

Reconstructing Communities: the impact of regeneration on community dynamics and processes

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Abstract

The New Labour government placed communities at the heart of urban regeneration policy. Area deprivation and social exclusion were to be addressed through rebuilding community in deprived areas, a process involving tenure diversification and the building of bridging social capital to support community empowerment, increased aspirations and wide-spread mutually supportive relationships. There is, however, little empirical evidence that tenure mix is an effective means for achieving the social goals of neighbourhood renewal. This thesis contributes to the mixed tenure debate by exploring the impact of regeneration on community. The research was guided by theories of social structure and cultural systems and argues that the regeneration process may give rise to social divisions and conflict between community groups, inhibiting culture change. The research was conducted on a social housing estate located within the West Midlands region. The findings represent the views of local residents and community workers and suggest that greater recognition needs to be given to the role intimate social ties play in community sustainability, that the provision of supportive services must be balanced with individual self-efficacy, and that regeneration policy should focus less on what new homeowners can bring to a community and more on what community can already offer.

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INTRODUCTION

...no cleanliness, no convenience, and consequently no comfortable family life is possible; that in such dwellings only a physically degenerate race, robbed of all humanity, degraded, reduced morally and physically to bestiality could feel comfortable and at home (*Engels, 1993: 75*).

The preceding passage was penned by Friedrich Engels in an attempt to describe the deplorable conditions he witnessed in nineteenth-century English working-class neighbourhoods. More than a century later reporter Paul Vallely (2000: 1 of 2) offered a similar description of living conditions in many of Britain's most deprived areas:

...a crime-ridden, damp, vermin-infested hell-hole of men with pit-bull terriers, where local residents dump their unwanted cookers and other detritus in the street without further thought, where publicly-paid-for murals are defaced with racist graffiti, where dealers sell crack to children in broad daylight, and where even the security cameras have been stolen.

What is striking about both passages is not so much their descriptive similarity, but the extent to which they suggest conditions in lower-income communities have remained relatively unchanged over time. Many of the areas identified by the New Labour government's list of the 88 most deprived wards in the country—such as Oldham, Rochdale, Manchester, Birmingham and Leeds--were also discussed by Engels. While, in many respects, living conditions in these areas have improved considerably since the Victorian era, serious gaps remain between the quality of life experienced by residents living in the majority of Britain's communities and that of residents living on the country's most deprived housing estates.

Efforts to improve conditions in Britain's poorest areas have been underway since at least 1945 (Roberts, 2005). Focusing, initially, on post-war reconstruction at the local level urban initiatives changed focus over the years encouraging regional development for several decades before returning to a more local emphasis in the 1990s. Upon gaining office in 1997, the New Labour government continued the trend of investing in development at the local level by placing communities at the centre of urban policy. Since 1998, regeneration policies and initiatives have been targeted towards the country's most deprived areas in an attempt to overcome years of socioeconomic, physical and environmental decline. Government has invested millions of pounds in the development of projects geared towards enhancing liveability in these areas, tackling such issues as crime, high unemployment, poor health, substandard housing and poverty (Hull, 2001). While some areas have experienced considerable positive change as a result of past regeneration initiatives, many other areas remain severely deprived despite repeated efforts (Berube, 2005).

In 2003, with the release of the *Sustainable Communities Plan* (ODPM), New Labour renewed its commitment to neighbourhood regeneration. The plan outlines six key areas for policy action encompassing changes to the economic, physical, environmental and governmental fabric of communities in an effort to create lasting change and reach New Labour's vision of a country in which "no one is disadvantaged by where they live" (SEU, 2001). To help track their progress, government has created a list of 68 sustainability indicators, 39 of which are directly related to the creation of sustainable communities. All quantifiable measures, the indicators are to be used to assess progress in achieving stated policy goals ranging from levels of community participation, crime, childhood poverty and

education attainment to the level of area satisfaction experienced by neighbourhoods throughout the UK (DEFRA, 2007). Sustainability, however, depends upon more than physical, economic, environmental and service improvements. Lasting change is also dependent upon a community's current and future residents—particularly, residents' behaviours, perceptions, aspirations and, perhaps most importantly, their interactions with other residents.

One of the main goals of the *Sustainable Communities Plan* is diversifying the social mix within the country's neighbourhoods, but especially within deprived areas, suggesting that an influx of higher-income and homeowner households in to deprived communities is an essential ingredient for sustainable regeneration. This idea, based partially on the notion of neighbourhood effects, or the idea that neighbourhood characteristics influence individual life chances, promotes the benefits of tenure diversification as: creating links to employment, providing role models for mainstream values and as a means for reversing area stigma, as well as providing a higher-income base for attracting private investment to deprived areas (Allen et al., 2005, Berube, 2005, Martin and Watkinson, 2003, Wilson, 1987). However, lower-income households may actually be the key to sustainability in target areas. Lower-income and socially excluded groups have the most to gain from successful regeneration projects but are also the groups most affected if the programmes fail. They are the groups being asked to change, and unlike higher-income families, they are the least able to leave the area if things begin to deteriorate. While regeneration activity may improve the physical, environmental and economic conditions of targeted areas, such change can significantly impact the way existing communities function post-regeneration. Displacement

of family and friends, whether voluntary or forced, severs personal relationships and disrupts local support systems. An influx of new residents, whose lifestyles are often different from those of long-term residents, may cause tensions or conflicts to arise between various groups within the community. Either scenario may result in those community members the regeneration programme was designed to help, feeling further excluded from society within their own community. How effectively newly regenerated communities adapt to change, creating new patterns of social interaction that incorporate and support the needs, aspirations and lifestyles of all residents, may be better indicators of sustainability than any of the currently measured indicators. The research presented in this thesis was carried out in an attempt to understand how regeneration activity affects the social processes of one targeted community.

PURPOSE AND RELEVANCE OF THE RESEARCH

A considerable amount of research exists examining area deprivation, neighbourhood effects and related policy responses. European, UK and US research point to a number of local and broader structural factors that lead to area decline and impede social mobility, such as economic restructuring which has led to a spatial jobs/skills mismatch (Wilson, 1987); a lack of weak social ties among residents in poverty neighbourhoods (Atkinson and Kintrea, 2004, Richardson and Mumford, 2002); the poor health status of many low-income individuals; and the physical and social isolation of poverty households resulting from housing letting policies (see Atkinson and Kintrea, 2002, and Friedrichs et al., 2003a for a summary of research). Results from housing mobility studies conducted in the

US indicate positive results in education opportunities (Ludwig et al., 2001, Buron et al., 2002c) and youth behaviour problems (Del Conte and King, 2001), as well as improvements in housing quality, neighbourhood safety and employment prospects for families moving from high poverty to low poverty areas (Buron et al., 2002c, Del Conte and King, 2001, Smith, 2002b). Research concerning UK regeneration policy covers a range of topics including: community engagement in the regeneration process (North, 2003, Anastacio et al., 2000); employment services and skills training initiatives (Green and Sanderson, 2004, Macfarlane, 2000); and the impacts of regeneration on health (Blackman et al., 2001) and liveability (Shaw, 2004) to name a few. All of these studies, and the many others not mentioned here, provide a wealth of information on the regeneration process and the changes they bring to communities. However, little research has been conducted into understanding how regeneration may alter community dynamics and interaction patterns, and how these changes are interpreted and experienced by lower-income residents remaining in the regenerated area.

This research sought to gain such an understanding by asking and offering insight into the general question of how does regeneration impact the daily social lives of community residents? Specifically, the research examined the impact of a major regeneration initiative on one community's social structure and culture systems. As this thesis argues, neighbourhood regeneration can significantly alter a community's social structure and the cultural systems those structures influence, alterations that have implications for securing long-term positive change. The question of how regeneration impacts social structures and cultural systems was examined in relation to three research themes:

- *Theme One: Social interaction, community and conflict*—has the estate’s regeneration increased levels of social interaction and a sense of community or has the initiative created (or reinforced existing) social divisions;
- *Theme Two: Empowerment*—have individual residents and the community as a whole been empowered as a result of the regeneration programme? What role did resident participation activities and supportive services provision play in supporting community empowerment; and
- *Theme Three: Aspirations*—what impact did the regeneration programme have on community values, beliefs and behaviours? Does an aspirational culture now characterise the community?

Each theme addresses key social goals of neighbourhood renewal policy implemented by the New Labour government between 1997 and 2009—increasing community cohesion and efficacy, empowering communities and raising individual aspirations. Building social capital, the ‘networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit’ (Putnam, 1995), was the means through which these objectives would met. Tenure diversification would support social capital formation by providing low-income households with opportunities ‘to build social networks and relationships with higher-income families’ (Smith, 2002a), relationships that would promote social mobility and social inclusion for all members of a community. However, as other researchers have demonstrated cross-tenure interaction does not naturally arise in mixed income developments (Kleit, 2005, van Beckhoven and Van Kempen, 2003) making the social objectives of neighbourhood renewal policy difficult to achieve. The findings of this research contribute to the mixed tenure debate by providing insight into the ways regeneration

influences social interaction and how that interaction contributes to residents' sense of community and feelings of empowerment, as well as personal aspirations.

THEORETICAL APPROACH

Two strands of sociological theory informed this research. Theories of social structure informed the questions developed to examine research *Theme One: social interaction, community and conflict*. Berkowitz defines social structure as the “underlying relationships among the elementary parts of a social system” (Wellman and Berkowitz, 1988: 481). He goes on to say that these relationships constrain interactions between members of any society and shape patterns of behaviour. Merton (1957) expands the influence of social structure to include constraints on resource acquisition and as helping to determine individual aspirations. These patterns of social relations help define the cultural system, the focus of research *Theme Two: Empowerment* and research *Theme Three: Aspirations*. The cultural system, or what Knott *et al.* (2008) refer to as cultural capital, encompasses the beliefs, values and social norms followed by the members of a social group (Just and Monaghan, 2000, Naylor, 1996, Rapport and Overing, 2000). Merton (1957) identified the cultural system as the most important component of the social system since it acts as a guideline for daily activity and influences individual and group behaviour, choices and identity. As Luhmann (1982) notes, inequality—whether in power, status or resource allocation—is inherent to all social systems and is reflected in the social divisions arising between competing groups within a given system. The position a social group holds within the social structure determines the amount of influence or other resources members of the

group may access. This competition for resources shapes the ways in which a particular group of people understand and experience the world around them and is manifested in life style choices and personal decision making. In effect, social divisions help shape a social group's cultural system.

The relationship between social structure and cultural systems has important implications for sustainable community regeneration. Neighbourhood renewal policies, which promote community participation in the regeneration process and introducing social mix into deprived areas, provide opportunities for personal growth and social mobility. At the same time, however, both aspects of the regeneration process may significantly alter a community's social structure. Resident participation may lead to competition between community groups as each group struggles to influence the regeneration programme. This competition may result in a strengthening of social divisions between the most and least active resident groups, creating feelings of resentment among certain sectors of the community. Additionally, the introduction of higher-income homeowners through tenure diversification may give rise to new social divisions between the newer and long-term members of the community. These types of social divisions may mean that culture change, an implicit goal of neighbourhood renewal policies may not be easily achieved.

METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted using ethnographic methods to uncover the ways in which regeneration has altered the local social structure and community culture. An

ethnographic style of research was chosen for a number of reasons. First, with its focus on “providing an explicit rendering of the structure, order and patterns found among a set of participants” (Lofland, 1971), ethnography is particularly suited to studying social relations and the influences of those relations on cultural systems. Ethnography is also concerned with understanding social phenomena from the participants’ point of view. Survey research, and other quantitative methods, has become the most widely accepted means of urban policy evaluation. Such studies are valuable in explaining what benefits regeneration programmes may bring to an area, but they are limited in their abilities to explain why certain communities or sections of communities have benefited while others have not. Qualitative studies into group behaviour and community culture, such as the one presented in this thesis, may help provide such an explanation.

THESIS OUTLINE

The dissertation is divided into two sections with Section One presenting a review of the literature and Section Two presenting the research and findings. Chapter Two discusses UK regeneration policy in relation to area deprivation and the importance of social mix as a component of community sustainability. The chapter is organised chronologically, beginning with a historical overview of urban regeneration policy from 1945 until 1997 when the New Labour government entered office. The discussion focuses on the relationship between poverty discourses and the policies designed to address the issue. This is followed by two sections outlining New Labour’s approach to neighbourhood renewal from 1997 through to the end of their term of office in May 2010. Again, policy is discussed in relation to changes

in poverty discourse and attempts to demonstrate that, despite New Labour's claims of a more holistic approach to neighbourhood renewal, their resultant policy prescriptions are more in line with poverty discourses from the past. Section three of the chapter examines one aspect of the *Sustainable Communities Plan* more closely—the mixed-tenure approach to neighbourhood renewal. This is done through an examination of a major mixed-tenure redevelopment initiative in the United States, the HOPE VI public housing redevelopment programme. The HOPE VI initiative is often referred to as a successful example of neighbourhood regeneration through tenure diversification (Houghton, 2006) and strongly influenced New Labour's Mixed Communities Initiative (Lupton and Tunstall, 2008) announced in the *Sustainable Communities Plan* (ODPM, 2005b). Chapter Three completes the literature review and examines the concepts of community, social structure and cultural systems and discusses how each of these concepts contribute to community sustainability.

Section Two begins with a chapter (Chapter Four) outlining the methodology adopted for this study. This chapter discusses the purpose of the research, defends the use of ethnographic methods to complete the study, and describes the specific research methods employed. Chapter Five presents a historical background of the case study site, a description of the regeneration programme implemented in the area and the changes that have occurred as a result. The research findings are presented and discussed in Chapters Six and Seven. The data is presented in relation to the research themes identified earlier with *Theme One: Social Interaction, Community and Conflict* the subject of Chapter Six and themes *Two: Empowerment* and *Three: Aspirations* being discussed in Chapter Seven.

Chapter Eight concludes the dissertation with a summary of the research findings and the implications for neighbourhood renewal policy.

**SECTION ONE:
LITERATURE REVIEW**

CHAPTER TWO: URBAN REGENERATION AND NEW LABOUR

When the New Labour government took office in 1997, it faced the continuing challenge of reviving Britain's failing communities. The decline of industry throughout the 1980s created high rates of unemployment among the country's unskilled labour force. And the hands-off and often disjointed approach to urban policy during several past administrations left many local authorities under-funded and unable to provide many of the services necessary to reverse area decline. Conditions in Britain's poorest neighbourhoods continued to decline throughout the 1990s, despite national economic growth. By the end of the decade, the disparities in economic and social conditions between the most deprived communities and the rest of the country had widened. Not just individuals, but entire communities were seemingly cut-off from mainstream British society.

This chapter provides an overview of New Labour's approach to the regeneration of deprived communities in Britain. It begins with a historical overview of policy approaches towards urban poverty, identifying three main strands of poverty discourse—environmental determinist, social-pathological and structural—that have influenced UK urban policy since 1945. Each strand of discourse reflects differing views as to the root causes of persistent poverty and have led to specific policy approaches to neighbourhood renewal ranging from a focus on physical and environmental improvements in the 1940s and 1950s, to a focus on

social and economic welfare issues in the 1960s and on economic development beginning in the 1970s.

Section Two of this chapter focuses on New Labour's approach to regeneration since 1997 when they entered office. A change in policy discourse at this time, from poverty to social exclusion, suggested a shift in neighbourhood renewal policy from those of past governments. Urban policy under New Labour would take a more integrated approach to community regeneration addressing not just the symptoms of persistent poverty but also the social, economic and political barriers to full citizenship. However, as will be discussed, neighbourhood renewal policy since 1997 continued to be heavily influenced by the social-pathological and structural conceptualisations of poverty discussed in Section One. This led to specific approaches to regeneration on social housing estates, two of which are discussed in Section Three: a focus on area-based initiatives and tenure diversification in deprived communities.

URBAN POVERTY AND POLICY PRESCRIPTIONS 1945-1997

Poor urban communities are not a new phenomenon, being first officially recognized as a problem during the nineteenth century. The rapid expansion of urban centres during the industrial revolution resulted in large tracts of high density housing for a massive labour force. These areas were often severely overcrowded, located next to the factories providing employment, lacked basic infrastructure such as sewerage and contained cheaply constructed and poorly maintained housing. These factors, combined with a lack of services

and adequate incomes, resulted in communities characterized by a host of sanitation, health and social problems (Gibson and Langstaff, 1982: 19). State intervention to address the problems of poor communities began as early as the 1860s, prompted by concerns for public health and fears of political unrest among the working class (Gibson and Langstaff, 1982, Hall et al., 2005, Merrett, 1979) and continues to this day. However, despite more than a century of policy initiatives, reversing decline in poor urban communities remains a key focus of government action.

The types of action taken to address neighbourhood deprivation are driven by perceptions of what factors lead to long-term poverty. The causative factors policy makers assign to a given problem determine what (or who) is to blame, identify the parties responsible for providing a solution and influence programme development to address the issue (Stone, 1997). In terms of neighbourhood renewal, Carley (1990) identifies three main causative frameworks that have shaped urban regeneration policy in the 20th century: environmental determinism, social-pathological views of poverty, and a structural approach to urban poverty and deprivation. Each of these frameworks, and representative policy initiatives, are the focus of this section. The following discussion provides the background necessary for understanding New Labour's approach to neighbourhood renewal, which is presented later in this chapter.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINISM

Environmental determinist theories arose from the social reform movements of the

late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many prominent social theorists of that time believed the condition of the local environment was a major influencing factor on social behaviour (Carley, 1990, Fordham, 1995, Franck, 1984) as, in the words of Rowntree (1901: 158), "...it is Nature's universal law that all living things tend to adapt themselves to their environment". Factors believed to influence human behaviour ranged from characteristics of the natural environment giving rise to specific lifestyles (e.g. nomadic cultures that follow seasonal rains), to the effects of the built and social environments on local communities and individuals. Environmental determinism has been influential in urban planning practices since the field's inception, but were perhaps most prominent in urban policy during the slum clearance and council house building programmes in the decades between 1945 and 1970.

Slum clearance and council housing estates

Local authority provision of housing began with the passage of the Housing and Town Planning Act, 1919 that provided local authorities with the power and means for direct housing provision (Gibson and Langstaff, 1982, Malpass and Murie, 1999, Ravetz, 2001). Citing an acute housing shortage following the First World War, and the inability of private housing developers to meet housing need, the government provided subsidies directly to local authorities for housing construction. The result was provision of approximately 500,000 council homes during the 1920s (Gibson and Langstaff, 1982: 23). Council house building continued throughout the 1930s with more than 1 million council homes being built by 1939 (Malpass and Murie, 1999: 43). However, the focus of local authority housing schemes began to change. Having relieved the immediate general housing need after the war, local authorities turned their attention to slum clearance activity (Malpass and Murie,

1999, Merrett, 1979, Wood, 1991)—focusing on “black patches within a vast area of off-white or dark grey” (Bowley cited in Gibson and Langstaff, 1982: 24)—to tackle the problem of outdated and unfit housing left from the pre-war years.

The most active period of council house building coincided with the formalization of the British planning system under the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act. The period 1945-1965 saw the largest increase in public sector housing with local authorities adding more than 2.9 million homes to the public sector housing stock (Malpass and Murie, 1999: 53). The physical form of these estates reflected the prevailing theories in urban planning at the time. British planning theory in the mid-twentieth century was heavily influenced by the social democratic ideals of the then Labour government (Taylor, 1998b). The social democracy of the post-war period sought to create a “mixed” economy...of both the private and the public sector, the market and the state’ (*ibid*: 131). This mixed economy approach was reflected in the 1947 act, which retained the right to private ownership of land and property, but nationalised the right to land development so as to ensure ‘certain socially desirable goals’ (*ibid*: 131) could be met (e.g. full employment, fair wages and greater social equity).

The post-war planning system was also influenced by Utopian visions of the perfect urban environment (Coleman, 1985, Parker, 2004, Ravetz, 2001, Taylor, 1998b), particularly those of Ebenezer Howard and Le Corbusier. Howard advocated for the creation of small (less than 30,000 persons), self-contained and self-sufficient districts surrounded by open land and connected to city centres. Such ‘Garden Cities’, Howard believed, combined the

opportunities for sociability and economic advancement found in urban centres with the spiritual qualities of the countryside which is “the source of life, of happiness, of wealth, and of power” (1996: 311). Le Corbusier also believed in the physical and mental values of open, natural spaces; however, unlike Howard, he did not believe that creating low density new towns was the answer. Instead, Le Corbusier (1996) proposed altering the urbanscape by increasing density through the construction of sky-scrapers and high-density tracts of housing thus freeing land for the creation of gardens, public parks and recreational and entertainment areas. He was also a strong proponent of modernising building techniques by means of mass production and standardising urban design. These design concepts, combined with more efficient roadway networks, would form the Contemporary or Radiant City, free of congestion with abundant open spaces for lively social interaction. For both Howard and Le Corbusier, these Utopian designs represented the ideal urban environment for creating socially active communities. Their influences on council house building can be seen in the varying design standards applied to estates built over the decades with the Garden City ideal guiding development during the initial years and Le Corbusier’s ideas playing the formative role during the most active periods of slum clearance.

Criticisms of slum clearance began to arise at almost the same time as the programmes themselves. Much of the initial criticism focused on the social impacts of the large-scale demolition and relocation of communities, citing the difficulties of creating community on new housing estates (Durant, 1939) and the breakdown of close-knit family and friendship ties (Jennings, 1962, Young and Willmott, 1957). The results of such studies

seemed to suggest that more than a modern home and clean environment were needed to create the conditions for a self-sustaining and socially active community.

THE SOCIAL-PATHOLOGY OF POVERTY

By the 1970s, the public rented sector was the second largest form of housing tenure in the UK as indicated in Table 2.1. However, local authority building activity began to slow

Table 2.1: Housing Tenure in Great Britain 1914-2006

Year	Owner-Occupied Households (% of total households)	Public Rented Households (% of total households)	Private Rented Households (% of total households)
1914	10	0	90
1945	26	12	62
1951	29	18	53
1961	43	27	31
1971	50	30.8	19*
1981	56	30.4	13*
1986	63	26.1	10*
1996	67.7	18.8	15.3*
2006	70.2	9.5	20.3*

* Includes housing associations

Sources: 1914-1961 (Gilroy and Williams, 1991: 71); 1971-1986 (Malpass and Murie, 1999: 59 & 88); 1996-2006 (DCLG, 2008: 2)

as government shifted the focus of housing policy from away from clearance and redevelopment (Gibson and Langstaff, 1982, Gilroy and Williams, 1991, Malpass and Murie, 1999, Thomas et al., 1984, Wood, 1991) as policy makers began to acknowledge that the approach was not working. While many inter-war council estates were functioning well, the estates built during the most active slum clearance phase during the 1950s and 1960s, had

begun to show signs of failure. By the 1970s, large, post-war council estates were increasingly being identified as some of the country's most deprived communities (Power, 1999). These estates were exhibiting signs of severe physical, social and economic decline, much like the conditions characterising the slum areas they were meant to replace.

The community studies carried out by social researchers during the 1950s and 1960s drew attention to the destructive forces of slum clearance on local community life. The growing awareness of the importance of local social ties, as well as the high economic costs associated with the slum clearance programme, shifted urban regeneration policy towards a more community-based focus. Clearance and redevelopment gave way to the rehabilitation of existing housing, as well as efforts to improve the social conditions of poor areas while preserving long-standing social ties in these communities. Beginning with the introduction of Educational Priority Areas and the Urban Programme in 1968, urban policy at this time focused on building community and improving services in officially recognised deprived neighbourhoods (Alcock, 1997, Carney and Taylor, 1974, Roberts and Sykes, 2005). Other area-based programmes followed, such as General Improvement Areas in 1969 and, in 1974, the ability for local authorities to declare certain neighbourhoods as Housing Action Areas. Both of these area schemes provided grant funding for the upgrading and improvement of private homes. Although the types of interventions funded during this period varied, the programmes were developed under two guiding policy assumptions that (1) urban deprivation arose from the collective characteristics of a local population, or from a 'culture of poverty' and that (2) due to the local origins of urban poverty, poverty issues were best addressed at the community level.

The idea that the roots of poverty are buried within individual and group behavioural patterns has a long history. References to the intergenerational transmission of poverty can be found in the social literature of the late 19th century, which often alluded to a genetic predisposition towards deviant behaviour among a certain class of individuals (Byrne, 2005, MacNicol, 1987). The culture of poverty concept as understood today, was first introduced by Oscar Lewis in 1966 to explain the individual and group socialisation processes and behaviour patterns he observed among members of high poverty neighbourhoods in Puerto Rico and the US. Through his research in these areas, Lewis identified approximately seventy characteristics indicative of a culture of poverty including economic instability and material deprivation, coping mechanisms for dealing with the uncertainties of poverty, and the negative psychological impacts of poverty on individuals (Harvey, 1993, Lewis, 1967). While acknowledging that the cultural characteristics observed during this research were the result of broader socioeconomic processes, Lewis stated that these behaviour patterns had been internalised over time by each successive generation giving rise to a 'culture of poverty' that served to reinforce individuals' exclusion from and inhibit integration into mainstream society. These cultural barriers were believed to be further enhanced by the concentration of poor families in certain urban neighbourhoods (Carley, 1990). The National Community Development Projects (CDP) that began in 1969 provides a good example of the ways in which this social-pathological concept of poverty influenced urban policy from the late 1960s until the end of the following decade.

The National Community Development Projects programme

Although not one of the larger urban programmes of the time, the CDP was one of the first urban regeneration initiatives developed with a wider social policy remit. Funding was directed towards 12 pilot sites throughout England and Wales (Table 2.2). These were small areas, or neighbourhoods, with populations of 10-20 thousand people and characterised by high levels of multiple deprivation as identified by a series of social indicators (CDPWG, 1974, Carley, 1990). Four primary programme objectives were established at the start of the project summarised by Greve (1973: 119) as:

- improving the quality of individual, family and community life in areas with high levels of social need;
- increasing the range of social and economic opportunities available to the residents of these communities;
- increasing individual and communal capacity to create or take opportunities and to make effective and rewarding use of them; and
- increasing individual and communal capacity to exercise self-determination of their own lives and control over the condition and use of the local environment.

These objectives were to be met through a variety of locally designed mechanisms geared toward improving service delivery and coordination in areas such as education, employment, income maintenance and housing, and by promoting local community development. Two key features of the CDPs were their action-research design and a focus on resident participation in the renewal process. Activity at each of the CDP sites were coordinated by action teams comprising members of the local authority and independent researchers. Local programme development was guided by research into local conditions and needs, and further research was conducted throughout the process to evaluate the effectiveness of

Table 2.2: Community Development Project Areas

Local Authority	Project Area
Coventry	Hillfields
Liverpool	Vauxhall
Southwark	Newington
Glamorgan	Glyncorwg
Newham	Canning Town
West Riding	Batley
Paisley	Ferguslie Park
Newcastle	Benwell
Cumberland	Cleator Moor, Arlecdon/Frizington
Birmingham	Saltley
Tynemouth	Percy and Trinity
Oldham	Clarksfield

Source: CDWPG, 1974

local programmes. Local residents were consulted throughout the process helping to identify local problems and areas for service improvement as well as proposing solutions to the issues. They were also encouraged to participate in the continuing management of their neighbourhoods as a means to sustaining local change.

The CDP was created to address what were, at the time, believed to be the source of urban deprivation—the individual pathologies of the residents in deprived neighbourhoods (CDPWG, 1974). As a result, much of the work carried out by the local action teams involved improving social services delivery and promoting community self-help and mutual aid. Employment training programmes, tailored to the needs of local residents, were established as were efforts to improve links between schools and local residents through the development of pre-school programmes and playgroups. Avenues for communicating relevant local information were enhanced through the creation of local newspapers and

community centres, both of which were thought to increase residents' awareness of the issues affecting their areas and provide a means for galvanising collective action for improvement. The formation of community groups was also encouraged as another way to secure local improvements as well as a means for fostering civic involvement. Other initiatives aimed to: increase benefit take-up among members of the local community, educate residents about housing rights, encourage a more coordinated and sensitive approach to redevelopment by local authorities, improve services for young people and the elderly, and to meet the needs of local ethnic populations. Research associated with each CDP, however, suggested that a locality-specific approach to regeneration may not be enough to produce lasting change in the targeted neighbourhoods (CDPWG, 1974).

The CDP programme was designed to address locally specific needs surrounding employment, income, education and aspirational issues. But, while the programme often had significant short term impact within the target communities, CDP team researchers began to uncover evidence that the programme was not addressing the root cause of the urban poverty problem. Neighbourhood deprivation, it emerged, was not the result of individual failings but arose from urbanisation and industrialisation processes occurring in each of the twelve project areas (CDPWG, 1974). The growth of the manufacturing sector in Birmingham and Coventry during this period attracted large numbers of unskilled and semi-skilled workers who settled in to low-cost housing areas where they joined other economically inactive groups (e.g., the unemployed, long-term ill or single mothers). Other CDP neighbourhoods were located in areas affected by large-scale declines in major industry. As employment dwindled, individuals that had transferable work skills and could

afford to move away did so, leaving behind large concentrations of unskilled and unemployed workers and members of economically dependent groups. Both scenarios led to increasing pressures on local housing, employment, schools and other community services that could not be met with existing resources. The factors involved in both economic expansion and decline were not, however, locally based. Instead, they originated in the decisions and actions taken by private industry the headquarters of which were increasingly located in foreign countries. With no physical or emotional connection to the communities in which their production plants were located, corporations felt little need to take local concerns into account during their business planning processes. Changes in national policy also affected local communities, especially changes related to nationalized industries such as coal mining. Communities such as Glyncoerrwg, which depended almost exclusively on the mining industry for employment, were left devastated after the closure of their local mining works. Small area-based policies and programmes such as the CDP did not address these external structural processes and could not, therefore, lead to sustainable change in the target communities.

STRUCTURAL VIEWS OF POVERTY

With increasing evidence that community intensive interventions were not solving the urban deprivation problem, the urban poverty discourse changed again. Now, the discussion focused on the ways in which national and international economic structures created inequality at the local level. Writing about inner-city ghettos in the

US, Wilson (1985) discussed how deindustrialisation, urban disinvestment, racial discrimination and the subsequent racial integration of middle-class neighbourhoods left concentrations of severely deprived households in many urban communities. Although Wilson's writings were heavily focused on the racial underpinnings of urban disadvantage, many of the same socioeconomic changes highlighted by Wilson were applicable in the UK as well. Deindustrialisation and a shift to a more service oriented economy throughout the 1970s and 1980s resulted in large sectors of the UK's unskilled and semi-skilled populations facing long-term unemployment. Unable to financially compete in the housing market, families were forced to locate in poor quality neighbourhoods (or remain in them) where housing was cheaper or to seek assistance from the public housing sector. Middle-class households, with the education and financial resources needed for success in the new economy, moved away from urban communities further exacerbating conditions in these areas.

Accompanying this change in the conceptualisation of poverty was a shift in urban policy from community development to a focus on urban economic regeneration. As Hart and Johnston note (2005), the Thatcher administrations believed 'labour market rigidities, and...a lack of enterprise' were responsible for the rise in concentrations of poverty and unemployment. Several key characteristics defined urban policy throughout Thatcher's government. The first was an emphasis on private market investment in urban regeneration. Programmes such as Enterprise Zones and Urban Development Grants encouraged private investment through financial and planning incentives in designated areas. Other programmes sought to instil confidence in private

investors through government led redevelopment projects. The Inner City Enterprises (ICEs) played such a role. Established in 1982 as a property development company, the ICEs undertook high-risk development projects to attract private developers to invest in areas designated for redevelopment (Roberts, 2005). A second key characteristic of urban policy in the 1980s and early 1990s was a focus on efficiency in government and 'value for money' in local services. The Conservative government at that time believed overly bureaucratic and inefficient local authorities were limiting economic growth (Noon et al., 2005). As a result, public-private partnerships were encouraged as a means to achieve a more efficient approach to regeneration. Other programmes, like Enterprise Zones, were meant to increase private investment and speed up redevelopment by creating a more effective local planning system.

The decentralisation of services was also an element of urban policy at this time with responsibility for many local services traditionally held by local authorities being privatised. This was especially true in the housing arena. In the period between 1979 and 1996, the council housing sector contracted by 38 percent through a series of initiatives promoting private ownership. The Housing Act 1980 introduced the Right to Buy enabling public sector tenants to buy their homes from the local authority. Tenants Choice was introduced under the Housing Act 1988. This legislation provided groups of tenants within local authority housing the right to form co-operatives and take over estate management. Alternatively, tenants could opt to transfer the management of their homes to an alternative institution such as a Housing Action Trust (HAT). HATs, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Five, were non-governmental bodies

created to take over management of designated areas of local authority housing. The HAT's were tasked with the responsibility to repair and improve housing, improve estate management, diversify housing tenure and encourage local economic development. Decentralisation was also sought by encouraging local authorities to voluntarily transfer large sectors of their housing stock to private housing associations, or registered social landlords, through programmes such as the Estates Renewal Challenge Fund (Malpass and Murie, 1999, Mullins et al., 2006). Finally, grant funding based on need was stressed as a way to increase efficiency as was the use of competitive bidding in the 1990s, ensuring that monies were spent wisely on the projects deemed most likely to succeed.

Recognition of the structural causes of urban poverty was an important shift in urban policy. The change in focus away from the social-pathological approach to urban deprivation provided government with the opportunity to create a more equitable urban societal structure. The policies and initiatives introduced during the 1980s to address these issues, however, more often than not supported and enhanced the prevailing economic structures creating greater inequality in the process. Efforts to increase efficiency and secure value for money left many local authorities without the power or economic resources necessary to address the issues affecting deprived communities. Regeneration funding schemes characterised by a competitive bidding process have often created conflict (Taylor, 2003) and increased the marginalisation of deprived communities (Morrison, 2003). Competition also resulted in many communities losing funding to more high profile areas based on political manoeuvring as acknowledged in

a government regeneration consultation report that stated ‘... the worst areas and less glamorous but nonetheless essential projects will lose out; and that having a competition enables [Government]...and Ministers to pick winners according to their hidden agendas’ (DETR, 1997: paragraph 5.31). The privatisation of the council housing sector had devastating effects on many estate communities. The Right to Buy programme resulted in the best properties on the most desirable estates being removed from the council sector leaving behind heavy concentrations of unfit housing for families in need. This programme, combined with deregulations in the private rented sector and changes in council allocation policies awarding housing based on need, resulted in the residualisation of the sector.

FROM POVERTY TO SOCIAL INCLUSION

By the mid-1990s, many council housing estates were characterised by high levels of poverty and long-term unemployment and all of their associated problems. Crime rates and the fear of crime in these communities were much higher than the national average. Educational attainment was low and health problems were many. Additionally, residents in many of these areas seemed to have been cut off from mainstream societal practices. In effect, residents in these areas had become socially excluded.

The concept of social exclusion had a significant influence on urban policy during the New Labour administration. The term arose during the 1980s in France to describe the various groups of people who had slipped through cracks in the country’s social insurance

system (Burchardt et al., 2002, Pilkington, 2003, Skifter Andersen, 2003, Smith, 2005a). The concept expands discussions of poverty beyond the lack of material wealth. It takes into account the extent of participation in the broader levels of society: political, social and cultural, as well as economic. In this respect, social exclusion is similar to Townsend's (1979) concept of relative deprivation. Unlike relative deprivation, however, the concept of social exclusion highlights the economic, political and social structural processes which lead to marginalisation as well as the relationships between deprived communities and other sectors of society (Kearns, 2003, Room, 1990, Taylor, 2003). The shift in policy discourse from poverty to the concept of social exclusion, a major focus of Labour policy, suggests a deeper understanding of urban poverty and that a more nuanced approach to neighbourhood regeneration has arrived. However, a closer examination of New Labour's urban policy uncovers strong connections with the poverty discourses of the past.

FROM DISCOURSE...

Levitas (2005) has identified three main discourses associated with the concept of social exclusion: a moral underclass discourse (MUD), a redistributionist discourse (RED), and a social integrationist discourse (SID). MUD has been discussed previously in this chapter in relation to the culture of poverty thesis. There is, however, an additional strand of the underclass theory that has been particularly relevant in UK policy since the early 1990s. This version of the underclass, as promulgated by Charles Murray (1990), placed a much stronger emphasis on the moral dimensions of poverty citing dissolution

of the traditional family structure, and it's associated value systems, as a causal factor. Murray also laid blame on the social welfare system. Generous social support systems lead to state dependency amongst certain sectors of society. With sufficient benefits taking away any incentives towards paid employment, members of these groups, particularly (according to Murray) young males, shun the traditional work ethic as well as other cultural morals becoming both a burden on and menace to society.

RED, on the other hand, sees the social benefits system as a means for reducing levels of poverty. From this perspective, social exclusion is seen as arising directly out of poverty. A lack of resources—economic, educational and influential—prevents individuals from achieving full citizenship status within society. An expanded social welfare system that provides sufficient income for participation in the generally accepted activities of daily life is one step in the process towards achieving social inclusion. But full social inclusion will only be achieved after all inequalities in the social, cultural, political and economic structures are addressed. RED, in essence, seeks equality across all levels of society.

SID also addresses equality but consigns equality to the realm of opportunity. Inequalities in social structures are addressed but only in terms of lowering barriers to participation. It is the responsibility of the individual to take advantage of the new opportunities. In general, SID defines the cause of social exclusion as non-participation in formal employment structures, in other words, as a lack of paid work. This conception of exclusion stresses individual self-sufficiency and efficacy and limits the idea of

citizenship to participation in formal economic structures. Paid work is believed to automatically lead to inclusion in other aspects of society. However, SID fails to account for persistent inequalities in the social and economic structures such as unequal payment structures or inequalities in the distribution of power.

... TO PRACTICE

Ideally, policies aiming to promote social inclusion and reverse area deprivation would approach social exclusion from the RED perspective. Policy initiatives would emphasise creating paths to full citizenship by removing all structural barriers to participation in the social, political, economic and cultural spheres of society. The Labour government has taken some steps towards creating a more equal society through, for example, the implementation of a national minimum wage (*National Minimum Wage Act 1998 (C. 39)*), the introduction of a new Equality Duty requiring public bodies to consider the differing needs of diverse populations in service delivery (GEO, 2009), and increasing the amount of influence local residents have on the services delivered within their communities by strengthening resident involvement governance structures.

However, as Levitas notes, the New Labour government's neighbourhood renewal policies were, overall, more heavily influenced by the SID and MUD discourses of social exclusion. Their approach to regeneration, as presented in the report *Transforming places; changing lives* (DCLG, 2009) places a heavy emphasis on preparing local residents for, and moving them into, paid employment. The economic development of disadvantaged

communities is also stressed, as increasing employment opportunities is identified as key to the successful regeneration of disadvantaged areas and the route to social inclusion for presently excluded groups:

We know that no community can survive in the long term without employment opportunities. Work provides better social and environmental outcomes and an opportunity for **social and economic mobility**—particularly for the most disadvantaged in society, for whom it can be an important first step on the road to independence... (DCLG, 2009: 2; emphasis in original).

The report identifies a number of new indicators to measure progress in community regeneration with the 'most important indicators' (*ibid*: 17)—overall employment rate and working age people claiming out of work benefits—measuring levels of local economic activity. As well as the two indicators outlined above, government has identified a set of 13 additional priority regeneration indicators six of which are directly related to employment or skills training. Regeneration schemes must now 'ensure that investment in housing and regeneration is linked to employment' (*ibid*: 20), support commercial development in disadvantaged areas and 'connect areas of need with areas of opportunity' (*ibid*: 21). The Labour government not only connects social exclusion to a lack of paid employment, but now explicitly places the blame for social exclusion on individual behaviours. Members of groups falling under the category of the socially excluded are blamed for failing to 'fulfil their potential and accept the opportunities most of us take for granted' (SETF, 2006: 10); the failure of some individuals to achieve any qualifications is partially blamed on 'the characteristics of this...group' (SETF, 2006: 17); negative attitudes and lack of individual aspiration are noted as barriers to social mobility (Knott et al., 2008) and communities, through collective values and beliefs, are implicated as a cause of low levels of aspirations among young people in disadvantaged areas (SETF, 2008).

The heavy influences of the SID and MUD discourses of social exclusion have led to the continued use of area based community and economic development approaches to neighbourhood renewal. Components of regeneration programmes mirror those of the National Community Development Projects (CDP) initiative of the 1970s by focusing on: improving local service delivery, improving local educational and job skills training services, increasing local employment opportunities, and building capacity for community efficacy through resident involvement in local governance structures. These aspects of neighbourhood renewal are related to New Labour's drive to promote culture change and responsible citizenship within deprived communities, a topic that will be discussed further later in this chapter. The increasing importance of quality-of-place in attracting private investment into disadvantaged areas has led to more strategically targeted investment with regeneration funds being directed towards 'priority areas' (DCLG, 2009: 7) where investment will 'have the most impact' (DCLG, 2009: 6). However, as Leunig and Swaffield (2007) note, area-based approaches to regeneration have failed to attract any significant private investment into many disadvantaged communities. Instead, economic conditions in many areas receiving targeted investment remain significantly lower than conditions across the UK as a whole.

THE SOCIAL EXCLUSION UNIT AND POLICY ACTION TEAMS

Upon gaining office in 1997, Tony Blair's Labour administration took several steps to address the problems associated with area deprivation. One was the continuation of the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) with some adjustments to meet the new government's

policy objectives. The second step was the creation of a Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) to address the persistent problems experienced by the many of country's most excluded communities and to co-ordinate the regeneration of these areas. Initially, the SEU was charged with determining how best to 'develop integrated and sustainable approaches to the problems of the worst housing estates, including crime, drugs, unemployment, community breakdown, and bad schools, etc' (SEU, 1998: Introduction). During its first year of operation, the SEU held a series of consultation meetings with central government departments and other relevant organizations to gather data describing the extent of social exclusion and area deprivation throughout the country, and to search for existing programmes that were successfully tackling these issues. Their findings and recommendations were presented in the report, *Bringing Britain together: a national strategy for neighbourhood renewal* (1998). The report identified 44 local authority districts with the highest concentrations of deprivation. More than half (27 out of 44) of these districts were located within the North and Midlands regions, with the remaining found in the London area. These deprived areas were found to suffer from high unemployment rates, a large proportion of lone parent households, higher rates of adult illiteracy, and large numbers of vacant housing among other problems. The areas were also found to house approximately four times the proportion of ethnic minority residents than other areas in the country. No single event was cited as the cause of area deprivation. Economic and social changes, such as the decline of industry and an increase in illegal drug use, were identified as contributing to the problem. But the report also noted that the activities of past governments were partly to blame, with programmes often being delivered in a fragmented and overlapping manner or not addressing relevant issues (SEU, 1998).

Bringing Britain together launched a number of policy changes and new initiatives, as well as retaining some existing programmes and resurrecting a few from the past. The benefit system was changed to address existing problems through the introduction of a national minimum wage and the Working Families and Child Care tax credits. New Deal programmes were initiated to deal with unemployment and partnerships were formed in relation to crime reduction. The SRB was extended for a fifth round of bidding. Programme funding now concentrated on areas of 'severe need' (SEU, 1998: 42) and had been restructured to better support community development efforts and community involvement in the regeneration process. A series of 'zones'—Employment Zones, Education Action Zones and Health Action Zones-- were again identified as areas to receive a variety of interventions and improvements. At the community level, the most prominent new initiative was the New Deal for Communities (NDC). A 10 year, small area based, regeneration initiative the NDC had one primary goal, 'to bridge the gaps that distinguish the poorest neighbourhoods from the rest of Britain' (DETR, 2000: 5). A total of approximately £2 billion was committed to support neighbourhood renewal efforts in 39 project sites. Government funding was to be supported locally by existing resources and through attracting new investors. Each NDC was to tackle issues related to five key themes: employment, crime, education, health, and housing and the physical environment. However, the programme offered each site the flexibility to emphasise particular themes over others depending on local needs, and encouraged innovation in project design and delivery (CRESR, 2005, DETR, 2000, ODPM, 2003a).

The NDC introduced a number of features that would characterise New Labour's regeneration programmes in the future. Partnership working, with local communities as a key partner, was a hallmark of the programme. Evidenced-based programme development was also a key feature, as was a shift in focus from output to outcome measurements with a focus on achieving long-term sustainable gains. Overall, the NDC programme was New Labour's first major attempt to approach regeneration through bottom-up, community driven activity.

Policy Action Teams

Following on from, and arising out of, its initial efforts the SEU created 18 Policy Action Teams (PATs) to examine various aspects of social exclusion and area deprivation, and to provide recommendations for action. The PATs were formed at the end of 1998, and tasked with providing recommendations for the creation of a national regeneration policy. Membership of each PAT comprised representatives from central, regional and local governments, as well as representatives from the public and private sectors and community residents. Each PAT studied a particular sector, ranging from employment and skills to local government reform. In total 569 recommendations were submitted by the PATs, with approximately 490 of them accepted fully by central government (SEU, 2006) and incorporated into a national strategy for community regeneration. The *National Strategy Action Plan* for neighbourhood renewal was released in January 2001 (SEU). It announced a new approach to community regeneration, which sought coordination across all levels of government and between departments, as well as providing long-term support for regeneration through new funding schemes and government reforms. Again, the focus of

the *National Strategy* was addressing the poor conditions found in the country's most deprived neighbourhoods. Eighty-eight of the most deprived local authority districts, containing 82 percent of the most deprived wards, are identified in the plan. Communities in these areas contained a high percentage (70 percent) of the country's ethnic minority households, as well as 18 percent of the country's children. Crime and unemployment rates were higher than average compared to the rest of the country, as were levels of poor housing conditions and poor health.

Two long-term goals were set forth seeking to achieve the overall vision that 'within 10 to 20 years, no-one should be seriously disadvantaged by where they live' (SEU, 2001: 8). The *National Strategy* outlines policies and actions being taken to achieve results in five key policy areas identified as necessary for securing long-term change:

- *Work and enterprise*—raising employment rates in disadvantaged areas and for disadvantaged groups;
- *Crime*—by reducing incidents of crime and antisocial behaviour, as well as illegal drug use in disadvantaged areas;
- *Education and skills*—by, for example, increasing levels of educational achievement and adult basic skills;
- *Health*—through reducing health inequalities between the most deprived areas and the rest of the country; and
- *Housing and the physical environment*—reducing the number of substandard housing units in occupation, improving management of social housing, and tackling low-demand and housing abandonment among other actions.

The plan emphasised a regional focus to development requiring the creation of Regional Strategies to co-ordinate economic development and regeneration in major areas. Private investment in regeneration was encouraged through the £10 million Community

Development Venture Fund and the Index of Inner City Businesses. New employment programmes were introduced, such as the Action Teams for Jobs, to tackle long-term unemployment issues in deprived areas. Crime and disorder were to be addressed through the Crime Reduction Programme and the introduction of Neighbourhood Wardens to serve as community-based safety teams. More funding was provided for improvements to local schools and adult education programmes. Local primary care centres servicing deprived areas were to be modernized and programmes promoting healthy lifestyles (e.g., the National School Fruit Scheme) were introduced. Housing and neighbourhood quality issues were addressed by a number of different initiatives. Government pledged £1.6 billion to raise quality standards in social housing over a three-year period. Changes to the Housing Revenue Account increased the amount of resources available for housing management services. Community involvement remained a key feature of the new programmes, enhanced by the establishment of tenant participation structures in the public housing sectors. Structures were also developed making it easier for local young people to become more involved in their communities and have more influence on local regeneration efforts.

THE WAY FORWARD: SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

In 2003, the New Labour government renewed its commitment to community regeneration with the release of its report, *Sustainable communities: building for the future* (ODPM). New Labour defined sustainable communities as:

...places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and

inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all (DCLG, 2005: 1 of 1).

Eight key components of sustainable communities have been identified in the document, indicating that sustainable communities must be (ODPM, 2005b: 4):

- *Active, inclusive and safe* offering an environment that is fair, tolerant, cohesive and socially and culturally vibrant;
- *Well run* with effective leadership and non-exclusionary participation;
- *Environmentally sensitive* to save local natural resources for future generations;
- *Well designed and built* providing a quality built and natural environment;
- *Well connected* to jobs, schools, health other services;
- *Thriving* economically;
- *Well served* by appropriate and quality services, both public and private; and
- *Fair for everyone* including people living in surrounding communities.

The plan launched a series of reforms, funding schemes and initiatives to address five key themes: housing standards, environmental quality, sustainable growth, rural areas, and housing demand and supply all of which were to support long-term sustainability. Changes to the planning system were implemented to help local authorities better respond to changing housing needs in their areas, to streamline the development approval process thereby encouraging more private developers to build in areas experiencing a housing shortfall, and to provide design guidelines for new developments. Approximately £2.8 billion has been allocated to improve conditions in council housing, with additional funds available to ensure all housing (across all tenures) meet the decent homes standard. Investment in affordable housing has been increased, especially in London, the South East and the East of

England where the demand for key worker housing outstrips supply. The Housing Market Renewal programme addressed the opposite problem—low demand for housing in particular areas, especially concentrated in the Northwest and Midlands regions. Tenure mix arose as a central feature of regeneration programmes targeting deprived housing estates (ODPM, 2005c: 39), and the plan retained an area-based focus to neighbourhood renewal. These last two components of the *Sustainable Communities Plan* are discussed below.

AREA-BASED INITIATIVES

As a previous section of this chapter noted, area-based approaches to regeneration have been in existence throughout Britain's post-war history. From the slum clearance programmes of the 1950s and 1960s to the SRB programme introduced in the 1990s, government has repeatedly turned to targeting regeneration funding streams towards reversing decline in specifically identified deprived areas. And since entering office in 1997, the New Labour administration continues to employ area-based initiatives (ABIs) as a means for revitalizing communities and tackling social exclusion.

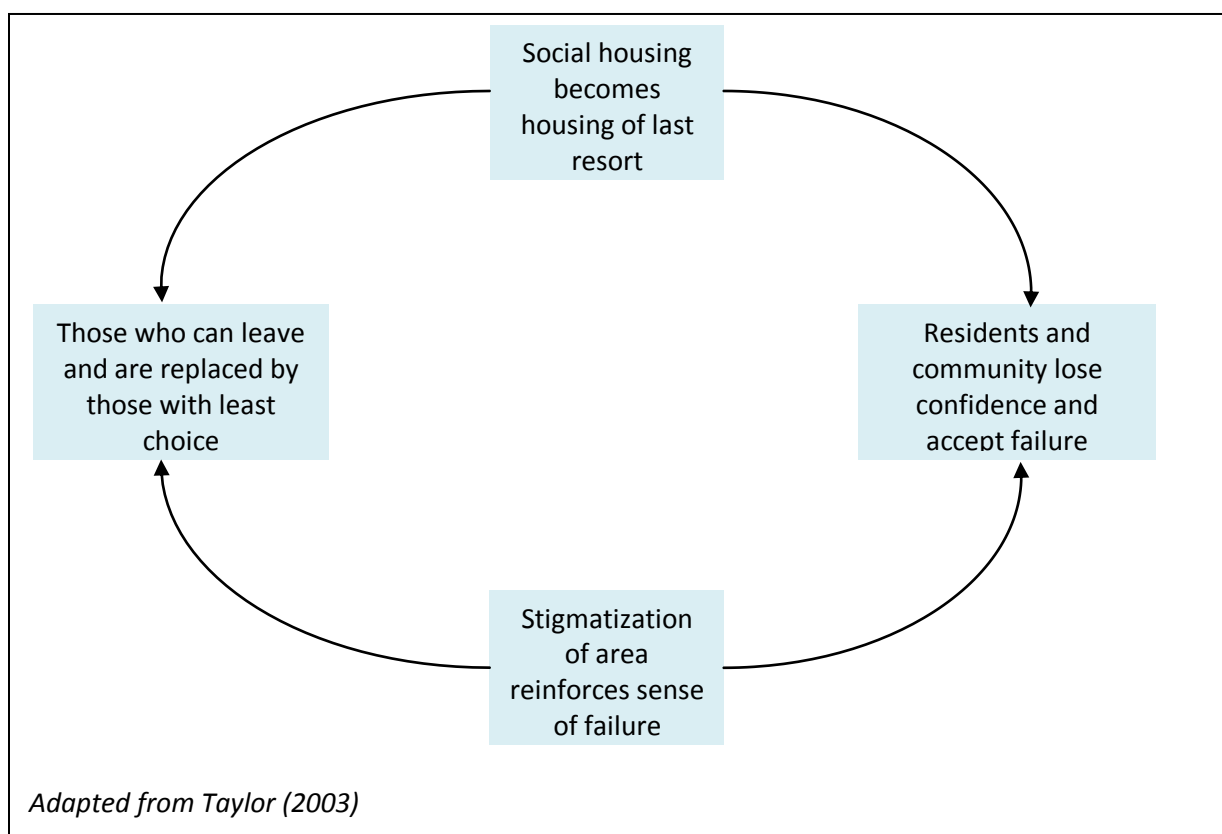
Although ABIs are a popular government regeneration tool, the effectiveness of area-based programmes in securing sustainable regeneration is contested. Critics of ABIs question the effectiveness of area-based programmes in addressing social exclusion. Stewart (2001), while acknowledging the physical and environmental improvements provided by many initiatives, suggests there is little indication that such

programmes enhance the long-term life chances of the deprived members of these regenerated communities. Local economic development schemes, designed to move socially excluded individuals into paid employment, have also been criticised. As Chanan et al. (2001) note, while such programmes can help improve the economic viability of deprived areas, the jobs created under these schemes are generally not filled by local residents as local residents often lack the skills and educational qualifications required for the newly created positions. Concerns have also been raised regarding the geographical targeting of resources with opponents of the approach noting that, as most socially excluded individuals do not live in deprived areas (Alcock, 2004, Hall, 1981, Chatterton and Bradley, 2000), neighbourhood targeted regeneration programmes fail to reach large portions of the country's disadvantaged population. Finally, critics also argue that ABIs draw attention away from the broader structural causes of social exclusion (Chatterton and Bradley, 2000, Hastings, 2003, Oatley, 2000), which are best addressed at a national level, and may reinforce social-pathological conceptions of poverty (Chatterton and Bradley, 2000).

