REVIEW

CARIBBEAN UNITY NETWORK

THOUGHTFUL | INDEPENDENT | CARIBBEAN



A NEW CHAPTER FOR BRITAIN?

The Burnham Government's First 100 Days and What They Mean for Caribbean Britain

CAN BLACK BUSINESS NETWORKS CREATE LASTING ECONOMIC POWER?

VISIBLE IN CRISIS, INVISIBLE IN CELEBRATION
Why Caribbean achievement deserves recognition

Cover image created using Generative AI

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REVIEW

THOUGHTFUL | INDEPENDENT | CARIBBEAN

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REVIEW is an independent publication from Caribbean Unity Network, examining the ideas, issues and developments shaping Caribbean communities in Britain, across the Caribbean and throughout the wider diaspora.

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Dr Carole Nicholson and her daughters at the 2022 Spirit of the Caribbean Ball

WELCOME TO REVIEW

REVIEW is an independent publication examining the ideas, issues and developments shaping Caribbean communities in Britain, across the Caribbean region and throughout the wider diaspora.

REVIEW evolves from One Caribbean Magazine, first published in 2022 with a simple ambition: to celebrate Caribbean achievement, strengthen connection and reflect the richness and diversity of Caribbean life.

That purpose remains. What has changed is our editorial scope.

There is a need for places that ask questions, examine evidence, explore ideas and engage seriously with the issues shaping our present and future. REVIEW seeks to provide that space.

Each issue will bring together analysis, interviews, commentary, business and economic perspectives, cultural insight, recognition and stories from across Caribbean communities. We will examine both familiar and overlooked subjects, looking to history for context while exploring the opportunities, challenges and choices that lie ahead.

There is no single Caribbean experience. Our coverage will reflect different histories, national identities, generations and perspectives, making room for voices from across the region and its diaspora.

Our editorial approach is grounded in independence, evidence and intellectual curiosity. Partnerships and commercial relationships will not determine editorial conclusions. Recognition will not be confused with endorsement. Where evidence is incomplete, we will say so. Where questions remain unresolved, we will continue to investigate.

Above all, REVIEW approaches Caribbean people not simply as subjects to be reported upon, but as thinkers, leaders, entrepreneurs, creators, professionals and citizens whose ideas, experiences and perspectives deserve serious consideration.

Welcome to REVIEW.

REVIEW



Elizabeth Flanders
Editor & Founder

From the Editor

Why REVIEW Matters
Celebration matters. Visibility matters. Recording achievement matters.

Over time, I have felt a growing need to look more deeply: to understand why things happen, who benefits, what changes, what does not, and what the evidence actually tells us.

Again and again, conversations within our communities have prompted bigger questions. An account of business success can open a discussion about access to opportunity. An award can prompt us to consider whose contribution remains overlooked. Conversations across borders and generations can reveal new possibilities for how we work together.

That curiosity sits at the heart of REVIEW.

Our experiences are sometimes discussed through remarkably narrow frames. Public attention can concentrate on moments of crisis, controversy or commemoration, while the complexity of our everyday lives receives considerably less sustained examination.

REVIEW cannot correct that imbalance alone. But it can contribute something.

Throughout this issue, you will encounter questions for which we do not pretend to have predetermined answers. Can Black business networks create lasting economic power? What should a modern relationship between the Caribbean and its diaspora look like? What does meaningful recognition actually change?

These questions matter precisely because the answers are not obvious.

We should be able to applaud good work while asking whether it is effective, challenge an idea without attacking the person proposing it, and change our conclusions when better evidence emerges.

And this is where I hope you will become part of REVIEW.

I do not want this publication simply to speak to its readers. I want it to speak with them. Respond to our questions. Challenge our assumptions. Suggest subjects we should investigate. Tell us about work that deserves attention. And if you disagree with something we publish, tell us why.

My hope is not that every reader will agree with every page. It is that you will finish an article knowing something you did not know before, considering a perspective you had not previously considered, or asking a better question than the one with which you started.

Thank you for joining us.

Elizabeth Flanders

Contributors & Interviewees

MEET THE VOICES SHARING IDEAS, EXPERTISE AND PERSPECTIVES IN THE INAUGURAL ISSUE OF REVIEW.



Wayne Antoine
Chair, UK Grenada Diaspora Partnership

Wayne Antoine is a director of UK Grenada Diaspora Partnership Ltd (UKGDP), which connects Grenada with its global diaspora. Through its G.A.P. initiative, UKGDP maps skills, businesses and community links, creating opportunities for mentorship, trade and collaboration. An entrepreneur, music manager and facilities leader, Wayne mentors Caribbean-descended entrepreneurs and believes diaspora connections create lasting value.

In this issue
What REVIEW Will Be Watching - UK Grenada Diaspora Partnership.



Audrey Bampoe
Founder and CEO, MDS Mentoring Program

Audrey Bampoe is founder and CEO of MDS (Mothers, Daughters, Sisters) Mentoring Program, which connects Black female students and young professionals with experienced women mentors. Founded on the principle of shared experience, MDS helps create supportive relationships, build confidence and develop the next generation of Black female leaders and entrepreneurs.

In this issue
What REVIEW Will Be Watching - MDS Mentoring Program.



Paul Crooks
Genealogist, historian, author and speaker

Paul Crooks is a genealogist, historian, author and speaker specialising in African-Caribbean ancestry and history. His pioneering research into his own Jamaican family history has featured on the BBC, and his published work is referenced by The National Archives. Through Ancestry Talks, he helps audiences explore Caribbean history, genealogy, migration and identity.

In this issue
The Big Question: What should a modern relationship between the Caribbean and its diaspora look like?



Mark Dalgety
Co-founder, Black Entrepreneurs International CIC

Mark Dalgety is an entrepreneur, founder of Dalgety Teas and internationally recognised master tea blender. What began with importing loose-leaf tea from Guyana to Brixton Market has grown into an international brand stocked by major UK supermarkets and independent retailers. He is also co-founder of Black Entrepreneurs International CIC, which supports connection, collaboration and growth among Black entrepreneurs in the UK and across the wider diaspora.

In this issue
The REVIEW Interview: Can Black Business Networks Create Lasting Economic Power?

Contributors & Interviewees continued.



Caroline Fagbemi
Co-founder, Black Entrepreneurs International CIC

Caroline Fagbemi is an entrepreneur, business advocate and co-founder of Black Entrepreneurs International CIC. With a background in business intelligence, project management and stakeholder engagement, she is passionate about creating opportunities for Black entrepreneurs to connect, collaborate and grow. Through Black Entrepreneurs International, she helps develop networks, partnerships and platforms that increase visibility, strengthen relationships and open pathways to new markets.

In this issue
The REVIEW Interview: Can Black Business Networks Create Lasting Economic Power?



Dr Gabrielle Jamela Hosein
Senior Lecturer, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine

Gabrielle Jamela Hosein is Senior Lecturer at The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. An Indo-Caribbean feminist writer, scholar, and activist based in Trinidad and Tobago, she was awarded the national Medal for the Development of Women (Gold) in 2022. In 2025, her collaborative art exhibition, The Botanical Afterlife of Indenture: Imaginative Archives, was held at the Art Society of Trinidad and Tobago.

In this issue
The Big Question: What should a modern relationship between the Caribbean and its diaspora look like?



Aquanjé Robinson
St Kitts and Nevis CARICOM Youth Ambassador

Aquanjé Robinson is a CARICOM Youth Ambassador for Saint Kitts and Nevis and a student at National Taipei University in Taiwan. A passionate advocate for sustainability, climate resilience and youth engagement, he has represented Caribbean youth in regional and international forums, championing greater inclusion in policy and development. His work focuses on the intersection of governance, social impact and sustainable development, reflecting a commitment to building a more resilient and connected Caribbean.

In this issue
The Big Question: What should a modern relationship between the Caribbean and its diaspora look like?



Joycelyn Thompson, LLB (Hons)
Director, Diaspora and Government Partnerships, UK Grenada Diaspora Partnership

Joycelyn Thompson is a strategic, schools and organisation improvement consultant with over 35 years' experience across education, social care, law, governance and organisational development in the UK and Caribbean. Founder of Triangulation Consultancy Ltd and former Head of Safeguarding at Ark Schools, she specialises in safeguarding, SEND, inclusion, governance and transformational leadership, with particular expertise in advocacy and legal matters. A passionate advocate for social justice and youth empowerment, she also contributes to diaspora development through the UK Grenada Diaspora Partnership.

In this issue
What REVIEW Will Be Watching - UK Grenada Diaspora Partnership.

The Quarter in Review

August-October 2026

Across the Caribbean and its diaspora, developments in public health, investment, regional cooperation, culture and heritage are shaping communities and their futures. This inaugural roundup brings together nine stories worth understanding, including selected earlier developments whose significance continues into the quarter. Some mark completed milestones; others remain proposals or processes whose impact will depend on what happens next.

A concise quarterly briefing on the people, institutions and decisions shaping Caribbean futures.

CONTINUED →

The full review follows on pages 10 and 11.

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BARBADOS: A FINANCIAL START FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

Barbados's proposed children's wealth fund returned to public attention in October, when Prime Minister Mia Mottley discussed intended seed funding of BDS$55 million and the legislation needed to establish it. The proposal raises an important question: how can public policy help children build assets rather than inherit financial disadvantage?
Source: https://barbadostoday.bb/2026/10/09/pm-pledges-more-funding-as-presidents-chapman-challenge-launches/

The distinction between ambition and delivery remains essential. Legislation, eligibility and arrangements for managing the fund will determine how the commitment translates into support for families.

A STRONGER REGIONAL RESPONSE TO DRUG-RESISTANT INFECTIONS

CARPHA's July launch of an antimicrobial-resistance reference laboratory in Jamaica strengthened the Caribbean's shared public-health infrastructure. The facility supports testing, surveillance and technical assistance, helping countries identify infections that are becoming harder to treat.
Source: CARPHA

Its importance extends beyond the laboratory itself: reliable findings need to inform patient care, prescribing and infection prevention. For a region with differing national resources, access to specialised services offers a practical example of cooperation supporting public wellbeing.

A NEW OPENING FOR BRITISH CARIBBEAN PLAYWRIGHTS

The Windrush Prize opened for submissions on 2 October, offering British Caribbean playwrights a route towards publication and production. The selected writer will receive £10,000, mentoring and support, publication through Methuen Drama and a minimum three-week run at Arcola Theatre. Previous publication or professional experience is not required. With submissions closing on 2 December, the opportunity remains open as REVIEW launches.
Source: The Society of Authors

Its significance lies in connecting recognition with the support and platforms needed to bring a writer's work to audiences.

FRENCH GUIANA JOINS CARICOM

On 7 July, French Guiana became CARICOM's eighth associate member, signing its membership agreement during the Community's leaders' meeting in Saint Lucia. Although preceding this issue's main reporting period, the development deserves attention as part of the continuing expansion of regional cooperation.
Source: CARICOM

It also invites a wider understanding of Caribbean connection across language and constitutional boundaries. Associate membership should be understood on its own terms: the practical value will emerge through participation and cooperation, rather than the announcement alone.

MOVING INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES TOWARDS FINANCE

Caribbean Export and the Caribbean Development Bank announced strengthened collaboration on 28 September to connect regional projects with prospective investors. The initiative includes support for investor readiness, targeted outreach, matchmaking and follow-up. Its existing pipeline comprised approximately 30 projects from 11 CARIFORUM countries, representing more than US$172 million in investment opportunities.
Source: Caribbean Development Bank

Those figures describe potential investment, rather than money secured. The meaningful test will be whether sustained engagement helps viable projects obtain finance and move into delivery.

YOUNG PEOPLE PRESERVE WINDRUSH VOICES

Voyage's The Stories of Windrush brought young people and Hackney elders together to document Caribbean lives and experiences. Launched on 26 June, the book grew from more than a year of research, interviews and intergenerational collaboration.
Source: voyageyouth.com

It merits inclusion in this first issue because it demonstrates how younger generations can participate in preserving community history. The project gives personal testimony a lasting form while creating opportunities for learning between generations.

Voyage has also indicated that a digital version is being developed.

RESILIENCE BEYOND RECOVERY: THE PANAMA EARTHQUAKE

The powerful earthquake that struck Panama on 9 October 2026 disrupted electricity supplies, air travel and public transport, highlighting how quickly essential services can be affected by sudden shocks. Although the Panama Canal continued operating, the disruption raised wider questions about the resilience of critical infrastructure.

Sources: Reuters, 9 October 2026; Panama's National Civil Protection System (SINAPROC), 10 October 2026 (official statement in Spanish).

For Caribbean and Central American nations, resilience is no longer solely an environmental concern. It affects tourism, trade, education, healthcare and economic development. Airports, ports, energy systems and communications networks are central to regional connectivity, making their reliability increasingly important.

The challenge is not simply rebuilding after crises but planning for them. Across the region, investment in resilient infrastructure, disaster preparedness and emergency coordination may prove just as important as the response to any single event.

NOTTING HILL CARNIVAL MARKS 60 YEARS

Notting Hill Carnival's August diamond jubilee celebrated six decades of Caribbean cultural expression in Britain. September's published competition results recognised the work of mas bands and steel bands, including children's participants.
Source: nhcarnival.org

Beyond the spectacle, those results point to the creative effort and community organisation that sustain Carnival.

The anniversary offers an opportunity to consider its continuity: how skills, traditions and responsibility pass between generations, and how the people producing this major public celebration receive recognition for their contribution.

MEMORY, FREEDOM AND NATIONHOOD.

On 19 October 2026, Grenada and Jamaica observed National Heroes Day, reflecting on their distinct histories of leadership, sacrifice and national identity. Grenada commemorated the events of 19 October 1983, while Jamaica honoured its national heroes for their contributions to freedom and nationhood. Earlier in the quarter, Emancipation Day on 1 August provided a wider moment of remembrance across much of the Caribbean, recognising the struggles and resistance that brought an end to slavery.
Source: CARICOM Reparations Commission, Emancipation Day Message (2026); Jamaica Information Service; official information on Grenada's National Heroes Day.

