The `Wicked Problems' of British Cities[1]: How New Labour sought to develop a New Integrated Approach

Introduction

The idea of `wicked problems' (Rittel and Webber, 1973) is by no means new in terms of social issues in the UK, indeed it has long been recognised that there are a series of problems/issues which, like the poor, and despite the `best efforts' of government, always seem to be with us and appear to be almost impossible to resolve. The problems of Britain's cities fall into this category; if we look back over the Nineteenth and early Twentieth centuries we find problems of poverty, unemployment, crime, etc, constantly reoccurring (see Steadman-Jones, 1976). However, at different times, the problems have been `thought', conceptualised and addressed in different ways. For instance over time the poor have been variously categorised as the cause of their own problems (i.e. the social pathology approach), the victims of wider forces (i.e. the structural approach) or a combination of the two; equally the distinction between the `deserving' and `undeserving' poor has constantly been present, while more recently notions of welfare dependency have moved to the forefront of the debate. All of these terms have been used to categorise and organise `the poor' and rationalise who merited assistance (and who did not), the manner in which that assistance was provided and what recipients had to do in order to qualify for assistance.

Moreover, the political and policy relevance of particular problems/issues has varied in terms of the attention they have received and the particular way in which problems have been understood and `solutions' developed. Thus in the 1980s the urban problem seen as most important was that of economic decline/restructuring, the attendant high levels of unemployment and poverty that accompanied these processes were seen as significant but

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[1] It is useful to bear in mind that the UK is made up of four separate countries and that there are variations between them in terms of particular policies and how they are put into practice. For instance Scotland has long had its own justice system and for many years has had its own distinct `urban policy'. The differences, particularly in the case of Scotland, have increased somewhat with the process of devolution that led to the creation of the Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Assembly. Although this is not strictly the case in relation to law and order where there has been something of a 'convergence' in recent years – notably in the field of youth justice where the divergence was traditionally the greatest and exemplified by the Scottish welfare-oriented Children's Hearings system. One explanation for this convergence is that devolution has reduced the justification for `Scottish exceptionalism'. Nevertheless the general thrust of policies, in terms of their objectives and approach, is broadly similar in each country and it is therefore possible to generalise whilst bearing in mind that the name of particular policy initiatives and their modus operandi varies between countries (for instance on urban policy in Scotland see Turok, 2004)

secondary in terms of a causal hierarchy, the basic assumption was `get the economics right' and the benefits will `trickle down' thereby automatically resolving the situation; the attendant problems of high unemployment were seen as a temporary problem that would be resolved once the economy was on the right track and thus a `price worth paying. Whereas in the latter part of the 1990s and early 2000s more emphasis was placed on `urban social exclusion' and developing targeted policies to address this problem (see Atkinson, 2000a), which represented a partial acknowledgement that the `tickle down effect' had not worked; more recently the pendulum has swung back towards the economic dimension through the emphasis is now on `urban competitiveness' (see Begg (ed), 2002; Buck et al (eds), 2005). Nevertheless, despite the varying priority attached to particular problems a surprisingly similar assemblage of apparently interminable problems has been with us in our cities – these are those `wicked problems'.

In this paper we seek to describe and analyse the approach to the `problems of the city' as pursued by New Labour with particular reference to three policy areas of unemployment, crime and safety and urban policy. It is, however, important to point out that these three policy areas have largely operated independently of one another within their functional departmental `silos'. While there is some more recent evidence that a degree of `joining-up' has occurred, particularly at local level, it is not possible to detect a single overarching strategy towards the city in government policy or even at a more general level in terms of how the city is `thought' other than in very general terms such as the city being a `motor of economic development'.

What perhaps distinguishes New Labour's approach from previous ones is the emphasis on developing a holistic, strategic and integrated approach – what is referred to as `joined-up thinking, policy and action'. In addition the general approach adopted places more emphasis, at least rhetorically, on building local partnerships and the involvement of local people in identifying and addressing these problems.

The Context for Britain's `Wicked Urban Problems'

Britain's urban areas, like those across Europe, have to varying degrees, since the 1950s, undergone major structural changes. In particular they experienced major economic decline/restructuring (deindustrialisation – see Martin and Rowthorn (eds), 1986) as the

key Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century industries that provided their economic life were closed and gradually replaced by new service and retail based industries. In rather simple terms this can be characterised as a move from an industrial economy to a post-industrial or knowledge-based economy (see Florida, 2000 and 2002). In addition since the 1950s there has been a concern with the impact of what might be termed `urban sprawl' and demographic change. This took two forms, on the one hand, and linked to the deindustrialisation thesis, industries that were not closing for good relocated to suburban and exurban locations and new firms mainly established themselves outside of cities making it more difficult for those living in cities to access these jobs (see for instance Fothergill and Gudgin, 1982; Massey, 1984). The other dimension was that more affluent sections of the population were leaving urban areas *en masse*, first moving to the suburbs, then to medium sized towns and later to small rural towns and villages leaving behind a poorer population and declining public services. This in itself had the result of leaving behind the poorest sections of the population and automatically increasing concentrations of poverty and deprivation that was intensified as more economic restructuring `kicked in' and other marginal groups, particularly migrants, moved into cities. Thus urban areas in Britain, in common with those across Western Europe and North America, have undergone a major process of restructuring (see Buck et al, 2005 for a recent discussion of these ongoing changes and Brenner and Theodore (eds), 2002 for a more international perspective).

These problems, particularly population exodus and economic restructuring, have persisted to the present day, although the *State of the English Cities* Report (ODPM, 2006a and 2006b, especially chs13) does suggest there is evidence of an improvement in the economic performance of some cities and that some more affluent sections of the population are being attracted back to some cities (e.g. central Manchester). This report also provides some evidence that unemployment and deprivation are declining, social cohesion is increasing and that segregation is declining. Volume II of the report states:

> There is a lot of good news. The report has provided much evidence that many English cities have picked up in terms of their economic and social performance in recent years. Despite these improvements, cities in the south and east are still more successful than those in the north and west. Matching the performance of

the most successful continental cities also remains a challenge for many. Sustaining the economic advances of our cities will also require the national economic growth of recent years to be continued. (ODPM, 2006b, p115)

Thus major inter-urban and intra-urban differences remain which are overlain by the `North-South divide' creating a complex situation that defies simple characterisation. What can be said is that even within those cities that are deemed to be `successful', while there are areas that do attract more affluent people back into cities, there are also areas that exhibit concentrations of poverty and social exclusion, high rates of unemployment and crime, poor health, low educational achievement, etc, where the problems may actually be intensifying and becoming even more entrenched. These areas remain `Excluded Spaces' or `Places Apart' (Power and Tunstall, 1995; Lupton, 2001) that are often cut off from `mainstream' society and whose inhabitants often feel they have little stake in the wider society and develop `cultures' of their own which are perceived as threatening (in an older terminology these places would be termed `dangerous places'). In effect what is clear is that cities are still characterised by social and spatial segregation, although new forms now interact with and overlay more traditional forms. The scale of the problem is rather simply expressed by the following government statistics referring to the gap between the most deprived areas and the rest of England:

- In the 10 per cent most deprived wards in 1998 44 per cent of people relied on means tested benefits, compared with a national average of 22 per cent;
- In the 10 per cent most deprived wards in 1998 over 60 per cent of children lived in households that relied on means tested benefits;
- In 1998-99, the employment rate in Tower Hamlets was 55 per cent, compared with 74 per cent nationally;
- The domestic burglary rate in North Manchester in 1999-2000 was 24.8 per 1000 population – compared with 8.7 nationally. Violence against the person was 37.8 per 1000 population compared with 11.4 nationally;
- In 1998 only 11 of the 488 schools with more than 35 per cent of pupils on free school meals attained the national average level of GCSE passes;

- During 1999, 26 per cent more people died from coronary heart disease in the 20 per cent most deprived Health Authorities than in the country as a whole;

- 43 per cent of all housing in the 10 per cent most deprived wards is not in a decent state, compared with 29 per cent elsewhere, and

- 19 per cent of all homes in the 10 per cent most deprived wards are in areas suffering from high levels of vacancy, disrepair, dereliction or vandalism, compared with 5 per cent of homes elsewhere. (SEU, 2001, pp12-13)

Ironically many commentators would argue that these figures are an underestimate, but they graphically illustrate the problems.

Moreover, some British cities also exhibit entrenched racial/ethnic segregation patterns (see Mason (ed), 2003). Such areas have often been the spaces in which urban unrest has exploded in Britain's urban areas (Bradford, Oldham and Burnley in 2001 were the latest examples in a long line stretching back to the 1950s – see Atkinson and Moon, 1994). Moreover, despite some changes, the areas experiencing this spatial and social exclusion have remained remarkably consistent over the last 30 years and defied numerous attempts to `regenerate' them and reconnect them with `mainstream society'. Britain's cities thus exhibit a complex mosaic of economic growth and decline, affluence and poverty and social exclusion, segregation and integration (see Pacione (ed), 1997; Imrie and Raco (eds), 2003; Johnstone and Whitehead (eds), 2004 for examples).

More recently, in common with developments across Europe, there has been a renewed optimism regarding the future of cities based upon the desire to replicate the success stories of several European Cities. In England major cities such as Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham, and smaller cities such as Bristol, have developed various forms of city-region (or metropolitan) partnerships (on these see respectively Harding, et al 2004; Murie et al, 2003; Boddy et al, 2004). Increasingly cities are viewed as the "…locomotives of economic and social progress…" in the UK (Miliband, 2005, p1) and thus they have moved back up the policy agenda (see also Core Cities Working Group, 2004; ODPM, 2006a). In particular this new prominence for cities has been connected their role in the development of a `knowledge-based' economy and the apparent need to

ensure a certain quality of life is available in order to attract key knowledge workers (see Florida, 2000 and 2002). The city, as a collective actor, is allocated a key role in these developments.

In the 1970s and 1980s the city in Britain clearly was not seen as a source of `integration', indeed it was largely viewed as a source of problems. The question remains in this new situation where the city is viewed in a more positive light, can the city function as an integrative mechanism? In many ways today's cities are more diverse, fragmented and divided than they were 30 years ago and the drive to (re)create inclusive communities and neighbourhoods is a recognition of this reality. Whether or not the city can be a new source of *societal* integration is a moot point.

Urban Policy, Area Based Initiatives and the search for a `Joined-up Approach'

In this section we discuss the urban policy developed by the Labour Government since its election in 1997, focussing on the priorities it attached to developing a `joined-up' approach to urban problems, encouraging community participation and tackling social exclusion. However, to place this is context we first of all outline New Labour's policy inheritance before going on to discuss the post-1997 period.

Throughout the period since 1945 all governments have developed policies to address the problems facing Britain's urban areas (see McKay and Cox, 1979; Atkinson and Moon, 1994; Blackman, 1995 for historical detail). As Table 1 indicates it is possible to identify `distinct periods' in urban policy based upon problem definition and policy responses[2]; although the division between periods should not be seen as watertight. Until the late 1960s/early 1970s these policies were largely concerned with the physical reconstruction of cities, mainly by replacing slum areas with new housing in tandem with policies that sought to create new modern city centres and road networks. In both cases this involved demolition and rebuilding and represented a `physical approach' to the problems of Britain's cities (see Atkinson and Moon, 1994, chs.2).

From the late 1960s onwards government gradually developed an approach to urban areas that sought to tackle social and economic problems. By 1977 this had developed into a full-blown policy that sought to tackle urban economic and social decline and regenerate

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[2] The reasoning behind this approach can be found in Atkinson and Moon, 1994, chs 1; Atkinson, 1995 and 2000b)

Table 1 *Periodisation of English Urban Policy. 1968-2006*

Period	Problem Construction	Policy Response
1968-1977	Social Pathology Approach - limited to small areas of towns	Small scale area-based initiatives - largely experimental, reflecting lack of knowledge
1977-1979	Structural Approach - Contained in White Paper 1977 *Policy for the Inner Cities* identified four key problems: 1) economic decline 2) physical decline 3) concentration of poverty 4) racial discrimination. Assumed problem of urban decline lay in `societal forces', those experiencing it `victims'	White Paper and *Inner Urban Areas Act, 1978*. Attempted to develop an integrated approach, the formation of partnerships, new role for private sector and reference made to voluntary and community sectors. These partnerships were attempts to create vertical and horizontal coordination within the state. Still small area-based.
1979-1991	Mixture of Structural and Social pathology Approaches. Urban problems seen as product of: a) too much state intervention; b) individual and group dependency; c) restriction of free market	a) rollback state; b) encourage self help; c) free-up the market. Produced property-led urban regeneration - physical renewal in profitable locations. State- private partnerships (e.g. UDCs). Multiplicity of initiatives lacking coordination. Emphasis on better management of programmes. Local government marginalised as part of the problem.
1991-1997	Retained elements of previous period but recognised failings, particularly fact that deprived (socially excluded) communities were largely by-passed by the market. Key problems: how to ensure excluded communities benefit from policies; incoherence of ABIs and need to take on board governance implications.	Development of new multi-sectoral partnerships (public, private, voluntary and community sectors). First in City Challenge, then SRB.
1997-2006	Built on previous analysis but post-1997 greater emphasis on focussing on the `worst' areas - seen as being by-passed by economic growth. In particular an emphasis on the need to address causes of worklessness and `social disorganisation. Issue of how to promote `urban competitiveness' in a global economy has emerged as a problem/opportunity.	Post-1997: creation of - RDAs; NDC, NRF. Setting up of SEU. Emphasis on better use and targeting of resources. Joined up approach. Strong element of `new managerialism'. Proliferation of uncoordinated ABIs targeting deprived urban areas. Attempt to streamline and coordinate multiple initiatives and levels of governance - achieve greater policy coherence and synergy. Community given a `leading role' but also allocated new responsibilities. Related to building social capital. Renewed emphasis on the role of cities as `drivers of the economy' and on competitiveness.