Despite the criticisms, ABIs do have a number of benefits. Parkinson (1998) and Stewart (2001) note the ability of ABIs to help encourage private market investment in deprived areas. Oatley (2000) cites improvements in service delivery at the local level, while Rhodes et al. (2003) suggest that area-based schemes allow for a more responsive and flexible approach to tackling local problems. Other advocates cite the effectiveness of social deprivation indicators in identifying concentrations of socially excluded individuals (Smith, 1999, Glennerster et al., 1999). Research into social

exclusion indicates targeted intervention may help reverse the negative effects of neighbourhood decline. Taylor (2003) suggests that concentrations of exclusion arise from a lack of choice. She describes a process through which a lack of choice in housing leads to a lack of choice in other areas of society. For Taylor, the limited financial resources of low-income households restrict their housing choices to the social rented sector concentrating poverty in particular areas. As the amount of poverty in these neighbourhoods rises, families with available resources leave the neighbourhood and are replaced by households

Figure 2.1: Cycles of exclusion



with even fewer means. Over time, poverty and its related problems become associated with these areas making them unattractive options for working families seeking housing. Private businesses leave the areas, or refuse to invest in them, creating neighbourhoods devoid of shops providing basic necessities. The quality of local services declines and local residents are often discriminated against by employers who associate a poor work ethic and problem attitudes with all members of the deprived communities. The result is a cycle of decline and a self-reinforcing sense of failure within the local community (see Figure 2.1).

MIXED TENURE COMMUNITIES

To reverse this cycle of decline, New Labour advocated transforming mono-tenure social housing estates into mixed tenure communities. Tenure diversification has a long history of support in British urban policy. Programmes such as Estate Action and the Right to Buy, introduced by the Conservative government in the 1980s, were implemented to diversify the tenure mix on council and housing association estates (Tunstall, 2003). The 1995 Urban White Paper promoted mixed tenure communities, in which ‘homeowners and renters live alongside each other’ (Kleinhans, 2004: 370), as a path to creating sustainable communities. Tenure diversification is also supported by both the Housing Green Paper (Tunstall, 2003) and the revised Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (Rowlands et al., 2006, ODPM, 2005a). The Urban Task Force (Rogers, 1999) argued that a mix of tenures and incomes promotes neighbourhood stability and sustainability, and the Social Exclusion Unit (1998, SEU, 2001) promoted tenure mix as a tool for enhancing social inclusion. More recently, the Labour

government's commitment to developing mixed tenure communities as a means for neighbourhood regeneration was reasserted with the publication of the administration's *Sustainable Communities Plan* (ODPM, 2003b, ODPM, 2005b).

Tenure diversification was viewed as an effective means for combating the negative area effects associated with deprived neighbourhoods, defined by New Labour as:

the additional disadvantages that affect poorer people when they are concentrated in poor neighbourhoods...poorer services, a worse physical environment...poor links with the wider community...low aspirations and poor self-esteem (ODPM, 2005b: 52-53).

Silverman *et al* (2005) summarise the presumed benefits of tenure mix differentiating between benefits that stem solely from introducing higher income households into a deprived neighbourhood and those that depend upon interaction between members of the different socioeconomic groups (Table 2). The first category of benefits are believed

Table 2.3: Area effects and mixed income solutions

Assumed area effects of concentrated poverty	Assumed benefits of mixed communities
<p>Arising from lack of resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • absence of private sector facilities • high demands on public services, poor quality services • area stigma 	<p>Arising from more resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more money to support facilities • fewer demands on services. Improved service provision. • improved reputation
<p>Arising from limited interaction between social groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exposure to disaffected peer groups • isolation from job-finding or health promoting networks for adults 	<p>Arising from greater interaction between social groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exposure to aspirational peer groups • access to more advantaged and aspirational social networks

Adapted from Silverman et al. (2005: 9)

to address issues related to a lack of community resources and include: increased private sector investment in the community (Berube, 2005), more support for local businesses, improvements in local services (Tunstall and Fenton, 2006, Buck, 2001, Kearns and Parkinson, 2001, Turock et al., 1999), and a decrease in the stigma associated with deprived areas (Kleinhans, 2004, Tunstall, 2003, Tunstall and Fenton, 2006, Pawson and Bramley, 2000). The benefits of tenure diversification arising from cross-tenure interaction include: improved access to employment opportunities for the socially excluded (Rosenbaum et al., 2002, Wilson, 1988), the promotion of local social cohesion (Cole and Goodchild, 2001, Field, 2003, JRF, 2003, Kleinhans, 2004, Tunstall and Fenton, 2006) and an increase in social capital (Brophy and Smith, 1997b), as well as increased levels of educational attainment and community aspirations.

The presumed social benefits of tenure mix are associated with New Labour's efforts to promote, as Raco suggests, 'sustainable citizen[s]...who actively contribute to the (economic) well-being of a community' (2005: 339). According to Flint, under New Labour, citizenship was defined as an active process based upon 'agency, autonomy and self-responsibility (2004: 893). Gough *et al* (2006) attribute this conceptualisation of citizenship to New Labour's shift from neoliberalism towards a conservative interventionism. According to Gough *et al*, conservative interventionism arose in response to the failings of neoliberalism to address long-term poverty and was influenced by the concept of social exclusion. Unlike neoliberalism, which blamed poverty on individual failings, conservative interventionism understands poverty as a social production, or as an interplay between 'different aspects of life—economic, family, community and so on...the problem may be not

merely lack of money but patterns of life' (*ibid*: 191). The shift in policy discourse from poverty to social exclusion led to a change in policy focus from purely economic approaches to poverty alleviation to an inclusion of moral approaches as well.

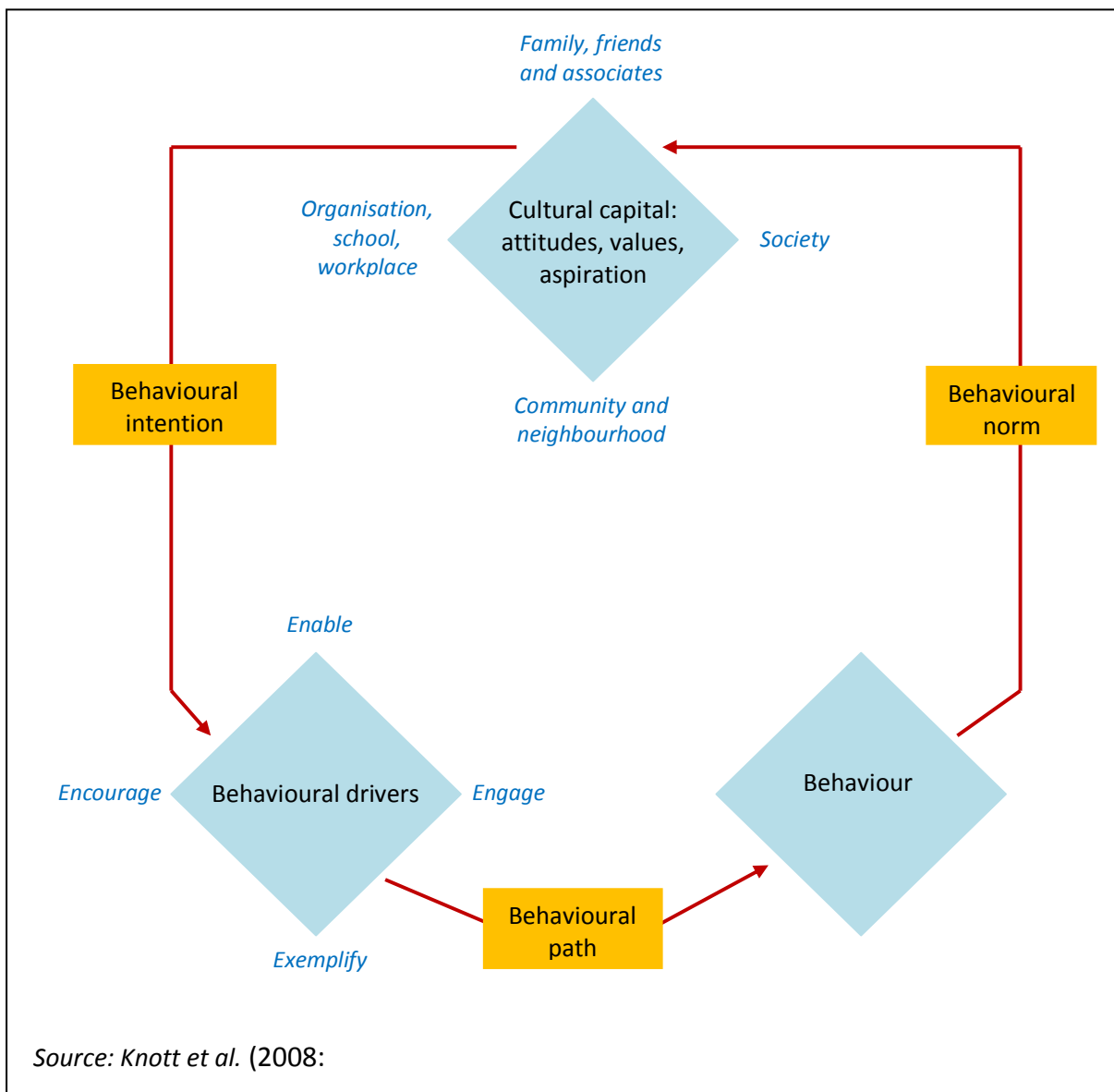
Levitas (2005) states that this moralised conceptualisation of social exclusion led to the idea of active citizenship, a form of citizenship based on opportunities and obligations—opportunities created by government that individuals are obliged to pursue. The role of government under New Labour became one of enabler, creating opportunities for employment and individual empowerment, to 'give each person a stake in [society's] future' (Blair, 1996). In return for these opportunities, individuals 'accept the responsibility to respond, to work to improve themselves' (Blair, 1996). From an active citizenship perspective, social exclusion arises when individuals fail to accept this responsibility. The local community is often blamed for this failure as the social relations embedded within community are the source of shared values, mutual obligation and responsible citizenship (Flint, 2004, Levitas, 2005, Rose, 2000); area deprivation occurs when there is a breakdown in these social relations. To restore balance, community must be rebuilt and responsible citizenship fostered through culture change.

Culture change is to be achieved through increasing levels of cultural capital in deprived communities. Knott *et al* define cultural capital as 'our attitudes, values, aspirations and sense of self-efficacy' (2008: 5). It is developed through sustained interaction with the local environment (e.g. parents, local organisations, friends and neighbours) and wider influences (such as the media and technology) and plays an

important role in 'guiding...the action or behaviours that we choose in life' (*ibid*: 6).

Figure 2.2 illustrates the ways in which cultural capital interacts with other behavioural influences to create shared behavioural norms among individuals and communities. In neighbourhood renewal policy, cultural capital formation is supported through tenure mix.

Figure 2.2: The cultural capital framework



Diversification of tenure is assumed to result in a socially mixed community that includes both low-income and middle-income households. Middle-income homeowners are viewed as the key to culture change since, as Raco (2005) notes, policy makers believe homeowners epitomize the responsible or sustainable citizen—self-reliant individuals with a strong interest in maintaining a healthy local community. They are believed to enhance community cultural capital by acting as role models for socially excluded individuals and families, providing daily examples of individual empowerment and aspirations.

Joseph (2006) has identified three levels through which mixed-tenure developments may work to influence culture change. The first and broadest level is that of the community. The diversity introduced into a community through tenure mix provides opportunities for greater interpersonal contact across socioeconomic lines. As personal interaction increases, trust and familiarity builds across group members and creates a sense of shared experiences. This, in turn, may lead to a greater capacity for community-efficacy to address local issues as well as creating a local culture supporting work and social responsibility. The second level of influence is through interpersonal relationships. Face-to-face contact between individuals personalises relationships turning anonymous neighbours—the ‘others’—into ‘one of us’ increasing the amount of accountability we feel towards them and other people they may know. With greater accountability comes greater social control as members of these new social networks improve individual behaviours to gain/retain acceptance within the group. Improved behaviour may then lead to improved personal outcomes as well as outcomes community-wide. The final level through which the influence of mixed-tenure

development may be felt is that of the individual. As local residents become imbedded within the new cultural system and social networks, they experience a modification of personal behaviour (through social control), increase aspirations and gain a sense of self-efficacy. The overall result is a community which both encourages and supports personal development, social mobility, and responsibility.

TENURE MIX – A RECIPE FOR SUSTAINABLE CHANGE?

As the above discussion shows, New Labour viewed tenure diversification as an effective means of reversing neighbourhood decline. Government believed that, through the tenure (and presumed income) diversification of deprived housing estates, a positive local environment would be created which enables all residents to realise their full potential and achieve economic self-sufficiency and responsible citizenship. All potential benefits of mixed tenure policies fit firmly within the broader goals of urban regeneration of securing 'lasting improvements in the economic, physical, social and environmental conditions' (Roberts, 2005) of deprived estates, as well as supported New Labour's vision of ensuring that 'within 10 to 20 years, no-one should be seriously disadvantaged by where they live' (SEU, 2001). There is, however, little evidence to suggest that all of the presumed outcomes of tenure mix occur. Drawing on research examining a prominent mixed tenure initiative in the US, the HOPE VI public housing redevelopment programme, the effectiveness of tenure diversification policies in securing benefits for local residents will be examined. The HOPE VI programme acted as a model for New Labour's Mixed Communities Initiative

(Lupton and Tunstall, 2008) announced in the document *Sustainable Communities: Homes for all* (ODPM, 2005b) and warrants the following discussion.

Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere

The Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere, or HOPE VI, programme was launched by the US government in 1992, under the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998, in response to mounting concerns about the deteriorating physical and social conditions associated with many of the nation's public housing developments (Buron et al., 2002a, Popkin et al., 2004c). Originally, HOPE VI was designed with a focus towards improving the physical and social conditions of severely distressed public housing developments through physical improvements to the buildings and associated property, and through implementation of effective community-building and resident support programmes. It was envisioned as a 10-year, \$7.5 billion revitalization programme targeting 86,000 of the country's worst public housing units. Improving the life chances and living environments of residents residing in the most distressed public housing was the main programme focus (Popkin et al., 2004b). Within several years, however, programme objectives broadened moving away from activities geared solely towards helping public housing residents to initiatives that provide improvements not only for the public housing residents, but also for neighbourhoods surrounding the targeted developments (Popkin et al., 2002). HOPE VI provided federal grant money for the revitalization of severely distressed public housing. Grant funding could also be used for a variety of activities related to public housing revitalisation including planning and demolition, site acquisition, new construction and physical improvements, public housing

management improvements, and resident support services. All work carried out on programme sites was required to fit within the confines of the four structural elements of the HOPE VI programme, as outlined below.

Physical improvements

The HOPE VI programme was originally created to address the extreme physical and environmental deterioration present in many public housing developments. Years of property neglect and mismanagement by several of the country's largest public housing authorities, combined with a lack of sufficient public services, had led to public housing neighbourhoods characterised by poor quality housing, vacant and boarded up buildings, and litter-strewn streets. Residents of these neighbourhoods also suffered from the effects of rat and cockroach infestations, plumbing and heating problems, and excessive mould. High levels of, often violent, crime and drug activity were also common. HOPE VI addressed these problems by providing funds for the demolition, replacement and rehabilitation of such housing developments. Development plans that reconfigure public housing sites, for instance schemes that decrease site density or implement safety enhancing features such as private street-front entrances, were also funded. Public housing authorities receiving HOPE VI grants were also required to target a portion of the funds towards improving management practices and service delivery. All work was to be carried out in partnership with other organizations in the private, public and non-profit sectors in an effort to secure additional financial and non-monetary resources (Popkin et al., 2004b, Freedman, 1998).

Economic development and neighbourhood revitalisation

Historically, public housing developments in the US have been located in low-income minority neighbourhoods in urban areas. While, politically, this may have made the provision of public housing more feasible, the consequences of concentrating large numbers of extremely poor households in economically fragile areas has had far reaching effects. The social problems associated with high levels of unemployment and poverty, such as teen pregnancy, crime, and drug and alcohol abuse have extended beyond the boundaries of public housing developments into the surrounding communities (Zielenbach, 2003). In response to these spill-over effects, changes were made to the HOPE VI programme requiring all schemes to include plans for local economic development and broader neighbourhood revitalisation.

Sustainable communities

In recent years, the term 'sustainable communities' has become synonymous with neighbourhoods characterised by a mix of tenures and incomes. Such communities are believed to be economically self-supporting by being better able to attract private investment to an area, as well as providing a better living environment with higher-quality housing and public service provision. HOPE VI promoted the creation of sustainable communities by encouraging public housing authorities to achieve neighbourhood revitalisation through mixed-tenure development. The perceived benefits of mixed-tenure communities were discussed previously and include features such as lower crime rates, higher levels of educational attainment, and increased employment rates, as well as promoting social inclusion and community cohesion.

Poverty deconcentration

Perhaps the most important objective of the HOPE VI programme was its goal of deconcentrating poverty. The negative social effects associated with poverty have been well documented (Wilson, 1987, Byrne, 2005, Smith, 2005b, Brophy and Smith, 1997a) and concentrations of poverty, such as that found in many public housing developments in the US, compounds the problems. HOPE IV required public housing authorities to engage in efforts to disperse poverty by attracting higher-income working households to revitalised communities, as well as by assisting public housing residents to relocate to lower poverty areas. The first action was accomplished through the creation of mixed-income communities. The relocation of public housing residents to lower poverty areas was facilitated through the federal Housing Choice Voucher or Section 8 programme, a federal market-based rental assistance programme. Both activities were believed to not only improve the living environment for public housing residents, but to also lead to improved life chances for low-income households as they interact and form ties with higher-income working families (Buron et al., 2002b, Buron, 2004, Clampet-Lundquist, 2004, Cunningham, 2004, National, 2002).

Results so far

Although the HOPE VI programme had operated for more than a decade, as of 2010 few project sites have reached completion. However, a number of studies have been tracking various aspects of the programme at a number of HOPE VI sites and the emerging data is discussed below in relation to the main programme elements.

Physical redevelopment

Due to the heavy focus on physical restructuring, HOPE VI projects should exhibit improvements in the physical environment. Emerging evidence indicates revitalised HOPE VI sites offer better quality housing; decreased density; public safety features, such as pavements and private entrances facing the street; façade improvements; enhancements to existing public parks, and reconfigured street grids connecting the public housing site to the broader community (Popkin et al., 2004b). A report released by the Urban Institute (Levy and Gallagher, 2006) indicates that residents of one HOPE VI site in Chicago are generally pleased with improvements to the physical environment on the estate. However, participants in the study expressed reservations regarding changes in the social environment. Several study participants indicated that an increased police presence in the area, and the accompanying police suspicion of long-term residents, has created an atmosphere characterised by fear of police harassment. This fear of harassment has resulted in many community members spending most of their time indoors. Also, while improvements to community parks are welcome, residents noted that the new rules governing use of the park space, such as night time youth restrictions and permits for picnics, are overly restrictive. Most importantly, the influx of newer, wealthier residents to the area has raised some class-related issues with longer-term residents expressing 'a sense of insecurity and fear about where they might end up as a result of all the changes' (ibid: 14).

Economic development and community revitalisation

Several studies into the economic impacts of HOPE VI developments suggest HOPE VI investment may lead to economic revitalisation. Popkin *et al* (2004), cite rising real estate

values associated with a completed mixed-income development in Charlotte, North Carolina. Zielenbach (2003), in his analysis of 10-years of socioeconomic and market indicators for eight HOPE VI sites, found that conditions improved immensely for the developments studied. Each site experienced average decreases in the number of low-income households, the number of households receiving welfare benefits and in the unemployment rate (-12 percent, -28 percent and 8.4 percent respectively). In addition, compared to citywide activity, average increases in per capita incomes were higher for the HOPE VI developments (71 percent for HOPE VI developments versus 14.5 percent citywide) as were increases in commercial and residential lending rates.

Although these figures appear promising, some reservations must be noted. Rising real estate values and lending rates identified in HOPE VI areas may be due to market factors independent of revitalization activity. Also, while changes in income levels, unemployment rates and welfare receipt are the direct result of HOPE VI activity, they were gained at the expense of public housing residents who were displaced during redevelopment. Also, as higher-income working households move into the new mixed-income communities, socioeconomic indicators will improve.

Sustainable communities

However, evidence suggests that the perceived social inclusion and community cohesion benefits of tenure-mixing may not be easily attained. In their study of Lake Parc Place, Rosenbaum *et al* (1998) found some evidence of interaction between public housing residents and higher-income families living in the mixed-tenure community. Studies

conducted by other researchers (Brophy and Smith, 1997a, Popkin et al., 2004b), however, indicate that little interaction occurs between income groups in mixed-tenure communities. In fact, Brophy and Smith (1997) observed tension between higher-income and lower-income groups in one of the areas they studied. Kleit (2005) examined neighbourhood relationships on one HOPE VI site in Seattle, Washington. Results from her study indicate little cross-over in the social networks of public housing residents and homeowners living in the area. She also found race, ethnicity and language differences act as barriers to sustained social interaction among diverse groups within the community suggesting that similarities of personal attributes are an important factor in establishing social relationships. The negative effects of these barriers may, however, be partially mitigated through geographical proximity. Kleit found that the homeowners in her study interacted most with individuals who lived closest to them (eg., next door) suggesting that communities in which ownership and affordable rental units are well integrated at the micro-level will experience higher levels of cross-tenure interaction.

Poverty deconcentration

A plethora of research highlights the negative impacts of residing in areas with high concentrations of poverty (for example: Atkinson and Kintrea, 2001, Buck, 2001, Friedrichs et al., 2003b, Musterd and Andersson, 2005, Musterd et al., 2003, Sampson et al., 2002). The transformation of mono-tenure public housing estates into mixed tenure/mixed income communities is viewed as an effective means for overcoming these negative area effects and creating life-changing opportunities for local low-income residents. Because redevelopment at so few HOPE VI sites is complete, it is difficult to gauge the effectiveness of this approach

for altering the personal circumstances of returning public housing residents; however, research examining the impacts of relocating low-income residents to low poverty neighbourhoods through the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) programme may provide some insight. The Urban Institute conducted a 10-year longitudinal study of HOPE VI residents relocated under the Housing Choice Voucher programme. Results from the study have indicated positive outcomes for relocatees in several areas:

families moving to lower-poverty neighbourhoods experienced improved living conditions in terms of better quality housing and local environments, as well as perceived improvements in neighbourhood safety (Buron, 2004, Comey, 2004); and children from families relocating under the voucher programme were attending higher quality schools and exhibiting decreases in problem behaviour (Popkin et al., 2004a).

Evidence does not, however, support two additional anticipated outcomes of tenure mix, increased community cohesion and social inclusion through employment. Both of these outcomes are believed to arise from the formation of social ties between higher- and lower-income members of a community. The research into the impact of mixed-tenure developments on social networks discussed previously indicates that cross-tenure/cross-income ties are difficult to attain. The impact of mixed-tenure on the employment prospects of lower-income households has also not held up to promise. Levy and Kaye (2004) tracked the employment history of 641 working-age voucher relocatees. At the beginning of the study, 45 percent of survey respondents were employed and 55 percent were unemployed. Two years after relocation, only 15 percent of those respondents who were unemployed at the start of the study had secured a job. Also of concern were the reported levels of household income. Two years after relocation, approximately two-thirds of survey

respondents reported household incomes below the poverty threshold. Active employment did not ensure a sufficient household income—two years after relocation, 58 percent of employed respondents continued to report household incomes below the poverty threshold. Levy and Kaye do note that job seeking respondents did report relying on assistance from family and friends in their search for employment. However, personal networks were dispersed with few employment contacts located within their new neighbourhoods.

A mixed message

Since the mid-1990s, mixed-tenure development has taken on increasingly more importance in neighbourhood renewal policies with tenure diversification of deprived social housing estates being a key component of the *Sustainable Communities Plan*. Tenure and, by extension, income diversification is viewed as an effective means for improving the quality of local service delivery, enhancing levels of social cohesion within communities, raising community aspirations and promoting social mobility among other positive outcomes. A review of the HOPE VI research literature indicates that the redevelopment of distressed social housing estates into mixed-tenure communities can improve the physical environment and may possibly enhance local economic development efforts, as well as producing spillover effects for neighbouring communities. However, the research does not fully support the positive social changes believed to arise out of mixed-tenure development. The introduction of higher-income households into the redeveloped communities has been noted as leading to class conflict and creating a sense of uncertainty and unease among some public housing residents, while differences in race, ethnicity, language and culture can act as barriers to interpersonal contact and the creation of cross-tenure social networks.

CONCLUSION

For more than a century British governments have been grappling with urban poverty and its related problems. Once associated with the rise of industry and the massing of low-wage workers in cheap, substandard housing areas near factories deprived areas were, by the mid-twentieth century, increasingly associated with the mass deindustrialisation of manufacturing-dependent towns and cities. Policy responses to urban deprivation have varied over time in relation to policy makers' understandings about the causes of poverty and deprivation. Changing conceptions about the roots of poverty have led to the implementation of policies and programmes addressing different aspects of disadvantaged communities ranging from improving the physical and environmental fabric of neighbourhoods, to improving the residents of deprived communities, to supporting the needs of private enterprise.

When New Labour gained office in 1997, they placed poverty and deprivation at the heart of urban policy. The creation of the Social Exclusion Unit and subsequent release of the report *Bringing Britain Together*, heralded a new, integrated approach to revitalising deprived communities and a more nuanced understanding of the factors leading to long-term disadvantage. Urban poverty was now discussed in terms of social exclusion, a concept that encompasses not only income deprivation but also includes inequalities of participation within the social, political and cultural spheres of society. This reconceptualisation of poverty was to lead urban policy down the path of addressing not only the consequences of urban deprivation but also the factors leading to social exclusion.

Throughout their time in office, the New Labour government stressed the need to gather evidence and learn from past policy and programmatic mistakes (ODPM, 2003b, SEU, 1998, SEU, 2001, Stephens et al., 2005). The introduction of long-term regeneration funding schemes, changes to the planning system, a return to a regional focus and the development of partnerships involving public, private and voluntary organisations as well as members of local communities suggests that some lessons have been learnt. Other aspects of Labour's regeneration policies, however, appear to repeat some mistakes of the past. Despite the introduction of the concept of social exclusion into discussions surrounding urban poverty, Labour's conception of poverty continued to stress structural and social-pathological causes. Social inclusion was equated with participation in the formal labour market. As a result, New Labour's approach to neighbourhood renewal placed a heavy emphasis on local economic development, as well as preparing local residents for, and moving them into, paid work. Individuals, themselves, were held responsible for their socially excluded status. Failure to take advantage of employment opportunities was attributed to individual characteristics, such as negative attitudes towards education and employment, and low levels of aspirations. This social-pathological view of poverty resulted in a return to the community development approach to neighbourhood renewal and a focus on building social capital.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORY

As noted in the previous chapter, it could be argued that New Labour's policy responses to urban deprivation continued to approach the issue from a social-pathological and economic determinist perspective. Such an approach to urban poverty led to the development of spatially targeted initiatives emphasising a community development approach to neighbourhood renewal. Communities, and the individuals living and working within them, were being asked to draw upon their existing resources to secure lasting, positive change for their areas. Members of socially excluded groups within deprived neighbourhoods were being encouraged to engage in capacity-building activities, such as employment skills training programmes and neighbourhood management schemes, in an effort to increase individual self-confidence and build connections with their community.

A key component of the New Labour government's neighbourhood renewal policy was the introduction of tenure or social mix into communities with high concentrations of deprived households (ODPM, 2005c, ODPM, 2005b). Attracting higher-income households, it was believed, would help stabilize communities and counteract negative neighbourhood effects thereby creating lasting, sustainable change. Social mix was thought to contribute to sustainable regeneration in a number of ways including: providing positive role models for lower-income residents; as a way to reintegrate the socially excluded into the wider community; and as a tool for the creation or enhancement of community social capital.

Securing positive social benefits through tenure mix is dependent upon the creation of social ties between members of the various socioeconomic groups residing within the mixed-tenure neighbourhoods. Research examining the social inclusion and community cohesion benefits of the HOPE VI programme in the US suggests, however, that such cross-tenure social networks may be difficult to secure because the existing social structures within communities—social networks based on common experiences and trust, and developed over a long period of time—may resist any attempts of restructuring. Additionally, the introduction of higher-income households and their cultural values may further reinforce feelings of isolation among the socially excluded members of the community.

This chapter examines the roles of social structure and cultural systems in the development of sustainable communities. It begins with a discussion about community, the various meanings of the term, how the concept is currently being used in urban policy and why it is deemed important to neighbourhood renewal. As will be argued in Section One, the New Labour government approached area deprivation from a normative and moralised conceptualisation of community, a conceptualisation that influenced the policy goal of developing community social capital through tenure mix. The concept of social capital is addressed in Section Two, as well as the role of social networks in securing long-term regeneration. Sections Three and Four introduce theories of social structure and cultural systems, which is followed by a discussion of their relationship to the formation of sustainable communities. Finally, the structural and cultural approaches of this thesis are presented along with the questions the research explored.

WHAT IS COMMUNITY?

Community is a popular concept, but a concept that is not easily defined. It can mean different things to different people ranging from descriptions of a geographical area, to arenas of social interaction such as social networking sites, or to groups of individuals characterised by a common set of beliefs such as a particular religious sect. Hillery (1955), in his review of the community literature, identified 94 separate definitions of the term finding little agreement between them. From the definitions he reviewed, Hillery identified a number of elements various researches have noted as essential components of community. These range from group self-sufficiency, residence within a common geographical area or the presence of kinship ties, to a common life, a consciousness kind, collective values and norms (social institutions) or a unity of feelings and attitudes. Hillery also noted that community has also been described in terms of a social system and as a process, neither of which necessarily depend on a geographic locality for community formation.

Which elements constitute community has been a topic of philosophical and scholarly debate since Aristotle first described the communal nature of the ancient Greek *polis* (Kitto, 2003). For the ancient Greeks the *polis*, or city-state, was the embodiment of community. Society and community were one-and-the-same. Through daily social interaction and public involvement in politics, the communal *polis* was the arena through which individuals could realize their full 'moral, spiritual and intellectual capacities' (*ibid*: 48) while helping to sustain a socially-just and democratic society. The concepts of society and community remained intertwined throughout the period of Enlightenment, a period

which experienced the rise of the nation-state and modern political philosophical thought (Delanty, 2003). During this period philosophers, such as Rousseau, began to view society as a construct of the state that alienated the individual from civic society, reducing human freedom and political autonomy. Where once society and community both represented the direct social relationships between individuals and expressions of common bonds, modern society was increasingly becoming associated with the structurally organised realm of the state and community became the arena through which individuals fought against the *status quo* to regain their personal freedoms (*ibid*).

Since the advent of urban sociology the concept of community has become synonymous with that of the neighbourhood. Throughout the twentieth century urban scholars researching community, such as Park, Burgess and McKenzie (1967) in Chicago, and Durant (1939) and Young and Willmott (1957) in the United Kingdom, have focused on geographical neighbourhoods as a means for studying the effects of industrialisation and urban development on the formation and maintenance of community sentiments and social interactions. Wellman and Leighton (1979) identify a number of reasons these two concepts have been merged, reasons which also help to explain the myriad definitions assigned to the concept of community. The first relates to the research process itself. Geographically, and administratively, delimited neighbourhoods offer an easily identifiable area in which to undertake research and are of a size appropriate for observing and mapping social interactions. In addition, many urban sociologists view the neighbourhood unit as a 'microcosm of the city' (*ibid*: 364) or, as Park stated, as 'cities within cities' (1967: 6). Such a perception has, according to Wellman and Leighton, led to a 'building block approach to

analysis' (1979: 364) in which local processes are given primacy over large-scale structural concerns. Thirdly, perhaps influenced by the Chicago School's ecological approach to urban development, many researchers have come to view territory as the most important factor in the organisation of urban social relations. Finally, sociology's preoccupation with 'the conditions under which solidary sentiments can be maintained' and a 'persistent overarching sociological concern with normative integration and consensus' has meant that the 'neighborhood has been studied as an apparently obvious container of normative solidarity' (*ibid*: 364). It is these last two factors, a focus on territory as an organising factor and the search for local solidarity, that Wellman and Leighton suggest have led to the melding of the community and neighbourhood concepts.

The spatial determinism associated with the 'neighborhood-as-community' (*ibid*: 365) to community research has influenced three primary arguments as to the condition of community. Two positions, those of the Community Lost and Community Saved perspectives, associate community formation with geographical location. The third perspective, Community Liberated, arose in response to the spatial deterministic views of the Community Lost and Saved arguments. Followers of the Community Liberated argument argue that community forms around interpersonal networks, networks that can form across neighbourhood, city and even international boundaries. Each of these community perspectives are discussed below.

COMMUNITY LOST

‘We are broken into pieces,’ states Peter Block in the introduction to his book, *Community: The structure of belonging* (2009: 2). Communities have been fragmented, Block argues, by the individualistic nature of western culture, the isolated operations of modern institutions and the stigmatising messages from media organisations. This idea, that community has been lost and modern society is its destructor, has a long history. During the 19th century social theorists, such as Ferdinand Tonnies (Wellman, 1979) and Emile Durkheim, expressed concern that the shift towards a more urban industrialised and modern society threatened to undermine the close-knit, mutually supportive interpersonal relationship structures on which (they believed) community is based. For Tonnies, modernisation signalled a shift from *Gemeinschaft* (community), a type of social organisation oriented towards the attainment of a common good, to *Gesellschaft* (society) a more rational form of social order that placed a higher value on the individual (Day, 2006, Delanty, 2003). Both *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* represent ideal types of social organisation, the former characterised by a ‘reciprocal, binding sentiment’ (Bauman, 2001: 10) based on tradition and arising naturally through sustained face-to-face interaction and shared experience. The social relations found in *Gesellschaft*, on the other hand, are more purposeful in nature. The increasing diversity and faster pace of modern society does not encourage intimate social relations and mutual understanding. Instead, social relations take on a contractual, temporary characteristic with individuals entering into agreements that achieve personal ends (Byrne, 2001).

Durkheim (2002a) used the concept of community to describe different forms of social solidarity as opposed to an ideal type of social organisation. Pre-industrial societies are characterised by a form of social solidarity he referred to as mechanical solidarity. Such societies rely on a 'collective consciousness'—a 'totality of beliefs and sentiments common to the average members of a society' (*ibid*: 132)—to maintain social order and cohesion. Pursuit of the common good is paramount, which is only achievable through consistency in collective representations formed over long periods of time. The rapid urbanisation and diversification of modern society fractures the collective consciousness. Greater population densities lead to fewer sustained interpersonal relations necessary for the formation of a collective consciousness. The division of labour inherent to industrialisation means that individuals and families are no longer self-sufficient but must rely on the efforts of others to meet their basic needs. The fragmented nature of modern society, then, gives rise to an organic form of social solidarity, a solidarity based on the interdependence of its members rather than their similarities. Unlike Tonnies, who seemed to view modernisation as antithetical to community, Durkheim saw in modern society the chance to create a new form of community that incorporated expressions of individual and collective autonomy while maintaining a collective consciousness. Durkheim's concern, however, was that the rapid social change associated with industrialisation threatened the creation of organic solidarity thus leading to a loss of community in modern society.

The theme of Community Lost continued into the 20th century with the concept of community becoming associated with a dichotomous relationship between rural and urban or traditional versus modern society (Cochrane, 2007, Kasarda and Janowitz, 1974, Nisbet,

1953, Warren, 1970, Levitas, 2005). Community was also assigned normative and moral roles, with the traditional close-knit form of social organisation representing the ideal type community acting as the arena through which a 'set of shared values'(Etzioni, 1995: ix) is taught to, and internalised by, its members. The interpersonal relationships embedded within community act a moral compass providing a level of social control within society, creating a sense of responsibility towards others and promoting the common good (Day, 2006, Sullivan and Taylor, 2007). Community is the opposite of modern society providing a safe haven from the insecurity, turmoil and amorality often believed to characterise modern life (Bauman, 2001).

COMMUNITY SAVED

While Community Lost theorists continue to search for community in modern society, other social science researchers argue that community continues to exist in the urban context. A number of community studies conducted during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, such as Young and Wilmott's *Family and Kinship in East London* (1957) and Herbert Gans' *Urban Villagers* (1962), demonstrated that urban dwellers continue to form strong interpersonal relationships within and attachments to their local neighbourhoods. Contrary to the fears of Community Lost theorists, who argue that urbanisation leads to excessive individualism and alienation, proponents of the Community Saved school of thought highlight the 'continu[ing] efficacy' of communal solidarities 'in providing support and sociability, communal desires for informal social control, and ecological sorting into

homogeneous residential and work areas' (Wellman and Leighton, 1979: 1205) From the Community Saved perspective, then, community within the urban context: continues to be a site of individual affirmation (and reaffirmation) of self (Suttles, 1972, Brower, 1996), continues to provide support through primary social ties such as family (Young and Willmott, 1957), and remains the primary site of casual social contact (Jacobs, 1961) that creates a sense of belonging among community members (Hunter, 1975).

COMMUNITY LIBERATED

A third perspective of community is that of the Community Liberated. This argument developed in response to the overly pessimistic and optimistic views of the Lost and Saved arguments, acting as a bridge between the two perspectives (Curtis-White and Guest, 2003, Sampson, 1999, Schiefloe, 1990, Tsai and Sigelman, 1982, Wellman, 1979). According to Wellman, the Liberated argument continues to acknowledge the existence and importance of primary social ties but recognises that those ties are no longer organised into 'densely knit, tightly bounded solidarities' (1979: 1206).

Community Liberated supporters believe this perspective corrects several of the problems associated with the Lost and Saved traditions. Firstly, it separates the concept of community from the spatially bounded neighbourhood overcoming the spatial determinism of the "neighbourhood-as-community" view of community discussed above. Redefining community in terms of interpersonal networks and resource flows, as Community Liberated theorists do, provides a truer representation of social organisation in diverse, modern

society. Advancements in transportation and communication technology, the separation of work and home, and increasing residential mobility mean that most individuals no longer solely rely on their neighbourhood of residence as a source of intimate social ties. Social networks are, instead, dispersed and diverse reaching beyond the spatial boundaries of neighbourhood each representing a variety of weaker solidarity-based relationships (Tsai and Sigelman, 1982, Wellman, 1979).

The Community Liberated argument also corrects the empirically incorrect normative community ideal presented by the Community Lost thesis (Schiefloe, 1990). The normative community is based on an ideal type, Tonnies' *Gemeinschaft*. For Tonnies, *Gemeinschaft*—the purest, most natural form of social organisation—was something for modern society to aspire to become. However, *Gemeinschaft* has never been empirically proven to exist.

DO WE NEED COMMUNITY?

The myriad definitions, uses and representations of community have led Margaret Stacey (1969) to declare the term to be a useless concept. Sampson supports her view, stating that community as a concept has 'lost analytical bite and therefore means nothing' (1999: 242). Despite this, he goes on to contend that community still matters as community is 'an important arena for realizing common values and maintaining effective social controls...[it] provide[s] important public goods...that bear on patterns of social organization and human well-being' (ibid: 242). Forrest and Kearns identify the community of residence as the site where the 'mundane routines' of daily life are most likely carried out, thereby

playing an important ‘normalising’ or stabilising role for individuals (2001: 2127). Healey (1998) argues that the residential community acts as the primary arena through which people access a variety of resources (material and social), connect with opportunities, and build individual and collective identities. David Thomas (1995) highlights the importance of local social processes and resources for the socially excluded. In contrast to more affluent members of society, who ‘have a choice about how far their social life is constituted around the family [or] neighbourhood’, residents in socially deprived areas often lack that choice and ‘have to face difficulties with little access to solutions to problems outside their neighbourhood’ (*ibid*: 20). Neighbourhoods of residence, and the social interactions taking place within them, are the focal points of daily life for socially excluded communities. This restricted local orientation can, as the Commission on Social Justice suggests, have significant, long-lasting impact on individual outcomes noting that:

where you live, who else lives there, and how they live their lives—co-operatively or selfishly, responsibly or destructively—can be as important as personal resources in determining life chances (1994: 308).

The views of the Commission on Social Justice had significant influence on New Labour’s neighbourhood renewal policy (Levitas, 2005), resulting in the area-based community development focus of neighbourhood renewal initiatives. The views of the Commission reflect perspectives of the Community Lost argument (Forrest and Kearns, 2001), attributing persistent area disadvantage to a breakdown in the ‘social fabric’ (Commission on Social Justice, 1994: 308) within the community. Thomas describes disadvantaged areas as communities not only experiencing poverty and material deprivation but also:

are underprivileged when their inhabitants are unable to communicate with each other in order to form agreements about both the daily tasks of living together, and how to deal with particular problems that crop up in the life of any locality (1995: 20).

In other words, community deprivation and social exclusion result from the dissolution of social cohesion or, in Durkheim's words, the collective consciousness. The key to reversing economic and social decline in deprived areas, many experts argue (Etzioni, 1995, Putnam, 2000, Sampson, 1999, SEU, 1998, Taylor, 1998a, Thomas, 1995), is to rebuild community in these neighbourhoods a process that is heavily focused on the creation and strengthening of social capital in deprived neighbourhoods. A number of theories of social capital have been produced (Bourdieu, 1986, Coleman, 1988, Lin, 2001); the one most influential in New Labour neighbourhood renewal policy, however, is the theory of social capital developed by Robert Putnam.

SOCIAL CAPITAL

Putnam defines social capital as the 'features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit' (1995: 67), features he equates with civil society (DeFilippis, 2001, Field, 2003, Putnam, 2000). It is a social good, both public and private, that arises out of sustained interpersonal contact between members of social networks that are based on mutual obligations. The mutual obligations and trust embedded in social networks, according to Putnam (2000), lead to feelings of reciprocity among network members. He identifies two forms of reciprocity, specific and generalized. Specific reciprocity represents actions

undertaken by one individual for another with the understanding that the other will provide 'something *specific* in return: I'll do this for you if you do that for me' (*ibid*: 20, emphasis in original). Generalized reciprocity, on the other hand, is more altruistic in nature. An individual will provide support or a service, offer assistance or pass on information to others with an expectation of future returns from any of the other members located within their social network. It is the generalized form of reciprocity and its associated high levels of social trust that Putnam believes is essential for a healthy society because 'trustworthiness lubricates social life' and 'facilitate[s] cooperation for mutual benefit' (2000: 21).

Specific and generalized reciprocity are supported by different forms of social capital, which Putnam labels bonding social capital and bridging social capital. Bonding social capital, which is based on intimate social bonds such as those found between family and friends, is associated with specific reciprocity. These types of social ties reinforce a sense of identity and feelings of solidarity, and provide the support systems individuals use to traverse daily life. Bridging social capital is based on weaker social ties among members of a variety of networks. This form of social capital allows individuals to access resources not readily available within their primary social network, builds trust among diverse members of society and broadens an individual's sense of identity. Like the generalized form of reciprocity, Putnam places high importance on bridging social capital because it promotes social cohesion among members of diverse networks enabling participants 'to come together to pursue shared objectives' (DeFilippis, 2001: 787). Taken together, generalized reciprocity supported by bridging social networks, strengthen democratic institutions and promote economic growth (Putnam, 1995, Putnam, 2000). It is these claims about the utility

of social capital that have made Putnam's theory so attractive to community workers and policy makers.

MUTUAL OBLIGATIONS OR POWER STRUGGLES?

DeFilippis (2001) highlights a number of flaws in Putnam's theory two of which will be discussed here. The first problem is one of measurement. For Putnam, social capital is an asset that is possessed by individuals or groups of individuals, such as a community, city or nation that is produced through active participation in social networks. He measures the amount of social capital owned by, for instance, a community by aggregating a host of individual characteristics (e.g. church attendance, membership in professional societies and volunteering) up to the community level. However, as DeFilippis points out, social groups such as communities are social constructions borne out of 'complicated sets of [internal and external] social, political, cultural, and economic relationships' (*ibid*: 789); they are not solely the products of internal attributes and relationships.

DeFilippis also faults Putnam for his overly optimistic view of social capital. In general, Putnam views social capital as a good thing, promoting social cohesion and cooperative, mutually beneficial action. Bonding social capital allows this to happen at the micro-level, while bridging social capital extends the benefits of mutual obligation across diverse macro-level networks. This positive view of social capital, however, ignores the 'power relations that play such an important role in intergroup relations' (DeFilippis, 2001: 791). Not all social networks are equal. Networks are located within broader social

structures organised around access to resources—or to economic, political, cultural and social capital. Groups are constantly competing against others to gain access to these resources with those social networks occupying higher positions within the social structure gaining access to greater amounts of capital. Putnam's suggestion that bridging social capital can help overcome the inequalities in power relations is, according to DeFilippis, misguided. 'What needs to change' he suggests 'are those power relations, not the level of connections' (DeFilippis, 2001: 790).

Social capital, as presented by Robert Putnam, is a positive social good. Built upon the mutual obligations and social trust that grow out of social interaction, social capital provides 'a mechanism for collective action' and 'helps people translate aspirations into realities' (Putnam, 2000: 288). According to Putnam, high levels of social capital correlate with high levels of social cohesion and economic prosperity. These claims have made Putnam's version of social capital attractive to community development specialists and policy makers. Social capital played an important role in New Labour's neighbourhood regeneration policy. Low levels of social capital was identified as 'a key factor' in neighbourhood decline and increasing social capital was identified as necessary for supporting 'social stability and a community's ability to help itself' (SEU, 2000: 24). Promoting self-help was a key component of New Labour's citizenship agenda, as discussed in the previous chapter. Tenure diversification was believed to support responsible citizenship by providing opportunities for cross-tenure social interaction and building bridging social capital ties. However, as DeFilippis' critique of Putnam's theory points out, social networks are located within broader social structures characterised by differential

access to social capital resources. The power imbalances associated with those social structures may inhibit the creation of the cohesive, mutually supportive social relations social capital is believed to support. The concept of social structure and how social structures influence social relations and individual life choices are the focus of the following discussion.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

A main area of concern for this study is the ways in which regeneration activity alters the community social structure and how the social structure influences resident activity and life choices. Communities comprise a variety of groups, members of which share some commonality (Crow and Maclean, 2006, Taylor, 2003). Each individual within a community belongs to a variety of groups some joined voluntarily, such as a gardening club, friendship circle or place of employment, while membership in other groups is socially assigned, a racial or gender group for example. All individuals and groups within a community interact with one another in various ways leading to 'enduring, culturally patterned relations' (Winthrop, 1991: 261). It is these patterned relations that define the community's social structure (Merton, 1957, Porpora, 1987, Winthrop, 1991)

Social structure and its role in organizing social life has been an interest of sociologists since the beginnings of the discipline. Early social theorists such as Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, and Karl Marx, drew attention to the social differentiation inherent in industrial society and theorized as to under what conditions

differentiation occurs, the forms of differentiation that arise under those conditions, and the ways in which the resulting differentiation orders social life. Social structure has been described in terms of a biological organism or a machine in which each individual component, performing its unique function, combines with the work of other parts to create a fully functioning whole, to the idea of a less integrated social space characterized by a variety of interdependent fields cooperating, but also competing, in the struggle to attain/retain necessary resources. While social theorists may dispute the nature of social structure, they do agree on its basic elements: social interaction and social institutions. Which of these elements—the social interactions that lead to the creation of social institutions, or the institutions which constrain interaction—is most important to the field of sociology differs among researchers. The main approaches to the study of social structure are discussed below, beginning with the most common models of social structure.

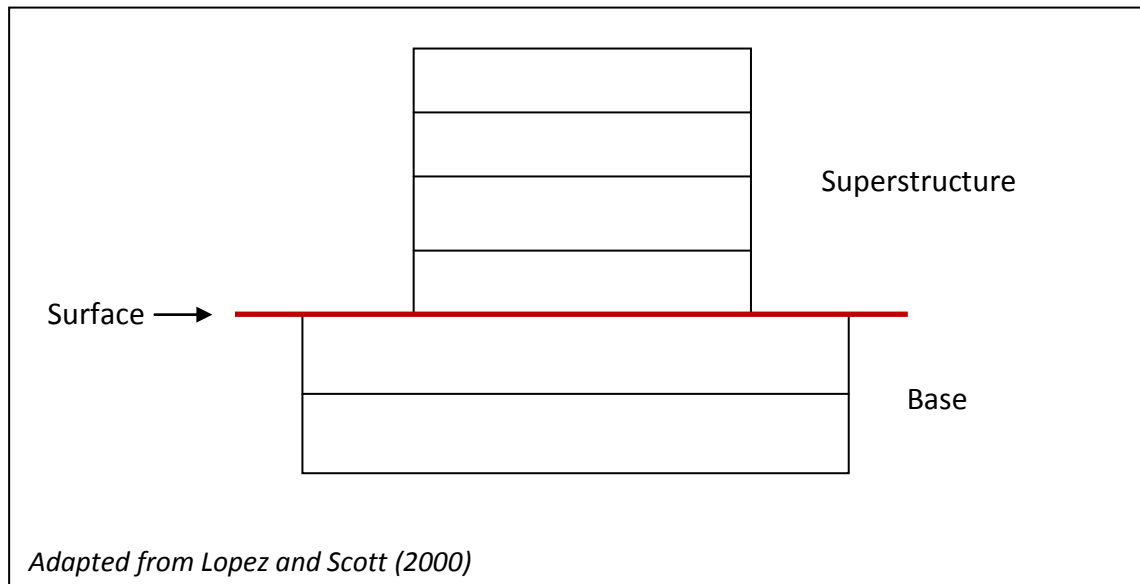
MODELS OF SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Three conceptualizations of the social structure have held prominence in sociological thought: social structure as a two-tiered ordering, social structure as a system, and the idea of society as a social space. Each concept is presented below.

Base and superstructure

One of the earliest models of social structure was that of a two-tiered system comprising a base of social relations and an institutional superstructure (see Figure 3.1). Karl Marx, who provided one of the best descriptions of this two-tiered model, described social

Figure 3.1: Base and Superstructure model



structure as ‘an organized whole, a ‘totality’ that develops over time’ (Jay, 1984, in Lopez and Scott, 2000: 69) encompassing not only the social relations present in any society, but also that society’s dominant ideology. According to Marx, economic relations, or what he called ‘relations of production’ (Marx, 2005: 15), are the foundation of any social system. He believed the core activity of any society to be the production of goods from the most basic, subsistence level goods such as food, clothing and shelter to those goods necessary for the continuation of a specific lifestyle—automobiles, machinery or televisions, for example. Marx also viewed production as an inherently social process because, ‘it is only the collective effort of human beings that enables them to get a livelihood from the world around them’ (Harman, 1986: 15). The ‘relations of production’ are the means through which human labour is organized and joined with material resources in the production process. These relations are hierarchical in nature, reflecting differences in the ownership and control of the means of production by various groups within a society (Afansayev, 1987, Lopez and Scott,

2000). They are, essentially, arenas of conflict in which members of the various groups struggle for control over the production process (Marx and Engels, 1970).