Although these commemorations reflect different histories, they raise a shared question: *who and what do Caribbean societies choose to remember?* At a time of economic and technological change, they remind us that national identity is shaped not only by future ambitions but also by an understanding of the past.



Professional expertise and leadership



Agriculture, enterprise and innovation



Education and the next generation



Generations and belonging

A NEW CHAPTER FOR BRITAIN?

The Burnham Government's First 100 Days and What They Mean for Caribbean Britain

INTRODUCTION

On 20 July 2026, Andy Burnham became Prime Minister and promised a different style of government: less centralised, more interventionist and more closely connected to the places in which people live. Attention quickly turned to the measures announced in his first days and to what they might reveal about the direction of the new administration.

The first 100 days are often treated as an early test of a government's intentions. They are not, however, a blank page. A new Prime Minister inherits legislation, spending settlements, public inquiries, commissioned reviews and reforms already under way. The relevant questions are therefore wider than what was newly announced. Which inherited commitments were continued? Which were accelerated or changed? Which acquired funding, legislation or delivery dates? And which remained unanswered?

This review applies those questions through a Caribbean lens. That does not mean every policy considered was designed specifically for Caribbean communities, nor that Caribbean Britons are affected only by policies framed around race. Decisions about health, housing, education, welfare, employment, policing, transport, culture and economic growth all shape Caribbean lives.

Particular attention is given to areas where evidence indicates distinct experiences or inequalities, including Black maternal health, school exclusions, mental-health services, policing, Windrush and migration. The analysis also examines universal measures whose effects depend on access, implementation and distribution. A policy can be open to everyone and still produce unequal outcomes. This includes examining longer-term questions of home ownership, business ownership, asset building and intergenerational wealth.

HOW THIS REVIEW WAS PRODUCED

A structured assessment, not a retrospective commentary

REVIEW monitored the government's first 100 days through a three-stage process:

1. **Weekly Monitoring:** Tracking major announcements, commitments and inherited reforms.
2. **Monthly Assessment:** Reviewing emerging themes, funding decisions, delivery mechanisms and independent commentary.
3. **Final 100-Day Review:** Bringing together accumulated evidence to assess what changed, for whom, and with what evidence of delivery.

The purpose is to establish a clear record against which the government can be assessed at the end of its first 100 days.

This feature analysis is presented as follows

1. **Establishing the Baseline:** What the government inherited, what it announced by 31 August and what remained unresolved.
2. **Early Signals:** What advanced during September, where policy direction shifted and where silence became increasingly significant.
3. **The First 100 Days Assessment:** What was delivered, delayed, changed or left unresolved.

OUR EDITORIAL PRINCIPES

- Not a party-political scorecard
- Distinguishes announcement from implementation
- Distinguishes inherited responsibility from new policy
- States uncertainty where evidence remains incomplete
- Focuses on outcomes as well as intentions

CARIBBEAN BRITAIN
BY NUMBERS

Official statistics do not use a single definition of “Caribbean Britain”. The figures below therefore retain the category, geography and date used by each source. They provide context, not a composite portrait of every person of Caribbean heritage.

POPULATION

623,115

In the 2021 Census, 623,115 people in England and Wales identified as Black Caribbean, representing 1.0 per cent of the population. A further 513,040 identified as mixed White and Black Caribbean, or 0.9 per cent. These categories do not capture everyone with Caribbean family origins, including people who selected other ethnic or national-identity categories.

56.5%

EMPLOYMENT

The 2021 census recorded 56.5 per cent of people aged 16 and over in the Caribbean ethnic group as being in employment. Almost half of this population was aged over 50, so the age profile should be considered when comparing the figure with groups that have younger populations.

41%

HOME OWNERSHIP & HOUSING

ONS analysis found that 41 per cent of people identifying as Caribbean lived in social rented housing in 2021. In separate household-wealth data for Great Britain covering April 2016 to March 2018, 39 per cent of Black Caribbean-headed households held property assets worth more than their property debts, compared with 68 per cent of households overall.

13.58

EDUCATION

In England in 2022/23, Black Caribbean pupils received 13.58 suspensions for every 100 pupils, compared with 9.33 across all pupils. The measure counts suspensions rather than individual children, because one pupil can be suspended more than once.

4×

HEALTH

In 2024/25, people in England recorded within the broad Black or Black British category were detained under the Mental Health Act at nearly four times the rate of White people. This is not a Caribbean-only measure, but it is the most recent national NHS comparison and provides important context for the discussion of coercive care.

59%

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The British Business Bank's 2024 survey found that 59 per cent of Black business leaders believed it would be difficult for them to obtain finance. This Black-wide measure is not Caribbean-specific, but it indicates the financing environment in which many Caribbean entrepreneurs operate.

PART ONE: ESTABLISHING THE BASELINE

20 July-31 August 2026

The Burnham Government began with a combination of immediate cost-of-living measures, a strong emphasis on devolution and public control, and major inherited reforms whose outcomes remained uncertain. By 31 August, the clearest record was not a complete programme but a set of priorities against which later action could be tested.

Household costs and public transport

The first measures were designed to provide visible relief. VAT on household electricity was cut from 5 per cent to zero from 1 October, with the government estimating a saving of about £45 a year for a typical household. Ministers said the cost would be met by cancelling the Digital ID programme. This sat alongside an inherited reduction in energy costs announced at the previous Budget.

The government also restored a £2 cap on participating single bus fares in England outside London for 2027. London already operates under a separate Transport for London fare system, including the Hopper fare and daily caps, so the national measure should not be described as applying uniformly across the country. Time restrictions on disabled concessionary passes in England are to be removed from April 2027, backed by £60 million.

These measures offered practical but limited help. Their significance for Caribbean households would depend on geography, service availability and the wider pressure of food, rent and energy costs. Lower fares matter only where reliable routes exist; an electricity saving of roughly £45 does not, on its own, resolve household insecurity.

Health, maternity and social care

The government continued the inherited plan to abolish NHS England and transfer its functions into the Department of Health and Social Care. That programme promised stronger ministerial accountability and less duplication, but it also involved substantial workforce restructuring. This matters to Caribbean Britain both because the NHS is a major employer of Black staff and because specialist health-inequalities expertise could be weakened if it is not explicitly protected.

The King's Fund, an independent health charity, cautioned that the principal risk was organisational change absorbing leadership attention and capacity without producing tangible improvements for patients.

On 5 August, ministers announced £343 million for up to 159 community mental-health facilities in England, including walk-in centres and alternatives to accident and emergency departments. Earlier local access could be important for Black Caribbean communities, which have experienced longstanding inequalities in mental-health pathways. NHS England reported that people from Black or Black British backgrounds were detained under the Mental Health Act at nearly four times the rate of White people in 2024/25, while the Care Quality Commission continued to identify persistent inequalities affecting people of Black African and Black Caribbean heritage. Success should therefore be assessed through patient experience, trust, detention and repeat-detention rates, and demonstrable narrowing of inequalities - not simply through the number of facilities opened.

The government also inherited the findings of Baroness Valerie Amos's maternity and neonatal investigation, published on 30 June. Commitments already existed to appoint the first Maternity and Neonatal Commissioner, develop a national action plan and address racial inequalities in maternal outcomes. By 31 August, funding and a December deadline for the national action plan had been announced, but the commissioner’s appointment and evidence that these commitments were improving care remained outstanding.

The urgency was reinforced by continuing evidence of poorer outcomes for Black women and concerns about listening, advocacy and continuity of care. The Race Equality Engagement Group reported in July that the maternal mortality rate for Black women in England had risen again in 2022-24 and was nearly three times the rate for White women. Parliamentary and professional reviews had also identified failures to listen to Black women and weaknesses in leadership, workforce capacity, data and accountability. New leadership structures would matter only if recommendations produced measurable improvements in safety, experience and outcomes.

Social care was given greater political prominence. On 29 July, Burnham reaffirmed the ambition to create a National Care Service, brought Baroness Casey's final report forward to summer 2027, launched a public conversation and established a ministerial group. The direction was clearer, but the funding model, timetable and practical offer to care workers and unpaid carers remained unresolved.

Housing, homelessness and place

Housing policy combined inherited commitments with a more interventionist emphasis. The government continued planning reform and the ten-year, £39 billion Social and Affordable Homes Programme, intended to support around 300,000 homes, with at least 60 per cent for social rent. The meaningful tests would be delivery, affordability, tenure and location rather than the headline total.

Ending rough sleeping was the Prime Minister's first stated instruction. In August, the government announced £442 million to offer people sleeping rough a route off the streets by Christmas, combining accommodation with health and practical support. The commitment was significant but narrow if judged only by visible street homelessness. Hidden homelessness, temporary stays with relatives and overcrowding can be less visible in minority communities and require longer-term housing, not only emergency accommodation.

Official Census analysis indicates that Black Caribbean communities continue to experience distinctive housing challenges, including higher levels of social renting, overcrowding and lower rates of home ownership. The housing agenda should therefore be assessed through affordability, security and access to asset-building opportunities, not simply the number of homes announced.

The government's wider place agenda included stronger council powers over high streets and a presumption in favour of devolving decisions. These measures suggested that neighbourhood conditions and local institutions would become part of its economic strategy.

Young people, skills and economic opportunity

Youth employment and technical education emerged as early priorities. The government announced fully funded apprenticeship training for eligible under-25s, additional employer support for smaller firms, a bursary intended to prevent benefit rules discouraging participation, more college places and an ambition to create 50,000 additional youth apprenticeships during the Parliament. Sainsbury's subsequently offered 10,000 work-experience opportunities.

The direction was relevant to Black Caribbean young people, but availability is not the same as equitable access. Equal participation cannot be measured through enrolment alone: the necessary evidence would include take-up, retention, quality, completion, achievement, pay and progression by ethnicity and region. Persistent disparities in school exclusion, attainment and belonging also remained largely outside the early employment package.

The latest full-year statistics continued to show particularly high exclusion rates among pupils from mixed White and Black Caribbean backgrounds, while Black Caribbean pupils also remained above the national suspension rate.

On procurement, the government announced that community benefit would carry a 20 per cent weighting in central-government contracts worth at least £5 million, with greater emphasis on local jobs, skills and work placements. This could create openings for Black-owned and community-rooted organisations, but only if tender design, payment terms, supplier outreach and subcontracting allow smaller providers to participate. No specific supplier-diversity mechanism was announced.

Devolution and public control

The most distinctive early theme was a redistribution of authority. Burnham proposed allowing English mayors to retain a share of income-tax and business-rates growth and exercise greater influence over transport, housing, skills and economic development. Civil servants were to be seconded into mayoral authorities, while areas without mayors would be encouraged to establish strategic authorities.

Many Caribbean communities live in large urban areas, so decisions about skills, housing, transport, culture and investment may increasingly be taken locally. That creates opportunities for more responsive policy, but devolution does not guarantee representation. Its distributional effects would depend on who participates in regional decision-making and which communities receive investment.

Culture, heritage and community infrastructure

The government inherited a Music Plan that included a £45 million growth package, creative mentoring, music facilities in libraries and licensing reform for events and festivals. It also announced a 20 per cent reduction in business rates for pubs, social clubs and live-music venues in England from April 2027.

These measures were relevant to Caribbean music, festivals, venues and cultural enterprise. Yet by 31 August there was no distinct new programme for Caribbean heritage, Windrush commemoration or Black-led cultural infrastructure. Existing Arts Council and National Lottery routes remained the main sources of support. The unresolved question was whether Caribbean organisations would help shape national cultural policy or continue to appear principally as programme content within institutions led by others.

Questions also remained about investment in community archives, museums, festivals, creative enterprises and heritage organisations preserving Caribbean contributions to Britain. This infrastructure sustains historical memory, identity and civic participation. By 31 August, no distinct national framework had emerged to strengthen that ecosystem.

Windrush and immigration

The government inherited the Windrush Compensation Scheme, outstanding commitments from the Windrush Lessons Learned Review and the office of the first Windrush Commissioner, the Reverend Clive Foster MBE. Appointed in June 2025, the Commissioner provides independent oversight of the government's response and a dedicated voice for affected communities. The previous administration had also revised the Scheme's rules in January 2026, including changes relating to pension and employment losses, advance payments during reviews and priority for claimants aged 75 and over. No substantial further reform had been announced by 31 August. The baseline was therefore not an absence of scrutiny or prior action, but an inherited accountability structure whose influence on delivery still had to be demonstrated.

The government retained an enforcement-led immigration and asylum programme while seeking faster decisions and appeals. The Windrush experience makes administrative accuracy, legal advice and effective challenge essential tests whenever speed and removal are prioritised.

The key test remains delivery. The existence of reforms, oversight structures and revised guidance does not necessarily mean that affected individuals experience faster decisions or fairer outcomes. Processing times, unresolved claims, the quality of decision-making and claimant confidence remain critical indicators.

The inherited delivery record was mixed. By March 2026, 9,495 of the 11,759 claims lodged with the Windrush Compensation Scheme - 81 per cent - had been fully closed, while 566 claims were still awaiting an initial decision. Of the closed claims, 3,256 had resulted in an eligible payment and 6,239 had been found ineligible or entitled to no compensation.

Policing, justice and race equality

In violence against women and girls, ministers accelerated an inherited commitment: every police force in England and Wales is now expected to establish specialist rape and sexual-offence teams by December 2027, 18 months earlier than previously planned. Up to ten forces would share £13.3 million to test specialist protection-order teams. The change was concrete, although culturally competent survivor services and wider confidence in policing remained unresolved.

Broader questions of racial disproportionality were substantially less developed during the period under review. Stop and search, use of force, police confidence and representation continued to feature in official evidence and public debate. Ministry of Justice statistics published in 2025, for example, showed that Black people continued to experience distinctive patterns across arrest, stop and search and other parts of the criminal-justice system. The government's opening programme did not establish a comparable new framework through which progress could be measured.

