have more understanding of the social context in which the clients operated, a factor which would be most acute where issues of discrimination were involved. Clients would feel they could explain their problem more easily, and would also be less concerned that they would not be understood. Lack of contact at community level means that most lawyers who are not of ethnic minority origin do not understand, for example, the persistent and wide-ranging nature of institutional discrimination. Hence ethnic minorities do not go to them for these services. Conversely if such contact existed some of the barriers to lack of understanding could be broken down.

4.10 Atmosphere

A third barrier identified was the sometimes intimidating atmosphere created by some legal firms. While multi-racial offices would be a major step towards promoting confidence in ethnic minority clients, the creation of an inviting atmosphere and taking the time to listen and understand and to explain would be significant.
4.11 Information

The fourth issue identified was a lack of knowledge amongst ethnic minorities of the relevance of the legal services provided to them and their needs. There was, therefore, a need to inform ethnic minorities of their legal rights, the remedies open to them, and the legal services available. While the communities had a role to play in getting this information across, the established institutions could play a positive role in developing this awareness through multi-lingual and multi-racial initiatives, including positive action initiatives to attract ethnic minorities into law.

4.12 Conclusions

1. Ethnic minorities are more likely to approach the Ethnic Minorities Law Centre regarding immigration matters than about other topics.

2. A significant part of the Ethnic Minorities Law Centre case load relates to discrimination.

3. A majority of the respondents did not speak English fluently.

4. A majority of the respondents gave as one of their reasons for consulting the Ethnic Minorities Law Centre the ethnic minorities connection.

5. Cost was a factor for a majority of the respondents in deciding to consult the Law Centre.
CHAPTER 5: SURVEY OF SOLICITORS

5.1 Research aims

We wrote to 48 firms of solicitors in Glasgow asking them to reply to a number of questions designed to see the extent to which they provided a service for ethnic minorities and to ask their views on this subject. We selected them by writing to firms in three postal code districts in Glasgow which we understood to have a relatively large ethnic minority population (G41, G42, G20) and we also wrote to a number of city centre firms, some large, some medium sized, and some small. Twenty eight firms replied including one response, perhaps surprisingly, from a firm in an area with a high ethnic minority population advising us that they could not help because they had no experience of ethnic minorities. We are very grateful to those firms who took the trouble to fill in the questionnaire, and to answer our questions.

Firms were asked whether they had any ethnic minority partners: none had. They were also asked whether they had any ethnic minority assistants: one firm had a trainee who was of ethnic minority origin, and two firms had ethnic minority staff, one a receptionist and the other a para-legal.

5.2 Clients

Firms were also asked to indicate their areas of practice, and, where appropriate, their areas of specialism. There was a wide range of firms; some tended to specialise quite heavily in, for example, corporate and commercial work (3 firms), or criminal work (3 firms); and the majority had a broad spread of practice, though some of them (7 firms) did not deal with criminal cases. We included in the list of possible areas of practice discrimination and immigration. Ten firms indicated that they dealt with immigration cases, while the rest did not. Six firms indicated that they dealt with discrimination cases, while the rest did not. However, it was interesting that in response to the question asking them to describe the problems their ethnic minority clients came to them with only four specified immigration, and none specified discrimination (see para 5.3 and Table 5.3).

The firms were asked to estimate what percentage of their clients were from ethnic minorities (See Table 5.1). Two firms, one local and one city centre firm, said that they had no ethnic minority clients; one firm estimated less than 1%, while a further three estimated 1 - 2% (2 of these were city centre firms and the other was a local firm, the last being a criminal practice, as was one of the firms who had no ethnic minority clients). Of those with the largest estimated ethnic minority client group, the two highest (55% and 50-60%) were local firms, as were the other three firms with a high proportion of ethnic minority clients (30%, 30% and 33%), one of which was a practice with branches in the city centre and the localities. Firms were asked to describe the ethnic composition of their ethnic minority clientele. Most firms described their clients' ethnic origin as Asian, or Indian and Pakistani. The five local firms who had the highest proportion of ethnic minority clients described their clients as Asian (2 firms), as Indian/Pakistani, as Pakistani/Chinese, and as Pakistani and a range of other nationalities. Two firms, both local - one with 30% and the other with 20%
proportion of ethnic minority clients - indicated that, in addition to Pakistani (in one case) or Indian/Pakistani (in the other), they had clients from a wide range of nationalities, including Iraqi, Khurdish, Iranian, Nigerian and Moroccan. One of these firms indicated that they acted in political asylum cases. Eight firms identified their ethnic minority clients as of Chinese ethnic origin, in one case exclusively, in the others in addition to Asian (2 firms), Pakistani (1 firm) or Indian/Pakistani (4 firms).