The result of these economic relations and power struggles is the formation of the superstructure--the legal, political and cultural systems defining a society at a given time. It is maintained through the legal and political systems (Engels, 1970a). Marx understood the base and superstructure to be interdependent systems, with any cumulative change in the relations of production leading to changes in the superstructure, while the superstructural institutions influence activity within the economic base. Marx identified three ways in which institutions within the superstructure can impact economic relations: they can support economic development and expansion by removing barriers to innovation; they can impose strict limitations on innovation in an attempt to preserve current dominant values; or they can restrict growth in certain directions while encouraging growth in others (Engels, 1970a). In all three scenarios, the superstructural institutions impose certain forms of limitations on social relations within the economic base. They may preserve the existing hierarchy of relations, as is the case with the second two scenarios, or they may pave the way for a reorganization within those power relations. Therefore, like the economic base, the superstructure may be characterized by conflict as various groups, through their respective institutions, fight to exert their influence on the production process and further their own interests (Harman, 1986).

An alternative explanation of social structure, one not based in economic relations, was presented by Emile Durkheim. He, too, conceived of the social structure as a two-tiered

system composed of a 'substratum' of collective relationships and a superstructure of collective representations (Lopez and Scott, 2000). Collective relationships, or the associations created through repeated interaction, are the building blocks of society for 'society is not the sum of individuals, but the system formed by their association' (Durkheim, 2002b: 123). Durkheim understood social structure as representing solidarity among society's members. Through communal relations individuals develop specific ways of acting, which are then repeated in similar circumstances. Over time, these patterns of interaction become habitualized lending stability and predictability to everyday life. Once these patterns of interaction become generally accepted by a population, they are 'transformed into rules of conduct' (Durkheim, 2002a: 145) governing future interactions and behaviour. These rules, or norms, become part of the superstructure and represent what Durkheim called 'collective representations' or 'social facts'—the ways of thinking and behaving common to a group of people (Durkheim, 2002b). A causal relationship exists between these two levels of the social structure as prolonged social interaction is necessary for the creation of collective representations. However, as Durkheim noted, this causal relationship moves both ways. For, once the collective representations are formed and instituted, they take on a life of their own becoming objective phenomena with the capacity to exert 'over the individual an external constraint' (Durkheim, 2002b: 117).

Both Durkheim's and Marx's models of social structure have been criticized as overly deterministic leaving little room for individual or institutional autonomy. Durkheim's critics state that his view of collective representations as an objective reality constraining social behaviour effectively removes individual will from social action. Ceri (1993), however,

suggests this criticism arises from a misunderstanding of Durkheim's theory. Durkheim understood collective representations to exert varying degrees of influence based on the extent to which an individual is integrated into their society. Those individuals who feel a strong connection to society will be more greatly influenced by society's moral code than those who have a weaker connection. He also believed adherence to the moral code to be an act of will. Individuals must consciously choose to accept society's norms and abide by them, otherwise, conformity to the rules would be an act of fear—coercion, not voluntary action.

Marx based his concept of social structure on the production process and, therefore, has often been characterized as an economic determinist (Harman, 1986, Lopez and Scott, 2000). His critics contend that he left no room for political or judicial autonomy in the social structure, and point to various points in world history during which religion or politics were more determining factors in social organization. Marx denied this determinist interpretation of his theory and acknowledged that factors other than economic ones may have been more influential during particular historical periods (Marx, 1970). Engels (Engels, 1970b: 76-77, emphasis in original) furthered this view when he stated,

...the determining element in history is *ultimately* the production and reproduction in real life. More than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. If therefore somebody twists this into the statement that the economic element is the *only* determining one, he transforms it into a meaningless, abstract and absurd phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure...also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their *form*.

Writing during a period of great economic expansion and social upheaval—during the Industrial Revolution—it is not difficult to understand why Marx placed greater emphasis on the influence of economic processes on social structure at the expense of other factors. And his theory, which highlighted inequality and social conflict, has proven influential despite his critics. However, his base/superstructure model of social systems does have weaknesses not associated with economic determinism. Marx’s conceptualization of the social structure suggests a foundation, like that of a building, of economic relations *supporting* a system of social institutions—the building itself (Lopez and Scott, 2000). Such a model implies that the base is a separate entity, unaffected by activity within the superstructure but, without which, the superstructure cannot exist. Later models have moved away from this analogy in an effort to explain the interdependent relationships between the various components of the social structure.

Systems and subsystems

Throughout the post-world wars period, General System Theory gained prominent influence in the social sciences. General System Theory, as advanced by Bertalanffy (1950), is concerned with identifying the overarching principles common to all types of systems. Bertalanffy defined a system as ‘a complex of interacting elements’” (*ibid*: 143) and felt that true understanding of a total system can only be gained through examination of the interrelations of a system’s individual parts:

...you will always find that the behaviour of an element is different within the system from which it is in isolation. You cannot sum up the behaviour of the whole from the isolated parts, and you have to take into account the relations between the various subordinated systems and the systems which are super-ordinate to them in order to understand the behaviour of the parts (*ibid*: 148).

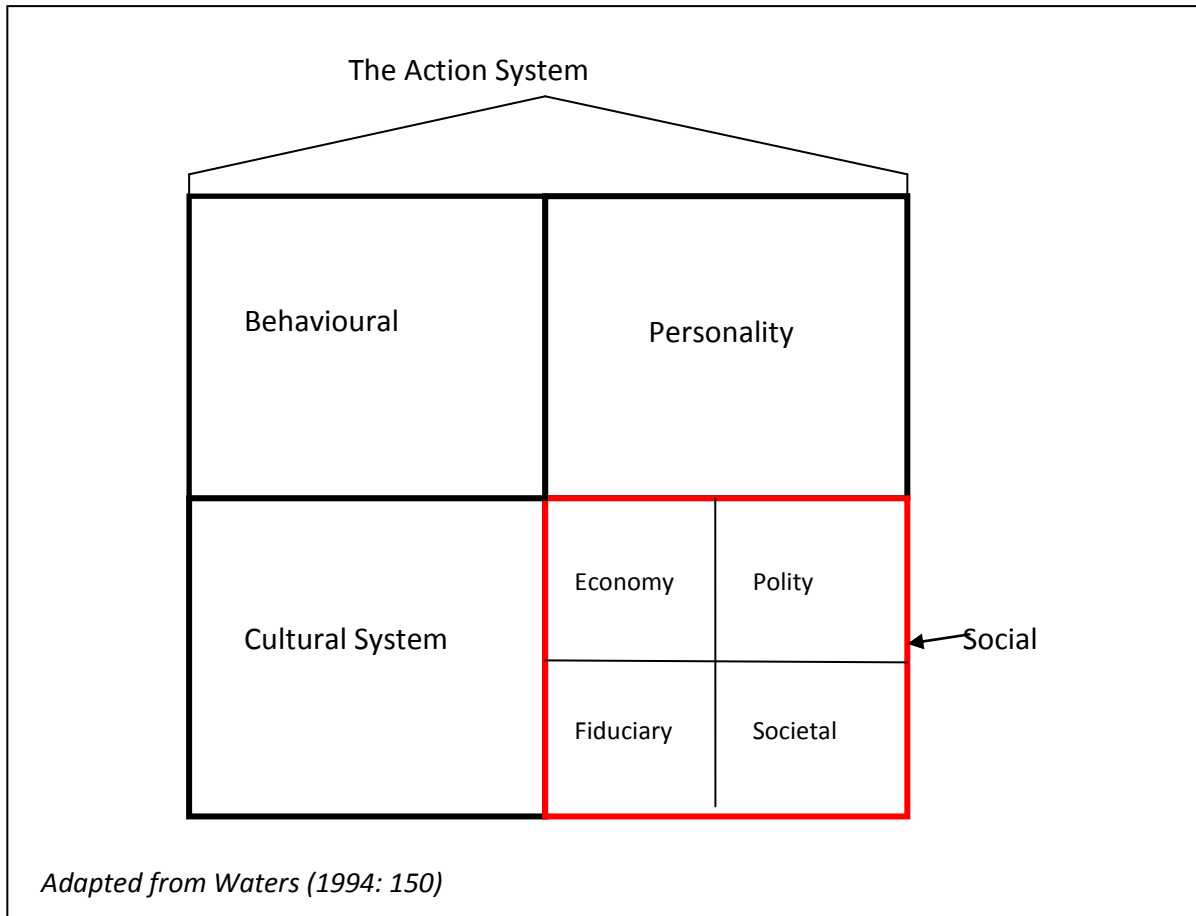
The application of General System Theory to sociological concepts provided the means to highlight the complexity of social life that was missing in the base/superstructure model. The most prominent sociologist advocating the systems model of society was Talcott Parsons.

Parson's action system

Parsons viewed society as an 'action system' through which 'cultural representations and symbols are formed into meaningful intentions and are given expression in concrete situations' (Lopez and Scott, 2000: 77). The action system acts as the overarching organizational system of society, which can be further divided into four subsystems: the behavioural organism, the personality, and the social and cultural systems each of which can be further divided into their related subsystems as illustrated in Figure 3.2. Parsons identified the social system as the domain of sociological research. Each element of the social system is arranged according to a 'hierarchy of relations of control' (Parsons, 2002: 369) over the behaviour of individual members of a society. The sole purpose of this hierarchy of relations is to maintain equilibrium within the system, which is achieved by fulfilling one of four functions defined by Parsons' AGIL system:

- **Adaptation** – the provision of resources for goal attainment;
- **Goal Attainment** – the process of maintaining equilibrium between the needs of the system with the conditions of the environment. This function also requires the prioritizing of system goals;
- **Integration** – ensures interactions between the various parts of a system are orderly; and
- **Latent Pattern Maintenance** – guarantees the continuation of the institutionalized culture.

Figure 3.2: Parson's model of the action system



Relating these functions to the subsystems identified in Figure 3.2, in ascending order of hierarchy, the social system is structured in the following way. The Economy is responsible for securing and identifying available resources and allocating them once system goals have been identified. The Polity, or leadership, subsystem sets and prioritizes goals as well as motivates individuals to work towards goal realization. Integration of system values and functions is managed through the Societal Community, which includes the legal system as well as the media. Finally, the Fiduciary system functions as the centre of socialization and the institutionalization of cultural values and norms, which constrain activity in all the other subsystems.

Although Parsons' systems model presents a more complex picture of society, it does not break from the problem of determinism. Parsons, himself, stated that he was a cultural determinist citing the 'normative elements' as 'more important for social change than the "material interests" of constitutive elements' (Parsons cited in Waters, 1994: 151). His model has also been criticized for its functionalist bias, which fails to account for the existence of some social institutions that appear to serve no purpose. Finally, Parsons' insistence on system equilibrium has produced a model that focuses solely on the cooperative elements of the social system failing to provide explanations of the tensions existing between system elements in the struggle for diverse interests.

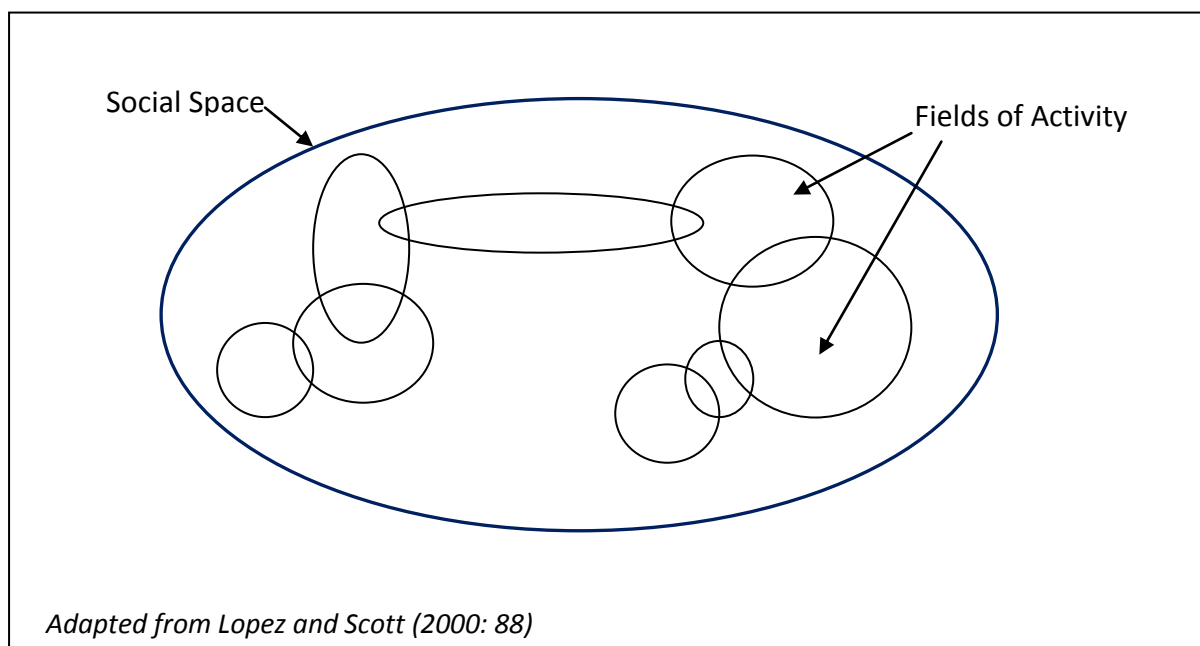
Fields and space

The models of social structure discussed above describe society as a system of social relations directed by an objective, autonomous force in the form of social institutions. Both models acknowledge the role of social interaction in the creation and maintenance of social systems but fail to adequately account for individual autonomy in social action or competition between diverse social institutions competing for resources and power. The third model of social structure, the concept of 'fields and space' (see Figure 3.3), attempts to overcome these problems.

Society, as conceptualized by Bourdieu, is a 'social space' composed of a 'multiplicity of fields in complex articulations with one another' (Lopez and Scott, 2000: 85). Social space is not defined geographically, but as a totality of existing social relations. Within a social space, individuals and groups are distributed across a range of social positions, either

institutional or relational, characterized by differential access to resources. Social life is conducted across a variety of 'fields of activity', such as education, art, or knowledge, with each field offering a number of resources specific to its domain. Within each field, the different social positions compete against each other for the acquisition and control of limited available resources with the resource-advantaged groups gaining a level of control over the least advantaged. Competition also exists between fields resulting in a hierarchy of influence over social formations (Lopez and Scott, 2000).

Figure 3.3: Society as social space



The idea of society as a social space moves the conceptualization of social structure away from a static or uni-directional model towards the notion of society as a dynamic process. It highlights the ways in which social relations, characterized by competition, lead to the formation of a hierarchical society dominated by particular cultural values. It also

provides a means for understanding the ways in which those relations maintain the dominant order over time.

This section discussed the models of social structure that have been most influential in the field of sociology. The models represent various conceptualisations of how society is organized and how the different levels of social organisation interact to create and maintain a particular social order. Models of social structure have ranged from a two-tier hierarchy of social relations to a the notion of society as a dynamic social arena, focusing on either inequality in power relations or the equilibrium of society. The ways in which the models of social organisation influence social relationships are explained through theories of social structure. These theories are discussed below.

THEORIES OF SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Lopez and Scott (2000) identify two prominent theoretical approaches to social structure, institutional structure and relational structure. Each of the theoretical approaches discussed in this section focuses on a different aspect of social structure, emphasising either social institutions or social relations as the explaining factor in social organisation.

INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

A number of social theorists believe the key to understanding society is through the study of social institutions. Durkheim proposed that the institutional structure, or the

patterns of beliefs and behavioural patterns characterising a society, be the central focus of sociological study. As previously discussed, Durkheim described the social structure as consisting of a substratum of social relations and an institutional superstructure of collective representations that guide activity within the substratum. He believed that social phenomena are not the result of individual actions but of the coordinated activities of groups of individuals acting in predetermined ways. They cannot, therefore, be explained by studying the behaviour of individual group members; doing so would lead to a false explanation (Durkheim, 2002b). To truly understand why people act as they do—why a father takes on certain responsibilities in a family or why the suicide rate is much higher in one country than another, for example—we must, instead, seek to understand the nature of society, the ‘collective ways of being’ (Durkheim, 2002b) practiced by a group’s members. These ‘collective ways of being’ can only be discovered through examining social facts, the ‘beliefs, tendencies and practices of the group taken collectively’ (Durkheim, 2002b: 114).

Although based in interaction between individuals, Durkheim believed social facts to have an objective reality assuming ‘a shape, a tangible form peculiar to them...vastly distinct from the individual facts which manifest that reality’ (Durkheim, 2002b: 114). They predate any one individual at any given period, and exhibit a coercive force pressuring individuals toward conformity to social norms. Social facts assume this power through social integration and a system of sanctions or rewards for conformity to normative codes. Individuals act in particular ways not simply because such action will satisfy an individual need. Their actions are not based on individual motive alone, but are set within the confines of a predetermined list of behaviours deemed acceptable by the general population of a

society. Individuals are pressured towards conformity by both formal and informal means a point Durkheim (Durkheim, 1938: 112) demonstrates when he notes:

If I do not conform to ordinary conventions, if in my mode of dress I pay no heed to what is customary in my country and my social class, the laughter I provoke, the social distance at which I am kept, produce, although in a more mitigated form, the same results as any real penalty.

It is to social facts (or institutions), then, the sociologist must turn to gain a full understanding of individual and collective behaviour.

Parsons also considered social institutions to be the guiding factor behind social organization. As noted earlier, Parsons thought of society as an action system always striving toward equilibrium. The aspect of society most important for sociological study is to be found within the social system, or social structure, the 'system of patterned relationships of actors' (Parsons cited in Lopez and Scott, 2000: 29). Patterned relationships, as opposed to the pursuit of individualized goals, are necessary for the stability and survival of the system. Social institutions, or the 'ultimate value attitudes common to members of a community' (Parsons, 1990: 326), ensure system stability. They act as constraining factors on individual action to ensure individual goals are in line with those of society as a whole. Obedience to social norms is guaranteed in one of two ways. Individuals may abide by social norms out of a moral sense of duty. The individual follows cultural norms because 'he holds it, or the principle embodied in it, good for its own sake' (*ibid*: 326). Alternatively, individual behaviour is constrained by a system of formal or informal sanctions that punish an individual for non-conformist behaviour. In either case, the individual is consciously aware

of cultural norms, weighs their compatibility with personal values, and actively chooses a level of conformity.

The institutional approach is useful for explaining some of the ways in which societies and related cultural elements persist over time. However, its assumptions of stability, consensus, and moral commitment to norms fail to acknowledge the contradictory or incompatible normative patterns of different groups within a society or the domination of a specific group's values over others.

RELATIONAL STRUCTURE

Whereas the above theorists believed social institutions to be the explanatory factors behind social life, other theorists felt society was better explained by examining social relations. This interest in social relations is not, however, an interest in individual interactions. Rather, relational theorists stress the form, or pattern, these interactions assume. Radcliffe-Brown defined society as 'the system that is formed when the acts of different individuals are connected through social relations' (Lopez and Scott, 2000: 45). He identified human beings as the basic units of society and attributed two characteristics to them: the human being as an individual, and the human being as a person. The 'individual' represents the physical form of human beings, including the biological and psychological processes that occur naturally. The 'person', on the other hand, is made up of social relationships, or the 'social personality', 'the position occupied by a human being in a social

structure' (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952: 193). It is through the interactions of social persons that the social structure arises.

The relational approach to the study of social structure is embodied in network analysis, which examines social organization through the analysis of social relations. Blau (1974: 615) views social structure as 'the differentiated, interrelated parts in a collectivity'. The social structure arises from social interaction and is defined by the "distinctions people make... in their role relations" (*ibid*: 616). Within every society individual members gather together in groups based on similarities in a variety of factors. Each group then occupies a particular position within society further defining itself in relation to the other groups in its environment. Through daily interaction, each group competes or cooperates with other groups to fulfil its needs. This interaction results in a hierarchy of positions with the most successful groups occupying a dominant position. Group membership and its position within the social structure help define an individual's worldview. For example, an individual who belongs to a dominant group, such as a middle-class, white, male, will be likely to view society as a world of opportunity whereas a member of a group holding a lower social position, such as young, black male from a low-income community, may be more likely to believe his chances for social success are limited. According to Blau, the best way to understand society is through the examination of the various social positions present, the ways groups interact, and how these interactions lead to differentiation in power and behaviour.

Blau's approach offers an explanation of the ways in which social structures are

created and of the forms they take. However, it too often ignores the constraining nature of the institutional structure doing little to explain why interaction takes the specific forms it does. In addition, Blau advocates studying relationships based on pre-assigned parameters, such as age, race, income or education level, assuming connections between all members of a group based on similarity of characteristics (Bates and Peacock, 1989: 569). Use of such classifications bases social interaction on subjective definitions of groups, or preconceived notions of existing relationships. It ignores inter-group differentiation and the spatio-temporal aspects of relationships.

Theories of social structure provide explanations for the ways in which the organisation of society influences social life. The two theories discussed in this section provide different explanations for social relations, giving prominence to either social institutions—collective values and norms—or the patterns of social relations that make up the relational structure. Each school of thought produces a different view of society, from one characterised by stability and consensus to a society defined by conflict and hierarchy in social relations. Both the institutional and relational structures influence the particular culture characterising a society. This influence is transmitted through a society's cultural system.

THE CULTURAL SYSTEM

Culture encompasses the beliefs, values and social norms followed by a social group (Just and Monaghan, 2000, Naylor, 1996, Rapport and Overing, 2000). Essentially, culture

represents the ways in which a particular group of people understand and experience the world around them and is manifested in lifestyle choices and personal decision making.

Merton (1957) identified the cultural system as the most important component of the social system since it acts as a guideline for daily activity and influences individual and group behaviour, choices and identity.

MERTON AND THE CULTURAL SYSTEM

According to Merton, the cultural system contains two important elements, culturally defined goals and institutional norms. The goals acts as a 'frame of aspirational reference' by defining the 'legitimate objectives for all or for diversely located members of the society' (Merton, 1957: 132). The normative institutions, on the other hand, delineate the socially acceptable means or procedures for attaining cultural goals. In doing so, they act as the regulating or controlling forces of social action. Cultural goals and institutional norms are interrelated elements 'operat[ing] jointly to shape prevailing practices' (Merton, 1957: 133). This relationship, however, is not constant. A society's emphasis on either the goals or norms varies independently of the degree of emphasis placed on the other. The degree of emphasis placed on either the goals or norms leads to different behavioural patterns among members of a society.

Merton, in his studies of deviant behaviour, identifies five modes of individual behavioural adaptation to cultural values as outlined in Figure 3.4. The types of adaptation differ among the various social positions within the social structure and are indicative of an

Figure 3.4: A typology of modes of individual adaptation

Modes of Adaptation		Culture Goals	Institutionalized Means
I.	Conformity	+	+
II.	Innovation	+	-
III.	Ritualism	-	+
IV.	Retreatism	-	-
V.	Rebellion	+/-	+/-
+:		<i>acceptance of goals or norms</i>	
-:		<i>rejection of goals or norms</i>	
+/-:		<i>rejection of both goals/norms and substitution of alternatives</i>	

Adapted from Merton, 1957: 140

individual's level of acceptance or rejection of culturally defined goals and norms.

Behavioural adaptations may differ not only between individuals located in different social positions, but may change for each individual as they assess each goal and norm set individually. The first type of adaptation, conformity, is the most common. It represents acceptance of both the culturally defined goals and norms by members of a society. While not every individual will subscribe to dominant values, conformity in behaviour by the majority of persons is necessary for the existence and stability of society. Without it, as Merton points out, 'there exist social relations' but society does not exist as a 'sociological reality' (Merton, 1957: 141).

The remaining types of adaptation describe various forms of deviant behaviour, 'deviant' in this sense referring to non-conforming, as opposed to criminal behaviour. The

second type of adaptation identified by Merton, innovation, occurs when an individual accepts a cultural goal but finds the institutionalized norms for goal attainment ineffective or unattainable due to the individual's structural position. In this situation, where the goal is emphasized over the means, an alternative behaviour will be substituted for the norm as in the case of a student stealing answers to an exam to achieve the highest mark, for example. Ritualism, the third type of behavioural adaptation, is the opposite of innovation. Here, greater emphasis is placed on the institutionalized norms of attainment rather than on the goal. Individuals following this type of adaptation may not wholly reject cultural goals, but scale back their importance; 'playing by the rules' gains prominence. Such behaviour creates a low-risk environment for an individual removing anxiety surrounding goal achievement, since the goals are no longer important, and guaranteeing the predictability and security of daily life. In extreme cases, individuals may exhibit retreatist behaviour. Those who adopt this fourth type of adaptation—retreatism-- have often internalized both the cultural goals and institutional norms and place a high value on each. Following the socially acceptable path to success, however, is either structurally impossible or does not lead to the expected result. A conflict arises for the individual between the tendency toward conformity and the pressure to substitute unapproved means to achieve success. Sensing no short or long-term change in conditions forthcoming, the individual eventually drops out of mainstream society all together. Their behaviour is often characterised as apathetic or resigned. The final, and rarest, form of behavioural adaptation is what Merton labelled rebellion. In this form of anomic behaviour, the individual rejects both the culturally defined goals and structuralised norms toward success. However, instead of withdrawing from social life, the individual strives to change the institutionalised social and cultural structures that presently define the

society. The prevailing social structure is redefined as exclusionary and problematic and a new, often greatly modified structure is sought. In its simplest form, rebellion leads to the emergence of subgroups whose members are unified under a sub- or countercultural belief structure, such as those followed by the street gangs of today or the hippy culture of the 1960s. These groups tend to be relatively powerless and unstable with most group members becoming absorbed into mainstream culture at a future point. If, however, a significant portion of a society's members are disaffected from the prevailing social and cultural structures and choose instead to adopt the alternative structures, a social revolution may occur leading to the near complete transformation of society (Merton, 1957).

REFERENCE GROUPS AND INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOURAL ADAPTATIONS

Conflict between cultural norms and the institutional means to attainment may often be due to an individual's choice of reference group. A reference group, or 'the group to which individuals compare themselves' (Holton, 2004: 514), acts as a 'social frame of reference' (Merton, 1957: 283) for individual actors. Merton identifies two types of reference groups, normative and comparative. Normative groups provide the basis for an individual's standard of behaviour, or the value sets followed by the actor. Reference groups may also be comparative by providing the individual a 'context for evaluating the relative position of oneself and others' (Merton, 1957: 284). An actor may orient themselves toward the values and beliefs of any number of groups at various times throughout the day and life cycle depending on the different roles they assume at a given time. Therefore, the behaviours exhibited by a top sales executive at the office, an environment in which success

is defined by out-competing your co-workers, may be vastly different from those practiced in their family circle. Both of these situations illustrate an individual actor conforming to the unique cultures of different in-groups, or groups of which they are a member. Individuals may also orient themselves toward the cultures of non-membership groups, or out-groups, to which they aspire to belong as, for example, a student intern adopting the dress and speech patterns of the chief executive of the company they are working for. When choosing reference groups for comparison, the groups may be either in- or out-groups in nature.

Our choices of reference groups, and the normative and comparative roles those groups play, help shape our perceptions of the world and of our place within the social structure. When the groups we choose assume both the normative and comparative roles our behaviour tends toward conformity as the goals related to our structural position are easily achieved. If, however, we aspire towards membership in a higher status group, the barriers to achievement may lead to deviant behaviour.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE, CULTURAL SYSTEMS, SUSTAINABLE REGENERATION

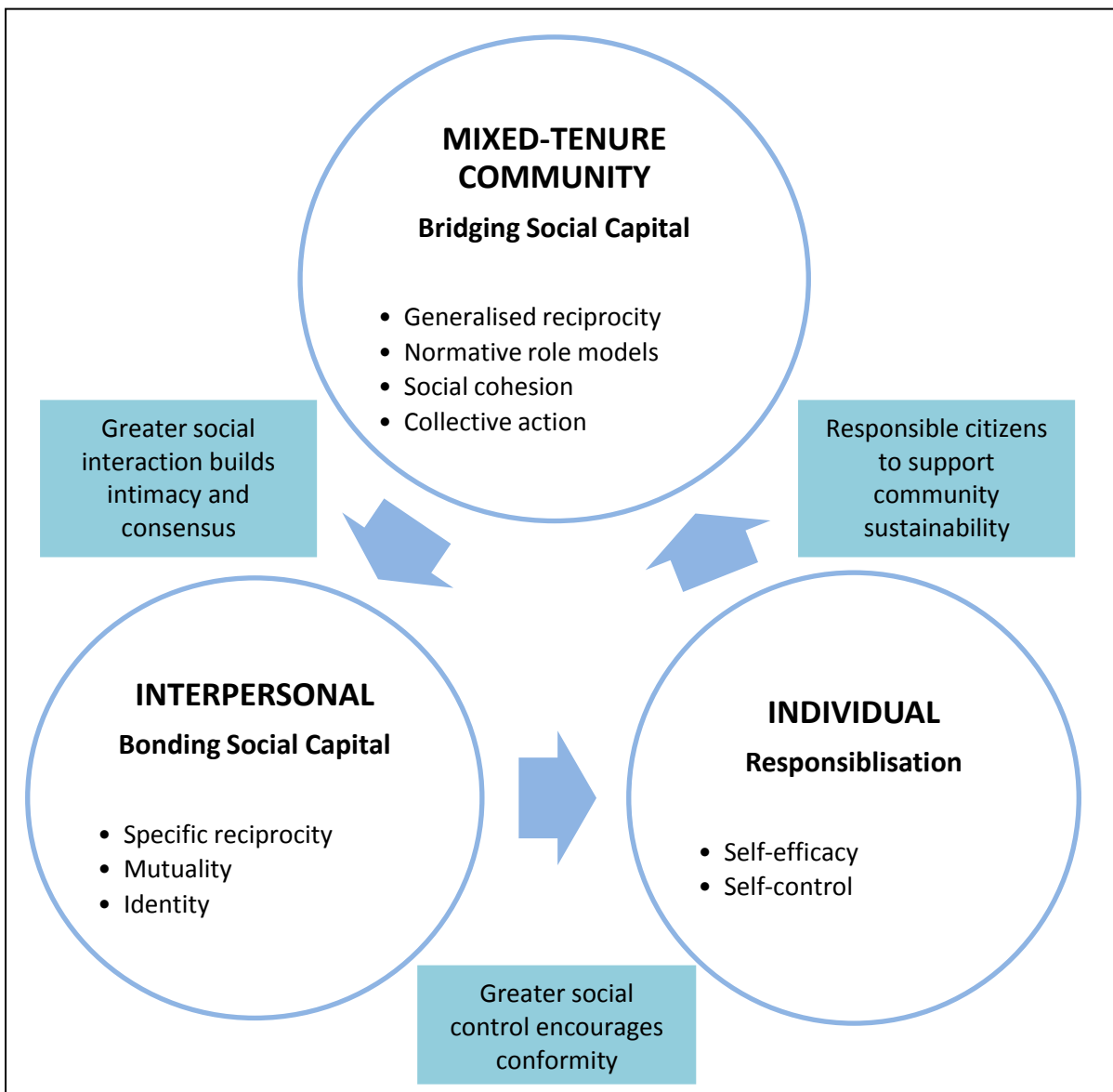
The previous discussion illustrates the ways in which the social structure, cultural system and reference group orientation influence individual and collective behaviours and attitudes. An individual's or group's position within the social structure determines the amount and types of resources they are able to access to meet society's goals. Those goals, and the means through which they are to be attained, are defined through the cultural

system. Perceptions of one's ability to meet both the socially defined goals and means are influenced by their position within the social structure. If an individual's structural position provides them access to the resources (economic, political and cultural) necessary for goal attainment their behaviour conforms to the dominant value and normative system of society. If, however, an individual's structural position inhibits access to necessary resources they may adopt one of the deviant behavioural adaptations discussed above. Behaviour and attitudes are also influenced by the reference group towards which an individual orients their behaviour. Reference groups may take on either a normative role, providing the value and belief systems towards which individuals orient their behaviour and attitudes, or they may be assigned a comparative role acting as a yardstick of sorts that individuals use to gauge their social position against that of others. All three elements of the social system—the social structure, the cultural system and reference group orientation—provide various levels of influence on individual behaviour leading to either conformist or deviant behaviours in a variety of situations and throughout the lifecycle.

It is the cultural systems and reference groups of socially excluded communities that New Labour sought to alter through the tenure diversification of deprived social housing estates and the creation of community through social capital development. As discussed in Chapter Two, New Labour's policy approach to urban deprivation was strongly influenced by structural and social-pathological understandings about the root causes of poverty. Long-term poverty and social exclusion were believed to arise from a separation from the formal labour market as well as destructive individual attitudes and behaviours—low aspirations, a lack of respect for formal education and a failure to pursue opportunities proffered by

society. To overcome these barriers and create sustainable change, New Labour advocated for a community development approach to neighbourhood renewal, with an emphasis on rebuilding social capital ties through the tenure diversification of deprived, mono-tenure communities. Figure 3.5 illustrates the presumed relationship between mixed-tenure, social capital and sustainable communities. The model is based on Joseph's (2006) pathways of influence model of mixed-tenure (introduced in Chapter Two), which identified three levels

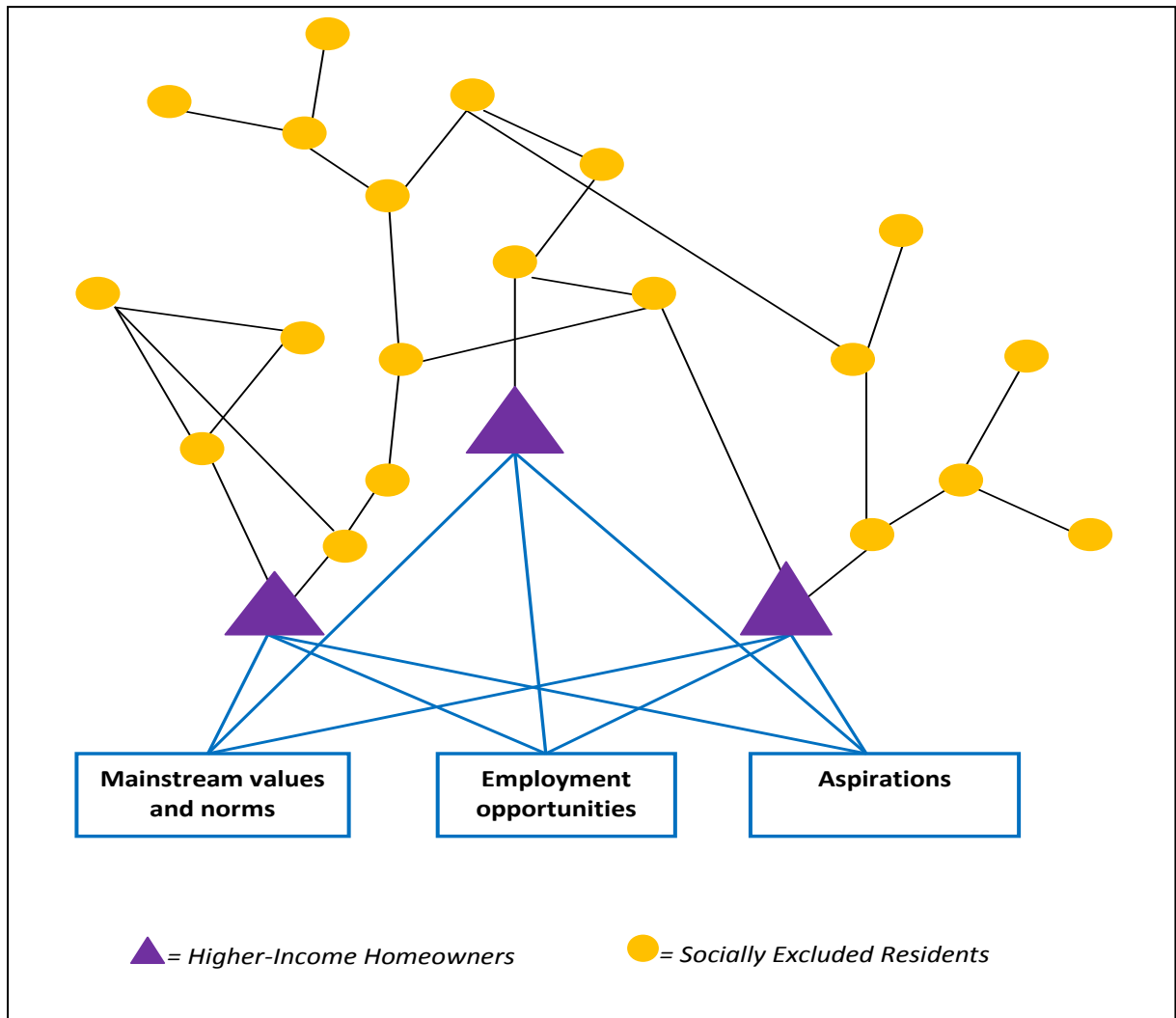
Figure 3.5: Mixed-tenure effects on sustainable communities



through which mixed-tenure effects may be transmitted. The model presented in Figure 3.5 relates these levels of influence to bonding and bridging social capital and the creation of sustainable citizens and communities. The diversity introduced into a community through tenure mix provides opportunities for interpersonal contact across socioeconomic lines strengthening feelings of generalised reciprocity and social cohesion (bridging social capital), as well as introducing normative role models for mainstream values. As social interaction increases, members from different socioeconomic groups form more intimate, bonding social capital ties. These ties create feelings of mutuality and a shared identity among diverse community members. As levels of trust increase, the community begins to work together to enforce common values and shared goals. This increase in social control encourages individuals to improve their behaviour or risk being marginalised from the community. These newly responsabilised individuals are then better able to help support community sustainability over the long term.

Behaviour modification is supported through the local cultural system, which communicates and teaches the values of good citizenship via the newly formed social networks as illustrated in Figure 3.6. The higher-income homeowners introduced into a deprived community through tenure diversification were believed to act as normative role models for socially excluded residents. They would transmit mainstream values, behaviours and aspirations either directly or indirectly to the lower-income residents living within the community. Direct transmission of mainstream culture would occur through interpersonal contact between the higher- and lower-income groups, represented by the lines connecting

Figure 3.6: Transmission of mainstream culture via social networks

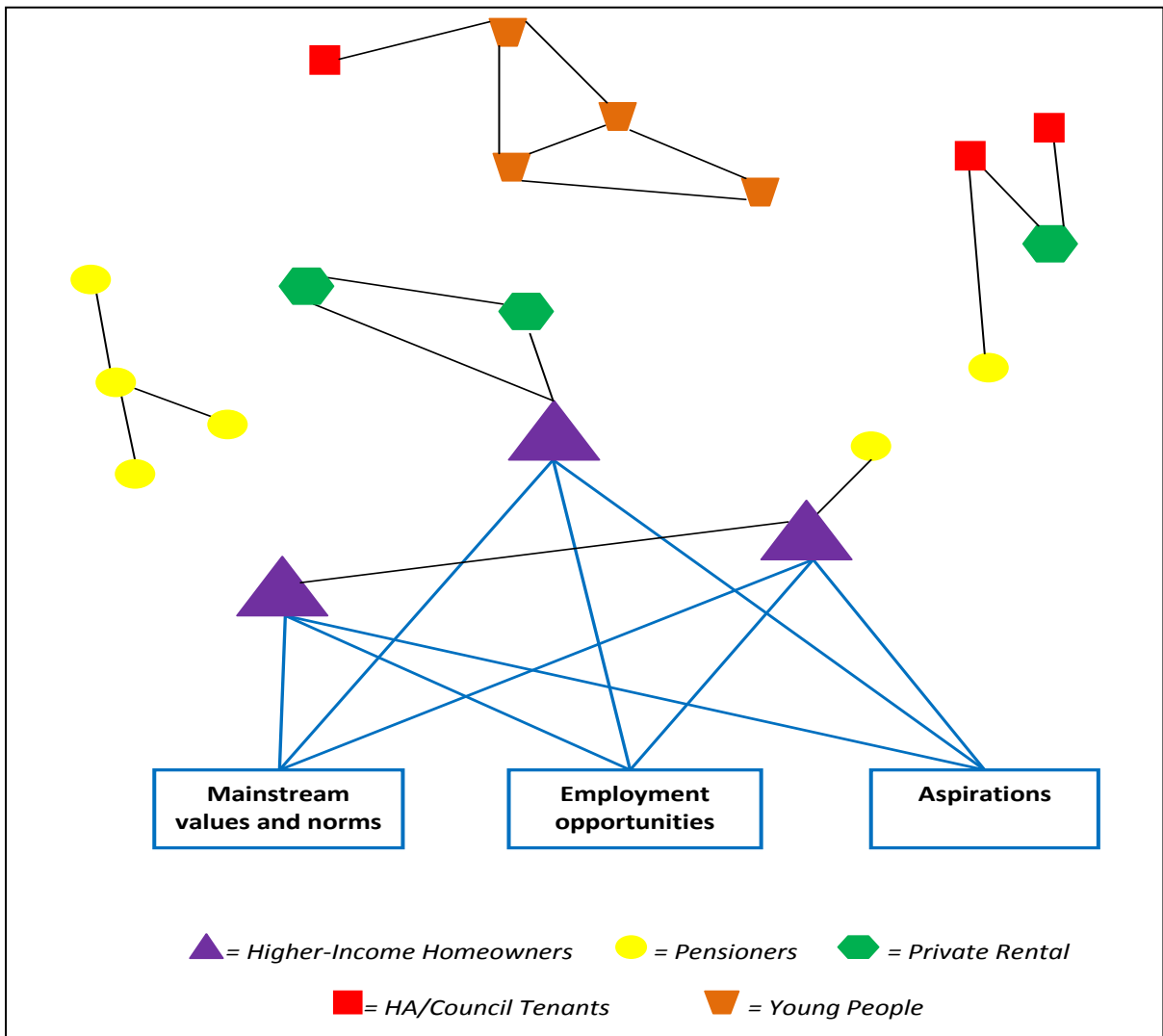


the triangles and circles in Figure 3.6. Indirect transmission of mainstream culture would result from a filtering down effect as those lower-income residents engaging directly with higher-income homeowners adopt mainstream values and behaviour patterns and pass those values down to their friends and family members. The newly formed bridging social capital ties would also enhance the social inclusion efforts of community development as higher income homeowners would be able to provide links to employment opportunities for the community's unemployed residents.

The above models of mixed-tenure effects are problematic in three respects. Firstly, the models assume a closed local social network in which all socially excluded residents are connected to higher-income homeowners either directly through interpersonal contact or indirectly through the extended social networks of peers. However, as the discussion of the HOPE VI programme presented in Chapter Two suggests, there are myriad factors that may prevent cross socioeconomic group network connections from forming. Differences in income, race, age or language all act as barriers to social interaction, a necessary condition for social capital formation.

Secondly, the models presume value consensus among the majority of neighbourhood residents. Such value consensus, formed through social capital ties, is believed necessary for long-term community stability. Communities, however, are social spaces or sites of conflict in which a variety of groups compete for recognition, status and access to the resources necessary to meet diverse needs. They are also multicultural in the sense that each group, through the sustained interactions of similar individuals, adopts a distinctive worldview that guides their behaviour and helps form their perceptions of life chances. Relatively homogeneous communities, such as those characterized by a high concentration of deprived households, may share a common culture as the majority of local residents face the same barriers to success. Mixed communities, on the other hand, may be less likely to achieve value consensus as the barriers to interaction noted above may create breaks in the local social network preventing widespread transmission of mainstream cultural values as demonstrated in Figure 3.7.

Figure 3.7: Community as social space



Finally, the presumed normative role modelling effect of higher-income homeowners must also be called into question. While higher-income homeowners may provide a normative reference group for some socially excluded members of the community there is a risk that, due to cultural differences between the socioeconomic groups, the higher-income homeowners may assume a comparative reference group role instead. Such an outcome would prevent social network ties from forming between higher- and lower-income

residents and may highlight the structural barriers to social mobility, which may lead to the further isolation of socially excluded members of deprived communities.

As the discussion in Chapter Two illustrated, tenure diversification was a key component of New Labour's policy approach to neighbourhood renewal. The transformation of mono-tenure social housing estates into mixed-tenure communities was believed to bring a host of benefits to deprived communities and support the reintegration of socially excluded residents into mainstream society through the development of social capital ties. The presumed social inclusion benefits of tenure diversification were based upon a specific conceptualization of community as a site of consensus and mutually reinforcing social network ties. However, as this thesis argues, communities are better viewed as social spaces in which different groups compete against each other for the economic, political, social and cultural resources necessary to attain/maintain group status and influence, as well as for achieving socially defined goals. The cultural differences between the higher- and lower-income members of the community may highlight social structural barriers to social mobility and prevent the sought after mutually supportive social ties from forming.

CONCLUSION

Community is a problematic concept in that it means different things to different people. Community may be spatially bounded, or based on social networks or common values. The term community may also be used to describe a group of individuals sharing a

common characteristic, such as ethnicity or social class. In New Labour's neighbourhood renewal policy, community became associated with social capital and the social networks necessary for enhancing community capacity. They followed a very specific, moralised view of community, based in the Community Lost school of thought. For New Labour, area deprivation and social exclusion were the result of a breakdown in local social cohesion and separation from mainstream culture. As a result, urban policy during the New Labour administration promoted neighbourhood renewal through tenure diversification to support the development of diverse, and solidary, social capital ties. The goal was to create *Gemeinschaft*, the ideal type community characterised by widespread mutuality, reciprocity and mainstream value consensus. However, as this thesis argues, communities are better viewed as social spaces. When defined as a social space, the social networks that characterise communities become embedded within broader social structures that are organised around competition for resources. This competition may give rise to inter-group conflict inhibiting creation of the active, mutually supportive and socially inclusive communities New Labour sought to achieve. Instead of the creation of widespread cultural consensus, the introduction of higher-income households into deprived communities may emphasize the structural barriers to social mobility and further isolate socially excluded members of the community. It is the impact of regeneration on local social structures and cultural systems that this research sought to understand and the following theoretical approach was adopted.

In line with the area-based focused of New Labour's regeneration policy, community in this research is partially defined by geographic boundaries with the fieldwork carried out

in one geographically and administratively delimited social housing estate. But this research also defines community in terms of social relations. New Labour's community development approach to neighbourhood renewal promoted tenure diversification to support the creation of social capital ties. Neighbourhood renewal policy during the New Labour administration was heavily influenced by Robert Putnam's view of social capital and assumed that, through regular social interaction, reciprocal and supportive social networks would form between the higher-income homeowners and lower-income residents within regenerated communities. However, this view of social capital ignores the power relationships inherent in intergroup social relations. Social networks are located within broader social structures characterised by differential access to resources. This study acknowledges structural inequality by viewing community, as Bourdieu suggested, as a social space in which the activities of various groups meet and collide with those of others in the struggle to acquire resources and exert influence over the local social, economic, political and cultural systems. The identification of the hierarchy of social positions is of particular importance to this study since the position any group or individual holds within the relational structure determines what resources are accessible to them and, therefore, may greatly influence their world view. Social structure and community are addressed by research *Theme One: social interaction, community and conflict* and are examined through the following questions:

- How do the subcommunities interact with one another, and how does this interaction affect feelings of inclusion;
- Do long time residents feel part of a community; and
- Have new social divisions arisen as the result of community restructuring or have existing divisions been strengthened?

Once the community social structure is established, this study turns its attention to the institutional structure, specifically the cultural system characterizing the community. An implicit goal of regeneration is to bring about a culture change in deprived communities with neighbourhood renewal policy stressing the need to raise the aspirations of local residents or for creating a culture of work, not worklessness. Any alteration to a local environment can potentially lead to culture change. Keeping public spaces free from litter or graffiti and improving the physical condition of local housing, for instance, can create feelings of community pride among residents who once felt embarrassed by local conditions. Increasing the responsiveness of local service providers, such as law enforcement officers or job training programmes, may lead residents to feel less helpless or ignored by the wider society. And widening access to continuing education, by including plans for a new community college in regeneration programmes, may help raise the aspirations of local residents who once deemed more than a basic education out of reach.

But widespread culture change through tenure diversification is not guaranteed. The introduction of an income mix into deprived areas, a major component of many regeneration programmes, and the accompanying social restructuring of the neighbourhood may reinforce the lower structural positions of some long-term residents or may even shift the positions of some residents, who once held positions higher up the local social order, to that of a lower status. In both cases, it is unlikely that positive changes in resident behaviour or aspirations will occur. Additionally, any cultural change in regenerated areas is dependent upon the willingness of local residents to accept the values of mainstream

society—those values held to be important by policy makers—as their own and for the residents to feel they are attainable otherwise, as Merton pointed out, they are likely to choose alternative, nonconforming patterns of behaviour. The cultural system is the focus of research *Theme Two: Empowerment* and research *Theme Three: Aspirations*, which were examined through the following questions, respectively:

- Do community members feel more empowered to actively participate in the management of their neighbourhood and their personal life, or do they still perceive barriers to achieving self- and group-efficacy; and
- Has regeneration changed group ideas, values, beliefs and behaviours?

Although mixed-tenure development has been discussed extensively in these past two chapters, it is not the main focus of this research. In this study, the effects of tenure diversification on community development are not directly measured through the research. Instead, the mixed-tenure discussion presented earlier acts as a background theme guiding the theoretical approach established for this study and the resulting research questions. The research findings presented in this thesis do, however, call into question some of the assumptions policy makers use to justify the tenure diversification of deprived communities, making the previous mixed-tenure discussion necessary. These findings and a description of the research are presented in Section Two beginning with a discussion of the methodology adopted for this study.

**SECTION TWO:
RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY-- A CASE FOR ETHNOGRAPHY

Our knowledge of others is based upon the accumulation of information about them. And the types of information we collect about others will determine the depth of our understanding. Lofland (1971) identifies two forms of knowledge about others, what he terms 'knowing about' and 'knowing'. 'Knowing about' is the type of knowledge we have of most of the individuals and groups we encounter in our daily lives. It is based upon second-hand information acquired through a variety of resources such as history books, media and the experiences of our friends. 'Knowing', on the other hand, is gained through intimate, face-to-face contact with a particular group of people. Unlike the 'knowing about' form of knowledge, 'knowing' involves first-hand experiences with others. The number and variety of people we encounter daily is immense. As such, we cannot have intimate knowledge of everyone; instead, we rely on second-hand and partial knowledge of others for our understanding. However, the social distance inherent in the 'knowing about' form of knowledge leaves our understanding open to misinterpretation, generalisation, error and stereotyping. In contrast, the direct, personal interaction with others that characterizes the 'knowing' form of knowledge enables us to gain a fuller understanding of how the members of a particular group think, act and feel. Attempts to 'know' a group break down social barriers, dispel social myths associated with the group and provide insight into how members of that group interpret and understand events in their daily lives.

My research is an attempt to further our intimate knowledge of community on a regenerated social housing estate. To move beyond what we 'know about' the community, to an understanding of what neighbourhood restructuring has meant for the estate's residents in terms of social divisions, residents' status and community culture. The research was conducted as an ethnographic-styled study of a regenerated housing estate in the Birmingham area since ethnography, with its focus on 'providing an explicit rendering of the structure, order and patterns found among a set of participants' (Lofland, 1971: 7), is particularly suited to studying the issues cited above. The remainder of this chapter provides support for the use of ethnographic methods in furthering our knowledge of regenerated communities and outlines the research process undertaken for this study. The chapter begins with a discussion of ethnography including its definition and the rationale for adopting an ethnographic approach in the research, as well the ways in which ethnographic studies are assessed. This is followed by a discussion of the research methods used, how the case study site was chosen and the recruitment and interviewing processes. The chapter ends by noting the study limitations and a reflection on the research process.

ETHNOGRAPHY

Ethnography has a long history in the study of human life. Detailed descriptions of non-western societies can be traced as far back as the fifteenth-century records of European explorers. These accounts and the ones that followed, often written by missionaries and colonial administrators residing in foreign lands, provided accounts of 'native' life judged on the basis of a Christian value system. Often, the 'natives' were deemed primitive by the

observers and the resulting ethnographic accounts acted as validation for imposing Western cultural and Christian values on the colonized peoples (Vidich and Lyman, 1994).

Ethnography has come a long way since these earlier times. Today's ethnographers reject the superiority of one culture over others and strive to understand the culturally specific meanings behind the variety of human activity. Social accounts are presented in such a way that they describe, as closely as possible, daily life in view of a specific peoples' beliefs and values system. In other words, in terms of those peoples' understandings of the world. This section provides support for the use of ethnographic methods in regeneration research and begins with a description of the ethnographic process itself.

WHAT IS ETHNOGRAPHY?