More broadly, the government inherited the Race Equality Engagement Group and evidence of unequal outcomes across health, education, employment, housing and justice. It had not, by the end of August, articulated a coherent cross-government race-equality programme. Universal measures might benefit Caribbean people, but there was no basis for assuming that they would automatically close racial disparities.

Baseline assessment

By 31 August, the government had moved beyond rhetoric in selected areas: household energy, bus fares outside London, disabled travel, community mental health, rough sleeping, youth opportunity, procurement and devolution all had identifiable policies, funding or dates. But much of the programme remained prospective. Social care, housing delivery, public control and fiscal devolution required further legislation, design or funding.

The sharpest unresolved tests were inherited ones: maternity safety and Black maternal outcomes, Windrush justice, educational exclusions, policing disproportionality, disability benefits and race equality. These established the baseline for September.

PART TWO: EARLY SIGNALS

September 2026



September revealed a more recognisable governing philosophy. Public control, regional power, technical education and intervention in failing markets became recurring themes. Several inherited policies were accelerated, while the limited movement on further Windrush reform, Black maternal health and an explicit race-equality programme became harder to overlook.

A governing direction takes shape

In his Commons statement on 1 September, Burnham described a state that would move power away from Whitehall, strengthen public influence over essential services and give local leaders greater control over housing, transport, skills and investment. Three cross-government taskforces were subsequently established around the cost of living, community regeneration and public control of essential services.

The importance of the statement lay less in individual announcements than in the organising idea: government would use public authority more actively while shifting delivery closer to regions and communities. At this stage, however, much remained a statement of direction. The decisive tests would be legislation, fiscal powers and the distribution of resources.

Social care moves from aspiration to a proposed settlement

On 29 September, the National Care Service gained greater definition. The Prime Minister committed to free personal care for older people in the next Parliament and proposed retaining the existing State Pension Triple Lock until April 2030, then modifying it so pensions would rise by at least inflation or 2.5 per cent while maintaining a longer-term relationship with earnings. The projected savings were intended to fund the care service, with Baroness Casey to recommend how it should be phased in.

This was a significant shift from a general ambition to a proposed funding route, but not immediate delivery. The service would begin in the next Parliament; the Casey report was not due until summer 2027; and accommodation costs would remain subject to existing means tests. For Caribbean families, the eventual significance will include the treatment of the predominantly female and ethnically diverse care workforce, support for unpaid carers and the availability of culturally appropriate care.

Housing and neighbourhood policy becomes more interventionist

September brought several practical housing and place measures. A national landlord-registration service was scheduled to begin a regional rollout in December, giving councils more information to identify poor practice. Amendments to the Social Housing Bill would give councils stronger powers to refer homeless households to housing associations, require public services to collaborate on prevention and help preserve social homes before disposal.

The government also announced £210 million for high-street regeneration. This included a £125 million Derelict Buildings Fund, £65 million to rescue community buildings and businesses, and £20 million divided between high-street rental auctions and co-operative development. These measures could support community hubs, cultural venues and social enterprise, although access would be mediated through councils and local partnerships rather than direct national grants to Caribbean organisations.

Leaseholder protections were also promised, including powers to cap some permission and administration fees and plans for independent regulation of property agents. Together, these announcements indicated a stronger willingness to regulate property relationships and intervene in neighbourhood decline. They did not yet resolve housing supply, affordability, temporary accommodation or the capacity of councils to enforce new rights.

Public transport and industrial policy begin to converge

Liverpool City Region became the first area under the new leadership to bring buses into a publicly controlled franchising system, initially in St Helens, with wider rollout to follow. This was a regional programme enabled by national policy rather than a wholly new central-government service, but it provided an early example of the public-control and devolution agenda operating together.

The distinction between this development and the national £2 fare cap is important. The £2 cap applies to participating bus services in England outside London during 2027; London remains under its own fare structure. Public control, fare levels, frequency and network coverage are separate questions.

On 11 September, the government backed approximately £1 billion for 29 battery-electric trains to be built in Derby for services in the North, supporting jobs in manufacturing and the supply chain. The announcement linked public ownership, procurement and reindustrialisation, but its relevance to equality would depend on recruitment, apprenticeships and supplier access rather than the location of investment alone.

Technical education acquires a delivery mechanism

On 23 September, the government announced new Vocational GCSEs, intended to replace existing Technical Awards and sit alongside English, mathematics and science. The plan also promised wider access to work experience. This advanced Burnham's early pledge to give technical education status comparable with academic routes.

For Black Caribbean pupils, the opportunity is potentially important, but so is the risk of recreating lower-status pathways through unequal guidance or expectations. The qualifications should be judged by curriculum quality, progression to further and higher education, employer recognition and evidence that students retain genuine choice.

School-cost measures also became operational. Limits of three compulsory branded items in primary schools and four in secondary schools took effect, with further action promised against expensive sportswear and restrictive supply arrangements. This was a modest but immediate household measure rather than structural education reform.

Safety and justice policies are accelerated

The accelerated timetable for specialist rape and sexual-offence police teams was reinforced by a September announcement that every Crown Court in England and Wales would have at least one specialist courtroom for rape and serious sexual offences within two years. Cases would receive fixed dates and facilities such as separate waiting areas and pre-recorded evidence, alongside trauma-informed training for staff.

These reforms could reduce delay and improve survivors' experience, but buildings and specialist teams will not, by themselves, ensure equal confidence in reporting or culturally competent support. Their effect on Black and Caribbean women should be assessed through access, withdrawal rates, outcomes and the involvement of specialist community organisations.

Community ownership and public control extend to energy and water

Great British Energy's first wave of People's Power projects opened routes for councils and community-energy groups to develop local renewable generation and, potentially, retain more benefit locally. Later in the month, the government said its strengthened Water Bill would remove statutory limits on government shareholdings in English water companies and develop a role for mayors in holding providers to account.

Neither announcement amounted to full public ownership. They did, however, demonstrate that public and community control was becoming more than campaign language. The question for Caribbean and other underserved communities is whether ownership and investment opportunities reach neighbourhood organisations or remain concentrated among already well-resourced institutions.

Caribbean Watch: Reparatory justice and Britain's institutions

On 7 September, Jamaica formally petitioned King Charles to refer three legal questions concerning slavery and possible remedies to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. Later that month, the King referred the petition for consideration, moving Caribbean reparatory justice into a formal legal process within Britain’s constitutional framework.

Referral was not a ruling on the merits, an award of compensation or a commitment by the British government. The Judicial Committee still had to determine how the questions would be considered and answered. Nevertheless, the development raised significant questions about historical accountability and the future relationship between Britain and the Caribbean.

The Burnham Government did not establish a substantively different public position during September. Although Jamaica initiated the petition, its progression provided an important test of how British institutions respond to Caribbean demands for reparatory justice. The government's relative silence therefore formed part of the developing record on UK–Caribbean relations.

What independent observers were saying

Outside government, independent and sector bodies broadly welcomed the direction of greater devolution while raising practical questions about delivery. The Institute for Government argued that the new taskforces would require disciplined cross-government collaboration and that the principles governing which powers should be devolved still needed clarification. The Local Government Association warned that devolution and growth ambitions would depend on addressing the financial pressures facing councils.

Those concerns were supported by the National Audit Office's wider assessment of limited capacity, fragmented funding and financial pressure across local government and housing. They did not necessarily contradict the government's objectives. They identified the conditions on which delivery would depend: clear responsibilities, capable institutions, sufficient workforce and resources, and funding sustained beyond the initial announcement.

Where silence became significant

By the end of September, no consequential new action had been announced on implementing the maternity investigation's recommendations, appointing the Maternity and Neonatal Commissioner or setting a measurable programme to close Black maternal-health gaps. The Windrush Commissioner remained in post and the January 2026 Scheme changes remained the inherited framework, but no major further reform or commitment to funded independent legal advice for compensation claimants was announced during September. Nor was there a comprehensive cross-government race-equality strategy.

Culture was also largely absent from the Prime Minister's emerging central narrative. Existing programmes continued, but no new national policy strengthened Caribbean-led heritage infrastructure or addressed the fragility created by long-term reductions in local cultural funding.

The same observation applied to wealth inequality, entrepreneurship and asset ownership. Employment and skills policies featured prominently, but little comparable attention was given to business ownership, access to capital or closing wealth gaps. Employment can ease immediate financial insecurity; ownership and assets help build longer-term resilience and intergenerational opportunity.

Silence should not automatically be treated as cancellation or hostility. Government works on different timescales, and some decisions awaited the Budget or later strategies. But as the first-100-days milestone approached, continued silence became evidence of priority: areas repeatedly omitted from major statements could no longer be treated as merely awaiting an introductory announcement.

The position at the end of September

By the end of September, the Burnham Government had established a recognisable governing philosophy. Devolution, public control, technical education, housing intervention and social-care reform had become recurring themes.

The record also revealed an imbalance. Economic management, public-service reform and institutional restructuring were advancing faster than action on racial inequality, Windrush justice, Black maternal health, policing disparities, wealth inequality and Caribbean cultural infrastructure.

Whether this reflected sequencing, administrative capacity or political priority could not yet be determined. But the pattern had become sufficiently consistent to form part of the evidence against which the first 100 days should be judged.

The question for Part Three is therefore clear: *has the government merely established its intentions, or has it begun demonstrably changing outcomes?*

PART THREE: THE FIRST 100 DAYS ASSESSMENT

October developments and the overall assessment: 20 July-27 October 2026

One hundred days is enough to identify priorities and governing direction. It is rarely enough to demonstrate lasting social change. The reasonable tests are whether commitments have progressed beyond announcement, whether funding has been attached to policy ambitions and whether implementation has begun.

Measured against those tests, the Burnham Government produced a mixed but distinctive record. Its universal economic and public-service agenda advanced more visibly than action on longstanding inequalities affecting Caribbean Britain. The question is where that progress occurred, who can access its benefits and what remains unresolved.

REVIEW FIRST 100 DAYS SCORECARD

Ratings assess policy progress during the review period, not proven improvements in outcomes. They reflect the measures examined in this report, rather than every government activity within each policy area.

Policy area	Assessment	
Cost of living	🟢	Selected measures implemented
Public transport	🟡	Local implementation; wider measures pending
Skills and youth opportunity	🟡	Programmes advancing; access and delivery still developing
Mental Health	🟡	Funded expansion; implementation at an early stage
Housing and homelessness	🟡	Funded intervention; wider delivery challenges remain
Social Care	🟡	Proposed settlement; future funding and implementation required
Devolution and public control	🟡	Administrative changes under way; wider fiscal powers pending
Enterprise and wealth creation	🟠	Business measures advancing; wealth inequalities insufficiently addressed
Windrush	🟠	Existing reforms continue; limited further movement
Race equality	🔴	No comprehensive cross-government framework identified
Black maternal health	🔴	Limited evidence of implementation against identified inequalities
Policing disproportionality	🔴	No comparable funded programme or delivery timetable identified
Caribbean cultural infrastructure	🔴	No clear national framework identified

Rating guide

🟢 Selected measures funded and implemented, or substantially under way.
🟡 Policy advancing, but important elements of implementation remain pending.
🟠 Some activity, with limited additional action on the specific challenge assessed.
🔴 A significant gap remains between the identified challenge and the policy response.

What Moved from Promise Towards Delivery?

The clearest immediate change was the removal of VAT on household electricity from 1 October. Unlike proposals awaiting legislation or future spending decisions, this altered a current household cost. Its value remained modest relative to wider financial pressures.

Other areas acquired funding and delivery mechanisms. Community mental-health investment supported the expansion of provision closer to home, while October announcements added technology work-experience opportunities to the Government's wider skills agenda. The meaningful tests will include access, service quality, retention and progression, with evidence showing whether inequalities narrow.

Transport illustrated the distinction between local implementation and national ambition. Bus franchising provided a practical example of public control operating regionally, while the national £2 fare cap outside London remained scheduled for 2027.

Devolution also progressed through administrative changes and a stronger emphasis on place-based investment. However, proposals for greater local fiscal power should be distinguished from powers already transferred. Moving officials and responsibilities is an identifiable change; demonstrating that communities gain effective influence and resources will take longer.

What Still Depends on Future Delivery?

Housing and social care remained prominent ambitions whose wider effects depended on decisions beyond the review period.

Housing combined funded intervention with proposed changes to landlord oversight, homelessness prevention and tenant protection. These measures did not yet establish that affordability, security or access to suitable homes had improved. Council capacity and the supply of genuinely affordable housing remained central constraints.

The proposed National Care Service acquired a clearer direction and funding approach, but implementation remained for a future Parliament, informed by the Casey review. For Caribbean families, the eventual assessment must include culturally appropriate care, support for unpaid carers and conditions across the care workforce.

These were substantive policy developments. They were not yet evidence of transformed services or outcomes.

Where Progress Was Most Limited

The areas of weakest movement were largely those identified in Parts One and Two.

On Black maternal health, the inherited investigation and proposed accountability arrangements had not yet been matched by a clearly evidenced implementation programme capable of narrowing the safety gap.

On Windrush, the Commissioner and earlier Compensation Scheme reforms remained important parts of the framework. Their continued existence did not establish faster decisions, fairer outcomes or greater claimant confidence. No major further reform addressing those tests was identified during the review period.

Specialist sexual-violence policing and court reforms advanced, but broader racial disproportionality in policing and justice did not receive a comparable funded programme or timetable.

Economic measures offered possible benefits to smaller businesses, yet employment, skills and regulatory simplification remained more prominent than targeted action on access to capital, ownership and intergenerational wealth. Similarly, cultural grants and heritage investment did not amount to a coherent framework for Caribbean-led archives, museums, festivals and creative institutions.

These gaps cannot establish motive. They do show that explicit action on racial disparities and Caribbean community infrastructure occupied a less developed place in the opening programme.