Table 5.1

**Ethnic minority clients**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated percentage of clients</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 2%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 60%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannot estimate*</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* includes 1 "a lot"

Firms were asked how their ethnic minority clients were introduced to them, and also asked how, in general, people find out about them. The majority of the firms' clients came to them by personal referral (see Table 5.2), with a number of firms drawing their clientele from the locality which, in these five cases, had a significant ethnic minority population. The means of referral of ethnic minority clients appears to coincide with that in the population at large, so that where firms stated that their ethnic minority clients came to them by personal referral, they also stated that this was the way in which their clients in general came to them, and where clients generally came from the locality, so did ethnic minority clients.

Table 5.2

**Referral of clients**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Word of mouth*</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work Dept.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other solicitors</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*includes family, friends, existing clients and reputation
5.3 Types of cases

The firms were asked to describe the kinds of problems which their ethnic minority clients brought to them. The answers (see Table 5.3) indicate that there is a wide spread of legal problems, common to them and the population as a whole, with a preponderance of conveyancing and business issues, but in addition four firms indicated that they were consulted about immigration matters.

Table 5.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clients’ problems</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conveyancing</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matrimonial</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debt</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4 Interpreting services

The firms were also asked whether they had access to an interpreting service for those who need it; what that service was if they had, and, if they did not, whether they saw a need for such a service and would use it if available. The replies indicated (see Table 5.4) that five firms knew of and used Strathclyde Interpreting Services. Of these four were local firms and one a city centre firm which indicated that they used the service for their Chinese clients. Eight firms indicated that if interpreting were necessary the client’s own family or friends would usually act as interpreter, all of these firms saying that they felt that there were no problems associated with interpreting. Two firms employed staff (one Asian, the other Chinese) who in addition to their other duties were able to interpret where necessary. Another firm used local community contacts in case of need, but acknowledged that there might be problems in this area if such contacts were not available to a firm. A sizeable minority did not use interpreting facilities and did not feel that there was any need for them, while three firms felt there was a need for such a service but were unaware that any existed.

Table 5.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use of interpreting facilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friends/relatives of client</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strathclyde Interpreting Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacts of firm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not but would use</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.5 Unmet need

We also asked the firms whether they thought there was an unmet need for legal services for ethnic minorities in Glasgow (see Table 5.5). We did not define unmet legal need so that some firms may have had difficulty in answering this question. Nine were either unsure or did not comment. One of those, however, sent a covering letter indicating the firm’s commitment to working with their ethnic minority clients but stating that their clients now manage to obtain equal service to Scottish clients, the second and third generations being fluent in English so that in their view interpreters are not needed as often as before. Eight firms answered "no", five of those expressing the view that there was adequate provision available from existing solicitors and no difficulties in obtaining advice. Another "no" respondent stated that there is always a solicitor to provide the required service, but felt that there might be difficulty in finding that right solicitor. Of the remainder, six felt there was an unmet need, while a further five stated that there might be an unmet need in certain specified respects. Amongst those firms whose ethnic minority clients were 10% or over as a proportion of total clientele (15 firms), five respondents stated there was an unmet need, three that there might be an unmet need, five that there was not, and two were unsure. The reasons given for the views of those who felt there was an unmet need can be seen in Table 5.6, and the areas in which the other firms thought that there might be an unmet need can be seen in Table 5.7.

