The Windrush Generation

London, United Kingdom

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This portfolio encompasses every possible aspect of the Windrush generation. There is a specific focus on the history of the generation which gives a solid understanding of who these people are before moving onto the current scandal that has been at the forefront of UK media for the most of early 2018. We included a vast history of the Windrush generation, personal stories and responses from both the government and the public in regards to the current situation while also looking at what this all means for immigration and the cultural impact on a much broader scale.
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Introduction

As a result of the losses during the Second World War, the British government began to encourage mass immigration from the colonies of the British Empire and Commonwealth to fill shortages in the labour market. The Windrush generation became those who migrated from the Caribbean between 1948 and the 1970’s. At the time, the British Nationality Act 1948 gave citizenship to all people living in the United Kingdom and its colonies, and the right of entry and settlement in the UK.

Our focus on the Windrush generation was decided on due to the scandal which has been at the forefront of London media as well as June being the 70th Anniversary of Empire Windrush pulling up to the docks of Tilbury with 1027 passengers who would soon become English settlers. 802 of these passengers were Windrushers who created families, started working and have spent the majority of their lives living in London. This topic is also important because it highlights the impacts of immigration on a much larger scale that is visible not only in the UK, but all around the world.

The graph below shows the population of the top 5 boroughs in London with the highest Afro-Caribbean population (as of the 2011 census) and compares them to the total population of the borough.
The next major topic we have written about in this portfolio is the outbreak of the Windrush scandal at the end of 2017. This scandal has been at the forefront of London media well into the middle of 2018. Most of the cases are involving the treatment of Windrushers at the hands of the Home Office and the impacts of immigration policy initiated by the current Conservative government. We have delved into the response from the government, and personal stories to better explain what is happening in London. By focusing on this topic we are hoping to enlighten people, not only British but on a much larger scale, about what is happening. This scandal is a clear example of the problems facing immigrants and refugees all over the world.

Linked here is a timeline we created that illustrates the scandal from its beginning in November 2017 up until the first week of June when this portfolio was completed. At the end of this portfolio, you will also find a print out of the backend of the timeline.

Timeline: https://cdn.knightlab.com/libs/timeline3/latest/embed/index.html?source=1B0jl46G8koO8W hM53sgeODA25cX5UvrqaKYB1s2HsSc&font=Default&lang=en&initial_zoom=2&height=650
What was the Windrush Generation?

The Windrush generation refers to immigrants who moved to the United Kingdom from its colonies and other members of the commonwealth in the Caribbean during the period 1948-1971. The majority immigrating from 1948-1962. During this period approximately 172,000 people from the west indies had immigrated to the United Kingdom. This was primarily a result of changing government policy as a result of the second world war.

Following the near economic collapse and immense loss of British lives (bordering on 500,000 people in total) caused by the war the country was in dire straits. One of the solutions proposed by the newly elected left wing government under Clement Attlee was to push for increased immigration from the commonwealth and colonies to bolster the labour market. This in part led to the British Nationality Act 1948.

The British Nationality Act gave British citizenship to everyone living in the UK and most importantly for our purposes, those living in its colonies. Created in response to increasing need for immigration and as a response to the Canadian Nationality Act, this created a situation where any citizen of the British Empire could travel and live freely within the Empire. Many citizens the world over would take this opportunity to immigrate to the UK.

Primarily this was in search of wealth and security which was supported by Government campaigns at the time. Despite the German bombing campaigns, London was still one of the largest and richest cities in the world at the time. In addition, repair works, infrastructure, military command and Clement Attlee’s newly founded National Health Service meant that the job market in London was open for business.

So, with jobs available and legal right to do so, immigrants started pouring in to the capital. Transport boats from the Caribbean became a regular sight in London. The most notable of these was the HMT Empire Windrush which is where the name comes from.
Namesake and history of the HMT Empire Windrush

Originally a German Cruise ship built in 1930 by Hamburg Süd christened the (MV) Monte Rosa, the HMT Empire Windrush had a long and storied career. Though a cruise ship before the war, it was used by the Kriegsmarine primarily as a transport vessel. Highlights include; Serving as a recreational ship for the infamous Battleship Tirpitz, deporting Norwegian Jews as part of the transport process to Auschwitz and finally carrying 5000 German refugees from the Polish city of Gdansk and its surrounding areas in a hasty retreat from the advancing Soviet army.

Following the war, the MV Monte Rosa was taken as a part of the war reparations by the British, renamed to the HMT Empire Windrush (named after a minor tributary of the Thames) and used to move Indian, Asian and ANZAC troops who had served in Europe back to their home countries. Despite being known in relation to and the namesake of the Windrush generation, the vessel only did one such journey from the Caribbean to the UK.

The journey started as a routine trip from Australia to the UK via the Atlantic. The Windrush had docked in Kingston, the capital of Jamaica for the collection of some on-leave servicemen. Everything was going well; the only issue was that the ship was rather empty. The ship had obtained a certificate as a Class 1 passenger vessel and was listed as a total capacity of 1571 passengers. By the time it had docked in Kingston, there was less than 1/3rd of this amount in attendance.