Reparatory Justice: A Test of Britain's Response

Jamaica's reparations petition and its referral to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council created a significant constitutional development during the period. Referral opened a process; it did not constitute a ruling, compensation award or British government commitment.

The King's acknowledgement of historical suffering and injustice during his Bahamas visit on 27 October added a further dimension. Royal acknowledgement, legal consideration and government policy must nevertheless be assessed separately. His remarks did not themselves demonstrate a change in the Government's position on reparations.

The forthcoming Commonwealth discussions fall beyond this assessment's cut-off. They provide a next test of whether acknowledgement develops into substantive dialogue and action.

The First-100-Days Verdict

The Government established a recognisable direction centred on practical cost relief, devolution, public control, technical education and public-service reform. Selected measures took effect; others gained funding, timetables or administrative structures.

The record also revealed an imbalance. Universal economic and public-service measures advanced more visibly than programmes explicitly addressing longstanding racial disparities and inequalities affecting Caribbean communities.

Some of that difference may reflect sequencing or administrative capacity. Several reforms will require years to assess. The absence of early outcome evidence should therefore temper the judgment, while leaving the gaps in policy response open to scrutiny.

The next test is whether resources, implementation and transparent reporting turn this governing direction into benefits that reach communities fairly.

After 100 days, the Burnham Government has begun changing systems and some immediate household costs. It has not yet demonstrated that it is changing the unequal outcomes against which Caribbean Britain will ultimately judge it.



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SPECIAL REPORT

The Budget in Five Numbers

These five figures highlight key commitments in the Budget. Their impact will depend on how support is delivered, who can access it and whether it brings greater security and opportunity to Caribbean Britain.

01

£100

Household energy bills

Households in council tax bands A-D in England will receive a one-off £100 payment from January 2027 towards energy costs.

This is separate from the electricity VAT reduction introduced in October, initially estimated by the Government to save a typical household around £45 a year. [1]

02

0%

VAT on Household Electricity

The temporary zero rate of VAT on domestic electricity will continue until July 2027. This extends the reduction introduced in October, providing relief through electricity bills rather than a separate payment. It does not mean that electricity itself is free. [1]

03

£1.5 Billion

Additional Social and Affordable Housing Funding

An additional £1.5 billion will support around 10,000 homes in England through the Social and Affordable Homes Programme. The investment prioritises social rent, particularly council homes. Its impact will depend on when homes are completed, their location and their affordability. [2]

04

£4.7 Billion

First Home Equity-Loan Scheme

The Government has allocated £4.7 billion over five years to an equity-loan scheme for eligible first-time buyers purchasing new-build homes in England. Expected to open for applications in February 2027, it offers a smaller deposit requirement alongside a mortgage and government loan. [3]

05

1.2%

2026 Economic Growth Forecast

The Office for Budget Responsibility has upgraded its forecast for UK economic growth in 2026 to 1.2 per cent. This is a projection, not a guaranteed outcome. For households, its significance will depend on whether growth supports better incomes, employment and public services. [4]



The figures show the commitment. Delivery will determine the difference.

BEYOND THE HEADLINES

What the Budget Means for Caribbean Britain

The five figures combine household assistance, housing investment, support for ownership and an economic forecast. They should be judged differently: a payment can reach households directly, homes take time to build, loans create future obligations, and forecasts remain uncertain.



Household Support: Who Receives the Help?

The £100 payment targets households through council tax bands, while zero-rated electricity VAT provides relief through bills. These are distinct forms of assistance, with different routes to reaching households. [1] Neither measure responds fully to differences in income, energy use or housing costs. Resolution Foundation's initial assessment finds that the poorer half of households receives only just over half of the cost-of-living support announced by Burnham and Healey. [5] REVIEW will therefore examine both delivery and adequacy: does support arrive as intended, and how much pressure does it actually relieve?

First Homes: A Lower Deposit, with Future Obligations

Your First Home could help eligible buyers overcome a deposit barrier. The proposed scheme combines a deposit of at least 2.5 per cent with a mortgage and a government equity loan worth 20 per cent of the purchase price. [3] The loan is interest-free for five years, but subsequent interest payments do not reduce the outstanding balance. Buyers must still satisfy lenders' affordability checks and meet the wider costs of ownership. Full eligibility rules remain to be published. [3] Its contribution to narrowing wealth gaps will depend on who qualifies, who participates and whether ownership remains sustainable.

Affordable Housing: From Funding to Front Doors

The additional housing allocation strengthens the commitment to social rent. It is funding towards future delivery, rather than evidence that housing conditions have already improved. [2] The practical questions are where homes will be built, how quickly they become available and whether rents are affordable to those who need them. For Caribbean households facing insecurity or overcrowding, completed and accessible homes will matter more than national investment totals.

Growth: A Forecast to Test Against Experience

The upgraded growth forecast provides economic context; it is not evidence that households are already better off. [4] Caribbean workers and entrepreneurs will experience growth through pay, secure employment, business opportunities and functioning public services. National expansion can coexist with unequal gains. REVIEW will look beyond the headline rate to whether economic improvement reaches people facing barriers to progression, finance and ownership.

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REVIEW'S ASSESSMENT

These commitments provide identifiable support and investment. Their benefits will arrive on different timescales, and some depend on eligibility rules and delivery arrangements still being developed. The next assessment should track payments received, homes completed, access to ownership and changes in household circumstances with evidence showing who benefits. The Budget's importance will be measured in greater security and opportunity, and in whether Caribbean Britain shares fairly in the gains.



THE CARIBBEAN IS MORE THAN A DESTINATION.

It is a region shaping its own future.

Behind the familiar images of sunshine and sea are societies making consequential decisions about their economies, institutions, young people and place in the world.

Their stories deserve attention beyond the headlines.

CARIBBEAN PERSPECTIVES

The Region in Focus

From Grenada’s election campaign to regional capital markets, freedom of movement and Jamaica’s planned STEAM academy, four stories examine how Caribbean ambition can become opportunity and what stands between policy announcements and lasting progress.



GRENADA'S CHOICE

Six Questions at the Heart of an Election and Why They Matter Across the Caribbean

As Grenadians prepare to vote on 5 November, competing approaches to household costs, healthcare, housing and economic development are in focus. The national leaders' debate held on **28 October 2026** brought those choices together, revealing questions that resonate well beyond Grenada.

Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell of the National Democratic Congress (NDC), Peter David of the Democratic People's Movement (DPM) and Opposition Leader Emmalin Pierre of the New National Party (NNP) addressed many of the same concerns. Their differences lay in priorities, delivery and their assessments of the Government's record.

The debate offered no shortage of promises. More revealing were the questions beneath them: who pays, how quickly change can happen and how governments should be held accountable for results.

1. How can living costs be reduced?

Mitchell pointed to electricity subsidies, VAT-free shopping days, changes to the zero-rated goods list and wage increases as evidence of action to support households.

David emphasised food production, agricultural development and solar energy as routes towards greater long-term affordability. Pierre defended the urgency of immediate assistance while proposing tax relief and measures to reduce household energy costs.

The distinction was not simply between helping people now and planning for later. Both were recognised as necessary. The disagreement concerned the balance, the effectiveness of existing measures and how quickly alternatives could work.

For voters, the useful questions are practical: who qualifies, what does relief cost, and how will longer-term investment reduce exposure to imported prices?

The debate offered no shortage of promises. More revealing were the questions beneath them: who pays, how quickly change can happen and how governments should be held accountable for results.

2. Can healthcare meet immediate and future needs?

Project Polaris, the proposed medical-city development, exposed differences over the sequence and financing of healthcare reform.

Mitchell defended investment in facilities capable of treating complex conditions within Grenada. He also discussed national health insurance as part of the wider healthcare reform agenda and linked its implementation to the development of the project.

Pierre stressed medicines, primary care and treatment people could afford now. David called for fuller public consultation and questioned why health-insurance provision should depend on the timetable for Polaris.

Workforce capacity is another essential test. New facilities and stronger primary care require doctors, nurses, allied health professionals and support staff. Training opportunities must be matched by funded posts, suitable working conditions and credible routes for graduates to return and remain in Grenada. Any healthcare programme therefore needs to explain not only what will be built or financed, but who will deliver the care.

These positions should not be reduced to a new hospital versus basic care. The challenge is how to fund and manage both, with credible timelines and a clear explanation of how ordinary patients benefit.

3. How can home ownership become a reality for more people?

Housing produced three distinguishable emphases.

David proposed deposit assistance for eligible first-time buyers able to obtain a mortgage, linking ownership with family stability and intergenerational wealth. Pierre advocated rent-to-own arrangements and faster access to available housing units.

Mitchell defended his administration's housing record and argued that apartment developments require a sustainable model for maintenance, payments and shared facilities. Pierre argued that past difficulties should not prevent consideration of better-managed rent-to-own arrangements.

The question extends beyond how many units are promised. Eligibility, allocation, household income, financing and long-term maintenance determine whether a housing programme creates lasting security.

4. Which skills will tomorrow's economy require?

The discussion exposed a tension between shortages in practical trades and the need to prepare for technological change.

Pierre argued for stronger digital literacy and preparation for robotics and artificial intelligence. Mitchell highlighted current demand for technical and vocational skills alongside education reform. David called for better planning around the skills the country will need.

The choice is not between digital and practical education. An economy needs both, supported by credible routes from learning into paid work.

Training programmes must connect recognised skills with paid work and progression. The wider test is whether young people can build worthwhile careers at home.

5. How should Grenada navigate global pressures?

The leaders discussed maintaining relationships with the United States, Cuba and other partners while protecting national interests.

Mitchell stressed decisions made in Grenadians' interests and the limits of conducting sensitive diplomacy publicly. David emphasised preserving longstanding friendships through careful negotiation. Pierre argued that constructive relations need not require choosing one partner over another.

Discussion of differing Caribbean positions on the UN vote concerning the US embargo against Cuba prompted wider reflections from David and Pierre on regional cohesion and diplomacy. Their comments raised a regional question: how can governments reconcile national calculations with the benefits of collective diplomacy?

Disagreement does not itself mean cooperation has failed. But a region seeking international influence must explain how common positions are formed and what happens when members diverge.

6. What will finance future prosperity?

Citizenship-by-investment and offshore oil and gas brought questions of opportunity, dependence and risk into the same conversation.

David and Pierre urged investment of citizenship revenues in productive sectors and warned against reliance on uncertain income. Mitchell disputed suggestions that Grenada had become overly dependent on the programme and defended regulatory reform and international engagement. Their accounts of external pressure and the programme's management differed.

On oil and gas, Mitchell outlined a licensing framework under which companies would undertake exploration at their own risk. David supported exploration but urged caution over contractual exposure and dependence on hydrocarbons. Pierre questioned expenditure and the handling of the Global Petroleum Group agreement. The debate did not establish commercially recoverable reserves or guaranteed future revenue.

What Happens After the Votes Are Counted?

On 5 November, Grenadians will decide which leadership they trust. After polling day, the promises must become budgets, laws and programmes open to public scrutiny.

The debate exposed differences over priorities, financing and delivery. Whichever administration takes office, citizens should be able to follow its commitments and assess the results in their homes, schools, workplaces and communities.

That is a test of democratic accountability everywhere: whether those elected to govern turn public trust into meaningful improvements in people's lives.

Reporting note: This article is based primarily on the 28 October 2026 National Leaders' Debate and its transcript. Policy positions and assessments of government performance are reported as the views of the participants. Claims regarding spending, programme outcomes, contractual exposure, legal compliance and future revenues have not been independently verified.

CONNECTING CARIBBEAN STOCK MARKETS

Could closer integration unlock capital and opportunity?

The Caribbean already has stock exchanges. Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago operate established markets, while Guyana also has a securities exchange. The Eastern Caribbean Securities Exchange (ECSE), launched in 2001, already provides a shared market for eight territories, including Grenada. Any wider regional initiative would therefore build on existing institutions and experience.

The question is what closer integration could achieve and whether businesses and investors would find it easier to participate across borders.

Building on Existing Foundations

Cooperation is already visible. The Caribbean Exchange Index, launched in October 2022, measures the performance of main-market securities across five participating exchanges: Barbados, the Eastern Caribbean, Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago. It provides a regional performance measure, although it is not itself a shared trading platform.

A new feasibility initiative will examine how integration could go further. In July 2026, the Caribbean Development Bank announced a US$100,000 grant to the CARICOM Private Sector Organization to assess possible models for a regional stock exchange serving participating CARICOM Single Market and Economy states. The Inter-American Development Bank is also supporting technical work on regional capital-market integration.

This is an assessment of potential arrangements, rather than an announcement that a new exchange is ready to open.

The question is what closer integration could achieve and whether businesses and investors would find it easier to participate across borders.

Why Does Scale Matter?

Existing exchanges provide important routes for raising and investing capital. However, the CDB identifies fragmentation as a continuing constraint on cross-border participation and the scale of investment opportunities. Its study will examine whether greater integration could improve trading activity, reduce financing costs and broaden access to capital.

For a company seeking expansion finance, a wider pool of potential investors could create opportunities beyond its domestic market. Investors could gain access to a broader range of businesses.

Those benefits would depend on practical arrangements: the cost of transactions, compatible rules, reliable information and the ease with which investments could subsequently be sold.

Who Would Benefit?

A larger market would not automatically be an accessible one.

Established companies may be better equipped to meet listing, reporting and compliance requirements. Smaller businesses would need routes into the market that balance proportionate costs with credible investor protection.

The study explicitly includes access to finance for women-led enterprises, young entrepreneurs and other underserved groups. Whether its recommendations create workable opportunities for those businesses will be an important measure of its value.

For diaspora investors, closer connections could also offer additional ways to support Caribbean enterprise. Participation would require clear information about eligibility, fees, taxation, currency conversion and investment risks. Cultural connection may encourage interest; transparent arrangements must support the decision to invest.

One Exchange or Better Connections?

The central design question is how much integration requires a new institution.

Closer links between existing exchanges, shared infrastructure or more compatible regulatory arrangements could offer alternatives to a wholly new trading venue. These are possibilities to assess, rather than settled recommendations.