Table 5.5

**Unmet need for legal services for ethnic minorities in Glasgow**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perhaps</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know/no comment</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.6

"Yes" respondents' reasons for thinking there was unmet need

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for interpreting facilities</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of awareness of rights and services available</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sample size</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* One solicitor gave 2 reasons
Table 5.7

"Perhaps" respondents' reasons for response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural differences</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of availability of legal aid generally</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample size 5

Amongst those who answered "yes", one firm highlighted the difficulty found in immigration cases in persuading the Scottish Legal Aid Board that an increase in authorised expenditure was reasonable and justified, stating that this has had an effect on the amount of assistance which they could give to clients with applications for asylum or assistance in having family members brought to this country or on matters which were peripheral to the application. Three of the firms highlighted the need for interpreting facilities, one firm emphasising this in relation to their Chinese clients. That firm's view was that an interpreter is required to make life easier for both solicitor and client, and that there should be a system set up for explaining advice to clients, so that fears that a client might miss an important, but complicated, legal point might be allayed. This point was also made by one of the other firms, who expressed concern that the client might not always be receiving accurate advice where there were language difficulties. Three firms identified a lack of awareness of rights, and a lack of knowledge of available remedies. For one firm this was particularly acute for ethnic minority women who may be unaware of their rights, particularly in the matrimonial field. Another firm stated that many clients who receive legal aid only approached the firm because of a referral by a social worker without whom they would not have received legal services because of a lack of awareness of them. The third firm identified a lack of awareness in the contractual and pre-contractual field. One of the "no" respondents had also identified a possible difficulty in finding a solicitor who had the necessary expertise.

Amongst those who felt there might be an unmet need in particular areas, three felt there might be a gap in relation to immigration, because of a lack of expertise. One of these firms specified that this was the only area in which there might be unmet legal need, since ethnic minorities have the same legal problems as the rest of the population and should be treated in the same way. Another firm (a local firm with 30% of ethnic minority clients) felt that cultural differences might make advising more difficult, where Scottish solicitors were ignorant of other cultures. The fifth firm made a general point that the new restrictions on legal aid meant that there would be a general unmet legal need, although they were not aware of whether this might have a particular impact for ethnic minorities.

At present legal aid is not available for representation at tribunals (including Immigration Appeal Tribunals and Industrial Tribunals) and as a result much of the work of advising and representing clients is undertaken by other agencies as described in para 2.1. The Commission for Racial Equality has proposed that legal aid be available in race discrimination cases², and we asked the firms whether they thought legal aid ought to be available for representation at tribunals. Perhaps not surprisingly, 21 of the respondents answered that they thought it should, one qualifying this by stating that it should only be
available in complex cases. Two respondents answered "no", one gave a "don't know" response, while the remaining four did not comment (Table 5.8).

Table 5.8

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No comment</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.6 Conclusions

Although based on a relatively small sample, there does appear to be some confirmation of some of the findings of previous chapters, and we draw some conclusions here.

1. The respondents were consulted by ethnic minorities on general issues, in particular conveyancing and business matters.

2. A minority of the firms had been consulted about immigration.

3. The respondents did not report that they were consulted about discrimination by ethnic minorities.

4. Most of the respondents' ethnic minority clients came to them by personal recommendation.

5. A majority of firms use interpreting services. While the most common source is through the client, a significant minority use Strathclyde Interpreting Services, their own staff or community contacts.

6. A small number of firms did not know of any interpreting services, but would have used them had they been aware of them.

7. Six of the 28 firms replying believed that there was an unmet need for legal services for ethnic minorities. A further five thought that there might be a problem in certain respects.

8. Lack of expertise in immigration matters, the need for interpreting facilities and lack of awareness of rights and remedies were identified as possible areas of need.

9. Twenty-one of the 28 respondents believed that legal aid should be available for representation at tribunals.
REFERENCES

1 See Appendix 1. One firm commented that where Strathclyde Interpreting Services were requested by the solicitor (rather than the client) it was expensive.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusions

This piece of research was a limited assessment of the use made by people from ethnic minority groups in Glasgow, primarily of services provided by solicitors in private practice, the types of services provided, levels of satisfaction and possible areas of unmet need. Although the numbers of consumers and service providers surveyed are small, it is nevertheless possible to reach some tentative conclusions and make some recommendations about how the provision of legal services to people from ethnic minorities might better meet their needs.

It would appear from the research that the traditional services offered by solicitors, such as conveyancing and commercial matters, were those most frequently used by respondents. Perhaps this can be explained by the fact that among the respondents recruited through ethnic community organisations, but not those from the Ethnic Minorities Law Centre, over 70% were either in business or employed. 95% of the respondents (again excluding those from the Law Centre) had used a solicitor. The researchers had found it very difficult to make contact with potential respondents (except through the Ethnic Minorities Law Centre, where numbers were small) who were unemployed. Choice of solicitor was made on the basis of personal recommendation in 23 cases (60%), with the main criterion for choice being the effectiveness of the solicitor.