So, with beds to fill and nobody to fill it, opportunity arose. Adverts were placed all over in Kingston offering a place for a price. Whether a stroke of capitalistic lust or simply taking advantage of a simple opportunity, this advert would change the DNA of British society for years to come.

The advert was a resounding success with 539 residents of Jamaica and 139 from Bermuda taking up the offer. In total 802 passengers came from the Caribbean out of a total passenger
count of 1027. Curiously enough 66 Polish passengers from Mexico were recorded, a result of fleeing through Siberia and travelling via the pacific. They had been granted citizenship in the UK under the Polish Resettlement Act 1947.

Arriving in the Port of Tilbury (part of the Port of London) on June 21st, 1948, the HMT Empire Windrush and its 1027 would forever impact British society, bringing in a new era of multiculturalism. Following their arrival, many more would take the same journey, eventually resulting in around 172,000 immigrants by 1962.

Cultural shift

By the 1960s the people of the West Indies had successfully planted themselves deep into British society. 60’s Britain was a cultural melting pot. War was being raged between the hardcore leather wearing rock and rollers with their pompadours abound and the suit wearing soul listening Mods. The impact of Afro-Caribbean culture was clear to see. As a result of the new kids on the block following Windrush the music scene had changed completely. Soul, Jazz and Calypso were becoming widespread. Several stars were born. One of which being Lord Kitchener (Aldwin Roberts) who had come to London on the Empire Windrush. His song [London is the place for me](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=95z8cQ5Cz5Q) became a smash hit in 1948 and by 1950 he was a regular performer for the BBC.

Another “musical” revolution was the boom of black gospel churches to Britain. These churches promoted traditional Afro-Caribbean ideals and culture whilst also fostering a sense of community. These were notable for their more musical take on sermons, with the service being much more involved than that of a traditional English church. Though they existed before Windrush, the sudden arrival of thousands of Afro immigrants reinvigorated the black gospel scene. To this day, many gospel churches still exist, determined to keep the soul of their culture alive through faith and community.
Another cultural icon of London to come out of the Windrush Generation is the Notting Hill Carnival. Currently attracting one million visitors annually, the carnival is a symbol of Windrush and of Black British culture.

Started in 1959 by Claudia Jones in response to the Notting Hill Race Riots of 1958, an anti-west Indian riot primarily involving white working class ‘Teddy boy’ (a subculture similar to the Mods and Rockers, focused on bringing back Edwardian ideals) youths who had become increasingly racist due to the increasing black population in the area.

The riot was sparked by an attack on Majbritt Morrison, a white Swedish woman who had gotten into a public argument with her Jamaican husband. Due to the proposed “impurity” of
the inter-racial relationship she was attacked by the white nationalist populace. That night many of said youths took to the streets in anger and began the riot, targeting black families and businesses.

Still, the community persevered and the following year the “Caribbean Carnival” was launched. Over the years it morphed into what is now known as the Notting Hill Carnival, a true symbol and representation of the Windrush generation, the difficulties they faced and their incredible perseverance in the face of adversity.

During the following decades, the Windrush generation would face hardship after hardship. This is best epitomised by the Notting Hill and Brixton riots.
Riots and race relations: The Afro-Caribbean community following the Windrush

The Notting Hill Race Riots in 1958 and the Brixton riots of 1981, 1985 and 1991 are prime examples of how the Windrush generation impacted on British communities. With increasing integration into currently existing communities in London, tensions continued to mount; eventually leading to violent outbursts. This occurred on both sides. The Notting Hill riots were perpetrated by anti-black nationalists whereas the Brixton riot occurred in response to institutionalised racism and the failure of the police to protect the Afro-Caribbean community.

Notting Hill Race Riots

Notting Hill, in West London, is a highly divided area even to this day. Prior to the 1940s Notting Hill was a very wealthy, very white area. However, repeated bombing by the Luftwaffe during the second world war and the destruction it caused lead to a significant devaluing of the area. Following the arrival of the Windrush generation, this meant that the area developed a large Afro-Caribbean community due to the new cheap housing in the area.

Whilst Notting Hill became home to many new immigrants the housing provided was atrocious, even by the standards of the 1950s. One such example is that of Southham street which contained 2400 residents in 140 houses. That’s 17 people per house.

Another example of the terrible living situation of Notting Hill is the infamous local landlord Peter Rachmann. Rachmann had a huge monopoly on the area and was portrayed in advertisements and media as a man who would help immigrants find new homes. He was indeed responsible for putting immigrants into housing however he was also known to overcharge and exploit his tenants who did not have the same protections as their white British counterparts. Following a police investigation, it was discovered that Rachmann had 33 companies under his belt to maintain his property empire and was also heavily involved in prostitution. The term Rachmanism entered the Oxford English Dictionary as a noun for “The exploitation and intimidation of tenants by unscrupulous landlords”.

These examples show the poor living conditions experienced by the Windrush generation. On top of this, the Windrushers experienced increasing racism by the white population in the area. This all came to a head during 1958 in what would be called the Notting Hill Race Riots.