There is no single definition of ethnography. For instance, Peacock defines ethnography as 'a social scientific description of a people and the cultural basis of their people-hood' (cited in Vidich and Lyman, 1994: 25), while Spradley describes ethnography as the 'work of describing a culture' (1980: 3). Others, such as Agar (1996), refer to ethnography as both a process and a product of research where the process represents the attempt to gain a comprehensive understanding of a group of people and the product is the written description of that group. Finally, Bryman describes ethnography as a form of qualitative research that employs a variety of research methods and that focuses on 'the way in which the people being studied understand and interpret their social reality' (1992: 8). Despite the lack of a formal definition, ethnographers tend to agree that ethnographic research is characterized by a commitment to representing the group studied in their own

terms by uncovering the meanings inherent in social acts that help shape the group's understanding of their world. It also involves studying people in their everyday environment since meaning, which is constantly constructed and reconstructed through interaction, cannot be fully understood out of context (Berger and Luckman, 1967, Blumer, 1969, Schutz, 1967). Ethnography, as employed in this study, is a multi-method process comprising a variety of research methods from participant-observation to quantitative analysis. The exact methods used in my research will be discussed later in this chapter. However, it can be stated here that the types of data collected through each method help ensure the researcher locates her final analysis within the appropriate historical and cultural context.

WHY USE ETHNOGRAPHY?

The main goal of this study is to understand how the regeneration of a social housing estate impacts the community subjected to change. Of particular interest are the ways in which regeneration affects the community's social structure and cultural system(s) and how this change, if any, influences the daily choices made by and the life chances of local residents. While such concepts can be studied using quantitative research methods, the results of quantitative studies tend to reflect the preconceived ideas of what the researcher believes is present in the community instead of reflecting the every-day experiences of the residents themselves. Quantitative studies test a specific theory or theories about social life. As such, those theories guide the research design resulting in measurements that the researcher feels are representative of the theory being tested. These predefined measurements restrict the researcher to examining only those theories identified at the

start of the project. Additionally, quantitative studies, such as survey research, are designed to discover causal relationships among a set of variables. These types of studies provide valuable insight into a variety of aspects of social life and the factors necessary for their existence. However, they are limited in their ability to explain how the activities or belief systems under investigation are experienced by the people being studied and how these experiences are interpreted and understood by those same people. Quantitative analyses can tell us *what* happens but, since data collected through survey research is separated from the historical, spatial and social contexts in which daily life occurs, they cannot tell us *why* groups or individuals think and behave in the ways they do. They cannot tell us how people make sense of their world.

As Ho (1999) notes, the evaluation of British neighbourhood renewal policy is influenced by a desire to achieve value-for-money through the regeneration process. As a result, evaluations of specific neighbourhood renewal programmes focus on ‘the “stocktaking” of programme outputs’ (*ibid*: 423). The focus on measuring programme outputs has limited the ‘capacity to facilitate knowledge...in particular, at the local level’ (*ibid*: 423). Ho suggests that evaluation of neighbourhood renewal initiatives should focus instead on programmes outcomes with a detailed analysis of the context and mechanisms leading to positive improvements for programme beneficiaries. Pawson and Tilley (1997) highlight the importance of situating programme evaluation within the community context suggesting that, since all regeneration programmes are introduced into pre-existing contexts, it is important to determine ‘the extent to which the pre-existing structures “enable” or “disable” the intended mechanisms of change’ (*ibid*: 70). The ethnographic

approach adopted in this study addresses the issues identified by Ho and Pawson and Tilley. This research contextualises regeneration in terms of residents' experiences and perceptions providing a fuller explanation of programme impacts than quantitative analysis alone can provide. Spradley (1980: 16) aptly summarizes the failing of quantitative analysis when he states, 'any explanation of behaviour which excludes what the actors themselves know, how they define their actions, remains a partial explanation that distorts the human situation'. Ethnography is a tool for uncovering such meaning, for getting 'beneath the surface of behaviour to the piled-up levels of inference and implication, the hierarchy of structures of meaning' (Rapport and Overing, 2000: 350). The more loosely structured and less pre-defined nature of ethnography provides the opportunity to gain an understanding of how local residents experience events, deal with obstacles they encounter and interact with other members of the community, as well as the ways in which all of these events are interpreted and help form their perceptions of the world. The end result is a description and analysis of community regeneration that better reflects the experiences of the residents grounded in their specific social, historical and cultural contexts.

THE RESEARCH PROCESS

The fieldwork for this study was conducted over an 10 month period between November 2008 and September 2009. Following is a description of the research process undertaken during this period including the case study site selection, the research methods used for data collection and methods of data analysis.

CASE STUDY SITE

The primary aim of this research is to examine the ways in which regeneration affects local social structures and cultural systems and how any changes relate to the creation of sustainable communities. Therefore, it was important to select a case study site that met two primary criteria; (1) the case study site must have recently completed a comprehensive regeneration programme and (2) the community must have been actively engaged in the regeneration process. The Castle Vale housing estate in Birmingham proved to be the ideal community in which to carry out this research.

Castle Vale is a social housing estate located approximately 5 miles northeast of Birmingham city centre. The largest post-war housing estate in Birmingham, Castle Vale originally served as replacement housing for families displaced due to slum clearance activity during the 1960s. Originally, the estate contained approximately 5,000 residential units—a mixture of high-rise and low-rise flats, bungalows and maisonettes—with the capacity to house a total of 20,000 persons. A large proportion of the residents moving to Castle Vale came from the Aston and Nechells areas of Birmingham resulting in a predominately white, working-class population. Throughout the 1970s conditions on Castle Vale began to decline. Economic, social and structural factors combined to create an environment on the estate characterised by high crime and unemployment rates, low levels of education attainment, decaying buildings, high levels of drug and alcohol abuse, and other health related issues. By the 1990s, Castle Vale's population had fallen below 10,000 (OPCS, 1991), 70 percent of residents feared becoming victims of crime (BCC, 1992), and approximately one third of Castle Vale's residents were classified as economically inactive (OPCS, 1991).

In 1991, Birmingham City Council identified Castle Vale as a priority area for regeneration and began the process of establishing a Housing Action Trust (HAT) for the area (CVHAT, 1995a). Following a tenant ballot the Castle Vale Housing Action Trust (CVHAT) was formed in 1993 and a 12-year, £322 million regeneration programme commenced (CVHAT, 1995a, CVHAT, 2005a, Mornement, 2005). The work of the CVHAT encompassed the demolition/construction or renovation of nearly 5,000 dwellings on the estate, the construction or improvement of facilities on the estate, and the creation of programmes to improve the social and economic conditions on Castle Vale. By the end of March 2005, when the CVHAT formally concluded its work, 2,807 homes had been built or refurbished, nearly 2,300 homes had been demolished and an additional 42,550 square meters of commercial space had been added to the estate (CVHAT, 2005a). Social conditions on the estate also improved. Over the course of the programme, unemployment fell from 27 percent at the start of the CVHAT to 5.6 percent in March 2005, and rates of criminal activity on the estate had also decreased significantly (CVHAT, 2005a). A variety of skills and employment training programmes have been instituted and several new facilities have been constructed in the community, including a football stadium, welfare advice centre, a private nursing home and a community radio station. The CVHAT was a community-led regeneration programme, with extensive involvement of local residents throughout the entire process. The CVHAT earned national (Table 4.1) and European recognition for its work and received several regional and national awards during the life of the project including Castle Vale being granted the status of Guide Neighbourhood in the national Guide Neighbourhood programme.

Table 4.1: Castle Vale Housing Action Trust Awards and Recognitions

Year	UK Award or Recognition
1996-2005	Chartermark Award
2000-2005	Investors in People designation
2000	Secretary of State's Partnership in Regeneration award
2000 & 2002	Cabinet Office TNT Modernising Government Partnership Prize
2001	Institution of Civil Engineers West Midlands award for the Spitfire Sculpture
2002	Midlands Excellence Ward for overall organisational excellence
2002	Birmingham Civic Society Forward Prize for the 'regeneration and transformation' of Castle Vale
2003	British Association of Landscape Industries award for Centre Park
2003	West Midlands Building Excellence Award for Regeneration
2003	'Regeneration and Renewal' recognition as "one of the top six most admired organisations in regeneration"
2004	Civic Trust Awards recognition of Centre Park
2005	Granted Guide Neighbourhoods Status

Sources: (CVCHA, 2010b, Mornement, 2005)

Although only three years had passed between the end of the CVHAT and the beginning of this research, residents of Castle Vale have been adapting to community change since regeneration began in 1993. Throughout the past 15 years, residents have learned new skills, taken on new roles and adjusted their daily routines to life on a new estate. The residents themselves have been actively involved in the regeneration process, integrating with management structures and forming resident advisory groups to evaluate and guide community change now and into the future. All of these factors make Castle Vale an appropriate area in which to study the issues identified in the previous chapter.

Gaining Access

Access to Castle Vale was facilitated via an existing relationship with the between the

community and the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies (CURS). Over the years, CURS staff has been actively involved with the estate evaluating resident engagement processes and structures (Beazley and Smith, 2004), serving as Board members for the Castle Vale Community Housing Association (CVCHA) and Castle Vale Community Regeneration Services (CVCRS), and conducting resident training courses. CVCHA also regularly hosts estate visits for the department's undergraduate and postgraduate students. Initial contact was made with the Guide Neighbourhood Coordinator (GNC) in January 2008, during which we met at the CVCHA to discuss my research. The GNC was provided with a summary of the research topic and issues to be examined, as well as a copy of the fieldwork plan. This information was then passed on, by the GNC, to the CVCHA executive staff. In February 2008, I received a response from the GNC that stated I was denied access to the community. At that time, the CVCHA was awaiting response to a research grant they had submitted in order to study issues similar to those examined in my research. The organisation, while being generally supportive of my research, was concerned that if both research projects were approved local residents could experience research fatigue. After discussions with my academic supervisor and the GNC, the decision was made to continue pursuing Castle Vale as the case study site arguing for the supportive role my research could play in their study.

In an October 2008 meeting with the CVCHA Chief Executive, an independent consultant and my supervisor, my research project was finally approved and fieldwork began the following month. From November 2008 until the end of August 2009, I spent a minimum of five days a week on the Castle Vale estate, during both day and night time hours, attending community meetings and social events, observing youth group activities, and

visiting local shops and other community facilities, as well as interviewing community workers and local residents. I utilized public transport to commute between my home and the estate and spent many hours walking through the estate's neighbourhoods and sitting in the local park in an effort to experience and observe daily life in Castle Vale. All of these activities contributed to the data collection process; an explanation of the exact data collection methods used throughout out this research are discussed in more detail below.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The data for this research was drawn from a variety of both primary and secondary resources. Primary resources include in-depth interviews with local residents and community workers; agendas and minutes from community meetings; articles and comments printed in the community newspaper; and the experiences and observations recorded by this researcher. Secondary resources, such as research examining areas related to but not directly addressed by this project, enhance the primary data collected and help produce a fuller picture of the changes that have occurred within the case study site. The data collection methods used in this research are described below.

Interviews

The primary focus of this research was to understand residents' perceptions of community change through regeneration. As a result, in-depth interviews with community members provided the primary data for this research. As discussed in Chapter Three, an individual's behaviours are partially influenced by their perceptions of their position within a

local social structure and the resources that social position allows them to access in the short- and long-term. Local social structures, and individual positions within them, can be measured with a variety of research techniques, such as survey research methods, which measure predefined social categories (e.g., social housing tenants, homeowners, or employment status). However, the perceptions this research sought to study are highly individual in nature and can vary between different members of the same predefined social category depending on their reference group orientation and previous life-course experiences. Interviews, I believed, were the most appropriate research tool for understanding community perceptions of change. Interviews were conducted with local residents, community workers and residents who work for local service providers. This sample population allowed me to compare and contrast resident interviewee perceptions of community change with the perceptions of the workers who support them. A description of the interviewing process is presented below.

Recruitment and Sample Profile

A total of 31 interviews were carried out during the course of this research. Interview participants represented local residents, community workers and resident employees—local residents who also work for a community organisation. Table 4.2 provides a summary of the interviewees by type. Interview participants were identified through convenience and snowball sampling techniques.

Table 4.2: Interviewees by type

Residents	Community Workers	Resident Employees	Total
18	8	5	31

Community Workers

The eight community workers that were interviewed represent some of the main service providers on the estate that address local issues related to crime, employment, education, estate management and youth outreach (see Table 4.3). All of the community

Table 4.3: Local service providers represented in interviews

Interviewee*	Name of Organisation	Type of Service Represented
Scott	Castle Vale Community Housing Association Community Safety Team	Community safety
Rachel	Castle Vale Community Regeneration Services	Social regeneration and support services
Kevin	Castle Vale Neighbourhood Partnership	Neighbourhood management
David	Community Warden Team	Crime prevention and victim support Youth activities
Mark	Merlin Venture	Employment skills training and job search Day care service Local transportation service Landscaping service CCTV monitoring
Susan	Tenants and Residents Alliance	Resident advocacy and support
Carl	Topcliffe Primary School	Education
Jason	Youth Outreach Team	Youth outreach and support

**Names changed to ensure confidentiality*

workers interviewed have extensive contact with local residents. Potential interviewees were identified through conversations with housing association staff. These conversations led to three initial interviews with representatives from the Community Safety Team, the Neighbourhood Partnership Board and the CVCRS. These interviews led to contacts with the Community Warden Team, the Tenants and Residents Alliance and Merlin Venture. Sharing

office space with the Youth Outreach Team provided the opportunity to interview the Lead Youth Outreach Worker. Finally, each local school was contacted, provided a brief description of the research and asked to recommend an appropriate member of staff for a potential interview. These staff members were contacted individually and given a fuller description of the research and an interview was requested. This process led to the interview with Carl from Topcliffe Primary School.

Resident employees

Five of the interviews were conducted with resident employees. These individuals live on Castle Vale and work for one of the organisations servicing the community (see Table 4.4). Three participants (Amy, Beth and Tammy) were referred to me during conversations with CVCRS staff. I met Peter while attending a community group meeting after which he volunteered to meet for an interview. Evan was my initial contact within the housing association. He has lived on the estate for approximately 30 years and was a community activist during the regeneration period.

Table 4.4: Profile of Resident-employee Sample

Name*	Gender	Age Range	Approximate Length of Residence (in years)	Organisation
Amy	Female	40 – 45 years	42	CVCRS
Beth	Female	45 – 50 years	18	Phoenix Court
Evan	Male	40 – 45 years	30	CVCHA
Peter	Male	35 – 40 years	3	CVCHA
Tammy	Female	40 – 45 years	41	CVCRS

**Names changed to ensure confidentiality*

Residents

Eighteen residents were interviewed for this study. They represent both newer residents (individuals moving to the estate within the past six years) and long-term residents with most of the resident interviewees having lived on the estate for more than 30 years. They also represent a variety of age-groups ranging from nine years of age to pensioners. Initially, I attempted to recruit resident interview participants on my own. I attended a number of community and neighbourhood group meetings to introduce myself and my research to the residents, ask for volunteers to share their stories, and provide my contact

Table 4.5: Profile of Resident Sample

Name*	Gender	Age Range	Approximate Length of Residence (in years)
Tracey	Female	60 – 65 years	40
Sarah	Female	50 – 55 years	40
Pam	Female	65 – 70 years	36
Nick	Male	40 – 45 years	6
Kris	Female	30 – 35 years	30
Shelley	Female	50 – 55 years	35
Lauren	Female	55 – 60 years	30
Michael	Male	5 – 10 years	9
Keith	Male	60 – 65 years	30
Kelly	Female	20 – 25 years	20
Barbara	Female	45 – 50 years	20
Tom	Male	60 – 65 years	9
Theresa	Female	60 – 65 years	30
Ann	Female	45 – 50 years	15
Carol	Female	50 – 55 years	35
Tim	Male	65 – 70 years	36
Gail	Female	60 – 65 years	6
James	Male	60 – 65 years	6

**Names changed to ensure confidentiality*

details. I also placed a short letter in the Vale Mail, the community newsletter, with the same information. This approach, however, proved largely ineffective. Only four residents agreed to meet with me. While this did lead to three interviews, one resident never responded to my follow-up telephone calls or email messages. To expand my sample of residents, I solicited the help of CVCRS staff. With their help, I was able to schedule and complete interviews with an additional 15 residents. Table 4.5 provides a profile of these respondents.

Interview process, questionnaire and topic guide

Both semi-structured and unstructured interviewing methods were employed during this research. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with community workers. Each community worker was asked the same set of open-ended questions (Table 4.6) and the questionnaire was designed to gather information related to the resident engagement activities currently being undertaken by local organisations, as well as community worker perceptions of social changes brought about through the regeneration process. The interviews were conducted at each worker's place of employment either in their office or, if they shared a work space, in a separate meeting room or conference space. Holding the interviews in private rooms helped to ensure respondent confidentiality and allowed the interviewees to speak openly about their views.

Interviews with residents were more unstructured in that they were guided by a set of topics derived from the research questions (Table 4.7). These interviews were conducted as open-ended conversations. This style of interviewing was adopted in order to create an

Table 4.6: Community worker interview questionnaire

INTERVIEWEE NAME:	
DEPARTMENT/TITLE:	
INTERVIEW DATE:	
Q1: Please explain your role within (organisation) and the community.	
Q2: How long have you worked in this position? Do you have direct contact with local residents?	
Q2a: What is your approach to engaging with the residents of Castle Vale?	
Q2b: What activities do you undertake?	
Q2c: What has worked well in this respect?	
Q2d: Do you feel part of a combined effort to maintain the restoration of Castle Vale?	
Q2e: What links/contacts do you have with other groups on Castle Vale?	
Q3: What changes have seen in Castle Vale during your tenure? What role do you believe regeneration played in bringing about these changes?	
Q4: How do you feel the regeneration programme benefited local residents? Have you noticed any changes in their attitudes, aspirations or levels of participation within the community?	
Q5: Have you noticed any changes in the interaction patterns of local residents? For instance, have new groups formed within the community or have you seen new leaders emerge?	
Q6: In your opinion, what are the problems that now need to be addressed to ensure all local residents can move forward positively and that regeneration can be sustained into the future?	
Q7: What is your vision for Castle Vale?	

Table 4.7: Interview Topic Guide (Residents and Resident-employees)

Research Theme	Topics
Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General impression of the estate prior to the CVHAT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What did they like/not like about living there ➤ Any events/incidents that made a lasting impression on respondent?
Theme One: Social interaction, community and conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any changes in social interaction levels? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Personal levels of interaction ➤ Overall impression ➤ Role of the CVHAT programme in changes? • Is there more or less community in Castle Vale? Can you provide an example/explain? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Role of the CVHAT? • Social divisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Respondent identified ➤ Role of CVHAT?
Theme Two: Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Personal—now and during the CVHAT ➤ Community-wide (perception of) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In community groups ▪ In support services ➤ How do you find out about events/activities/services? • Impact of participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ On ‘community’ and individuals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CVHAT programme ▪ Community groups ▪ Support services
Theme Three: Aspirations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any changes in aspirations? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Personal ➤ Overall perception of • What contributed to this change?

informal atmosphere in which the interviewees could relax and feel free to express their personal opinions. Informality was particularly important during interviews with residents as their perceptions are the primary focus of this study. The unstructured conversational style also provided flexibility in the interviewing process. Without a rigid, predefined order of questioning, I was better able to raise interview topics in response to interviewee. Additionally, I was able to revisit interviewee comments at later stages in the conversation or introduce issues identified during earlier interviews with other research participants. The interviews included one small group interview comprising five local residents. This session followed the same interviewing format (described below) as the individual interviews. Interview dates and locations were chosen by each resident interview participant and were carried out in either the community centre or in the participant's home. Allowing the participant to choose the interviewing venue ensured that the interview not only fit within each participant's daily schedule or routine, but also that the interview was conducted in an environment familiar to them further ensuring interview responses would be more candid.

Interviews with resident employees combined aspects of both the interview questionnaire utilised in the community worker interviews and the resident interviewee topic guide. This approach allowed the research participant to express opinions associated with their professional and resident roles within Castle Vale. The interviews were conducted either in the participant's office or, if the participant shared a work space, in a private meeting room within the community centre. Again, a private location was sought to ensure resident employee responses remained confidential.

All of the interviews followed a basic format beginning with a description of the research study, my personal and professional background, and assurances of participant confidentiality. I then asked each participant to provide personal background information including their age, how long they have lived or worked on the estate and, if the participant was a community worker or resident employee, to describe their professional role within the community. Time was provided throughout each interview for more informal conversation between the interviewee and the researcher. These conversations addressed a variety of topics depending on the interviewee's role in the community. Due to my professional background in affordable housing policy (prior to my studies in the UK, I worked for a consortium of local governments in Washington, DC), my conversations with community workers tended towards comparisons of public/social housing programmes in our respective countries. The resident interviewees, by contrast, questioned me about various aspects of American lifestyles or, if the participant had previously travelled to the US, we talked about our favourite cities that we have visited. These informal conversations were an important component of the interviewing process as they allowed me to build rapport with each participant. All of the interviews carried out for this research were recorded for later transcription and data analysis.

Participant-observation

A primary tool in ethnographic research is participant-observation in which the researcher immerses her/himself in the daily activities of the community under study. Such involvement: helps the researcher become less of an outsider and gain the trust of local residents, provides the opportunity for first hand observation of community interaction, and

allows the researcher to experience many of the hurdles local residents encounter in their daily lives . As someone not fully involved in the community, the ethnographer is in a position to identify aspects of community life that may not be apparent to community members.

To become as involved with the local community as much as possible, I was provided work space within the Sanctuary, a community facility centrally located on the estate. The Sanctuary is operated by the Castle Vale Regeneration Services (CVCRS) and acts as a community centre for the estate providing a range of leisure activities and community services, as well space for meetings and community events. The work space was located within the offices of the Youth Outreach Team. This location provided me with the opportunity to interact with many of the community's young people during youth-oriented activities such as youth cooking classes and afternoon Database sessions. The Database is a technology centre located within the Sanctuary offering the estate's young people access to computers which they use to surf the Internet, listen to music or complete their homework. The daily afternoon sessions provide a safe space for local youth to gather and engage in supervised activities and socialise with friends and youth outreach workers. The sessions were generally well attended with young people dropping by for a few minutes to catch up with friends after school or spending several hours in the facility until parents arrived home from work. My regular interactions with the Youth Outreach Team provided me with the opportunity to interview Michael, one of the younger members of the Castle Vale Youth Council. While young people were not the main focus of this study, the conversations I had

with local youth and the observations I was able to make of youth provision on the estate, provided insight into adult and youth relations in the community.

In addition to the youth activities, I also participated in a number of community events including acting as Santa's helper during the Santa's Grotto hosted annually by the CVCRS. On the day that I helped out, approximately 86 families stopped by the Sanctuary to visit with Santa and share their hopes for Christmas and the New Year. The event allowed me to engage with, on an informal basis, with a broad range of local residents and provided some insight into community relationships. Participating in the St. Cuthbert's Church Spring Flower Festival introduced me to a different sector of the community, as well as to two new skills—flower arranging and crochet. Additionally, I met with a variety of residents groups representing tenants, leaseholders and owner-occupiers on the estate. These group meetings were more formal in nature and the agendas addressed a variety of community issues ranging from information about Birmingham City Council's Loan Shark Task Force, to neighbourhood safety and housing management. A full list of the events and meetings attended can be found in Table 4.8.

My participant-observation activities were an invaluable means of integrating, as much as possible, into the Castle Vale community. I became a familiar, if not intimate, presence on the estate which helped to partially reduce my outsider status. I quickly became referred to as 'Our American' to many members of the community and I was able to use that status to my advantage. My American nationality generated curiosity among local residents and instigated many casual contacts I probably would not have otherwise had.

Table 4.8: Community events and group meetings attended by researcher

Activity	Name of groups or event
Resident/Community group meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2005 Group • Neighbourhood Partnership Board • CATCH Radio • Merlin’s Citizen Advisory Group • Leaseholders Group • Innsworth Drive Group • Renfew Square Group • Farnborough Road Development Committee • St. Cuthberts Reading Group • Castle Vale Writers Group • Family History Support Group • Youth Club • Database
Community events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Santa’s Grotto • Health, Environment and Democracy Day • St. Cuthberts Flower Festival • Community Garden Clean-up • Party in the Park • Down Your Way
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castle Vale Scouts • Circle of Friends women’s group • Merlin youth education and training programme

These activities also provided a wealth of information that helped to contextualise the data gathered through personal interviews with local residents and community workers. Residents often shared stories about community life prior to the estate’s regeneration. Some of these stories reflected personal experiences, like one gentleman’s description of his bedroom flooding due to the residents in the flat above his hosing down a bedroom to clean out waste from six dogs, while other stories appeared to have originated out of rumours as a story about one tower block resident throwing a television from their balcony onto a police

car seemed to suggest. I would often mention the more extreme stories (such as the police car incident) during interviews to test the accuracy of the original account and to gauge the interviewee's perception of the event. This helped to not only give me a better picture of the community prior to the regeneration, but also added perspective to outsider perceptions of the estate.

The observations made during community events and meetings also helped shape the interview topics themselves. For example, after attending several community group meetings I noticed that participation in community groups appeared to be dominated by a core group of active residents. This seemed to be particularly true in those community groups whose main function was addressing estate management issues (e.g., the Neighbourhood Partnership Board, CATCH Radio and Merlin Venture's Citizens Advisory Group). This observation led me to expand the interview topic related to resident empowerment to include not just interviewees' perceptions of personal empowerment but also their views on community-wide empowerment and levels of influence. My own experiences of trying to find information about upcoming community events or local service providers (information that was often not easily found) prompted questions relating to the accessibility of information on the estate.

Finally, the observations I made through the participant-observation activities acted as a means of triangulation during analysis of the data. Through direct participation in community meetings and events, I was able to corroborate information gathered during interviews with my own experiences during the period of fieldwork. They also helped to

minimize researcher bias during the data analysis phase as many of my perceptions about Castle Vale (acquired through second hand accounts of the community) were altered through my interactions with local residents.

Documentary evidence

Data for this research was also drawn from a variety of both primary and secondary documentary resources. Primary documentary evidence collected for this research was drawn from a number of media sources including print media (the Vale Mail, the Birmingham Mail and the Sunday Mercury), BBC radio broadcast transcripts, and recorded minutes from community group meetings. Secondary resources, such as local history accounts and existing research examining areas related to but not directly addressed by this project, enhance the primary data collected and help produce a fuller picture of the changes that have occurred. Documentary evidence was used to create a historical profile of the community (the focus of Chapter Five) and to support the research findings. It provided an additional means of data triangulation and was particularly important while examining the inter-group conflicts present in the community.

Quantitative data

Although qualitative research methods were the primary means of data collection, some quantitative data has also been included. Census data and results from resident satisfaction surveys were examined to produce a snapshot of the socio-economic change that has occurred within Castle Vale over the past 30 years. This data is included in the community profile presented in the following chapter.

Fieldwork Diary

Finally, a fieldwork diary was maintained throughout the project to record my experiences and observations. The diary also provided a space for me to note comparisons between interviewee comments, highlight issues to be raised in future interviews, record statements collected through casual conversations and to reflect upon the research process itself. Information recorded in the diary helped contextualise the research data during analysis and was an additional layer of data triangulation.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH THEMES

The research findings are primarily based on the qualitative data collected through the interviewing process. Each interview was recorded and then transcribed by me at a later date. Once transcribed, I read through each interview highlighting key interviewee comments. During subsequent readings of the transcripts, the key comments were indexed according to the generalized interview topics and then, again, in relation to the specific research questions. Qualitative data collected from documents, existing research and media were analysed in a similar manner and are presented throughout the following three chapters to support or expand upon the interview data. All data analysis was done manually. I felt this approach provided more flexibility in the analysis process than a computer assisted approach. It also allowed me to present the data within the interviewees' historical narrative when this was appropriate to do so. Through the iterative data analysis process discussed above, I identified three key themes under which the data is presented.

Theme One: Social Interaction, Community and Conflict

Findings related to Theme One are presented in Chapter Six. Interviewees were asked to compare levels of social interaction in Castle Vale before and after the estate's regeneration. They were also asked about their views regarding the amount of community on the estate. Participant comments provided in relation to community were then compared and organised according to the level of community they perceived as characterising Castle Vale. Interviewees were also asked to identify any divisions or tensions between groups on the estate and how they thought those divisions arose. The data demonstrate that regeneration initiatives may have both positive and negative effects on social interaction and these effects may strongly influence residents' perceptions of community.

Theme Two: Empowerment

Interviewees were asked to comment on a number of issues associated with empowerment including resident participation activity, the accessibility of local services and methods of communication. Again, they were asked to compare current conditions with the pre-regeneration environment. Responses provide a mixed message suggesting that empowerment may not be equally distributed through regeneration initiatives. Chapter Seven presents the findings related to Theme Two.

Theme Three: Aspirations

This research also examined the ability of regeneration activity to raise aspirations among residents in the community. The aspiration levels of Castle Vale residents,

particularly those of the estate's young people, are an issue of concern for the CVCHA.

During interviews, participants were asked for their views about community aspirations and what, if any, factors may be keeping aspiration levels low. A presentation of the data is also presented in Chapter Seven.

TRUSTWORTHINESS

The most widely accepted criteria for evaluating the quality of a social research project are reliability, replicability, validity and objectivity. Reliability refers to the extent to which a measurement of a concept produces the same results over time. Replicability is the degree to which the results of a research study can be reproduced. It is closely related to reliability in that it helps determine the consistency of the measures used in the research. Validity refers to the accuracy of the research findings. Four main types of validity are applicable to social research:

- *Measurement validity*—does the measurement used in the study truly reflect the concept it is meant to explain;
- *Internal validity*—when examining a causal relationship can we be certain that one variable is responsible for the outcome, or is there another factor leading to the relationship;
- *External validity*—are the research findings generalizable to other populations and events or are they applicable only to the specific event or population studied; and
- *Ecological validity* —or how well do the research findings apply to everyday, natural social settings?

Finally, objectivity measures the extent to which the researcher's own values, beliefs or preconceived ideas influence the data collection and analysis processes. When judged

against these standards, ethnography often comes up short. Developed under the canons of positivism, which advocates the application of natural scientific methods to the study of human life, the above criteria are more appropriate to assessing quantitative analyses than any form of qualitative study.

Several alternative assessment criteria have been offered by ethnographic researchers. Hammersley (1992) suggests ethnographies should be assessed in terms of *validity and relevance*, where validity refers to how accurately an ethnography represents the event it is examining and relevance concerns the importance of the study to the researcher's field or its contribution to the relevant literature. Lincoln and Guba (1985), on the other hand, offer four criteria for assessing ethnographies, which are subsumed under the broad heading of *trustworthiness* and these are the criteria that guided my research.

The trustworthiness of ethnography is determined by establishing a study's:

- *Credibility*—was the research conducted using accepted research practices and have the findings been corroborated by either respondent validation (people who were the subject of the research verify that the researcher's interpretation matches theirs) or triangulation (using multiple research methods to collect data and ensure accuracy of findings);
- *Transferability*—does the ethnography provide enough descriptive detail of the event to enable other researchers to determine the applicability of the findings to other situations;
- *Dependability*—how closely have proper procedures been followed during the research process; and
- *Confirmability*—to what extent has the researcher allowed personal values or prior theoretical assumptions influence the research findings.

Three of these criteria can be related to internal validity (credibility), external validity (transferability) and reliability (dependability). The fourth criterion, confirmability, relates to objectivity in research.

To ensure this study meets the four criteria related to trustworthiness, several steps have been taken. A combination of triangulation and respondent verification was employed to meet the standard of research *credibility*. The assortment of methods used in this study collected a variety of information about the community's history, the regeneration process and the current environment, which has allowed for comparisons of data across methods to check for consistency. Respondent validation was integrated into the interviewing process. The conversational style adopted during interviews provided space for immediate feedback of my interpretations of the interviewee's responses. This interviewing approach also allowed me to connect interviewer responses with comments made earlier in the interview, again ensuring my views corroborated those intended by the respondent. Both of these steps—triangulation and respondent validation—ensure the final written product represents, as accurately as possible, historical accounts of the case study site and the residents' points of view. These steps also achieve the standard of *transferability* by providing a detailed description of the case study site allowing for future comparisons with similar sites or situations. The description of the research process provided earlier in this thesis, including the methods used and the theoretical background, displays the *dependability* of the project. Finally, the issue of *confirmability* is addressed by acknowledging that no research is completely objective since all researchers enter a project with cultural and knowledge backgrounds, and by recognizing what my preformed notions

are and how they may have affected the research process and findings. As mentioned previously, my participant-observation activities helped dispel many of my preformed opinions of the Castle Vale, strengthening the confirmability of this research.

ISSUES AND REFLECTIONS

The research process outlined above is my first experience with ethnographic research. I chose to conduct an ethnographic informed study of the Castle Vale estate for two reasons. Firstly, most of my research experience has been focused on quantitative and survey research methods. In my past employment position, I compared US housing and employment and wage data to determine the housing affordability levels in the Washington, DC metropolitan area; conducted annual housing surveys; used assisted housing data to track the movements of housing benefit recipients over a five year period; and analysed census data to demonstrate longitudinal change of various variables over time. Basically, my past work has involved numbers, lots of numbers. While all of this has been valuable and informative work, I did feel my skills could be enhanced by developing knowledge of, and experience with, qualitative methodologies. It would make me a more rounded researcher, so to speak.

The second, and more academic, reason for designing an ethnographic styled study was based on my feelings that something is missing from all of the available research. There is no shortage of data available examining the impacts of community regeneration: changes in local employment and educational attainment levels, the impact on crime rates, increases

in the perceptions of personal safety, resident satisfaction levels with local services and changes in benefit receipt to name a few. What are often not examined are the social processes sustaining change, things that are not easily measured by traditional means. Sustainable regeneration depends upon a multitude of factors—physical, environmental, economic and social—working in concert. Each sector may be deemed successful when measured independently; however, the ways they intersect on the ground on a daily basis, and how they influence resident decision making processes, is a better determination of long-term success. These processes were best examined, I felt, through a qualitative approach with an emphasis on resident interviews and the participant-observation research methods I had studied throughout my university degree courses. Identifying a need for an ethnographic study, having an understanding of what the research process entails, and possessing the enthusiasm to carry out such a project however, does not an ethnographer make. This section presents issues related to the research as well as my experiences with the process.

Five different research methods were used throughout this study with varying results. Documentary and data analysis were the easiest methods for me to employ, possibly because these are the methods I am most familiar with. They were also the easiest types of information for me to secure. There is no shortage of brochures, posters, books and presentations available about the history of Castle Vale, the estate's regeneration, and the variety of services available to local residents. The local newspaper, The Vale Mail, is published on a monthly basis as is a newsletter distributed by Merlin Venture, a social enterprise operating within the community. Both the Vale Mail and Merlin Venture also

have websites that provide regularly updated news items. The local library maintains a historical archive of Castle Vale related information, including media articles, books, and land transfer documents. And annual reports published during the CVHAT's tenure, as well as the results of research conducted by MORI, were readily available for my review. The census data, dating back to the 1971 census, was accessed electronically through CASWEB. Information collected from all of these resources provided a rich historical profile of the Castle Vale community.

Success with other methods (interviewing and participant-observation), however, was mixed. The personal interviews were most successful. The interview sessions lasted from one to two hours each, depending on the interviewee's schedule and the relevance of information being offered. Interviewer-interviewee rapport was never an issue, and interview participants were more than willing to share information. Often, however, it was difficult to move the conversation away from the 'official' viewpoint towards a more personal level. This was expected when speaking with CVCHA staff or other community workers. But even the residents I interviewed, while more than happy to divulge rather personal information (e.g., divorces or mental illness), were reticent to speak about community life in anything other than very positive terms. This interviewee tendency to produce a positive image of the estate is possibly related to the community's efforts to overcome the negative reputation the estate gained over the 20 year period prior to the regeneration programme. However, this tendency did limit my ability to fully assess the amount of social divisions present within Castle Vale.

Interviewee recruitment was also an issue. As mentioned in the previous discussion about interview recruitment strategies, my initial attempts at recruitment were unsuccessful securing only three interviews. To increase my interview sample, I changed my recruitment approach in two ways. Firstly, I used my involvement in another research project being carried by my academic supervisor as a way to contact community workers. This approach secured interviews with Merlin Venture, the Tenants and Residents Alliance (TRA), and the head teacher of a local primary school. Acting as a University representative in a project sanctioned by the Castle Vale Endowment Fund seemed to add a bit of importance to my presence on the estate. The interview with the TRA proved to be of further benefit to my research as I was able to arrange a group interview with five residents through the TRA representative. I approached this with some trepidation as I was concerned that a group interview might inhibit candid responses from the participants. However, all members of this group were friends and felt comfortable providing honest comments to the research topics. Secondly, I asked CVCRS staff for assistance identifying possible resident interviewees. With their help, I was introduced to a further 10 residents who agreed to meet with me. While working with CVCRS and TRA staff increased the numbers of interviews I was able to successfully complete, the resulting interview sample represents residents who are well-known to and are actively engaged with local organisations. My resulting interview sample does not include the less active and harder-to-reach members of the community. This has limited the research findings in that they provide no insight into how the regeneration programme may have influenced the activities and behaviours of the individuals in this category.

The most difficult aspect of this project has been the participant-observation. I was able move relatively freely around the estate, visiting the library, patronizing the local shops, and using the local park and walking trails. I was able to attend meetings held by several of the local community groups, attended the Health, Environment and Democracy Day and Party in the Park events, and participated in a stress and relaxation session with the Circle of Friends group. I also helped Santa during the annual Santa's Grotto hosted by CVCRS each December, hung out with the young people who visit the Database after school and participated in weekly youth group meetings. I spent several Monday mornings with a reading group that meets in a local church. And, as mentioned previously, my US citizenship helped to initiate a number of casual conversations with local residents. However, my consistent involvement with local groups was not welcomed by all residents. Also, invitations I had been promised to many events, such as an event held during which monies collected during the Santa's Grotto was officially handed over to a local charity, were never formally extended. This made it difficult for me to fully immerse myself in community life.

Overall, my experience with ethnographic research has been rewarding but not easy. The exercise has been tiring and often frustrating. The amount of energy required to build relationships and overcome obstacles to access the community cannot be underestimated. The sheer volume of information collected, and the lack of any hard (i.e. quantitative) evidence, often left me feeling overwhelmed, frustrated with an apparent lack of progress in the data collection process and doubting my abilities as a researcher. This research process has also produced some strange experiences. On one particularly memorable day, I visited a resident at her home to conduct an interview. As I entered her sitting room, I was greeted

by 150 teddy bears arranged neatly around plates of sweets; they had, I was told, been having a tea party. But the experience, and the data collected, has been worthwhile. This research provides insight into an aspect of community regeneration and sustainable community development that has not been addressed by the research community. It moves beyond an analysis of programmes outputs to a consideration of the long-term impact of regeneration on community social and cultural processes themselves.

CONCLUSION

This chapter provides support for the use of ethnographic research methods to assess the impact of neighbourhood renewal on communities and their residents. The effectiveness of regeneration initiatives are assessed against the quantitative changes achieved. Statics related to, for instance, changes in local crime rates, educational attainment, employment rates and business development are measured and positive improvements in these areas are deemed to signify the successful regeneration of the area. Quantitative indicators provide evidence as to how a regeneration initiative improved a community but such indicators do not explain how these changes influence a community's cultural system. As argued in Chapter Three, the cultural system represents an individual's or group's values, beliefs and aspirations and is informed by their perceived position within the social structure. It is these perceptions this research sought to understand and ethnographic methods provided the most appropriate means for doing so. Unlike quantitative research, which reflects the preconceived ideas of the researcher, the ethnographic data collected during this research reflects the perceptions of the interviewees

themselves. The data provide insight into how the regeneration of Castle Vale has affected residents' world-view. While the single case study undertaken for this research limits the generalisability of the research findings, the use of ethnographic methods provided the opportunity to broaden our understanding of the ways in which residents and communities experience, and perceive the changes brought about by, an extensive regeneration programme.

CHAPTER FIVE:

THE CASTLE VALE COMMUNITY THEN AND NOW

The research for this thesis was carried out in the Castle Vale community, one of the largest post-war mixed tenure housing estates in the West Midlands region. The community has recently completed a 12-year regeneration programme under the Housing Action Trust initiative introduced in 1988. The Castle Vale Housing Action Trust (CVHAT) was a community-led regeneration programme, with extensive involvement of local residents and a variety of public and private partners throughout the entire process. The CVHAT earned national and European recognition for its work and received several regional and national awards during the life of the project including gaining Guide Neighbourhood status in the national Guide Neighbourhood programme. Although the CVHAT was created under a previous government administration, the overall goal of the programme to create:

A self-sustaining community living in high quality homes in a pleasant and safe environment...[with] an improved quality of life and economic opportunity [and whose residents] have been empowered to make choices regarding ownership and management of their homes (CVHAT, 1996)

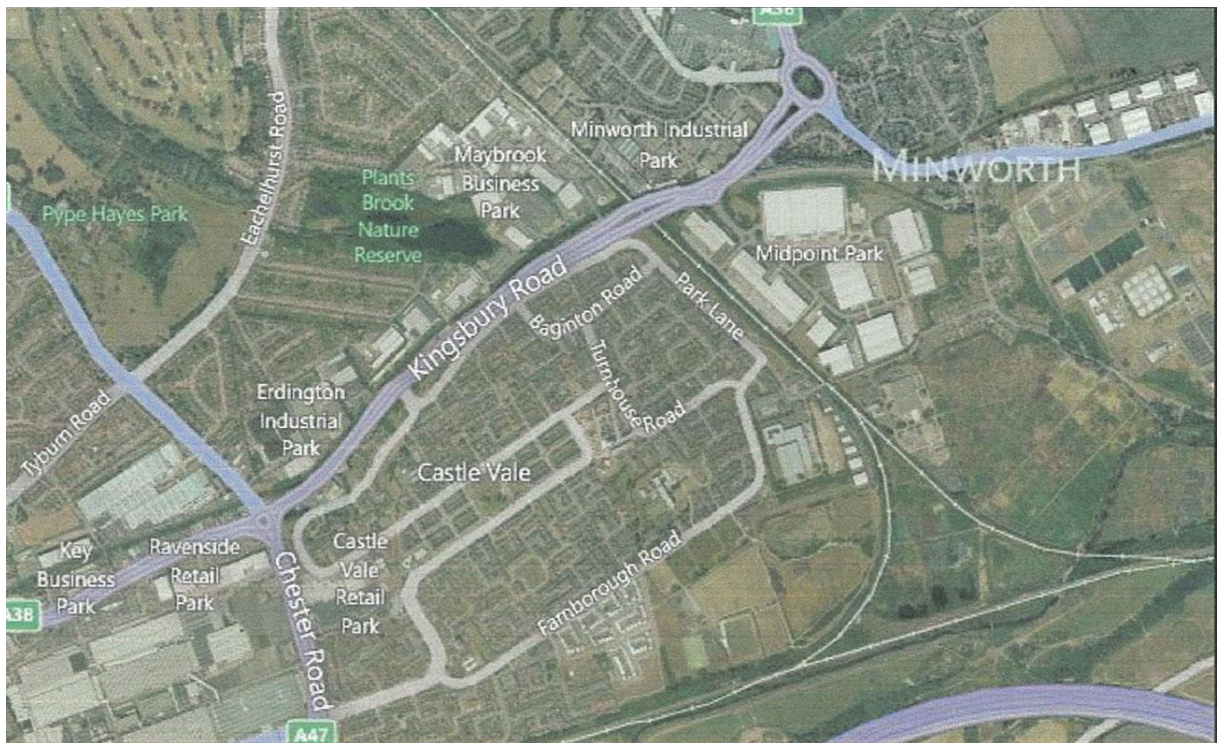
closely reflects New Labour's vision for sustainable communities. This chapter provides background on the community beginning with an historical overview of the estate and the factors leading to the estate's decline. A description of the estate's regeneration

programme follows and a presentation of the changes resulting from the estate's regeneration concludes the chapter.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Built in the 1960s, Castle Vale is the largest post-war housing estates in Birmingham and originally served as replacement housing for families displaced due to slum clearance activity during the same decade. The estate is located on a 494 acre site approximately 5

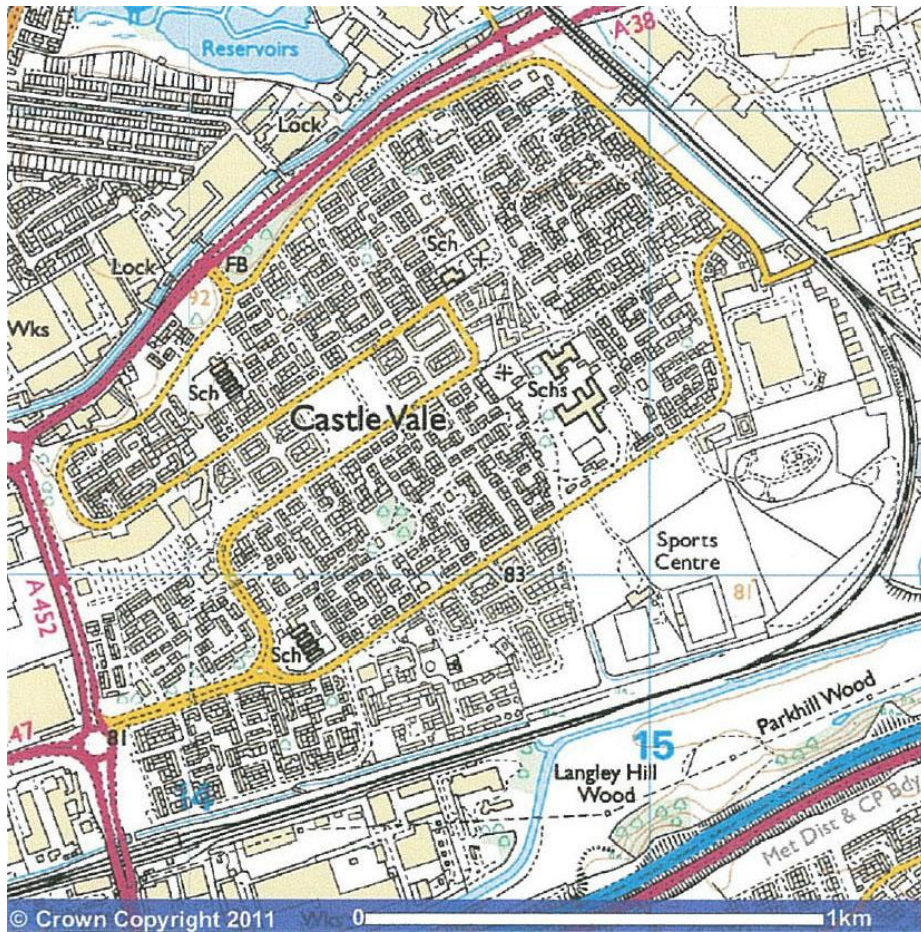
Figure 5.1: Aerial view of Castle Vale, Birmingham



Source:

miles northeast of Birmingham City Centre. The boundaries of the estate are clearly defined, surrounded by main roadways to the north and west and railway lines to the south and east

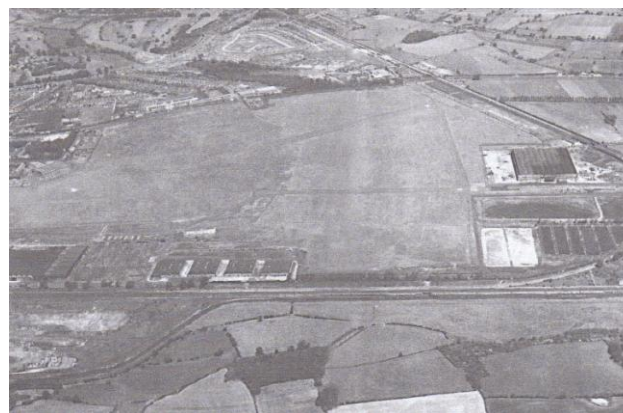
Figure 5.2: Castle Vale boundaries



Source:

of Castle Vale as illustrated in Figures 5.1 and 5.2. The estate was built on the site of the old Castle Bromwich Aerodrome, which was used as the testing ground for Spitfire aircraft during World War II (Birmingham City Council, 1992, Bateson, 2005). In

Figure 5.3: Castle Bromwich Airfield



Source: Drake and Baxter (2000)

1938, as the war with Germany was approaching, the Air Ministry commissioned the Nuffield Organisation to build a shadow aircraft manufacturing plant on a parcel of land west of the Castle Bromwich airfield. Vickers-Armstrong took control of the factory in 1940 and, over the next five years, produced nearly 12,000 Spitfire aircraft more than half the total number

Figure 5.4: Spitfires on the production line



Source: Vickers Archives/Syndics Cambridge University Library(no date)

Figure 5.5: Test Flights at Castle Bromwich Airfield



Source: Drake and Baxter (2000)

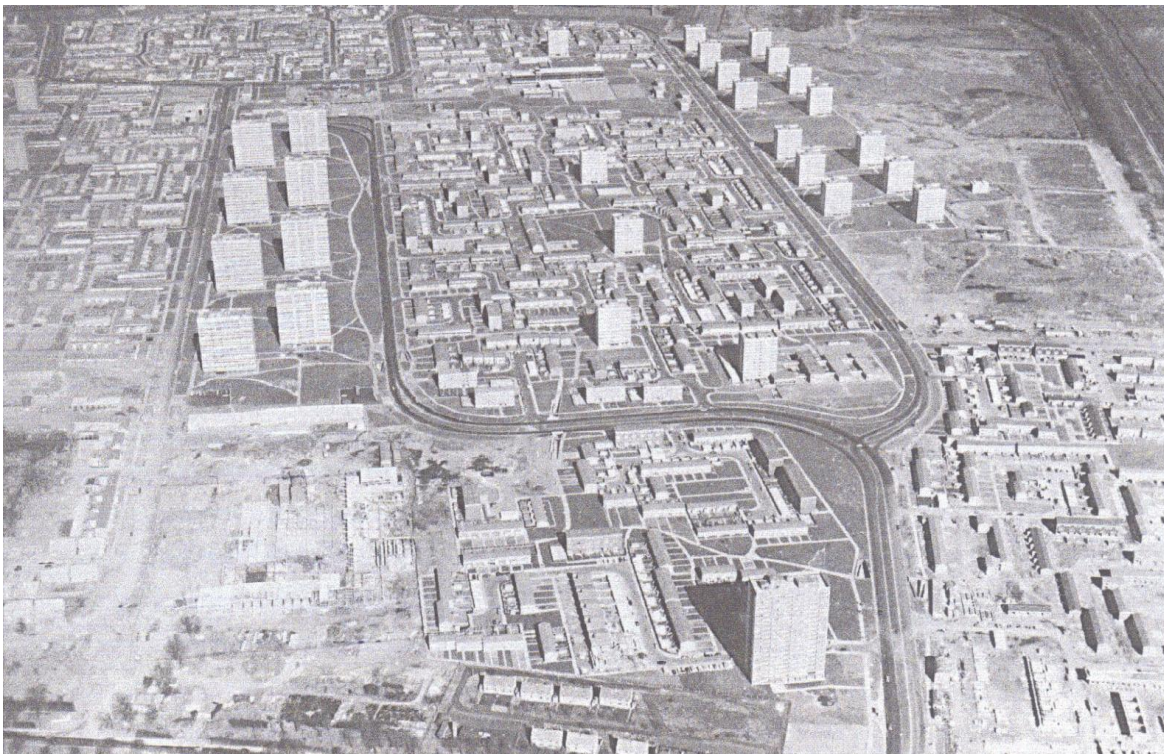
of Spitfires produced during World War II. At the peak of war time operations, the factory employed more than 15,000 workers and produced 320 Spitfire aircraft each month. Once complete, the aircraft were wheeled across Chester Road to the airfield where a total of 37,000 test flights were conducted throughout the war. Production at the Vickers-Armstrong factory continued until November 1945. The airfield itself continued to operate as a service station of the RAF Reserve Command until March 1958. The site remained unused until it was sold to the Birmingham City Council in September 1960 for the construction of a new housing estate (Bateson, 2005, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, 2011).

‘WHEN WE FIRST CAME HERE, IT WAS A COMMUNITY’

Sarah, Castle Vale resident of approximately 40 years

Construction of the Castle Vale Housing Estate began in 1964 (CVHAT, 2005b). The estate originally contained approximately 5,000 residential units with the capacity to house a total of 20,000 persons. From the outset, the Castle Vale estate was planned as a mixed tenure housing estate with 30 percent of the homes constructed as owner-occupant housing. The remainder of the units were local authority owned and distributed across a variety of housing types including houses, bungalows and maisonettes, as well as 27 low-rise and 34 high-rise tower blocks of flats (Mornement, 2005. See Table 5.1). Additionally, a

Figure 5.6: Aerial view of Castle Vale Estate, 1969



Source: Drake and Baxter (2000)

variety of facilities were constructed to service the community including: two shopping centres, several pubs, five schools, a health centre, a library, a community centre, an old persons' home and a horse paddock (CVHAT, 1995a,

Figure 5.7: Original shopping centre



Source: CVCHA (no date-m)

CVHAT, 2005a, Mornement,

2005). Most of the residents originally moving to Castle Vale relocated from the Aston and Nechells areas of Birmingham resulting in a predominately white, working-class population (Mornement, 2005).