Britain's cities (see Atkinson and Moon, 1994, chs. 3 and 4). Since 1977 all British governments have had an urban policy of some description, however, each has developed its own particular approach reflecting the way(s) in which it conceptualised the causes of urban problems, the narratives developed to articulate the genesis of urban problems and the political priority given to addressing those problems (see Atkinson, 1995 and 2000b)

In the late 1960s the focus of `urban policy' was largely determined by the particular `urban' narrative at the time which saw urban problems as relatively isolated, i.e. not caused by wider structural forces. During the 1970s and 1980s it was no longer possible to maintain this particular narrative, yet at the same time it remained impossible for government to develop a narrative of urban problems that linked them to wider structural forces central to the operation of contemporary capitalism. However, in the subsequent period a new narrative developed which argued that urban problems continued to exist because many mainstream policies, due to bureaucratic (note not market) failures, have failed to `reach those most in need'. Thus there has been a progressively greater emphasis on integrating urban policy with mainstream programmes, particularly relating to employment and welfare, and the need to achieve better spatial targeting of mainstream programmes. This process began with the 1977 White Paper and has intensified, along with the growing belief in managerial/institutional `fixes', as public expenditure took on increasingly negative connotations.

In 1979 the newly elected Conservative Government, whilst accepting its predecessors view that economic decline lay at the heart of the problem, began to develop a rather different policy. It believed a key cause of urban decline was state intervention in the economy that prevented the market from functioning, stifled entrepreneurial activity and led the private sector to withdraw from urban areas. Moreover, it was thought that the welfare state was too expensive, deprived the private sector of resources and created a dependency culture amongst those reliant upon it for the provision of services. Part of the solution, so far as it was politically feasible, was to withdraw the state from both the economy and the provision of welfare services thereby encouraging individual initiative and self-help. Thus the familiar metaphor of `rolling back the state' is frequently employed. However, to take this at face value is to oversimplify the situation, in some cases the state was rolled back, but in others it was rolled forward. It is perhaps more sensible to recognise that what took place

was a restructuring of the state and its interventions; indeed it could be argued what we term the welfare state was remarkably resilient to Thatcherite reforms and that the welfare system has taken much longer to restructure than many Thatcherites envisaged. The fact that New Labour is still seeking to `modernise' the welfare system is evidence of the difficulties of bringing about fundamental change.

During the 1980s the dominant view was that urban areas had been left behind by the rising tide of the British economy – that they were islands of decline in a sea of prosperity. In particular the council (or social) housing sector has come to epitomise this situation; run-down council estates attracted a great, even overwhelming, degree of attention in terms of the attempts to address concentrations of poverty and social exclusion (see Power and Tunstall, 1995). In part this reflected the changing role of social housing whereby it became an increasingly stigmatised and residualised sector – effectively it had become the `tenure of last resort', the `welfare tenure' and the major focus of many initiatives to address concentrations of multiple deprivation. In terms of these processes a great deal of attention was focussed on the symbolism of the `right to buy' legislation introduced by the first Thatcher government in 1980 that led to the sale of over 1.7 million council dwellings and the attendant notion of a `property owning democracy' which elevated owner-occupation, and the private market, to a position of unchallenged primacy as the *the* tenure of choice. Without wishing to deny the impact of these reforms to focus on them alone would be to oversimplify the situation and ignore the fact that as Malpass (2003 and 2004) argues council housing has long occupied an ambiguous position vis-à-vis the welfare state and that the primacy of owner-occupation (and the market) in housing provision dates back to at least the mid-1960s (if not to the 1930s) with council housing being viewed by all post-war governments as a `secondary tenure' for those unable to provide for themselves.

Furthermore, Lee and Murie (1999) have pointed out that the overwhelming focus on social housing has distracted attention from the problems facing many low-income owner-occupiers and the complex mixture of tenures and socio-economic, ethnic and gender relations to be found in many urban areas. In policy terms this focus has produced

a narrow obsession with the need to introduce a `social mix'[3], however defined, into concentrations of social housing that has too often ignored the wider economic and social relations underlying the problems of these areas.

Turning directly to urban policy we find that many of the programmes which had been running prior to the 1979 election continued throughout the 1980s, although they were gradually restructured to bring them more into line with Conservative thinking (see Atkinson and Moon 1994, chs.6). The distinctive policy element of this period was an experiment that appeared to epitomise neoliberalism – withdrawing the state and encouraging the private sector to take the lead within specific run-down urban areas to redevelop them. In terms of action local government was increasingly marginalised and the Property Development Industry took on a key role in an approach that became known as `Property-Led Urban Regeneration' (see Turok, 1992; Imrie and Thomas, 1993; Atkinson and Moon, 1994, chs.7). It was believed that by allowing investors to make profits they would then rebuild cities and create jobs that would `trickle-down' to those in need. However, this approach was underwritten by grants, subsidies, tax relief, relaxation of planning controls, etc, designed to attract wealth creators back to the cities. In effect state intervention was still required to support the role of the private sector, but it took a rather different form to that previously envisaged.

Despite all the political capital invested in the lead role of the private sector by the end of the 1980s this approach came under sustained criticism, put simply it was widely believed that 1980s urban policy had failed to achieve its aims (see Atkinson and Moon, 1994, chs.7 for more detail). As a result the period between 1990 and 1994 saw a gradual reorientation of policy. Local government was brought back in, although on terms largely dictated by the centre, and attempts were made to ensure that the needs of those who experienced the worst effects of urban decline were integrated into urban initiatives. City Challenge, although a rather short-lived initiative, was the first example of this (see Atkinson & Moon 1994; De Groot 1992). As well as giving a central role to local government and a greater role to local communities it was also notable for introducing the idea of competition as a method of allocating urban resources. Government portrayed competition as the most efficient method

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[3] It is interesting to note that the notion of `social mix' was only applied to these areas and never to the considerable uniform expanses of middle class owner-occupied housing in the suburbs. Thus in one context social uniformity was seen as a problem while in another it was simply seen as unproblematic.

of allocating resources and developing innovative regeneration schemes and the best way to harness local talent and initiative.

By 1993 government had decided to initiate a major review of urban policy, the outcome was the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB). SRB began in 1994, whilst largely adhering to Conservative orthodoxy on the causes of urban decline SRB acknowledged, at least tacitly, the need for greater co-ordination in the regeneration process. Its objectives explicitly stated that local people should be engaged in and benefit from regeneration. The initiative brought together 20 programmes from five central government departments under the overall co-ordination of the Department of the Environment (DoE) to ensure greater organisational co-ordination between departments whose programmes had an impact on urban areas. This central restructuring was complemented by the creation of Government Offices of the Regions (GoRs) in each of the English regions. Regeneration partnerships at local level were the main means by which SRB was implemented at local level.

Whilst many commentators gave SRB a guarded welcome concerns emerged over its effectiveness and ability to achieve its objectives (see Oatley, ed, 1998; Imrie and Thomas, eds, 1999). In essence these criticisms boiled down to three issues. First, that there was little evidence, despite the organisational changes introduced, that co-ordination had actually increased; policy at and between levels of government remained fragmented. Second, that community participation was largely illusory and there was still very little evidence that deprived communities were benefiting from regeneration (see Atkinson and Cope, 1997). Third, that the finances available for urban regeneration were actually being reduced (see Atkinson, 1999a, pp77-78).

New Labour's Urban Policy

Prior to its election in 1997 New Labour had signalled its intention to address urban problems in a more coherent manner and to ensure that combating social exclusion would be a key part of both urban policy and its wider policy agenda. In opposition Labour had broadly welcomed SRB and had indicated that it would be retained should if Labour won the 1997 election. Indeed the new government appeared to accept the general diagnosis of urban problems offered by previous Conservative governments when it stated that areas of multiple deprivation in cities had been `…largely by-passed by national economic

success…" (DETR, 1997a, Section 2.2). This implied that the causes of urban decline lay in the areas themselves rather than in wider societal forces. In terms of the urban policy agenda what was new was the emphasis on social exclusion and a renewed, almost evangelical, belief in the effectiveness of joined up policy and action (for overviews of the period since 1997 see Imrie and Raco (eds) 2003; Johnstone and Whitehead (eds), 2004).

In the summer of 1997 the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR)[4] issued supplementary guidance for Round 4 of SRB (DETR, 1997b). The guidance informed partnerships that their bids should reflect the government's manifesto commitments and take account of proposed programmes (such as Welfare to Work and Action on Drugs). The guidance emphasised the need for `...a concerted attack against the multiple causes of social and economic decline...'(ibid, p1) that tackled `...the needs of communities in the most deprived areas…' (ibid, p2). A consultation paper on the future of regeneration policy (DETR, 1997a) was also published which reflected these new priorities and discussed new ways to develop urban regeneration. The paper also argued:

> Policies have generally had a more limited (or at least less measurable) impact on tackling social exclusion and empowering local communities. Overall progress has been slowest in the most deprived areas. In some cases, where deprivation is entrenched, regeneration action can do no more than mitigate problems or prevent their further development. This process can take a considerable time; often longer than the lifetime of individual projects or even programmes. (DETR, 1997a, section 4.7)

The significance of the previous quote is that it signals the importance of addressing social exclusion in urban areas, the recognition that regeneration in some areas will

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[4] After the 1997 election the DoE was merged with the Department of Transport to create the DETR, after the 2001 election the department lost the environment portfolio and was renamed the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR). In the early summer of 2002 the DTLR was broken up with a separate Department of Transport once again created. The vast majority of the DTLR's functions went to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) under John Prescott. The ODPM was responsible for urban policy, addressing social exclusion, regional and local government, the cross-cutting agenda on social exclusion/inclusion and neighbourhood renewal. In 2006 the ODPM was broken up and a new department – the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) created. Readers should bear in mind that Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have somewhat different institutional arrangements to those in England, but the general thrust of urban policy is almost identical in each country.

require sustained long term action and identifies key themes that are reflected in later policy developments. In particular social exclusion was almost immediately given a high priority on the urban policy agenda as well as on the government's wider policy agenda by the setting up of the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU)[5] shortly after the 1997 election. Subsequently, in 1998, the SEU published a consultation paper on urban regeneration (or neighbourhood renewal as it was to be increasingly described) - *Bringing Britain together: a national strategy for neighbourhood renewal* (SEU, 1998). This represented an attempt by government to develop a new approach to urban regeneration building upon SRB. In many ways this document contains a remarkably frank recognition of past failures, arguing that these included:

> ...the absence of effective national policies to deal with the structural causes of decline; a tendency to parachute solutions in from outside, rather than engaging local communities; and too much emphasis on physical renewal instead of better opportunities for local people. Above all, a joined up problem has never been addressed in a joined up way. Problems have fallen through the cracks between Whitehall departments, or between central and local government. And at the neighbourhood level, there has been no one in charge of pulling together all the things that need to go right at the same time. (SEU, 1998, p9).

The aim was to create a holistic and strategic national approach within which Area Based Initiatives (ABIs), such as SRB, would play a key role and communities a key stakeholder. To further this objective in 1999 Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) were established for the eight English Regions with the objective of developing a regional strategy to address the problems, including those of urban areas, in each region.

In 1999 the report of the Urban Task Force *Towards an Urban Renaissance* (Urban Task Force, 1999) highlighted similar issues, although it placed much greater emphasis on the need for regeneration to be design-led. The report stressed the importance of high quality urban design in making cities attractive places in which to live and work and the need to

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[5] The SEU's role is a wide one: to stimulate new thinking and ways of tackling social exclusion as part of the process of drawing up a national strategy; and to draw attention to the complex and multi-dimensional nature of social exclusion and highlight the need for `joined-up' action at and between national, regional and local levels.

use `…public finances and incentives to steer the market towards opportunities for lasting regeneration.' (Lord Rogers, Introduction, *ibid*, p8; see also Rogers and Power, 2000). Despite being criticised for its excessive focus on the role of design to the detriment of economic and social factors the Urban Task Force report was an important document[6] that stimulated discussion and helped create the context for the subsequent urban policy white paper.

