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Faculty of the Built Environment



RESEARCH AND CONSULTANCY

A Retrospective Study of Racism in the Operation of the Planning System within the Inner City

Chizoma Onuoha in association
with Clara Greed

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Tel: 0117 344 3209

Fax: 0117 - 976 3889

Email Julie.Triggle@uwe.ac.uk

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Nature of this Paper

This occasional paper draws upon PhD research being completed by Chizoma Onuoha on the way in which racism works to undermine the fair operation of the planning system with references to examples drawn predominantly from two inner London boroughs, which for the purposes of this study are referred to as Easterly and Riverside. The paper combines material from the original empirical accounts collected by Chizoma, with some editing and explanation by Clara in association with Chizoma. The paper seeks to 'tell the story' of the experience of racism within the planning system. The paper also seeks to highlight the problems and methodological issues surrounding 'doing' PhD research on the sensitive subject of 'race and planning' (and supervising such research). It is important to let Chizoma and her BEM (Black and Ethnic Minority) respondents 'bear witness' fully, in their own words, to how they experienced the planning system, without editing the more critical comments, as strong emotions were expressed in describing personal experiences of the operation of the planning system. Such material is ethnographically significant in its own right, as to how ordinary people seek to make sense of their encounters with the statutory planning system. However, some contextualising and comparative material is added by Clara (from her own research), to take the story up to the present day, and to 'place it' academically and professionally, in the light of subsequent developments.

As Chizoma's research progressed it evolved from a somewhat conventional quantitative origins to become a much more qualitative, ethnographic and personal research activity. Chizoma was deeply involved in the research subject herself, as a black planner, a Nigerian Ibo woman, a Londoner, an inner city resident and an active church member (Nwabara, 1977). Thus she was seeking to study something of which she is part, the ultimate participant observer. As will be explained the research was originally commenced over 10 years ago and Chizoma has travelled a difficult path to the present stage of her work. Therefore, although at the time of writing, the PhD is not completed but, we considered it vital that significant material from the work should be presented to a wider audience before it became out of date and 'cold'. It was agreed with the Faculty PhD committee that an occasional paper should be jointly produced by Clara and Chizoma to disseminate the material to a wider audience before it is too late. Since Chizoma is still so much part of what she was studying, and the boroughs studied are readily identifiable, not least because of subsequent news items and investigations of local government practices, it was considered that anonymisation was important. Some of the empirical material is now well over 10 years old, but this does give the paper some historical distance from the events, and provides opportunity for a more detached retrospective perspective on the operation of racism in the London boroughs chosen.

Therefore, some of the more controversial material gathered by Chizoma is included, as many of the personnel, problems and structures described have since changed and moved on. Where there are particular examples of good practice or non-racist local government officers who were supportive to the needs of BEMs we have sought to point these out, whilst also highlighting examples of institutional racism with the

organisation as a whole, all of which provide as timeless lessons on the operation of the modern planning system.

1.2 Nature of the Research

The purpose of the research was to investigate the extent to which racist attitudes and institutional racism within local authorities were affecting the operation of the planning system in two inner city London boroughs, one of which being where Chizoma had previously worked as a race adviser, community planner and Equal Opportunities officer responsible for race and planning issues. A complex range of theories about 'the local state' were drawn upon as to their applicability to the local authorities studied which demographically were characterised by substantial and diverse Black and Ethnic Minority (BEM) populations (see Quantitative Appendix). Chizoma sought to increase our understanding of how the bureaucratic processes, policy assumptions and organisational mechanisms inherent to the planning system affected Black and Ethnic Minorities (BEMs) through direct and indirect discrimination. Thus, in summary, she was interested in investigating the ways in which racism was manifest;- in the organisation and processes of planning; within the institutional setting of the wider local authority context of planning; in the nature of planning policy and development control decisions; and in how it impacted on the lives of BEM individuals at a personal level.

The purpose of the study was not to prove a hypothesis [that racism in planning existed], or to undertake a quantitative survey of planning applications per se, nor necessarily to compare black and white experiences *pro rata*, but to give an in-depth illustrative account of how BEMs themselves were experiencing the planning system and seek to link this material to developing a better understanding of how the planning system works at local authority level in terms of the promotion [or blocking] of equalities issues. However, the study is inevitably set against dualistic black/white comparisons. Accusations of racism and unequal treatment arose from BEM's expectations that their planning applications should be treated in the same way as those from the majority white population and refusal was often directly seen as a result of racism (although it is acknowledged that the local planning authorities concerned might have a different interpretation and set of reasons for refusal). The study was set against 'the established fact' that empirically there was clearly something wrong with the planning system and there is a series of existing studies that 'prove' the existence of racism in the planning system as summarised in Sections 3 and 4, and attested to by the material, from a range of policy realms, that Chizoma collected for the Bibliography, particularly the fields of sociology, urban politics, equal opportunities, and town planning.

Rather than majoring on 'black and white' comparisons, Chizoma found it more valuable to prioritise 'planners and planned' contrasts, by investigating how the planners 'saw' certain types of BEM applications (as culturally unusual and unacceptable), in contrast with how BEM individual 'saw' their planning applications (as perfectly normal and reasonable) (Section 5). Discrimination had already been 'proved' within the lives of ordinary BEMs who had experienced bias and racism in their own personal life experience when dealing with the planning system, as

illustrated by their impassioned comments (Section 6). Rather the purpose of the study was to 'make sense' of what was going on, to develop 'understanding' (verstehen, Weber 1964) and to bear witness to the problems encountered by means of qualitative accounts of the experiences of 'the planned' that is BEMs themselves, and through investigation of 'the planners' approach to BEM needs as manifest in how they operated the system and how they 'saw' the BEMs and their needs.

Chizoma sought initially to use a range of quantitative methods, including sample surveys, questionnaires and interviews in her research, alongside applying conventional theoretical and methodological avenues into the subject. But as time went on she increasingly found that when meeting with 'the planned' that is the BEM (Black and Ethnic Minority) respondents she was meant to be formally interviewing, that there was a natural tendency for both researcher and researched (Chizoma and her interviewees) to engage together in a much fuller conversation and in a telling of their stories of what had happened to them and their applications when dealing with the planning system. On the other hand when seeking to contact and interview a range of white (and some BEM) planners and other persons of authority, she often found that 'actions spoke louder than words' as she often found that her own status as a valid researcher was questioned because she was female, black and asking about the 'difficult' subject of racism in planning. The problems and racial discrimination that Chizoma herself encountered as a researcher was becoming a valid set of data in its own right in seeking to understand 'how' racism worked in local planning departments.