The ECSE's experience should form part of that discussion. A regional exchange already operates within the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union; a wider CARICOM arrangement would need to establish what additional value it could provide across a more diverse group of markets.

The Real Test

The strongest case for integration would be evidence that it helps viable businesses obtain finance and gives investors a trustworthy, practical way to participate.

A new regional exchange is one possible outcome. Better-connected existing markets may be another. The useful question is which arrangement can widen opportunity, justify its costs and attract sustained use.

The Test Ahead

The feasibility findings, the proposed relationship with existing exchanges, regulatory and governance arrangements, participation costs, and credible routes for smaller businesses and diaspora investors.

CARIBBEAN FREE MOVEMENT

When Does a Right Become a Reality?

Freedom of movement has become one of the Caribbean's most ambitious integration projects. Its promise is straightforward: citizens should be able to pursue opportunities across participating states without unnecessary barriers.

Different agreements provide different rights, and practical outcomes often depend on how rules are applied rather than how they are written. As free-movement arrangements expand, an increasingly important question emerges: when does a legal right become a practical opportunity?

Not All Free Movement Is the Same

Within the OECS Economic Union, citizens of Protocol Member States benefit from provisions supporting freedom of movement and the removal of nationality-based discrimination in employment. Official guidance describes indefinite stay and the removal of work-permit requirements, while recognising that implementation continues to evolve.

A separate arrangement took effect on 1 October 2025 among Barbados, Belize, Dominica and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines under CARICOM's Enhanced Cooperation framework. Citizens of those four countries can reside and work indefinitely within participating states without requiring a work permit or skills certificate, alongside specified health and education entitlements.

The four-country arrangement is not a general entitlement for every CARICOM national to live and work throughout the Community. Eligibility must be checked against the relevant citizenship and legal rules; Caribbean heritage alone does not establish it.

From Legal Framework to Everyday Experience

Registration systems, recognition of qualifications, border procedures and access to public services can all determine whether freedom of movement feels straightforward or difficult.

CARICOM's review marking the first anniversary of the four-country arrangement describes the regime as operational while identifying further work on registration processes, public awareness, monitoring and data management.

Will People Use the Opportunity?

Employment opportunities, housing availability, transport costs and family circumstances all influence decisions about relocation.

For island states, geography introduces additional considerations. A legal right to relocate may be less meaningful if travel remains expensive or practical information remains difficult to access.

The challenge therefore extends beyond legislation. Policymakers must also consider the conditions that make mobility realistic and attractive.

How Should Success Be Measured?

Can employers explain the rules accurately? Are applications processed efficiently? Can qualifications be recognised without unnecessary delays? Are families able to access services without confusion?

These questions may appear administrative, but they help determine whether mobility is viewed as a meaningful opportunity or merely an abstract right.

The Next Phase of Integration

The next test is whether participating states can demonstrate that the arrangements already agreed work consistently for citizens and their families.

Regional integration succeeds when rights move beyond legal texts and become part of everyday life.

The most important measure of progress may therefore be practical confidence: the degree to which people understand the rules, trust the systems and feel able to exercise the opportunities available to them.

THE TEST AHEAD

Public guidance, implementation data, registration systems, employer awareness and evidence that legal mobility increasingly translates into practical opportunity.

JAMAICA'S FIRST STEAM ACADEMY

Can One School Help Build the Skills a New Economy Requires?

REVIEW retains the term "STEAM Academy", as used in the original source report. STEAM expands the traditional STEM framework by including the Arts alongside Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, recognising the role of creativity and innovation in education and workforce development.

Governments across the Caribbean are seeking ways to prepare young people for economies increasingly shaped by technology, innovation and changing labour-market demands.

Jamaica's planned STEAM Academy at Bernard Lodge offers a concrete example of investment in that goal.

In June 2026, a J$3.7 billion design-and-construction contract was signed for the project, which is expected to accommodate approximately 2,400 students from grades seven to thirteen. Planned facilities include science and engineering laboratories, digital classrooms, maker spaces and creative-arts facilities.

The contract covers design and construction; the academy is not being presented here as an open school. The project raises a broader question: can a specialised institution help equip students with the knowledge and skills needed in a changing economy?

More Than a Construction Project

Modern laboratories, technology-enabled classrooms and purpose-built learning environments all signal a commitment to science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics education.

But educational transformation depends on more than physical infrastructure.

The academy's long-term significance will therefore be determined not by what is built alone, but by how those facilities support learning.

What Skills Matter Most?

The project reflects a growing emphasis on science, technology and innovation within education policy.

Many governments increasingly view technical capability, digital literacy and problem-solving as important components of economic competitiveness.

Students require specialised knowledge, but they also need creativity, communication skills and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances. The challenge is not simply producing technical expertise, but preparing young people for a range of future opportunities.

How that balance is achieved will help shape the academy's contribution.

Buildings can create opportunities. Outcomes depend on teaching, curriculum design, leadership and student engagement.

Who Will Benefit?

Access may prove as important as curriculum.

Admissions arrangements, transport options and support services will all influence who is able to participate.

Ambitious institutions can broaden opportunity. They can also unintentionally concentrate it.

The academy's wider significance may therefore depend not only on educational quality but on whether students from different backgrounds are able to benefit from what it offers.

Can Success Extend Beyond One Campus?

The academy's impact should not be measured solely by the achievements of its own students.

Its broader influence may emerge through teacher development, curriculum innovation, partnerships and the sharing of successful practices across the wider education system.

Many education reforms have their greatest effect when lessons learned in one institution are adapted and applied elsewhere.

The question is whether the benefits of the academy can extend beyond Bernard Lodge itself.

The Real Measure of Success

A signed contract marks the beginning of a project, not its completion.

The academy's legacy will ultimately depend on outcomes: educational achievement, progression opportunities and the extent to which students develop skills that support their personal ambitions and national development.

What happens inside the academy will determine whether that investment delivers lasting value.

The Test Ahead

Construction milestones, admissions policies, teacher preparation, curriculum development and evidence that innovation in the academy contributes to stronger educational outcomes.

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THE REVIEW INTERVIEW

CAN BLACK BUSINESS NETWORKS CREATE LASTING ECONOMIC POWER?

Elizabeth Flanders speaks with Black Entrepreneurs International co-founder Mark Dalgety and Caroline Fagbemi about collaboration, business growth and turning connections into lasting economic opportunity.



Caroline Fagbemi and Mark Dalgety
Photography courtesy of Black Entrepreneurs International.

Visibility has become one of the most familiar ambitions in conversations about Black enterprises. Businesses are encouraged to be seen, tell their stories and occupy spaces from which they have historically been absent. But visibility alone does not pay suppliers, secure contracts or build assets. The more difficult question is what must happen after a business has been noticed.

For Mark Dalgety and Caroline Fagbemi, co-founders of Black Entrepreneurs International, the answer begins with a determinedly commercial mindset: businesses must sell, ask for help, use one another's expertise and learn to collaborate without pretending that competition will disappear. Their ambition is not simply to assemble a large network. It is to help turn connections into trade, confidence, knowledge and, eventually, collective economic power.

An idea born from frustration

Black Entrepreneurs International began in October 2020, during Black History Month. Dalgety, a chemical engineer and founder of Dalgety Teas, describes its creation as a direct response to the murder of George Floyd. Watching the footage left him convinced that protest and discussion, while necessary, could not be the only response. He wanted to build something practical.

> ***"I did not want only to talk about what was happening. I wanted to ask: what is the solution? For me, part of that solution is building economic might within Black communities."***
>
> **- MARK DALGETY**

Fagbemi brought a complementary set of skills. Her professional background spans information technology, data and corporate events, with particular strengths in administration, organisation and project management. She says the founders were united by a frustration at seeing too many good Black-owned businesses operating separately and too few opportunities for them to build together.

What began as an informal group later became Black Entrepreneurs International CIC in 2024. The founders say its combined reach across social-media and member platforms now encompasses 2,219 people and businesses, with connections across the UK, North America, the Caribbean, Africa and Europe. Its international identity is intentional: Black Entrepreneurs International was designed to extend beyond one nationality or territory and to create connections across the wider Black diaspora.

A network is only useful if people use it.

Both founders are candid about a problem that confronts many networks: joining is not the same as participating. A directory may contain hundreds of businesses, but its economic value remains limited if members do not introduce themselves, promote their services, ask questions or purchase from one another.

Fagbemi's advice is deceptively simple: ask. Entrepreneurs do not need to master accountancy, insurance, law, intellectual property, investment and every other professional discipline themselves. They need to recognise where expertise is required and become comfortable seeking it. Black Entrepreneurs International's role is not to provide financial or professional advice in fields where it lacks authority, but to connect members with people who possess the relevant knowledge and to circulate information about grants, services and opportunities.

"You do not know who may be able to help until you ask the question. We are not experts in every field, so our role is often to point people towards someone with credible expertise."

- CAROLINE FAGBEMI

That distinction matters. A functioning business network should not become an echo chamber in which informal opinions replace professional guidance. Black Entrepreneurs International is now developing a Members Expertise Service Hub through which specialist member businesses can promote their services, collaborate and provide practical expertise while retaining their commercial independence. Its value will lie not simply in listing expertise, but in making credible support easier to find and creating opportunities for members to do business with one another.

Sales before applause

Dalgety brings the conversation repeatedly back to the commercial foundation of enterprise: selling. He believes some founders spend too much time pursuing finance before they have tested whether customers will buy what they offer. His own business began with limited resources. He describes walking from shop to shop, speaking to dozens of potential buyers and building sales in small increments.

"The foundation of building a business is to sell. Some people spend more time trying to raise finance than selling the product or service they already have. You have to go out, speak to people and do the work."

- MARK DALGETY

This is not an argument that access to finance is unimportant. Structural inequalities in lending, investment and procurement remain real. Rather, Dalgety's point is that capital cannot substitute for a viable proposition, persistence or contact with the market. He urges founders to identify a clear point of difference and to understand that approaching three or four potential customers is rarely enough. Commercial resilience is built through repetition, feedback and volume.

The message also sharpens the meaning of visibility. Valuable visibility is not simply publicity. It places a business before potential customers, partners, advisers and investors and gives the founder an opportunity to convert attention into a relationship or transaction.

Collaboration without denying competition

Fagbemi is equally direct about a mindset she wants to change: the assumption that anyone offering a similar product or service must be treated only as a threat. Two accountants, lawyers or mortgage advisers can occupy the same room, she argues, because their experience, personalities, specialisms and customers will not be identical. Proximity can generate learning and referrals as well as competition.

"Do not always look at a similar business as competition. Look at it as an opportunity to learn. There is enough work for people to succeed in different ways."

- CAROLINE FAGBEMI

Dalgety illustrates the economic case through collective purchasing. Several businesses may obtain better terms by buying together, while continuing to compete for customers through service, presentation and individual strengths. He also points to clusters of car dealerships: rival brands locate near one another because customers value the convenience of comparison and because the combined destination attracts greater footfall.

It is a useful distinction. Collaboration does not require businesses to surrender their independence or pretend that commercial tensions do not exist. It asks them to identify the areas in which shared purchasing, representation, information or infrastructure can increase everyone's capacity.

Making the collective visible

Black Entrepreneurs International has sought to demonstrate that principle through collective exhibition. Since 2023, it has taken members into established trade and consumer events, allocating stand space so that businesses can exhibit collectively under a shared identity while retaining their individual offers. It has exhibited at the UK Black Business Show three times and at the Birmingham Black Business Show in 2025.

The result is intended to be more than a temporary display. Between 2023 and 2025, the organisation supported 22 member businesses to exhibit, six of them on more than one occasion. For the 2026 UK Black Business Show at ExCeL London, the founders planned to showcase 24 businesses, including six returning participants. They calculated that this would bring the number of individual businesses supported through their exhibition activity to 40.

The progression of individual members offers an early indication of what that support can enable. Imani Ulaini of Junopenarts first exhibited with Black Entrepreneurs International in 2024 and went on to exhibit under the business's own umbrella at the UK Black Business Show in October 2025. Errol Drummond of Sunrise Bakery also moved from exhibiting collectively with the organisation to exhibiting independently.



Photography courtesy of Black Entrepreneurs International.

For the founders, these transitions represent more than additional stand bookings: they reflect the experience, confidence, resilience and courage required to move from supported participation to independent presence.

"We are not just saying that collaboration is possible; we are showing it. Businesses come with us, learn what an exhibition involves and some then return with stands of their own."

- CAROLINE FAGBEMI

The organisation has also created platforms intended to keep businesses visible between exhibitions. Its monthly Black Entrepreneurs International Trade Catalogue, launched in November 2025, has a reported reach of more than 50,000. Member businesses are featured through YouTube spotlights, interviews filmed at business premises and exhibitions, and regular virtual and in-person networking. Alongside the developing Members Expertise Service Hub, these activities are intended to move the organisation beyond social connection towards a more useful commercial ecosystem.

From network to infrastructure

The founders' longer-term ideas reveal the scale of that ambition. They envisage a more searchable directory organised by sector and country; an editorial publication highlighting business developments that often go unreported; international branches operating beneath a common umbrella; and, eventually, a Black Entrepreneurs International exhibition capable of bringing businesses from across the network together under one roof.

Their thinking extends further to collective assets and investment. Dalgety speaks of members potentially pooling modest sums to acquire land, property or an operating business, subject to the appropriate legal, financial and regulatory structures. Fagbemi describes the possibility of a physical hub offering workspace, training, storage or a credible business address. These remain ambitions rather than completed programmes, and the founders are open about the governance and technical questions that must be resolved.

That honesty is important. There is a considerable distance between a networking group and an institution capable of managing shared investment or property. Moving across it requires specialist advice, sound governance, transparent decision-making, risk controls and sustained administrative capacity. But the ambition raises the right question: can a network help its members not only to meet and promote themselves, but also to build and own something together?

What would success look like?