Race aggravated assault was not new to the area but the event that started it all was the assault of Swedish Majbritt Morrison on the 29th August 1958. The day before, Morrison had been seen on the street arguing with her husband (a Jamaican black man) Raymond Morrison. Several white youths took it upon themselves to intervene, leading to a small scuffle between them and several friends of Raymond. The following morning, Majbritt was attacked by the
same youths that had “come to her aid” the night before. They beat her with several weapons whilst calling her various slurs relating to her interracial relationship.

That night 300 white youths took to the streets. Many of these were Teddy’s boys (a subculture focused on Edwardian style and values). They proceeded to attack West Indian houses and businesses along with assaulting residents on the streets. This continued for 6 more nights, ending on the 5th of September.

During this time 140 people were arrested, of which 108 were charged. Most were charged with Grievous Bodily harm, affray and riot and possession of offensive weaponry. Of the 108 arrested, 72 were white, 36 were black.

The riots and poor police response lead to a fracture between the Afro-Caribbean community and the metropolitan police. The court sentencing is famous to English law students as an example of over-sentencing as a form of deterrence. In addition, and most importantly, the riot would set the stage for several more riots to occur over the following decades, the most famous of which being the Brixton Riots.


Brixton, located in Central London in the borough of Lambeth is known today for its large multicultural community, the lion’s share of which are of Afro-Caribbean descent. Similar to Notting Hill the area was significantly destroyed during the second world war. This lead to cheap housing being built which the new wave of immigrants flocked to.

During the 1980s Britain was going through a recession caused by poor long term financial planning in the 1970s. This was felt by all people in the United Kingdom but especially the poorer immigrant communities. Of these, it was again the Windrush generation at the forefront of the issue.

The Brixton community was especially hit hard, the recession compounded the issues with poor housing, high level of crime in the area (10,626 crimes were recorded in 1980 alone) and high levels of unemployment. Further strife was caused a few months prior to the 1981 riot when several black youths tragically burned to death in a house fire. The fire was reportedly caused by a racially motivated arson attack and many people nationwide believed the police response to the fire to be less than sufficient.

This lead to the “Black People’s day of action”, a march of 5000-25000 people from Deptford to Hyde Park (about 17 miles). The march went well, however a clash with the police occurred in Blackfriars. Though only a small incident, newspapers at the time used it to push anti-immigrant/black stereotypes.
Though tensions were rising in Brixton, it wasn’t until April that the rioting would start. It all started on April 10th when Michael Bailey, a black teenager was stabbed and the police response to it. Bailey had been attacked by three black youths and in his urge to get away ran into some local police officers on patrol. The officers, seeing the man charging towards them decided to tackle him to the ground. Michael eventually got away and the officers pursued. Eventually he was caught and the police started to apply basic medical aid whilst waiting for transport to a hospital for the man. A police vehicle arrived and Bailey was placed in the back seat, covered in blood at this point. To the public onlookers it had looked as if the officers had attacked Bailey themselves. This misunderstanding would be the cornerstone of the first Brixton riot.

Bailey was pulled from the police vehicle by onlookers trying to save the boy. As more and more rumours that the police had attacked Bailey spread, the now massive crowd began to turn on the police, harassing them all day. In response, the police cracked down on the area, adding even more fuel to the fire.

Over the next two days, riots would erupt. The police initially failed to form an effective response, despite calls for help being sent out to the rest of the Metropolitan police force. Over the course of the riots, the rioters, armed with bricks and Molotov cocktails burnt down over 25 buildings (the fire department being unable to respond due to the danger). Eventually the police force managed to gather enough troops as 1000 officers descended upon Brixton at 9:30pm on April 11th, by the early morning this had grown to 2500 officers. By the end of April 12th, the rioting had stopped.

In total 299 police officers and 65 civilians were injured, 117 vehicles destroyed, 117 buildings damaged and 28 totally destroyed and finally 82 arrests were made.
The legacy of the first Brixton riot continues to this day. Public distrust of the police and government grew, especially after then Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher claimed that the riots were not justified in the slightest. The PM’s statements of “No one should condone violence. No one should condone the events … They were criminal, criminal.” In response to the leader of the local council claiming that the police presence in Brixton “amounted to an army of occupation” was particularly controversial.

The event and response further divided the Afro-Caribbean community and the government. In part, this also lead to two subsequent riots happening in 1985 and 1995.

**Riot of 85’**

The riot of 1985 occurred following the shooting of Dorothy “Cherry” Groce, a mother of six who was part of the original Windrush generation. She was shot in the chest during a police raid on her house. The police had been given a warrant to raid the house in order to arrest her son Michael Groce.

Michael Groce, twenty-one at the time, had spent 15 times in prison and had over 50 convictions by 1985. Now he runs motivational workshops and goes around to schools giving talks on how not to end up like him. The events of 1985 would change him to his very core.