Chizoma's previous PhD research registration at one of the leading 'old' London university colleges was close to completion when her family situation and other personal circumstances, including her employment situation, forced her to suspend her studies. At a meeting of the London Boroughs Women and Planning group organised by the Women's Design Service and the London Boroughs women and planning network, Chizoma approached Clara about completing her PhD at the University of the West of England. Clara was keen to be Chizoma's supervisor because of Clara's own interests in the social aspects of planning, as well as a range of gender, ethnicity and minority issues, including her interest in local authority planning (and her recent research on mainstreaming equality into the planning system (Greed (ed) 2002 a and b). By the time Chizoma got going again on her PhD she was able to come out from under the burden of feeling she had to fulfill certain traditional quantitative requirements in the research (although some statistical contextualisation of the topic is still useful of course). On registering with the UWE, under Clara's supervision (with Dr. Huw Thomas at Cardiff University as second external supervisor) she was able to take stock, re-visit the question of methodology and re-appraise her research data and 'progress so far' in the light of taking a much more qualitative, ethnographic approach, which since the late 1990s had become much more acceptable in the field of urban public policy research and which Clara had experience in, with particular reference to studying women's experience in the built environment professions (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1996, Greed, 1990, 1994a).

Chizoma was now able to put the personal accounts and examples gained from her respondents centre stage in their own right as valid data. It is now ten years since she

first started her research in London and during the interim she had developed a deeper reflective perspective on her previous work, a more retrospective ethnographic approach on her previous experiences. So it seemed more useful to concentrate on what she had already collected, rather than rushing out and redoing the whole thing again. Thus emphasis was put upon her reprising her existing material, in order to 'make sense' of what was going on, so she could evaluate and link together what she had already studied (and experienced), but with an element of 'hindsight' in terms of updating on what factors (such 'the problem without a name' that was later to be dubbed 'institutional racism') subsequently proved to be the most significant and enduring into the present day. Clara, as supervisor, advised this path, as the material already gathered needed to be capitalised upon. In writing this occasional paper, upon the basis of what is still really a work in progress Clara has held back from her desire to add too much of her own work or ideas, and she has not corrected or added to the referencing so that (what are predominantly) Chizoma's words and ideas may come through strongly.

1.3 Who are we?

It is a principle of ethnographic participant research, in which the researcher is part of what is being studied to declare one's interest in the topic, even including personal accounts (Purvis, 1987). In this case it is important to understand the background of both PhD student and supervisor, as life experience surely shapes how one 'sees' a research subject. Chizoma is a person with experience of inner city racial problems in London, has been particularly aware, from her own life experience, that racism in town planning was a topic that needed exploring. Thus the researcher was part of the research situation and one of the researched. Rather than pretending to be 'impartial' and 'detached' from the subject Chizoma undertook this research to bear witness to, and make sense of, what she and others had experienced from the planning system. Such a personal approach is entirely valid academically, particularly in the fields of modern feminist, qualitative and ethnicity research. Chizoma's knowledge of the unsatisfactory nature of planning policy and procedures was reinforced through her work as a Race Relations Adviser and as a Community Planner, and later as an Equal Opportunities advisor, all at Principal Officer level, in the Planning and Development Directorate of a London local authority. She had always worked closely with BEM communities of the borough particularly as a result of her church involvement as well as her race relations and town planning role. Politically Chizoma points out she always votes Labour and incidentally, the case study borough where she worked for fourteen years, and lived in for seventeen years, is a Labour Council. She had daily involvement with planning issues which could easily lead to direct confrontation between BEMs and white neighbours, especially, as will be illustrated, including applications for minority places of worship, housing conversions, hot food takeaways, car showroom and taxi cab firms. She also had experience of the organisation and operation of the planning system at a personal level in which she was involved in making supportive comments on BEM applications at planning committee meetings and also contributing towards the assessment of the equality implications of policy initiatives and other planning matters. Eventually, when her post was deleted (as will be explained), she opted to take early retirement. For the last ten years she has been involved in family caring activities and working in the health sector having felt

pushed out of planning (as she has medical qualifications before she became a chartered town planner).

Clara, Chizoma's supervisor, also a chartered town planner, had previously developed an interest in qualitative research and had also drawn on her personal life experience in her work on women in the town planning and surveying professions. Clara spent her teenage years in an inner city area of South London, which at that time had a 30% ethnic minority population. She first developed an interest in town planning in the 1960s because the planners had had a negative impact on her family's home and business, not least in trying to knock down their house for road widening. Although from a free-thinker, non-religious family, she was converted in her late teens and attended a range of inner urban white and black churches whose congregations were very concerned with the urban situation all around them, and did not separate the secular and spiritual sides of life. She is therefore familiar with the types of religious, business and community situations Chizoma is describing in her research. On entering town planning Clara was unable to relate to the dominant white, male, secular, unemotional, middle class agenda of the time and in seeking material to which she could relate she was drawn into the discourses of urban sociology, liberation theology, equal opportunities, social town planning and qualitative methodology. Subsequently, although living in Bristol, Clara has continued to be involved with various London-based groups such as Women's Design Service, London Boroughs Women and Planning Group, and a range of urban theology, community groups, planning aid, various GLC and subsequently GLA consultation groups. All of this leads her to conclude that there are many other people around (both planners and planned) who profoundly question the nature of modern town planning and who have never 'fitted' into the planning system for a variety of gender, class, race, religious and cultural reasons.

1.4 Contents

Following this brief introduction on 'how to take' this occasional paper, the next Section (2) discusses the methodological approaches that informed Chizoma's work on the continuation of her PhD work with an emphasis upon qualitative and ethnographic methods. Key themes and categories are identified in the methodology section that helped structure the research the 'revisiting' of the research data 10 years on. Section 3 discusses the theoretical aspects of 'racism' at institutional, local and personal levels. Section 4 gives an historical overview of race relations policy at governmental level and in respect of the planning profession. Section 5 is the first empirical chapter and looks at the role of 'the planners' in transmitting racism on to the BEM population and comprises a comparative case study of the two boroughs studied with an emphasis upon the institutional and organisational structure aspects of racism. Section 6 concentrates on the experiences of the planned, that is BEM individuals' and organisations' experiences of dealing with the planning system with reference to a range of planning applications. The final section (7) draws the occasional paper to a conclusion and puts forward some policy recommendations in order to tackle racism and thus enhance the chances of BEM needs being fully taken into account within the policy and processes of the planning system. This is followed by the full bibliography from the PhD, which including references from this paper, and from the thesis and

updated sources, followed by short Quantitative Appendix giving details of the demographics of the areas studied.

SECTION TWO: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 The Nature of the Research Problem

This section discusses the different research methods and techniques used in this study, highlighting the ethical and political issues in undertaking race relations research. Chizoma's role in the research both from the position of being inside and outside the system, which is similar to that described in P.H.Collins (1990) (in her work on black feminist thought and ways of thinking about research), as a researcher who is also a participant, is also discussed. For Chizoma can say, 'in this process I too am subject' (Lury,1987).