The clear intention of *Bringing Britain Together* (SEU, 1998) and all subsequent urban reports and initiatives is to create a comprehensive and coordinated approach in which all the pieces of the urban regeneration jigsaw will actually fit together. Moreover, according to Tony Blair this requires "...a ten to twenty year plan to turn round poor neighbourhoods," (SEU, 1998, p8). During this period the aim is to:

> …narrow the gap between deprived areas and the rest of the country by dramatically improving outcomes – with more jobs, better educational achievement, less crime and better health – in the most deprived areas. (SEU, 2000, p9)

In November 2000 the long awaited Urban White Paper was finally published (DETR, 2000c). To be somewhat brutal the White Paper contained very little which was new, all the themes outlined above were reiterated. In the foreword to Urban White Paper the Deputy Prime Minister and then Secretary of State at the DETR, John Prescott, stated:

> Our guiding principle is that people must come first. Our policies, programmes and structures of governance are based on engaging local people in partnerships for change with strong local leadership. (DETR, 2000c, p5)

The White Paper sought to do two things: 1) to create a *vision* of urban living; 2) to create a *framework* in which all of the various initiatives and themes previously announced can be brought together and operate in a holistic and coherent manner. The *vision* `…is of towns, cities and suburbs which offer a high quality of life and opportunity for all, not just the few.' (DETR, 2000c, p7). The *framework* is one that aims to facilitate co-ordination, collaboration and partnership; these are the means by which effective policies and programmes will be delivered and resources directed at problems. Thus it should

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[6] Lack of space prevents any detailed discussion of this report, readers interested in reading more about the report should turn to *Town and Country Planning*, September 1999, pp258-281.

come as no surprise to hear that joined-up strategies and joined-up working are the watchwords. To this end government at national, regional and local levels are exhorted to work together.

The period since 1997 has seen an endless series of reports and official publications (most notably the SEU, 1998; Urban Task Force, 1999; Urban White Paper, DETR, 2000c; SEU, 2001), the setting of new organisations (such as Local Strategic Partnerships [LSPs][7], the Regional Coordination Unit [RCU][8], the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit [NRU][9]) and initiatives (such as New Deal for Communities; Neighbourhood Management, the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund; Community Strategies). All have sought to create a holistic and integrated approach to urban regeneration.

In policy terms the first fruit of this new approach, and arguably Labour's flagship regeneration programme, was the *New Deal for Communities* (NDC), with 39 areas being designated. NDCs are in many ways the test-bed of Labours' idea that urban areas that have suffered the most extensive decline require long-term programmes to turn them round. They will run for 10 years with each area receiving around £50million over its lifetime. From the outset each NDC was required to think about forward strategies that will continue the project, or key elements of it, after funding has terminated. All NDCs are required to address 5 key themes in an integrated manner, these are:

- Worklessness
- Housing and the Built Environment
- Health
- Crime
- Education

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[7] According to the Guidance on LSPs:
> The aspiration behind local strategic partnerships is that <u>all</u> local service providers should work with each other, the private sector and the broader local community to agree a holistic approach to solving problems with a common vision, agreed objectives, pooled expertise and agreed priorities for the allocation of resources. (DETR, 2000d, p3, emphasis in original).

The Guidance goes on to state that LSPs will "…provide a single overarching co-ordination framework within which other, more specific local partnerships can operate. " (ibid, p6)

[8] The RCU was set up at central government level to try and prevent the avalanche of policies, particularly ABIs, central government departments set up post-1997; many of these were directed at deprived areas. The problem was the lack of coordination between ABIs which often placed conflicting demands on local organisations contributing to `partnership fatigue'.

[9] The NRU is a key body within the central government department that has overall responsibility for urban policy, it is responsible for a number of key programmes.

It is widely recognised that the resources allocated to NDCs is insufficient to allow them to independently address the problems of their areas. However, this was never the intention behind the NDC programme; the government's intention was, although initially this was not clearly communicated to all relevant organisations and has taken some years to be understood by the relevant parties, that mainstream services at local level (such as social security, health, education, employment and economic policy) had to play the main role in regenerating these areas. Among other things NDC was the test bed for the development of a strategic and integrated approach at local level and the modernisation of local service provision. Government assumed that major service provides would bend their spending to benefit NDC areas as well as learning lessons from NDCs about new ways to deliver services in order to better meet the needs of users. This required NDCs to establish close, reciprocal, relationships with major public service providers, and other ABIs, delivering services in their area. The lessons learnt from NDC about `what works' and how best to deliver services are intended to be mainstreamed by other local public service providers, thus they represent, in theory at least, part of a wider attempt to shake up the whole public sector and how it operates (see Atkinson 2003).

The Challenges facing New Labour's Urban Policy

In terms of the overall approach to urban areas one of the key challenges facing government has been how to develop a joined up approach in practice. Yet despite this commitment to a joined-up approach all the evidence suggests that action has been anything but joined-up. If we look at the example of the various ABIs (such as Education Action Zones, Employment Zones, Health Action Zones, NDC) launched since 1997 that have impacted on urban areas it is clear that each has tended to reflect the priorities and targets of its own parent department in Whitehall. Moreover, there has been little, if any, co-ordination at central, regional or local levels between the initiatives. A number of reports (DETR, 2000a and 2000b; Performance and Innovation Unit (PIU), 2000; NRU, 2002) highlighted this lack of co-ordination between initiatives and the problems caused by the avalanche of urban related ABIs launched since May 1997. One survey estimated that by 2003 there were around 45 ABIs directed at cities, the authors arguing that urban policy had moved from resembling a `patchwork quilt' to a `bowl of spaghetti' (Johnstone and Whitehead, 2004, pp5-7). It should be recognised that this is not a

problem specific to urban initiatives but applies more generally across government and between levels of government (PIU, 2000; for wider discussion of the issues surrounding joining-up see Ling, 2002; Cowell and Martin, 2003). Moreover, the PIU (2000, chs.2) argues that at local level this excess of initiatives is leading to `partnership fatigue' which exhausts the local capacity of individuals and organisations to actually participate effectively and thereby undermines the general thrust of policy.

Significantly for urban policy a report by the Treasury -*Government Interventions in Deprived Areas* (HM Treasury, 2000) - argued that the primary responsibility for tackling (urban) deprivation should lie with main programmes and that this required a refocusing of those programmes. The report argued:

> Targeted initiatives, including holistic regeneration programmes, have a role to play. But they should be part of a clear framework for tackling deprivation, rather than the main tool for doing so. (HM Treasury, 2000, p2)

At one level this supports the importance of a `joined-up' approach to urban problems, but it also recognises the need for mainstream policies (such as social security, health, education, employment and economic policy) to play the main role. In terms of the longstanding `people v places' debate (see Bolton, 1992) the emphasis has switched to a `people-based' approach with `place-based' policies reserved to address the worst and most longstanding concentrations of deprivation. This implies the need for policies directed at both people and places that work together to tackle social exclusion in all its forms wherever it exists.

Perhaps because of this the government has tended to focus on the need to change the ways in which policies are delivered within urban areas. This is part of the agenda for modernizing local government and operates through initiatives such as Best Value and Local Public Service Agreements and is viewed as increasingly central to addressing urban problems. Yet, with regard to deprived areas, there is little real evidence that any significant changes have taken place to date. Most service providers at local level have proved reluctant, or unable, to significantly change the ways in which they deliver services to these areas. The health service still tends to operate separately from the local authority, and even within local authorities there is little real evidence to support joined up working to address urban problems (see Alcock et al, 1998).

Multi-sectoral regeneration partnerships have continued to be the main vehicle for the development and delivery of urban policy at the local level. However, the multiplication of such partnerships has actually created an increasingly complex system of governance at local level that few, if any, understand (see Atkinson, 2005a). Moreover, it places enormous strains on the relatively small number of people who participate in them. LSPs were intended to rationalise and simplify these local systems providing them with greater coherence and allowing for easier collaborative working. However, LSPs have few real powers and even fewer resources to carry out these tasks and it is uncertain whether they will be able to bring the fragments that currently constitute urban policy together in a coherent manner at local level (see Geddes, 2006).

At a more specifically urban policy level NDC is intended to develop new ways of addressing problems in the worst areas and ensure that the lessons learnt are mainstreamed by service providers at the local level. Although this is a relatively new initiative the evidence so far is that many mainstream service providers have tended to view NDCs as just another ABI, few seem to understand how government intends NDC to impact on their activities. There is little evidence of links being built between mainstream service providers and NDCs and even less that the former are learning lessons about `what works' from the latter.

At a regional level the picture is no better; Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) and Government Offices of the Regions (GoRs) are the key regional bodies. RDAs are charged with developing regional economic strategies that address a region's problems, including the urban ones. However, RDAs have shown little interest in the social regeneration of urban areas and their focus has increasingly been on economic issues and `bricks and mortar' regeneration. Nor do RDAs appear to be internally coherent, there is a general view that they are still coming to grips with their role and have yet to really develop a regional perspective or the means to implement one when it is developed. GoRs on the other hand are responsible for the social side of regeneration. Among their responsibilities are social exclusion/inclusion, local authorities, Local Strategic Partnerships and NDCs. Whilst GoRs have sought to actively and enthusiastically involve themselves in these areas many of them still retain an internal structure that reflects the regional elements of the departments, and their priorities. Thus internally they often do

not reflect `joined-up working'. Perhaps more worrying GoRs and RDAs do not have a particularly good track record of working together. Too often they are unaware of what each is doing and there is little evidence that the `social' and `economic' sides of regeneration have been brought together at the regional level to create a framework that will facilitate and support local level regeneration. The creation of two separate regional bodies, with different operating priorities and cultures, was never likely to succeed and it increasingly looks to have been a mistake. This regional division has arguably increased fragmentation and made life more difficult for local regeneration projects.

The other major challenge facing the government, as indicated earlier, is how to engage with and empower local communities. As we have already pointed out over the period since the early 1990s community participation has been allocated a key role in urban regeneration at local level and more widely, and this has particularly been the case since 1997 (see Blair, 2002). Successive initiatives have sought to secure a central role for communities in urban regeneration partnerships. NDC represents the most recent, and arguably thoroughgoing, attempt to create `community-led' regeneration partnerships that place the needs of local people at the centre of developments. Much of the emphasis has been on building social cohesion and solidarity within communities/neighbourhoods[10] in `Excluded Spaces' which are viewed as spaces containing `disorganised' communities. The way to tackle this is through promoting social cohesion, solidarity and self help principally by generating social capital (see Leigh and Putnam, 2002, on how government might facilitate this process; see also Johnston and Percey-Smith, 2003; Kearns, 2004). This approach entails changing communities' internal social structures (`social mix'), way(s) of behaving and `persuading' those who live there to internalise certain values related to responsibility, respect and civility (see the section on urban safety for a wider discussion of the `Respect Agenda') and in the process to develop new ways of `governing themselves' (see Atkinson 2003; Whitehead, 2004).

The problems associated with community participation and urban regeneration partnerships are well documented (see Atkinson and Cope, 1997; Atkinson, 1998 and 1999b, 2005b; Geddes, 2006). Many excluded communities lack the capacity to

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[10] On the reasons behind the recent turn to the neighbourhood see Forrest (2004); Bridge et al (2004); Whitehead (2004).

effectively participate in partnerships where other players in the `regeneration game', who have superior resources and knowledge, frequently set the agenda. Indeed even where local communities do have the capacity to engage effectively in partnerships they often find themselves disadvantaged by the need to `learn a new language' which frequently makes it difficult for them to effectively express their own interests in partnerships (see Atkinson, 1999c). Moreover, it should not be assumed that communities are coherent, identifiable bodies with a single set of interests; conflicts of interest frequently exist within communities and make it difficult to articulate a coherent series of proposals that partnerships can address. Furthermore, only a small number of people from local communities will be actively engaged in these activities leading to the possibility that they will succumb to `participation fatigue' as the constant launching of initiatives makes more and more demands on their limited time[11].

The introduction of the community, however constituted, into regeneration partnerships offers both opportunities and threats to governance. For instance this can lead to a better use and targeting of resources, a smoother development process and the development of significant community capacities for self-help, empowerment and democratic participation. However, it can also produce resistance to particular forms of development (e.g. flagship projects), calls for more social expenditure that cannot be met from meagre budgets, demands for more democratic control of projects and disruption in state-private sector relationships. Moreover, communities, particularly deprived ones, do not necessarily have an existing capacity to organise themselves or the resources that would allow them to participate in partnerships as equal partners. To achieve this requires the investment of significant resources over a considerable period of time and the willingness of other partners to support this both financially and in terms of the development of community infrastructure (e.g. knowledge, confidence, self-organising abilities). Too often local government, partly as a result of the timetables imposed to submit bids to the central government, has conceived and developed projects with minimal levels of community input. While there are examples

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[11] In response to these problems, and as part of a more general attempt to develop, support and sustain community participation, a Community Empowerment Fund, worth £35m over three years, was made available to the 88 most deprived areas that qualify for the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and a further £50m provided small grants to support social entrepreneurs and community organisations over a three-year period in disadvantaged areas (SEU, 2001, p28).

of regeneration projects in which communities have played a crucial role, and hopefully NDC will provide more examples of this, all too often community involvement has failed to rise much above the level of consultation.