Solicitors are not perceived as having the necessary expertise in relation to immigration, so that ethnic minorities may be more likely to approach another agency which is perceived as having the expertise, such as UKIAS and, more recently, the Ethnic Minorities Law Centre. Since legal aid is not available for representation before the Adjudicator or the Immigration Appeal Tribunal, solicitors may be reluctant to develop an expertise in this field.

Similarly, with problems of discrimination, it appears that ethnic minorities are less likely to approach solicitors. Again, there appears to be a perception of lack of expertise. As with immigration, perhaps this is because of a reluctance to develop such expertise because legal aid is not available for tribunal work. Secondly, there is a perception that solicitors who are not from an ethnic minority background will not understand the nature of discrimination or racism and that it will be difficult to explain issues to them. Discrimination, or a cultural dimension, may also enter into many of the traditional legal areas, and particularly into welfare issues, and this also requires particular understanding. For example, referrals of children from an ethnic minority background to Children’s Hearings may well have a cultural dimension of which advisers should be aware.

Most of the respondents were fluent in English and did not report a problem in relation to language. However, when asked for their views on the difficulties generally met by ethnic minorities in obtaining access to legal services there was a view that their fellow community members with poor English might be poorly served by the legal services available. Nineteen of the 37 respondents consider there is a need for more lawyers who are themselves drawn from ethnic minority groups and ten of these specifically state that the biggest difficulty for ethnic minorities is language, and that for some it may be an absolute barrier to legal
services, particularly for some elderly people, women, and amongst the Chinese community. Bilingual lawyers are preferred to interpreting services, because this would permit direct communication between solicitor and client.

The research also revealed a need for ethnic minority lawyers for cultural reasons. There is a general view that lawyers from ethnic minority groups would have more understanding of the social context in which the clients operate, a factor which would be most acute where issues of discrimination are involved.

6.2 Recommendations

It is clear that there is a need for well publicised interpreting services. This is not happening at the moment because Strathclyde Interpreting Services (see Appendix 1) are unable to fully meet the present demand.

1. The need for increased resources for interpreting services should be given further attention. Available interpreting services should be widely publicised.

Since other research has shown that reading fluency is less than conversational fluency, it is important that written information on legal services should be available in the languages spoken by ethnic minorities in Scotland. This has particular implications for court documents, general information leaflets as well as Law Society leaflets and publicity, and leaflets produced by other advice agencies.

2. Documents relating to proceedings in courts and tribunals, information leaflets and publicity materials produced by the government, the Law Society of Scotland and by advice agencies should be available in the languages spoken by ethnic minorities in Scotland.

While respondents consider there is a clear need for more lawyers from an ethnic minority background, it is also recognised that there is a need for members of the legal profession generally to develop a greater understanding of the problems of ethnic minorities, perhaps by developing contacts at community level.

3. The Law Society of Scotland should adopt a clear policy in relation to the provision of legal services to ethnic minority groups. The need to increase the number of ethnic minority lawyers in Scotland should be addressed in consultation with the Scottish Law Schools, bearing in mind the particular needs of women solicitors with an ethnic minority background. Such a policy could also encompass the encouragement of more direct communication between solicitors and ethnic minority groups, perhaps through seminars or joint initiatives. This would provide white solicitors with opportunities to gain an understanding of cultural and discrimination issues.
4. The Faculty of Advocates should also consider adopting such a policy.

5. The Law Society of Scotland and solicitors in their continuing efforts to develop a more user-friendly environment should consider ways in which solicitors' offices could be made more approachable and less intimidating to the ethnic minorities.

The respondents appear more likely to consult solicitors in private practice about traditional areas of law such as conveyancing or on business matters. Respondents are more likely to consult UKIAS for immigration advice, since it is perceived that solicitors are not knowledgeable in this field, and respondents are less likely to take a discrimination problem to a solicitor.

6. Government should increase the provision of, and improve access to, immigration and discrimination advice and representation through advice agencies such as the UK Immigrants Advisory Service, Law Centres and Citizens Advice Bureaux in Scotland.

