

Summary: Black and Missing Toolkit Roundtable

23/06/2026, Portcullis House

Attendees

Michelle Walsh MP, ACC Damien Miller (NPCC lead for Missing), Alan Rhees-Cooper (NPCC Staff Officer), Grace Gayle (Home Office- Police Reform Team), Raphaela Thynne (Home Office- Public Safety), Paulette Johnson (IOPC), Bernadette Rhoden (Race Equality Foundation), Henrietta Imoreh (Missing People), Deborah Frimpong (Lived Experience Advisor) Breanna Hibbert (Lived Experience Advisor), Elliot Lubel (Missing People).

Apologies: Dr Jahnine Johnson (ListenUp), Anita Grant (Police Race Action Plan), Susannah Drury (Missing People)

Overview

This roundtable discussion explored how the Black and Missing Toolkit can be more effectively embedded across policing to improve responses to Black missing people. The discussion focused on increasing adoption, strengthening accountability, influencing upcoming police reform, and ensuring that lived experience informs future practice.

Key Messages

Implementation Requires Accountability

While the toolkit has been circulated nationally, uptake remains inconsistent. Participants agreed that voluntary adoption alone is unlikely to achieve widespread change. Participants explored options for formalising the requirement to adopt the toolkit including embedding expectations within HMICFRS inspections, Home Office guidance, or future performance frameworks as levers for driving implementation.

Cultural Change Must Accompany the Toolkit

There was strong agreement that data alone is not enough. Cultural awareness training, leadership support from Chief Constables, and ongoing reinforcement are needed to improve frontline responses to Black families and communities.

Police Reform Presents a Strategic Opportunity

With significant police reform expected from 2027, stakeholders agreed that implementation should be planned in two phases: before and after reform. The development of new performance and safeguarding frameworks presents an opportunity to embed expectations relating to missing Black people within future policing structures.

Lived Experience Remains Essential

The group emphasised the value of lived experience in shaping policy, training and oversight. However, this must be done carefully to avoid placing unnecessary emotional burdens on those affected. A balanced approach using both evidence and lived experience was supported.

Safeguarding and Partnership Approaches Are Key

Participants highlighted opportunities to position this work within wider safeguarding, child protection and children's strategy agendas. The role of advocacy organisations, external scrutiny and multi-agency partnerships was also recognised as critical to improving outcomes and building trust.

Priority Actions

- Re-promote the toolkit nationally through Chief Constable networks and the Police Race Action Plan.
- Explore opportunities to include relevant measures within HMICFRS inspections and future police performance frameworks.
- Engage with Home Office police reform teams to influence emerging national structures.
- Showcase good practice through national policing forums, conferences and practitioner networks, including in an upcoming IOPC magazine issue and November workshop run by the NPCC.

- Explore ways to strengthen lived experience involvement in oversight and learning processes.
- Build stronger links with safeguarding, children's services and advocacy organisations.
- Identify and address force-level gaps in practice, including the quality of return interviews and family engagement.

Conclusion

There was broad consensus that the toolkit provides a strong foundation for improving police responses to Black missing people. The challenge now is moving from awareness to consistent implementation, with accountability, cultural change, safeguarding and police reform identified as the key mechanisms for achieving sustainable impact.