Unemployment, Economic Inactivity and 'Welfare to Work' in British Cities

New Labour is in the process of creating what it describes as an 'employment first' welfare state. In the first phase of New Labour's welfare to work strategy, between 1997 and 2005, the Government prioritised a concerted drive from the centre to tackle high unemployment and give a work focus to the benefit system. There has been some success, and unemployment has fallen significantly, but less progress has been made in reducing levels of 'worklessness' amongst the economically inactive, especially in the major cities. In response the British Government is introducing another wave of welfare to work reform that aims to increase the economic activity rate (from just under 75% to 80%) through the creation of a more active benefit system that connects workless people with jobs, reinforces work incentives and reduces costs and welfare dependency. A new element of this strategy is the focus given to the uneven impact of the strategy in cities and the Government's ambition is to now to 'decentralise' and 'localise' the "centralised intervention system" it has created (DWP, 2004b).

New Labour's Welfare to Work strategy

Ministers and the national Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) have developed the welfare to work strategy since 1997 and it is implemented at 'street level' through a radically reshaped public employment service, 'Jobcentre Plus' (JCP), that delivers its programmes through a national front line system of about 850 integrated employment assistance and benefit offices. JCP is 'steered' through a variety of 'Performance and Resource Agreement' targets agreed annually with DWP. These include job entry targets and targets that specify performance in paying benefits promptly and accurately, reducing fraud and error, helping employers fill vacancies and improving business efficiency and customer satisfaction. The job entry targets are weighted to clearly signal the priority attached to different groups with, for example, greater value given for getting a lone parent into a job and least value for helping someone already employed to move into a new job.

The front line JCP service has been designed to "enshrine the principle that everyone has an obligation to help themselves, through work wherever possible". Within this regime unemployed people are 'activated' through a 'work first' Jobseekers Allowance; working age people in receipt of 'inactive' benefits, such as lone parents and those on disability benefits, are required to attend regular employment reviews; and the tax and benefit system has been radically redesigned to reduce disincentives and 'make work pay' (see Table 1).

Table 1: New Labour's Welfare to Work Strategy

1. 'Activation': This has been a feature of the British system since the mid-1980s. It was first aimed at the unemployed and culminated, in 1996, with the replacement of Unemployment Benefit with a Jobseekers Allowance (JSA). This requires unemployed people to enter into a formal Jobseekers Agreement and demonstrate that they are available for and actively seeking work. A more limited form of activation has now been extended to all other working age claimants, including carers, lone parents and people on long term ill health or disability benefits who must now normally attend mandatory 'Work Focused Interviews' when they first claim benefits and at subsequent intervals when required to do so. These claimants are not as yet required to actively seek work or participate in labour market programmes. **2. 'Making Work Pay':** This included reductions in direct taxes on the low paid and in 1999 the introduction of a National Minimum Wage (NMW) and the Working Families Tax Credit. There has been also the gradual introduction of a complex package of 'transition' initiatives designed to minimise the 'risk' of leaving benefit and meet the immediate costs involved in starting work. At the same time New Labour, partly in response to European Directives, has partially re-regulated the labour market, introducing new rights at work and anti-discrimination legislation. Finally, there has been a gradual expansion of child care provision enabling lone parents in particular to participate in the labour market.

Unemployed people claiming JSA are subject to a relatively strict job search regime and access to more expensive employment programmes is only made available for those who become long term unemployed. The main national programmes are the 'New Deals' that have been at the forefront of the Government's welfare to work strategy. Young people aged between 18 and 24 have to enter a New Deal after six months of claiming JSA. Those aged between 25 and 60 have to enter the New Deal after 18 months unemployment. Lone parents and people on disability benefits can choose whether to participate or not. The only significant alternative to the New Deals is the Employment Zones, which are delivered by private sector organizations in areas of high unemployment, primarily in the larger cities. The relevant national programmes are described in more detail in Table 2.

The significant innovation associated with the New Deals was the introduction of Personal Advisers (PAs) in Jobcentres. These PAs, like case managers in other European systems, are expected to assess employability, provide job search assistance, and tackle employment barriers through referrals to a complex array of support programmes usually delivered by 'for profit' and 'not for profit' providers. This focus on support tailored to the needs of each individual is the key feature that distinguished the New Deals from previous programmes (Hasluck, 2001).

Table 2: British Employment Programmes

New Deal Programmes (introduced 1998) *Budget 2005/06* Young People £327m 25+ Adults £248m 50 plus £87m Disabled People £42m Lone Parents £91m Partners £20m	The programmes include access to a Personal Adviser who is the main point of contact throughout the programme. There are currently eight different New Deal programmes depending up on a person's age or circumstances including: Young People (18 to 24 year olds), 25 plus, 50 plus, disabled people, lone parents, partners, self employed, and musicians. Personal Advisers route customers to a range of training providers who can also provide support with job search and preparation for interviews. The delivery structure of New Deal is in the process of change as part of the Department's plans for Building on New Deal (BOND). In the future there will not be separate programmes but instead a menu of modular provision from which Personal Advisers will advise customers on what best meets their needs.
Employment Zones (introduced 2000) *Budget 2005/06* £101m est.	Introduced to test new approaches to helping long term unemployed people (over 25 years of age) in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance into work. They operate in 13 areas, mainly cities that have high levels of unemployment. A key part of this initiative has been access to a Personal Adviser for one to one support. In 2003 they were extended to include lone parents and some long term unemployed youths aged 18 to 24. Contractors, who are either from the private sector or Working Links, a Public Private Partnership, run the Zones.
Action Team for Jobs (introduced 2000) *Budget 2005/06* £47m	63 Action Teams for Jobs were set up by DWP and aimed to identify and remove barriers to work for unemployed people furthest away from the labour market in disadvantaged areas and help them find sustainable employment. Each Action Team for Jobs provides one-to-one advice, help and guidance from a Personal Adviser backed up by the award of grants to fund training and work related costs. The Action Teams were only initially funded for one year, but due to their success funding was secured until March 2006.
Pathways to Work (pilots introduced October 2003)	Set up in three areas initially and to be extended to a third of the country by 2007, they provide people claiming disability benefits with advice and support from specialist Personal Advisers. New claimants are required to attend six mandatory monthly work focused meetings with a Personal Adviser to discuss work options and develop an action plan.

The most important recent programme development has been the introduction of Pathways to Work aimed at people on disability benefits. This involves a more intensive regime of sequenced WFIs, linked with 'return to work' cash credits and specialised PAs

who can make referrals to 'condition management programmes', developed with the National Health Service. These can involve rehabilitation support to enable an individual to return to work and manage health conditions, such as, back pain, angina, or mental illness. This approach is being implemented gradually and by 2007 will be extended to the areas that contain the highest numbers of people claiming disability benefits.

Critique of the British 'welfare to work' strategy

New Labour claims much success for its welfare to work strategy and there has been progress in reducing unemployment and child poverty (ref). Between May 1997 and November 2005 the number of people in employment increased from just over 27 million to 28.8 million, and the number of unemployed people fell from over 8 per cent to 4.9 per cent, calculated by the standardised International Labour Office (ILO) definition. Although much of this increase has occurred in the context of a relatively buoyant labour market evidence-based evaluations have indicated that many welfare to work policies have made modest net additional impacts to employment outcomes and levels (refs). There have, however, been less favourable assessments of the Government's strategy and regular JSA unemployment has been on the increase in GB over the past year.

Some critics point out that many of those who participate in welfare to work programmes do not get jobs and a significant minority of those who get jobs do not retain them. The problems of placement and retention are most acute for people from minority ethnic groups, for those with the greatest individual barriers, and for those living in the cities and other areas of highest unemployment. One analysis of the New Deal programme for young people showed it was most successful in rural areas, especially in the South of England, where over half of participants typically entered jobs. Job entry rates in the older industrial cities and in inner city London were, however, as low as 30 per cent and employment retention rates were lower often because of the relatively poor quality of jobs available. This poor performance has been attributed to the interplay between local labour market conditions, the characteristics of participants and the capacity of local delivery systems that characterises many British cities (Sunley and Martin, 2003).

Over the life of the various New Deal employment programmes these trends have intensified as front line staff in Jobcentres have struggled to place clients with more complex barriers into employment. Currently only 45 per cent of those leaving the New Deal for

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Young People move into sustained employment with about a third returning directly to unemployment and about one in five placed in a job returning to claim JSA within 13 weeks. Some of these young people are now entering the programme for a second or third time. This pattern of 'recycling' is emerging in the other New Deals.

There has also been criticism of the 'make work pay' strategy, with employers complaining about the increased costs of regulation and Opposition Parties highlighting the bureaucratic complexity faced by those 'trapped' in the 'tax credit economy'. These criticisms have been exacerbated by some administrative failures in the payment and calculation of the credits. Paradoxically the separation of Child Tax Credit from Working Tax Credit has 'blunted work incentives', and while the highest effective marginal tax rates have been reduced the number of those in work "facing an effective marginal tax rate of over 50%" has increased by almost 900,000 (Brewer and Shephard, 2004, p. viii). Another problem has been the significant disincentive to work now faced by the partners of those in households where someone is already claiming a tax credit.

Another weakness in the overall 'welfare to work' strategy has been the marginal impact in reducing the numbers of working age people receiving sickness and disability benefits. The number of people of working age claiming incapacity related benefits increased between 1997 and 2005, when it stood at some 2.7 million people. Detailed analysis revealed that the increases in those claiming disability benefits were concentrated amongst those living in the cities and were closely related also to patterns of industrial change, with many recipients being unskilled male manual workers in areas of highest unemployment (in Easington, for example, over 20 per cent of all residents receive incapacity benefits, see Table 3).

Despite some success in reducing welfare dependency the impact of New Labour's welfare to work strategy has been at it's weakest in Britain's largest cities and in former manufacturing and coalfield areas still struggling with the legacy of deindustrialisation and major population shifts. Even Britain's most successful cities, especially London, experience complex forms of social exclusion and poverty where unemployment and economic inactivity remain stubbornly high. Paradoxically, in the largest British cities these areas often exist adjacent to more prosperous locations with high numbers of job vacancies. Typically, these areas also contain high concentrations of the particular groups

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that have proved to be the 'hardest to help' for various welfare to work programmes that have been implemented - lone parents, minority ethnic communities, the low skilled, ex offenders, those with health problems and people with substance abuse addictions.

In public New Labour Ministers often take a predictably 'tough line', arguing that residents in many of these areas live within travelling distance of available jobs and that increased conditionality of benefits will reduce the "culture of worklessness endemic in many inner city neighbourhoods".[12] However, the Government acknowledges also the complexity of the problems these communities and individuals face and much research and evaluation has now been undertaken to analyse the employment barriers experienced within these communities and to identify 'what works' in tackling concentrations of worklessness (see, for example, SEU 2005).

The unemployment problem in British cities

City unemployment rates have fallen in the UK but most still have worklessness rates above the national average. The UK has only a small number of areas with an employment rate below the EU average but nearly all are in cities (see Table 3 which highlights also the situation of ex-industrial areas, especially those previously linked with the coal industry). It is in these areas that the welfare to work strategy has been least effective even though in some of these cities the most entrenched concentrations of unemployment and poverty are located close to areas of high employment (for example, Tower Hamlets with the lowest economic activity rate in GB is adjacent to the City of London). Within these local districts worklessness is further concentrated in particular neighbourhoods and 'area effects', linked with poverty, ill health, youth disaffection, crime and family breakdown, themselves seem to exacerbate social exclusion (SEU, 2005). In particular, many children in these neighbourhoods are at risk of growing up in families with little contact with the world of work and limited aspirations to join it.

High levels of unemployment can indicate that employment creation has to be part of an effective local strategy, but the data reveals also that in many of the localities concerned jobs are accessible in local labour markets. The problem is that for low skilled residents many of these positions are often associated with low-pay and poor working conditions,

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[12] Des Browne, then Minister for Work, cited in a Guardian article, 'Labour to tackle inner-city culture of worklessness', 1 April 2004

and require a great deal of flexibility. The jobs available are no longer the industrial-type jobs of earlier decades, but personal service occupations (Green and Owen, 2006). This restructuring of the employment market has favoured women, especially the partners of men already in employment. These developments have contributed to the polarisation of work amongst households and to the remarkable level of jobless households concentrated in the high unemployment areas of Britain (Gregg & Wadsworth).

Even where jobs exist those out of work in the poorest areas are least likely to get them. In some cases employers still directly discriminate against the unemployed, especially if they are from a particular minority group or a particular district. In more cases, employers are likely to discriminate indirectly because of the way they recruit. They may choose to advertise in channels that the unemployed do not access, or rely on the social networks of their existing employees. These channels and networks are often closed to those who live in communities where most of their friends and relatives are also unemployed. Employers also may specify requirements that are actually unnecessary for the job, for example, particular qualification levels or physical requirements (such as minimum height requirements that may discriminate against women and/or people from certain minority communities).

