



Black History Month | October 2021

What is Black History Month?

The month of October marks Black History Month (BHM) in the UK. BHM began as a way of remembering and celebrating the achievements of black people, past and present, such as Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks. It is also a way of remembering and understanding the importance of events in history, such as the African diaspora and the slave trade.

BHM was officially recognised by the US government in 1976 and, in the UK, BHM was first celebrated in October 1987. Further information on the origins of BHM can be found [here](#).

BHM has expanded since it was originally incorporated. For example, in 2018 Instagram created its first-ever BHM programme.

Why is BHM so important?

When first established, BHM was met with some controversy. Many questioned whether it was appropriate to limit the celebration of black history to just one month and thought that it would be more beneficial to integrate black history into the education system so that it was taught all year round.

People from African and Caribbean backgrounds have been played a major part in British history. However, it is unfortunately still the case that the value and contributions of such individuals are overlooked. BHM is an opportunity to highlight these values and contributions and celebrate the brilliant achievements of black people

BHM is also a period that can serve as a strong reminder of where racism still exists, whether it be societal or systemic, and give a platform to the people and organisations that are advocating for change and challenging negative stereotypes. More recently, we have seen examples of racism still remaining prevalent in the UK and across the globe. For example, the murder of George Floyd by a white police officer in May 2020 sparked the Black Lives Matter movement which has been a large campaign at the forefront of many news stories in the last two years. More information can be found about the campaign [here](#):

At LA, we believe that it is important that the key lessons of BHM remain in our focus all year round, and as a firm, we do all that we can to challenge racism, support diversity and celebrate the achievements of black people,

whether that be our own staff or by supporting local black-owned businesses.

BHM 2021

In 2021 the theme for BHM is 'Proud To Be'. This campaign will invite black people around the UK to share what they are proud to be, for example, 'Proud to be Black' or 'Proud to be me' ([click here](#)). The campaign aims to make BHM more personal to individuals, families and communities across the UK, and to share the pride that people have in their culture.

More information on BHM 2021, how you can become involved and events you can support, can be found [here](#).

Written and approved by LA's Equality and Diversity team.