That night Michael Groce was sought after due to his possession of a firearm. The night before, he had been involved in an argument with his girlfriend. In his rage, he fired off his gun (a sawn-off shotgun) into a wardrobe. When a police officer responded to the gunshots, he was confronted by Mr. Groce. Groce proceeded to place the gun into the officer’s mouth but didn’t execute him, allowing the officer to escape. Michael then went into hiding.

The following day, the police raided his mother’s house looking for him. Expecting an armed man, the officers were equipped with firearms and riot gear. In the process of the raid,
Dorothy Groce was shot by officers. It’s still debated to this day whether this was truly an accident.

As news of the shooting of Mrs. Groce filled the news, the anti-police sentiment the Brixton community had built up following the riot of 1981 started to boil up again. Eventually riots would break out again, responding to the accusation that the police were institutionally racist and the shooting of Mrs. Groce.

Rioting was similar to the 1981 riot with heavy use of petrol bombs and destruction to property. Continuing for several days as the police force tried to contain the situation. The most notable event during the riot was the construction of a wall of cars, placed on their side as a defensive barricade from the police. From behind this wall protestors would lob Molotov cocktails at the police whilst destroying the properties that they had cordoned off.

Eventually the riot died down, over 200 arrests were made and over 50 shops and cars were burnt or destroyed.

In the aftermath of the riot, not much would change. The government issued its typical statements condemning the riots whilst saying they probably shouldn’t have shot Mrs. Groce. Further inquiries into the event did not occur till 2014 following the death of Mrs. Groce from kidney failure following an infection. The coroner called for an inquiry into whether or not the shooting of Mrs. Groce lead to her dying prematurely.

The inquiry and subsequent report found that the police were both responsible for the death of Mrs. Groce (who had been paralysed since the event and still had shrapnel in her spine) and responsible for the initial shooting. The police commissioner at the time made a public apology and stated that things would change.

The Brixton riot of 1985 and victim blaming of the police force (until 2014, 29 years later) is clear evidence of the institutionalised racism that the Windrush generation experienced. Whether or not the shooting of Mrs. Groce was “justified” in the situation, the response during and after the riot was abhorrent and did nothing to ease the tensions between the Afro-Caribbean community and the government.

The riot of 1995

The riot of 1995 is a similar story to the ones before. Wayne Douglas, a 26-year old black man died in police custody in Brixton. According to the reports this was due to a heart failure. Douglas had a heart condition which was exasperated by aggressive questioning and reportedly being tied up and left on the floor on four different occasions.

A peaceful protest formed which eventually turned violent after the police force attempted to block the protesters in. Thankfully, the riot only lasted for 5 hours. Only 22 people were arrested.

Sara Maryniak and Cathal Charker
Though a small riot, the event is still notable for showing how little had changed in Brixton despite the turbulent times of 1981 and 85. Interestingly people at the time seemed to not only blame the death of Wayne Douglas for the riot but the continued gentrification of Brixton (which was slowly but surely pushing Afro-Caribbeans out of the area). The government’s response is best summed up by the deputy PM at the time Michael Hasseltine who, according to the New York Times, said “efforts to improve Brixton would continue”, which can be read as a statement supporting the continued gentrification of Brixton.

How the past reflects the present

The Notting Hill and Brixton riots (as well as the conditions that caused them) are crucial to understanding the lives of the Windrush generation and their children. These are people who have constantly been targeted by racists, harassed and abused based on their skin colour and financial means and let down by their government.

By looking at the past, a clearer picture of the ongoing scandal can be found. Is it really a surprise that a government who suppressed and turned a blind eye to the exploitation of Afro-Caribbean minorities for so long would also create the hostile environment policy? The same government that let Rachmann charge minorities more or denied racial motivation for attacks over and over again is the same government that now deports people for not having correct documentation that the government itself failed to provide.

Institutionalised racism is at the heart of the Windrush scandal and for all the claims that the government may make, the riots and their causes are, at least, damning evidence against them.
The Windrush Scandal- What is it?

London is known for being one of, if not the most multicultural city in the entire world. However, recent events suggest that minority groups are not as accepted as it may seem.

In both 2016 and 2017 prejudice was focused on Eastern Europeans, encouraged by Conservative campaigning during Brexit. Now the common enemy has changed to those who came to Britain from the 1940’s up until 1973, with rights guaranteed under the 1971 Immigration Act: the Windrush generation.

As a result of the losses during the Second World War, the British government began to encourage mass immigration from the colonies of the British Empire and Commonwealth to fill shortages in the labour market. The British Nationality Act 1948 gave citizenship to all people living in the United Kingdom and its colonies, and the right of entry and settlement in the UK.

Up until recently the Windrush generation has lived, worked and created families within Britain just like any other British family. The only difference here is that many of these people who immigrated to Britain have no paperwork to prove their citizenship.
The Windrush scandal began when Paulette Wilson sat down in November 2017 and spoke to the Guardian about her treatment at the hands of the UK Home Office, and the impact of their new policy on her livelihood. The government had threatened to send her back to Jamaica – a country she has not seen since she left at the age of 10 in 1968.