Table 3: Lowest Economic Activity Rates: GB Local Authority Districts by Area Type 2004/05

London Boroughs	Cities	Ex-Industrial Areas
Tower Hamlets 54.13%	Manchester 61.06%	Easington 61.77%
Newham 55.63%	Liverpool 61.86%	Neath Port Talbot 64.07%
Hackney 56.40%	Middlesbrough 64.96%	Merthyr Tydfil 63.48%
Haringey 60.27%	Nottingham 64.71%	Blaenau Gwent 63.78%
Barking and Dagenham 62.03%	Glasgow City 64.81%	Sandwell 65.16%
Islington 63.79%		
Kensington and Chelsea 63.49%		
Westminster 64.03%		
Waltham Forest 64.13%		
Southwark 64.30%		

There are also barriers concerning location and transport, especially the ability to get to a job and organise family commitments. This is particularly acute for women if adequate

child care is not available or available only at times that does not match travel to work requirements. It is also a constraint for those with other caring responsibilities.

Finally, there are a range of barriers that relate to the characteristics of the unemployed themselves and which are exacerbated the longer a person remains out of work:

1. As the duration of unemployment increases many people reduce the frequency with which they look for jobs, with some giving up altogether. People lose touch with the labour market and lose contact with other people in work. Their perception of suitable jobs and pessimism about their availability can become entrenched. British research has found that many residents in such areas have low expectations of starting a job, low aspirations for work and study, and very limited travel horizons. There is also a distrust of state agencies, such as Jobcentres. Lack of recent work experience becomes a more significant barrier the longer a person is out of work.

2. Many workless people lack skills and what may be called 'employability'. Many have problems with reading, writing or with speaking the required language, and others lack key skills required for employment, including computer and IT knowledge. Others will not yet be 'job ready' in terms of time management, teamwork or interacting with customers. Still others will have health problems, disabilities, or issues arising from drug or alcohol misuse. Others may be homeless, or lack secure accommodation.

3. For some there may be little financial incentive to work either because of the state benefits they already receive, or because they can generate a 'cash in hand' income from the informal economy, including activities that may be illegal.

4. There also may be significant financial risks for people who have been out of work for a long time to make the transition into employment. In many areas, especially London, the long term relative security offered by the benefit system may be preferable to the risk of starting a job that may not work out. This is particularly acute for those with significant debts.

The varied causes of unemployment and economic inactivity indicate that local strategies and initiatives should be carefully targeted. Unfortunately, the 'top down' nature of

British policy making and implementation has not been well suited to delivering such a 'joined up' approach.

City Governance and Welfare to Work

City governance in the UK contrasts markedly with the departmentalised, federal and/or more decentralised systems of other European countries, with their more complex division of policy responsibilities and differentiated social insurance and 'safety net' social assistance delivery systems. In particular, the British welfare system has traditionally been organised through hierarchical bureaucracies controlled by central Government Departments. Local British city authorities have played a relatively marginal role, in the 'welfare to work' system and in other policy areas. With far fewer powers or resources than those enjoyed by other cities in Europe local leaders in British cities have had little capacity to redesign or tailor local strategies.

One fundamental weakness is that many of the institutions and agencies involved in formulating and implementing employment programmes within cities do so in an uncoordinated and unsystematic way. Typically employment and regeneration programmes have often been focused on different groups and been delivered by different agencies contracting with different levels of Government all with diverse funding streams. The absence of local coherence often has reduced the effectiveness of individual policies and programmes and evaluations have shown that the impact of welfare to work programmes has been highly contingent on local labour market conditions and on the capacity of local institutions and networks (Campbell). This fragmentation has also restricted the capacity of city governments to respond to the growing diversity of local communities and tailor programmes to the particular circumstances of local labour markets.

New Labour, and preceding British Governments, have primarily responded to the problems generated by this fragmentation through the creation of multi agency partnerships through which Whitehall-led Departments have attempted to 'steer' the local delivery of regeneration, education, transport, and some aspects of employment programmes. Until recently, however, Jobcentre Plus - the primary 'welfare to work' agency - has demonstrated little local flexibility and engagement with these partnerships. This may be about to change.

The British Government has been placing a renewed emphasis on the contribution that cities make to economic performance and social cohesion (HMT, 2006). Local Authorities and Local Strategic Partnerships are also to be given a more strategic role in employment strategies through Local Area Agreements. In this context the latest Welfare Reform Green Paper (2006) announced plans to pilot new partnerships between JCP, Local Authorities, skills agencies, employers and the third sector, to deliver better coordinated employment and skills support for workless people in the UKs major cities. These partnerships or 'Employment Trusts' are to be given as yet unspecified flexibilities but their aim "will be to deliver a significant reduction in the number of workless people" in those cities (HMT, 2006, p. 31).

It seems that the Government anticipates that the following benefits will result from involving local actors in the delivery of welfare to work programmes:

- Innovation with new policy tools that may be able to fill gaps in the existing policy framework and increase impacts, which if successful may also be transferred and adapted elsewhere.

- Increased adaptation of policy to the different sets of problems and opportunities experienced in different localities. Local actors may be the best placed to understand the circumstances of their own area and to identify solutions.

- Increased inter-linkage between the variety of national and local agencies operating in an area and through creating local partnerships and structures better co-ordinating these actors and encouraging complementarities and synergy between their activities.

- Co-ordination of different funding streams and policy initiatives to focus on local priorities.

- The mobilisation of new actors to increase the scale of delivery and to address local problems that are preventing policy from working effectively, based on the use of broader local networks.

These objectives have been given added urgency at a time when the Government is replacing passive benefit entitlement for lone parents and the disabled with new work focused benefits. Coupled with broader decentralisation these changes are now presenting many British cities with a set of far-reaching choices about how to restructure and deliver new active benefit regimes and improve the effectiveness of labour market programmes.

British policy makers recognise that the diversity of local areas - in the structure and development of their labour markets and their patterns of employment, in their welfare populations, and in their institutions and the ways they do or do not work together – play a significant role in the delivery of effective programmes. In this sense local flexibility is "not so much a political choice as a practical necessity" (Peck, 1998, p. 9).

Partnerships and Cities

The creation of local partnerships has been a key feature of British policy development for over twenty-five years. They have become a favoured policy tool of the Blair Government and there are now so many different strategic uses of the partnership idea that it is hard to generalise about the role they play in British cities. Nevertheless 'partnerships' are set to play a more important role in welfare to work strategies and it is useful to reflect on the experience of the local partnerships and inter agency networks that have already emerged from the 'bottom up' in the UK.

While many of these existing partnerships have a particular genesis and objectives they share certain common objectives. They are intended to overcome the local fragmentation and incoherence between different agencies and programmes. They provide a forum that can allow groups to combine their resources to develop complementary projects that provide multi-dimensional responses to complex individual and collective problems. They can allow a more extensive and accessible range of services to be provided through the creation of 'one stop shops' and integrated back to work strategies.

Potentially, the establishment of such common goals and the interaction between the key local players also improves the effectiveness of programmes by, for example, providing better matching between training for the unemployed and the needs of local employers. The collective scrutiny of partnerships can also allow them to minimise waste, duplication, and deadweight and substitution. At their best they also help free the forces of innovation and experimentation. These positive attributes not only improve effectiveness; they can also help build legitimacy and popular support in the often highly controversial debates about welfare reform.

Although local flexibility and partnership arrangements offer great potential, they also have drawbacks, not the least of which is the difficulty of measuring and comparing performance in systems that have been given considerable local discretion. Most

fundamentally without effective ways of continuing to ensure core entitlements significant variations in services and quality are likely to emerge between different localities, with corresponding differences in the opportunities offered to eligible clients. For example, while some areas are able to draw on a strong and diverse network of local agencies and projects, and/or a local tradition of collaboration, others may have few of these resources. This issue has particular resonance for the British approach to national welfare entitlements and standards that were originally created to overcome the inconsistency and arbitrary administrative practices associated with the earlier locally driven Poor Law system.

Partnership working may also divert some agencies from their core objectives, and others may see the arrangement as an opportunity to shift their costs and most complex problems onto other providers. More pragmatically, partnership, local analysis and collaboration require the development of new, often sophisticated skills from the agencies involved (Campbell; SEU, 2005). If the new 'Employment Trusts' are not focused and well-managed they may become an irrelevant 'talking shop' that wastes time and resources and creates yet another tier of unwanted bureaucracy. There is also a danger, as is evident in some parts of the UK, of 'partnership fatigue', where conflicting and confusing local demands are created through a plethora of initiatives with different Departmental sponsors, budgets, priorities, timetables and spatial remits.

The Changing Nature of Crime and Urban Safety

Policies in the field of 'law and order' and public safety over recent years share a number of commonalities with those in the other policy domains outlined but also reflect important differences. The significant politicisation of crime and insecurity since the late 1970s has exacerbated an inherent tension within criminal justice between the rational desire to manage the crime problem and process offenders, on the one hand, and the expressive and moral dimensions inherent in policing, prosecution and punishment, on the other hand. This ambiguity expresses itself both in the significant dissonance between policy rhetoric and practice and in the contradictory and volatile nature of much policy. Since the Thatcher government was elected in 1979 on a strong 'law and order' mandate there have been a series of dramatic shifts and policy U-turns. The period from 1979 to the mid-1980s was characterised by much tough rhetoric, which produced initiatives such

as the 'Short, Sharp Shock' for young offenders, increased police powers (and pay) and a rising prison population supported by a prison building programme. However, this loud punitive tone gradually gave way to a more pragmatic managerialist emphasis on cost efficiencies, effectiveness and value for money. Previously shielded from the impact of neo-liberal inspired new public management reforms policing and criminal justice became the subject of a 'quiet revolution', first heralded by the Financial Management Initiative. Home Office circular 114/1983 addressed to all chief constables and police authorities announced the arrival of this new approach in declaring that as a result of 'constraints on public expenditure', future increases in resources would be made conditional upon improvements in efficiency and effectiveness in the achievement of objectives. For many commentators, even those on the political Right, policing and criminal justice were central pillars of the 'strong state' which was believed necessary to balance (and cope with the excesses of and fall-outs from) the 'free economy' (Gamble 1994). Within this new logic, previously unimaginable reforms, such as the privatisation of prisons[13] and the use of cautioning to deal with young offenders,[14] suddenly came onto the agenda. The high-water mark of a managerialist approach to 'law and order' was reached with the passage of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 with its emphasis upon 'just deserts' and proportionality in sentencing. However, some of its most controversial provisions lasted less than a year before being ditched in a dramatic punitive shift in policy initiated by the same government in 1993.

The emblematic event that signalled and precipitated this shift was the murder of 2 year-old Jamie Bulger by two 10 year-old boys and the subsequent trial, together with the accompanying media frenzy. The government's mood shifted away from a managerialist informed pragmatic politics to one of 'populist punitiveness' with an emphasis upon a rhetoric of 'prison works'. This led to a renewed emphasis upon individual responsibility, early intervention and the use of custody. In this context, multiple cautioning of young

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[13] Even Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary who oversaw much of this period, denied the possibility of private prisons as late as 1987. Within less than a year, in the light of strong encouragement from the Adam Smith Institute and the House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, he was announcing the legislative basis for privatisation in a Home Office Green Paper (1998).

[14] One of the success stories of this period, the cautioning of juvenile offenders as an alternative to prosecution increased dramatically over the decade without a subsequent increase in crime. Whilst driven locally this was encouraged by the Conservative government by way of circulars 14/1985 and 59/1990. In 1993 some 311,300 people were cautioned, a twofold increase on the number 10 years earlier.

people and diversion schemes distinctly fell out of favour. It was against this background, in 1993, that in a radio interview the then shadow Home Secretary Tony Blair (still smarting from the election defeat a year earlier) first coined the now infamous slogan: 'tough on crime; tough on the causes of crime'. It was designed both to capture the public mood and to distance the 'New' Labour Party from earlier 'law and order' policies which had come to constitute an electoral Achilles heel. Consequently, the 'New Labour' government that swept to power in 1997 did so promising to address growing public concerns about personal security and public safety, with plans to reform policing, transform youth justice and introduce crime and disorder reduction partnerships across the country (in England and Wales at least).

One explanation for the volatility in contemporary crime and security related policies is the hesitant and ambiguous attempt by governments to come to terms with a number of contemporary realities:

- High levels of crime have become a normal aspect of consumer society. Recorded crime rates increased dramatically from the 1960s onwards, placing growing strain upon the formal, reactive criminal justice system and engendering greater insecurity as more people became touched by the experience (direct or vicarious) of victimisation.

- A growing realisation – powerfully revealed by victimisation surveys - that most crimes do not come to the attention of formal institutions of control, thus questioning their effectiveness.

- A growing cultural and political status of the victim. Victims of crime, largely forgotten within criminal justice and by criminology, have moved to the centre stage of policy debates and media attention.

- An increased acknowledgement of the importance of social institutions and informal control within civil society in sustaining order and conformity, rather than the uncertain threat of state administered punishments. Moreover, important social and cultural trends in the post-war period, notably with the growth of consumer capitalism, appeared to be loosening and undermining traditional bonds and institutions of control. At the moment of their apparent decline, family, kinship and community increasingly came to be recognised as important sites of control (Hirschi, 1969).