7. There should be a recognition by the legal profession of the need to develop skills and understanding in immigration and discrimination law. Above all, solicitors should have access to expertise in these areas within the legal profession, and their general awareness should be increased so that they recognise the circumstances when there is a need for greater expertise. We recommend that the Law Society of Scotland and the Faculty of Advocates should consider, with the Law Schools and with advice agencies with particular expertise in these areas, ways in which both an awareness of these areas of the law and the development of greater expertise among lawyers could be encouraged.

A concern was expressed by a majority of the solicitor respondents that legal aid was not available for tribunal representation. A call for the extension of legal aid in a climate of restraint is unlikely to meet with a positive response although research has shown that representation at tribunals does increase the chances of success. Such representation is at present undertaken by various agencies which in many cases have developed an expertise in particular areas of tribunal work. Citizens Advice Bureaux, Welfare Rights Offices and Law Centres provide assistance over a wide range of cases, while more specialist help is available from organisations such as Shelter or UKIAS.

8. We consider that central government should develop a strategy for ensuring that adequate representation assistance is available for those requiring it.

There is a concern that there is a lack of knowledge amongst ethnic minorities of the relevance of legal services to their needs. Clearly this is an issue for ethnic communities themselves, but also for established institutions such as the Law Society of Scotland, the Faculty of Advocates, the Scottish Office and local government.
9. The Scottish Office and local government should, in association with ethnic minority community groups, actively explore appropriate methods of informing ethnic minority groups of their legal rights.

10. The Law Society of Scotland and the Faculty of Advocates should, in consultation with ethnic minority groups, actively promote the development of legal services for ethnic minority groups and improve the provision of information about these services to members of the ethnic minority groups to enable them to gain access to them.

A very small number of respondents volunteered comments on the perceived racism of the legal system itself.

11. Further research should be undertaken in this area in the light of the potential seriousness of such a criticism of the legal system. In particular, it would be very valuable to investigate the perceptions of the legal system of solicitors with an ethnic minority background. Such research could also investigate the extent to which ethnic minorities are represented on lay tribunals.
APPENDIX 1

United Kingdom Immigrants Advisory Service

UKIAS is a voluntary independent body which was set up in 1971 after the Immigration Act 1971, and is funded by the Home Office under s.23 of that Act. It has its head office in London, with regional offices in major cities including Glasgow. Its function is to advise on immigration matters in relation to applications, and also to give representation in appeals before Adjudicators and at the Immigration Appeal Tribunal. There has been an appellate authority in Glasgow since October 1992. The Glasgow office is the only Scottish office of UKIAS. The Glasgow office wish to develop surgeries outside Glasgow, but the funding has not been available for this. Clients, therefore, have to travel from all parts of Scotland to Glasgow. The service given by UKIAS is free to all clients. The representative function is carried out by Immigration Counsellors. In the Glasgow office there are two such counsellors, who have to deal with approximately 25-30 appeals to the Adjudicator a month. There is also an Adviser who deals with the large numbers of inquiries they receive. Between them the two Counsellors have Bengali, Punjabi and Urdu. In other cases they will request assistance from Strathclyde Interpreting Services. If interpretation is necessary before the Adjudicator, arrangements are made by the appellate body itself. Political asylum cases are not dealt with by UKIAS, but are dealt with by a separate body, the Refugee Legal Centre, which was once part of UKIAS, but is now independent. UKIAS estimates that it represents in 90% of cases in Scotland, a slight decline from an estimated 95% being due, it is thought, to uncertainty about UKIAS's future. The Home Office has been undertaking a review and the report of a Working Group is currently with the Home Office. The UKIAS will continue under a new name.
APPENDIX 2