Table 5.1: Housing Tenure on Castle Vale 1992

Property Type	Owned by Local Authority	Owner Occupied	Total
Houses	814	1254	2,068
Bungalows	115	0	115
Maisonettes	249	4	253
Flats – up to 5 storeys	358	147	505
Flats – over 5 storeys	1,943	2	1,945
Total	3,479	1,407	4,886

Source: Birmingham City Council (1992)

The first residents began occupying the new homes in 1964. Initially, many of the residents liked the new estate, especially the improved living conditions. The new housing

on Castle Vale included modern amenities and the estate itself was characterised by an abundance of open green space, conditions that sharply contrasted with the older, inner-city areas from which the majority of Castle Vale residents relocated. As one long-term resident described the new estate, 'it was a huge

Figure 5.8: A horse paddock was one of the amenities provided for the estate's residents



Source: CVCHA (no date-h)

improvement on our house in Aston. We had an indoor toilet, and there was so much. Mobile butchers and grocers came to our door. It seemed like Utopia' (Mornement, 2005: 5). During the early 1970s, the estate also began offering an increasing variety of community activities such as youth clubs and slimming clubs, an annual fun run, dancing classes, the Air

Figure 5.9: Children's play area 1960s



Source: CVCHA (no date-d)

Training Corps, school plays and an annual carnival, as well as professional orchestral concerts and theatrical performances. A swimming baths was opened and enrolment in the local schools increased. The Castle Vale Estate had become a community in which people enjoyed living

and in which they wanted to remain (Bateson, 2005).

Figure 5.10: Housing on Castle Vale, 1960s



Source: CVCHA (no date-i)

‘IT WAS LIKE BEIRUT...’

Barry, Castle Vale resident for more than 30 years (Walia and Walia, 2005)

This vibrant community life, however, did not last. Throughout the latter 1970s and the 1980s conditions on the estate began to decline. Drug dealers started working on the estate, burglaries increased and

Figure 5.11: Signs of physical decay



Source: Bateson (2005: 41)

Figure 5.12: Many local shops were closed by the 1990s



Source: *Walia, S. & Walia, Y. (2005)*

arson became a problem. As one resident noted, her 'flat was above the rubbish shute. There were so many fires in the shute, some set off deliberately...I remember once...standing in a smoke filled hallway with a fire extinguisher trying to put out a fire' (Mornement, 2005: 7). Local shops and other services began to disappear with the last bank to service the community shutting its doors in the late 1980s.

Physical decay was also an issue with cracked roofs leading to flooding in flats, lifts in the tower blocks breaking down and slabs of concrete cladding falling from the sides of some buildings (Bateson, 2005, BCC, 1992, Mornement, 2005).

By the beginning of the 1990s the Castle Vale estate was characterised by high crime and unemployment rates, low levels of education attainment, decaying buildings, high levels of drug and alcohol abuse, and other health related issues. The estate became an unpopular place to live and the local population declined.

Figure 5.13: Fly-tipping was an issues across the estate

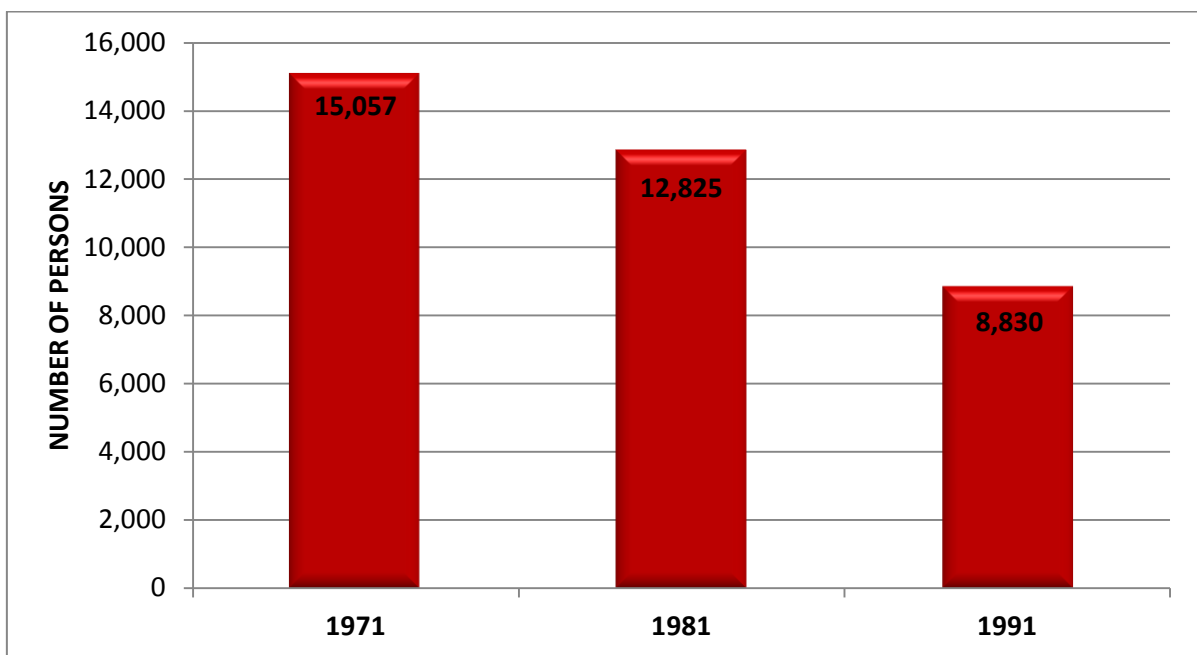


Source: *CVCHA (no date-g)*

According to census figures, between 1971 (the first census to be completed after the estate had been built) and 1991, population on the Castle Vale estate decreased by 41.4 percent

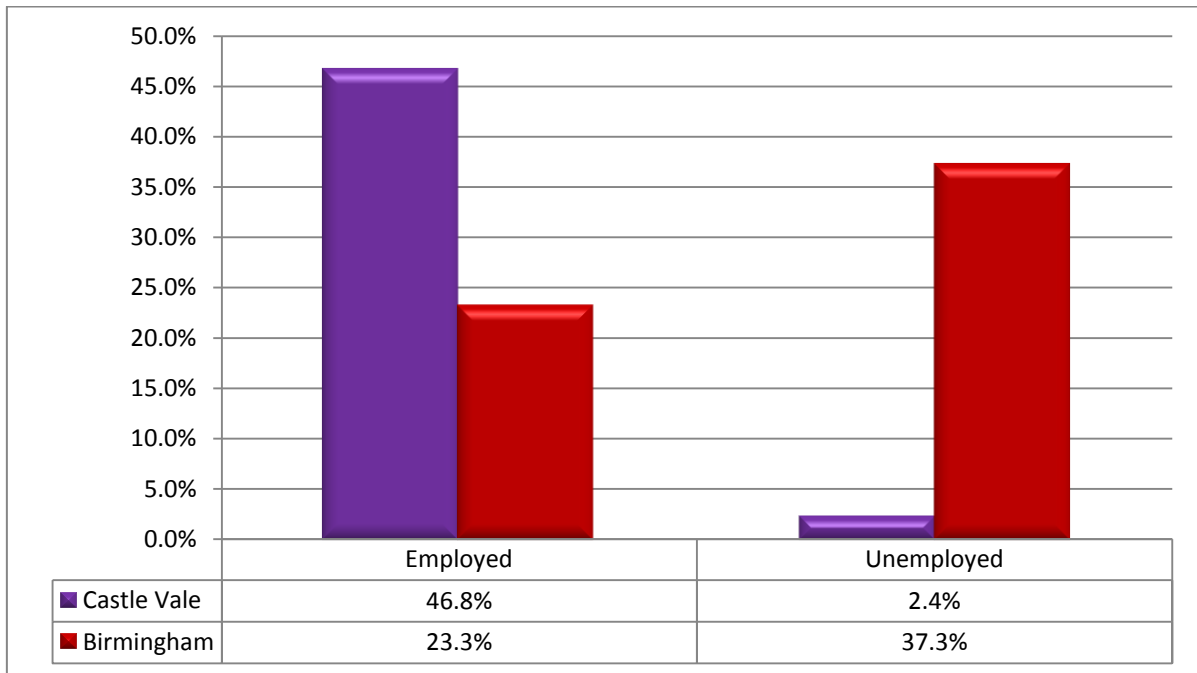
(Figure 5.14) and housing vacancy rates on the estate increased from 1.5 percent in 1971 to 4.2 percent in 1991 (OPCS, 1981, OPCS, 1991, RGEW, 1971). Employment rates also decreased. Initially, the residents of Castle Vale enjoyed rates of employment higher than those found throughout the city of Birmingham as a whole (Figure 5.15). By 1991, however, the unemployment rate for Castle Vale had increased to 11.4 percent of the estate's working-age population surpassing the rate found throughout the rest of the city. Additionally, slightly more than one-third (33.9 percent) of working-age adults in Castle Vale were classified as economically inactive, meaning they were neither working nor actively seeking employment (Figure 5.16).

Figure 5.14: Total Population 1971 - 1991



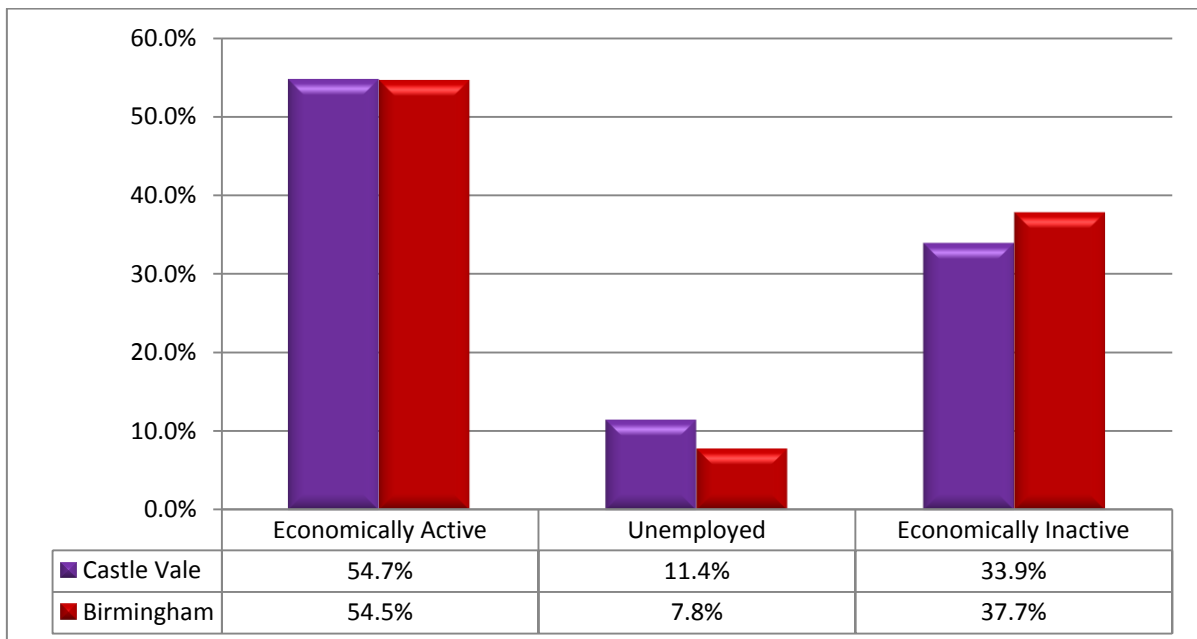
Source: RGEW (1971), OPCS (1981), OPCS (1991)

Figure 5.15: Employment Status in Castle Vale and Birmingham 1971



Source: RGEW (1971)

Figure 5.16: Economic Status in Castle Vale and Birmingham 1991



Source: OPCS (1991)

The estate suffered in other areas as well. Levels of educational and skills attainment were low with approximately 90 percent of the estate's economically active residents noted as having left school at age 16 with more than half of those earning no qualifications (CVHAT, 1995b). The poor health of local residents was also an issue with Castle Vale experiencing higher rates of infant mortality, strokes, lung cancer and mental health disorders than other areas in North Birmingham. Finally, the high rates of criminal activity on the estate had led to 70 percent of the estate residents fearful of becoming victims of crime (Birmingham City BCC, 1992).

No single factor can be identified to explain the decline of the Castle Vale Estate. Some residents placed blame on other residents 'who didn't want to be [t]here' (long-time resident on Castle Vale cited in Mornement, 2005: 6). Other residents held local housing allocation policies responsible. One local resident suggested that problem families were intentionally offered housing on Castle Vale because the estate was viewed by local housing officers as a problem area:

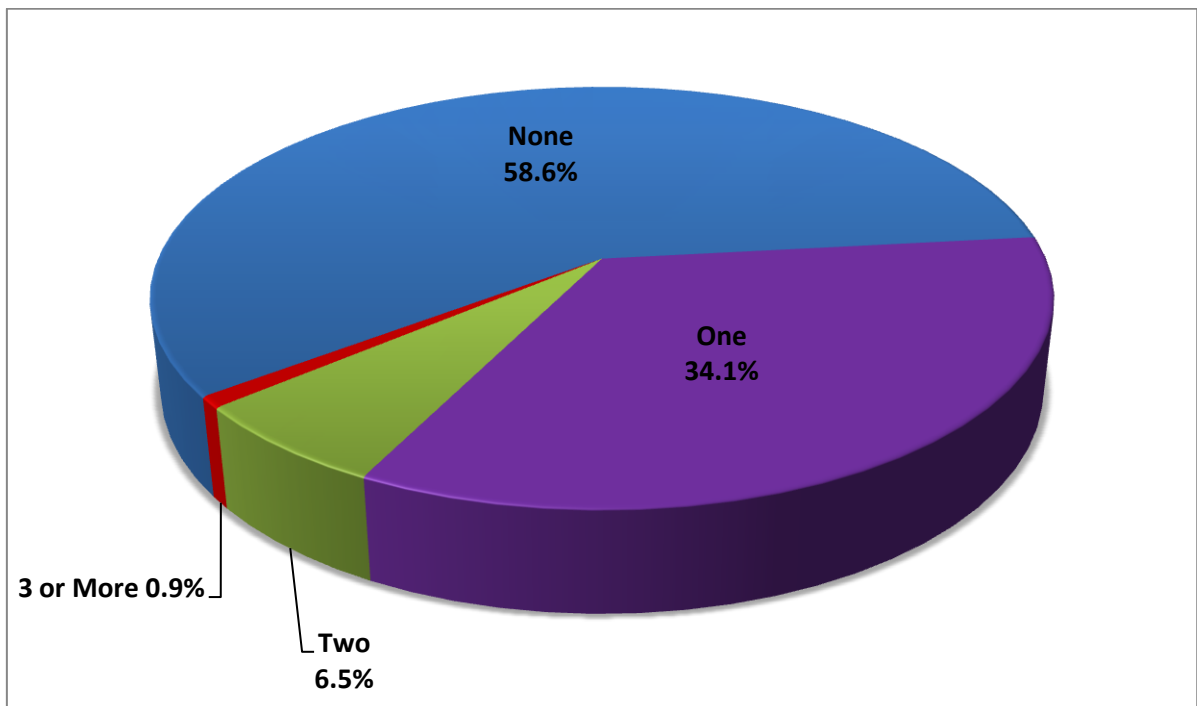
I went to see my property...she said to me...'This is where we put problem families'...I said, 'What do you mean? I'm not a problem family.' She said, 'Oh, it just means families with problems.' So I was put in what they called a problem area...They actually had a policy of putting 'problem families' in Castle Vale (Castle Vale resident cited in Dean and Hastings, 2000b: 19).

A report by the Birmingham City Council (BCC) (1992) suggests that a number of social, economic, environmental and policy factors, many of which stem from problems with the original development and management of the estate, combined to create the poor conditions. These factors include:

Estate design and development

The report identifies the site of the Castle Vale Estate, with its distinct physical boundaries and peripheral location, as a possible isolating factor for the community. Further adding to the sense of isolation was the fact that, in 1991, more than half (58 percent) of the households living on the estate did not have regular access to an automobile (OPCS, 1991; Figure 5.17). Constraints on the amount of land available for residential development, as well as a need to meet a significant housing need in the city, resulted in higher than average housing densities on the site accommodated by a high number of high- and medium-rise tower blocks. The Radburn planning style, which separates public from private domains, was implemented in areas of low-rise housing and had resulted in a large number of undefended public areas. This layout, combined with a lack of lighting in public spaces, contributed to

Figure 5.17: Percentage of Households with Access to an Automobile 1991



Source: OPCS (1991)

Figure 5.18: Low-rise housing designed according to Radburn principles



Source: CVCHA (no date-1)

the rise in crime. Structurally, many of the buildings were of unsound or poor quality construction. A number of the tower blocks were built using concrete panel construction techniques which proved, in the late 1960s, to be structurally unstable. The flats included under floor heating systems

making them difficult to heat during the colder months. Additionally, the flat roofs and poor guttering characteristic of the low-rise buildings had led to flooding within individual units.

Environmental issues

The environmental conditions on the estate were also poor. Noise levels from the adjacent rail lines were quite high. Streets and open areas were strewn with litter and illegal rubbish dumping was a common occurrence. Over time, the concrete buildings had turned grey adding to the dirty appearance of the estate. And high winds arose from the combined effects of a flat terrain and columns of high-rise buildings. Overall, Castle Vale was characterised by an environment that BCC described as 'bleak' (1992: 14).

Figure 5.19: Stolen cars were often left to burn on Castle Vale grounds



Source: CVCHA(no date-b, no date-a)



Estate Management

A number of issues related to estate management were also identified. The high level of vandalism on the estate had increased the costs associated with the repair and maintenance of damaged property. The number of caretakers working on the estate was below the number needed resulting in a decline in the quality of service provided. A preponderance of one-bedroom flatted accommodation units had led to a concentration of young, single households living on Castle Vale. Additionally, although

Figure 5.20: Property vandalism was an issue on the estate



Source: Walia, S. & Walia, Y. (2005)

diversity of tenure had been achieved during initial development, the estate lacked for-sale housing options attractive to higher-income buyers, a factor limiting options for social diversification of the estate population.

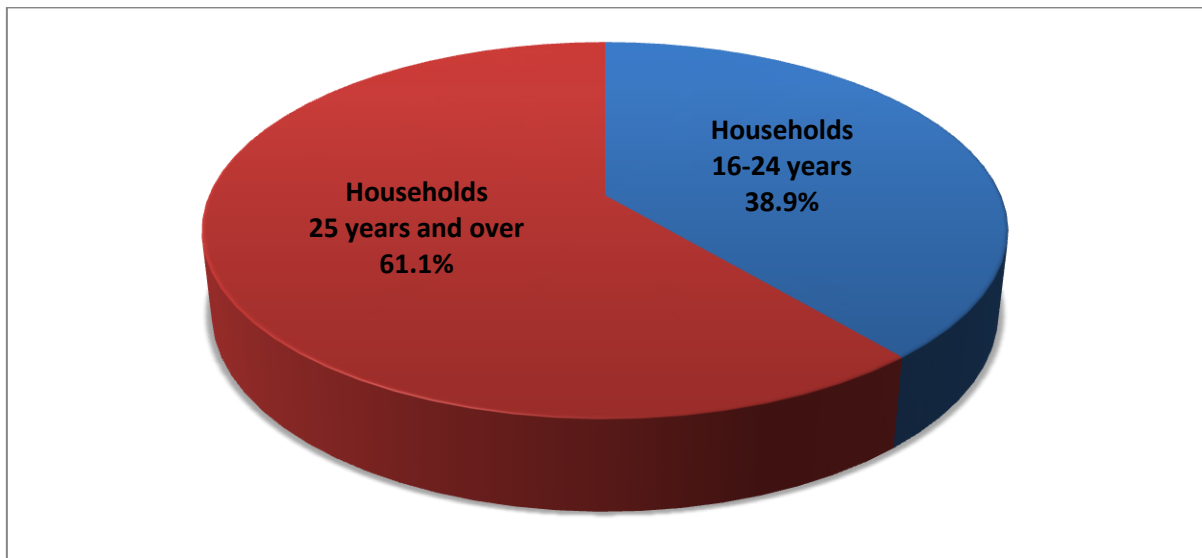
Social factors

The BCC report also noted low levels of social cohesion amongst Castle Vale residents. As mentioned previously, the estate was developed as replacement housing for families displaced during clearance activity occurring in inner-city neighbourhoods during the 1960s. Although neighbourhoods in the clearance areas exhibited high levels of poverty, the close-knit family and friendship networks present in those areas provided a significant amount of informal social control helping to reduce incidences of antisocial behaviour. The rehousing process, which relocated households from different areas, disrupted those pre-existing communities and led to a weakening of informal controls and levels of trust among estate residents. Although new relationships within the community were formed, the regular churning of population amongst some sectors of the community and a high percentage (38.9 percent; see Figure 5.21) of households headed by young adults aged 16 to 24 years (Birmingham City Council 1992, OPCS, 1991), added to social instability within the area.

All of the issues discussed above, along with many others, helped fuel a negative impression of the estate. Despite the poor image and conditions, however, the majority (64 percent) of Castle Vale residents were satisfied with living on the estate and did not wish to

move away (Birmingham City Council, 1992: 31). Nearly half (48 percent) of the residents had lived on the estate for 20 years or more and felt a strong connection to the community;

Figure 5.21: Young Adult Households as Percentage of Total Households 1991



Source: OPCS (1991)

they acknowledged the declining conditions on the estate but felt strongly that, with investment, the community could thrive once more (Birmingham City Council, 1992: 30).

TIME FOR CHANGE

Birmingham City Council (BCC), as the major housing provider on Castle Vale, recognised the need for extensive action to arrest the possibility of further decline of the conditions on the estate. As a result, in 1991 BCC identified Castle Vale as a priority area for regeneration. To carry out the necessary improvements, the then Director of Housing at

BCC, Derek Waddington, recommended the creation of a Housing Action Trust on the Castle Vale estate (Mornement, 2005).

HOUSING ACTION TRUSTS

Created under the Housing Act 1988, Housing Action Trusts (HAT) were limited life non-governmental bodies tasked with addressing the social, economic and environmental problems associated with large, deprived council housing estates (Bright and Gilbert, 1995, Evans and Long, 2000, Karn and Wolman, 1992). As originally conceived, the primary role of the HATs was to:

tackle major concentrations of run-down local authority housing...[by] tak[ing] on the responsibility for management of tenanted local authority housing; devis[ing] and implement[ing] a programme to bring about physical and environmental improvements; [and] provid[ing] more effective management and maintenance (Peat Marwick McLintock, 1989: 76).

Areas for which a HAT was to be created were to be identified by central government and approved by the Secretary of State. Following designation of the HAT areas, the responsible local authorities would undertake a wholesale transfer of their respective stock to the newly created entities. Once the improvement works were complete, the HATs were responsible for 'pass[ing] the properties on to different forms of ownership and management' (Peat Marwick McLintock, 1989: 76). Initially, a number of estates located within six local authority areas were identified as potential locations for the programme. None of them, however, were approved. The initiative encountered strong resistance from both local authorities, who viewed the HATs as a further attempt by the then Conservative government to reduce local authority power, and tenants who feared the HATs would deprive of them

any tenant rights, reduce their security of tenure, raise rents and, ultimately, lead to their displacement through housing privatisation (Bright and Gilbert, 1995, Evans and Long, 2000, Gregory and Hainsworth, 1993, Ravetz, 2001). Government responded to these concerns with a number of concessions, most significantly by: agreeing to work cooperatively with

Table 5.2: Housing Action Trust areas

Original Designation Areas	Approved Areas	Date Created
Lambeth	North Hull	July 1991
Tower Hamlets	Waltham Forest	December 1991
Southwark	Liverpool	February 1993
Leeds	Tower Hamlets	June 1993
Sunderland	Castle Vale	June 1993
Sandwell	Stonebridge	July 1994

Source: Chumrow (1995)

with local government, consultants, architects and residents to develop proposals for HATs; agreeing to provide local councils with the necessary funding to buy back the improved properties; ensuring tenant and local authority representation on HAT boards; and granting tenants the right to vote on an area’s potential HAT designation and future landlord (Evans and Long, 2000). As a result of these changes the first HAT was approved in 1991 in North Hull with a further five HATs approved over the next three years (Table 5.2).

CASTLE VALE HOUSING ACTION TRUST

The Castle Vale Estate was one of those approved areas. Following a tenant ballot, in which 92 percent of Castle Vale voters endorsed the establishment of a HAT on the estate, the Castle Vale Housing Action Trust (CVHAT) was formed in June 1993 (CVHAT, 1995a).

Twelve members were appointed to the CVHAT Board including four resident representatives identified through tenant ballot, three local authority councillors and five independent specialists. A number of surveys of the estate commenced to assess environmental conditions and to identify possible sites for new residential development (CVHAT, 1994, Mornement, 2005). In March 1994, ownership of the Castle Vale social housing stock and related land was transferred from BCC to the CVHAT and work to regenerate the estate began (CVHAT, 1995a, Mornement, 2005) with a vision to create 'a self sustaining community living in high quality homes in a pleasant and safe environment'. The CVHAT further envisioned that, by the end of the regeneration programme 'Castle Vale residents will enjoy an improved quality of life and economic opportunity' and that 'they will have been empowered to make choices regarding ownership and management of their homes' (CVHAT, 1994: 6). To meet statutory requirements all work carried out on the estate had to satisfy four corporate aims:

- To secure the improvement or redevelopment of housing on Castle Vale;
- To improve the social, living and environmental conditions on Castle Vale;
- To provide a wider choice of tenure and forms of ownership of dwellings to residents; and
- To provide a good and effective housing management system.

One additional aim, 'to realise the vision of sustainable and long lasting regeneration', reflected the overall vision for the estate's transformation (CVHAT, 1994: 6).

A search was undertaken to select the firm that would produce a Master Plan for the estate. In April 1994, Hunt Thompson Associates was appointed as Master Planners for the

project and, in September 1995, the master plan for the regeneration of Castle Vale was complete. The master plan, developed under extensive consultations with local residents, BCC and other stakeholders, outlined a number of improvements for the area including: new residential and commercial development; the refurbishment of existing housing; activity to support economic and community development in the area; transportation improvements, such

Figure 5.22: Demolition of the Centre 8 tower blocks



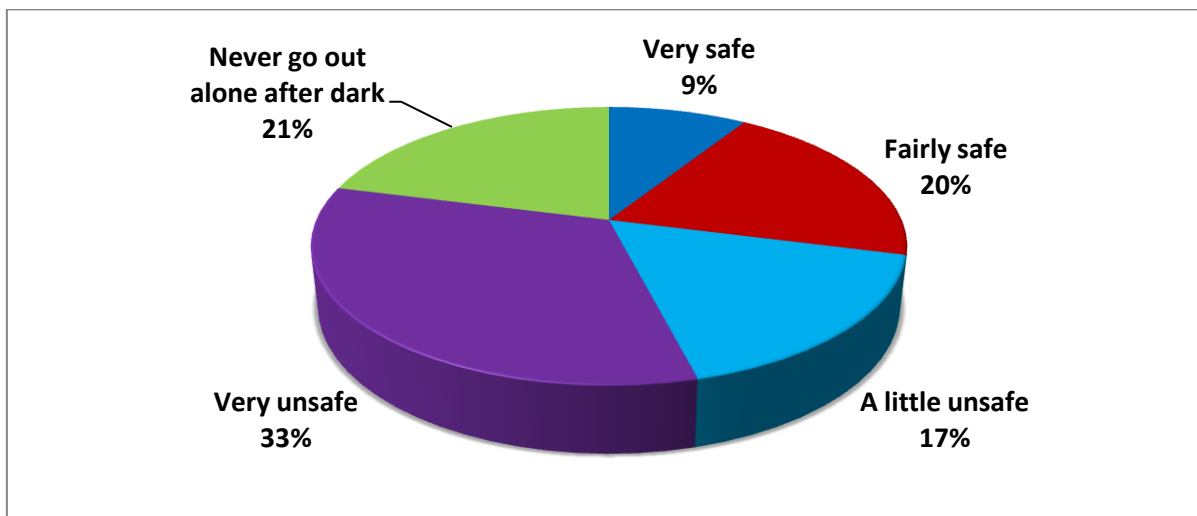
Source: CVCHA (no date-e)

as traffic calming measures and the construction of footpaths; improving energy efficiency in homes; and enhancing the estate's green space areas (CVHAT, 1995a). By the end of March 1996, signs of progress were beginning to emerge. The construction of 76 new housing association provided homes and refurbishment work on 84 low-rise homes had been completed. Two of the five pubs located on the estate had been demolished, as well as four of the eight high-rise tower blocks (the Centre 8) that defined the centre of Castle Vale. Additionally, the CVHAT began operation of a local bus service, plans for the development of a new doctors surgery were finalised, and environmental projects, such as the creation of a bridlepath around the perimeter of the estate, had been initiated (CVHAT, 1995b, CVHAT, 1996).

Although the primary focus of the Master Plan was addressing the physical and environmental issues affecting Castle Vale, the CVHAT also undertook action for enhancing

the social and economic aspects of the local community. A survey of local residents indicated that crime was a major concern within the community (Figure 5.23) with 50 percent of survey respondents indicating they did not feel safe walking the estate alone and 21 percent indicating they did not leave their homes after dark (MORI, 2004: 46). In response, a series of steps were taken over the course of the regeneration programme to reduce criminal activity on the estate and improve the residents' perceptions of safety. Neighbourhood Watch and Neighbourhood Wardens schemes were implemented. Partnerships were formed with the West Midlands Police and Fire Services to improve crime

Figure 5.23: Residents' perceptions of safety on Castle Vale 1994



Source: MORI (1994)

and arson detection. A CCTV system was installed throughout the estate, a drugs and substance misuse strategy was developed and a Victims Support scheme created. In an effort to decrease incidences of antisocial behaviour, the CVHAT created the VIP GOLD programme which rewarded local residents for responsible behaviour, while persistent

problem families were evicted from the estate when necessary. The high rate of unemployment among Castle Vale residents was addressed through the provision of employment and training programmes, courses offering help in basic skills development and job search support schemes were offered (CVHAT, 1996, CVHAT, 1997, CVHAT, 1998, CVHAT, 2000, CVHAT, 2001, CVHAT, 2002).

A key feature of the CVHAT's approach to the estate's regeneration was the organisation's commitment to resident involvement and engagement. Local residents were consulted extensively throughout the life of the CVHAT and became involved in many aspects of the regeneration process. A number of public consultations and planning for real exercises were conducted with local residents during the estate's master planning phase (CVHAT, 1995a, Mornement, 2005). Membership of the CVHAT Board included four elected resident representatives. Residents were also recruited to staff CVHAT working groups addressing issues related to housing, health, leisure, finance, employment and education. A Tenants and Residents Alliance was formed to represent community interests and act as liaison between residents and the CVHAT (Mornement, 2005). Community events were organised, a community newsletter created and youth outreach workers recruited to engage with the younger members of the community. Local residents were also involved in local service provision as, for example, through employment with the CVHAT and the 27 residents who founded and managed the Castle Vale Credit Union (CVHAT, 1998).

THE END OF THE HAT, A NEW BEGINNING FOR CASTLE VALE

The transformation of the Castle Vale Housing Estate was a 12-year, £322 million effort. Ultimately, the work of the CVHAT encompassed the demolition/construction or renovation of nearly 5,000 dwellings on the estate, the construction of new or the

Figure 5.24: New housing on the Centre 8 site



Source: CVCHA(2009a)

improvement of existing facilities on the estate, and the creation of programmes to improve

Figure 5.25: The Redeveloped Castle Vale Retail Park



Source: Kennedy (2006)

the social and economic conditions on Castle Vale. By the end of March 2005, when the CVHAT formally concluded its work, 2,807 homes had been built or refurbished and nearly 2,300 homes had been demolished (see Table 5.3 for a

breakdown of residential work). All save two of the high-rise tower blocks had been demolished and replaced with new forms of housing. The Castle Vale Shopping Centre had been redeveloped with new retailers including Sainsburys as the anchor store. An additional

Table 5.3: Details of residential work completed on Castle Vale, 1994-2005

Types of Housing	Number of Homes 2005	Number of Homes 1994
HAT tenanted *		
Houses	0	785
Bungalows	0	114
Maisonettes	0	249
Flats up to 5 floors	0	395
Flats over 5 floors	0	1,944
Housing Association for rent	2,402	0
City Council for rent	18	0
Other New Build/Build for Sale	157	0
<i>Leasehold/Freehold</i>		
Castle Vale Community Housing Association Owned		
Houses	1,333	1,284
Maisonettes	0	0
Flats	137	156
Birmingham City Council Owned		
Houses	7	0
Flats	10	0
Total Homes	4,064	4,931

**The 2005 figure represents the transfer of HAT stock to the successor organisation, Castle Vale Community Housing Association.*

Source: CVHAT (2005a)

42,550 square meters of commercial space had also been added to the estate (CVHAT, 2005a).

Socioeconomic conditions on the estate also improved. Rates of criminal activity on the estate decreased significantly with a 51 percent decline in crime during the five year

Figure 5.26: The new doctors surgery

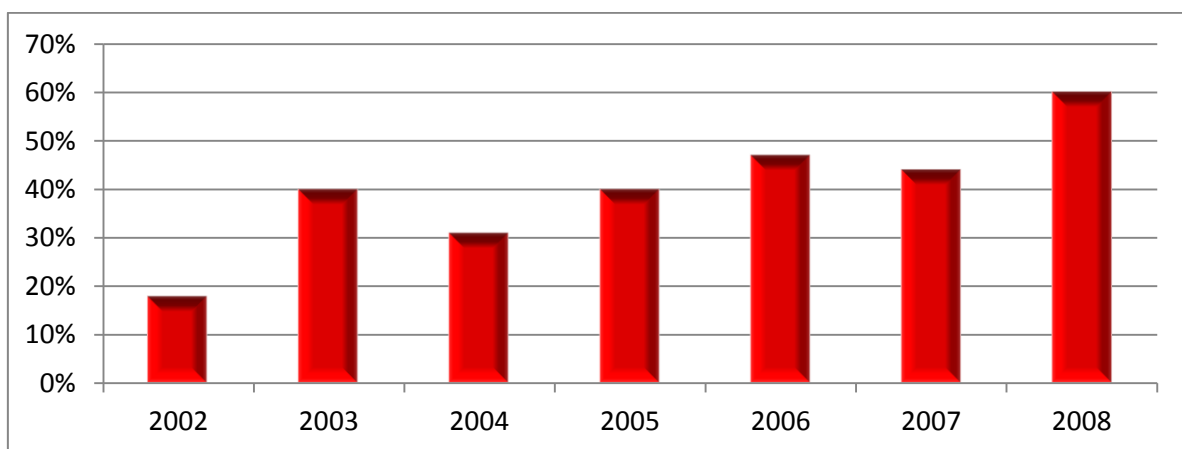


Source: Kennedy (2006)

period between 2000 and 2005. Over the course of the regeneration programme, the variety of skills and employment training programmes on offer to Castle Vale residents helped increase employment levels on the estate. During the 12 years tenure of the CVHAT, more than 3,400 residents had

undertake some form of employment training and more than 1,450 job placements had been made. By March 2005, the unemployment rate on Castle Vale had fallen to 5.6 percent (CVHAT, 2005a). And improvements in educational achievement are also being attained. Between 2002 and 2008, the percentage of students from the local secondary school achieving a grade of A* - C on the GCSE exams has steadily increased from 18 percent to 60 percent (Figure 5.27), with nearly all students (99 percent) receiving at least one

Figure 5.27: Castle Vale Performing Arts College: School Performance Summary - GCSE and Equivalent (Year 11) 2002 - 2005 (%)



Source: DfE (2005, 2006, 2007, 2008)

qualification upon leaving school in 2008 (DfE, 2008). Several new facilities have been constructed in the community, including a football stadium, welfare advice centre, a private nursing home and a community radio station. Public art works were commissioned for and donated to the estate one of which, the *Sentinel* (designed to celebrate the area’s aviation history; Figure 5.29), marks the entrance to Castle Vale.

More importantly, the stigma attached to Castle Vale and its residents appears to be diminishing. Throughout the period of decline, many residents of Castle Vale became ashamed their community and did not want to admit to outsiders that they lived on the estate. As one resident told me, “when I first came to

Figure 5.29: *Sentinel* sculpture marking the entrance to Castle Vale



Source: CVCHA (CVCHA, 2009b)

Figure 5.28: *Knight of the Vale* sculpture



Source: CVCHA (no date-j)

Castle Vale and people asked me where I was from, I told them I lived in Castle Bromwich” (*Castle Vale resident of more than 30 years*). By the 1990s, the Castle Vale estate had gained a reputation as being a dangerous, no-go area. These negative perceptions also became associated with the people who lived in the community:

I used to put a barrier. We used to say we're not all thieves, rogues or whatever that live on here. Some of us are from good families. But you got classed as being common, whatever, just because you lived on the Castle Vale. (Tracy, Castle Vale resident of 40 years)

Local employers were reluctant to hire residents from Castle Vale. Pam (*estate resident for 36 years*) described the job interviewing experience of her son:

I always remember when one of the lads went for an interview and he said he lived on Castle Vale, and we're talking 20 years ago. And he saw the panel's faces drop. And he knew immediately that he wouldn't be taken on...he told me that. He says, 'I won't get that, Mum...because I'm from Castle Vale'.

Some service providers, such as taxi drivers and pizza delivery drivers, shunned the estate due to fears about becoming victims of crime:

You know, you get out of the car, and it is very much, there are lots of paths, rabbit warrens. You get out of the car, you leave the car to go to knock on the door, when you come back there are no wheels left on your car, or your window has gone through, or the driver has been mugged (*Business woman-taxis, MORI, 2002: 21*).

We actually stopped because of the crime, at least one out of every 10 went wrong, either someone done something to our van, someone broke the window just to steal the bag, little things like that that cost us a lot of money (*Business man-pizza delivery, MORI, 2002: 20*).

Today, perceptions of the area appear to be changing for the better. Tim (*estate resident for 36 years*) noted that "people are now proud of what's been achieved and all that". Tracy has noticed a change in her sisters' attitudes towards Castle Vale:

...before, my sisters used to say to me 'why don't you move somewhere else'? When my sisters come here now they look around and say, 'oh, it's lovely. It's so nice'.

Sainsbury's commitment to the area appears to be having a positive influence on employer perceptions of the area:

It has really made people sit up.... That's mainly because of Sainsbury's profile and the market that they are aiming at you wouldn't traditionally associate with the Castle Vale estate...I think it does say something about their view of the area as a whole...that perhaps it has a greater potential than I thought it had (Birmingham employer, Dean and Hastings, 2000a: 28).

And taxi drivers who "wouldn't come on the Vale at one time", now "sit on the little car park waiting for people to come" (*Pam, estate resident for 36 years*). Finally, the number of people from outside Castle Vale applying for housing on the estate has increased significantly (from 386 in June 1995 to 1,600 as of the end of March 2005), and the housing association has had to close the housing waiting list to future applicants (CVCHA, 2010c, CVHAT, 2005a).

The continuing improvements to the Castle Vale estate are now being managed by several successor organisations (Table 5.4). The Castle Vale Community Housing Association (CVCHA) is the primary landlord on the estate. The organisation was formed in 1995 after a majority (98 percent) of the estate's tenants voted in a landlord ballot to transfer housing management from the CVHAT to the CVCHA. A resident-led housing association, the CVCHA manages more than half (59 percent) of the homes in Castle Vale, as well as provides a range of services to all of the residents on Castle Vale. The housing association works closely with all of the other successor organisations to support the estate's continuing development and sustainability (CVCHA, 2010a).

Table 5.4: The Successor Organisations

Organisation	Purpose
Castle Vale Community Housing Association (CVCHA)	A resident-led community-based housing association and primary landlord for the estate.
Castle Vale Community Regeneration Services (CVCRS)	A subsidiary of the CVCHA, CVCRS is a social enterprise delivering services to support the ongoing social regeneration of the Castle Vale community.
Castle Vale Neighbourhood Partnership	Responsible for bringing together the key partners and the community to work together to ensure standards are maintained and outstanding issues tackled.
Community Care Partnership	Manages the Sanctuary (a community centre) and the Community Fund.
Community Environmental Trust	Coordinates a wide variety of environmental initiatives on the estate.
Community Fund	A community-based charity providing financial support for good causes and people in need.
Endowment Trust Fund	Provides continuing support for other successor bodies.
Merlin Venture	A social enterprise organisation addressing issues related to local economic development.
Tenants and Residents Alliance	An advocacy and support group for local tenants and residents.
Vale FM	A community owned radio station providing broadcasting, training, education and volunteering opportunities for the local community.
2005 Group	A resident-led service scrutinising committee.

Adapted from: Mornement (2005)

Figure 5.30: New housing on the Centre 8 site



Source: CVCHA (no date-k)

Figure 5.31: New eco-homes



Source: CVCHA (no date-f)

Figure 5.32: A variety of new housing types were developed



Source: CVCHA (no date-c)

Figure 5.33: The Spitfire House Community Campus houses the library and training facilities



Source: CVCHA (no date-n)

Figure 5.34: Aerial view of Castle Vale, 2004



Source: CVCHA (2004)

CONCLUSION

The Castle Vale community has experienced significant change throughout the course of the estate's 40-year history. What was initially viewed as a modern, vibrant community Castle Vale experienced a 20-year period of decline earning the estate a reputation as a 'no-go' area for families seeking affordable housing. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the community suffered high rates of criminal activity, deteriorating physical and environmental conditions, increasing levels of unemployment and poor health. In 1993, those conditions began to change. With the support of local residents, the Castle Vale Housing Action Trust was formed to undertake the complete regeneration of the estate.

Twelve years and £322 million later a new Castle Vale emerged. Today, the estate's residents enjoy good quality housing, an attractive park and walking trail, improved local services and an active community life. Castle Vale residents played an important part in securing these changes and continue to influence community activities today. How all of this change has affected the local community is the focus of this research. The following two chapters discuss this impact from community members' points-of-view.

CHAPTER SIX:

FINDINGS—SOCIAL INTERACTION, COMMUNITY AND CONFLICT

The Housing Action Trust's programme of regeneration secured significant improvements in the physical, environmental, economic and social characteristics of the Castle Vale community. From a low point at the beginning of the 1990s when the estate was labelled as a 'no-go' area for families seeking housing, Castle Vale today is, as one estate resident described it, "the Phoenix that rose from the ashes" (*Tom, estate resident for 9 years*). This same resident went on to note, however, that the Castle Vale community now faces the continuing challenge of ensuring that the community "never put[s] the bird in danger again". Following the release of the report *Bringing Britain Together* (SEU, 1998), the New Labour government advocated for the introduction of social mix onto single tenure deprived social housing estates as a means for securing sustainable community regeneration and long-lasting culture change. Persistent area deprivation, according to New Labour, occurs from a breakdown in the social fabric (or from decreases in levels of social cohesion) within affected communities. In order to reverse decades of decline and secure the sustainable regeneration of these areas, it was argued, regeneration initiatives must include efforts to rebuild community through the creation and strengthening of bridging social capital in deprived neighbourhoods. In social capital terms, 'bridging' represents non-intimate social ties between members of the various social networks present within a

community. Such ties break down barriers between the diverse groups characterising a community helping to increase levels of social cohesion and enabling local residents to pursue common goals. Regeneration programmes can promote social capital formation in a number of ways through, for example, addressing issues related to residents' fear of crime, promoting casual interaction through community events, or encouraging collective action through resident involvement strategies. However, regeneration programmes may also negatively impact local social relations particularly if resident involvement and mixed-tenure policies create strong divisions among social groups in the community.

This chapter discusses the impacts of the Castle Vale Housing Action Trust (CVHAT) programme on social structures within Castle Vale and if the initiative successfully created community. The research findings presented below are discussed in relation to research *Theme One: Social interaction, community and conflict*. Social capital building and community cohesion are dependent upon sustained, positive social interaction among local residents; therefore, this chapter begins with a presentation of interviewees' perceptions of social interaction within the Castle Vale community and in what ways (if any) they believe the estate's regeneration affected local social relations. This is followed, in section two, by a discussion of community—did the regeneration programme have a positive or negative impact on local community spirit or social cohesion, or has there been no change—and the impact of regeneration on feelings of belonging. The chapter ends with a presentation of the social divisions identified through the interviews with community members.

While the data presented in this, and the following chapter, focus primarily on interviewee comments, other data collected throughout the fieldwork have been included to help support or enhance the findings. For example, reader comments posted on the community newspaper website were particularly helpful in corroborating interviewee perceptions of the social divisions characterising the community and some of those comments have been included in this chapter. Researcher observations are not presented in the findings chapters as the main focus of this research was to uncover the perceptions of local residents and other community members. However, they did influence the overall findings of this study leading to the policy and practice recommendations presented in the final chapter.

SOCIAL INTERACTION

Social capital and community cohesion, two factors identified by New Labour as characterising sustainable communities, are built through sustained, positive social interaction between community members. The CVHAT undertook a number of steps that could promote social interaction in the community. The organisation: sponsored a variety of community events, such as a local festival and musical and theatrical performances; took steps to reduce criminal activity on the estate; created a community park in the centre of the estate and improved local leisure facilities; supported the creation of neighbourhood groups; and encouraged resident participation in the regeneration programme through community consultation exercises. If successful, all of these activities and many more should have had a

positive impact on local social interaction. However, as the following discussion indicates, regeneration does not guarantee an increase in social interaction.

Interviewees provided conflicting accounts of social interaction on the estate with some interviewees feeling that interaction has increased in recent years; as one respondent noted, “people talk more now. You can’t go out without meeting someone you know” (*Beth, Castle Vale resident of 18 years*). Social relations on the estate were described by one resident as friendly and welcoming even during casual interactions:

...even if someone doesn’t know your name, they will recognise you when you pass on the street and stop to chat (*Lauren, Castle Vale resident of 30 years*).

Several interviewees attributed the increased interaction to various aspects of the estate’s regeneration. One resident felt that the decreased residential density achieved through redevelopment has provided new opportunities for social interaction. Tracey, who has lived on Castle Vale for 46 years, used to reside in one of the Centre 8 tower blocks. During our interview she described the tower blocks as being somewhat socially isolating, “you got to know people slightly, but never really friendly...you never got any closeness with people”. She knew a few of her neighbours (e.g. the elderly couple across the hall) but the large number of people residing in the block meant that most of her neighbours were strangers:

If they didn’t live on the same floor as you, or you popped in the lift every now and again and they were in the lift, you didn’t know them.

To illustrate, she recounted one memory of meeting a young woman and her children:

While I lived there, some of the mothers in summer used to sit out, put blankets on the grass, sit out with the children. It was nice. I remember this one girl, a blonde girl. She had a Cockney accent, she was from London. I said to her, ‘where do you live?’, and she went, ‘I live in Cosford Tower’. I went, ‘so do I’, and she said, ‘how long have you lived here’. I think my daughter

must have been 8 years old then and I said, 'since she was 9 months old so its like over 7 years'.... And she said, 'I've lived here 3 years, since my little boy was born'...she asked 'where [in the building] do you live' and I pointed to mine there, the fourth one up, and she said 'well, I'm six on top of you'.

The social distance resulting from the high density in the tower blocks left Tracey feeling unable to offer support to the young woman during a time of crisis. The same day the two women met for the first time, the young woman's son died from a fall from the window of her flat. Tracey was reluctant to approach the blonde woman afterwards because she didn't "know her well enough...how can I help her because I don't know her". Tracey now lives in a small block of flats and has far more contact with all of her neighbours:

...I see them and I say 'Good Morning', 'Hello', in the summer when they're out in the gardens and that...you know them because you live in a row, because you're not stacked up on top of each other. They pass here [through the main entryway] because it's enclosed. Even if it's only good morning, at least you know who your neighbours are.

Evan (*estate resident for 30 years and CVCHA employee*) also spoke about the social isolation associated with living in a tower block. Evan moved to Castle Vale as a young adult in 1978 and was allocated an apartment on the 15th floor of one of the Centre 8 tower blocks. He described his time living there as "such a lonely experience" and felt that the social isolation of living in the tower blocks may have contributed to a number of suicides among Centre 8 residents. Tim (*estate resident for 36 years*) also believed the tower blocks could be socially isolating. He noted that while working for Jaguar, a number of his colleagues who lived in the Centre 8 flats "commit[ed] suicide, jump[ed] off the balconies". While acknowledging that these individuals must have reached a "very low ebb", their situations were, he felt, compounded by feeling that there was "no one to help them. No

one to communicate [with]”. Tim identified the effectiveness of the CVHAT’s commitment to resident involvement in the estate’s regeneration in bringing people together and helping to overcome this isolation:

...getting these groups together...at least it was something, interaction going, it was interacting with human beings. You ain’t sitting and just watching the television, letting the world go by. And the good thing about it, people started getting to know one another, started to talk to one another and intermingle.

Other interviewees felt that levels of social interaction have declined since the regeneration programme ended. Amy, a resident of Castle Vale for 43 years and a community worker, noted a decrease in levels of socialising activity among neighbours:

I remember when I was younger...the neighbours would say they ‘popped’ into peoples’ houses and it was that kind of community. And I had friends on the street where I knew their mums and dads. In that respect, I think things are slightly different because, maybe it’s me, maybe it’s my son, but we don’t have that in our street...I think people have changed.

However, she was not sure that this change in socialising could be attributed to the regeneration programme. Instead, Amy felt the decrease in neighbouring activity may reflect broader cultural trends or personal life-style choices. To illustrate, she described her preference for an uninterrupted home life:

That’s your home, isn’t it? I don’t want my neighbours knocking on my door looking for me. I suppose, really, because you’re out and you see people all day. The last you want is sort of get in, just sit down, put your feet up with a cup of coffee and the neighbours...You think I just want five minutes to myself. Maybe that’s just me.

Tammy (*estate resident of 41 years and community worker*), however, did feel that the regeneration programme contributed to a decrease in social interaction within the community. Prior to the regeneration, Tammy lived in a maisonette block located in Locking

Croft. Her building, along with three others, surrounded a garden. Approximately 40 families occupied the buildings and they used to gather together for celebrations:

We'd do things, like VE Day we had a celebration. We actually all put some money together. We had a bouncy castle; we sort of did, like, some food. [And] Bonfire Night, we put some money together because we'd got this green...some of the men-folk would do the fireworks...people would bring their burgers, this, that and the other so, you know, there was that element there, so it was quite good.

Since the regeneration, Tammy has lived in two separate neighbourhoods on the estate and has never regained that level of interaction with her neighbours. In the first area she relocated to she had limited contact with her neighbours. This lack of socializing, she feels, was a result of the relocation process which severed many intimate social ties formed over a number of years:

Although...some of us moved out together, we were mixed with other parts of the community and we didn't really socialize... other than the immediate neighbours [one of whom she chose to live next to], didn't socialize whatsoever.

After two years, she chose to exchange housing with a resident located in another area of the estate. This exchange means she now lives next door to her sister and in a neighbourhood she feels connected to socially, "because my sister [is] there, very much that [is] my neighbourhood social circle". However, even after 10 years, contact with most of her neighbours remains casual:

Bearing in mind that I've lived here for 10 years, I have conversations with neighbours, like my immediate next door neighbour, and B I've sort of got to know well, never enough to go round have coffee and stuff like that...but it's very much, we'll send each other Christmas cards, we know each other's names, like the whole row...[but]...we sort of integrate just with that row.

As the preceding comments demonstrate, regeneration can have varying effects on social interaction levels. While some of the residents interviewed for this study reported increases with their interactions with neighbours, other residents have experienced a decline in social interaction since the completion of the regeneration programme.

COMMUNITY AND BELONGING

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, the New Labour government attributed neighbourhood deprivation to a breakdown in the social cohesiveness characterising a community. As a result, neighbourhood regeneration policy includes a community development component to increase community cohesion (or create a sense of community) through the development of bridging social capital ties—those social ties believed to give rise to feelings of trust and to encourage a group identity and sense of belonging among community members. The CVHAT provided a plethora of opportunities for Castle Vale residents to interact socially, build bridging social network connections across neighbourhood groups and work together to change their community. However, given interviewees' mixed views about levels of social interaction presented in the preceding section, how successful was the CVHAT programme in building a sense of community on Castle Vale?