Since this more and more people have been coming forward and sharing stories of isolation, confusion and constant worry at the hands of the UK government.

In response to this the people of London have come together unexpectedly. There have been huge protests, online petitions and several organisations and charities offering pro bono work and donations to help those affected.

Lawyer from Immigration Advice Services (IAS) Aleksander Bucholski says, “there’s such wide outrage about this within London and on a national scale at the moment, it’s important for society as a whole because it’s obvious to see that many Londoners are not happy. The scale of the entire event is insane and hopefully has the capacity to impact immigration on a broader scale.”

**Policy and Government Actions**

After the Second World War around 50,000 people arrived from Caribbean countries by invitation from the UK Government. These same people now face homelessness, unemployment, lack of health services and even deportation from the same government.

Under these new laws put forward by the Conservatives, there will be a crackdown on those who have not formalized their residency status or no longer have the documentation to prove it. This includes a large majority of the Windrush generation.

As result of this some have been denied access to healthcare, lost their jobs, and been threatened with deportation.

This, according to Aleksander Bucholski, is a complete waste of time. These people have no impact on the economy of Britain, despite the Conservatives repeatedly telling their voters just that.

“At this point, it really is the government seeing how far they can go. It’s not in anyway justifying the numbers of the economy, it’s ideologically driven. Nothing to do with jobs, university, the NHS or education; migrants don’t get benefits so that can’t be the blame either.”

“Letting them stay doesn’t do anything to the economy, really. The Government don’t understand how great the situation is, but personally I believe that the scandal is a result of policy from the Conservatives, and I think this was their goal all along.”
The “result of policy” Bucholski is referring to is the amended immigration policy and the hostile environment policy.

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<th>Hostile Environment Policy</th>
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<td>- Originated 2009, came into effect in October 2010</td>
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<td>- A set of administrative and legislative measures designed to make staying in the United Kingdom as difficult as possible for people without leave to remain</td>
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<td>- Works through both the Immigration Act of 2014 and 2016 to require landlords, the NHS, charities, community interest companies and banks to carry out ID checks resulting in negative consequences for those in the windrush generation as they don’t have the necessary documents</td>
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<td>- During her time as Home Secretary, Theresa May said, “the aim is to create, here in Britain, a really hostile environment for illegal immigrants.”</td>
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<td>- In February 2018 a review of the policy was called as many believe it’s too harsh, and unfair</td>
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<td>- The Act makes provision to prevent private landlords from renting houses to people without legal status and to prevent illegal immigrants from obtaining driving licenses and bank accounts</td>
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<tr>
<td>- This makes it near impossible for people who are a part of the windrush generation without paperwork to do almost anything.</td>
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<th>Immigration Act 2016</th>
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<td>- The Act focuses on illegal migration and punitive measures for those who don’t “play by the rules”</td>
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<td>- It is stricter than the 2014 Act as it puts more pressures on employers and landlords to come forward about illegal immigrants.</td>
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The problem follows the ending of a previous system of Commonwealth citizenship and free movement wherein status was conferred by law on people to safeguard them. Some migrants did not acquire the necessary papers and this is the main issue that we are seeing now. These people do not have proof of being able to live in the UK.

This issue of lack of papers, and the scandal, was then exacerbated by Theresa May’s hostile environment policy, under which, the New Statesman’s Stephen Bush says:

“Landlords, hospitals, businesses and civil society have been forced to proactively prove that their employees, tenants and service users have the right to be in the United Kingdom.”

The policy was introduced to achieve the Government’s lower migration targets, by making “living in the UK so unbearable that immigrants will decide to leave of their own accord,” says Bush.

On top of the changes to policy, the elected cabinet have been consistently losing numbers. Amber Rudd, the fourth person to leave the cabinet in the last six months, resigned at the end of April. Ms. Rudd resigned as Home Secretary after telling MPs that the Home Office did not have targets for removing illegal immigrants.

However, less than a week later the Guardian published a letter in which Ms. Rudd set out her “ambitious but deliverable” aim to deport 10 percent more illegal immigrants over the "next few years" to Theresa May.

In replacement of Amber Rudd, MP Sajid Javid was appointed the new Home Secretary. Since beginning this role at the end of April, Mr. Javid has been noted saying that he will be
“taking a closer look” at the hostile environment policy as a part of a much wider government review.

What’s next

Currently, the government is up in arms about what happens next. Whilst tackling immigration and lowering the numbers of immigrants is still at the forefront of the agenda, Theresa May is calling for a government review.

This review will have access to all documents involving the Windrush scandal backdating to 2010. But it’s still unclear whether this will help to tackle immigration or assist the Windrush generation in any way.

At the moment it is a waiting game for those potentially impacted by the deportation, homelessness and unemployment that has come as a result of the scandal. It is important that this issue stays at the forefront of people’s minds, because this is just the tip of the iceberg of immigrations issues worldwide.

Bucholski believes the Windrush scandal represents a much deeper problem.