For Fagbemi, one measure is cultural as much as commercial: challenging the perception that Black businesses operate in isolation. Businesses can collaborate, learn from one another and share opportunities while maintaining their individual identities and commercial independence. She also wants consumers to value Black-owned businesses properly, seek out their services and resist judging an entire community of entrepreneurs through one disappointing experience.

For Dalgety, progress is visible when businesses gather collectively, enter larger commercial spaces and use their numbers more strategically. His long-term vision is international, a network in which someone travelling to Grenada, Ghana, Guyana, Nigeria or another country could identify businesses, obtain guidance and build relationships before arriving.

The interview does not produce a single formula for lasting economic power. It does, however, identify several necessary ingredients: businesses willing to sell; founders confident enough to ask; credible specialists; consumers prepared to buy; competitors capable of collaborating; platforms that enforce a commercial purpose; and institutions strong enough to turn shared ambition into durable infrastructure.

Visibility matters, but it is the beginning rather than the destination. The more demanding test is whether being seen leads to participation, whether participation generates trade, and whether trade can contribute to stronger businesses, greater ownership and collective economic power. Black Entrepreneurs International is already constructing parts of that pathway. Its next challenge is to demonstrate how activity becomes sustained commercial impact as the network grows.

"We can do business, we can collaborate and we can grow together. There is still a lot to do, but changing that mindset is one of the achievements I am most proud of."

- CAROLINE FAGBEMI

ENTERPRISE LESSONS

Five Takeaways from the REVIEW Interview

The conversation with Mark Dalgety and Caroline Fagbemi offers five practical lessons for entrepreneurs seeking to build businesses that are visible, resilient and economically sustainable.

01

PROVE DEMAND THROUGH SALES

Many aspiring entrepreneurs focus on raising finance before proving demand. Mark Dalgety argues that sales are the true foundation of any business. A product, service or idea only becomes viable when customers are willing to buy.

Leaders must be prepared to test their offer in the marketplace, seek feedback and persevere through rejection. Funding can accelerate growth, but it cannot replace customer validation.

Enterprise takeaway: Prioritise revenue, relationships and customer engagement before pursuing investment.

02

ASK FOR HELP AND USE EXPERTISE WISELY

Successful leaders do not attempt to become experts in every aspect of business. Caroline Fagbemi emphasises the importance of recognising knowledge gaps and seeking credible professional support.

Whether the challenge involves legal matters, finance, marketing or technology, knowing when to ask questions is a leadership strength rather than a weakness. Access to the right expertise can help entrepreneurs make more informed decisions and avoid trying to solve every challenge alone.

Enterprise takeaway: Build trusted networks and seek specialist advice instead of trying to solve every problem alone.

03

COLLABORATE WITHOUT FEAR OF COMPETITION

One of the most powerful lessons from Black Entrepreneurs International is that collaboration and competition can coexist.

Businesses operating in the same sector do not need to view one another solely as rivals. Shared learning, referrals, joint purchasing and strategic partnerships can benefit everyone involved while preserving commercial independence.

Enterprise takeaway: Look for opportunities to create value collectively while maintaining your unique market position.

04

TURN VISIBILITY INTO OPPORTUNITY

Being seen is important, but visibility alone does not create economic power. The founders stress that exposure must lead to conversations, partnerships, customers and sales.

Whether through exhibitions, trade shows, networking events or digital platforms, leaders should focus on converting attention into meaningful business outcomes. Visibility is the doorway, not the destination.

Enterprise takeaway: Measure success not by how many people notice your business, but by the opportunities created from that attention.

05

THINK BEYOND THE INDIVIDUAL BUSINESS

Dalgety and Fagbemi's ambitions extend beyond helping individual businesses succeed. They see opportunities for entrepreneurs to build shared services, spaces and, eventually, assets that strengthen the wider business community.

These remain longer-term ambitions. Turning them into practical opportunities will require specialist advice, strong governance and the capacity to sustain the work. The lesson is to consider what businesses could achieve collectively alongside their individual growth.

Enterprise takeaway: Identify a shared need that collaboration could address, then establish the expertise, responsibilities and resources needed to turn that idea into action.

REVIEW'S REFLECTION

The journey from entrepreneur to leader is not simply about growing a company. It is about developing the confidence to sell, the willingness to seek support, the ability to collaborate and the discipline to turn connections into commercial opportunity.

Their experience points towards a larger ambition: turning individual enterprise and collective purpose into stronger businesses, shared opportunity and lasting economic value.


PEOPLE. PLACE. POSSIBILITY

THE BIG QUESTION: THREE OPINIONS, ONE QUESTION.

What should a modern relationship between the Caribbean and its diaspora look like?

REVIEW hears from ...



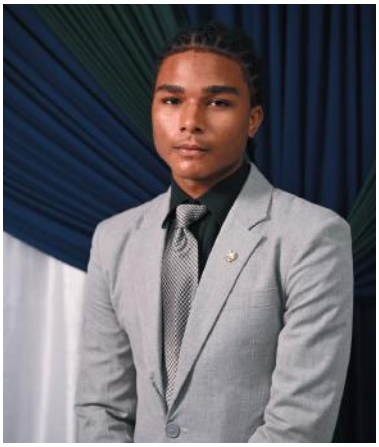
Paul Crooks

Genealogist, Historian, Author and Speaker specialising in African-Caribbean ancestry and history.



Dr. Gabrielle Hosein

Senior Lecturer
The Institute for Gender and Development Studies
The University of the West Indies.



Aquanjé Robinson

St Kitts and Nevis CARICOM Youth Ambassador; currently studying in Taiwan.



For me, a modern relationship between the Caribbean and its diaspora has to begin with understanding how that diaspora came into being.

The movement of Caribbean people across the world did not begin with the Windrush generation. It is part of a much longer history shaped by slavery and colonialism, but also by emancipation, migration, family ambition and the determination of successive generations to create better lives. Understanding that history matters because it helps explain why people thousands of miles from the Caribbean can still feel such a powerful connection to it.

Through my work in African-Caribbean genealogy, I have seen how strong that desire for connection remains. People want to know where their families came from, how they lived and how their own lives fit into a much larger story. For many descendants of Caribbean migrants, particularly those born overseas, discovering that history can transform the Caribbean from somewhere their parents or grandparents came from into somewhere to which they themselves feel connected.

But history should be the starting point, not the entire relationship.

Too often, the relationship between the Caribbean and its diaspora can feel either nostalgic or transactional. We celebrate food, music and carnival; we visit family; we send money home; and Caribbean governments sometimes look to their overseas communities for investment. All of those things have their place, but a modern relationship should go further.

The diaspora has knowledge, experience, professional expertise and international connections to contribute. But equally, the Caribbean should not be seen simply as somewhere for the diaspora to help, invest in or return to. A genuine relationship has to work in both directions.

That means creating more opportunities for people in the Caribbean and the diaspora to work together in education, business, culture, heritage and professional life. It also means finding ways for younger generations to participate that do not depend on having been born in the Caribbean or remembering a Caribbean childhood.

This is where history and heritage can play an important role. A young person in London, Toronto or New York who begins researching a grandparent or great-grandparent is doing more than constructing a family tree. They are discovering how their own story connects with the history of a Caribbean country and, ultimately, with the wider African diaspora.

For me, that is where the future lies. The strongest relationship between the Caribbean and its diaspora will not be defined simply by where we were born or where we now live. It will be built on understanding where we came from, recognising what we can contribute to one another, and deciding what we want to build together.

Paul Crooks
Genealogist, Historian, Author and Speaker specialising in African-Caribbean ancestry and history



As many people in the Caribbean diaspora know, our region faces an existential predicament. Many of our nations are beset by debt, high unemployment and macroeconomic precarity; dependence on non-renewables, tourism, and agriculture; and the growing risk of climate-related disaster. Rates of violence, including gender-based and sexual violence, are also disproportionately high. Brain drain remains persistent. This is not to paint a gloomy picture, but to situate the region in its current realities and to position these issues at the centre of how the Caribbean diaspora can engage with a place still considered a homeland by many.

The 'Caribbean' itself is a porous boundary, stretching into the diaspora even as geography maintains a distinction between the two. Caribbean people are mobile and migratory, moving back and forth and living abroad while remaining connected in spirit. Yet there is lived knowledge that should not be glossed over. Actually living in the region brings a particular experience of its possibilities and constraints.

There are fewer opportunities of many kinds and less funding for arts, activism, and entrepreneurship. For artists, for example, it can be daunting to access opportunities for funding, exhibiting or selling work in the diaspora. Even established artists may struggle to be taken seriously unless they 'make it' in the metropole even while circulating in those very spaces is more difficult for those who live in the periphery.

When representing the Caribbean in the diaspora, it is therefore important to continually make space for those who remain located on the ground, and to give their perspectives and contributions a reach that visa requirements and limited resources may foreclose. This is particularly important for feminist and activist women, younger generations, working-class communities, Indigenous peoples, LGBTQI+ folx and others whose experiences do not always enter official conversations about Caribbean development. It is equally important for artists and writers and for small businesses producing brilliant products that struggle to break into larger markets.

At the heart of the relationship between the Caribbean and its diaspora must be recognition of these inequalities of location, access, and mobility, even while finding grounds on which to act together. I am not suggesting a one-way relationship in which the diaspora 'gives back' to the Caribbean. Rather, I imagine a dispersed Caribbean community that takes seriously our responsibilities to one another, to mitigating inequalities, and to shaping a collective future.

Dr. Gabrielle Hosein
Senior Lecturer, The Institute for Gender and Development Studies,
The University of the West Indies



Beyond Belonging: Rethinking the Caribbean and Its Diaspora

I was born and raised in Saint Kitts, and I am writing from Taiwan, where I am a student. For now, I am part of the diaspora whose place in the Caribbean I have been asked to consider. My answer begins with a distinction. Our ambassadors and high commissions speak for our governments. The diaspora can speak as something else: as citizens, constituents and professionals inside the countries whose decisions shape ours.

Look at what the world now offers a small island. Official development assistance fell 6 per cent in 2024 and by another 23 per cent in 2025, and debt service in developing countries reached a twenty-year high in 2024 (UN DESA, 2026). We are still judged by our income, when what threatens us is our exposure. We did not choose this starting point. Colonialism built our economies to serve other people's, and the rules we inherited were written elsewhere.

When the global table is being rearranged, small states cannot wait to be seated. We have to build tables at our own scale. The OECS already does: its nationals, mine among them, live and work freely across its member states (Lacarte et al., 2023). CARICOM remains our essential house, but smaller circles inside it may move faster. The same logic applies in every capital where our diplomats and our diaspora both stand.

The diaspora already acts. After Hurricane Melissa, Jamaicans abroad sent home US$93 million more in three months than the year before, and December's US$296 million was the largest month of remittances in the Bank of Jamaica's records (Government of Jamaica, 2026). Our governments call their people home through units, conferences and incentives. In Washington, diaspora groups also lobby Congress (CARICOM Today, 2018). Yet most of our emigrants live in the United States, the United Kingdom or Canada (Lacarte et al., 2023), and the gap has been named. In 2018 Guyana's ambassador to Washington called for "a more structured process of engagement" between diplomats and the diaspora, and in 2020 a CARICOM commentator wrote that the diaspora there was "still not united and well-coordinated" (CARICOM Today, 2020). Those remarks are old, and I would be glad to hear they are out of date.

The change I want within five years is modest, and it is ours to make. Every Caribbean mission abroad should convene a standing advisory panel of diaspora organisations in its host country, with one shared agenda a year. Begin with the case for judging small islands by their vulnerability, through the UN's Multidimensional Vulnerability Index, and not by income alone. Give seats to the overseas-born, who will carry this relationship longest. The diaspora's part is to treat a seat as a commitment, and to speak with humility about what it cannot see from abroad.

We are not where we could be. Our diplomats speak for our governments, and our diaspora can speak as constituents. We should make sure they are making the same case.

Aquanjé Robinson

St Kitts and Nevis CARICOM Youth Ambassador,
currently studying in Taiwan.



Carla Zuill - Winner, Outstanding Personal Achievement at the 2022 Spirit of the Caribbean Ball and Black Honour Awards

RECOGNITION & CONTRIBUTION

WHAT DOES RECOGNITION CHANGE?

Who receives visibility, who remains unseen and how can recognition create opportunity, integrity and lasting legacy?

By Elizabeth Flanders

THE PEOPLE WERE NEVER ORDINARY

In February 2022, The Weekly Gleaner introduced the inaugural awards under the headline *"Black Honours Awards for 'ordinary people'."* The phrase captured what I wanted to achieve. These were not to be awards reserved for celebrities, senior executives or people supported by powerful networks. They were intended to recognise people making an important difference through everyday acts of service, commitment and care.

The article spoke about neighbours delivering food parcels, people running errands during the pandemic, and a caretaker who remained available even when not officially working. Their reliability had become so embedded in community life that it was easy to benefit from their contribution without placing it on the record.

Four years later, however, I would challenge one word in that headline. The people themselves were never ordinary. What had become ordinary was the way their contribution could be relied upon, benefited from and still remain unseen.

That founding purpose remains relevant. Recognition is partly about achievement, but it is also about correcting an imbalance in visibility. Public attention often follows status, networks, publicity and proximity to institutions rather than value. Some of the people holding communities together possess none of those advantages.

BEING SEEN BY YOUR OWN COMMUNITY

The 2024 awards brought another dimension of recognition into view. Paulette Randall MBE received the Creative Industries award for her groundbreaking contribution to British theatre and television. She co-founded the Theatre of Black Women, led Talawa Theatre Company, directed major work for stage and television, and served as an associate director for the London 2012 Olympic Opening Ceremony. She had already received an MBE and spent decades widening the space available to Black performers and stories.

Yet, after receiving the award, Paulette told me that it was the first award she had won. Her pleasure was evident. The moment stayed with me because it revealed something that a list of professional achievements cannot explain. Formal distinction, professional standing and recognition from one's own community are not identical experiences. One does not replace the other.