Strathclyde Interpreting Services

This service was set up in June 1980, after a two-year research project. It was initially funded by Urban Aid and administered by Strathclyde Community Relations Council, and had its grant renewed every three years, until 1988 when Strathclyde Regional Council decided to absorb it as part of its services. It is administered by the Social Work Department. It was the first of its kind in the UK and since its establishment it has helped to advise other local authorities establishing a public interpreting service. The service tries to cover every language spoken and written in the Strathclyde Region. It deals with requests for translation and interpreting. The service is available 24 hours a day 365 days a year. It is available for individuals, for public bodies and for private bodies. It does not charge unwaged, students or those on Family Credit. It will operate in any area but especially in essential areas, being particularly concerned with hospitals, courts and social security. Courts and police pay the interpreters direct. The DSS are invoiced by SIS. If their services are requested by someone in the private sector (eg a solicitor) they will be invoiced for the SIS services (if the person is on legal aid it would be expected that an increased authorised expenditure would be looked for to cover this). There are three Interpreting Officers and one Administrative officer. SIS operates by employing sessional interpreters and translators. SIS runs its own in-house training. New recruits are assessed before being admitted to training. After training the sessional workers are monitored by the full-time officers before being allowed to operate alone. When SIS was set up in 1980 publicity material was issued to all possible client organisations, statutory and non-statutory (including the Law Society of Scotland). The service has not been publicising its services currently because its resources are stretched to the limit (and beyond). Because of demands on its very limited resources, there could be an 8-10 week wait for translation.
Glasgow Translation and Interpreting Services

This is a new body which is Urban Aid funded initially for four years. It started in August 1992. It has four full-time members of staff, three interpreters (covering Chinese, Urdu and Punjabi) and one administrative worker. Its services are not available to the public, but are available to all 17 departments of Glasgow City Council, their services being used particularly by the Housing Department. They have also been used by the Environmental Health Department, the Public Relations Department, the Museums Department, Libraries and Parks and Recreation. They will be using sessional workers for languages not covered by their full-time staff, and are currently developing a training course for them.
QUESTIONNAIRE 1 (Ethnic Minority Law Centre clients)

Strathclyde University Law School are undertaking research on behalf of the Scottish Consumer Council to investigate the extent to which the legal needs of ethnic minorities in Glasgow are being met by current provision. It would be very helpful to our research if you would take the trouble to fill in this questionnaire and return it to the address at the end of the questionnaire. Any information that you give us will, of course, be treated in strictest confidence. Thank you for your assistance.

Q1. Please indicate what the problem you approached the Law Centre with concerns. If the problem covers more than one area please indicate all.

A1. 
   a. immigration
   b. discrimination
   c. family
   d. debt
   e. social security
   f. employment
   g. faulty goods
   h. housing: tenancy
   i. housing: buying and selling
   j. criminal
   k. other (please specify) 

Q2. Had you previously taken this problem to another legal agency such as a solicitor or Citizens Advice Bureau?

A2. No (see question 3)
    Yes (see question 4)

Q3. (If answering No to question 2.)
    Why did you not approach another legal agency? Please tick all that apply.

A3. 
   a. did not know any agency
   b. had previous unsatisfactory experience with agency (see question 5)
   c. felt they would not understand particular problem
   d. felt that language would make communication difficult
   e. felt intimidated
   f. other (please specify) 

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Q4. (If answering Yes to question 2.)
What was the agency?

A4.

a. solicitor
b. Citizens Advice Bureau
c. UKIAS
d. Law Centre
e. other (please specify) ____________________________

Q4A. If you approached this agency with a different problem to that which you brought to the Law Centre please indicate what area the problem was concerned with. If the problem covers more than one area please indicate all.

A4A.

a. immigration
b. discrimination
c. family
d. debt
e. social security
f. employment
g. faulty goods
h. housing: tenancy
i. housing: buying and selling
j. criminal
k. other (please specify) ____________________________

Q4B. What ethnic background was the adviser in the other agency from?

_________________________________________________________________

Q4C. How would you describe the service given to you by that other agency? Please tick the appropriate box: 5 means very satisfactory; 4 satisfactory; 3 fairly satisfactory; 2 not satisfactory; 1 very unsatisfactory.

A4C. Knowledge of subject matter:

Friendliness of service:

Accessibility (availability):

Understanding of problem:

Language communication:

Cost:
Q5. (If answering b. to question 3) What was the agency?
   a. solicitor
   b. Citizens Advice Bureau
   c. UKIAS
   d. Law Centre
   e. other (please specify) ______________________________

Q5A. If you approached this agency with a different problem to that which you brought to the Law Centre please indicate what area the problem was concerned with. If the problem covers more than one area please indicate all.
   a. immigration
   b. discrimination
   c. family
   d. debt
   e. social security
   f. employment
   g. faulty goods
   h. housing: tenancy
   i. housing: buying and selling
   j. criminal
   k. other (please specify) ______________________________

Q5B. What ethnic background was the adviser in the other agency from?