The main purpose of this research was to increase understanding of the processes, attitudes and organisational mechanisms involved in planning decisions affecting BEMs, and to build up a picture of what was going on and to use this knowledge to inform policy approaches and good practice guidance. The research question may be summarised as follows: **'Why is it that BEM planning applications and planning needs are not appropriately met by the planning system?'** Thus, the aim was not to prove a hypothesis, but rather to illustrate the problem, develop understanding and to identify key issues for change, and to highlight those barriers, attitudes and practices that prevent BEMs getting fair treatment within the planning system. Indeed a positivist, quantitative approach is problematic, as such is the ingrained attitudinal and institutional nature of racism that it makes it difficult for racism to be measured or even admitted. As Chizoma was to find statistical data on BEM planning applications was inadequate or non-existent in many departments, and a 'colour blind' approach or more recently a non disaggregated 'generic' equalities approach, could both render BEM issues invisible and irrelevant. As Dummett (1984:131) puts it, 'a racist society has institutions which effectively maintain inequality between members of different groups, in such a way that the open expression of racist doctrine is unnecessary.' The sensitive and subtle nature of racism therefore requires a kind of method that can help the researcher to assess people's attitudes towards racism even when they are not directly and openly expressed.

It was decided that a qualitative, and ethnographic approach was more suitable in order to cast light on what is going on, and to enable the researcher to hear the respondent describe their experiences and perceptions of reality in their own words and time. As Clara (Greed,1990, 1997) has argued, qualitative research is softer than quantitative methods, but it is often more valuable particularly in drawing attention to social issues, and 'hidden' social problems and minority groups. It usually takes a longer time scale and greater participation with the group being studied, as against simply collecting and analysing impersonal figures. It requires more thought, analysis and making connections with key themes and links. Plenty of time is needed for writing up, which can involve writing several drafts so that the material is gradually crystallised to bring key issues to the surface. The word 'ethnography' comes from the same root as 'ethnic' in the sense of studying and writing about a 'tribe', a group of people (as in anthropology). Many of the traditional urban sociology studies such as Willmott and Young, Rex and Moore and other community studies are ethnographic. According to Hammersley and Atkinson (1995:1; Greed,1994,b), in its

most characteristic form it involves the ethnographer participating, overtly or covertly, in a particular group of people's daily lives (in this case the BEMs and the Planners) for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions in fact, collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research.

2.2 Research Approaches

2.2.1 Initial Interviews and Questionnaires

When Chizoma started her research, under the advice of her previous supervisors, and in keeping with the expectations of the time, she adopted a traditional, positivist approach, and undertook a series of questionnaires, sample surveys and formalised interviews, with mixed success. These subsequently were to provide a rich source of ethnographic material, albeit not in the more 'objective' style originally envisaged. But, at the time, the planning officers and other majority respondents expected a more formal structured, quantitative interview approach too, as presumably otherwise they did not think what Chizoma was doing was 'real research'. However, what had been the previously 'supressed' aspects of this earlier research process, the difficulties of access to key interviewees, the attitudes Chizoma encountered personally and the academic tension between Chizoma's own more reflective approach and expectations of a more traditional set of 'data' were, in retrospect, all valuable qualitative indicators of how the subject was 'really' viewed. In fact Chizoma could not keep the research at a detached distance as her everyday life experiences involved her totally in the research field and people involved. Interviews and conversations about planning often involved what Keith (1992,1993) calls, 'angry writing' within a highly racialised, discriminatory situation which creates huge resentment among the planned and many BEM planners.

The study was based predominantly in two inner city London local authorities, namely Easterly where Chizoma had worked for several years and which was known to have an emphasis upon equal opportunities initiatives, and Riverside which also had a large BEM population, as well as some additional examples from other inner city local planning authorities. Initially the study sought originally to compare the achievements of the two case study local authorities, one with an established Race Relations Unit and staff between 1983 and 1992 (Easterly) and the other borough without any such mechanism at the time (Riverside), by looking at their land use and decision making processes as they affect BEM groups, the effects of planning service delivery in meeting the needs of these groups (e.g. economic, social, cultural), and other policy initiatives. Chizoma had sought to interview a sample of both planners (local authority officers and councillors) and planned (applicants and residents) about their experience of the planning system. As it turned out this task was not easy, and there were many complications and problems, but examples of refusal as well as willingness to participate were all ethnographically significant. For the purposes of this paper it was considered by Clara that it was wise to make the actual source of particular examples a little 'vaguer' and definitely to anonymise respondents, but at the same time to retain the feel of the situations in the two boroughs, not least the sense of frustration, anger and resentment experienced by BEM individuals, both planners and

planned.

As stated Chizoma's research strategy was framed around the dualism of planners and planned. She also extended this to a slightly wider parameter of insiders and outsiders within the context of understanding and gaining information on the local authority institutions studied. Early on she found qualitatively significant problems in terms of the lack of data and BEM application records, as well as hostile and disrespectful attitudes towards her as a person when contacting planning officers. Nevertheless, initially she sought data on planning officers' attitudes and 'awareness' regarding the application of mainstream (majority) planning policies, regulations and laws that might have particular implications for BEM applicants and communities. She investigated planners' awareness of race relations legislation and race issues in planning and the general handling of BEM applications. She interviewed a range of planning officers at different levels (ranging from chief officers to middle management and junior staff (the latter being generally the ones that met the BEM applicants on site), plus insiders (such as councillors, other council officials and concerned individuals). She interviewed various outsiders, including what she termed 'watchdogs' such as the EOC and NALGO (Unison) who could give an independent perspective on the problems encountered within the local authority departments concerned.

When contacting the planned, (especially BEM applicants) Chizoma always asked them about their existing knowledge of the planning system, law and policies and whether they knew of, or had any experience of the operation of Equal Opportunities or anti-racist policies in their local authority in question. In fact she was to find that many BEM applicants had a great deal to say too about their experiences of dealing with the planners, and the way in which their enquiries, planning applications and appeals were dealt with. But she was to find that BEM applicants, 'trusted the system' initially at least, and had high expectations as to the powers of the planning system. Their hopes were soon to be dashed and thus Chizoma found a great deal of anger, frustration and disappointment among BEM applicants as illustrated by their comments in Section 6. Chizoma also interviewed (predominantly white) neighbours who had objected to BEM planning applications and white community members who were complaining about BEM-related planning policy decisions and also asked them about their knowledge of planning, racial matters and local government in their area. She did this because, as time went on, she found that the third force of 'the neighbours' appeared to have a disproportionate influence on planning decisions, usually to the disadvantage of BEM applications.