Her response also disrupted any simple division between visible and invisible people. Someone may be well known within a profession and still feel that a central part of their contribution has not been personally celebrated. Others may have served locally for decades without ever appearing in a newspaper or on a stage. Recognition must be capable of seeing both.

RECOGNITION IS NOT THE SAME AS OPPORTUNITY

It would be easy to claim that an award changes careers, unlocks investment or creates new commissions. I cannot make that claim on the evidence available to me. We did not formally track what happened to every finalist after the 2022 and 2024 events, and I am not aware of a clear line between receiving an award and securing a tangible professional opportunity.

That does not make the recognition meaningless. It can affirm that someone noticed the work and understood its value. It can also create public credibility, provide a permanent record, introduce an individual's contribution to a wider audience and give younger generations an example of what leadership and service can look like.

There is value in saying: we saw what you did; we understood what it required; and we will not allow it to pass without record. But that must be the beginning of the answer, not the end. If recognition creates a brief moment of attention and then returns people to invisibility, its potential has not been fulfilled.

INTEGRITY BEHIND THE APPLAUSE

Awards must also be willing to examine themselves. Recognition loses credibility when it becomes a popularity contest, when payment influences participation, when sponsors affect decisions, or when the same familiar names are repeatedly celebrated because they are easier to find. A beautiful ceremony cannot compensate for a process that is unclear or unfair.

From our first event in June 2022, those shortlisted for recognition were invited to attend as our guests. Their ability to purchase a ticket was never a condition of being celebrated.

That principle continued at the 2024 Black Honour Awards, a deliberately small, invitation-only gathering of judges, finalists and their supporters. Every finalist was able to attend without charge. The intimacy worked: those being recognised remained the focus, their stories were properly heard and the occasion felt personal rather than performative. I did not sit on the judging panel and had no influence over the outcome. Judges were given clear criteria, and the work of winners and other recognised finalists continued to be presented publicly afterwards. These safeguards mattered because an award should never depend upon a nominee's ability to buy a ticket, their relationship with the organiser or the commercial interests of a sponsor.

Independence is not only about avoiding interference. It is also about making sure that the evidence supplied to judges allows them to reach a fair decision. That is where the process still has room to improve.

WHAT THE NOMINATION PROCESS TAUGHT ME

Some nominations contained rich evidence of sustained contribution. Others were extremely brief, even when the nominee's work was clearly deserving. In practice, this meant that the process could measure a nominator's confidence and writing ability as well as the nominee's impact. People with professional communications support were better placed to tell a persuasive story than those whose contribution was known mainly through personal experience.

The next awards must begin earlier and guide nominators more carefully. A reasonable minimum word count and structured questions can prompt people to explain what the nominee did, who benefited and what changed. Optional video or audio submissions may help those who communicate more naturally by speaking, provided production quality is never considered by the judges.

Accessibility should not weaken standards; it should help more people provide the evidence needed to meet them. Where necessary, organisers should be able to request clarification without rewriting a nomination or advocating for one candidate over another. The aim is not to manufacture stronger entries. It is to prevent worthy contribution from disappearing behind a poorly completed form.



Above: Guests at the 2024 Black Honour Awards
Photography: Black Wall Street Media

Below: the 2022 Black Honour Awards Winners



FROM A MOMENT TO A LEGACY

The awards themselves are now evolving. What began as the Black Honour Awards will continue as the Caribbean Honour Awards at the Spirit of the Caribbean Ball, reflecting the wider purpose of Caribbean Unity Network: to celebrate every nation while strengthening the whole Caribbean community.

That evolution must involve more than a new name. Responsible recognition should create an enduring public record, revisit recipients' work and, where appropriate, connect people with media, partners, funders or organisations able to support their progress. It should also help communities nominate those who are usually overlooked.

Not every award will produce a contract, promotion or funding opportunity. Nor should recognition be valued only when it leads to commercial reward. There is dignity in being seen, pride in being affirmed and cultural importance in documenting who contributed to a community's development. But we should still ask what visibility is for and where it might lead.

Recognition is most meaningful when it does four things: acknowledges the individual, communicates the value of their contribution, preserves that contribution within the community's story and creates a platform from which something further may become possible. The ceremony is only one part of that responsibility.

WHAT RECOGNITION MUST BECOME

Paulette's response reminded me that achievement does not automatically bring personal recognition, and that formal honour does not necessarily replace the experience of being seen by one's own community. The local volunteer, the community business owner and the nationally respected creative leader may occupy very different spaces, but each can experience the same gap between contribution and acknowledgment.

An award cannot correct unequal access to opportunity by itself. It cannot guarantee that a lifetime's work receives the attention, support or investment it deserves. What it can do is place that work on the record and challenge the habits that determine whose names become known.

The next challenge is therefore not simply to recognise more people. It is to recognise responsibly: with independence, evidence, accessibility and a commitment that extends beyond the applause. Recognition should not tell people that they are extraordinary and then return them to invisibility. It should confirm that their work mattered, that they belong within our collective story and that others should know their name.



RECOGNITION IN ACTION

The principles explored in this article continue through the Caribbean Honour Awards & Ball, which seeks to recognise contribution with integrity, transparency and a commitment to lasting community legacy.

Turn the page to learn more about the Caribbean Honour Awards & Ball 2027.

CARIBBEAN
UNITY NETWORK







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at the SPIRIT OF THE CARIBBEAN BALL

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SCAN ME

Presented at the
Spirit of the Caribbean Ball
Saturday 12 June 2027,
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In a world built around visibility, will the ability to disappear become the ultimate luxury?

By Elizabeth Flanders

I was watching television when a character said something that stopped me: in the future, everyone would want fifteen minutes of privacy. It was a playful reversal of Andy Warhol's famous prediction that everyone would one day be famous for fifteen minutes. Yet it felt less like a joke than a description of the world we are steadily creating.

Warhol's observation belonged to an age when public attention was unusual. Fame was conferred by newspapers, television studios, record companies and other gatekeepers. Most people lived beyond the reach of a mass audience. Today, the tools of publication sit in our pockets. We can broadcast an opinion before breakfast, share a family celebration by lunchtime and allow strangers to accompany us through an evening that would once have belonged only to those in the room.

The change is not simply that more people can become visible. Visibility itself has become a daily expectation. We are encouraged to document where we go, what we eat, what we achieve, whom we love and sometimes what we suffer. An experience can feel unfinished

until it has been photographed, captioned and acknowledged by others. If we do not post, people may wonder whether anything happened at all.

Most of us have experienced the tension. We attend a concert, celebrate a birthday, watch a child open a present or simply spend an evening with people we care about. Before the moment has fully unfolded, someone reaches for a phone. The impulse is understandable; photographs help us remember and sharing helps us connect. Yet the habit raises an uncomfortable question: are we preserving the experience, or interrupting it? And if every meaningful moment requires an audience, what happens to those experiences that are valuable precisely because they are private?

When sharing becomes the default

Social media began with a compelling promise: ordinary people could tell their own stories. Communities overlooked or misrepresented by traditional media could speak for themselves, find one another and challenge the narratives imposed upon them. That remains one of its greatest strengths. Visibility can build confidence, create opportunity, mobilise support and ensure that achievement does not pass unnoticed.

But a useful tool can quietly become an obligation. The invitation to share has developed into pressure to remain present, responsive and publicly legible. Organisations are told they must constantly produce content. Professionals are expected to maintain a personal brand. Businesses feel compelled to reveal the personalities behind their work.

Even private individuals may be judged by the frequency of their updates and the apparent success of the lives those updates display.

We have also begun to treat access to one another as almost unlimited. A photograph taken at a private gathering may appear online without everyone's agreement. A personal disagreement can become public testimony. News of a birth, illness, separation or death may travel far beyond the people directly involved before those closest to it have had time to absorb what has happened. The person at the centre of the story may be the last person to control it.

"The person at the centre of the story may be the last person to control it."

What artificial intelligence changes

Artificial intelligence makes the question more urgent because the information we release is no longer merely viewed; it can be gathered, interpreted, combined and recreated. A photograph is not only a photograph. A voice recording is not only a record of a conversation. Together with names, locations, preferences and relationships, these fragments can help construct a detailed version of a person, sometimes more detailed than the person realised they had disclosed.

AI systems can produce enormous public benefit, but they also complicate the boundary between what is available and what was meaningfully offered for reuse.



Material posted for friends, customers or a particular community may later be encountered in a completely different setting. Context disappears more quickly than content. A joke, mistake or unguarded opinion can remain searchable long after the person who expressed it has changed.

There is an obvious irony in using AI to help develop an article questioning the consequences of AI and digital exposure. But perhaps that is precisely the point. The choice is not simply between embracing technology and rejecting it. The more useful question is whether we are using these tools consciously, with boundaries, or allowing their convenience to decide those boundaries for us.

The identities children inherit

For children, the issue is especially complex. Many now acquire a digital history before they can speak. Pregnancy announcements, scans, birth photographs, birthdays, school achievements and embarrassing family stories may all be published by adults acting with affection and pride. By adolescence, a young person can inherit an online identity assembled by other people.

Previous generations grew into adulthood with the freedom to leave childhood versions of themselves behind. Today's children may have to negotiate with an archive they did not create and could not consent to. The question is not whether families should celebrate their children. It is whether love automatically gives us the right to make a child permanently visible.

"Love does not automatically give us the right to make a child permanently visible."

A Caribbean conversation

Privacy has never been straightforward in close communities. Caribbean families and neighbourhoods have long been connected by overlapping relationships, shared histories and highly efficient word of mouth. News travels. People recognise surnames, remember grandparents and maintain ties across villages, islands and generations. Within the diaspora, these networks stretch across Britain, the Caribbean, North America and elsewhere.

That closeness can be a source of care. It means that people notice an absence, mobilise support and preserve memory. But social media has removed many of the natural limits that once surrounded community knowledge. Information that might once have travelled through a circle of relatives or neighbours can now cross several countries in minutes. A screenshot can outlive the conversation from which it came. A family matter can become community entertainment. Concern can slide into entitlement: because we know of someone, we begin to believe we have a right to know everything about them.

The diaspora also carries a strong and understandable desire to be seen. Caribbean contribution has too often been overlooked, simplified or absorbed into broader categories. Digital platforms give individuals and organisations the means to document achievement, challenge erasure and strengthen connections across borders. We should not surrender that power. But greater visibility should not require the surrender of every boundary. We can insist that our stories matter while retaining the right to decide which parts of those stories belong to us alone.

Privacy is not secrecy

Part of the difficulty is that privacy is sometimes treated as suspicious. A person who declines to share may be described as guarded, secretive or inauthentic. Yet privacy is not necessarily concealment. It can be the space in which we think before speaking, recover before performing, make mistakes without an audience and decide who we are without immediately turning that process into content.

The same distinction matters for organisations. Transparency should apply to decisions, money, governance, power and matters of public accountability. It does not mean that every conversation, relationship or unfinished idea must be exposed. Responsible openness requires judgement. Without boundaries, transparency can become performance rather than trust.

Privacy is also unevenly distributed. Wealth and influence can purchase secure spaces, professional reputation management and legal intervention. Others may find that a single viral moment defines them indefinitely. People who depend on digital platforms for work can rarely withdraw completely. Those escaping abuse, discrimination or political danger may need anonymity not as a luxury but as protection.

The right to be unfinished

Perhaps what constant visibility threatens most is our right to be unfinished. Human beings reconsider, contradict themselves and grow. We should be accountable for genuine harm, but a society that preserves every misjudgement without proportion leaves little room for development. If every early opinion becomes evidence and every difficult period becomes permanent identity, change becomes harder to recognise.

This does not mean retreating from public life. Nor does it require us to stop celebrating, campaigning, connecting or creating. It asks for something quieter: a more deliberate relationship with visibility. Before posting, we might ask whether the moment is ours to share, whether everyone pictured has agreed, whether a child might later feel differently, and whether the information needs to remain available forever.

We might also resist the assumption that everything meaningful must be witnessed by an audience. Some achievements do not need applause. Some acts of generosity do not need evidence. Some relationships are strengthened by being protected rather than displayed. Some grief needs time before it becomes language.

A future worth choosing

The most valuable form of privacy may not be disappearing completely. It may be recovering the power to choose: what is known, by whom, for what purpose and for how long. That power should not belong only to celebrities, governments, technology companies or those wealthy enough to defend it.

Warhol imagined a future in which fame would be democratised. In many ways, it has been. But the cost of universal visibility is becoming clearer. We are watched by institutions, analysed by systems, observed by strangers and recorded by one another. At the same time, we voluntarily contribute to the record, often without knowing how it may later be used.

Perhaps the future will not be defined by everyone receiving fifteen minutes of fame. Perhaps the greater privilege will be fifteen uninterrupted minutes in which nobody photographs us, measures us, searches for us or expects us to perform, a moment that is experienced fully and then allowed to disappear.

And perhaps privacy will become not an escape from modern life, but one of the freedoms we must learn to protect within it.

The REVIEW Question

How much control do you feel you have over your privacy and digital identity, and what would you most like to keep beyond the reach of the online world?

Editorial Note

The opening idea is a contemporary inversion of Andy Warhol's “fifteen minutes of fame”. Similar versions have appeared in popular culture and have been attributed to several writers and artists; the article therefore does not assign the privacy formulation to a single originator.

VISIBLE IN CRISIS. INVISIBLE IN CELEBRATION

Why Caribbean achievement must be named

By Elizabeth Flanders



"Visibility without identity is not complete recognition."

A milestone worth celebrating

On 18 August 2026, the Beninese musician Angélique Kidjo received the 2,854th star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. The Hollywood Chamber of Commerce described the five-time Grammy winner as the first African musician and the first Black African to receive one of its stars. After more than four decades of music, performance and advocacy, the recognition was both historic and thoroughly deserved.