Interviewee perceptions of a sense of community, or community spirit, on Castle Vale are presented below. Again, perceptions are varied with some interviewees feeling community spirit has increased since the regeneration programme, some interviewees

believing the regeneration programme actually led to a decrease in community spirit, and still others suggesting community spirit has always been strong within Castle Vale. The discussion about community is followed by a discussion about belonging, or the level of connection residents have with the area. Social capital proponents, like Putnam, argue that increasing levels of bridging social capital strengthens social bonds and expands an individual's sense of identity to include the entire community. However, as the comments provided by the interviewees indicate, identification with an area does not necessarily lead to a feeling of belonging.

COMMUNITY GAINED

Three interviewees did believe that the regeneration programme had successfully recreated a sense community in Castle Vale. Peter (*estate resident for 3 years and community worker for 19 years*) noted a “sense of kinship” and a “neighbourly atmosphere” on the estate that did not exist prior to the regeneration. He cited better enforcement of anti-social behaviour and effective partnership working between local organisations as a contributing factor. According to Peter, since the regeneration Castle Vale residents gather together more often and are more willing to work together. Sarah (*estate resident for more than 40 years*) also noted an increased sense of community on the estate. She felt that, prior to the CVHAT, community spirit had declined in tandem with the physical and socioeconomic deterioration of Castle Vale:

When we first came here, it was a community. Everybody moved on at the same time. But then, as the properties deteriorated on the estate, and there was a lot of crime, there was a lot of unemployment, there was a lot of bad health...people lost hope inside themselves.

Since the estate's regeneration, however, she feels that Castle Vale "is a community again".

Tracey (*estate resident for 40 years*) attributed this renewed sense of community to the support programmes initiated by the CVHAT and the CVCHA. During our interview she described one such programme, Telebuddies, a telephone support system:

It's a group of people on Castle Vale and they're just people who one phones and another person phones, and it's a circle of people and they phone each other every day just to make sure you're okay. They take it in turns...it's just to say 'Good morning, how are you today? Is everything okay?'

This programme and others like it, according to Tracey, "has all come about with this regeneration thing" and, as a result, "people are beginning to care about other people".

COMMUNITY LOST

Other interviewees did not feel that the regeneration programme had any positive effect on community spirit in Castle Vale and suggested that the regeneration may have actually led to a decrease in community spirit. For these respondents, a general cultural shift towards individualism and private lifestyles is to blame, as is a broad fear of young people and the successful regeneration of the estate.

Individualism and lifestyle choices

Scott (*community worker*) feels that members of the Castle Vale community are less open to working together now than they were before the end of the regeneration:

There was, I think, at one stage an attitude where people were prepared to work together more. Now it's that 'if you want it, you go for it', this kind of thing. You go for it, you get it. You want it you get it. And this thing people

say, really get focused you're in competition and if you don't cut the throat of your neighbour to get there then he'll cut yours.

Scott believes this attitude, individual competitiveness, does not just apply to local residents but to community organisations as well. He noted a “terrific tension between the two cultures” of individual competitiveness and that of partnership working being advocated by New Labour policy:

...on the one hand, we working in regeneration talk about partnership working together, problem solving. Why aren't you working together? When culturally we've been told go for it, get it, get your promotion within your organisation and stamp on the guy who's after your job.

Tom, an estate resident for nine years and a volunteer with the Castle Vale Environment Trust, felt that community spirit is being affected by preferences for a private lifestyle. He noted a general decline in the number of local residents becoming actively involved in community groups. To illustrate he noted the difficulties his partner is having in starting up a community group. His partner envisions the group as a forum for addressing neighbourhood issues, similar to other neighbourhood groups established within Castle Vale. At the time of our interview, she had been unsuccessful in attracting members. While years ago Tom believes his partner would have had no problems organising residents, today he feels Castle Vale residents are less interested in getting involved with the community. He believed employment may be preventing some residents from participating in community groups, but also felt that many residents tend to “keep to themselves”, a perception reflected in comments from Amy (*resident-employee*) who described herself as “a person who keeps themselves pretty much to themselves in my house”.

Fear of young people

Amy (*resident-employee*) suggested that fear is a barrier to building community on Caste Vale, particularly in relation to informal social control mechanisms on the estate.

According to Amy, many adult residents on the estate are often afraid to reprimand local youth for poor behaviour:

I think years ago people, adults, would go out and shout at the children and they would feel confident that that child would probably go away, move, or they [the child] knew that you would tell their parents if they didn't. Now, you can get children who are just very abusive and there's people in the houses that won't go out and shout at them because they know they'll get repercussions, like stones thrown at the windows.

She went to say that fear of retaliation by a child's parent may also make some people on the estate hesitant to monitor the behaviour of the estate's young people:

...people, before, used to say 'we found your son doing something wrong' and the parent would tell the child off. But we've a situation now where the person's more likely to shout at the person telling them, you know, 'don't pick on my son'.

This fear of young peoples' retaliation for reprimands may be acting as a barrier to efforts to build relationships between age groups on the estate, a factor that is discussed later in this chapter.

The regeneration programme

Finally, the regeneration programme itself was blamed for a decrease in community spirit on Castle Vale. Two interviewees felt that the formalisation of resident involvement on the estate has led to a decrease in the sense of community felt among the estate's residents. Shelley (*estate resident for approximately 35 years*) stated that prior to the regeneration there had "always been community spirit" on the estate "but not any

community groups". Now, however, the shift towards officially recognised resident involvement structures has created a situation where "community spirit has been replaced by resident engagement" (*Kris, estate resident for approximately 30 years*). Their comments appear to imply that, for them, community solidarity is a voluntary activity built upon a universally perceived need, not something that can be created through formal involvement in estate governance.

Evan (*estate resident for 30 years and resident-employee*) suggested that the success of the regeneration programme was a factor in the decline of local community spirit. The conditions characterising Castle Vale prior to regeneration provided issues for local residents to rally around and join together to fight against. Now:

...there aren't any major issues and I think that is why the engagement and involvement has dropped off. People aren't angry enough.

This view was echoed by comments from Scott, the community worker introduced earlier:

It's the same old story, really. If you haven't got a problem, you're not going to be particularly active within the community. If everything is okay, are you going to go to a meeting in the evening? Neither am I. Would you come along to the street committee because we're going to have a something? 'Well, I'm okay. No I won't bother'. Now, if my street is falling to bits, you bet I'll be there with my legal advisor and all the rest.

Again, Scott's and Evan's comments suggest that collective action and community spirit is based on common purpose.

COMMUNITY MAINTAINED

Several interviewees suggested that the regeneration programme had no effect upon

community spirit, noting that strong social ties and feelings of mutuality have always characterised the Castle Vale community. Nick, who has lived on the estate for six years but has had personal ties in the area since 1991, described Castle Vale as always having a sense of community:

There's always been a sense of community in the sense that people used to look out for one another or still do...so, if something goes on, somebody's in trouble or whatever, there are people who will come round, ask you how you are, offer help and that sort of thing...you do find that people do take an interest and offer help (*Nick, estate resident for 6 years*).

Pam (*estate resident for 36 years*), reflecting on conditions prior to the regeneration noted that, while some areas of the estate had experienced significant problems, the majority of Castle Vale remained a community:

Even though you had these tower blocks of flats where you had drug addicts and that, it was like unreal, because that was their life and the community...it was still a community.

She went on to describe the residents of Castle Vale, many of whom have lived on the estate for decades, as "so giving". To illustrate, she recounted the following event:

In the last 18 months, a young lady came onto the estate with two children, and just came with a suitcase. I think she was from a refuge and moved into a flat. Within three days that flat was furnished by the neighbours...I rang up and said I've got a spare vacuum cleaner; I've got a spare mattress. They said, the only thing we haven't got now is a cooker...That house was put together for that family who had obviously been through a horrendous time, so that's what the people on this estate are like.

Pam felt that of all the improvements brought about through regeneration, increasing the sense of community was not among them because Castle Vale has always been "just a close-knit community" whose members support each other through the good and bad times. Beth (*estate resident for 18 years and a resident-employee*), however, did credit the regeneration

programme, not for creating community since “there has always been good community spirit on Castle Vale”, but for “spreading a community spirit across the entire estate”.

COMMUNITY TRANSFORMED

One interviewee, Tammy (*estate resident for 41 years and a resident-employee*), provided a thoughtful and unique perspective about community. Tammy’s story, while playing out within the geographical boundaries of the Castle Vale estate, demonstrates the difficulties associated with applying the concept of community to an entire geographical neighbourhood. During our interview, she named four distinct communities that she has been a part of; these communities are associated more with the social ties developed during various stages in her life-cycle and in relation to personal circumstances than with spatial boundaries.

Tammy has spent her entire life on the Castle Vale estate. She was, “quite literally born in the back bedroom on Davenport Drive”. As is common during childhood, the family home and, later, the local schools encompassed Tammy’s community. Both venues were arenas for social interaction and support with school playing a primary role in her casual relationships:

If we go right back to growing up and that, most of the socialising, because I was so young, was through the schools and that...my community basis was around school.

After finishing school, Tammy left home, married and began a career. This step marked the first change in community for Tammy:

...and then, as I got older, just prior to the refurbishment, I was actually running a pub on the estate...so, again, my social activities, community activities, was based around what was happening in that environment.

Her life was very much oriented around the pub and she had little knowledge of any activity occurring elsewhere on the estate, including the proposed regeneration programme:

And, to be quite honest, I didn't really know much about the start of the regeneration because I was in that environment and it was detached from some of the other aspects of the estate, the management aspects of the estate. We were tenants of the brewery, worked for the brewery; basically, it was all encompassed in that. I didn't realise actually that, you know, this regeneration was going to start.

In 1993, Tammy, now the mother of two young children, left her husband and the pub signalling a third change in community. During this phase of her life, the supportive role often assigned to community gained prominence:

...all of a sudden, not only was I single parent myself, but I was living amongst people who were predominantly single parents...so it's very much around support mechanisms. Because I had two young children, because I've got twins and they were still toddlers at the time, very much a lot of my support—I'd get support from my family, but a lot of it around my immediate neighbours there...because we were all very much in the same boat.

At that time Tammy, as well as many of her neighbours, was unemployed and receiving benefits. A very home oriented life and the social stigma associated with benefit households created "an element of isolation" that she and her neighbours sought to overcome through mutual support:

What I did do was, you had the baby intercoms, stick that up in the twin's bedroom and I'd go next door with the other intercom and have coffee, you know, coffee and a chat so that you weren't so isolated in the evening. So I think it was very much a support mechanism.

Although Tammy acknowledged the role spatial proximity plays in creating a feeling of community—“we were, probably, geographically a community”—she felt shared experiences and similar circumstances were the stronger bonding element:

I think, also the circumstances...it's something that brought us all together. We'd all got something in common. And I think, maybe, that's the belonging. We all had the same gripes...

Tammy stated that, although this was a difficult period in her life it was, in many ways, the “some of the best times”. Reflecting back, she has “really, really fond memories” of this period, which she attributes to a strong “sense of community” she formed with her neighbours, a feeling that “we’re all in this together; we’re all going to pull together”.

The regeneration of the estate altered Tammy’s community, once again; an outcome, she admits, that neither she nor her neighbours had anticipated:

...we were desperate to get out because of the poor conditions there. I don't think we actually considered the impact of that...I don't think any of us ever felt that we'd lose our community.

The rehousing process, which moved Tammy away from many of her neighbours, was partly to blame for the dissolution of her community. However, Tammy feels her involvement with the CVHAT and , later, the CVCHA is more responsible for the change in community orientation. The CVHAT actively recruited residents to become involved in a variety of management-related activities. Tammy joined the steering group responsible for writing the new policies for the estate, a decision that marks her move towards forming her current community:

So, I actually joined the steering group to start to write the core policies and that's how I began to get involved in CVCHA. I was one of the core policy

writers. I met up with people like, Sarah and that, and forged long term relationships.

Involvement with the steering group led to further opportunities, with Tammy taking up training programmes with the CVHAT and, eventually, employment with the organisation.

As her experiences within the CVHAT expanded, she grew less dependent on her relationships with her former neighbours. Tammy's changing circumstances meant she and her former neighbours had fewer things in common:

...from my point of view then, because my aspirations had changed, I think my focus of where community was [changed]. So I think I started to move away from my community there, my neighbours there...whereas they hadn't took the progressive stage to get themselves out of where they were...I think by the time we all did move out, I'd totally moved out of where I was and progressed. You know, I'd got my aspirations and that.

The new relationships she formed with other residents involved with the HAT led to a change in focus of community:

Because I was working at the Housing Action Trust and that, my CVCHA circle was very much, my community was very much there.

BELONGING

Many of the residents that were interviewed have a very strong connection with Castle Vale. In fact, several of them stated that they could not imagine living anywhere else. Pam (*estate resident for 36 years*) said had once suggested to her husband that they move away from the estate and discovered she could not think of anywhere else she would like to live:

I'll tell you something, about 10 years ago I said [to my husband], why don't we move? I sort of got itchy feet, you know how you do? And he sat me down and said 'name one place you'd like to live better than here', and I couldn't name him one.

Tammy (*estate resident for 41 years and CVCRS employee*) also cannot imagine living anywhere except Castle Vale:

My daughter, yesterday, told me we're moving to Australia. I asked where and she said Perth...while it would be nice to go somewhere you get to see the sunshine and stuff like that occasionally, no. I can't imagine moving off Castle Vale at all.

Amy (*estate resident for 42 years and CVCRS employee*) considered moving away from Castle Vale and even began searching for a house in another area. She abandoned her search after realising that she felt a level of discomfort at the idea of moving away from the estate:

I wanted to move off Castle Vale a few years back. It would be seven years now. And I looked around other areas for houses. You know, I thought I live here. I came back. I just, literally, went to areas and thought oh dear, I don't want to live here. I tried going at different times of the day, you know, the quiet night, and I didn't feel comfortable. I found houses and stuff and I sat there and thought I can't imagine living here. I just came back and thought, no, I'll just live on Castle Vale.

She also has "quite a few" friends on the estate who "have gone away and thought oh, I've got to go back". For Amy, Castle Vale is where she and her friends feel comfortable and secure. She believes people "want to be where you feel comfortable living". Scott, a community worker, attributes this strong local connection to the fact that Castle Vale is clearly identified as a neighbourhood by its physical boundaries:

Castle Vale has a very clear identity that can be recognised geographically...it is formed by the urban landscape. And what forms it are its very clear physical boundaries. On two sides we have major rail lines, the Birmingham-Derby mainline going the one end. We have the trunk rail freight line going the top here. And then down the other two sides of the estate we have main dual carriageways...that cartographic image is also imprinted mentally on the people who live here. They very much associate themselves that place.

But a strong identification with Castle Vale does not necessarily mean that residents

continue to feel the community belongs to them. The regeneration programme changed many aspects of daily life on the estate and the changes have produced some feelings of exclusion among some members of the community. During interviews, two residents spoke negatively of the new shopping centre. The original shopping centre contained a variety of shops. As Lauren (*estate resident for 30 years*) recalled, the original shopping centre was run down but “the shops provided a lot of stuff and there was a cafe where I used to meet friends for a cup of coffee”. The merchandise on offer was lower priced than what can be purchased from major retail chains and more in line with the purchasing power of local residents. The shopping centre was redeveloped as part of the regeneration programme and now includes a Sainsbury’s supermarket, a TKMaxx, a Comet, an Argos, a Halfords and, most recently, a Bath Store. The inclusion of major retailers in the new site was a conscious decision taken by the CVHAT. It was felt that bringing in a major retailer, like Sainsbury’s, would help attract shoppers to the area and help improve the estate’s reputation. However, some local residents, like Tracey (*estate resident for 39 years*) for example, feel their needs have been overlooked:

Yes, Sainsbury’s is a wonder supermarket but not everyone can afford Sainsbury’s prices. I go to Sutton and spend £3 on my day pass and I can still save money because there’s Aldi and places like that...let’s have a Tesco or something more in line with the people that live on Castle Vale, what they can afford.

Tracey’s feelings about the shopping centre are a mild example of the ways in which the regeneration process has left some local residents feeling excluded. Recent comments posted on the Vale Mail (15 July 2010a) website suggest that, for at least one long time resident, adjusting to the new environment has been difficult:

Having lived on Castle Vale since 1968, I am of the definite opinion that Castle Vale was 1000 times better when it was run by the council...They [the CVHAT and CVCHA] have thrown off proper Vale residents and imported vermin, also willingly overseeing the destruction of any community spirit the place ever had by assisting with the closure of all the pubs, because they didn't fit in with the image that the illegally elected board members had in mind. The sooner all of these self interested idiots clear off and pass the running of the estate back to the local authority the better. All of the original residents could then reclaim the place... (*Jack Cardboard*).

Carol (*estate resident for approximately 35 years*) also expressed a desire to return to previous times, "I wish it was like the old days". Both comments suggest that some local residents feel that since the regeneration, they no longer feel part of their community. Many of Carol's friends moved away from the estate during the regeneration, which may partly explain her feelings of nostalgia. Amy (*estate resident for 42 years and CVCRS employee*), however, has a different explanation:

When people say the community is different, what some people will criticise is the fact that we've had quite a few, a lot of new, houses built. People who grew up on Castle Vale were able to stay on Castle Vale [after the regeneration] but with all the new houses built, they brought people in from other areas...people feel that their children have now got to move further away because there's no spaces for when their children grow up. You can't build houses for the next generation because there's nowhere to build.

Amy's observation highlights an important issue related to the community aspect of New Labour's neighbourhood renewal policies. While the community restructuring brought about through the regeneration of Castle Vale has created a sense of community among many of the estate's residents, for others the restructuring has left them feeling angry and a bit isolated. The regeneration process led to a breakdown in some residents' social networks as friends and neighbours moved away from the area and new residents are often resented. Feelings of resentment create an atmosphere of 'us' versus 'them' among certain

members of the community, effectively drawing lines between various groups on the estate. These types of social divisions are discussed in the following section.

SOCIAL DIVISIONS

Payne defines a social division as:

a principal of social organisation resulting in a society-wide distinction between two or more logically interrelated categories of people, which are socially sanctioned as substantially different from one another in material and cultural ways (2006: 348).

These divisions are ‘socially constructed’, ‘long-lasting’ and are ‘sustained by dominant cultural beliefs, the organisation of social institutions and the situational interaction of individuals’ (*ibid*: 348). He goes on to note that social divisions are ‘all about advantage and disadvantage’ (*ibid*: 6) because ‘one [social] category is better positioned than the other and has a better share of resources...it has greater power over the way our society is organised’ (*ibid*: 5). Payne identifies what he considers to be ‘the key social divisions’ (*ibid*: 16) characterising modern society: social class, gender, ethnicity, religion, national identity, elites, age, sexuality and disability. An individual’s social ranking within each group determines the amounts, types and quality of resources that individuals can access at any given time. The higher an individual ranks within a social category the greater that individual’s share of the resources. Social divisions encompass social inequalities. While the social categories identified by Payne help to explain social organisation and inequality at a broad society level, Crow and Maclean note that at the community level social fragmentation is more nuanced often arising out of ‘narrower and more particular interests

and perspectives' (2006: 322). Community divisions may mirror the broader categories set out by Payne leading to tensions between, for instance, older and younger members of a community but may also expand to include more locally relevant categories of divisions, such as tensions between long-term and newly arriving residents. Such micro-level divisions are just as empowering and constraining for individuals as the macro-level divisions identified by Payne.

It is these locally derived divisions that this research attempted to uncover. The social divisions present within a community may have implications for sustainable regeneration. The ability of local residents to work together as a group is believed essential for maintaining the benefits of neighbourhood renewal over the long-term through fostering a sense of community and belonging in the area. Interviewees identified a number of divisions among Castle Vale residents. Some divisions, such as racial and ethnic tensions or relationships between older and younger residents, reflect broader social trends while others, like a non-acceptance of new arrivals, have arisen as a result of the regeneration programme. Table 6.1 provides a breakdown of the social divisions identified by interviewees; these are discussed in more detail below.

Racial and ethnic tensions

The first week of January 2009, the 2005 Group met for their monthly meeting. At the top of the agenda was concern about a recent article published in the Sunday Mercury newspaper. The article, titled 'The area of Birmingham that are no-go areas for white

Table 6.1: Social divisions identified by interviewees

Interviewee*	Social Divisions						
	'Established' and 'Outsider' Relations	Racial and ethnic tensions	Older residents and young people	Respectable and non-respectable poor	Home-owners and tenants	Residents and Management	TRA and 2005 Group
Kris	X				X		
Nick	X	X			X		
Evan		X			X		X
Lauren			X				
Shelly	X				X	X	
Amy	X	X		X			
Tammy				X			
Sarah	X						X
Carl		X					
Scott			X				
Jason			X				

*Names changed to protect confidentiality.

people' (Aspinall, 2009), reported on the results of a research study released by the Department for Communities and Local Government (Garner et al., 2009) that same month that examined the attitudes of the British white working class towards immigrants. Castle Vale was one of the sites chosen for the study and the area of focus for the news article. Everyone present at the 2005 Group meeting was upset about the way Castle Vale had been portrayed by the Sunday Mercury report as, they believed, a community consumed by racism and a no-go area for everyone. The article cited comments provided to the study's researchers by a Castle Vale resident who stated he did not feel comfortable in certain neighbourhoods that have a high concentration of ethnic minorities. He went on to describe Castle Vale as a "haven" because "it's about 90 percent white in this community, and it's just such a relief you know" (Aspinall, 2009: 2 of 4). Residents' anger over the report centred on the portrayal of the estate as a no-go area, but also the implication that the community was not tolerant of racial and ethnic minorities.

The residents' anger with the media for portraying Castle Vale as a no-go area is understandable; it is a label the community has been fighting for many years. But the idea that Castle Vale does not contain racist attitudes was discounted by several interviewees. Carl, a local education worker, noted that the estate has a majority white population; the lack of diversity in the area, he believes, has created an atmosphere of racial and ethnic intolerance among many estate residents an atmosphere, which Carl felt, was a "big problem". Evan (*estate resident for 30 years and a resident- employee*) agreed stating that, "some members of the community are...totally racist" and indicated that there have been racial and ethnic incidents over the years. Although noting that Castle Vale has a number of African Caribbean families that have been on Castle Vale "from the very beginning" and have been "kind of accepted" by the white residents on the estate, Evan does not believe new minority families are widely accepted:

...if you got Asian or Chinese or any other different coloured skin apart from black, they would be targeted.

To illustrate, he recounted the experience of one family:

One family were moving in here from the Ladywood area and they were a mixed race family of Asian origin. They were right down on Sheridan Walk. They had been to look at the property and hadn't been bothered too much then. They'd accepted it, they were moving from an unfit accommodation to here. The removal van turned up and it was...a crowd gathered round and started name calling. These were not just little kids, they were grown men and women. They said to the removal van, stop, put the stuff back on we're going back. And they left.

Evan's comments suggest that ethnic intolerance may be more of an issue in Castle Vale than racism. His comments also suggest that at least some information presented in the Sunday Mercury article may have been accurate.

Amy (*estate resident for 42 years and a resident-employee*) believe racial intolerance was affecting social relations in Castle Vale, particularly long-term minority residents' acceptance of new minority families into the community. Amy related a conversation she had a few years ago with a local Black resident:

A few years ago, I had a Black lady come up to me and say to me, 'Can you stop these niggers from coming on to Castle Vale?'. I said, 'what's your problem?'. Basically, what it was, we had Black people that had been here for years and totally accepted. No feeling of being outsiders, totally feel part of the community. But what they felt was, we brought in new houses, we brought some new Black people onto Castle Vale that were not, um, how do you put it? They were troublesome. Troublesome families from other areas...housing was given to a couple of Black families who were notorious in other areas for being troublemakers and whatever, and her problem was she didn't want to be lumped in...

The woman's concern was that, as a Black woman, she would become associated with a generalised perception of Black families through racial stereotyping by white residents:

What she said was, what will happen is these couple of families will cause trouble and then people will say, 'those Black families over there' and, she said, I'll become of those as a general and I don't want to be.

Older residents and young people

Negative stereotyping also affects interactions between the older and younger generations on Castle Vale. Jason, a youth outreach worker on the estate, noted a perception among the estate's older residents that all young people are "criminals or prone to violence". Evan (*estate resident for 30 years and resident-employee*) supported this view: "...old people see a crowd of youngsters in hoods and think they're up to no good". The perception of youth as criminals is, according to Scott (*community worker*), often created and reinforced by the media:

That gap that has appeared between the older people and the younger people...isn't helped by this constant headline of 'yob does this'.

While Scott was referring more to national news agencies, the community newspaper, the Vale Mail, may also be reinforcing negative 'yob' stereotypes. Between October 2007 and September 2010, 27 percent (or 42 out of 157) of the crime related articles posted on the newspaper's website reported on criminal activities carried out by individuals aged 25 years and younger. Even the articles that do not directly mention youth involvement in criminal acts report on criminal activity often associated with younger people, such as graffiti, vandalism and illegal mini motorbike riding. News items addressing issues other than crime may also reinforce negative perceptions of local youth. For example, in August 2008, the Vale Mail posted two letters from estate residents voicing concerns about bus stops on the estate. Listed among the issues raised by one writer was the poor behaviour of young people who use the bus stop outside the writer's home for a gathering spot:

The thing that I cannot stand anymore is the covered bus stop being constantly used by teenagers until the early hours of most nights, to doss. They are very loud, play music off mobiles, drink, leave rubbish, smash beer bottles in the road, destroy surrounding trees, try to set fire to the bus stop, and persistently bang and kick the sides of the stop in an effort to smash it in..!! *Lifelong Vale resident* (Vale Mail, 2008: 1 of 2)

Youth crime is not a new phenomenon on Castle Vale. One former estate resident remembers it as a big issue in the late 1980s:

Gangs of youths (sometimes numbering in the hundreds) roamed the streets wearing balaclava hoods and with pickaxe handles—sometimes in broad daylight! Youths would sometimes kick in a person's front door and beat up the occupants of a house and steal their valuables. Anyone who informed on these people to the police was targeted and their homes petrol bombed. I know it sounds like something out of an American horror movie but that's

what it was like! I still have nightmares about it even now. (*excerpt from an email sent to the researcher*).

Although one may argue that the above account is possibly an exaggeration of youth behaviour at that time, it does suggest that the behaviour of “a few bad apples” (*Jason, community worker*) can spread fear among residents on the estate and that fear can have long-lasting effects on interaction patterns between older and younger members of the community. As one resident noted in a letter submitted to the Vale Mail regarding a group of rowdy youths gathering outside the writer’s home every night:

I would quite gladly go out and have a word with these teenagers but fear retribution to gardens or vehicles... (*Lifelong Vale Resident, 2008: 1 of 2*).

Respectable and non-respectable poor

As discussed in Chapter Two, one of the underlying assumptions guiding New Labour neighbourhood renewal policy is the idea that entrenched local deprivation is partially the result of a ‘culture of poverty’ shared by the area’s residents. Katz (1995) traces the origin of the culture of poverty thesis to the 18th and 19th century distinctions between deserving and undeserving poor. It was a moral distinction separating people who were poor due to unfortunate circumstances (e.g. the death of a husband or having a disability) from those who were poor because of their personal characteristics. The undeserving poor were characterised as ‘dependent on account of their own shiftless, irresponsible, immoral behavior’ (: 68). Echoes of the deserving/undeserving poor classifications can be found in the distinctions between ‘respectable’ and ‘rough’ families in working class neighbourhoods identified by researchers such as Willmott and Young (1960) and the labelling of ‘problem families’ (Katz, 1995) today. These classifications are also represented in New Labour’s neighbourhood renewal policy, which attributes area deprivation and social exclusion to the

personal and moral failings of a community's residents (Flint, 2004, Levitas, 2005, Rose, 2000), and seeks to encourage good citizenship based on the qualities of 'self-agency and self-responsibility' (Flint, 2004: 895) as well as an adherence to mainstream moral values. Both distinctions, respectable/rough or good/problematic, act as status signifiers and continue to divide communities like Castle Vale.

Amy (*estate resident for 43 years and estate-employee*) spoke about a "council estate mentality" among some residents in Castle Vale. She described the members of this group as people who, "have got no aspirations...haven't got jobs or haven't got money or are on benefits". Although she was uncertain, Amy believed they were probably the types of people "who are more likely to commit crime". Tammy (*estate resident for 41 years and estate-employee*) distinguished between families receiving benefits as a result of some misfortune and those for whom benefits are a way of life. Following her divorce, Tammy spent a period of time receiving benefits a period during which she and other benefit dependent families were "treated like the scum of the earth and the lowest of the low", a perception that, "probably in the past was what my perception would have been". Her perceptions of benefit recipients changed once she:

...actually met people, the same people as me. When you actually get to know people and you realise that people were married, they had businesses, they had their own homes and its circumstances that had basically changed their lives.

However, Tammy did not believe that misfortune could account for every family's poverty. For some families poverty was a choice. Families like the one who lived in a maisonette above hers:

...the people who lived up from me weren't very nice at all. They were absolutely vile. All night parties, they used to throw their plates out into my back garden. Quite vile people. I remember one day a child's top, a little t-shirt landing in my back garden and the smell...it was just, like, disgusting.

Although she admitted that at the time she and her neighbours "were all needy", Tammy did believe there is a "distinction between people that had fallen from, you know, a secure family to those who chose to live like that". Tammy continues to distinguish between the 'respectable' and 'non-respectable' poor. The regeneration, according to Tammy, led many of her neighbours to change their aspirations:

You know, a lot of people changed what they did. They got themselves back into work. Their children, who potentially were destined to spend their whole lives on benefits as well, started doing well at school, joined the army, went to college, went to university, things like that.

But other benefit dependent families, such as her "vile" neighbours "who chose to live" a chaotic life, "still choose to live like that".

'Established' and 'outsider' relations

Amy's and Jack Cardboard's comments from the section discussing feelings of belonging indicate that individuals and families newly arriving to Castle Vale may not be easily integrated into the community. Their comments suggest that long term residents may feel a certain amount of resentment towards newcomers. Residents' wariness of strangers may also have an impact on social relations forming between established and incoming residents. Both Kris and Shelly (*estate residents*) stated they would be hesitant to interact with any new residents because they "do not know anything about them". Nick, who has been a resident on the estate since 2004, compared this wariness of strangers to

xenophobia, “when you get different people moving in to areas you get xenophobia going on...people are naturally wary”. Nick’s reference to xenophobia highlights the role length of residence plays in building trust, cohesion and a common identity among local residents.

A distrust of newcomers, in Nick’s opinion, led to the stigmatisation of certain housing areas in Castle Vale. He currently resides in a property added to the estate during the regeneration programme. Many of the housing units included in the site were built for private sale and rental. As a result, many of residents currently residing in those units are new to the estate. During site construction, a number of rumours related to the characteristics of future residents circulated amongst Castle Vale residents:

When it came to building the new properties on Farnborough Road, I live in one now, people walking past when they were being built, there was a rumour going round that they were actually being built for immigrants, which is a complete fabrication.

Amy (*estate resident for 42 years and resident-employee*) also noted the rumours about these properties and felt the buildings’ distinctive architectural elements, which include brightly coloured external panels, were to blame:

People had views...to be honest, the first thing that was said because they were all different colours was, they must be moving in foreigners cause it’s all bright.

For Amy, the modern design of the buildings, “don’t fit with the general feel of the estate. They just sit out there because they don’t blend in”. The site has, she said, been nicknamed Butlins¹ because of the bright colours and the nickname, she thought, “kind of isolates it a little bit”. Amy believed this isolation and stigma may possibly extend to the individuals and

¹ Butlins are family holiday resorts located in several areas throughout the UK.

families living in the homes--she admits that she doesn't "really know the people who live there"--and Nick agrees:

...they [the new housing] were for immigrants and there was more room and they were problem families only, you know, and in a way that kind of thing has stuck. I'm either a problem family or I'm a criminal of some description.

In Nick's opinion, it was the unease associated with the prospective, unknown neighbours that led some local people to try to "instigate resentment" towards the newcomers.

The 'outsider' distinction does not only apply to newly arriving residents. The CVCHA and other organisations on the Castle Vale may also be labelled as 'one of them' and be subjected to the same level of distrust. It is not uncommon for communities—whether geographic, interest-oriented or work-based—to rail against authority figures (e.g., government, police or 'the Boss Man') creating an 'us' versus 'them' relationship. 'They' are the group not be trusted, that wait to take advantage of or do ill towards of 'us' at the first opportunity. Local level us-them relationships represent power struggles between various social groupings in a community, most notably in Castle Vale, between the residents and the estate management and service organisations.

During the regeneration, members of the Tenant's Forum opposed the CVHAT which was perceived by the Forum as an antidemocratic organisation. Other residents believed the CVHAT was a political attempt to privatise social housing (Mornement, 2005). Tracy felt the CVHAT was more concerned with boosting the organisation's success than with helping the community:

They wanted to make it [Castle Vale] a showpiece. They were given the money to do the regeneration. I think, to some of them, they just wanted it to be a showpiece to say, 'oh, look what we did'.

She thinks the CVCHA is a much better organisation and has the community's interests in mind. Other residents, though, disagree. Residents leaving comments on the Vale Mail website have described the CVCHA as "not that good" (*Sandra, Vale Mail, 2010a*); "a cowboy organisation...only in it for the money (*P Doff, Vale Mail, 2010a*)"; "a joke" (*Anonymous, Vale Mail, 2010a*); and "turn[ing] a blind eye" (*Anonymous, Vale Mail, 2010b*) to local crime issues.

Residents may also be labelled 'one of them' as a result of their involvement with a community organisation. Shelly (*estate resident for approximately 30 years*) recounted her experiences with Tenants and Residents Alliance (TRA) during the CVHAT period. Shelly had taken an employment position with the CVHAT's maintenance department. After joining the CVHAT, she said, she was "chucked out" of a TRA meeting after the TRA's chair publicly announced her involvement with the CVHAT and labelled her as a "HAT spy". Shelly was subsequently harassed by some local residents and even had to move house as her flat was located in a building that also housed the TRA chair's son. Evan (*estate resident for 30 years and a resident-employee*) also appears to be considered as 'one of them' by some local residents. Evan was a community activist during the HAT period and now works for a local service provider. Although he did not mention being treated any differently by local residents, a recent commenter on the Vale Mail website reminded Evan to not "forget you are working for us residents of castle vale [sic]" (*Anonymous, Vale Mail, 2010a*), suggesting

that Evan's resident status may have been overshadowed by his identification with the housing association.

Homeowners and tenants

One social division was directly attributed to the regeneration programme--the divide between homeowners and tenants. According to Evan (*estate resident for 30 years and estate-employee*), "there is a big divide because of the investment, the public investment that was going on". The regeneration funds could only be invested in new properties or existing council owned properties, not privately owned homes on the estate. This has left some homeowners feeling overlooked and a bit resentful of the regeneration:

...the owner-occupiers would say well, we didn't have a vote for the HAT to come on, they aren't doing for anything us, we had this imposed on us. The regeneration passed us by (*Evan, resident-employee*).

This division was further enhanced by the resident representative structures implemented by the CVHAT. Initially, the CVHAT created two representative groups, the Tenants' Representative Board to address landlord-tenant issues, and the Community Council to represent the interests of the owner-occupiers. According to Evan, the differentiation between the two groups of residents "drove the wedge deeper and split them further" and led to "infighting between the two groups". In 1998, the two groups merged to form what is now the Tenants and Residents Alliance (TRA) (Mornement, 2005). It became a resident-led not-for-profit organisation in 2002, and "exists to provide help, information and representation for residents of Castle Vale" (*Evan, resident-employee*). Membership with the organisation is open to anyone who lives on the estate, both tenants and owner-occupiers. However, as one resident suggested, the organisation's title is still divisive:

Come to think of it, why “Tenants and Residents”? Aren’t we all residents, whether tenants or owner-occupiers? I can’t see the point making a distinction between the two (*Ann*, 2010: 2 of 6).

Nick (*estate resident for 6 years*) explained the homeowner-tenant division as a result of jealousy:

There’s the bought and rented. I’ve detected a certain amount of resentment. In a way, that’s actually jealousy because I’ve known people who bought houses from the HAT and then, when it comes to DIY and whatnot, of course they’re the ones responsible for what gets done. And then you see the neighbour whose property still belongs to the housing association, if they need anything done it’s all done free. So you get that resentment going on.

Finally, Tracey (*estate resident for 39 years*) noted an attitude among older tenants towards Property owners. She does not understand this perception because, she too said, “we all live on the estate”.

The TRA and the 2005 Group

Another significant division identified as originating with the CVHAT, is the split between the TRA and the 2005 Group, a resident-led scrutiny panel responsible for monitoring the quality of service provision in Castle Vale. According to Evan (*estate resident for 30 years and a resident-employee*), the 2005 Group “was set up because the CVHAT thought the TRA was going to collapse”. The TRA survived, and the two groups “have been in opposition ever since”. The level of animosity felt between the groups has been intense often being “like open warfare at times”. Evan believes the tensions arose due to personality differences and are responsible for the split today:

Personalities have clashed between the leaders of group...it still comes down to that clash of personalities and one group won’t work with the other group.

Whether the tensions arose from personality clashes or, possibly, the TRA's resentment over the creation of a new resident representative group Evan feels the divide may have led to some "missed opportunities" over the years.

Social divisions are present in all communities. The divisions listed above are those identified by the individuals interviewed for this study as characterising social relations in Castle Vale. These divisions are based on a number of factors including racial and ethnic stereotypes, fear of young people and strangers, resentment and power struggles between groups in the community. While no community is ever free from conflict, long standing social divisions such as the ones identified above may inhibit efforts to foster community cohesion and develop unified vision for sustaining change on Castle Vale.

CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the findings related to research *Theme One: Social interaction, community and conflict*. New Labour attributed persistent area deprivation to a break down in community. In order to reverse decades of decline and secure the sustainable regeneration of these areas, New Labour argued, regeneration initiatives must include efforts to rebuild community through the creation of bridging social capital in deprived neighbourhoods. Increasing levels of bridging social capital, policy makers believe, strengthens community cohesion and creates a sense of belonging among community members. However, as the data presented in this chapter suggest, community may be difficult to create through neighbourhood renewal initiatives.

Social capital as a community resource is built through sustained social interaction between community members. Castle Vale provides numerous opportunities for local residents to interact with each other, build trust and develop a shared vision for their community. However, the experiences of the interviewees outlined above suggest that regeneration can have differential impacts on residents' social interaction levels. The resident interviewees who felt socially isolated prior to the estate's regeneration appear to have experienced the greatest gains in social interaction levels. For one resident, her move from a high-density tower block where she knew few of her neighbours, to a much lower density apartment building increased her level of casual encounters with her neighbours. But for other residents, the regeneration programme appears to have reduced the amount of social interaction they have with other residents in their neighbourhoods. This was particularly true for two interviewees whose intimate social ties were severed during various stages of the regeneration programme. Finally, broader cultural trends and personal life-style choices may influence personal interaction levels. While some residents may welcome increased contact with their neighbours other residents will prefer to limit neighbouring activities viewing their home as a private space in which to unwind at the end of the day.

All of these factors have implications for efforts to build community and create a sense of belonging. The interviewees who indicated an increase in their levels of social interaction since the regeneration programme were more likely to perceive an increase in community spirit on Castle Vale. Interviewees who related a decrease in social interaction were less likely to perceive a sense of community on the estate. For most of the residents

interviewed, social interaction and their perceived sense of community did not influence their sense of identity with Castle Vale. In fact, two of the interviews noting a decrease in social interaction were quick to state they could not imagine living anywhere other than Castle Vale. But there was some indication that the intimate social ties, severed through aspects of the regeneration process, may have negatively impacted residents' sense of belonging.

Finally, the data also challenges New Labour's conception of community in deprived areas. New Labour, like proponents of the Community Lost argument, attributed area deprivation to a break down in social cohesion. To reverse long-term decline, their neighbourhood renewal policy strives to create an ideal type of community, one that is characterised by trust, cohesiveness and mutuality within prescribed geographical boundaries. Several of the residents for this research, however, indicated that residents in Castle Vale has always felt a strong sense of community between them willing to work together to solve problems and quick to offer support when needed. Their perceptions of community are in line with the Community Saved theorists who argue that community solidarity has been a long-standing characteristic of urban communities. And the reflections of one resident-employee, who traced the changes in her community during her lifetime in Castle Vale, suggest that a sense of community is perhaps better defined by similarity of circumstances and stage in the life-cycle rather than by a universal sense of identity.

CHAPTER SEVEN: FINDINGS--CULTURE CHANGE

The previous chapter discussed the findings related to social structures and community on Castle Vale. Comments from interviewees suggest that the CVHAT programme had both positive and negative effects on the community's social structure, levels of social interaction and community sentiments. All of these changes may have implications for New Labour's culture change agenda. As discussed in Chapter Two, the social benefits associated with mixed tenure policies are believed to create the forms of cultural capital—the 'attitudes, values, aspirations and sense of self-efficacy' (Knott et al., 2008: 6)—necessary for responsible citizenship. As Thomas (1999) notes, building social capital is an important component of the route to citizenship, as social capital equips individuals with the skills required for self-help and mutual aid (Foley and Martin, 2000).

In relation to neighbourhood renewal, a culture change approach is reflected in tenure diversification policies. Diversification of tenure is assumed to result in a socially mixed community, or a community that includes households representing a range of socioeconomic classes from low-income households to middle-class homeowners. Middle-class homeowners are often portrayed by policy makers as embodying sustainable citizens (Raco, 2005, ODPM, 2003b)—self-reliant individuals with a strong interest in maintaining a healthy local community. They are believed to enhance community cultural capital by acting as role models for socially excluded individuals and families, providing daily examples of

individual empowerment and aspiration. These characteristics are spread throughout the community via the bridging social ties developed through interaction between community members.

In addition to tenure diversification and social mix, cultural capital may also be enhanced through initiatives and services that encourage residents to participate in local governance, increase individual skills levels through education and training initiatives, and through individual support programmes such as debt counselling schemes. As tenure diversification has characterised Castle Vale from the time the estate was originally built, these types of culture change initiatives played a larger role in supporting community empowerment and raising aspirations during the regeneration programme. Outlined below are interviewees' perspectives of community empowerment and aspirations. The findings are presented in relation to two additional themes:

- *Theme Two*: Has regeneration empowered Castle Vale residents to manage their personal lives as well as the community; and
- *Theme Three*: Has regeneration created an aspirational culture on the estate?

THEME TWO: COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

Community empowerment was a key component of New Labour's neighbourhood renewal policy from the start (SEU, 1998, SEU, 2001, ODPM, 2005c, DCLG, 2009) and was viewed as a necessary ingredient in creating sustainable communities:

...empowering residents to make decisions about the homes and communities they live in is central to building sustainable communities (ODPM, 2000: 155).

One route to empowerment is through resident engagement in the neighbourhood renewal process. The CVHAT was committed to resident involvement in, and empowerment through, the regeneration. This commitment to community involvement and empowerment is reflected in the organisation's mission 'to work with the residents of Castle Vale and others to achieve sustainable physical, economic and community regeneration', and in the CVHAT's overall vision for the estate of 'a self sustaining community' in which 'Castle Vale residents...will have been empowered to make choices regarding ownership and management of their homes' (CVHAT, 1994: 6). Empowerment has been encouraged at both the individual and community-wide levels. Programmes empowering individual residents include social support initiatives such as employment and skills training schemes, healthy eating programmes for local youth, and a citizens' advice bureau. Community-wide empowerment was facilitated through the active involvement of residents in the regeneration process and continues today through resident participation in the estate's governance and management structures. Interviewees' perceptions of local empowerment are presented below. The discussion is divided into two sections; the first section addresses the effectiveness of supportive services in empowering individual residents with the remaining section addressing empowerment through participation.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

There are a variety of support services available on the estate to help individual residents take charge of their lives. The Castle Vale Community Regeneration Services has

tenancy support workers to assist individuals at risk of losing their tenancy. Exercise and slimming courses are on offer, as well as sexual health programmes for teens, stress management courses and support groups for victims of crimes. Residents can receive employment and training support through Merlin Venture and legal assistance, debt advice and access to a credit union banking service through the Tenants and Residents Alliance. In general, all of the interviewees felt that the level of social service provision on Castle Vale was greatly improved through the regeneration programme; as Amy, a resident-employee, noted Castle Vale “has a lot to offer...there’s a lot of things that go on here for all sorts of age groups...there is something for everyone on here now, I would say”. However, the interviewees did not believe the enhanced services were empowering residents towards self-sufficiency.

Interviewees who work for some of the community organisations servicing Castle Vale offered a number of explanations for a lack of resident empowerment. Amy, who was quoted above, suggested that a lack of knowledge about the services and resources available on the estate may be inhibiting the empowerment of some local residents. Amy believed that some residents may not seek the help or support they need because “they have no knowledge” of what to do or where to go:

...if you don’t know what questions to ask you can’t find the answers can you?
If you don’t know the thing to ask, the question, if someone’s not going to
volunteer the information you’ll never know.

Mark (*community worker*) thought that there may be too many organisations serving the Castle Vale community. While he acknowledged that the current level of local service provision is an improvement over the situation prior to the regeneration, he did feel that

things may have gotten a bit out of control and has now “become a curse”. Mark was concerned that the high number of organisations on Castle Vale may be causing confusion among local residents about which group to contact for help. Carl (*community worker*) agreed and also cited a lack of coordination between local organisations as adding to the confusion. He stated that, at present, each organisation and group on the estate appear to have their own ideas of what is best for Castle Vale, “everyone seems to be doing their own thing”. The lack of a coordinated strategy towards service provision, he believed, is creating uncertainty among local residents about which organisation/group to contact for help with a particular issue. He also cited a lack of communication between local organisations as inhibiting effective support for residents; as an example, he related his experience with the CVCHA. Nine months prior to our interview, Carl had been appointed as Head Teacher for a local school. During his nine months tenure, no one from the CVCHA had contacted him. While he placed some blame on himself for not going to the CVCHA personally, he did find it odd that the housing association seemed uninterested in introducing themselves and explaining the work they do on the estate. Carl feels it is important for head teachers to know what tenant/resident support services are available locally as teachers are often the first to recognise potential issues within families. Without proper knowledge of available services and which organisations provide them, schools are unable to refer families in need of support.

Resident interviewees cited other factors that may be inhibiting empowerment efforts. During our interview, Tom (*estate resident for 9 years*) stated that not enough local residents take advantage of the support services on offer. He was not sure why this was the

case but suggested that a lack of knowledge of available services may provide an explanation. Tom noted that “some people just don’t know about them [the services]” and felt that there may be a lack of effort by either individuals (not seeking for information) or on the part of service providers who may not be taking the appropriate steps to advertise their services estate-wide. Tracey (*estate resident for 40 years*), however, disagreed. She felt that information about services, events and support is well communicated. She indicated that notice boards advertising community services and events are located throughout the community:

You’ve got places like the doctor’s surgery has a board up and that. The post office. There are drop in centres in a lot of places. The campus where the library is...they’ve got information boards all around...

Instead, Tracey blames individuals for lacking the initiative to seek out services and opportunities, “there’s a lot out there. If you don’t want to find it, you’ll never find it”.

Sarah (*resident for 40 years*) attribute a lack of individual empowerment to the array of services offered on the estate. She felt that providing so many services locally has possibly led many residents to “expect everything to be done for them rather than going out seeking...it is like you’re handing them things on a plate”. As an example, she referred to an employment initiative on Castle Vale:

I mean, they’ve got this thing to sort of try and find people employment going round knocking on doors. Well, I’m sorry, you need to get off your backside and get out there and look for a job.

Rather than this door-to-door approach, Sarah believes that local organisations should “encourage [residents] to actually get off the estate and go do something” for themselves.

Nick (*estate resident for 6 years*), on the other hand, felt that Castle Vale lacks opportunities

for local residents, opportunities for “entertainment, education, empowerment”. This lack of opportunities, he believes, has resulted in a good deal of local talent going undeveloped:

There are a lot of people on Castle Vale that have a lot of talent in various areas, whether it be from a previous job, career path or hobby or something. They could be an artist to a musician to a painter/decorator, anything like that. We’ve got a lot of talents on here, a lot of talents, but it’s gone to waste.

For Nick, it was not the number of local services available that is an issue but that the available services are of the wrong type. At the time of our interview, Nick was trying to establish his own business and was having difficulty establishing a customer base. When asked if he had sought assistance from Merlin Venture (a local social enterprise and business support organisation), he indicated that he believed the organisation had wound up operations on the estate and was no longer accessible to local residents.

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH PARTICIPATION

Castle Vale offers numerous ways for residents to get involved with their community (see Table 7.1 for a sample of activities). Participatory activities range from the formal to informal and from the neighbourhood to estate-wide levels. Formal participation activities, such as acting as a tenant representative on an organisation’s board of directors, provide residents with opportunities to influence estate management activities. Established neighbourhood groups offer interested residents a means for monitoring conditions in their local areas and for taking action to address issues that may arise. Less formal community events, such as Castle Vale’s annual Party in the Park, act as venues for socialising with other estate residents and promote community cohesion. All of the individuals interviewed were asked for their views regarding the level of community empowerment on Castle Vale and the

Table 7.1: Sample of resident participation activities on Castle Vale

Estate Management	Neighbourhood Groups	Life Management and Support	Social
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CVCHA Board • CVCRS Board • Neighbourhood Partnership Board • 2005 Group • CATCH Radio • Youth Council • Merlin Citizen Advisory Group • Environment Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cadbury Drive Area Residents Group • Innsworth Drive Area Residents Group • Leaseholders Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRA • Phab Youth Club • Slimming group • CVCRS Job Club • Yoga classes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Party in the Park • Health, Environment and Democracy Day • Scouts • St. Gerard’s Reading Group • Family History Support Group • Castle Vale Writers Group • Santa’s Grotto

role of participation in increasing feelings of empowerment. Their opinions are presented below in relation to their role in the community, that of resident, resident-employee or community worker.

Views of residents

The majority of Castle Vale residents interviewed for this study are actively involved in the community. Of the 18 residents interviewed 15 have been actively involved with the community in some form either currently or during the regeneration. Five resident interviewees also work for either the CVCHA or the CVCRS; their views are presented in the following section. Fourteen interviewees are involved in at least one community group, while nine interviewees indicated they are or have been involved in two or more groups on the estate. Resident interviewees represented a broad range of age cohorts—from young people (under 10 years of age) to pensioners—as well as both long-term (30+ years of

Table 7.2: Resident interviewees' participation activity by group/organisation

Resident	Age Range (years)	Approx. Length of Residence (years)	Community Action Team	Centre 8 Liaison Group	CVHAT Staff	CVCHA Staff	CVCHA Board	CVCRS Staff	CVCRS Board	NPB	2005 Group	TRA	Citizens Advisory Group	CATCH Radio	Neighbourhood Group	Youth Parliament	Other
Tom	60-64	9												X			X
Tracey	60-64	40													X		
Lauren	55-59	30	X												X		
Theresa	60-64	30											X				X
Keith	60-64	30															X
Pam	65-70	36	X								X						X
Tim	65-70	36	X								X						X
Sarah	50-54	40	X	X		X		X	X	X	X						
Nick	40-44	6															
Shelly	50-54	35			X												
Kelly	20-24	20										X					X
Kris	30-34	30															
Carol	50-54	35															
James	60-64	6								X		X					X
Ann	45-49	15															X
Barbara	45-49	20															X
Gail	60-64	6										X					X
Michael	5-10	9														X	
Tammy	40-44	41	X		X		X	X		X	X				X		X
Beth	55-59	18			X	X											
Peter	35-39	3			X	X								X			
Amy	40-44	42						X		X	X						
Evan	40-44	30		X		X					X	X			X		

residency) and newly arriving residents (those moving to the estate less than ten years ago). Table 7.2 (above) provides a breakdown of the resident and resident-employee interviewees' participation by group/organisation.

Residents had a variety of reasons for participating in community group activities. Several long-term residents indicated that they became involved in the early stages of the regeneration programme. Their involvement was often prompted by curiosity about the proposed Housing Action Trust (HAT). Sarah (*estate resident for 40 years*) was living in one of the Centre 8 tower blocks when she first heard about the possibility a HAT was going to be created on the estate. She decided to attend a public meeting about the HAT because of "all the rumors" circulating throughout Castle Vale in relation to what the HAT would do if approved. She liked the information she received during the meeting and her involvement with the regeneration programme began that evening:

I went along to the meeting and I remember they were doing a feasibility study to get the Housing Action Trust...basically he [the presenter] just ripped it in half and said "well, this is how we got it but it's up to you residents, what do you want". And I thought, oh wow, that sounds really good so, by the end of the evening those that were left in the room were the Community Action Team.