“The windrush generation are currently the common enemy, but it’s a nationwide - even global - issue that has been impacting people worldwide. But fortunately it has avoided British citizens until now which is why this is such a big deal. The home office heavily miscalculated how much people would care and I’m excited to see where this goes.”
Windrush scandal attempts to push out generation, brings Londoners closer together

Amidst the sunny days that have been felt by the people of London in early May, there has been a dark cloud hanging over the city. The Windrush scandal has rocked Londoners in every which way, but in a surprising turn has also brought the people closer together.

The scandal has ignited Londoner’s support for the Windrush generation through online petitions, protests, crowdfunding, and pro bono representation. The Windrush scandal has its roots in racism and immigration - both issues that have impacted the UK, Europe, and the world for sometime. This particular scandal has hit very close to home for many of the people involved.

The Windrush scandal is affecting around 50,000 people who came to live, work and settle in the UK from the Caribbean colonies from the 1940’s up until 1973 as a response to work shortages from the Second World War (as well as the generations that followed). These people are now being targeted as they do not have proof of residence in the UK and are facing the risk of unemployment, homelessness and even deportation.

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The Black Cultural Archives (BCA) in London, the only national heritage centre dedicated to collecting, preserving and celebrating the histories of African and Caribbean people in Britain, has been operating since 1981, aiming to share stories of the Windrush generation amongst the people of London.

Due to the scandal, visitors have been steadily increasing at BCA as more and more people are willing and wanting to be educated about what is happening.

Press Secretary for the BCA, Monique Baptiste-Brown says, “it really is something special to see how people are reacting. Not only in the rise of people visiting us, but the ways in which people are protesting, signing petitions, and how other organisations are offering their services to help others.”

**Protests, petitions and pro bono**

In early May, protesters took to the street in an attempt to get Theresa May to resign over her handling of the Windrush scandal. The focus of the protests was to show solidarity with the Windrush generation, to help appeal the 2014 Immigration Act, to demand compensation for those deported and threatened with deportation, who lost housing, jobs and benefits, and to call an end to the hostile environment policy.

Shadow Home Secretary MP Diane Abbott also amongst the crowd of hundreds. She blames Theresa May for the Tories’ hostile environment policy, and believes that there needs to be repercussions.

The protests sparked immediate interest from the government - soon after they occurred Theresa May called for a government review - but there have been no real changes as of yet.
Another form of support is an online petition which has reached nearly 180,000 signatures. This petition was created by British social activist and commentator of Jamaican heritage, Patrick Vernon. The purpose of this petition is to bring about an amnesty for the Windrush generation, to “call on the government to stop all deportations, change the burden of proof and establish an amnesty for anyone who was a minor. The government should also provide compensation for loss & hurt.”

In an email response Mr. Vernon says, “it’s a really important petition. We aimed for 100,000 signatures and have nearly double that.”

He also stated that in the UK when a petition receives over 10,000 signatures the government needs to respond within a certain amount of time, and currently the government has less than 30 days to do so. Mr. Vernon and everybody who has signed so far are eagerly awaiting their response.

Another way that support has been shown is through a vast array of legal, immigration and mental health support clinics offering their services for free to anyone who is a part of the Windrush generation.

The Windrush Foundation, Immigration Advice Service (IAS), Joint Council for Welfare of Immigration and the Black Cultural Archive of London are just a few organisations and charities offering their services pro bono.
A majority of these services revolve around legal advice and helplines for those impacted. But this advice goes a long way.

Lawyer from IAS, Aleksander Bucholski, says, “it’s so important that we, and others, are doing this. There is a lot of confusion, and a huge lack of confidence for these people. You have to remember that half of them are poorly educated, and even illiterate and British immigration law is one of the hardest to comprehend in the world.”

He continued, “what we do is ask them immediate questions, we try to assist them by explaining the current legal situation and setting the facts straight for them as a majority of the ones we’ve spoken to have a lot of misheard information. If the person who calls us leaves more reassured with their current situation, we’ve done our job.”

These services are working and providing people with the support they need. One helpline set up after the Windrush cases emerged has received more than 11,500 calls so far. More than 4,482 of these were identified as possible Windrush cases and so far 526 people have now received documents confirming their right to be in the UK.

The BCA has held several events throughout April and May where people have been invited to listen to speakers from the Windrush generation share their story, and so far it’s been a success.

Ms. Baptiste-Brown expresses her excitement for how involved people have been.

“You don’t realize how much of an impact just everyday people can have, or those who offer free help and advice. It is the difference between somebody going from feeling isolated and alone to feeling supported, which makes all the difference in the world.”

None of the organisations involved have a time frame for their services on offer, and after the government review in July it is expected that more people will come forward needing assistance, and Londoners will continue to come forward and offer their support to those most in need.
June marks the 70th anniversary of the first ship, Empire Windrush, arriving from Jamaica into Tilbury, London. This ship carried 1027 passengers, of which roughly half would become British settlers and fill the labor shortages that appeared after the Second World War.

This first ship heralded the start of multicultural Britain as we know it today, and it is the very event that Jim Grover had in mind when he was accepted into the Windrush community in South London and started photographing their everyday lives to showcase for the world to see.