The announcement nevertheless prompted a question. Kidjo was not the first Black entertainer to be honoured on the Walk of Fame. Many Black actors and musicians had preceded her, including people born in the Caribbean or descended from Caribbean families. What, then, made this a first? The answer lies in what was being counted. It was the first time the honour could be claimed specifically for a Black African musician. That is a legitimate and important distinction, but it also reveals how unevenly identity is named when success enters the public record.

The Caribbean presence already in the pavement

There is no official Caribbean register within the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Its directory records recipients principally by name and professional category, and some older profiles use broad labels such as “African American” even for Caribbean-born figures. Establishing a Caribbean presence therefore requires separate research into individual lives and family histories.

That research quickly moves beyond the two most familiar examples. Bahamian-American actor Sidney Poitier received his star in 1994. Harry Belafonte, born in Harlem to Caribbean parents and partly raised in Jamaica, had been represented on the Walk since 1960. Cicely Tyson, the daughter of immigrants from Nevis, received hers in 1997; Jamaica-born Bob Marley followed in 2001. Billy Dee Williams, whose mother came from Montserrat, was honoured in 1985. Cuba Gooding Jr., whose paternal grandfather was Barbadian, received a star in 2002.

The more recent record includes Jamaican-born rapper Sandra “Pepa” Denton as part of Salt-N-Pepa’s 2022 group star; Lenny Kravitz, whose maternal family is Bahamian, in 2024; Kerry Washington, who has spoken about her maternal family’s Jamaican story, also in 2024; Jamaican-American actor Sheryl Lee Ralph in 2025; and Busta Rhymes, born in Brooklyn to Jamaican parents, later that year. These are not marginal associations added retrospectively. For several of these artists, Caribbean upbringing, family, music, language or cultural commitment has been integral to the person they became.

Yet their honours have not generally been assembled and narrated as a Caribbean milestone. They appear separately as American, Black, Latino, British or simply individual success. The people are visible, but the Caribbean thread connecting their stories is not necessarily visible with them.

"Visibility without identity is not complete recognition."

Grouped together, until the distinction matters

African and Caribbean communities are often brought together under the broad category "Black". There are compelling reasons for solidarity: shared African ancestry for much of the Caribbean population, connected histories of enslavement and colonialism, and continuing experiences of racism. But solidarity does not make the communities interchangeable. They have different histories, migration patterns, cultures and relationships with the institutions in which they live.

The distinction often reappears most sharply when poor outcomes must be explained. Government education statistics in England separate Black African and Black Caribbean pupils because the aggregate category can conceal materially different experiences. In the 2022/23 figures, 69.4 per cent of Black African pupils achieved grade 4 or above in GCSE English and mathematics, compared with 52.1 per cent of Black Caribbean pupils. Progress 8 data likewise showed stronger progress for Black African pupils than for Black Caribbean pupils. A shared racial label did not produce a shared educational outcome.

This creates an uncomfortable pattern. African and Caribbean people may be combined when discrimination is discussed in general terms, divided when the evidence exposes a particular Caribbean disadvantage, and then combined again when individual success is celebrated. Caribbean identity becomes specific when institutions need to describe an inequality, but can become indistinct when the contribution deserves recognition.

What Subnormal revealed

The 2021 BBC One documentary Subnormal: A British Scandal showed the devastating consequences of that history. Produced and directed by Lyttanya Shannon and executive-produced by Steve McQueen and others, it examined how Black children in the 1960s and 1970s were disproportionately removed from mainstream education and sent to schools for children officially described at the time as "educationally subnormal". Caribbean children were assessed through culturally biased tests, judged through racial stereotypes and placed in institutions that restricted both their education and their future. Survivors described consequences that extended far beyond the classroom: lost opportunity, damaged confidence and shame carried quietly into adult life.

The documentary also recovered the resistance that challenged the system. Black parents, teachers, psychologists, publishers and community organisers gathered evidence, created supplementary schools and forced the injustice into public view. Grenadian educator Bernard Coard's 1971 book, How the West Indian Child Is Made Educationally Sub-normal in the British School System, gave the scandal a name and an analysis. Subnormal therefore documented more than institutional failure. It recorded Caribbean people organising, researching, publishing and defending their children, another history of positive action that is too rarely taught alongside the harm that made the action necessary.

When scandal becomes the history lesson

A response to the 100 Caribbean Voices survey brought this contradiction into focus. One anonymous participant described having had little awareness of the positive contribution Caribbean people had made to Britain before the Windrush

scandal brought that history more fully into public discussion. Her words should not be treated as a judgment on the contribution itself. They reveal the failure to make that contribution sufficiently visible beforehand.

The Windrush scandal was an injustice: lawful residents were wrongly detained, denied rights, threatened with removal and, in some cases, deported. Yet it became the occasion on which many people learned more about the generation's service to post-war Britain the hospitals staffed, transport systems operated, industries supported, communities built and public life enriched. Positive Caribbean contribution entered wider consciousness as supporting context to a story of mistreatment.

That is the deeper concern. Caribbean people should not have to be encountered principally through scandal before their contribution is understood. Nor should Caribbean identity become most precise when the subject is educational failure, exclusion, immigration injustice or institutional neglect. The same precision should be present when achievement, leadership, creativity and service are being recorded.

Connection without erasure

None of this diminishes Angélique Kidjo's achievement. Her star belongs to her, to Benin and to the generations of African musicians whose work made her path possible. Naming an African first does not take recognition away from Caribbean people. The appropriate response is not to challenge the African milestone, but to ask why Caribbean milestones have not always been named with comparable confidence.

Nor is this an argument for distance between Africa and the Caribbean. The relationship is ancestral, historical, creative and living. But connection should allow both identities to be seen. Acknowledging distinction is not division; it is the beginning of understanding.

Solidarity becomes more meaningful when it recognises the people actually in the room, the particular barriers they face and the histories they carry.

Caribbean visibility therefore requires more than the appearance of successful people with Caribbean heritage. It requires their heritage to be recognised where it is relevant, their contribution to be documented as part of the Caribbean story and younger generations to be able to find themselves within that record. Otherwise, individuals may become famous while the community that helped form them remains comparatively unseen.

Who will keep the record?

The question is larger than Hollywood. Who records Caribbean achievement? Who teaches it? Who preserves the connection between individual accomplishment and collective history? Who ensures that Caribbean children encounter stories of imagination, leadership, courage and excellence before they encounter stories of failure or injustice?

This is why Caribbean-specific research, publishing and recognition remain necessary. They are not attempts to withdraw from a wider Black story. They ensure that an important part of that story is not lost through overgeneralisation. They enable Caribbean people to understand both what has happened to their communities and what their communities have made possible.

Angélique Kidjo's star deserves celebration. It should also encourage us to look again at the record beneath our feet: at the people whose Caribbean connections were present but not always named, and at the future achievements that must not be allowed to disappear into categories too broad to carry their full meaning.

> *Caribbean identity should not become visible only through crisis. Caribbean achievement must be named while it is happening, documented as part of a shared inheritance and carried forward for those who follow.*

Editorial research note: Caribbean-linked Walk of Fame recipients

The Hollywood Walk of Fame does not maintain an ancestry-based register. The following working list records recipients identified through official Walk of Fame entries and corroborating biographical sources. It is intentionally limited to confirmed Black Caribbean birth or family connections relevant to this article, and should not be presented as a definitive list of every honouree connected to the wider multilingual and multiracial Caribbean.

Recipient	Documented Caribbean connection	Star category	Year
Harry Belafonte	Jamaican/Martinican family; partly raised in Jamaica	Recording	1960
Billy Dee Williams	Mother born in Montserrat	Motion Pictures	1985
Sidney Poitier	Bahamian-American; raised in The Bahamas	Motion Pictures	1994
Cicely Tyson	Parents from Nevis	Motion Pictures	1997
Bob Marley	Born in Jamaica	Recording	2001
Cuba Gooding Jr.	Paternal grandfather born in Barbados	Motion Pictures	2002
Salt-N-Pepa	Member Sandra “Pepa” Denton born in Jamaica	Recording (group)	2022
Lenny Kravitz	Bahamian heritage through his mother’s family	Recording	2024
Kerry Washington	Maternal family connection to Jamaica	Television	2024
Sheryl Lee Ralph	Jamaican mother; raised between Jamaica and the US	Television	2025
Busta Rhymes	Born in New York to Jamaican parents	Recording	2025

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What happens next is everyone’s responsibility



What REVIEW Will Be Watching

The issues, opportunities and developments that REVIEW will continue to monitor, revisit and assess as they evolve.

WHO SHAPES THE CARIBBEAN'S AI FUTURE?

Regional priorities, practical choices

Artificial intelligence raises a question that extends beyond adopting new tools: how much influence will Caribbean societies have over the technologies reshaping their lives?

UNESCO's Caribbean AI Policy Roadmap provides a framework for regional cooperation. In July 2026, UNESCO reported its endorsement by members of CARICOM's Council for Trade and Economic Development responsible for information and communication technologies.

Why we're following it

Decisions about AI concern education, employment, public services, cultural expression and control over information. REVIEW will examine how Caribbean priorities inform those decisions and whose voices are included.

What we'll look for

How regional frameworks inform national action, training and public participation. We will follow efforts to develop local expertise, protect rights and create useful applications and ask whether smaller businesses, communities and states can share in the opportunities.

Sources: UNESCO Caribbean AI Policy Roadmap; UNESCO's July 2026 update on regional endorsement.

WINDRUSH 80: FROM COMMEMORATION TO LEGACY

Heritage, Education & Lasting Recognition

In 2028, Britain will mark the 80th anniversary of the arrival of HMT Empire Windrush. The Government has committed to working with communities to mark the milestone, although the scale and funding of its anniversary programme remain to be established.

Cultural plans are also emerging, including Pegasus Opera Company's Windrush: The Opera, scheduled to tour nationally in 2028. Meanwhile, the separate Windrush Day Grant Scheme for 2027 supports projects raising awareness, fostering pride and inspiring younger generations.

What we'll be watching

Whether preparations give communities a meaningful role in shaping the anniversary and lead to sustained support for education, archives, cultural organisations and intergenerational learning beyond the commemorations.

The question

What progress has been made towards Windrush 80, and what lasting legacy is being built?

Sources: House of Lords debate, 14 April 2026; Windrush Day Grant Scheme 2027 guidance; Pegasus Opera Company.

UK GRENADA DIASPORA PARTNERSHIP

Building Bridges Beyond Borders
The UK Grenada Diaspora Partnership Ltd. (UKGDP) is developing a network designed to strengthen connections between Grenada and its diaspora, while also creating opportunities for diaspora communities to connect and collaborate with one another. Its founding vision centres on skills exchange, knowledge sharing and access to trusted professional and community networks.

The initiative proposes separate structures to support its different activities, distinguishing the network and professional work of UKGDP Ltd from future charitable and community programmes in the UK and Grenada. While plans for a charitable organisation are under development, trustee appointments and registration have not yet been completed.

At its heart, UKGDP aims to create relationships that extend beyond individual events and projects, providing a framework through which skills, expertise and opportunities can be shared for mutual benefit.

Why We're Following It
Effective diaspora engagement requires more than goodwill. It depends on clear opportunities to contribute, trusted partnerships and meaningful participation from the communities it seeks to serve. UKGDP presents an opportunity to explore how these relationships can be built, nurtured and sustained over the long term.

What We'll Be Watching
How the network develops in practice, how its proposed structures evolve, and which initiatives move from planning into delivery. We will be looking for tangible examples of skills exchange, collaboration, community impact and benefits that are shaped by both people in Grenada and members of the diaspora.

Source: Purpose and governance documents supplied by UKGDP's founders.

Editorial Disclosure: *Elizabeth Flanders, Editor of REVIEW and Founder of Caribbean Unity Network, has been invited to serve as a trustee of the proposed charitable organisation associated with UKGDP Ltd. At the time of publication, the charity has not been established, and no trustee appointments have been formally confirmed.*

MDS MENTORING PROGRAMME

Turning shared experience into opportunity

Access to someone who understands the path ahead can make a difference to a young woman's choices. MDS (Mothers, Daughters, Sisters) connects Black women and girls with experienced Black female professionals through mentoring, skills workshops and career-focused activities.

Founded in 2020, the organisation describes work across St Lucia, Ghana, Jamaica and Tanzania. Its model brings African and Caribbean experiences into a shared network of guidance and support, with ambitions spanning education, employment, entrepreneurship and leadership.

Why we're following it
Mentoring can help bridge the distance between talent and opportunity. Its lasting value depends on the quality of relationships, the support available and whether participants can turn advice and encouragement into practical next steps.

What we'll look for
How MDS develops its work in Jamaica, recruits and supports mentors, and responds to participants' needs. We will follow the opportunities that emerge from these relationships and how participants themselves describe the difference mentoring makes.

Source: Organisational article supplied by MDS; MDS website.

REVIEW will return to these developments to examine what has changed, who has benefited and what still needs attention.

Save the Date

CARIBBEAN HONOUR AWARDS

at the SPIRIT OF THE CARIBBEAN BALL

RECOGNISING THE PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS SHAPING CARIBBEAN ACHIEVEMENT.

Saturday 12 June 2027

6.00pm–1.00am

The Westbourne Suite at
Royal Lancaster London
Lancaster Terrace, London W2 2TY

Black Tie Gala
Welcome Drink | Dinner | Awards Ceremony | Entertainment

Honouring Excellence. Celebrating Heritage. Building Legacy.

Ticket and booking details will be announced soon.
Visit the event page for more information.



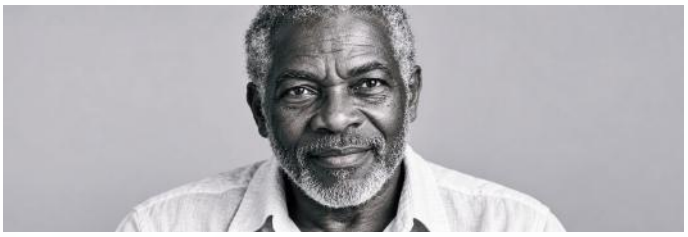
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