Sarah was one of the remaining residents. From her initial participation in the Community Action Team, Sarah expanded her involvement in the community becoming a member of the Centre 8 Liaison Group, and a tenant representative on the CVCHA Board, the CVCRS Board, the Neighbourhood Partnership Board and the 2005 Group. Other long-term residents, like Shelly (*estate resident for 35 years*), became involved for more practical reasons. Shelly had been unemployed for several years prior to the formation of the CVHAT. Her involvement

with the community began through an employment opportunity with the CVHAT. And for some residents, participation in community groups was seen as a way to pursue personal interests while contributing to their community. For example Tom, an estate resident for nine years, has a strong interest in environmental issues. Since his retirement, he has been a regular volunteer for the Castle Vale Environment Trust helping to maintain the local conservation area and community allotment site, a position he feels not only benefits himself but also the wider community.

All of the residents interviewed believed that resident participation was important for maintaining positive change in the Castle Vale community; however, they provided mixed views about the relationship between participation and empowerment. Tracey (*estate resident for 40 years*) made a direct link between resident involvement and levels of empowerment on both individual and community-wide levels. On an individual level, she attributes her involvement in the Leaseholders' Group to her increased sense of confidence:

I had depression. I was terrible after my marriage broke down...I just sort of didn't go out. But, you know, I went to that first Leaseholders' meeting. There was something come through and I thought I'm gonna take myself along to that and, you know, it really helped me. It's brought me out and I've started to sort of get involved in other things. Like if they have a meeting about something else I'll go along to one now, whereas before I wouldn't bother to go to anything...the last two years, it's brought me out...I used to go to the meetings and sit and just look around, and they'd ask for anyone's opinion and I would just keep quiet. Now, I'll say 'yes, I think', you know? So it's really done me good.

She even viewed participation in this study as a form of personal empowerment: "that's why I said yes to you coming because I thought, you know, three years ago I would have said

I can't, I can't speak to anyone". On a community-wide level, Tracey credits the CVCHA's commitment to resident involvement as increasing feelings of empowerment:

I think more people do get involved now. I think more people get asked to put their opinions forward. Whereas in the past it was, like, 'oh yes, we're gonna have a swimming pool, we're gonna have this, we're gonna have that', but no one was ever consulted. Now, we have these special days and they have it on the board 'in your opinion what would be the best'...you can actually put your point forward. In the past you were never consulted about a lot of things that went on, whereas now you are.

Tim (*estate resident for 36 years*) felt that resident involvement in the regeneration programme has helped the community take charge of their environment, "it was getting away from the blame game...and take responsibility for ourselves and that's where we are today". And Pam (*estate resident for 36 years*) believed that resident involvement gave local residents a feeling that they can affect change in their community, "the people who live here today, I think if they see things slipping they stand and shout".

Several interviewees, however, cited a level of apathy among local residents. These interviewees appeared to associate empowerment with the level of involvement in formal resident participation structures. As noted in the Chapter six, Tom (*estate resident for 9 years*), a resident and volunteer on the estate, believes there has been a drop-off in resident involvement in local groups. And, as noted in the previous section, he also felt that a large number of residents do not access local support services. Tim was concerned that residents are becoming "complacent" and worries about how the estate will maintain change over the longer term without resident involvement. Kris, Shelly and Sarah also felt that "people are kind of apathetic...they don't want to get involved" (*Sarah, estate resident for 40 years*).

They thought a lack of major issues on the estate may partially explain the decrease in resident involvement:

[In the past] we had to fight to get decent homes. Most people now have got their house, they've got their little garden, they're happy, they're settled and unless something comes along and upsets where they are living, they're not going to get involved. Perhaps if there was sort of a big issue again, like CVCHA suddenly starting not doing the repairs...then I think there would be an uprising again. (*Sarah*)

People show up when something goes wrong. (*Shelly*)

But Sarah also thought local residents were relying too heavily on other people in the community, such as the CVCHA and resident representatives, to solve individual and community issues:

If you've got a problem with your neighbour...you'd go to the housing association and say I've got a problem with so-and-so lives next door to me and come and sort it kind of thing rather than actually go along to a meeting and complain. They know the Board's there and they know the Board, they've elected the residents to be on that Board so, basically, get on with it.

Views of resident-employees

Five interviewees (Amy, Beth, Evan, Peter and Tammy) were both residents of and employees in Castle Vale. Amy (*estate resident for 42 years*), Beth (*estate resident for 30 years*), Evan (*estate resident for 30 years*) and Tammy (*estate resident for 41 years*) were all tenants of the Birmingham City Council at the start of the CVHAT programme. Evan and Tammy began their paths to participation through involvement with the Centre 8 Liaison Group and the Community Action Team and have remained active within the community ever since. Both Evan and Tammy took advantage of the training courses offered by the

Table 7.3: Resident-employee participation by activity/group

Resident	Age Range (years)	Approx. Length of Residence (years)	Community Action Team	Centre 8 Liaison Group	CVHAT Staff	CVCHA Staff	CVCHA Board	CVCRS Staff	NPB	2005 Group	TRA	CATCH Radio	Neighbourhood Group	Other
Tammy	40-44	41	X		X		X	X	X	X			X	X
Beth	55-59	18			X	X								
Peter	35-39	3			X	X						X		
Amy	40-44	42						X	X	X				
Evan	40-44	30		X		X				X	X		X	

CVHAT and credit their involvement with the regeneration programme as springboards to their current careers. Beth, like Shelly who was mentioned above, secured employment with the CVHAT; today, she manages a sheltered scheme on the estate. Amy took a while longer to get involved in the community. She stated that she did not really pay attention to community issues until she was in her “late 30’s, early 40’s”. Before this time, she described herself as:

...quite blinkered. I used to just come home, you know, go to work, come back and go out with my friends. Do what I was doing. Castle Vale was just somewhere I slept really.

It was after the birth of her son that Amy began to take more of an interest in her community and she now works for the CVCRS. Peter (*estate resident for three years*) began his involvement with the community before moving to Castle Vale. Peter has worked on the estate since 1990, first with Birmingham City Council (as a clerical officer, on the maintenance team and as an assistant housing officer) before taking up a position as a housing officer with the CVHAT. In 2000, Peter moved from the housing staff to the IT department and has continued in this position with the CVCHA. He was impressed by the

changes brought about the CVHAT, particularly the organisation's success in lowering crime—something Peter described as a “major issue” in the early 1990s—on the estate and decided to apply for housing with the CVCHA. In 2006, he was allocated an apartment and has lived in Castle Vale ever since. Peter continues to work for the CVCHA and is also a member of CATCH Radio, the neighbourhood watch group.

The resident-employees interviewed for this study placed a high value on the role of resident participation in sustaining community change. But, like the resident interviewees, they had mixed views about the role of participation in community empowerment. Beth felt that the regeneration programme “gave people a voice, a say in the way they wanted to live”. Amy agreed and thought resident involvement was a key factor in creating the positive changes delivered through the regeneration:

I think Castle Vale wouldn't be what it is now without the community being, the residents and community being involved in what goes on. They've had such a key role in how it's all moulded together...I think the residents have been a real key part of making people accountable, really.

CVCHA's continued engagement with the community, she believes, has created an atmosphere in which residents feel they can affect change:

There's things on Castle Vale that makes people able to change things on Castle Vale, which I think wasn't there before the regeneration. I don't think people felt they had a say in what went on and how they could improve their own area, which they do now.

She cited community meetings, which bring residents and service providers together, as an effective means for increasing service providers' accountability to the community:

...I think the residents have been a real key part of making people accountable, really. Because the meetings that we have there's people

[residents] there that, instead of saying “Yes, okay”, they want to know if you’re going to do it, and next meeting why haven’t you done it?

For these interviewees, the resident engagement and participation structures created by the CVHAT and continued by the CVCHA have, as Peter stated, made local residents feel that “what they do matters”.

Tammy, attributes resident participation for increasing her sense of personal empowerment. She strongly believes that her involvement in the regeneration programme gave her the confidence to become the person she is today:

...when I go places, I describe myself as a product of the regeneration because I feel that, if it hadn’t been here, if we hadn’t had the HAT, the Housing Action Trust and the £270 million and opportunities...I don’t think I’d be where I am today. I don’t think I’d have the confidence I have today...I do feel maybe my whole life has been built around the regeneration because if I hadn’t gotten involved with CVCHA I certainly wouldn’t be here today.

Evan also views his involvement with the regeneration programme as a path for personal growth. Evan has lived in Castle Vale since 1979 when, as young single homeless person, he was allocated an apartment in one of the Centre 8 tower blocks. He stated that his involvement with the regeneration programme began in 1993 when he attended a public meeting during which the CVHAT outlined proposals for demolishing the Centre 8 blocks:

the HAT...said the Centre 8 were going to be knocked down, demolished and replaced and I thought, ‘ah, that would be good. I wonder what they’re going to build’.

That one meeting prompted Evan to become a community activist. In 1994, he helped form the Centre 8 Liaison Group, a residents’ group representing the interests of the Centre 8 tenants. He was elected to the Tenants’ Representative Board in 1996 and then as chair of the Tenants’ and Residents’ Alliance (TRA) from 1998 to 2001. And in 1999, he was elected

as a tenant representative on the CVHAT Board. Evan used the skills and knowledge he gained through his community involvement to secure employment with a local service provider..

Although both Tammy and Evan are proud of the changes their efforts, and those of other residents, helped bring about in Castle Vale they expressed concern about the continuing empowerment of the community. Tammy suggested that the estate's improvements may have led to apathy among some members of the local community:

I think the downfall of Castle Vale is that we don't have to fight for stuff. I think we've lost our fight. Because we had our fight, then we got it laid out on a plate and we don't seem to have regained our fight.

Evan echoed this view by observing that "there aren't any major issues and I think...people aren't angry enough" to get involved. A lack of major issues was felt to explain a recent decrease in the resident involvement levels on the estate. This decrease in resident involvement is of concern to Tammy because it leaves her uncertain as to how the community will react to any major issues that might arise:

It depends what happens. With my own street, I know if there was an issue people would be there and it depends what happens when that issue is there. And I think we will be tested at some point. And it's whether we sort of are there or whether we all just kick back and think well, somebody else will deal with it. That's the new story of Castle Vale; the story continues.

Evan also indicated that the resident involvement structures currently in use in Castle Vale may be disempowering. He was particularly concerned about changes to the TRA. Initially, he said, the TRA was a volunteer-led group that formed to work with and represent the views and interests of all Castle Vale residents. Now, however, the TRA is:

...mainly officer led, paid officer led, and they will take on the issues. ...The first member of staff the TRA employed was a development worker and that was to support the organisation to grow and develop its role. They were employed to take over the role and then for Board members to do nothing...So, from my point of view, it has disempowered the TRA and the Board members and the residents...Public funds are being used to support the employment of somebody doing a job that residents used to do voluntarily.

This arrangement has, in Evan's opinion, created a culture in which resident representatives rely on the CVCHA, the TRA and other official bodies to address community issues:

Whereas it used to be 'we will' it's now 'you've got to', 'you should be doing it'. That's how it's changed...It won't be **we've** [emphasis added] got to do anything. It's not like that anymore.

Peter was also concerned that the estate's resident involvement structures may be disempowering local residents. He felt that too many tenant representatives have become "yes people" simply promoting CVCHA work plans and no longer challenging the CVCHA or other local service providers.

But Peter also indicated that some residents feel locked out of the estate's resident involvement structures. Community groups on Castle Vale are, in the main, composed of "the same people now as 20 years ago" (*Beth*). This core group of long-term active residents has, in Evan's opinion, led to "the wider viewpoint of the residents of Castle Vale" not being represented as some of the groups "haven't got the interests of the wider community at heart. There are a lot of people who are in it for personal reasons". It is the self-interested motivations behind some residents' involvement that create the perception among some residents that community groups and resident representative bodies are, as Paul described them, "exclusive and not open to new ideas or new people". According to Paul, he knows many residents that will not stand for tenant representative posts on any local Boards

because they believe they have no chance of winning the election or, if they are elected as tenant representative, they will “never be invited into the clique”. This perception of group exclusiveness and self-interest may also be enhanced by the power struggles occurring within some groups. Tammy recounted her experience of joining one community group and taking on the role of group Secretary:

...the people saw it as a control thing for themselves so the person who was the previous secretary, she became treasurer but would never hand over the files and it was very much if I leave, this lot leaves with me.

Views of community workers

Overall, the community workers that were interviewed did feel that the estate’s resident participation structures have increased levels of community empowerment. Scott (*community worker*) felt the fact that the CVCHA is a community-based housing association enhances resident influence and feelings of empowerment:

...the line of communication in this area between the main service provider and its clients is extremely short. You’ve only got to walk in here [CVCHA offices], in the Sanctuary and you’re in touch.

Mark noted that Merlin Venture’s Citizens Advisory Group (CAG), the shadow board for Merlin Venture, has 12 very active resident members. The CAG meeting agendas are driven by members’ concerns and the group provides residents with direct access to local ward councillors and the police to discuss issues concerning the community. He strongly believes that the CAG has empowered local residents as the CAG is the only group on Castle Vale that works solely for residents. Jason, a youth outreach worker, highlighted the importance of the Castle Vale Youth Council (YC) for raising levels of empowerment among the young

people on the estate. The YC provides a means for local youth to make an impact on, and contribute to, the community. Through the YC, local young people have developed an anti-graffiti campaign, have hosted a series of sexual health education seminars, and actively participate in the Castle Vale Community Forum which addresses crime and environmental issues on the estate. YC members are provided opportunities for leadership development through chairing meetings, including leading a meeting of the Castle Vale Community Forum.

Despite the overall belief that the community empowerment has been achieved on Castle Vale, there are concerns about a growing level of apathy among local residents. Community workers, like the residents and resident workers interviewed, appear to equate empowerment with levels of resident participation. Mark, Kevin, Scott and Rachel noted that most of the currently active residents are older, often retired residents who have been actively involved in the community since the start of the regeneration. Scott thought that the time required for effective participation may be preventing some of the younger generations from getting involved but he also suggested that the lack of big issues affecting the community is a possible cause for the decline in resident participation:

...if things are ticking over reasonably nicely then the only people who are really going to be active are those people who have the time to be active, and those generally tend to be the older and retired.

Mark also cited the lack of big issues as a hurdle to increasing participation levels, particularly among the younger and newer residents on the estate as both cohorts do not understand the past struggles required to secure the changes on Castle Vale. All they know is a nice community in which everything is provided; they have “no need to step forward, nothing to fight for”. Rachel suggested it may be necessary to redefine what participation

means, to help residents understand that participation is not just about the “big stuff” (e.g. complete redevelopment) but also about the “little things” such as volunteering that transform a community. For Rachel, the challenge is to help residents make the transition from “save our community to help our community grow”.

THEME THREE: ASPIRATIONS

The wrap-up of the CVHAT in 2005 signalled the end of what Scott (*community worker*) referred to as “phase one” of the estate’s regeneration:

They [CVHAT] came in and assessed the estate for what it was, you know, it was crumbling mess. And they had to get in and knock the old physical infrastructure down and replace it, which they did and they did very effectively.

Indeed, since the start of the regeneration programme in 1993, the community has experienced significant improvements across a range of physical, environmental and socioeconomic aspects of the estate; as Kevin (*community worker*) noted, “Castle Vale is no longer a barrier to achievement” for the people living in the area. He went on to comment, however, that the physical and environmental improvements are “not enough to sustain change”. Sustaining improvements secured through regeneration requires raising the aspirations of local residents, encouraging and supporting them to achieve their full life potential. Kevin was unsure how ‘aspiration’ should be measured—possibly through levels of educational attainment—or defined since “achievement, success, differs for every individual”. Despite the lack of a clear definition of the concept, Kevin (and other

community workers) identified a lack of aspirations among Castle Vale residents as an ongoing concern.

Carl, Head Teacher of a local school, discussed his school's struggles raising students' aspirations. He stated that, in school, all of his students are taught a range of values including respect for higher education and personal achievement. However, he does not feel that the continued development of these values is supported throughout the wider community. Many local families, Carl believes, do not place a high value on education and, therefore, do not encourage or support their children towards high educational attainment. He also felt the physical isolation of Castle Vale feeds into young peoples' low aspirations. According to Carl, young people in Castle Vale have little to no contact with persons different from themselves, people who could act as role models for personal achievement. Kevin agreed stating that, "Castle Vale lacks role models". He was, however, unsure of the specific qualities that "makes one an appropriate role model". He went on to suggest that individual support may be a better mechanism for helping some individuals "see beyond the immediate [need] and achieve their potential". Scott (*community worker*) highlighted an important issue related to young persons' aspirations when he noted that many teenagers "struggle with just basic social skills or how to management themselves", factors that can inhibit achievement of the aspirations they may have. He also noted that many residents in Castle Vale are "under pressure...under pressure for economic reasons...there are issues of just general ill health" both of which may produce low aspirations. Mark (*community worker*) was concerned that the economic recession may decrease aspirations among local residents and feed into "generational worklessness".

While the community workers interviewed for this study held a unanimous, negative perception of the level of aspirations characterising the Castle Vale community, the opinions of residents and resident-employees were mixed. Sarah (*estate resident for 40 years*) felt that many young people on the estate lack ambition, that they have “nothing to aim for” and are, therefore, not “actually pushing themselves” to achieve in education or employment arenas. She offered two possible explanations for this lack of ambition. The first was related to family role-modelling and its effect on generational worklessness:

I think the problem you’ve got is, if you’ve got parents who’ve never worked then it’s hard to think that the child, to encourage the child to go to work. And I think that’s the problem. You’re talking second generation or even third generation who haven’t actually ever worked.

But she also suggested that the low national minimum wage may be discouraging local residents from taking up local employment positions:

I think we’ve got this situation, somebody was saying the other day, that because the minimum wage is fairly low and you’re on benefits and you’ve got family, it’s not always worth your while to go out to work. And I think that’s the situation you’ve got...is it worth going for the minimum wage? Is it really worth getting out of bed in the morning?...You need higher paid jobs so these people are better off going to work.

Other residents and resident-employees expressed more positive views of local aspirations. As cited in the preceding chapter, Tammy (*estate resident for 41 years and a resident-employee*) felt the opportunities provided by the regeneration programme raised her aspirations and those of many of her former neighbours. Pam (*estate resident for 36 years*) disagreed with the idea that Castle Vale lacks role models for the younger generation. She described a project she was involved in several years ago with the Vale Mail, ‘Where are

they now?', that interviewed people who grew up on Castle Vale to find out how they have progressed. She described some of the individuals she interviewed:

One of them is a manager of Volvo, travels all around the world. D is a graphic artist to all the stars...X [is] a Director of Music in a big church in America of 2,500. Next door, two of them have got their own businesses. Next door there, they've got their own business. They grew up on this estate. They went to school on this estate.

Tim (*estate resident for 36 years*) also worked on the project and thought it provided good examples of residents who "had aspirations...to better themselves". More importantly, he believed the project demonstrated that aspirations can be achieved without intensive support, "they [did] it without any government help and they just went for it". Several of the residents interviewed for this study illustrate Tim's opinion. Both Pam and Tim have travelled extensively around the world. Lauren (*estate resident for 30 years*) studied A-level art history, worked for a Spanish airline company and spent several years living in Barcelona. And resident-employees, such as Evan, Tammy, Beth and Amy, are excellent examples of how personal initiative can lead to a satisfying career. The problem, according to Pam, is not a lack of local role models but that stories of residents' successes are not shared with the young people today.

CONCLUSION

Empowerment and aspirations are two of the factors comprising 'cultural capital' — the 'attitudes, values, aspirations and sense of self-efficacy' (Knott et al., 2008: 6) characterising individuals and communities. Cultural capital is created through social interaction and is disseminated throughout a community via the local cultural system.

Neighbourhood renewal policy seeks the creation of cultural capital through tenure diversification and social mix. The middle-class homeowners living within the community are assumed to act as role models for socially excluded individuals, providing daily examples of sustainable citizenship. Cultural capital is also formed through initiatives that empower residents (e.g. resident participation structures) and programmes that support individuals towards self-sufficiency such as jobs skills training schemes.

The CVHAT was committed to empowering local residents and raising their aspirations. They developed a variety of structures through which residents could participate in the regeneration programme and they strengthened local service provision to better support residents to self-sufficiency. Employment training and education initiatives were developed to provide residents with the skills and knowledge they need to pursue personal goals. The CVCHA and the CVCRS continue to offer this support to residents and strive to involve the community in a broad range of estate management activities. This chapter presented interviewees' perceptions of the changes in levels of empowerment and aspirations brought about through the estate's regeneration. The data is presented in relation to research *Theme Two: Empowerment* and *Theme Three: Aspirations*. While all of the individual's interviewed for this study noted the importance of community empowerment and high aspirations to sustainable regeneration, they presented mixed views about the levels of each within Castle Vale. Interviewees were in broad agreement that services and structures are now in place to support individual and community empowerment. But it was also widely acknowledged that they may not be effective for empowering all residents in Castle Vale. Views regarding levels of resident aspirations were

less unified with community workers expressing concern about aspiration levels, and residents and resident-employees expressing more positive views. How these perceptions and those presented in Chapter Six are related to regeneration is discussed in the following chapter.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

When the New Labour Party gained office in 1997, they placed social exclusion and area deprivation at the heart of urban regeneration policy and identified 'community' as the key to reversing long term neighbourhood decline. Under New Labour, the concept of community became closely associated with social capital, or the social network ties that build trust, communicate social norms and enhance reciprocal relations throughout a community. Long-term deprivation was viewed as arising from a breakdown in local bridging social capital ties, ties that could be rebuilt through the creation of mixed-tenure/mixed-income communities on deprived social housing estates. A number of social benefits have been attributed to tenure-mix and cross-tenure social capital ties including: increased access to available employment opportunities, exposure to aspirational peer groups and positive behaviour change. However, research examining mixed-tenure effects on social capital development do not fully support these claims. Mixed-tenure research from the UK and US point to a number of factors that inhibit the creation of cross-tenure social capital ties, such as language barriers, tensions between newly arriving and long-term residents, community governance structures and cultural differences related to socioeconomic status findings that suggest community building through tenure diversification may be an unrealistic goal of neighbourhood renewal policy.

This research supports the findings of those previous research efforts but adds to the mixed-tenure debate in three important ways. Firstly, much of the research into mixed-tenure communities examines interaction patterns between lower-income and higher-

income households. The focus of this research has been on testing the proposition that tenure diversification leads to social interaction between these two socioeconomic groups. And research carried out in the US, particularly those studies examining HOPE VI sites, examine communities experiencing tenure mix for the first time. In contrast, the case study site chosen for this research contained a mix of tenures from the start. The focus here is not *if* cross-tenure social interaction will occur, but how the estate's regeneration impacted any social interaction (inter- or cross-tenure) that previously existed. Secondly, this research adopts a social structural theoretical framework that, unlike social capital theory, allows for an examination of the tensions present within the case study community. Theories of social capital, especially the one presented by Robert Putnam, presume value consensus exists throughout a community, a condition necessary to accomplish the culture change agenda of many neighbourhood renewal policies. However, communities are made up of a variety of smaller groups each of which has different aspirations, values and beliefs. Examining social interaction from a structuralist perspective highlights the ways in which regeneration can introduce or enhance conflict within the community. The final contribution of this research is a methodological one. This research has followed the community studies approach from the past utilizing ethnographic research methods in an effort to understand community change from the community perspective. The result is a more intimate view of neighbourhood renewal, presented in community members' own words, than can be gained from a survey or other quantitative study.

This final chapter summarizes the research beginning with an overview of the research topics, as well as a summary of the methodology chosen and its limitations. This is

followed by a discussion of the research findings presented in the two previous chapters. Finally, the chapter concludes with recommendations for regeneration practitioners and policy, as well as a reflection on the research process and suggestions for future research.

OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

This research sought to examine the ways in which neighbourhood regeneration impacts the social processes characterising community. Specifically, the research examined changes to community social structure and cultural systems arising from the extensive redevelopment of one social housing estate in the UK. These issues were examined in relation to three research themes and a series of supplemental questions designed to understand community social change from the perspectives of community members. Three strands of sociological theory informed this research, Bourdieu's theory of society as social space (social structural theory) and Merton's theories of cultural systems and reference groups. These theories formed the framework under which the research themes and questions were developed.

Theme One: social interaction, community and conflict, addresses the impact of neighbourhood renewal on community social structure. One of the main goals of New Labour's neighbourhood renewal policy was the diversification of tenure mix within deprived communities. Tenure mix was promoted as an effective means 'of developing income mix, social mix and social interaction' (Rowlands et al., 2006: 1) which was believed to:

reduce the incidence of social ills while providing an opportunity for low-income households to gain access to better neighbourhoods, to network and to build relationships with higher-income families (Smith, 2002a: 1).

These newly formed, cross-tenure social networks and relationships were believed essential for increasing social capital, enhancing community cohesion and raising community aspirations all of which help to empower communities and facilitate the social inclusion of community members. New Labour's positive view of social capital and tenure mix was heavily influenced by the work of Robert Putnam (2000). Putnam believes that high levels of social capital ties are the hallmark of a strong civil society. Such ties arise out of sustained social interaction and build trust between diverse members of society, transmit social norms, and build mutually beneficial and reciprocal relationships. Without social capital, communities struggle economically, politically and socially. As levels of social capital decline within a community the levels of social exclusion and deprivation rise.

As argued in Chapter Three, however, it is not a lack of social capital that leads to social deprivation and exclusion but a lack of powerful social network connections. As DeFilippis notes (2001), Putnam views social capital as a commodity that can be possessed by individuals or groups of people built through cooperative action to achieve mutually beneficial goals; a view of social capital that has been widely accepted by community development workers and policy makers. He goes on to identify a number of problems with Putnam's theory, most importantly that social capital is not something that communities can possess and measure but is, rather, a characteristic of social networks. This research breaks the social capital-community connection by conceptualising community as, what Bourdieu terms, a social space. Viewed in Bourdieu's terms, the social relationships characterising a community are embedded within broader social structures that are organised around

competition for resources and are often characterised by conflict. This conflict often gives rise to social divisions within a community that may negatively impact social interaction preventing the formation of community social capital, as well as long-term sustainable change. This approach moves the focus of neighbourhood renewal research away from measuring social capital ties to a focus on the social relationships—and the factors supporting or limiting their formation—necessary for the creation of social capital. To determine the affect of regeneration on local social relations the following questions were examined:

- How do the subcommunities interact with one another, and how does this interaction affect feelings of inclusion;
- Do long time residents feel part of a community; and
- Have new social divisions arisen as the result of community restructuring or have existing divisions been strengthened.

The answers to these questions have implications for another component of New Labour's neighbourhood renewal policy—the promotion of responsible citizenship. This was to be achieved through culture change, or the development of cultural capital in deprived communities and was supported through tenure mix. Two aspects of culture change were examined in this research through two additional research themes—*Theme Three: Empowerment* and *Theme Four: Aspirations*. The effectiveness of neighbourhood renewal initiatives to empower residents and communities was explored through the following question, which addressed empowerment through supportive services and resident participation activities:

- Do community members feel more empowered to actively participate in the management of their neighbourhood and their personal lives, or do they still perceive barriers to achieving self- and group-efficacy?

Changes in residents' aspirations were examined through one final research question:

- Has regeneration changed group ideas, values, beliefs and behaviours?

Social capital formation through the diversification of tenure were believed to help empower local residents and communities and raise levels of aspirations. The middle-class homeowners introduced into a community through tenure diversification are assumed to act as role models for socially excluded individuals, providing daily examples of responsible citizenship. Mainstream values and norms, an appropriate work ethic, and personal responsibility and self-sufficiency modelled by the higher-income residents were to be transmitted throughout the community cultural system leading to a positive change in individual behaviour patterns and community aspirations. Again, this approach to community change assumes community cohesion and widespread value consensus can be achieved. If, however, communities are viewed as sites of conflict the culture change approach to neighbourhood renewal must be questioned.

This research overcomes this problem by examining culture change in relation to the social relationships and divisions present within the community. It accepts Merton's proposition that the cultural system is a key influencing factor on individual and group behaviours, beliefs and aspirations. That our actions are guided, primarily, by those individuals with whom we have the most social contact; a proposition also accepted by proponents of a culture change approach. But this research also recognizes that individuals

often choose to orient their behaviour towards individuals or groups with whom they have no social relationships. These groups are what Merton refers to as reference groups and they sometimes have greater influence on individual behaviour patterns than their primary group of social interaction. As discussed in Chapter Three, reference groups act as a measure of individual social position and can assume either a normative or comparative role. Proponents of building social capital through tenure diversification assume higher-income homeowners will be assigned a normative role for socially excluded residents. However, as this thesis argues, cultural differences and a lack of meaningful interaction between higher- and lower-income residents within a community may result in higher-income homeowners assuming a comparative reference group status, a status that would reinforce the lower social structural position of socially excluded residents and inhibit widespread community culture change.

METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

The research questions outlined above were designed to examine the social outcome goals of mixed-tenure neighbourhood renewal from the perceptions of the residents themselves. The research itself was carried out using ethnographic research methods, a mixed-method approach utilizing in-depth interviews with community members, and participant-observation techniques, as well as documentary and qualitative analysis. This approach to neighbourhood renewal research breaks from the standard approach which focuses, as Ho (1999) notes, on the measurement of programme outputs. It helps to fill a gap in our understanding of neighbourhood renewal's affects on community by providing

insight into the ways community members perceive local social change. The ethnographic data presented here situates neighbourhood renewal within the community context, a factor that Pawson and Tilley identify as important for determining ‘the extent to which the pre-existing [community] structures “enable” or “disable” the intended mechanism of change’ (1997: 70). This contextualising of neighbourhood renewal is particularly important for studying the presumed community building outcomes of such initiatives since, as discussed in Chapter Three, an individual’s beliefs, values, aspirations and sense of community is socially constructed, influenced by their perceptions of their place within the local social structure.

What this research does not do is make any attempt to directly measure levels of social capital in the community, identify standard categories of social structure (e.g., income levels, age, race or education levels), or make a causal link between tenure diversification and social structure. There are several reasons for not addressing these issues. Firstly, while several research tools have been developed to measure levels of social capital in communities (e.g., Social Capital Assessment Tool and the Social Capital Integrated Questionnaire), these tools continue to suffer the measurement problem identified by DeFilippis—they aggregate individual level data to the level of the community. Secondly, in terms of identifying the local social structure, two main concerns prevented me from doing this. There are two primary approaches to the study of social structures. One approach is to define social structure in terms of researcher defined parameters, such as age, gender or socioeconomic status, and then measure the levels of influence, power or resources each of these predefined groups yields within a community. As discussed in Chapter Three,

however, locally defined social structures may not fall within a researcher defined category. The other, more recent, approach to studying social structure is to map local social networks, the strength of these network connections, and identifying isolates (or excluded individuals and groups) within the community. This is the method of studying social structure is most closely related to what this research attempted to do. However, due to concerns about community research fatigue, a community-wide social network survey was not undertaken. Finally, while the research topic and questions originated out of my concerns about the social benefits attributed to mix-tenure regeneration and the findings suggest implications for these policy goals, mix-tenure development was not the main focus of this research. Instead, it played a secondary role to understanding residents' experiences and perceptions of social change through the regeneration process.

One final note must be made about the limitations of this research. Due to time and research constraints, and the desire to understand as fully as possible the effects of regeneration on community, only one case study was undertaken. As such, the data and findings presented here are not generalisable to a broader population. Residents living within a different community may have different perceptions of the regeneration process and resulting community change. However, the research process adopted for the study set the stage for future case study research and uncovering similar patterns of social and cultural change.

DISCUSSION

Chapters Six and Seven of this thesis presented the research findings in detail. This section returns to those findings offering a more critical assessment of their meanings. The data is discussed in relation to each research theme and ties are made between the findings, results from existing research, and the policy and theoretical backgrounds presented in earlier chapters.

THEME ONE: SOCIAL INTERACTION, COMMUNITY AND CONFLICT

Chapter Two discussed the social benefits attributed to mixed tenure development and the role of tenure mix in social inclusion and community sustainability. One of the aims of New Labour's neighbourhood renewal policy was to rebuild community in deprived social housing estates as community—or the 'social fabric' that binds the residents of a neighbourhood together—is presumed to be lacking in these areas. Tenure mix was one of the policy tools New Labour employed in its community building efforts. The social mix that is thought to occur through tenure diversification was to provide opportunities for cross-tenure interaction, expand a community's social capital network and help reconnect the socially excluded with mainstream society. As the findings of this research demonstrate, however, neighbourhood regeneration can have negative as well as positive benefits for local residents.

Social interaction

This is especially true in relation to claims that tenure mix increases levels of social interaction. Although tenure diversification was not a main priority for the CVHAT, the organisation did take steps to further diversify tenure on the estate through, for example, a self-build project, a Tenants Incentive Scheme offering homebuyer grants, and the construction of new build properties for sale (Mornement, 2005). These efforts, combined with tenant purchases of existing homes through the Right-to-Buy scheme, had the effect of creating a better street level mix of owners and tenants in some of the estate's neighbourhoods, a factor Jupp (1999) notes as essential for fostering cross-tenure socializing. The regeneration programme also created a number of venues in which social interaction could take place. A local park was built in the centre of the estate, a community centre was developed, and improvements were made to a local shopping centre. Community events are regularly on offer, including an annual community festival, and a variety of neighbourhood groups were established to encourage resident participation in the community. All of these are mechanisms through which levels of both informal and formal social interaction among local residents may be facilitated.

However, as the findings of this research demonstrate, the regeneration programme has had varying effects on social interaction levels for local residents, with differential impact on casual and intimate social relations. The regeneration appears to have had a positive impact on informal interaction levels. Comments such as "you can't get out without meeting someone you know" (*resident-employee*) and "even if someone doesn't know your name they will recognize you when you pass...and stop to chat" (*resident*) suggest that

casual social interaction is a common occurrence in the community. The increase in informal interaction appeared particularly beneficial for one respondent who used to reside in one of the estate's former tower blocks, an experience she described as socially isolating. For this respondent, the decreased residential density achieved through the regeneration has provided new opportunities for social interaction with her neighbours. She frequently encounters them while passing through the communal entrance to her building and while outside in her garden. Her comments suggest that there is some truth to environmental determinist theories in planning, such as those presented by Jacobs (1961) and Coleman (1985) (and discussed in Chapter Two), which suggest that physical design may have a direct influence on social interaction patterns.

Intimate social interaction, however, appears to have been negatively affected by the regeneration process, at least for some of the interview respondents. Two respondents, Amy (*resident-employee*) and Tammy (*resident-employee*), reported a decrease in more intimate neighbouring activity. For Amy, this decrease in intimate interaction was a conscious choice. Her job entails a great deal of social contact with local residents throughout the day. As a result, she views her home as a form of escape and discourages visiting by neighbours; in effect, she does not want to be bothered. She also reported a general decrease in neighbouring activity in Castle Vale noting that residents no longer "pop into peoples' houses", a common activity she remembers from her childhood. This finding is not unique. A recent study undertaken by Chaskin and Joseph (2009) of three HOPE VI sites in the US, found similar attitudes to intimate social relations among residents interviewed for their research. In their report, the authors note that most of the residents they spoke

with enjoyed casual contact with their neighbours and were satisfied with maintaining that level of interaction. Additionally, the authors note that most of these casual interactions did not include instrumental exchanges of, for instance, practical information or personal favours. Atkinson and Kintrea (2000: 96) suggest that 'contemporary life is becoming more home-centred or private, rather than taking place in the...communal realm' a view which this finding appears to support.

Tammy identified two aspects of the regeneration programme as contributing to the decrease in her neighbouring activity. The first was her relocation to a new housing unit, a move which disrupted many of the close, supportive social ties she had formed with her previous neighbours over a number of years. As Tammy mentioned, the CVHAT made some effort to keep social ties intact by offering tenants the opportunity to choose their neighbours during the rehousing phase. However, entire neighbourhoods seldom relocated together and the new neighbourhoods mixed residents from different areas from across the estate. This resulted in many of Tammy's intimate social ties being disrupted and she was unable to feel settled in her new home. Although she now lives in a neighbourhood that she considers to be her "social circle", she has yet to form with her current neighbours the types of socialising and supportive neighbouring relationships she engaged in prior to the regeneration. But relocation within the estate may not have been the most important factor affecting Tammy's social interaction. She also cited changes in her personal circumstances as a cause. As Tammy explained, prior to the regeneration most of her social interaction was with her neighbours and was based on what she described as common "circumstances... something that brought us all together". As the CVHAT became more established on the

estate, she took an active interest in the regeneration programme and took advantage of the opportunities offered through the CVHAT. As a result, her personal circumstances changed and she grew apart from many of her long-time friends. Today, Tammy's intimate social circle is focused on contacts made through her place of employment, her community participation activities, and within family relations; in other words, with individuals who share her interests and aspirations.

Tammy's views regarding the changes in her social interaction patterns raise two interesting and important issues. As noted in Chapter Two, the community studies conducted in the 1950s and 1960s (e.g. Young and Willmott (1957) and Jennings (1962)) highlighted the negative impact of large-scale demolition and relocation of communities on close-knit family and friendship ties. The results of these studies influenced the shift in urban regeneration policy away from slum clearance towards housing rehabilitation and community development so that such social ties could be maintained. The CVHAT also took steps to retain existing social ties within Castle Vale through, for example, ensuring all tenants had the option of remaining on the estate after the regeneration programme ended and offering tenants the opportunity to choose their neighbours during the rehousing phase. However, Tammy's comments demonstrate that even inter-community relocations can disrupt supportive social networks, a finding similar to other research indicating that spatial proximity is an important factor in social interaction (Atkinson and Kintrea, 1998, Beekman et al., 2001, Cole et al., 1997, Jupp, 1999, Page and Boughton, 1997). These studies, however, were concerned with the factors affecting the formation of cross-tenure social

ties; what this research suggests is that a better understanding of how intimate social relations can be maintained may be needed.

The second issue raised by Tammy's story relates directly to mixed-tenure policy objectives. Tenure diversification is presumed to lead to cross-tenure interaction simply by virtue of the two groups residing together in the same neighbourhood (Atkinson and Kintrea, 2000, Silverman et al., 2005). However, Tammy's view that her social circle has formed around common interests and concerns suggests that more than propinquity is necessary for the creation of supportive and instrumental social ties. In terms of mixed-tenure policy, this finding suggests that the social and cultural differences characterising social tenants and higher-income homeowners may act as barriers to cross-tenure interaction, a conclusion also reached by van Beckhoven and van Kempen (2003) and Kleit (2005) whose research indicates that regular social interaction arises from commonalities in lifestyles, values or socioeconomic status. Jupp (1999) suggests that length of residency may help overcome this barrier to building more intimate social relations as long-term residency provides opportunities for residents to get to know each other and discover commonalities. Tammy's story, however, demonstrates that time itself may not be enough to foster intimate, supportive relationships between neighbours. Even after ten years in her current residence—and a lifetime living on the estate—Tammy has yet to expand her intimate social network beyond her family, work place and resident participation activities.

Overall, the findings from this research demonstrate that regeneration activity can have differential impact on social interaction. The CVHAT programme appears to have been

most successful at supporting the creation of casual social relations between residents throughout the estate. There was some indication that the increase in casual interaction may have been beneficial for residents who felt socially isolated prior to the regeneration. However, there was little evidence that these casual social relations have led to more intimate and constructive forms of interaction between residents. These types of relationships take time to form, but they are also influenced by spatial proximity, perceived commonalities with neighbours and individual life-style choices. These findings suggest that expectations of wide-spread mutually supportive interaction arising through neighbourhood renewal are, perhaps, unrealistic a finding that has implications for efforts to create a sense of community.

Community and belonging

What do the interviewees' differing experiences with social interaction imply for efforts to build community in Castle Vale? One factor used to measure levels of community is the amount of social capital ties present in a neighbourhood. As discussed in Chapter Three, New Labour's neighbourhood renewal policy was heavily influenced by Putnam's (1995) theory of social capital. He defines social capital as the 'networks, norms and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit' (*ibid*: 67), and identified two forms of network ties, bonding and bridging. Bonding ties are those formed around intimate relationships, such as family and friendship networks. They are the types of social ties that lead to feelings of solidarity and belonging. Bridging ties, on the other hand, are based on weaker social interaction and help build trust, strengthen social cohesion and provide access

to resources not readily available to a community. It is this form of social capital that is believed to be essential for sustainable regeneration.

Temkin and Rohe relate bridging social capital to the 'institutional infrastructure' (1998 cited in Cole and Goodchild (2001): 355) of a community, or the presence of active community groups and the communication between them. A variety of community groups have been created in Castle Vale and some do appear to have been influential in creating bridging social capital ties. Of the 23 residents interviewed for this study, all but three of them are actively involved in one or more of the community groups in Castle Vale. Participation in some of these groups provides local residents access to housing management and local government officials. The Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) established by Merlin Venture is a good example. CAG membership includes both owner-occupiers and tenants, as well as elected representatives of the Birmingham City Council. The local councillors regularly attend the CAG meetings, take note of the resident members' concerns and report back to the group on progress in addressing these issues. This membership arrangement does appear to have increased residents' levels of bridging social capital through face-to-face contact with members of local government, albeit only for those residents who participate in the CAG.

Other participation structures, however, may be prohibitive to bridging network formation. Neighbourhood groups have been formed to represent various areas on the estate. Membership in these groups is limited to residence within specific neighbourhoods and even, as in the case of the Leaseholders Group, within a particular tenure. There was

no indication throughout the fieldwork that these groups interact in any meaningful way with each other or with non-members. Meeting minutes are distributed solely to group members and neighbourhood groups did not appear to coordinate action to address community issues, despite the groups having many common concerns. And there is some indication that the participation structures have created tensions between community groups, most notably between the 2005 Group and the TRA, which may be preventing constructive bridging ties forming between the two groups. To overcome these barriers, it may be necessary for the CVCHA to take active steps to foster bridging network formation. One possible solution would be to create an open access, web-based repository for community group information. The website could include documents, such as group membership lists and meeting minutes, that could be accessed by all local residents. The information provided on the site would allow local residents to connect with groups and other individuals who share similar interests and concerns.

In terms of interviewees' perceptions of community, the results are mixed. Five respondents reported an increased sense of community in Castle Vale, which they indicated could be observed through the increase in social interaction among local residents and their neighbours. Two interviewees indicated that Castle Vale has always been characterised by a strong sense of community. And one resident interviewed for this study, Sarah (*estate resident*), suggested that local residents have a strong sense of community but no community spirit. Sarah's differentiation between 'sense of community' and 'community spirit' is important. According to Putnam, a sense of community arises through an increase in non-intimate, bridging social capital ties, the types of ties formed through membership in

community organisations. Sarah, one of the most active residents interviewed for this study participating in six community groups since 1993, has a social network rich in bridging ties. If, as Putnam suggests, these weak ties are the foundation of community sentiment, we would expect Sarah to associate community participation activities with her sense of community. However, her comments seem to suggest that community sentiment is based in more intimate, bonding social capital relationships. Research from Kasarda and Janowitz (1974) came to a similar conclusion. In a study examining community attachment they found that participation in formal organisations, such as community groups, had a strong influence on an individual's interest in community affairs but almost no effect on community sentiment or an individual's desire to remain within a community. A sense of community was, instead, most affected by the number of local friendship ties an individual had within their community. This finding questions the high importance attributed to bridging social capital in developing community. While such ties may be beneficial for creating links between a community and external resources, and for creating latent structures for collective action, they do not appear to be instrumental in fostering the community attachment believed necessary for neighbourhood stability.

What role did the regeneration programme play in building community? As the above discussion suggests, respondents views varied. Two resident respondents indicated that the regeneration programme had no effect on community. They suggested that Castle Vale has always been characterised by a high level of community spirit, which has remained unchanged since the regeneration programme ended. Three interviewees, however, did credit the estate's regeneration with creating a sense of community in Castle Vale. Two

specific regeneration related factors were cited as helping to build community. Firstly, improvements in the estate's physical and socioeconomic environment were cited as improving community spirit. As one respondent noted, community spirit appeared to decline in tandem with the deteriorating physical and socioeconomic environments on the estate, "people lost hope within themselves". As the quality of local housing and the environment began to improve, and employment opportunities returned, the residents of Castle Vale began to take to pride in their community and in themselves. Secondly, one interviewee identified the support programmes offered by the CVCHA as helping to create a sense of mutuality between the residents of Castle Vale. This respondent credited the telephone support network, Telebuddies, as helping to reconnect socially isolated residents within the community and creating an atmosphere in which local residents are beginning to care about each other.

But several interviewees suggested that the regeneration of the estate has actually led to a decrease in community spirit. Two explanations were provided for this decline. Five respondents (a mixture of residents, resident-employees and community workers) attributed the improvements secured through the regeneration programme to the decrease in community spirit; local residents now have nothing to fight for and feel no reason to get involved in community activities. Here, again, the distinction between 'community' and 'community spirit' is important. During interviews, all interview respondents were asked whether they felt there was more or less community on Castle Vale since the regeneration. The term 'community' was used in a generalised sense so that the interviewees could define community in their own terms. It was not, perhaps, surprising that the community workers

identifying a decrease in community would measure community in terms of resident participation activity. As employees of the CVCHA and other community organisations, their perceptions may have been partially influenced by the government's prioritization of resident participation in regeneration and estate management practices. The distinction was significant in the views presented by the residents and resident-employees. Two of these respondents have strong ties to the estate, identify strongly with the community and indicated that they would never consider moving away from Castle Vale. They were both concerned, however, with the possibility that without widespread resident participation in community activities, the positive change residents had fought so hard for in the past may begin to deteriorate. This findings does lend some support to Putnam's and policy makers' claims that bridging social capital (or institutional infrastructure in Temkin and Rohe's (1998) terms) does play an important role in community sustainability. The resident participation structures in Castle Vale provide a means through which local residents are able to challenge the quality of estate management and other local services, demand improvements where necessary and influence change in their neighbourhoods.

But institutional infrastructures may also inhibit the creation of wide-spread community spirit. Several interviewees spoke negatively of the impact community participation and resident engagement structures in Castle Vale have had on community spirit. One respondent noted that prior to the regeneration Castle Vale had been characterised by high levels of community spirit but lacked formal community groups. Another respondent followed up this view by stating that the regeneration programme had replaced community spirit with community engagement. Their comments suggest that, at

least for these two respondents, an active interest in community affairs arises from the grassroots level in response to a perceived need. Two other respondents suggested that the formalisation of participation has reduced community spirit. As they both explained, the current participation structures have placed responsibility for the scrutiny of estate management and maintenance practices in the hands of a core group of committed and active resident representatives. This has, they believed, led to a decreased sense of community responsibility among a majority of Castle Vale residents. The participation structures were also criticised for promoting the work plans of the CVCHA and other local service providers. In the views of one respondent, too many of the long-term active residents have become 'yes people' serving simply as agents of the CVCHA and no longer represent the interests of the wider community. This lack of community-wide representation has been acknowledged by the CVCHA who have, as a consequence, undertaken a review of the estate's resident participation and engagement structures. Initial steps to broaden resident participation have been taken, most notably the decision to set limits on the number of years residents may serve as representatives on the CVCHA Board. This is a change that may encourage previously inactive residents to get involved in community affairs and reinvigorate feelings of community responsibility. However, as will be discussed in more detail later on, engagement efforts may be inhibited by residents' perceptions of exclusion from participation structures.

Residents' sense of community and their perceptions of overall levels of interaction appeared to have little influence on their sense of identity with Castle Vale. All of the residents and resident-employees interviewed for this study spoke highly of the estate and

expressed pride in living there. In fact, two of the interviewees who noted a decrease in their intimate social interaction were quick to state they could not imagine living anywhere other than Castle Vale. However, there was some indication that intimate social ties, severed through aspects of the regeneration process, may have negatively impacted some residents' feelings of belonging. Carol was one such resident; many of her long-term friends moved away from the estate during the regeneration programme. This has led to her feeling nostalgic for "the old days".

Other changes brought about through the regeneration process may also be affecting feelings of belonging. The redeveloped shopping centre was cited by one interviewee as a community resource that serves outsiders more than the residents of Castle Vale. And there is some indication, as a comment posted to the community website implies, that the changes and an influx of new residents to the estate has created resentment among some long-term residents. This resentment may be partially due, as Amy (*resident-employee*) suggested, to housing issues on the estate. Since the estate's regeneration, Castle Vale has become a community sought after by families in search of social housing. This popularity has led the housing association to close its housing waiting list to new applicants. Additionally, through the regeneration programme, residential density on the estate has decreased by 17.5 percent. This decreased density, high demand for housing, low tenant turnover (less than 100 units per year, according to one resident-employee) and an agreement with the Birmingham City Council that fifty percent of available housing units will be offered to families on the Council's housing waiting list means that fewer residential units are available for local young people who wish to become independent. It is this potential

severing of family ties that Amy believes is influencing some residents' feelings of belonging. This finding provides partial support for Putnam's assertion that intimate, bonding social ties underpin feelings of belonging, but suggest that other factors influence that feeling as well.

The interviewees expressing the strongest sense of identify with Castle Vale have all lived on the estate for long periods of time (from 18 to 42 years). One respondent was born on the estate and has never lived in any other community. As she was one of the interviewees reporting a decrease in her intimate social interaction since the regeneration programme ended, it may be a lifetime of experiences and memories that influence her connection to the area. But the characteristics of a community also appear influential. How closely local services and facilities meet an individual's needs, and how similar other local residents' values and lifestyles are perceived to be, play a part in feelings of belonging. The findings also suggest that community building is an ongoing process that extends far beyond the lifespan of any government funded regeneration initiative, and that it requires a flexible approach. While resident engagement was successful in creating a sense of community spirit during the regeneration programme, the same approach now appears to be having a negative impact on feelings of community responsibility and efforts to promote social interaction. There is another factor that may be inhibiting community building efforts, as well—the social divisions present within the community. These divisions are discussed below.

Conflict

This research identified eight social divisions that may be having a significant impact in the community. Four of these divisions ('Established' and 'Outsider' relations, racial and ethnic tensions, older residents and young people, and the respectable and non-respectable poor) have implications for increasing community cohesion on the estate. The Local Government Association (LGA) (2002: 6) defined a community as cohesive when:

- there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;
- the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued;
- those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and
- strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

While the focus of the LGA definition was on promoting racial and ethnic tolerance, their definition of cohesion is applicable to Castle Vale as well. The four divisions identified above appear to be acting as barriers to social interaction and, possibly, the assimilation of some residents into the community.

As indicated in the previous discussion, individuals and families newly arriving to Castle Vale may not be easily accepted by long-term residents. This is partly due to feelings of resentment towards the newcomers but, as three interviewees suggested, may also be due to long-term residents' wariness of strangers. Racial and ethnic intolerance was also identified as a barrier to integration and acceptance. This finding may be particularly important for any attempts by the CVCHA to diversify the resident racial/ethnic composition on the estate. Castle Vale is a predominantly white community. While there are a number

of African Caribbean families residing on the estate, several respondents felt that the acceptance of these families into the community has been aided by their long-term residency in the area. There was some concern from interviewees that new minority families could experience racial and ethnic intolerance from local residents. Lack of interaction between older residents and the young people in Castle Vale was also identified as a barrier to creating positive relationships throughout the community. Fear, due to negative stereotyping of young people through the media, was the primary reason cited for the lack of intergenerational interaction.

An interesting finding was the distinction one respondent made between families receiving benefits as a result of some misfortune and those for whom receiving benefits appears to be a lifestyle choice. Another respondent offered a similar view suggesting that some residents have, what she called, a “council estate mentality”—a mentality that she described as having no aspirations, no job, no money and a predilection for criminal behaviour. These comments echo Murray’s (1990) description of the underclass and have significant implications for community cohesion and the social inclusion benefits attributed to mixed-tenure policies. As Atkinson and Kintrea (1998) and Kleinmans (2004) note, nearly all of the social benefits associated with tenure diversification are expected to occur through social interaction. The perceived cultural differences identified by these respondents, however, may prevent any social interaction from occurring between socially excluded households and other estate residents. If, as Tammy (*resident-employee*) (see Chapter Six) suggested, benefit recipients are considered “the scum of the earth...the lowest of the low” by other members of the community, establishing strong and positive relationships (LGA,

2002) between the two groups may prove difficult. Benefit recipients risk becoming labelled as undesirable and being further excluded within their own community.

One objective of this research was to determine the impact of regeneration on the social structure in Castle Vale. Specifically, it sought to ascertain whether the regeneration programme restructured the community in such a way that new social divisions had been created or existing divisions strengthened as a result of the initiative. As discussed above, the regeneration programme does appear to have affected social relations between long-term residents and newly arriving households. Several other social divisions were also identified that are related to the estate's regeneration. One of these divisions is represented by tensions between homeowners and tenants. While these tensions were present prior to the regeneration—a division recognised by the CVHAT and a factor underpinning their tenure diversification efforts (Mornement, 2005)—several interviewees indicated that the regeneration programme served to strengthen the divide. Many of Castle Vale's homeowners felt neglected by the CVHAT and resentful of the improvements made to the CVHAT owned properties. This division between homeowners and tenants appears to have been further strengthened by the resident engagement structures implemented by the CVHAT. Initially, two resident groups were created one to represent the interests of the estate's owner-occupiers and the other group addressed landlord-tenant issues. One interviewee indicated that, through this structure, the competing interests of homeowners and tenants were accentuated and tensions between the two groups intensified. In 1998, the two groups merged, becoming the Tenants and Residents Alliance (TRA), and now represents all residents in Castle Vale regardless of tenure. However, as a commenter on

the community website noted, the name of organisation may still be divisive. The distinction between tenants and residents in the organisation's title may suggest differences in status between owner-occupiers and tenants.

