**Amar bari, amar jibon’ (My home, my life): developing living environments for Bangladeshi elders**

*‘Amar bari, amar jibon’ (My home, my life): developing living environments for Bangladeshi elders*, is a pioneering 36-month long research project, funded by The Dunhill Medical Trust, that will focus on the entrenched housing and health inequalities of Bangladeshi elders (‘probin’ in Bangla) in East London.

A dynamic team led by The Open University (OU) in partnership with the Bangla Housing Association (BHA) and the Housing LIN (Learning and Information Network) and involving both local Bangladeshi communities and practitioners will together explore diversity and inclusion in later life living environments and communities.

The voice of this older, probin community is seldom heard, and this research sets out to hear their voice, communicate cultural preferences, and empower the community to have a greater say in local housing plans and strategies. It will develop a knowledge base of their experiences and aspirations regarding meaning of place - home, housing, and neighbourhood environments, and implications for wellbeing.

This project is the first in-depth research of its kind in the UK. It will benefit East London communities through:

* developing more empowered local communities;
* helping to create skilled and competent community researchers;
* hearing the voices of local people;
* providing a detailed understanding of current and future housing needs of Bangladeshi probin;
* contributing to informing debates on housing and support, and how local housing strategies and investment plans can better address housing for later life.

**Dr. Manik Gopinath commented** “*The Open University Team is delighted to be working with Bangla Housing Association, Housing LIN and members of the Bangladeshi communities in East London to learn from probin (i.e., elders) about their lives and homes.”*

**Bashir Uddin, CEO of the Bangla Housing Association said** “*We are very excited about working with The Open University and Housing Learning and Improvement Network (LIN) on this important research project. This intense study will produce the much-needed evidence and hard facts about the current living arrangements, health and wellbeing, and aspirations of the currently marginalised Bangladeshi Probin (elders) in East London in their own words*.”

**Jeremy Porteus, CEO of the Housing LIN added** "*We are immensely proud to partner The Open University and Bangla Housing Association in this Dunhill Medical Trust funded social action research project. It offers a unique opportunity to directly involve and support the older Bangladeshi community in East London to share their lived housing and care experiences and help give them greater voice to have a say on how local strategies and plans can better reflect their needs and aspirations*."

**Susan Kay, CEO of The Dunhill Medical Trust says** *"As an organisation, we have made a strategic commitment to support initiatives that build and deliver suitable living environments and communities for an ageing population. This project is very much part of that commitment and we look forward to working with all the project partners to help them achieve their goals."*

Notes to editors

**Bangla Housing Association (BHA)** was formed in 1991 to support the Bangladeshi community that was experiencing housing problems in the London Borough of Hackney. BHA have since extended their remit and now support and house people from wider communities in the London Boroughs of Hackney, Islington and Waltham Forest. BHA’s mission is to provide decent, affordable homes and support services for those in needs in the local BME and the wider community. For more information visit: <https://www.banglaha.org.uk/about>

A **Bangla Research Advisory Group (BRAG)** from local people across Hackney, Newham and Tower Hamlets; a new group of community researchers; and a Practitioner Advisory Group (PAG) will co-produce a better understanding of the housing needs and aspirations of Bangladeshi elders. This will help build awareness, inform local, borough-wide, metropolitan, and national housing strategies.

**The Housing LIN** is the 'go to' sharing network for anyone working in housing, health and social care promoting solutions that enable everyone to live well in good quality housing. The network provides market insight and intelligence on latest funding, research, policy and practice to inspire better housing and care choices through its free knowledge and information sharing activities and consultancy business. For more information visit <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/>

This research project is supported by **The Dunhill Medial Trust (DMT)** through the ‘Building and delivering suitable living environments and communities for an ageing population grant’. For more information visit: [www.dunhill.medical.org.uk](http://www.dunhill.medical.org.uk)

All partners available to interview upon request.

**This research programme is being launched on the Bangladeshi Independence Day on Saturday, 26 March 2022:** <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Amar-Bari-Amar-Jibon>

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