Although between a quarter and a third of all planning applications in the different boroughs investigated derived from BEM applicants (q.v. Quantitative Appendix), the intention was not to interview 'everyone' but rather to talk to those who were key figures in the course of events, in order to develop a feel for the views of a cross-section of 'actors' in the planning process, both planned and planners, both minority and majority individuals. Indeed problems of access and simply 'finding' BEM applicants in areas where there was no record kept of the ethnicity of applicants proved difficult (and names were not necessarily an indication, particularly where applicants had used a white agent). However, qualitative research is not concerned

with achieving a large representative sample, rather an illustrative selection of responses, that help 'tell the story' of what is going on. After all every case is different, and in the case of BEM applications they may appear 'unique' or 'unusual' at least to the non-BEM planning officer. Whilst, for example, a planning application for a mosque extension may be not uncommon within ethnic minority areas, to the non-BEM planner from the provinces who has gone through an average planning education and training this may seem very 'out of the ordinary' to him. Therefore it was considered worthwhile to concentrate on a selection of likely types of BEM applications and get an in-depth, and specifically, BEM viewpoint on the course of the planning application, rather than to cover 'everything' and not to get sidetracked into grandiose comparisons between black/white applications across the board (which is another task altogether).

2.2.2 Literature Review and Other Sources of Material

Chizoma had originally started the research by means of a comprehensive literature review (as given in the Bibliography). A wealth of information was gathered through this source which includes the information on the role of central government and local state, the politics of race, and people's views about race and racism, (including background to what was happening in the 1980s and early 1990s), and about the birth, achievement and demise of anti-racism initiatives. The analysis of information gathered from this source formed the basis of chapters two and three of her draft PhD. In addition to the literature review a variety of information was obtained through various documentary sources. These included: the relevant Councils' data bank - some of them are in the form of reports, others were memoranda, publications, and policy documents; the local geography and history of developments; Central Government legislation; publications from established bodies, institutions and individuals such as DETR, the London Research Centre (LRC), Office of Population Census Survey (OPCS), the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), the Docklands Forum, the Docklands Consultative Committee, radio and television programmes, news paper articles, the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), Home Affairs Committee, religious leaders, journalists, researchers and other writers. These were woven in the subsequent chapters to reinforce the themes and issues being observed and illustrated

Such other sources were particularly helpful when the planners gave only a limited response to Chizoma's research enquiries. A range of other sources was drawn upon including her active church involvement, and the role of the church in promoting anti-racist initiatives among the public. For example in an ITV London Programme (July 1991), the Bishop of Stepney gave a valuable perspective on racism in inner city local authorities (1983). Although she found much criticism of the planning system, Chizoma also was grateful to those few planning officers who demonstrated awareness and commitment to the eradication of inequality. But she notes that the system under which they operated denied them the opportunity to do. Whilst Chizoma was an insider at Easterly, such was her personal situation at the time that information was forthcoming from a good number of respondents contacted. In contrast she was an outsider at Riverside and found that she was unable to receive useful responses to her enquiries from most of the planners in that authority.

2.3 Drawing on Retrospective Ethnography

In addition to the material from academic literature and other sources of information, such methods as participant observation, interviews and community contacts and in-depth conversations, the researcher's own personal account, observations and experiences were a very important ethnographic component of the researcher. In choosing an ethnographic approach, Chizoma was conscious that the nature of her research was unique at the time relating to ethnicity, groups cultural values, institutional set up and inequality. She was encouraged by the fact that some other black feminist researchers had successfully used ethnography, notably, a fellow Nigerian Ifekwunigwe, J (in Mirza ed., 1997). Also she consulted the work of Collins (1991:202) who wrote about the importance of her involvement with fellow African women and how she has chosen to embed herself in the group she studied instead of distancing from it. Chizoma strongly identified with Collins's role as an insider, that is as a researcher who is also a participant. As Fetterman (1989) puts it (as referred to in Hammersley and Atkinson, 'ethnography is more than a one-day hike through the woods: it is an ambitious journey through the complex world of social interaction'. An ethnographic approach is appropriate when one is dealing with a range of linked issues, allowing the researcher 'the opportunity to give multiple interpretations of data throughout the study' and upon capturing 'the insider's perspective' on the situation.

Deegan, M (in Atkinson and Coffey (eds),2001) has identified a number of characteristics of ethnography which are particularly relevant to this research, stating (Chizoma quotes) 'that ethnographies study face-to-face everyday interactions in specific locations. The descriptives portray social worlds experienced in everyday life within a modern, often urban context. The investigator takes 'the role of the other' in the empirical investigations. Ethnography emphasises a dynamic process incorporating social change, especially disorganising and rapid changes in values and attitudes. Thus an openness to people, data, places and theory is intrinsic to the ethnographic process, so a strict set of criteria cannot and should not be applied' (ibid, 2001:11).

In fact these are many of the factors that she was trying to suppress and ignore in her previous attempts at the research, such was the pressure to undertake traditional objective, unemotional, impersonal research. But now she was able to look at her life, her conversations, observations and comments from the church and community groups in which she was involved, all the previous interview data she had collected that was so interesting but for which there had not previously been a 'proper place' and now declare it was 'real research data' after all. In fact ethnography bears a close resemblance to the routine ways which enable people to make sense of the world in everyday life and develop understanding. Thus retrospective ethnography was used to develop sensitising concepts from her own life experience including personal accounts (Roberts,1981; Purvis,1987: Hammersley and Atkinson,1983 edition:179 [now 2001]). This often involved simply thinking back over the material and experiences gathered and looking at them in the light of subsequent thematic development in order to build up an understanding of 'what was going on' in terms of factors that blocked (or enabled) the operation of racial equality within the planning system, a key factor

being reflection upon the attitudes and values of the planners themselves.

Ethnography is particularly appropriate for studying sensitive subject areas such as race, where people are unlikely to give a 'true' answer if confronted with a yes/know questionnaire. Who nowadays is going to say 'no' to the question 'do you believe in racial equality?' in a planning office survey. But Chizoma knew that she would be likely to encounter some difficulty in obtaining racially-sensitive information from professionals who for one reason or the other are noted for withholding information. Majority professionals may have no confidence in sharing information with 'an intruder' (who is not like them), as officers always fear that whatever they say will be used in evidence against them. On the other hand there were also likely to be problems gaining the confidence of BEM individuals who were applying for planning permission. They might find it difficult to believe that the researcher represents their interests and may be doubtful of the purpose and benefit to them of the research investigations. The question of 'whose side are you on?' (Solomos, 1991:7), is always one that any researcher cannot answer to the satisfaction of the researched. This creates an atmosphere of suspicion and unfriendliness between the researcher and the researched. Therefore it was always important take care in making the initial approach to the respondent and making sure they felt comfortable about the research process.

2.4 Ethics and Raised Expectations

Many ethical issues are raised in the study of race relations. Chizoma found that some of her BEM respondents desperately wanted to see change in many areas such as, the restrictive framework of planning laws; the length of time it takes to reach decision on their planning applications; the type of conditions attached to planning consent and the way their neighbours views are allowed to interfere with their proposals. To be able to fulfil these expectations one would need to be involved in 'Action Research' (Ben-Tovim et al, 1986:7) in which the research itself is used as a tool for combatting the effects of urban deprivations and disadvantage. Chizoma hoped this might come about, but at the same time was aware of the delicate balance between her two objectives of 'doing' the research to get a PhD, and contributing towards 'changing' the racist nature of planning departments through her research, a task that was to prove increasingly difficult as the years passed by.