- Recognition of the financial burdens of traditional modes of crime control on the public purse.

- A realisation of the limited the capacity of the agencies of criminal justice to reduce the incidence of crime. This represented itself most acutely in a loss of faith in the 'rehabilitative ideal'. A new-found pessimism, most starkly evoked in Martinson's (1974) infamous phrase 'nothing works', was born, replacing the perceived confidence in the capacity of 'experts' to solve the problem of crime.

The subsequent 'crisis of penal modernism' (Garland 2001) has resulted in ambiguous political responses whereby, in certain instances, the limitations of government action are acknowledged as the levers for securing safety and order lie 'beyond the state' and at other moments state sovereignty over crime is symbolically reasserted through periodic episodes of frantic and populist activity. This dualistic denial and recognition produce contradictory shifts in the state's presentation of its own capacity for effective action in crime control.

As faith in traditional criminal justice institutions and established policing strategies began to ebb and wane, practitioners and policy-makers began to look elsewhere for novel avenues of development and adaptive strategies. The principal adaptation has been the emergence of a discourse of public safety as distinct from, and to rival, that of 'justice'. This discourse focuses upon a different set of priorities that are future-oriented, concerned with security, order and prevention, through risk-reduction, harm-minimisation and loss-prediction. Here, the demands of governing the future eclipse the requirements of 'doing justice' by re-ordering the past. Importantly, in this new discourse security encompasses subjective anxieties and fears, as well as objective risks of victimisation. As such, the criminological gaze began to be extended far beyond the incidence of crime itself to fear-provoking and deviant behaviour or situations, particularly where these might escalate or serve to indicate future criminality or crime.

The new 'preventative mentality' promoted interventions that could affect costs and benefits largely by reducing the supply of crimogenic opportunities and increasing the likelihood of apprehension of those who seek to exploit such opportunities. Motivational questions, whether they be social, structural or psychological were to be pushed into the background. In the 'new criminologies of everyday life' (Garland, 1996), situational

factors were to be accorded greater salience. This precipitated a criminological shift away from the offender as the object of knowledge towards the offence – its situational and spatial characteristics – as well as the place and role of the victim.

Situational Crime Prevention

An essential element of the growing preventive approach to crime in urban areas has been the emergence of situational crime prevention, which seeks to alter behaviour through routine and mundane modifications to the physical world. Here, control is embedded in the design and 'arrangement of things' in such a way that it is taken-for-granted or imperceptible, but nonetheless demands small adjustments to behaviour by individuals. It emerged through a plethora of locally-based and small scale initiatives, innovations and technological advances often arising from attempts to solve very specific problems. Many of these had their origins in the commercial sector. The pragmatic and intuitive connection between emerging preventive theory and practice drove innovation forward based on the following assumptions:

- a belief that situational features are more susceptible to change than others which may influence crime;

- an assumption that much, if not most, crime is opportunistic;

- a belief in human choice in the commission of criminal acts, premised upon a 'rational choice' model of human behaviour;

- an advocacy of deterrence, with a relative emphasis on the certainty of detection and speed of sanction rather than the severity of punishment.

Situational crime prevention has proved attractive at a number of levels. As well as its pragmatism and its appeal to commonsense, piecemeal change with tangible results, situational prevention (re-)emerged at a favourable political moment. Its language of economic reasoning, personal choice, responsibility and rationality fitted very well with the growing neo-liberal consensus within government. Its appeal to the responsibilities of people and organizations throughout civil society meshed well with the growing political will to downsize and roll-back the state, in order to free-up entrepreneurial initiative.

A notable example of the growth of situational approaches to preventive urban governance has come in the form of the expansion of CCTV across the country,

massively sponsored by governments since the late 1980s.[15] It is estimated that in the mid-1990s in England some 78% of the Home Office's crime prevention budget was being spent on CCTV systems alone (Koch 1998). This growth has continued with Britain leading the world in the installation of CCTV. According to the British Security Industry Association (BSIA), by 2004 there were over 4.25 million CCTV cameras installed in the UK.[16]

The dramatic expansion of CCTV was initially rooted in a political ideology that favoured a situational approach and technological solutions whilst visibly demonstrating that (local and national) government was 'doing something' about crime. However, it also reflects a deeper cultural attraction in that CCTV cameras not only evoke symbols of security by appearing to perform preventive tasks, but also facilitate the acting out of more traditional expressive and punitive sentiments provoked by the footage derived from CCTV cameras where criminal acts and disorder are captured on film. In this manner, CCTV straddles both a preventive logic and a punitive one (Norris and McCahill 2006). The growth of situational prevention has become associated with the rise of a 'fortress society' in which the logic of 'defensible space' (Newman 1972) and 'target hardening' is taken to its extreme in the form of 'gated communities' where people live secured behind walls, gates and other security paraphernalia.[17] Urban developers and local authorities seeking to lure (affluent) people back to city centres as magnets for regeneration are increasingly resorting to security systems, gating and visible guarding as means of achieving this. Here, security is embedded into the urban environment, in ways which not only disrupt trust relations but also segregate populations by constructing exclusive zones in which safety is a prevailing factor (Crawford 2000). Exclusion, dispersal and avoidance have become defining logics of a preventive mentality.

Crime and the City

In much of the debate about urban regeneration and safety there is a prevailing assumption that inward investment in, and renewal of, urban areas will have a positive impact on public safety. Yet one of the most significant recent developments in the

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[15] In 1994, the first of four CCTV Challenge Competitions was launched to support the expansion of city-centre CCTV.

[16] http://www.bsia.co.uk/industry.html

[17] A recent survey of planning authorities identified around 1,000 gated communities in England (Atkinson *et al*. 2004).

regeneration of city centres – namely the expansion of the night-time economy, notably by alcohol-based, leisure industries - has simultaneously promoted incivility, crime and disorder. Encouraged by local and central governments, weak regulation and promoters of 'urban boosterism', pubs, clubs and other night-time outlets have become important elements of post-industrial urban prosperity by attracting inward flows of capital investment and new consumers (Hobbs *et al*., 2003). Nevertheless, they have brought with them safety dilemmas, particularly given the alcohol-related crime and disorder problems that have been generated. This serves as a stark reminder that inward capital investment does not always produce crime preventive effects and may actually foster locales in which bonds of restraint are loosened, the pursuit of pleasure and aggressive hedonism extolled and civility threatened. But, this also points to one of the central dilemmas for the city; its cultural attraction may in part derive from its vaguely threatening excitement and transgressive potential.

In terms of insecurity, the contemporary urban predicament has largely been seen through the lens of 'estate on the edge' (Power, 1997), wherein anti-social behaviour and crime compound other problems. Here, the spatial concentration of poverty has been exacerbated by the growing wealth of some sections of the population and the flight of people and capital out of certain localities (Dorling and Rees, 2003). Social polarisation has been fuelled by the residualisation of the public housing stock, notably in the light of the 'right to buy' legislation of the 1980s. As inequalities in wealth, land values and employment opportunities became more extreme, so too according to analysis of BCS data, the distribution of victimisation in England and Wales became more spatially concentrated (Trickett *et al*., 1995). Poverty, like crime, is subject to a clustering effect, heavily concentrated among the 10% that experience the most victimisation (Hope, 2001). A small proportion of neighbourhoods suffer exceptionally disproportionate rates of personal and property crime. Unsurprisingly, these are also places in which other social disadvantages are concentrated. This is also reflected in anti-social behaviour which is a significant problem for a minority of the population. For most people, anti-social behaviour is not a big problem, 61% of respondents to the 2003/4 BCS reported no bad effects from any of 16 types of anti-social behaviour (Wood, 2004). However, it compounds other forms of disadvantage, concentrated as it is in deprived urban areas: a

third of BCS respondents in inner-city areas thought levels of anti-social behaviour were high in their area.

Contemporary Urban Safety Policies under New Labour

A major declaration of the shift to a preventive mentality towards urban governance within government came with the publication of interdepartmental circular 8/84. It constituted a decisive statement of the new philosophy, spelling out the need for a multi-agency approach and declaring that 'preventing crime is a task for the whole community'. The Morgan Committee Report (1991), established to review developments in the intervening 6 years after the publication of circular 8/84, articulated this approach in the terminology of 'community safety'. This was perceived to be open to wider interpretation than the language of 'prevention'. It was also seen as an umbrella term under which situational and social approaches could be combined rather than juxtaposed. The Morgan Report recommended that local authorities should be given 'statutory responsibility', working with the police, for the development and promotion of community safety. It also highlighted the lack of central government co-ordination. However, largely for ideological reasons, the then Conservative government refused to implement the Report's central recommendations.

In 1997, New Labour came to office with a pledge to implement the key Morgan Report recommendations and set about articulating a new infrastructure to be assembled at the local level to address crime and disorder through a partnership approach. As one of its first major pieces of legislation, the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 created the institutional framework for implementing a partnership approach. It diverged from the Morgan proposals in that it placed a joint duty on local councils and the police to work together with a wide range of other agencies from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to develop and implement strategies to reduce crime and disorder.[18] Each of the 376 Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) across England and Wales is required to conduct a triennial audit of crime and disorder within its area, to consult the local community on the findings and to deliver a strategic response. The Act also provides a power to partners to disclose information for the purposes of the Act (s. 115).

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[18] The discussion that follows applies primarily to England and Wales. Obligations set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 do not apply to Scotland, where a voluntaristic approach to partnerships has prevailed. Northern Ireland has followed a slightly different route.

Section 17 of the 1998 Act also imposes a duty on local authorities, in exercising their various functions, to consider the crime and disorder implications and the need to do all that they reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in their area. The purpose of the duty was to 'give the vital work of preventing crime a new focus across a very wide range of local services... putting crime and disorder considerations at the very heart of decision making, where they have always belonged' (Home Office 1997: para. 33). It was intended as an 'enabling device' to promote the embedding of a crime prevention mentality in the everyday activities of the police and local authorities. Some commentators saw this as the most radical element of the 1998 Act. Moss and Pease note that since anticipating crime could pervade 'every aspect of local authority responsibility, it is difficult to conceive of any decision which will remain untouched by s.17 considerations' (1999, p16).

Soon after the establishment of CDRPs the government launched its ambitious Crime Reduction Programme. Local partnerships were to be centrally involved in the implementation which allocated significant funding through which to advance the work of preventive partnerships. Initially, the programme was intended to run for 10 years. In the event, however, the programme only ran from 1999 to 2002 and few projects were fully implemented. Many suffered from slow moving bureaucratic procedures, cultural resistance from practitioners, unfeasible timescales and a lack of capacity on the part of relevant organisations. Less was learnt about what works than about the reasons for implementation failure. Maguire (2004) suggests that the unraveling of the crime reduction programme, in part, lay in the manner in which it got sucked into the wider reform agenda of achieving performance targets and delivering crime reduction outcomes. The initial long-term aim of learning through experimentation and evaluation became side-tracked by the shorter-term objectives of meeting challenging crime reduction targets set by government. Hence, at the outset of the programme the government announced targets including a 30% reduction in vehicle crime by 2004 and a 25% reduction in burglary by 2005.

The experience of community safety partnerships has not lived up to early expectations. The main barriers have included a reluctance of some agencies to participate (especially health, education and social services); the dominance of a policing agenda; unwillingness

to share information; conflicting interests, priorities and cultural assumptions on the part of different agencies; local political differences; lack of inter-organisational trust; desire to protect budgets; lack of capacity and expertise; and over-reliance on informal contacts and networks which lapse if key individuals move on. The involvement of the private sector has often been patchy and the role of the voluntary sector is frequently marginalised. Despite s.115 of the 1998 Act which gives partners the legal power to exchange information, in practice, partnerships experienced considerable problems in reaching agreements or protocols about what data they could legitimately share and on what basis. Along with data protection legislation, the implications of s.115 have been differently interpreted. As a result, concerns over confidentiality have often stymied partnership working and problematized inter-organisational trust relations.

Central government responded to the perceived unwillingness of some key agencies to participate actively in local partnerships by expanding the list of organisations under a legal duty to participate. Since the original legislation, a similar statutory responsibility has been extended to police authorities and fire authorities as of April 2003 and Primary Care Trusts (representing the health service) a year later.[19] Demands for such legislative obligations emerged largely because these partners were not deemed to be contributing to many partnerships around the country.[20]

Similarly, the implementation of s.17 has fallen considerably below expectations. One area where it might have had direct and immediate implications was in the realm of planning applications, where police architectural liaison officers and crime prevention design advisors might have been able to use it as a lever into planning decisions. A significant number of test cases revolved around applications for licensed premises associated with the expansion of the night-time economy. Despite the well documented attendant crime and disorder implications of large numbers of alcohol outlets in city centres (Home Office, 2001), the Planning Inspectorate has been largely unwilling to uphold decisions to reject applications on the grounds of s.17 where these had been made by local authorities (Moss, 2006). As a branch of central government rather than the local council, the Planning Inspectorate has not felt itself bound by the legislation which

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[19] By means of the Police Reform Act 2002.
[20] The recent review of community safety proposes that the Home Secretary have a power to extend the list of responsible authorities in the future simply by means of secondary legislation (Home Office 2006b: 2).

applies to local authorities alone. This reflects more general tensions between responsibilities at central and local government levels.