Q5C. How would you describe the service given to you by that other agency? Please tick the appropriate box: 5 means very satisfactory; 4 satisfactory; 3 fairly satisfactory; 2 not satisfactory; 1 very unsatisfactory.

A5C. Knowledge of subject matter:

Friendliness of service:

Accessibility (availability):

Understanding of problem:

Language communication:

Cost:
Q6. All.
Why did you approach the Law Centre with your problem? Please tick all that apply.

A6. a. cost
b. ethnic minorities connection
c. expertise in particular area
d. dissatisfaction with previous adviser
e. might be able to obtain advice in non-English language
f. other (please specify) ______________________________________

Q7. How did you find out about the Law Centre?

A7. a. mosque, temple, gurdwara or other religious/cultural centre (please specify) _______________________________

b. community organisation (please specify) _________________
c. advice centre (please specify) _____________________________
d. CRC ____________________________________________
e. other (please specify) ________________________________

Q8. Personal information

A8. a. male     female
b. age ________
c. occupation _______________________________________
d. ethnic origin ________________________________________

African
African/British
Bangladeshi
Bangladeshi/British
British
Caribbean
Caribbean/British
Chinese
Chinese/British
Indian
Indian/British
Pakistani
Pakistani/British
Other (please specify)

e. principal language _________________________________

If you would be prepared to assist the research project further by giving a confidential interview, please complete and return the attached slip.
Research project on legal services

Name ________________________________________________________________

Address ________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

Telephone number ________________________________________________

J M Ross
EMS Project
Law School
University of Strathclyde
173 Cathedral Street
GLASGOW
G4 0RQ
QUESTIONNAIRE 2 (Solicitors)

Ethnic minority legal services

Questions to solicitors (four pages)

1. Information about firm

How many partners are there in the firm?

How many assistants are there in the firm?

Are there any partners or assistants of an ethnic minority* origin, so far as you know? If so, how many? If possible could you indicate which ethnic minority.

Partners:

Assistants:

How many branches of the firm are there?

*To assist in determining "ethnic origin" the following is a partial list of possible categories:

African
African/British
Bangladeshi
Bangladeshi/British
British
Caribbean
Caribbean/British
Chinese
Chinese/British
Indian
Indian/British
Pakistani
Pakistani/British
Other (please specify)
2. Categories of work

Could you please indicate the services offered by your firm from the attached list by placing a cross next to each service offered. Could you also indicate the first five categories of work undertaken by your firm in terms of income and time, by placing a 1 beside the most important, 2 beside the second most important and so on.

Matrimonial  Debt
Housing      Reparation
Employment   Criminal
Wills        Conveyancing
Tribunals    Immigration
Discrimination Social Security
Consumer protection Commercial

Are any of your partners or assistants specialists? If so, what do they specialise in?

Are there any categories of work which you or your firm refuse to undertake? If yes, what are they?

What are your reasons for such refusal (eg lack of expertise; uninteresting; uneconomic)?

Did your firm provide representation at any of the following during 1990-1991? Please tick if appropriate.

Social Security Appeal Tribunal  Industrial Tribunal
Employment Appeal Tribunal     Housing Benefit Review Board
Immigration Appeal Tribunal

Does your firm offer legal aid? What percentage of your cases would you estimate are funded by legal aid?

If you estimate the percentage is below 20%, why is this? (eg specialised in other areas; financial constraints; lack of demand)

Do you think legal aid should be available for tribunal proceedings?
3. Clients

Can you estimate how many and what percentage of your firm's clients come from an ethnic minority background?
If possible, could you indicate which ethnic minority?

What kind of problems in general do these clients come to you with?

How are ethnic minority clients referred to you? (eg family, friends, Citizens Advice Bureau, UKIAS, Law Centre (please specify), other (please specify))

Do you give a free initial interview?

Do you have access to an interpreting service for those who need it? If yes, please describe the service. If no, please indicate whether you see a need for such a service and whether you would use it if available.

In general, how do people find out about your services? (eg family, friends, advertising, referral, other (please specify))

In general, where do clients come from to see you?

4. General

Are any of your solicitors associated with CAB or a law centre?

Do you think that the CAB or law centre compete for your clients?

Do you think there is an unmet need for legal services for ethnic minorities in Glasgow? Please give reasons for your answer.