Yet her research raised unrealistic expectations among her respondents. Chizoma sensed an obvious power relation in operation during the interviews as some of her BEM respondents felt she held the power as a researcher and therefore the key to solving their planning application problems. On the other hand the power of some of the interviewees over the researcher they could not trust led to some hostility, particularly as to matters of 'confidentiality'. Some demanded to know what benefit would result from the interviews. Because these people knew little about her, the researcher had the choice to conceal or mention casually, her involvement with either of the case study boroughs. This of course poses an ethical dilemma. With the few who knew the researcher before the interview the power relation was much stronger in her favour. This was particularly so among some informants from Easterly who had seen the researcher at Planning Committee and consultation meetings speaking out in support of their applications. For these people, there is the possible danger of raising

their hopes that the research will result in visible changes which will benefit the disadvantaged groups. These interviewees did not hesitate to voice out their concerns. Because the researcher was known to them, it was difficult to do anything that would dent the prestigious image they had about her involvement with the council. This left her with the choice to conceal or make explicit her inability to deliver what they expected. In saying this, the researcher feels that she was not living up to the expectations as there is in the call made by political activists for 'race relations researchers to help change the current situation rather than just study it' (Back and Solomos, 1993:185).

As the research developed, her research methodology changed and her intentions became more focused. Chizoma found it was more valuable to undertake a more in-depth study of BEM examples, using qualitative and ethnographic methods than to undertake a comprehensive, across the board quantitative survey. She could have examined the experiences of the white indigenous residents for fuller comparative analysis to enhance her research. But the purpose of the research, which was about how the planning system disadvantaged BEMS was not served by extending the work to a qualitative study of white applicants and communities as well. Indeed time and resources did not allow for a large comparative study. Rather there was a need to focus upon the specific experiences of the BEM population. As Corrigan (1979:14 referred to in Hammersley and Atkinson) has argued, 'the experience of being black and in Britain should be written about by someone who has experienced these oppressions'. Therefore the study is intended to be an illustrative study of the BEM's experience of the planning system, not a representative, or a comparative study, of white and black people's experiences of the planning system.

2.5 Key Issues, Questions and Themes

In order to make sense of what was going on and to help unravel the puzzle, Chizoma sought to develop a set of key themes, questions and issues that were informing her approach (initially from her literature review and her own past experiences), that were subsequently refined as she reflected on what she had found and what people (planners and planned) were saying to her. Some of these were quite 'large issues' whereas as others relate to attitudes, values and the inter-personal level of human interaction by which racism is maintained and projected on to society. Others are simply questions and feelings that needed more investigation.

- **Institutional Racism (Political and Bureaucratic):** This related to the cultural and attitudinal situation, which was embedded in the nature of some organisations (subsequently defined and rendered official in the MacPherson Report in 1999 on the Stephen Lawrence case in which a young black male architectural student was killed by a gang of white thugs at a bus stop).
- **Individual Racism:** individual prejudice against persons of other racial groups and its impact in denying access to service to members of that group.
- **Neighbour Racism:** links between this and ethnic structuring of urban space, attitudes of individuals towards each other, across the spectrum of ethnicity,

class and locality.

- **Local Authority Racism:** for example, inability of Local Authorities: to meet service needs of BEMs and to acknowledge changing demographics and cultural change in their area.
- **Anti-racism/Equal Opportunities Policy:** What happens when there is such a policy? (Policy is either not far reaching or not well implemented and monitored, thus making it ineffective)
- **The Planners as key players:** In promoting Anti-racism and Equal Opportunities: How committed are planners to equal opportunities (both in service delivery and employment practices)?
- **Process of Planning:** Time scale, slowness of planning officers in dealing with applications, rigid conditions attached to planning consent, bureaucracy, UDP process.
- **The Role and Formulation of Equal Opportunities Policies in UDP (Unitary Development Plans) and Local Plans:** Development Control: Implementation of Equal Opportunities.
- **Consultation and Advice:** Role of local authority with service users in relation to equal opportunities.
- **Role of planners as managers:** Promoting the equality of other planners in employment practices and the inter-personal relationships between and within departments
- **Politicians as key players:** Promoting Anti-racism and Equal Opportunities, The role of elected members and their commitment to equalities.
- **Audit Activities:** The trend towards measurements of indicators of commitment, e.g. Best Value and Audit culture.
- **Local government and local politics:** How a local authority attempts to meet the needs of multicultural groups. Comparative analysis of how the needs of different racial groups within the disadvantaged group are met. There are levels of hierarchy of disadvantage within the disadvantaged groups, such a trade off can be made by a local authority which offsets the need to address the concerns of other groups.
- **Marginalisation:** BEM councillors not put them in committees that make key decisions.
- **The role of Trade Union:** Promoting Anti-racism and Equal Opportunities, and the resources available to them to undertake their duties.

- Traditional definition of Town Planning as a service: Planning always seen as land use by definition, practice and processes with little regard to social and cultural needs and requirements of some groups of service users in society.
- Diversity Relationships: Links between race (black/white), gender (male/female), class and power in service delivery and employment. Gender and class are important even though race/ethnicity is the main issue in this study. Power relation between black and white; men and women; upper class and lower class.
- Weak Groups: Evidence that any relatively unorganised, poor group gets a raw deal from the planning system. This relationship can be broken down more into key words/categories as follows:
- Different Land uses and types of development: e.g. shops, takeaways, religious buildings, taxi cab offices, etc.
- Racist Attitudes: e.g, shouting, ignoring, rudeness, name calling, violence
- Causes/reproduction of racism: Experiences, attitudes and opinions of various actors and groups. Including people's opinions/views about being discriminated against (in service delivery) only the sufferer can tell better how painful racial discrimination can be.
- People's experiences of direct racism/hostility (e.g name calling of which people can hardly be mistaken).
- The desire by BEM respondents to see change in the planning process and other areas.
- Restructuring: Why was Easterly Race Relations Unit restructured and made ineffective at the beginning of the 1990s.
- Cover up: Why professionals would not like to expose their racist attitudes.
- Chizoma herself as a Theme: as a black woman planner, working in one of the Boroughs studied and experiencing discrimination as a result of her gender, race, nationality, beliefs, her research and her work

Whilst many of these themes recur and are addressed in other Sections, the following component covers how Chizoma sees herself.

