Breaking down barriers

Finding out why there are gaps can be difficult and time consuming but it is not impossible. Some communities are assumed to have particular characteristics and it can be helpful to know what they are generally. However it is unwise to assume that they are typical of all of the individuals within a community, that they still hold true for the community as a whole or that they were accurate in the first place.

Rather than make assumptions it is better to try to find out what a particular community wants or needs. Some communities have their own established leaders, Iman, Rabbi or Minister for example. Others have representative groups, people of colour, young people, LGBT for example.

Finding out the names and contact details of community leaders and groups should be straightforward but if not most local authorities have good connections with different communities and will be able to provide contact names or to make introductions.

Community leaders and representative groups are generally helpful, happy to answer questions about their community and keen to explore how members of their community can best be helped and can in turn help. It is then a relatively simple matter to work out what needs to be done to start to address any gaps.