Grover began this exhibition by joining in on “bones” or dominoes (as we know it) games played by first and second-generation Windrushers. While the media has been focused on stories of hardship and prejudice, Grover’s focus of the exhibition is on the unique community and relationships inside of it.
For this exhibition to work, Grover focused on stories from first-generation immigrants. He tracked down Alfred - the 92-year-old old is one of only six people alive who were aboard that very first ship in 1948 into Tilbury.

Alfred told Grover that his seventy years in Britain have been, “brilliant… really brilliant. It’s been a beautiful life. If I could wind the clock back and was telling into Tilbury once again there’s nothing I’d do different… absolutely nothing.”

Read the next piece to get a more in-depth story of Alfred’s life.

For his project, Grover spoke to more than 100 Windrushers and captured intimate and moving photos on 70 separate occasions over eleven months. There’s images of families cooking together, men playing dominoes, women dancing and personal stories about traditions and beliefs. You can see all of Grover’s photos here.

Grover began taking these photographs before the Windrush scandal even broke out, and now he has published the collection for the world to see in time for the 70th anniversary.

“After learning about the lives they lead when you get to know them they are the most warm-hearted generation, they are kind, supportive and connected people with lovely values. They’re truly delightful and hospitable people - you have no idea - and what is happening now is truly tragic.”

**The 70th Anniversary**

Empire Windrush pulling into Tilbury June 22nd, 1948. This ship carried 1027 people, 802 from the Caribbean, who would spend the rest of their lives living and working in and around London. Source: Getty
2018 marks a special year for the anniversary, with the Windrush scandal still at the forefront of the media. At the time Empire Windrush pulled into Tilbury, the British Nationality Act 1948 had just been passed.

The British Nationality Act 1948 gave the status of citizenship of the UK for all people connected with the UK or a British colony. At this time, there was no immigration control for these people and they could live and work in the UK without restrictions.

Advertisements were placed in Jamaican newspapers and on billboards around big cities offering cheap transport on Empire Windrush for anybody who was interested in working in the UK - a £28 fare was required. Many servicemen from the Second World War took up this offer in hopes of finding better work and earning more money.

Grover spoke to dozens of people from the Caribbean and all of them are happy to be considered British and to have lived their lives here. But confusion and uncertainty is high within the Windrushers.

“The first-generation can’t understand how the scandal happened - many of them are often asking ‘how did we get to here?’ or ‘how did the government let this happen?’”

“What the people I spoke to have not been impacted yet, they’re scared for their children. The feelings within the family became quite strained as no one quite understood what was happening or if it would affect them.”

While Grover’s exhibition isn’t focused on the scandal, and the timing is pure coincidence. When speaking to the Windrushers he photographed, Grover witnessed a change in the atmosphere for them. They were all saddened by the scandal, although none of them were at-risk due to having the appropriate paperwork.

“And any human being can see it’s just tragic. The stories I’ve heard, the stories I’ve read in the press... I think that it’s just so desperately sad that these people are in this tragic predicament, due to no fault of their own, but it is awful.”

Grover is ecstatic with the timing of his exhibition though, and he’s hoping it not only educates people, but gives them a better understanding of the community and the way they have lived their life, and puts more of a face to the numbers and stories we are seeing in the news.

“I had no idea about the citizen crisis at the time the photography took place, afterwards I went back and the mood had changed. But, the more time I spent with them and learned about the Windrush and the anniversary the more I learned there’s a much bigger story here and I’m so glad I uncovered it.”
“I’m a storyteller. I wanted something local, something moving and something important. The scandal just ties it all together and makes this exhibition so much more relevant.”
From Jamaica to London - the Story of Alfred

Walking into the Oxo Tower at the end of May to see the Windrush: Portrait of a Generation exhibition, I wasn’t expecting to meet Alfred Gardener. Dressed to impress in a black suit and white shirt, Alfred was rapt to hear that I’d be interested in him and his story. Alfred Gardener, now 92, is one of the six living people who caught Empire Windrush on its first trip into London in 1948.

Alfred (right) is one of the most down to earth, friendly and inspiring people that I’ve ever spoken too. He’s lived in London since 1948 and he wouldn’t change it for the world. He is eternally grateful for the life he has lived in London and didn’t have a bad thing to say about it.

“The last 70 years have been brilliant. Such happy times, I was told it was going to be tough but I haven’t had many tough times. I’ve lived a brilliant life here.”

Alfred first came to London in 1944 when he was 17 after responding to a call for engineers needed in the Second World War. After being discharged, he couldn’t get enough of London and came back on Empire Windrush the next year. The goodbye with his family was hard, he and his mother both cried while his father gave him £50 to cover both the move and the £28 fare for the trip. Despite the hard goodbyes, he was over the moon that he got the chance to return to his ‘mother country’ to work and to live. As Alfred was in the RAF he had the correct documentation to enter the UK (see passport photo below).