2.5 Chizoma herself: Researcher and Research Subject?

Chizoma initially spent five years (between 1989 and 1994) on the research with a London university and subsequently transferred to Bristol later in the 1990s. It

became a passion for her to find out as much as possible of the key issues in the planning system that are of concern to (or hinder the progress of) BEM community. As a Race Relations Advisor in planning and development in the London Borough of Easterly between 1984 and 1992 (8 years), She tried to influence policy formulation, development and implementation. Participant observation played an important role in this study. As an employee of one of the organisations being studied, Chizoma had the privilege of using her experiences and involvement to generate data which helped to confirm, contradict or substitute for the responses obtained from her informants. The advantage of this technique is that artificiality was minimised either because the observed were not aware of their being observed or did not perceive her as an intruder. This enabled the researcher to study behaviour as it occurred. As Nachmias and Nachmias pointed out, 'the researcher does not have to ask people about their own behaviour and the actions of others; he or she can simply watch them do and say things' (1976:74), a view supported by Moser and Kalton (1971). At the same time, she considered it necessary to take note of the advice offered by social scientists on the establishment of validity in qualitative research and she read widely on the questions of subjectivity/objectivity, bias, and over-familiarity (for example Smith, S.J. 1988, referred to in Eyles, J. and Smith (1988 pp 17-38). Others have drawn attention to the way the theories we use in academic research contain fragments of autobiography, and such fragments require exposure of one's own life and fears.

Chizoma was part of what she was studying. Therefore her account reflects the fact that she lived the experiences recounted and was often strongly personally affected by the examples of racism towards ethnic minority colleagues and members of the community. It has been argued that far from resulting in subjectivity, being part of what is being studied increases understanding of the situation and qualitative depth to the study. As Race Relations advisor in planning and development, Chizoma took an active part in recruitment and retention policies. This resulted in the relaxation of what was seen as a previously rigid policy and practice that excluded BEM from getting into the professional posts of planning, architecture, surveying and valuation. For example, during her term of office, a black African male was recruited into the post of 'Practice Group Leader' and later as the Head of Architecture (for the first time in Easterly); an Asian male was recruited into the post of Assistant Head of Planning; an African male was appointed as Assistant Head of Valuation; and a Caribbean male was appointed team leader in Valuation; the percentage of BEM in these professional areas increased considerably. The same period saw an improvement in service delivery such as the requirement for planning committee reports to take into account the race relations implications of decisions; monitoring the implementation of approved reports; providing Race Relations Unit (RRU) input into Local Plan Document; providing RRU input to Regional Planning Guidance Policy Consultation Paper; setting up a borough wide service delivery (consultation) working party of BEMs, officers and politicians which enabled BEM community to participate in the planning process through regular face to face meeting/ discussion with officers and politicians to draw attention to their specific service needs/concerns. This working party continued to function until she left the Council employment in 1998.

In 1989, the Principal Race Relations Adviser's Committee report titled 'Planning For Black and Ethnic Minorities', recommended a more comprehensive approach towards

the delivery of planning services to Easterly's BEMs. This report was approved and consequently, a separate black and ethnic minority chapter was made part of the Local Plan which was adopted in 1989. As a community town planner, she was involved in the preparation of this new Unitary Development Plan (UDP) document. Her involvement resulted in the inclusion of a separate BEM chapter in the UDP. (It is interesting to point out that this chapter has now been removed from the UDP shortly after she left). A separate BEM chapter in the new UDP contained details in each topic area, (Environmental Quality, Housing, Employment, Transport, Shopping, Community Services, Leisure, Arts, Culture and Entertainment) on how the Local Plan/UDP would like to address the planning needs of the borough's BEM communities. At least, Easterly has shown, by this gesture, that it recognises the presence and specific needs of its BEM Communities. The BEM chapter became a reference point in many cases when demands or planning applications were being made for use by community or cultural groups. Although such a policy requires proper implementation for it to be meaningful, this is a gesture which Riverside had not considered at all in their Local Plan/UDP documents. An attempt by Riverside officers to introduce a similar approach in their UDP was thrown out by the politicians. Similarly, the LDDC paid no heed to the criticism about the implication of its development policies for BEM communities in Docklands.

Chizoma also carried out research into the planning needs of three different BEM groups, namely: Orthodox Jewish, Turkish and Chinese communities. The findings and recommendations of the study were reported to the relevant committees and received approval. One of the reports she prepared was published in the form of an advisory booklet entitled 'Planning for Black and Ethnic Minorities in Easterly' (although not attributed to her as author but to her department). This was widely distributed to the community groups and individuals to advise them as to their rights and obligations in the planning process. She also prepared and circulated advisory leaflet entitled 'Planning for Women in Easterly' for the planning department which helped to secure the involvement of women during the preparation of the UDP. Chizoma was involved in the implementation of the 'Access Programme' which enabled Easterly to recruit young BEM male and female school leavers who were sent to the planning and architectural schools to gain professional qualifications. Most of the successful candidates, gained full-time employment with the Council after their graduation. While working for the Council as a planner, one of the access candidates did a part time computer course. After some years of good experience in both planning and information technology, he left the Council to set up his own consultancy. This a success story for an African boy who would otherwise have ended up on the scrap heap. It must be pointed out once more that, like many other equal opportunities initiatives of the 1980s, the 'Access Programme' in Easterly has been discontinued since the early 1990s.

In her role as a race relations adviser, Chizoma had always sought to highlight the pitfalls in the laws, policies and practices and had endeavoured to effect changes albeit within the limit of her job description to the benefit of BEMs. This is evidenced in the Committee Report: 'Planning for Black and Ethnic Minorities', for which she was the lead originator. She had been accustomed to officers refusing to see the importance of flexibility towards certain development proposals in order to meet the

specific needs of BEM community. She witnessed at Committee, and during a number of consultation meetings, the hostility and intolerant attitude of white residents towards their BEM neighbours' planning proposals for places of worship, community centres, minicab offices etc. As a participant observer, she had been accustomed to white managers on the recruitment panel refusing to short-list a BEM applicant who met all stated criteria. The reason for refusal could be such excuses as, 'I doubt his managerial and supervisory capability'; or 'he has the qualifications but not British experience'; or such annoying comments as 'with a Ph.D, I think he is over-qualified for this job'. It can therefore be clearly seen that the BEM is in a 'no win' situation. Either he/she has no relevant qualification or he/she has the qualification but 'no British experience', or he/she is 'over qualified for the job'. So clearly Chizoma was living the research, for as Lury says, 'in this process I too am subject' in Chizoma's case the 'planning process'. Chizoma took advice from the work of Back and Solomos (1993) and recognised that as a black person, it was inadequate to talk about research on racism as if it is external to herself and as if her own personal biography and the biography of the project are not important.