Despite the requirement to identify and highlight local priorities, partnerships have been shackled by their lack of autonomy from central government. Under pressure to prioritise national targets that reflect a preoccupation with police recorded reductions in crime, the community safety remit of partnerships narrowed in the late 1990s to a focus on crime reduction (Hope, 2005). Despite the rhetoric of localism, central government appears to have been unable and unwilling to adopt a more 'hands off' approach to local partnerships. In the politically sensitive arena of crime and disorder, government desires to be seen to be responding to immediate problems often encourage a 'hands on' approach to micro-management. This ambiguous stance of central government reflected the dilemma of government pertaining to govern at 'arm's length' but ending up 'hands on' (Crawford, 2001). A related dilemma pertains to the manner in which the intention to join-up policies has been frustrated by competition, the proliferation of confused, overlapping and often short-term initiatives and a lack of joined-up thinking at central government.

Furthermore, the managerialist emphasis on target setting and performance measurement has fostered an *intra*-organisational focus on meeting narrow goals that pays little attention to the task of managing *inter*-organisational relations and networks (Crawford, 2001). The myopic implications of performance measurement afford scant regard to the complex process of negotiating shared purposes, particularly where there is no hierarchy of control. In such a wider policy climate, it is difficult to encourage partners for whom crime is genuinely a peripheral concern to participate actively in community safety endeavours whilst they are being assessed for their performance in other fields.

Such has been the political disappointment with community safety partnerships – despite the steady decline of aggregate crime rates since the mid 1990s – that in late 2004, the government announced a major review of their activities, governance and accountability, acknowledging that: 'a significant number of partnerships struggle to maintain a full contribution from key agencies and even successful ones are not sufficiently visible, nor we think accountable, to the public as they should be' (Home Office, 2004, p123). In early 2006, the government published a response to its review which made a number of

proposals for the future development of CDRPs (Home Office, 2006b), which appears to offer 'more of the same' with regard to central steering of local partnerships, propped up by statutory duties. Impatience at the pace of change has provoked an acceleration of the review cycle with little regard for the extensive burdens that partnerships are under to respond to the frenetic pace of new initiatives and the burdens of meeting central targets. Whilst the 1990s saw a shift in terminology from a narrow, police-centred understanding of crime prevention to 'community safety' in order to broaden debate to include the adverse impact of fear of crime, disorder and incivilities, the years from 1999 onwards saw a subsequent shift to 'crime reduction' as the over-riding narrative influenced by managerialist preoccupations with performance measurement. More recently, there has been an opening up of the preventive lens which has seen a more capacious concern with securing public reassurance, tackling anti-social behaviour and promoting civility (Crawford 2006). This reflects the much deeper ambivalence about the appropriate tasks and capacities of contemporary government. Policies have sought concurrently to devolve responsibilities onto others, acknowledging the limited effectiveness of governmental interventions, and to re-assert ambitious intentions to regulate behaviour in ways that often appear to lie far beyond the reach of the state.

The Ambitious Reach of Security Policies

What marks out New Labour's urban safety policies has been the pace of policy initiatives and their ambitious reach. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the government's campaign against 'anti-social behaviour'. Recent years have seen a profusion of new powers and technologies attempting to regulate and manage 'troublesome' behaviour. These include fixed penalty notices for disorder (recently extended to those aged 10-16), acceptable behaviour contracts, anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs), child curfew orders, dispersal orders, parenting contracts and parenting orders, amongst others. The feverish pace of change has seen the frenetic development and selection of new institutional tools and their equally frenzied supplement or replacement with ever novel ones. The latest manifestation of this, the 'Respect' programme launched in January 2006, spelt out the government's intention to go 'broader, deeper and further' than before in pursuing its crusade against anti-social behaviour (Home Office 2006a). This hyperactivity conforms well to Moran's (2003)

depiction of the British 'regulatory state' as one engaged in 'hyper-innovation' in a context of 'hyper-politicisation'.

Paradoxically, at the moment in history when the cloak masking the 'myth' of the monopolistic sovereign state had slipped significantly, in Britain at least, the state has embarked upon nothing less than the attempted transformation of contemporary British manners. The government's capacious aim is to 'ensure that the culture of respect extends to everyone - young and old alike'. The wide remit and urgency of the task in hand was underlined by the Home Secretary, Charles Clarke, when he announced the establishment of the Respect taskforce: 'Tackling disrespect in our society is an absolute priority for the government… From bad behaviour in schools and poor parenting, to binge drinking and noisy neighbours, disrespect can take many forms'. Hence, *Making People Behave* is an apt title for new book on the subject (Burney 2005). It nicely captures what is at stake; the British state in ebullient interventionist mode demanding 'self-regulate or else…!' Despite the novelty of some of the instruments deployed and the blurring of civil and criminal sanctions they herald, behind the 'or else' stands the traditional coercive arm of the state. Imposing 'civility through coercion' has become the ambitious, if ambiguous, aim of much contemporary policy. It is estimated that since 1997, the government has introduced 43 pieces of crime and security related legislation and created over 1,000 new criminal offences.

More broadly, the new governance of urban safety has served to conflate and confuse contemporary risks – especially in the amorphous concept of the 'anti-social'. Incivilities, disorder and disrespect are interwoven with the treats posed by terrorist violence, sexual abuse and assaults. At the same time, security-related risks have also become segregated from other social harms. All the talk of 'community safety' is something of a misnomer as it privileges crime and disorder risks at the expense of other harms from traffic, health, food, pollution, product-design, planning, etc.

The inflated cultural, social and political salience accorded to crime and insecurity has also had the effect of redefining public policies and strategies in terms of their possible crime preventive effects, previously defined in other terms. Through this securitisation lens, the quality of education, health, environment, housing and social provisions more generally, frequently come to be viewed in terms of their crimogenic consequences or

insecurity-potential, rather than merely as important public goods in their own right. Consequently, the ascendancy of a preventive mentality has heralded a 'criminalisation of social policy' (Crawford, 1997) whereby, we are increasingly 'governed through crime and insecurity' or at least social policies are justified in terms of their crime reductive potential.

This elevated status of urban safety policies also tells us something about the contemporary British state in and era of 'liquid modernity' (Bauman 2000), in which global forces and risks invade and constitute local settings. Community safety is saturated with referents to wider sentiments of 'ontological insecurity' (Giddens 1990) and contemporary uncertainties. In the face of government's limited capacity to control the global flows of capital, people, technologies and communications that infuse insecurities, the tasks associated with 'quality of life' policing have assumed a greater (symbolic) salience. Doing something visible and tangible about issues that intimately affect people's lives and about which authorities might actually be able to do something, provide a new governmental *raison d'être*. 'Reassurance' through neighbourhood policing teams, CCTV cameras, and symbols of security present tangible and visible demonstrations that government is actively doing something and can, or at least might possibly, effect change. As Bauman notes:

> 'In the world of global finances, state governments are allotted the role of little else than oversized police precincts; the quantity and quality of the policemen on the beat, sweeping the streets clean of beggars, pesterers and pilferers, and the tightness of the jail walls loom large among the factors of "investors' confidence", and so among the items calculated when the decisions to invest or de-invest are made. To excel in the job of precinct policeman is the best (perhaps the only) thing state government may do to cajole nomadic capital into investing in its subjects' welfare; and so the shortest roads to the economic prosperity of the land, and so hopefully to the "feel good" sentiments of the electors, lead through the public display of the policing skill and prowess of the state.' (1998: 120)

In the rush to 'make a difference' normative questions of proportionality and due process have largely been swept aside. Troublesome and disturbing behaviour no longer serves as

a reminder of the need for a politics of social solidarity and care, but is seen as an outcome of personal choice in which individuals appear as the authors of their own predicament. Containing the social threat they pose and excluding those unwilling or unable to meet the conditions of belonging are increasingly becoming the order of the day.

Conclusion

Neo-liberalism has helped foster a process of 'individualisation' in which wider social bonds increasingly have been loosened – including bonds of authority, tradition, paternalism and domination (Giddens 1991). Individualisation enlists the citizen in constructing their own destiny, in participating in decisions and making responsible choices. Individualisation affects not only relations between citizen and state but also permeates social, employment and sexual relations. It is a cultural as well as political and economic force. The impact of individualisation on public policies is to be found predominantly in the aims of tailoring services to specific individual needs, notably through contracts and agreements between service providers and individuals. Clients are not to be viewed as the passive recipients of a service but as active and reflexive agents; as consumers with choices. Public services are increasingly required to contract with citizens as 'partners'. These 'contracts' articulate the nature of reciprocal responsibilities and commitments. Examples of this new contractualism include Job Seekers Agreements, personal learning records in schools, acceptable behaviour contracts and youth offender contracts (Crawford 2003).

A positive interpretation of individualisation is that it shuns state paternalism, allowing individuals to escape from linear lives and constrained biographies (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995). Individuals are liberated from the straightjackets of tradition and the past. Autonomy and agency are recognised in ways that allow individuals to construct personal futures of choice, rather than fate. The 'freedom' heralded by individualisation demands new skills of responsiveness, flexibility, communication and the capacity to articulate preferences and negotiate interests. For some, this encourages more reflexive individuals and opens up space for new forms of participative democracy. The dark sides of individualisation are that it erodes collective values and commitments, fosters a short-termism that corrodes character (Sennet) and is premised on a 'mythological' discourse

of choice that masks inequality (Bauman 2001). The market model of choice offers only two real options of 'exit' or 'voice'. Exit is highly constrained by limitations to access alternatives, whilst voice not only demands high levels of competency - notably in communication and information processing – not available to all, but is also engendered by significant structural power differential. In reality, voice is both an unequal and 'obstructed ideal'.

In our view it would be wrong to characterise contemporary urban and security policies in Britain purely in terms of a neo-liberal influence. Whilst, as we have outlined, the language of market-forces, personal responsibility, choice and new public management reforms have been dominant aspects of change over the past 25 years or so, there have been other important voices at play. The instrumental rationality of neo-liberalism – with its emphasis upon individual self-interest - has often left a void with regard to questions of moral responsibility, civic values and the public good. This has been particularly notable in policy domains – such as family policy, education, crime and security – with an explicit normative dimension. It has expressed itself in a growing emphasis on the 'politics of behaviour'(Field 2003) reflected in the conditionality of welfare benefits, debates about criteria of citizenship and the idea that there are 'no individual rights without concomitant social responsibilities'.

It is here that a form of neo-conservatism with an avowedly moral agenda has come to asserted prominent sway, especially under New Labour. Unlike neo-liberalism, neo-conservatism asserts a notion of responsible agency that is conceived in highly moralistic tones embodying values and virtues. The state's role is not merely to free autonomy but to shape it. As Cruikshank notes: 'To restore civil society back to a state of natural liberty and self-reproduction, neo-conservatives argue that it is necessary to inculcate civic virtue in the citizenry, if necessary, by force' (cited in Rose 1999: 185). Civic renewal underpins much of the New Labour agenda, particularly its assault on 'anti-social behaviour' and a 'culture of disrespect'. The influence of communitarian philosophies is evident, with their emphasis on individual and collective responsibilities that supplant and sometimes conflict with individual rights. For communitarians the duties we owe to our communities constitute the basis for value commitments and social order (Etzioni 1993). Consequently, appeals to 'community' have been appropriated as the focus of

moral renewal, notable in policies allied with community safety, community cohesion and neighbourhood renewal.

What can be stated clearly – urban policy on its own cannot solve the problems of Britain's urban areas. All parties to the debate, including the current government, acknowledge this simple fact. Nor is there any pretence that left to their own devices mainstream policies pursed in isolation will address these problems. People based policies will play the lead role, but the way in which these have been delivered in the past has failed to address the needs of those experiencing poverty and social exclusion. Moreover, they have failed even more dismally to address the needs of those living in areas that have concentrations of poverty and social exclusion; it is in these `Excluded Spaces' or `Places Apart' that policies have failed most dramatically. This failure is the justification for the continued requirement for `place based' initiatives and the emphasis on the need to adopt a joined-up approach to the problems of these areas.  New Labour's approach stresses the need for integration of `people based' and `place based' policies (see HM Treasury, 2000). However, it is difficult to divine an overall grand strategy that `thinks' the role of the city in terms of social integration or indeed in terms of social polarisation. It is hard not to suggest that the primary emphasis is on the role of cities in economic development (largely through the metaphor of competitiveness) and their role in national economic life. If there are thoughts about how the city functions as an integrative mechanism they largely operate in `silence' through the assumption that economic growth will integrate the vast majority of the population into society and that at local level an integrated approach involving ABIs will address the needs of those living in areas experiencing the most severe poverty and social exclusion.

