

## Statement from PDREC following EU Referendum

The staff and Board of Trustees at the Plymouth and Devon Racial Equality Council would like to issue this message of support, solidarity and reassurance to all the diverse residents of Plymouth and Devon.

Following the results of the U.K. Referendum, we have been carefully monitoring both local and national news concerning a rise in reported racist incidents, and listening carefully to the stories and experiences of our own clients. It is also very important to note that many distressing racist incidents are not reported, for a variety of reasons. Many of our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and individuals, (including those from Eastern Europe) have expressed feelings of hurt, fear and bewilderment at the apparent rise in xenophobia and racism following the decision to leave the EU. It would seem that some far right extremists are using this decision to legitimise racial violence and intimidation, and there have been a number of reports of this nature in our own locality.

PDREC, however, stands firm with its partner organisations, including local BAME communities, to publicly condemn any act of hate, and to reiterate our message that all are welcome within our vibrant and multicultural locality, which has been enriched by people from a huge range of cultures and ethnicities. We offer our range of services, including a free and confidential advocacy service, to anyone who feels they have been a victim of racial abuse, and we urge anyone who witnesses such an incident to report it to ourselves or the police.

We are aware that the majority of local people are appalled by this apparent wave of bigotry, and that, by our collective actions, we can challenge and defeat such ignorance, and instead continue to concentrate on working with our neighbours to induce harmony and mutual respect.