In a number of cases, Chizoma was able to win the day either by taking the matter to the director or to Committee. Hence her claim that the existence of RRU Easterly in the 1980s worked to the advantage of the BEM communities. As a race relations advisor, she was regarded as an agent of change, and therefore someone of considerable status, possessing the power to challenge racist decisions in employment and service delivery for the benefit of BEMs. For this reason, those applicants and insiders from Easterly (as discussed in later chapters) who knew her status, were most prepared to speak out in the hope that her report would lead to the required changes in policy and practice. She did not however, hesitate, to stress that her study was private and academic and that she was not commissioned by the Council or Government to investigate their problems with a view to recommending and securing an automatic change. On the other hand the key actors in the planning process in Easterly were prepared to talk to her in detail in the hope that she would help to project the image of the borough and its managers as having performed wonderfully well in their anti-racism initiatives.

Chizoma's race and colour, as a Nigerian Ibo woman, provoked some stiff resistance by some chief officers and white residents who refused to respond to her questions. Similarly, in a few cases where she mistakenly visited a white applicant for interview (e.g. in Riverside), the reaction was unfriendly. At a point in this research, she found that people around her - her family, friends, associates, and neighbours were all potential sources of data. But [as a result] during the four years of the original investigation of this research, a member of her family, some of her colleagues at work, some of her friends and associates became victims of racism either in employment, or service delivery. Some of the cases went to the Industrial Tribunal. Easterly which is a Labour (or Socialist) Authority was seen to be operating anti-racist and equal opportunity policies and had a Race Relations Unit in the Council in the 1980s and early 1990s. The existence of, and consultation with, race relations officers in the Planning Department not only helped with cultural awareness programme but also assisted in ethnic monitoring, highlighting and advising on the race issues during the processing of planning applications and the preparation of local development plans.

Indeed when Clara's gender audit team investigated Easterly in 2002 there was still to be found a strong emphasis upon equal opportunities issues in terms of gender, race and disability within the borough's written policy documents (see Quantitative Appendix and see Greed, 2002a and b).

However, Chizoma explains, since 1st April 1992, there has not been a specific race relations adviser attached to the department as the Council's central Race Unit was first restructured and rendered completely ineffective by reducing its workforce from 46 to 4 staff who had no clearly defined role. Chizoma received a letter from the Head of her department telling her that her post was to be deleted (sic) and he had arranged for her to be assimilated into a new - Equalities post that had been created with effect from 1st October (only about ten days notice) from the date she received the letter. Her request for a meeting to discuss this in the presence of a trade union member before any final decision was turned down. Chizoma argues this is totally in breach of the Council's procedure. To move from a planning post to an equalities post meant that she was being deskilled and down graded and she was not given a chance to have a say in the decision. The trade union was not consulted. In view of this glaring injustice and act of racism, she approached one of the NALGO top officers to show him the letter and asked for support and protection. The NALGO officer's reaction was experienced by Chizoma to be sharp and hostile and discriminatory. He was not willing to represent her, rather he would pass the letter to the young black Union representative in her department. He went on to say, 'for me to represent you means that you have access to God'. As far as this white, male NALGO officer was concerned he was 'God' and she as a black woman did not deserve access to him, even though she was a principal officer of the Council. This is the same NALGO officer who had turned down request for representation from another black victim of employment discrimination. In Chizoma's case the NALGO officer passed her letter to the young black shop steward a couple of days later with no attempt to assist him in handling it knowing fully well that as a junior administrative staff in the same department, it will be very difficult for him to confront Management over her case. Such matters have shaped Chizoma's life experience and clearly are examples of a mixture of both direct, and by proxy, race, gender and class related discrimination.

Such are the factors that shaped Chizoma's perceptions of the subject area that she was studying, whilst, as summarised in Section 1, Clara as supervisor had her own set of life experiences that no doubt, ethnographically, affected her perceptions of the validity and interpretation of the research data too. Thus this was a sensitive piece of research based on two London boroughs and drawing deeply on the life experience of Chizoma.

SECTION 3: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

3.1 Different Levels and Realms

Chizoma's research, of necessity, drew on a wide range of academic and professional realms in order to provide herself with the intellectual tools to make sense of the way in which racism affected the operation of the planning system, and her own life, in inner London. In this Section first definitions of race and racism are considered as to applicability to the situation she was encountering. The institutional setting of the 'local state' and the planning department as an agent of that state in transmitting policies and a range of values and attitudes onto the local population is considered, drawing on the literature of urban governance and a range of political perspectives. Then literature on the role of racism within the inner city is considered drawing on urban sociology and urban politics, and finally studies of racism within the planning profession are reviewed. In all this 'the trick' was to establish links between the fate of individual planning applications and minority people's careers at the 'micro' level with the higher 'macro' level theoretical perspectives and urban political and institutional structures. Whilst Chizoma was looking at this process in relation to race, Clara had had a similar conceptual problem in exploring the 'reproduction of gender relations and their maintenance and transmission over urban space' in her work on women in the surveying and planning professions, in other words 'the imprint of gender relations on the form and structure of the built environment (Greed,1991,1994).

3.2 Definitions

3.2.1 Race and Racism

Chizoma's research was centred upon investigating 'racism' in planning, but she was soon to find that, there is no consensus among social theorists about the meaning of the concepts of 'race' and 'racism', and contemporary theorists tend to use the terminology in a haphazard manner (Solomos, 1989; Solomos and Back,1996). These concepts may be clarified by critically examining the various definitions and explaining the use of the terms in this study.

3.2.2 Race

According to some dictionary definition, a 'race' is a group of persons, animals or plants sharing common descent, for example, people with distinct ethnic stock (the Caucasian, Mongolian, etc. races). In Ball and Solomos, (1990), Nanton and Fitzgerald described race as a 'ratified concept' based on changing political ideas involving nationality, geographic area of origin, religion and ethnicity (1990:157). Solomos's (1989:xiii) 'common sense' definition of race refers to 'classificatory variables' such as 'skin colour, country of origin, religion, nationality and language'. In contemporary Britain, as in other western societies, race has become a negative terminology which equates easily with a range of social problems and conflicts. In the context of local government the concept of 'race and ethnicity' is increasingly becoming a source of discomfort and extra sensitivity in the daily bureaucratic operations of the local authority, as the average person seems to believe that the terms

'race and ethnicity' refer only to the non-white communities and the range of social problems and conflicts with which these groups are often labelled or associated. Implicit in the notion of race is the idea that race in itself is a form of identity. For the purpose of this research, BEM 'Black and Ethnic Minority' is used as a catch all term, used to cover any group irrespective of colour or creed (Solomos and Back,1996). Even some 'whites' among these groups felt that they had been treated differently from other whites, and effectively seen as 'blacks', particularly if they are non-Christians. Other research has shown that Turkish people are frequently labelled as 'black', although potential members of the European Union (Tijen Uguris,2001). The terms multicultural, multiracial and multiethnic will also be used when necessary to demonstrate the existence of mix and diversity of culture, race and ethnicity within society. BEMs are not a unitary group, and Chizoma was to find that there were internal tensions and evidence of discrimination between and within the different BEM groups themselves. On the other hand Chizoma notes that whilst there is much hostility at a public level between different ethnic groups, at an individual level there are now more mixed race children (by 2003 1 in 8 of all babies were of mixed race in the UK). They are the product of 'mixed' relationships, and Chizoma suggests this will lead to the inevitable consequence that future generations may become more conscious of the malaise of racial prejudice/segregation (see new Solomos and Back,1996). The sad thing remains though, that genuine institutional commitment to confronting and combating problems of racism are still lacking.