Urban policy remains relatively small scale in terms of its scope and resources particularly when compared to mainstream policies such as welfare, employment, crime and safety, etc. It is tempting to argue that it is a form of `sticking plaster' designed to address the worst problems and give the appearance of doing something to address those `wicked problems' that society as a whole wishes did not exist but remains reluctant to tackle in terms of root causes through more radical redistribution of resources and redirection of service provision. But changes have taken place – there has been under New Labour, compared to its predecessors, a greater willingness to address problems of

poverty and social exclusion, albeit primarily through the notions of economic development and worklessness. Partnership and an enhanced role for communities have become key elements in the rhetoric of urban policy, although a real tension remains between the desire for central control and local leadership. Indeed, some would argue that the proliferation of local partnerships has actually become an obstacle to a joined up approach; attempts to streamline and rationalise this `system' at central level, through the RCU, and at local level, through LSPs, have yet to bear fruit.

Perhaps as Donzelot has argued:

> It is not the business of urban policy to reduce unemployment, delinquency, racism, or at least not directly. These issues are dealt with by other policies, using greater resources, though perhaps not always effectively. The objective of urban policy is rather to make these policies converge on the issue of exclusion and thus citizenship. (quoted in Yépez Del Castillo, 1994, p625).

But it is in `excluded spaces' that the problems we have outlined are most starkly expressed and notions of citizenship, as an integrative mechanism, come under most pressure. In such spaces vulnerable groups, who have a tenuous relationship with the labour market and mainstream services, have become concentrated (although the majority of those experiencing poverty and social exclusion do not live in such spaces). It is in localities where these forms of concentration exist that the institutional systems in which citizenship rights are embedded come under most pressure and face the real possibility of breakdown (i.e. they become potential spaces of destruction rather than reproduction). More than thirty years of urban initiatives have failed to `solve' the problems of these areas and today they appear to be as entrenched as ever.

As we have pointed out the emphasis in terms of employment policy is very much on reducing levels of worklessness, getting more people into work and ensuring that `work pays'. In part this has operated through the development of a more strictly enforced and regulated `job search' regime that places more responsibility on the unemployed and increasingly the workless to actively seek work. Nevertheless, despite a relatively buoyant economy, certain groups have remained outside the labour market particularly in the larger cities and coalfield areas. More recently government has recognised the need to ensure that policies are better targeted at those who have remained economically

inactive, particularly in cities, by decentralising and localising the system and delivering the service in a more targeted manner and working in partnership with other local agencies and local people (i.e. the community). Targets have played a key role in this regime and remain a key driver directing the activities of agencies at national level, the problem is whether or not the targets actually help or hinder the attempt to reduce worklessness. The attempt to reduce worklessness represents a key element in the government's strategy to address poverty and social exclusion, particularly in `Excluded Spaces', in urban areas.

With regard to crime and urban safety considerable effort has been put into preventing crime and developing an infrastructure at local level that supports this approach. Here too partnerships have become a key element in the architecture and practice of the preventive approach. Part of this approach has been to modify the physical environment in order to change behaviour through design and offer reduced possibilities to potential offenders to engage in criminal and anti-social activities. At the same time there has been a recognition that there are complex links between crime and anti-social behaviour and poverty and social exclusion, particularly in `Excluded Spaces'. The approach to crime and safety in these areas has also emphasised multi-agency working and engaging with local people; partnerships are central to this approach to community safety. An example of this recently came through the letterbox of one of the authors; a leaflet from Safer Bristol (Crime and Drugs Partnership) stated:

> Each team [of police officers] will be working with local Neighbourhood
> Managers, council services and local volunteers to reduce crime and anti-social
> behaviour in your area and provide a reassuring presence in your community.

Once again we have seen the development of new local organisational forms, driven by targets, at local level; this complex new architecture governing community safety, with its attendant targets and tendency to be driven by media headlines, is thought by many to actually make matters more difficult and to act as an obstacle to crime reduction.

Across the three policy areas we have reviewed, despite New Labour's emphasis on developing a joined-up approach, there is surprisingly little evidence of policy integration and the development of a strategic approach to cities and their problems. The use of multiple, and sometimes conflicting, targets to drive service delivery and development is

thought by many to actually make the situation worse and to militate against multi-agency partnership working. Not only does this apply within `policy realms' but even more so across them. More recently at local level there has been some evidence of a closer relationship developing between urban regeneration and employment and crime/safety policies. In some areas Job Centre Plus has shown a willingness to adopt a more `community orientated' form of service delivery and to engage in partnership working particularly with ABIs such as NDC. In terms of crime and safety some Community Safety Partnerships have worked well with regeneration partnerships and a number of police forces have shown a genuine willingness to engage in partnership working at local level. But taking a broad view across the country the results are rather disappointing and there is little evidence that overall we have entered a new era of joined-up working at local level. Similarly there are positive examples of closer working between regeneration partnerships, Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and Local Education Authorities (LEAs) as well as more generally with local authorities. Indeed a few NDCs have been reasonably successful in integrating all, or many, of these service providers into their plans and developing positive and fruitful working relationships with the relevant organisations that are beginning to impact positively on service delivery. Nevertheless these examples remain the exception rather than the rule.

Many of these problems have their origins at the centre in the continued dominance of departmentalism that leads to a range of targets being set at central level that actually thwart and obstruct joined up working at local level. Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) were one mechanism that was hoped would help overcome the fragmentation of governance at the local level and integrate local service provision. However, to date the performance of LSPs has been disappointing (see ODPM, 2003 and 2004; Geddes, 2006). Much political capital is now being invested in Local Area Agreements in the hope that they will allow for greater service integration at the local level and the development of new ways of delivering services that more effectively address the needs of those in poverty and experiencing social exclusion and integrate them into society. There remains a real danger that the mantra of joined-up governance becomes seen as a managerial solution to all the problems facing Britain's cities – a sort of `silver bullet' that will provide the ultimate `technical fix' which will automatically solve all the problems found

there. This search for the `holy grail' (always being reached for but never quite reached) may even act as a distraction from tackling the more fundamental causes of the problems that need to be addressed and which are rooted in wider economic and societal forces.

Looking at policy more generally we can argue that urban policy in its broadest sense and particular regeneration strategies do not exist in a vacuum, they are embedded within a wider context that has an important influence upon their effectiveness (however that is defined). The aims of wider policies on the economy, the welfare state, crime and safety, etc, and resources devoted to them, have major implications for social exclusion and urban regeneration and thus for social integration.

Addressing worklessness and `making work pay' remains the overriding priority in New Labour's approach (some analysts have even talked in terms of a `workfare state' – e.g. Jessop, 1993) and arguably the key mechanism for integrating the workless into society and establishing them as `full citizens'. This is based on the assumption that the labour market still occupies a crucial role as an integrating mechanism to combat poverty and social exclusion[21] and facilitate integration. For instance Clasen et al (1997, p37) have noted that:

> Exclusion from the labour market automatically marginalises the long-term unemployed but for many it begins to erode other social ties. The longer people are unemployed, the less they are able to maintain the economic and social fabric of their lives and the more unmotivated and unemployable they become.

However, in a world where a sizeable minority of the population experiences either long-term unemployment or insecure employment the centrality of traditional notions of work and its role as an integrating mechanism needs to be questioned. Mingione (1991, chs.2) argues that the dominant concept of work is closely associated with `official' work and that we need a much wider notion, he argues "...the criterion for inclusion of an activity as `work' is whether it contributes to material survival." (ibid, p74). This wider definition allows the

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21. However, as Rodgers (1995, p46) points out individuals/groups may not be excluded from the labour market but the segmented nature of labour markets may mean that "...some groups are trapped in segments where jobs are insecure, ill-paid and low-skilled.". In these circumstances, particularly in `flexible labour markets', such workers may oscillate between low-paid insecure employment and low-income unemployment. This implies that there are different levels and forms of exclusion.

recognition that resources, particularly of a non-commodified nature, produced within the household or in the community are a crucial aspect of work and survival strategies. By recognising their legitimacy and equivalence with traditional paid work such forms may act as mechanisms of insertion to both counter social exclusion and encourage cohesion. At the same time the legitimacy accorded such activities may also reinforce civic action (e.g. participation) and hence aid inclusion. In relation to urban regeneration the contribution which community based activities (e.g. provision of care facilities for the young and old, community housing, women's refuges) can make to a renewed sense of citizenship and participation in the wider society (i.e. an enhanced sense of social solidarity/cohesion and a counter to social isolation) is considerable. Yet despite this economic and employment policy operates with a traditional notion of work and governments' seem unwilling to attempt to change either their own definition of work or that of the wider population.

The other crucial dimension of integration is of course the welfare state which has been engaged in a fundamental restructuring of its activities to support a work based society and thereby bring it into line with the new imperatives thought to derive from increasing global competition, high levels of unemployment, an aging population, etc. Nevertheless as Dieleman and Hamnett (1994) pointed out some years ago these developments do not dictate any particular outcome:

> The links are contingent, and depend to a significant extent on the scale of welfare state intervention, income distribution, planning policy...and the structure of...`the mode of social regulation' both national and local. (ibid, p359).

A great deal depends upon how these pressures are discursively constituted and understood and more emphasis is being placed on the role of individual citizens (duties as well as rights) to adapt to these changes (i.e. to change their behaviour).

Increasing we have seen the development of an individualised citizenship approach to exclusion and integration, such an approach has its problems. First, citizenship is a contested concept. The meaning of social rights (or entitlements) is open to interpretation. There are major differences over the development and meaning of citizenship and social rights. As Giddens (1985) has noted, we should not expect citizenship and associated rights to remain static. For instance in the UK since the 1980s social justice has come to play a secondary

role with much greater emphasis placed on rights in relationship to the market. Yépez Del Castillo (1994, p617) also points to the distinction between formal and substantive rights, asking:

> ...what is the true significance of social rights if the citizen is not in a position to demand that they be upheld or applied?...what is the use of a social right...without the necessary material conditions for its application...

Given this we should not expect the notion of citizenship to resolve the problems surrounding social exclusion and integration in cities.

The counterparts to exclusion are cohesion and integration; both are seen as central to the achievement of solidarity and citizenship. However, the attempt to understand and combat social exclusion through the concept of citizenship is not without its difficulties. Indeed, there are deeper and more serious problems with the concept of exclusion, particularly as it operates within contemporary. As Levitas (1996) has persuasively argued the dominant meaning of social exclusion has taken on a pseudo-Durkheimian conservatism, one subordinated to a neo-liberal economic discourse that emphasises the market, competitiveness and efficiency. Within this context paid work is seen as the primary mode of integration into society. As a result issues of gender, race, class, low pay, the working poor, etc, are, relatively speaking, marginalised . Thus attention is largely focused upon those living on the margins of society who display socially unacceptable forms of behaviour, e.g. drug addicts, criminals, welfare dependents, the homeless, the mentally ill, etc, i.e. "...the poorest of the poor, a sub-set of poverty;..." (Abrahamson, 1996, p5). Thus a simplistic and reductive model is created which "...fails to distinguish between different situations and ends up imposing too simple a picture of a dual, or two-speed society divided into those who are "in" and those who are "out"." (Strobel, 1996, p174). Social exclusion is thus reduced to manageable proportions by defining it as a problem of marginalised individuals and their pathologies while more problematic and emotive terms such as poverty and inequality are avoided.

Terms such as social cohesion and integration are also problematic. Such concepts tend to be presented in neutral terms, but they only take on concrete meaning in relation to particular discourses and in Britain the discourse of exclusion (and integration) is located within a particular social and economic discourse (social conservatism and economic neo-

liberalism). Moreover, with reference to cohesion Pahl (1991, p348) has argued with regard to Britain:

> Since the capacity of occupational associations [e.g. trade unions] to generate social cohesion is at best partial and at worst seen to be dangerous, the focus has shifted to `the family' and the `community' not so much as counters to state power but rather to aid the state as appropriate loci of social control and social responsibility.

With reference to integration Potter (1996) has argued such a notion presumes a social consensus into which individuals/groups can be inserted, but this is to disregard the very different, and potentially conflictual, interests of those concerned. Given these points notions of cohesion and integration must be treated as social and political constructs and therefore as problematic.

To a large extent discourses of social exclusion and citizenship have avoided even posing, let alone tackling, these issues and the danger is that they may become profoundly conservative concepts largely assimilated to market liberalism and social conservatism. Thus any associated concept of citizenship is equally likely to be tainted unless it specifically functions as `...an articulating principle that affects the different subject positions of the social agent...while allowing for a plurality of specific allegiances and for the respect of individual liberty.' (Mouffe, 1992, p235).

If, as in the British case where, since the 1980s citizenship and inclusion have increasingly been redefined in individualistic terms, these pressures are thought to require ongoing economic and state restructuring then the outcome, particularly in cities, is likely to be one of continuing pockets of high unemployment, employment insecurity for many, widening income differentials, growing social polarisation and social exclusion. In this situation the city is unlikely to serve as space of integration and cohesion and is more likely to embody the divisions and conflicts that characterise society (for a more optimistic view see Painter, 2005). Thus the `wicked problems' we started out with will remain, albeit in a transformed manner.

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