The resident engagement structures were also identified as an explanation for tensions between the TRA and another community group created during the regeneration, the 2005 Group. The CVHAT created the 2005 Group over concerns that the TRA was at risk of dissolving. The TRA remained intact and, as one interviewee indicated, has felt a certain level of resentment towards the 2005 Group. This resentment, along with personality clashes between the leaders of each groups, means that the two groups often refuse to work together. One final, and significant, division resulting from the regeneration must be noted. As discussed in Chapter Six, the active involvement of some residents with the CVHAT and the CVCHA appears to have distanced them from the community. As one respondent noted, her employment with the CVHAT led to her being labelled as a "HAT spy" by members of the TRA, a label that subjected her to harassment and affected her living arrangements as well. And one interviewee's current status as a CVCHA employee appears to be affecting his status as a resident member of the community.

These findings highlight the role of regeneration in creating community conflict. While social divisions are present in all communities, entrenched divisions such as those discussed above, can act as barriers to community cohesion and collective action, as well as make new residents' assimilation into the community difficult. They may also lead to exclusion through labelling. Although some of the social divisions identified through this

research predated the CVHAT, several aspects of the regeneration programme do appear to have created new ones. The findings suggest that knowledge of a community's social structure may be needed prior to an area's regeneration so that community cohesion efforts can be built into the programme. Practitioners also need to be sensitive to the potentially divisionary effects of resident participation activities and take steps to minimize any tensions that may arise.

CULTURE CHANGE

The findings discussed above have implications for New Labour's pursuit of a culture change in deprived communities. As discussed at the beginning of Chapter Seven, a report released by the Cabinet Office (Knott et al., 2008) identified the role of cultural capital—our 'attitudes, values, aspiration and sense of self-efficacy' (*ibid*: 6)—in promoting social mobility and self-efficacy, raising aspirations and supporting community sustainability. The culture change component of neighbourhood renewal policy was associated with the New Labour government's efforts to promote responsible citizenship, a form of citizenship based on opportunities and obligations—opportunities created by government that individuals are obliged to pursue. In return for the opportunities provided by government, individuals 'accept the responsibility to respond, to work to improve themselves' (Blair, 1996). New Labour attributed social exclusion to individuals' failures to accept this responsibility. The local community is often blamed for this failure as the social relations embedded within community are the source of shared values, mutual obligation and responsible citizenship (Flint, 2004, Levitas, 2005, Rose, 2000); area deprivation and social exclusion occur when

there is a breakdown in these social relations. To restore balance, community must be rebuilt and responsible citizenship fostered through culture change. This research examined two aspects of culture change: empowerment, which is the focus of research *Theme Two*, and aspirations the focus of research *Theme Three*. The findings related to these themes are discussed below.

Theme Two: Empowerment

One way regeneration can enhance local cultural capital is through community empowerment initiatives. Two forms of empowerment were examined in this study: the empowerment of individuals through support programmes and empowerment through resident participation activities.

Castle Vale residents can access a broad range of support services, from victim support programmes or exercise courses to employment and job skills training, all of which can support local residents' efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and take control of their lives. All of the individuals interviewed for this study indicated that the current level of social service provision was significantly improved through the regeneration programme. They did not believe, however, these services are helping to empower all local residents. There was general agreement between the interviewees that not enough residents are taking advantage of the services available. A number of explanations were offered for this lack of take up with slight differences in explanations provided by the respondents who work in the community and the resident-interviewees.

Community workers highlighted problems with the local services themselves, identifying two potential issues. One concern was that there are possibly too many organisations serving the community. This issue was raised by two community workers and was believed to be creating confusion among local residents as to which organisation to approach for support. A local education provider indicated there is a lack of coordination of services between providers. This lack of coordination may result in a duplication of services, further adding to residents' uncertainty as to which organisation will best support their particular needs. But this respondent also indicated that local organisations are not communicating between themselves. This lack of inter-organisation communication was of particular concern for him as he believed that detailed knowledge of the support services each local organisation provides helps community workers refer residents to the most appropriate form of support. Inter-organisational communication may not be the only type of communication lacking in Castle Vale. One resident-employee suggested that residents' lack of knowledge about local services may explain why some individuals and families are not accessing services.

The residents interviewed for this study cited similar concerns about the social support services being offered locally, but for different reasons. One resident indicated it is not the amount of services being provided, but that the available services are not what local residents need. At the time of our interview, this respondent was trying to start his own business but had not sought assistance or advice from the local business support organisation as he believed the organisation, Merlin Venture, was no longer in operation. Merlin Venture is still providing advice and support services for local residents, although

they have relocated their business premises to a site off of the estate. Another resident did indicate that the number of services provided locally may be disempowering residents. This respondent suggested that an over-provision of services locally may be reducing residents' sense of self-responsibility and efficacy as they assume a local service provider will resolve their issues for them. Finally, one resident disagreed with suggestions that a lack of service use is due to a lack of knowledge. This respondent highlighted a variety of sites in which local residents can find notice boards advertising community services and events and suggested, instead, that lack of personal initiative may explain why some residents fail to access the support they need.

Several conclusions can be drawn from the above discussion. Firstly, the one resident interviewee's misunderstanding of Merlin Venture's operating status suggests that communication may, in fact, be an issue within the community. Although, as one resident suggested, there are a variety of communication channels through which local residents can access information about local services, they may not be reaching all residents in Castle Vale. It may be appropriate to, as a local head teacher suggested, inform local service providers and support workers of all of the services available, as well as the types of services each community organisation provides. But at the very least, providing local education providers with this type of information would be beneficial since, as mentioned in Chapter Seven, teachers are often the first to recognise potential issues within families. Communication and coordination between service providers may also need to improve. Reducing duplication of services would help clear some of the confusion community workers identified as a barrier to empowerment. And enhanced communication between local organisations may aide

early identification and resolution of family problems. Finally, care must be taken to balance service provision with efforts to promote resident self-efficacy. This balance may be difficult to achieve but is essential. Some services provide vulnerable households with crucial support and should not be removed from the community. However, other programmes like the door-to-door employment initiative discussed in Chapter Seven, may remove any incentives individual's may have toward self-efficacy.

The other route to empowerment examined in this research was the estate's resident participation structures. There was widespread agreement among the interviewees that resident participation in the regeneration programme was beneficial to community empowerment. The participation structures were credited with giving residents "a voice" and creating an atmosphere in which residents feel that "what they do matters". Involvement with the regeneration process led several interviewees to pursue further education and new careers, including employment with local organisations. Several respondents expressed concern, however, that the participation structures currently in place may no longer be acting as tools for empowerment. Many of the residents, community workers and resident-employees interviewed for this study expressed concern about a perceived level of apathy among local residents identified by a decrease in the level of resident participation in community groups. One possible reason cited for this apathy is that there are, simply, no big issues the community needs to tackle. The time required for effective participate was also mentioned as a possible explanation for the decrease in interest.

The more interesting finding is the suggestion offered by two resident-employees that the participation structures may be disempowering for local residents. Three primary concerns were raised in relation to this issue. Firstly, one respondent suggested that the resident representatives may have become overly reliant on the efforts of official organisations to address community issues. He was particularly concerned that the TRA has moved from a resident volunteer-led organisation to one directed by paid officers. This change in organisational structure, the respondent suggested, created an atmosphere that appears to have decreased resident representatives sense of responsibility. Secondly, an interviewee suggested that many community groups have become too self-interest oriented. This concern appeared to be an issue related more to specific group leaders and officers than with the groups themselves. Thirdly and, perhaps, more significantly, this respondent suggested that many local residents perceive the participation structures to be exclusionary. This was an issue addressed briefly in the discussion about community but has significant implications for community empowerment. The core group of long-term active residents has, the respondent suggested, created the perception among sectors of the community that representative bodies are exclusive and exclusionary. This perception may be preventing some local residents from taking an active interest in the community due to feelings that they will be actively prevented from fully participating in influential structures. While the CVCHA has taken steps towards opening up these structures to all residents, additional action may be needed to help reverse this perception.

Theme Three: Aspirations

During this research, low levels of resident aspirations were identified as an ongoing concern for Castle Vale. The education provider interviewed for this study spoke about the struggles he and his staff have in raising the aspirations of his students. While his school teaches a range of values to the students, including personal achievement, he feels these values are not supported throughout the community. He was particularly concerned that many of his students' parents do not place a high value on education and are not encouraging their children towards high education attainment. He was also concerned that there may be a lack of role models in the community that young people could interact with. Another community worker was less concerned about a lack of role models than with some young people's lack of basic social skills, skills this respondent noted were necessary for young people to achieve any aspirations they may have. Finally, one community worker expressed concern that the poor economic climate may limit the aspirations of younger residents and create a generation of workless families. This concern was shared by one resident interviewee, although she suggested a lack of ambition and appropriate role models may be the cause.

Other interviewees expressed more positive views about local aspirations. One resident-employee suggested that the opportunities offered through the regeneration programme had encouraged many of her former neighbours to attend university and find new careers. And two resident respondents firmly disagreed with the idea that Castle Vale lacks role models for the younger generation. Both respondents highlighted the achievements of estate residents noting that individuals who grew up on the estate and

attended local schools had gone on to attain management positions with international companies, that one had become a successful graphic artist and that their own son is now the Director of Music for a large church in the United States. The problem was not, according to these respondents, a lack of role models but that stories of residents' successes are not shared with the estate's younger generations. This finding highlights the importance of overcoming the social divisions identified previously. Forging positive links between social groups that do not currently interact constructively, such as the older and younger people in Castle Vale, may provide the role models believed necessary to raise aspirations and secure culture change.

RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

Several conclusions can be drawn from this research, which have implications for both regeneration policy and housing management practices. And there lessons to be learned from the research process adopted as well. This section presents a discussion of these implications and suggestions for future research.

Policy Implications

Four policy related issues can be drawn from this research. The first is related to the social capital goals of mixed-tenure policies. The community development aspect of New Labour's neighbourhood renewal policy placed a high value on social capital formation facilitated through tenure diversification. The administration was particularly interested in the creation of bridging social capital ties between higher-income homeowners and lower-income social tenants. Such ties, policy makers believed, would foster community cohesion

and build a sense of community among local residents. However, while social capital formation is an important component in the creation of sustainable communities, the findings of this research suggest that the prominence given to bridging social capital ties in neighbourhood renewal policy may be misplaced. Policy makers often downplay the importance of intimate, bonding social capital ties perceiving them as hostile, insular and barriers to cohesion and building a sense of community. As this research demonstrates, however, bonding ties are of equal importance in creating community sentiment and stability. In contrast to bridging ties, which foster interest in community affairs and create the latent structures necessary for future collective action (or what participants in this research referred to as 'community spirit'), bonding social ties underpin an individual's long-term connection with—and commitment to—a community. They are the types of bonds that foster a sense of belonging and without them, residents are not likely to take a long-term interest in community improvement activities. To create the stable, sustainable communities that mixed-tenure policies seek, greater recognition must be given to the role intimate social relationships play in community sustainability raising bonding social capital to same level of interest in regeneration policy as that of bridging social capital.

Secondly, this research calls into question the presumed role-modelling effects attributed to tenure diversification. While this is not a unique finding, the comments provided by resident interviewees suggest a change in policy focus is needed. Social exclusion rarely characterises all members of deprived communities, and Castle Vale is no exception. Interviewees were quick to highlight a number of local success stories, individuals who grew up on the Castle Vale estate and have gone on to pursue successful

careers in corporation management, the arts and music. Also, the lack of widespread social interaction between homeowners and tenants identified through this research may be preventing the desired role-modelling effects of tenure mix from arising. What these findings suggest is that neighbourhood renewal policies should focus less on injecting new, higher-income role models into communities and more on supporting the ones already there.

This research also demonstrates that community development is an ongoing process. Community cohesion and creating a widespread sense of community are long-term goals that may never be fully realised within the time frame of any regeneration project. The barriers are numerous, ever changing and sensitive to any changes made at the local level. As demonstrated through this research, regeneration activity may have a significant impact on community social relations, particularly in the development and strengthening of local social divisions. Community involvement structures implemented by the CVHAT, and continued by the CVCHA, were identified as enhancing tensions between tenures and creating rifts between at least two resident involvement groups. And several of the other social divisions identified in this research, such as those between the older and younger generations, and long-term and newly arriving residents, appear to be acting as barriers to widespread social interaction. These findings highlight the importance of integrating long-term maintenance of community development efforts into neighbourhood renewal policies from the start, including identifying sources of support for local community organisations once the regeneration funding ends.

Finally, participants in this study made a clear distinction between the concepts of ‘community spirit’ and of a ‘sense of community’. The former was associated with residents’ interest with, and involvement in, community management activities. A ‘sense of community’, on the other hand, was associated with a feeling of belonging. This finding suggests that policy makers must be clear about what they mean in terms of building a ‘sense of community’ in deprived areas.

Practitioner Recommendations

The implications for estate management practices are threefold and relate to issues of community empowerment and cohesion. The research findings suggest that communication problems may be a barrier to individual empowerment. There was some indication that the current methods of communication—the local newspaper, community organisation websites and message boards in local facilities—may not be reaching all sectors of the community. Also, communication between community service providers appears to be insufficient. This was especially true in relation to communication between local organisations and the local primary school. Communication is not always considered a major barrier to empowerment; however, as the research findings indicate, lack of information (or confusion) about local services may be preventing some of the most vulnerable families in Castle Vale from accessing appropriate levels of support. While some personal initiative may be expected in an individual’s search for information, efforts should be made to expand communication channels possibly utilizing other forms of digital media such as text messaging. In addition, regular means for communication between local service providers should be developed, such as monthly newsletters aimed specifically at

community workers or quarterly meetings where service providers can gather to exchange information. At the very least, a resource book should be created listing each local organisation and the services they provide that can be distributed to all members of the community.

The findings also suggest that current levels of local service provision may be disempowering for local residents. The regeneration programme brought a number of much needed services to the Castle Vale community; however, interviewees expressed concerns that the level of provision may now be too high. The fear is that with so many services on offer, local residents will lose any individual incentive to address personal issues themselves. While many of the social services provided locally offer essential support mechanisms for vulnerable families, care must be taken that the level of local supportive services provided does not decrease residents' sense of self-responsibility in life-management activities.

Finally, this research indicates that estate participation structures can inhibit resident empowerment and decrease community spirit. These negative effects appear to be related to two primary factors, the ways in which community groups are structured and the social divisions characterising the estate. In terms of group structures, interviewees expressed concerns about one local organisation moving from a volunteer led organisation to one managed by a paid staff. This move, it was suggested, has removed responsibility for community affairs from the residents. While the research findings can neither confirm or deny these perceptions, it is a factor worth examining and making changes if necessary.

A more important finding is associated with resident representation on housing management boards. Several community groups (the CVCHA, the CVCRS and NPB) include seats for resident representative members on their Boards of Directors who are selected through tenant ballot. At the time this research was conducted, the residents currently serving as elected board members were all long-time active members of the community. These individuals had been serving on a number of different board since the regeneration programme began and their continuation in these rolls appears to have created the impression among some sectors of the community that the participation structures are exclusionary. Or, as one interviewee described them, 'cliquey'. Another issue that was raised in relation to community participation structures was a lack of cooperation and communication between some community groups. This is especially true for the TRA and 2005 Group. The lack of cooperation between the two entities appears to stem from a social division that arose as a result of CVCHA action during the regeneration programme. In both cases, the findings indicate that the participation structures are having a negative impact on feelings of empowerment and community spirit. This finding highlights the importance of ensuring fair and equal access to participation structures. These structures should be regularly assessed and modified to ensure they meet the changing needs of the community and ensure open and fair access for all community members.

Ethnography in Policy Research

In Chapter Four, I outlined my rationale for adopting an ethnographic approach in this research. The reasons for doing so were both personal (a desire to expand my research skills training) and academic. Although the amount research examining neighbourhood

renewal is extensive, few studies have investigated the impact on local social structures and cultural systems, and what this impact means for sustainable community development. These issues were, I felt, best explored through an ethnographic case study approach. Such an approach would contextualise the research findings within the community environment, situating social change in residents' real-life experiences. In this section I reflect on the chosen methodology with a more critical eye, assessing the pros and cons of an ethnographic approach to policy research, and offer suggestions for future research.

Methodological Issues

Several important issues arose during the course of the fieldwork that have implications for the research findings and the use of ethnographic research in general. The first relates to the participant-observation methods that comprise a large portion of ethnographic studies. My original intent for this research had been to become as involved as possible with the Castle Vale community, attending community meetings on a regular basis, volunteering for community events and shadowing community workers for short periods of time. Through these activities, I would be able to engage with local residents and observe first-hand the types of social interaction that characterise the estate. The observations made through participant-observation activities were to enhance the data collected through interviews by offering a more objective, outsider perspective to the findings. However, my participation in community activities was limited. I was rarely able to attend more than three meetings held by any of the community groups, with the exception of the public meetings held by the 2005 Group and the NPB. My attendance at many other events, such as the Castle Vale Health, Environment and Democracy Day, were restricted to

an observational role limiting my engagement with local residents. Also, while I had secured agreements from the local Community Wardens that would me to shadow at least one warden on her rounds, attempts to arrange a week to do so fell short.

Two primary reasons may explain the difficulties I had in integrating with the community. Most importantly, I was a stranger to the local community. To many of the estate's residents, I was simply one more academic analysing the community and passing judgement. Although my American accent did help to initiate a number of conversations with local residents, the conversations were mainly one-sided, superficial and short-lived. Once their curiosity about American culture was satisfied, they moved on. This points to the importance of the second issue constraining participant-observation, the time-frame in which the fieldwork was conducted. Originally, the fieldwork was to be carried out over a 12-month period. Due to delays in securing the CVCHA's approval for the project (see Chapter Four for an explanation), the fieldwork period was reduced to a period of a little over nine months. This reduction in available fieldwork time had a significant impact on my ability to integrate with the community. Although I began attending community events and meetings almost immediately, I did not begin to make any meaningful contacts with local residents until approximately three months into the fieldwork. Reflecting back on the research process, I now feel that even 12 months is not enough time to adequately conduct an ethnographic study of this type. A minimum of 18 months (preferably 24 months) of active fieldwork would have provided a more sufficient amount of time for me to gain the trust of community members, develop more instrumental contacts within the community and become more fully immersed in community life.

Allowing more time to build trust between myself and the community would possibly have helped to overcome two other research issues as well, the propensity of interviewees to focus interview responses on only the positive aspects of the regeneration programme and the representation of my interview sample. The Castle Vale estate had suffered from a highly negative image prior to the estate's regeneration, a negative image that the community has actively fought to reverse for several decades. It was no surprise, therefore, that interviewees would want to emphasize the positive aspects of the community. However, this tendency did limit my ability to fully assess the amount of social divisions or other negative social changes brought about through the regeneration process. Having more time to build more intimate social relationships with local residents—to shift my role in the community from that of 'researcher' to 'friend'—may have resulted in more honest and reflective interview responses.

Developing trust with the community may also have increased the size and breadth of my interview sample. As discussed in Chapter Four, recruiting residents to participate in the interviewing process proved difficult. Despite efforts to recruit participants myself, through a variety of mechanisms (attending community group meetings, posting a letter in the community newspaper and on the community website, for example) I was only able to schedule interviews with three local residents. The remainder of the resident interviews were completed with the help of CVCRS staff. This has resulted in a resident sample characterised mainly by some of the estate's most active residents. It does not include the less active and harder-to-reach members of the community. This has limited the research findings in that they provide no insight into how the regeneration programme may have

influenced the activities and behaviours of the individuals in this category. While engaging with hard-to-reach households is not a problem unique to this research, it is one that may have been overcome with a longer presence in the community.

Finally, issues of confidentiality have limited one aspect of this research, situating the findings within the community's historical context. The protecting the confidentiality of Castel Vale residents was a primary concern of the CVCHA's. Assurances of the residents' confidentiality were made during my initial meeting with CVCHA employees, and efforts were made throughout this research to protect the confidentiality of the participants. Interviewee names have been changed, age ranges have been used to describe the research sample, interviewee addresses have been omitted, and every effort was made to exclude any personally identifiable data from the findings when it was possible to do so. This has also resulted in a lack of photographic illustrations of the physical and social changes that have taken place on the estate, as well as a photographic history of my fieldwork experience. The photographs that are included in Chapter Five include both archival photographs taken from a variety of print and digital media sources, and photographs supplied by the CVCHA. While these photographs provide a snapshot of the physical changes that have taken place in the community, they do not provide a comprehensive representation of community in Castle Vale.

Is Ethnography an appropriate tool?

Despite the research issues identified above, I do believe ethnography is a useful method in policy research, particularly in the examination of community social processes.

This research provides insight into an aspect of community regeneration and sustainable community development that has not been addressed by the research community. It moves beyond an analysis of programmes outputs to a consideration of the long-term impact of regeneration on community social and cultural processes themselves. Most importantly, this research has situated the findings within the world-view of the residents who experienced regeneration; the very people policy makers attempt to change through neighbourhood renewal policy.

There are, however, several steps I would take when carrying out a similar research project. As mentioned above, I would extend the active fieldwork period as much as possible in to facilitate relationship building activities. I would also find a means to produce a photographic record that accurately depicts the fieldwork experience while preserving community confidentiality. Additionally, I would expand the methods utilized in the research to incorporate a community wide social network survey and resident diaries into the data collection process. Social network surveys collect demographic data and information related to social interaction. Types of data commonly collected include, for example: the five persons an individual relies on most for assistance and the form of their relationship (family, friend, priest, etc.); the local facilities the resident utilizes most frequently; and the community groups the resident is most actively involved in. The survey would help to build a better picture of the social structures characterising the community. The diaries would contain a record of resident's daily activities (e.g., individual's they met with and their relationship to them, facilities they utilized) and personal reflections. The data collected through the diaries would enhance the social network data collected through

the survey, providing a more in-depth look at the meanings behind those relationships and enhancing the overall detail.

CONCLUSION

Ruming, Mee and McGuirk (2004) note that 'the ideology of community has come to represent an ideal solution to the myriad problems now confronting public housing' (2004: 246). The ideology of community was fully embraced by the New Labour government and the concept of community became a prime component of the government's neighbourhood renewal initiatives. Through their neighbourhood renewal policy, the New Labour government strove to transform deprived social housing estates into vibrant, socially cohesive, sustainable communities. Tenure diversification and the creation of social capital played key roles in achieving these policy goals. As this thesis has demonstrated, however, these outcomes of neighbourhood renewal policy are not guaranteed. While regeneration may provide deprived communities with an improved environment and better quality of life overall, the regeneration process may also harm communities by creating social divisions and conflict, outcomes that may inhibit the community building efforts and culture change deemed necessary for the development of sustainable communities.

The findings presented here, particularly those relating to social capital, social divisions and community spirit, provide important lessons for policy makers, lessons that continue to be relevant as the current Conservative-Liberal Democrat government pursues their Big Society agenda. Once again, social capital becomes the focus for empowerment

and the responsabilisation of socially excluded groups. Active participation in community affairs—by, say, volunteering for a local school, joining a neighbourhood group or participating in the new National Citizens Service—will usher in a new ‘culture of social responsibility’ (Cameron, 2008: 16) and, in the words of David Cameron, ‘...create communities with oomph – neighbourhoods who are in charge of their own destiny, who feel if they club together and get involved they can shape the world around them’ (2010: 5 of 10). A vision of British society that appears ignores the tensions inherent in every community; tension that, as this research demonstrate, can inhibit the creation of community spirit.

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APPENDIX

The following pages are selections from the fieldwork diary recorded throughout the research process. These specific pages were chosen as they offer a good representation of the types of entries made. The diary was used to record notes taken during interviews and informal conversations with community members, summaries of events and interviews, and observations made. Pages were updated on a regular basis, either daily or, if the week was particularly busy, at the end of the week. Items were often jotted down onto Post-It notes and returned to later for summary. Diary entries were also used during the data analysis process. They provided a means for comparing interviewer comments with those of other residents, as well as with my own observations and thoughts. Where necessary, names have been blackened out on these pages to help protect the confidentiality of community members.

NPS MTA 4/12/16

chaired by Lord Corbett

→ last minutes

① Signage problems

· lack of has created dangerous problem in past (emerg. svc. unable to find entrance)

② CCHA Strategic Review

- biggest thing = raising aspirations & skills (removing challenge)

③ 2005 Group

- safety
- parking - bad!
- toilets, urinals

· issues w/ sanitisation - complaint re: staff out front smoking, drinking coffee - people (mostly hygiene) concerned

· complaints re: nighttime callers - several incidences of callers in every ~~hour~~ - some using for bank details - nervous (Red Cross, apparently)

④ Public Safety

- warning letters sent: 152, only 17 for young ppl.
- crime levels lowest in 30 years.

⑤ Skills Training

- info from college provided, but not delivered
- talk re: skills needs, but perhaps not needed if ~~school~~ had been provided.

Relaxation Sessions
4; arrange
for coffee time
- several
- frequency

12/14

AM end of 2nd wk. Not terribly exciting - lots of getting acquainted w/ Sanctuary staff, reading through lots of stuff - pamphlets, newsletters, reports. Getting lost everytime I leave building. But today should be more interesting because it's...
SANTA'S GROTTO!

and got to play Santa's elf. Will overlook any friend comments re: about time I found a job appropriate for my night.

PM Right end of the day - and I'm TIRED!!! Way more work than any elf should have to do on a Sat. Something like 86+ families came to visit Santa. I have developed 'gift-giving' fatigue. So, on to the day -

Grotto is held in the Sanctuary. The decorate one small meeting room for Christmas, give Santa a comfy chair - tree behind. Santa is, apparently, always played by, G., a long-time CV resident. Nice guy, fairly active in community - he does this @ CVCHA Board. He showed up in jeans, Harley Dawson t-shirt - had no idea you could ride a Harley @ the North Pole. He added his Santa suit & sat @ his chair - for like 6 hours. So, the families would arrive @ the Sanctuary, had to the large room to sign up & pay fee - £1.50/kid. Photos w/ Santa could be purchased for an extra £1. Then they'd line up and wait their turn. Every child that visited Santa got a present when they were finished - no idea what they were, they were already wrapped

Various local groups/companies/orgs donated them.
All money went to a local charity. Everything seemed to run smoothly - or as smoothly as it could w/ 86 families and a bunch of excited children.

My conversations were pretty informal - I'm new so didn't expect much else. Santa explained they adopted the Grotto so local families had a Santa option they could afford. Always well attended. Residents volunteer to help out - provide refreshments, run a raffle, collect fee, conval kids. Seemed to be fun for all.

Two things to note. The first, not relevant to my stuff, but I thought it was cute. A woman brought her children in - 2 young ones (around 4 yrs) and her 10 year old son. The 2 little ones chattered to Santa about what they want for Christmas and what not. The 10 y.o. tried to play it cool though. He was too old to believe in Santa. Until Santa asked him what he wanted for Christmas. He still tried to act cool, but you could see he really wanted to believe. It was fun to watch.

The other was more interesting. A woman, her 9 yo son, & 3 yo daughter came in. Santa talked to them all; the son told Santa he wanted a Play Station for Christmas. Just that. Santa asked about any games for Play Station. The boy said "NO. It comes with a game already. That's enough until Mum goes back to work." Seems like 9 yo; understand the economy sucks. But his comment is interesting in the sense that I get a lot of comments re: kids here are irresponsible, don't care about anyone, they're just out to cause trouble, blah, blah, blah. Apparently however, not all of them.

14 FEB. - CAG MTG.

Masha came w/ son from Feb 11. [redacted] - [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] (local rep). [redacted] (who was non-verb) seemed to be returning to english & [redacted] for [redacted] from Nelson & one guy I couldn't see.

[redacted] & [redacted] agreed to meet w/ me re: Per. Involvement stuff. Have to email tomorrow or Friday to schedule.

Spoke w/ [redacted] before mtg. began. She was telling me that she was impressed w/ the work the HST did. How they were able to carry out the extensive regeneration while keeping residents in situ. And relatively happy.

→ P. finds this an issue for per. involvement / community spirit

manage, implement new housing mgmt/sys.
 report only, system admin.
 • understand what all about so integrate into whole system

*would be
 finance teams
 will w/ were
 maintenance*

begin CVCHA 2003
 on estate → 1990
 start @ council as clerical officer
 then repairs/maintenance
 asst. housing officer @ BCU
 then CVHAAT housing asst.
 & housing officer
 always had interest in IT, got certificate,
 2000 - secondment into Altona w/ implementation
 vs mo - but became permanent

*wid w/ attend @ that time
 interested in stories
 re: PCC. staff
 H2O fights, throw
 mpy. in skel
 now work - all
 plant*

CVCHA tenant since 2000

Born BMAA
 then Tamworth
 @ in 1970s - moved in w/ smear
 then Tamworth
 Back to CV

Early 1990s

car on fire - walked past pub mid-day (2.00) a
 July 3. Arrived w/ holes - went to news
 office - did I make a mistake? top block -
 run down - shop or was 'concrete nightmare' -
 covering an eye sore - rubbish, stray dog
 overgrown gardens - trees a tower block -
 stand office @ council watching fire -
 council cars stolen, delivery vans robbed

①

prostitutes - noise - lack of any control -
no working arrangements / cooperation -
staff spent more time playing than
working (water fights etc, manager in
skip) - it was a holiday camp -
no targets - no focus, no control

HAT - 94% of vote in favour - orig. plan
was to refurbish T.B. - concierge, nice
roof tops, colourful - not good for
affordable rent - kept 2 out of 34 (over
school) one = shelter scheme one =
majority block (40%)

specifically moved offices into
all school (comprehensive) - risk
of closing - lack of students -
help keep school running financially -
third payment - raise educ
std (key target)
attendance rose over yrs.
results improved

contractors
apathy comments

work of local bus - ensured board
had local bus members

health improvements - new health ctrs

police - key partner

change environment -> all looked
really bad

std. of living - quality of prop. @
enjoyment of area

ASB rule - gang ruled -
dominant families
intimidated others

trust

- team to combat
- witness support grps.
- eviction of key families

④

welfare officers - to support tenants

- helped some undesirable moved on (youth)
- decaying decreased trouble
 - BCE dumped on an estate
 - HAT took control of allocated
 - policed new tenants
 - background checks

1990s - no wait list, high void rates, took what was available

Now - wait list closed

centre of area (around pk) - high density
 new bldgs to accommodate tenants - problems
 still concentrated there & noted by E & others

Farnborough Rd redel. met name

1997 HAT - still problems -

2002 changed mind - support work - opportunities
 perceptions changing (community) -
 CCHA in place - real progress - housing
 application put in - great neighbors -
 quiet

P. applied

→ youth, control, order - issues every
 where
 • need to crack down more across
 board

supports poor
 image of Y.P.

• need more consequences
 → • social impact is big, culture
 of fear
 • gone from one extreme to the other

tenant rights - more of a community spirit
 • none (or few) yrs ago

• ABS groups

• now ppl. come together for all sorts of stuff

→ e.g. catch rabio @ Merlin @ police about happen

- ppl. now feel empowered
→ friendship, neighborly atmosphere, what they do matters

- key for communal living.

Rules, reg & enforcement when nec.

Most ppl. have @ approach to estate

- ops
- influence

can sit → 68% estate full/partial benefit
emotion & for tenants but still
lots of benefit.

power struggles → TRA one main factors to
push thru parish council stealthy —

- be truly rep, not have own agenda
- residents are constituents

→ other grps also let power go to head

→ 2005 grp more concerned w/ being represented

A Survival of
some comments on
Vick May's
site

→ probably gone off rails — should be
community tool — many avoid — feel
they have own agenda —

⑤

Purish Council was ex of own agenda -
others forced consultation & was rejected

No other major issues

Most get along well - lots of crossover
↓ *ref. to lack of broad representation
must be addressed

too many 'yes' ppl - need ppl to
challenge

tenant reps not rep. of community -
- perhaps term limits
to allow new blood in
- refocus
- redirect

conv. re: how to get about
board?

- very hard
- ex. me Spicer can
get 500 votes - one
less well known would
be locked out

- have contributed, but

- many feel why bother

• clique
• must be equal / fair
process to get involved

- Adeena went for board - lost by 4 votes -
but ran against other new person

①

30 yrs. (1978)

working - city ctr - for airline - Art & Design Course
A level art (history of)

→ felt she needed to do something
Now, she wants a rest

disability allowance last couple yrs.

Multi stories flat
never in them but looked Spanish - hotel -
litter, graffiti, broken glass, etc.

Lived in house up the road - moved to Helesowen
like it when no kids around

Shops in Erdington → feels Sainsbury too expensive, liked
old shoppy ctr.

Only in leaseholders
worked w/ Community Action Team w/ NAT
trip to London - got drunk - sick on Joan Laume's in
handbag.

→ 4 yrs. in hospital so doesn't drink now

Too much on mind to get involved
flat is big, gets tired moving around

there's been a disagreement btw. leaseholders & mgmt
£12 / yrs raised to £220 ⊕

→ got involved to know what was going on

why travel far when this is nice place - time enough
for that

like: convenience - must travel by bus to work -
biggest reason for coming here -

(2)

Angus Kennedy

Richard Temple - CX - made all laugh
'knew on CV when hubcaps were stolen'

↳ good crowd who worked here
made things right

No routine - shopping, whatever I want -

Going to London this weekend
Robert more

first exhibit was Monet
has traveled to France

Good example of
local vote models - lived
in Barcelona for # years,
studied, traveled -
why not hook ppl like
her w/ estate ppl.
* mental health issues,
but other exist

Used to go to lots of courses, always active
Now, after 4 yrs in hospital - nice to be
back in own surroundings

Returned to nice estate

- nice ppl.
- quiet
- bump into ppl - don't know name,
but nice when gone

Old Shop - rundown, but lots of stuff
- 'Cafe'

- always liked it - outside
perception's all alive
- supervisor once said
"Blinny, That's a horrible
place to live."

At Teddy Bear
Tea Party! Now
that was weird.
could have used a
'meal's up' for
this one.

24 MARCH 09 — [REDACTED]

(3)

[REDACTED] first moved to the estate approximately 30 yrs. ago. She liked the convenient location of CV in relation to downtown & the fact that there was a direct bus service. She was working for an airline at the time (Iberia?) and studying on an Art & Design course. She said she wasn't very good, but wanted something to do and, having studied A-levels Art History, thought it would be fun.

[REDACTED] is now retired so receives a pension. She also receives a disability benefit due to mental health issues. Several years ago, she told me she had a breakdown, was diagnosed w/ manic depression, and spent 4 years in hospital. She now attends regular appt. w/ health specialists, including an occupational Therapist to deal w/ her depression & diabetes.

When she first moved to the estate, there were quite a few highrise blocks. She said she used to be able to see the Centre & blocks from her living room window. Thought they looked like Spanish hotels - although hotels in Spain are more densely developed. She said there were problems w/ litter, graffiti, broken glass, etc. The shopping centre was run down, but the shops provided a lot of stuff. There was even a cafe where she could meet friends for a cup of coffee.

[REDACTED] has always enjoyed living on the estate but admits that ppl. who are not from here have rather negative opinions of CV. She said her old supervisor, upon hearing where she lived, stated 'Blimey! That's a horrible place to live!'. However, [REDACTED] likes the people in Castle Vale. The fact that, even if someone doesn't know your name, they will recognize you when you pass on the street is top to chat. She noted that when she returned from the hospital, several neighbours were happy to see her return. People miss each other when they're gone. She also likes CV best when there are no kids around.

(4)
At the moment [redacted] is only involved w/
the leaseholders group. - She likes being ~~back~~
'fewer responsibilities' since her return from
hospital. However, she had been an active ~~member~~
member of The Community Action Team during
the period of The HAT. She recalled on trip to
London w/ the group during which she got a bit
too drunk & then sick on the coach telephone.

[redacted] noted that there has ~~been~~
a bit of tension b/w the leaseholders & management.
She seems to feel it revolves around maintenance
fees - used to be £12/yr. now £220/yr. She got
involved w/ the group to keep up w/ what is
going on.

She said the ppl. who worked in The HAT were
good ppl. She seems to have especially liked
Richard Temple-Cox. But said it was a good
crowd who ~~was~~ made things right.

[REDACTED]

Met w/ [REDACTED] @ her home on a Thurs. morning. She & husband own their home on Stourneway Rd. Not sure how long they have lived there, and not sure if they purchased their right-to-buy. But I think so as [REDACTED] noted that 'This section of Turnhouse has ~~always~~ was owner-occupied, supported by the Council'

Any way, they live on a nice road. The houses and front gardens are well-kept. The [REDACTED] home is a good size - 2-bed (possibly) on 2nd floor w/ bath; a nice sitting room w/ lots of light, dining room, kitchen on first.

Initially, just [REDACTED] & I met. She gave me background on the various groups she's involved with -

1. The Scouts: she's a group leader & works w/ young people ages 6-18 - both boys & girls.
2. Young Stars - group of young ppl. from local church (30-40 of them) who perform @ various charity events. [REDACTED] is the group's treasurer.
3. Active Arts: community-based arts group
4. Local Church: helps w/ Spring & Christmas fairs @ Flower Festival.

[REDACTED] husband, joined us around this point. He, too, is a group leader w/ scouts - mostly explorers, I think. They're both rather active w/ the young people on CV. They seemed to feel it was important to get them involved in the local community & a young as this will help them develop a vested interest in the community. [REDACTED]

felt this 'interest in community' was a key ingredient in sustaining the positive changes on CV. They learn how important it is to take responsibility for their environment (physical, social, etc.), will work far into the future to keep things good, and will 're-educate' others to do the same.

4 she seemed to be suggesting that a good number of local residents simply didn't have the skills, knowledge or will to work for the good of CV as a whole. don't know if that is true or not

gave me a brief description of part-time on the Vale:

- Turnhouse was always owner-occupied, so didn't change during regeneration.
- There is a greater mix of tenures on the rest of estate (although I'm not sure if she meant now, or always).
- She thinks things are good now - everything is kept nicely.
- The middle of the estate used to be dominated by tower blocks, with more on Farnborough. 'The people who lived in them really liked them, despite what some say'

• In terms of perceptions, she doesn't think things were ever as bad on CV as the publicity made it out to be. She said local news have been petitioned to stop portraying CV so negatively. But, even if they do, figures it will be a long time before overall outsider perceptions change.

- she said she was on a coach trip w/ scouts & leaders, & the coach stopped in CV. non-CV'ers were amazed @ how quiet the estate was.

• CV did have a problem w/ drugs, which brought in other crime. Getting rid of the pubs helped a lot.

The [redacted] feel CV has some work to do to ensure they retain what they've got - to keep moving forwards. This can be done thru education. They would like to see the estate enhance what has been put in place, and to offer something for everyone.

They mentioned a planned development for the land backing onto the football field. It's not finished, but they claim it has an upmarket feel. I have no idea what they're talking about.

So, overall, a very successful mtg. Not what I went for - which was Mike's stuff - but good for me. I have #s for the 3 churches (+ contact names). Will join The Scouts as a volunteer. Am meeting w/ the Christian reading group (or something like that) on 1 June. And have promises to pull me into whatever they can - which may be quite abit since they seem to do everything.

Oh, & they own a holiday home in Devon. May have to ask about renting it sometime.

Found a note from 14 Feb CAG mtg:

[redacted] was, apparently, telling me she was impressed w/ the work done by the HAT. They did great job of carrying out the extensive regeneration while keeping residents in-situ - AND relatively happy.

Comments re: distexia education but relevant to broader area as this -

Much of training done in school-like settings. Many ppl. did not have good experience @ school, so probably won't take up courses. Must change approach.

Active Arts:
get funding
community groups
community-based (+)

4
Young Staff
Measure
Advisor

Church
- Member
- Spring Fair
- Christmas Fair
- Flower Festival

Explores
14-18

Tuesdays
6.45 - 8.15

→ church by ACHA
ring bell

*Pushy women!
To dismay of their
husbands!*

4 ppl. feel better

This section of Turahouse
was owner-occupied -
Council supported - always
stayed same (because
own.) - Miss on
rest - good - more
interest in estate -
way kept up very
nice - middle was
four blocks (+) Farm
brough Rd. - ppl in
them really liked
them despite what
some say - constantly
remind we all have
part to play

Outside perceptions
hard to change -
couch trip w/ Scouts -
analysis & quiet of estate -

Never as bad as publicity
made out - petition &
Newspaper's re: move -

drugs came in - stuff
fellows - got rid of
pubs

St. Cuthberts Reads Sup
June

Group was on 10 - 11.50/12 on Monday.
Sally / 8 women in attendance today - @ 2
who had to leave early. One joined group in
middle - for coffee & a chat mostly. Large pile
of books on table. Sort thru & choose a passage/
poem to read aloud. Lots of talking btw. reading. Very
enjoyable evening.

Most have lived in CV for a number of years
ranging from 5 - 40+. One came in from
Sutton Coldfield. All had very positive things to
say about CV - wonderful ppl. Clean, attractive;
convenient shops & buses to everywhere. One
is now w/ sister (C.). Previously lived in
Essex w/ daughter when her husband died.
Knew CV before. When she came back,
surprised @ change. Quite beautiful in
summer.

Was shown 1005 Squadron memorial, given tour
of church. I also talked re: previous shopping
ctr. - the variety of shops. Not sure if they
miss the variety, but seemed ok w/ Sainsbury.

Remember:
Story re:
dog in flat -
roof/ceiling leak
lead to
Reads grp.
GUY

Check on TV
falls in top car
true? or No?

~~I say~~
no

16/6

FINALLY made into Chip Shop. Burgers not too bad, didn't get chips. Talked to owners wife & son - mostly because they wanted to know about the US. My accent is all. Turns out maybe Greek Communist. Have lived in UK forever - kids born here, not sure about parents. Been on CV since before, reg. Some interesting stories about pre-reg. Kids used to play football in Shop roof (Gleed Square site). At least 1 fire was set up there. Wife's biggest concern was w/ drag racing stolen cars. Said she used to watch them race the stolen cars then ditch & burn them. Much happier now. But always liked CV & the ppl. That's why they decided to stay. Rest of convo related to US. Son loves NYC & wants to move there (they have family connections). Mom worried that if he goes, he won't marry a nice Greek girl. I assured her there are lots of Greek families in NY. Not sure I helped the son cause any, but I tried!

Should probably stop writing notes on bus. Can't read the damn thing later. Spent several days in library this week going thru CV archive. Not much better in it really. A few Council documents re: land transfer way back before original construction. All news items are about HAT and all positive. Brochure re: art show (local artist) was interesting. Painter had lived in CV pre-reg. His work illustrates his memories of CV - several of women w/ older & clip on Centre & balconies. Library staff thought show was horrible idea. Felt only good side of CV should be broadcast. Explains a lot about archive material. Goes against E's view that best needs to be taught so younger gen knows why it's important to be active in community.

Reading this it seems my writing not really better than on bus. No wonder my mom sometimes questions how I got thru school - teachers probably couldn't read 1/2 my assignments.

Chip Shop
→ Hottish
Greek Communist
(bad girl!) around while
drag racing - son
wants to move to
America

NERLIN VENTURE

- ① Merlin Venture formed w/ endorsement from CHAT, and tasked w/ the economic redevelopment of CV. They provide a range of services including: in terms of: skills training, education (numeracy & literacy), boosting morale, raising aspirations.

Merlin engages w/ local residents in a number of ways:

- ① Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) - set up in 2002 as a shadow board. There were no resident members on Merlin's Board at the time. CAG membership is voluntary. They receive same report that is presented to Board. The group has become a 'talking shop' for residents - The agenda is set by member concerns. It provides a way for residents to speak directly w/ local police & local ward councillors. CAG fills a gap in that there is no other group on the estate that truly works for the residents

although rep is questionable

The NPB was set up by the HAT, & has resident reps, but the NPB business does not nec. reflect resident concerns. ① They only meet 4 xs per year. The 2005 Group was set up to monitor the NPB. But they, like the NPB, don't have a free hand. The work they do is set by CVCHA. Both groups are a bit confined.

think & letter
appearing!

(2)

so, C&E is place for residents to address issues important to them. It's also vital in terms of ensuring Merlin's accountability to CV & organizational transparency.

(2) Social Enterprise: Merlin provides runs two nurseries on CV, as well as a local bus service. Merlin employees frequently engage w/ service users to gain feedback. They do this thru surveys, bus drivers talking w/ passengers, Merlin workers speaking w/ people on the street.

(3) CCTV monitoring - there is a telephone # residents may call to speak w/ monitors about concerns. Merlin has links to police dept. They also work closely with the CATCH Radio group.

(4) ~~Publications~~ Publications - Merlin prints a monthly newsletter that is distributed throughout the state, as well as other publications. They also have a website.

(5) Training & Education - Merlin offers a number of skills training courses for local residents, as well as educ.

(3)

Their recent move to a new facility provides the space necessary to provide employment skills programmes for 14-19 y.o.

(6) Coordinating the Business Group - while not directly involving residents, the work Merlin does with The Business involves increasing employ opportunities in the area, and encouraging local business to hire CV residents

(2)

█ feels The CAE has been very successful. While only about 12 residents sit on CAE, they are all very engaged. He believes The group has empowered its resident members and they do get results.

no one mentioned in comms / just work

Surveys have worked well in terms of gaining resident comments. Also, The newsletter is thought highly of within the CV community.

as well as other orgs. and

see other w/ comment

However, █ admitted that Merlin needs to do a better job at engaging 'regular' people - i.e., families & individuals who do not normally get involved. There may be too many organizations serving CV. While this is an improvement over the way things were done before the regeneration, things may have gotten a bit

(1)

out of control, become a curse. He's afraid the high number of organizations just leads to confusion - which group do I go to? For what? where do I go?

For example, CVCHA ^{was} recently awarded a grant to address worklessness on the estate and have hired two ^{office} ~~new~~ ~~worklessness~~ ~~councillors~~ ~~councillors~~. However, ~~CV already has worklessness~~ two programmes addressing the issue already exist in CV, one within Merlin & one within the TRA.

(4) [redacted] does feel that Merlin is part of an overall combined effort to maintain the restoration of CV. However, as mentioned above, he would like to see ~~a more combined~~ more coordination between existing groups & organizations

(5) A large part of the problem, he feels, is funding-related. Every organization relies, at least in part, on grant support to continue operating. This often leads to replication of service, such as the worklessness programme CVCHA is now implementing.

[redacted] is also worried about how certain programmes will continue to operate once funding dries up. For example, the CCTV monitoring programme is almost entirely (or possibly entirely) funded

also issue for successful my social eq-teen pregnancy

the funding this
runs out this
year Dec.

⑤

with Government money. ~~to receive the money~~
~~money~~ ~~already~~ already knows that there
will be significantly less govt funding
available this coming year and is concerned
the CCTV programme may have to end. He
is concerned that w/o the programme, CV
~~the~~ risks ~~falling back into~~ a significant
increase in criminal activity.

⑥

also places some blame on the community
itself. CV has come to ~~rely~~ ^{depend} on a core group of

active residents, and he does not ~~see~~ think it
will be easy to get new people involved - especially
young people. ~~Young people~~ Younger & newer
residents do not understand the struggles
past

But P.
feels as too
discouraged to
get involved

required to secure change on the estate. All
they know is a nice community in which
everything is provided. They have no need to
step forward, nothing to fight for.

noted that the creation of The Youth Council
& Youth Parliament are ~~good~~ good steps taken in
the direction of educating young people on the
need to get involved.

9 July

Visit to Merlin Venture training session

Merlin is now focusing training on 14-19 y.o. Made arrangements to visit the current session which is offered to 14-16 y.o. Unfortunately, there were no students today. Apparently, one of the trainers called in sick yesterday w/ suspected swine flu. So, they cancelled today's session to be safe. The guy is okay, but I had nothing to observe.

Client Development Manager, took me on a tour of facility. It's in the process of being constructed. 2 floors, about a dozen 'rooms', plaster walls, windows & door in each. Used to teach painting / decorating, plumbing & electrical. In terms of plumbing, they learn which types of pipes are used for what, how water flows, tiling. Electrical - start w/ wiring a light switch up to a whole house, how circuit work. Painting is pretty much painting.

I was a bit sceptical about the whole programme. I mean, how many painting / plumbing / electrical contractors does one city need? But, after talking w/ [redacted] I feel better. The purpose of the programme is NOT to make trainees tradesmen. It's seen as more of a route back to education. The kids involved all have problems - generally behavioural - and have been excluded from school. Most also come from families that have experienced long-term unemployment / worklessness & low educational attainment. This programme is designed to offer the kids a source of motivation, provide opportunities to develop a sense of pride / accomplishment, teach a good work ethic, raise self-esteem / confidence - basically, to give them the idea that they really aren't 'stuck in the same rut' as the rest of the family (doesn't that just sound awful).

The kids also get the opportunity to get off the estate. Not very far off - but for some it may be enough. They take kids from all over the area, so it's also a chance to meet new people, often from neighbourhoods they are generally 'at war' with.

The ppl. running the programme seem to have the right ~~attitude~~ attitude. At least [redacted] does. She said that, because of the problems these kids have, they don't expect miracles. Small accomplishments are praised. For example, one of the coordinators told a young man, the other day he had done a really good job, suggested the trainer contact his mother w/ the news. The trainer complained that he had to call the kid's name 50 times before he paid attention. The coordinator pointed out that, previously, they had had to call his name 100 times to get his attention, so this was big.

There seem to be some issues w/ trainers. Many of them are contractors learning how to provide training & have little experience/understanding of the types of problems the young ppl. are trying to overcome. The kids' families can also be an issue. The other day, [redacted] & one of the trainers went to the home of one young man enrolled on the course. Two weeks in, he had yet to show up, so they went to find out why, if there was anything they could do. Seems he has some behaviour problems & his mother is afraid of him. He 'terrorizes' the neighbours. [redacted] said his mother's appearance was immaculate when she & her son went to the interview @ Merlin, but her house is a disaster - crap everywhere, dirty, ~~holes~~ - holes in the walls from her son punching them. His bedroom was no better - writing on sheets, sheets torn by knife - except for his PS3 which was nice & shiny. Final assessment - he's been out of school for 2 yrs. They think he's just afraid to get back into it, or anything similar.

Well, that takes care of today's visit. I'm going back on the 21st for a whole day to volunteer. Looking forward to that.

Tomorrow, I will attend the 'Down ^{Our} ~~for~~ Way' exhibit. Next week a visit to The TRA offices! Some time w/ The Wardens.

Tonight, supposed to do a group dinner this w/ school, but may cancel. Especially if Mike did actually write the report & send a copy for my review. But, generally, I just don't feel like going. I'll be off sick - rather stay @ home in PT's w/ bottle of wine. I can be so unsocial.

Last night, met up w/ The Writers Club [redacted] [redacted] is trying to organize. No one there, but it was only the second mtg. They will try again next month. Jotted some notes in other notebook - get to those this weekend. Along w/ notes re: Scouts & Flower Festival.

15/07

Community Wardens

8yrs. → Under Comm. Safety Team

generalized role.
split estate into quarters - each has
diff. walk

1 spec. projects (+) daily

→ cover all rds in area
each wk

UNITED STREETS

- May, April, June
- visible on streets for 7hrs.
- targeted ≈ 20 hotspots
- get out - presence
- meet w/ res.

[redacted] = 5yrs.
feels perceptin
of wardens has
changed

OVONA

~~OVONA~~ → 2 outreach workers

→ help get off state - a has everything
but job ch.
opportunity there - take it
So much to do -

No longer
want to be called
an 'estate'

tenants - if they know it there will
take advantage

①
Very fortunate - so much here now - Those
that want to take advantage, do

Only reason leave → ASBO → biggest
factor & not keep up rent

All community led - support all comm/res
groups

Nice guy but not much info beyond
Warden scheme. Interesting though that
most of the wardens - well many of -
the Community Safety Team - were
from A. Pol. appear to be mostly involved
in CATS kids. I would think that
having res. involved in Safety team,
usually, would be helpful. But then
that was their choice. Personal Safety
isn't, probably. Wonder how much that
matters now. Also interesting that he feels appears
to) its up to Res. to find SVCS. on their own.
Hard for me to identify what's available. I'm
stubborn/persistent that way.