Racism and inequality were rampant when Alfred arrived, he wasn’t allowed to go to certain clubs, restaurants or bars but this didn’t stop him. The first few weeks were rough, he and three others moved up to Leeds and their accommodation fell through, but eventually they found a house and gathered together all the money they could from their nights spent gambling aboard Empire Windrush.

Alfred was a former member of the Royal Air Force (RAF) and he used this experience to find a job within three weeks, this then led to a home which then led to finding himself a girl.
“The first few weeks were rough, I remember that. But it all came together, four of us decided to buy a house in Leeds… we put together what little money we had. But we got a house and a job, and then each of us found a girl.”

Alfred’s first job was at a little engineering place in Leeds, called Commercial Engineering. He was paid less than his white coworkers, and was not allowed to join the union straight away to the color of his skin but he didn’t let this bother him.

“It took me three weeks to find a job. It was very hard… everywhere you went there was no woke and nobody wanted me. I went to the labour exchange twice a day everyday! Then one day I met a man outside the labour exchange and he was looking for ex RAF lads so he took me and my friends. I was so grateful as it was a lot harder finding a job being colored and there was deliberate intimidation. But I was okay, it didn’t bother me.”

After Commercial Engineering, Alfred working many more jobs. Most of them hard manual labour, he worked at iron works factories, in a weapons factory and at International Harvester before retiring in 1981.

Alfred was an avid gambler and spent all night and most weekends gambling, playing cards, dominoes, dice and anything else that he could.

“Weekends were for girls, partying, dancing, gambling and cricket,” says Alfred. These were Alfred’s favorite parts of London back when he was “free, single, and disengaged.”

He says he was judged being out and happy while being Jamaican in Leeds but he didn’t let it bother him. He couldn’t, he said he needed to ignore it to make sure he could enjoy his time in London and his new life.

“I had no problems being Jamaican. I knew what to expect when I came here… I’d lived here before and it wouldn’t get me down. I’m easy going and I take things as I find them. When I was younger I got caught up in some fights but as I got older I just walked away.”
Alfred joked about the fun ending in 1952 when he married Norma. He became a family man and had nine children over twelve years. He is now a proud grandfather and great grandfather. His family is scattered all over the world, but he makes sure to see as many of them as he can and he still makes an annual trip back to Jamaica every Christmas and celebrates traditionally with his loved ones.

“When we got married in 1952 but already had one child and a house, all Norma wanted was a big family and a big house. Never wanted anything else and I was so happy because I could provide that for her. I got a house, cost me £400.”

The marriage ended suddenly and unexpectedly for Alfred, he came home one day and Norma had left. The kids were grown up and had left at this point, but he has never heard from her again and has no idea why she left. This was nearly 40 years ago and Alfred has moved on since, but he still gets confused about the situation.

In 2007, Alfred’s new wife passed away and since then he has lived alone. But, he’s travelled the entire world including his favorite place, Cuba, which he has visited five times. He still visits family, and watches sport. He doesn’t gamble as much but he said he still enjoys it.

When I asked Alfred how his life in London has been, he told me, “brilliant… really brilliant. Such happy times. I’ve never been tempted to go back to Jamaica to live even though I’m a Jamaican at heart.”

When asked, Alfred was more than happy to take part in Jim Grover’s exhibition. Alfred is featured in many images from the exhibition (including the one above) and has been happy to share his story with the world. He never expected any of the attention he’s received and when asked about the current Windrush scandal he was quite upset.

“When I haven’t been affected because I was in the war and had a passport and all of my documents, it makes me sad. I would hate to think anything could happen to my family. I’ve lived such a great life here and I want everybody to be able to experience what I have.”

Both images in this story were either taken or provided by Jim Grover.
Website Design

Though we were unable to produce a website for this project, we decided to include our design document in hopes of showing you what our idea was:

A quick mock design showing how the interactive map would have functioned, the boxes would have ideally been semi-transparent thumbnails of pictures relating to their articles. Source: Google maps/Cat Charker

Our primary idea was to have the website be an interactive map, where one could click on various boxes on a map of London to find articles that related to the area. For example, by clicking on the box about Tilbury (Box 1), one would be taking to the article relating to the HMT Empire Windrush which docked there in 1948. Similarly, box 2 (the location of the OXO tower) would take you to an article about the exhibition that occurred there, whereas box 3 (situated above the houses of parliament) would have linked to an article about the Government’s response to the scandal.

The idea behind this was to give the reader a sense of place in London, in a sense trying to take them on a journey through the history of the Windrush generation in much the same way that the Windrushers would have taken themselves.

In addition, the website would have included a simplified viewer where a reader could either read our project in full or be directed to shorter articles on the subject. Primarily this function would exist to serve one of our primary readership, elderly or middle-aged people who may not be able to operate an interactive map with ease or have the technology available to use it. To this extent the user would be presented with the choice at the splash screen to the website which would also contain an about us/about the project section.
Furthermore, a timeline section would have been included which would have detailed the history of the Windrush generation.

A basic mock up of the timeline to be included on the website. In the finished version, more events would be included, in particular relating to our own articles and the timeline would have been scrollable. Source: Cat Charker