3.2.3 Racism

The term 'racism' is not an easy one to define and Gilroy (in Ball and Solomos 1990:192), highlights the 'difficulties involved in producing a coherent definition of racism as well as the tension that appears from the need to link an account of the ritualization of social and political structures and discourses with an understanding of individual action and institutional behaviour'. 'Racism' may simply be defined as 'actions which exclude people on grounds of colour or race' (Ball and Solomos, 1990:26). But racism is not always manifested by apparent nastiness or violence, quite the opposite in fact. Many blacks pointed out that black people could suffer equally when whites were pleasant to them. As Greed (1991) puts it, 'paternalistic, patronising niceness could be even more deadly in the end than obviously hostile attitudes, as they can be friendly and still put you down' (1991:185). The definition of racism as 'a combination of prejudice and power which powerful racialised groups exercise against less powerful racialised groups', and which in contemporary Britain, takes the form of white racism against black communities, is seen by Gilroy (in Ball and Solomos 1990) as problematic because it plays into the hands of the sections of the New Right and other opponents who capitalise on crucial ambiguities in anti-racist and multicultural initiatives as their reasons for waging war against such policies. It is also argued that prejudice suggests 'conscious action if not actual choice', and Gilroy questions whether this is an appropriate formula.(1990: 204)

Racism does not operate only within the central/local government, nor only within the boundaries of Europe. It was exported at an early stage to the 'blackman's homeland' (sic) during the colonial and imperialist era. The Institute of Race Relations (1982: 37) has shown that the cultures of colonialism did its best to make colonised people

feel inferior in every way, so that they would submit more easily to colonial rule. Also the Europeans who were involved with colonial rule and slave trade came out with the crude notions of their racial superiority and the inferiority of any one with a black skin. Early right wing scientists like Jensen and Schockley claimed to have proved, on the basis of genetics, that black people are less intelligent than whites. Gould (in Altarf Collective 1984) points out that with the flowering of the natural sciences in the latter part of the 19th century, 'proof' of the white dominance and superiority was developed. 'The resulting intellectual tensions were resolved after 1859 by a comprehensive evolution which was at once monogenist and racist, affirmed human unity even as it relegated the dark-skinned savage to a status very near to the ape' (IRR,1984:4).

The view advanced in Chizoma's research, and to some extent in the above literature, is that racial prejudice is not only a conscious action but also a matter of choice which individuals as well as groups can exercise as and when it suits them. A person does not necessarily need power in order to exercise prejudice over another. For example, while working in a local authority in the inner city, she observed a case where a junior white administrative staff refused to serve under the new Head of his department (an Assistant Director grade) because he was black. Because of his racial prejudice, the Administrative assistant demanded to be removed to another department headed by a white man and the authorities granted his request. This is hardly an isolated case and it can therefore be argued that both power and prejudice are essential elements in the definition of racism. While prejudice explains the racist actions of individuals, power lies behind 'institutional racism'. This concept of institutional racism is highlighted in Dummett (1984:133) which states that, 'A racist society has institutions which effectively maintain inequality between members of different groups in such a way that the open expression of racist doctrine is unnecessary or, where it occurs, superfluous. Racist institutions, even if operated partly by individuals who are not themselves racist in their beliefs, still have the effect of making and perpetuating inequalities'. Thus, a racist society is one whose essential economic and social institutions, such as industry, education, law, media, government - and planning - are organised on, or in effect act on, the principle that one race is superior to another. Thus institutional racism, which subsequently was to become topical in the late 1990s as a result of the Lawrence Enquiry and criticisms of police conduct, may be defined, according to the Macpherson Report of 1999, as, 'the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people'.

Because Chizoma was of the view that the operation of institutions and actors within them could have influence on the way in which a service is delivered, the research investigated how the political, bureaucratic (institutional) and individual acts of racial discrimination affect the economic and socio-cultural well-being of the BEM communities in the service area of planning and development to examine whether the planning system itself is responding to the problems of BEMs or whether it is reinforcing them through the planners' attitudes towards the planned. Studies have

established that there is co-relation between the operations of institutions and actors within them and the way the planning system relates to the needs of BEMs. This was done by investigating the attitude of politicians and bureaucrats towards race issues in planning and development as well as the level of race/cultural awareness among council officers and the implications of such awareness or lack of it for service delivery to black and ethnic minorities. It was also considered necessary to investigate the feelings and reactions of BEM service users to the planning system. Studies (notably Thomas and Khakee, 1995), have shown that the planning system has an effect on BEMs and an understanding of the feelings and reactions of these people would allow a broader sensitivity to develop in ways in which planning activities would be more sensitive to the disadvantages of BEMs. Also because as Thomas (1995:131) puts it, the nature of the planning system itself, i.e. the bureaucratic organisation implicit within the planning system, is of particular significance to BEM users when they have dealings with the planning process.

Because it is believed that institutions which have anti-racism mechanisms operating would have less adverse racial impact on service users, Chizoma's thesis explains and justifies this belief by assessing the value of race relations units and race officers in influencing planning policy and practice both in employment, service delivery, policy formulation, development and implementation in the two case study boroughs. As Thomas and Krishnarayan (1993) have argued, where ever there is a political will/commitment, the guidance as to how service should be delivered to meet BEM needs as well as the financial support to enhance service delivery are always made available. In particular attention is given to the fact that some BEM groups had greater problems than others with the planning system and that some BEM planning applications are more problematic to traditional majority planners than others. So institutional 'macro' level attitudes work their way out onto society in terms of 'micro' level individual incidents of discrimination towards individuals and their planning applications, the sum total of which amount truly to a 'macro' level matter. This has implications in terms of the types of planning proposals each group is likely to apply for and how they are treated. So Chizoma was keen to collect illustrative examples of how residents and applicants were treated by the planning department in respect of topics such as hot food takeaways, places of worship, taxicab offices, and residential building extensions and alterations. But even then it was not straightforward as ethnic minorities are not a unitary group and Chizoma was to find that some fare better than others in dealing with the planning system, because of the extent of their 'foreign-ness', their social class and levels of wealth. Also the nature of the type of planning applications received from different ethnic groups varies. For example, some BEM groups may be more likely to submit planning applications related to religious buildings, whereas others may be more concerned with hot food takeaways and others may be involved in housing issues, as will be illustrated in the empirical Sections.

3.3. The Local State: Agent of Racism

Conceptually, one of the key questions in this research was to what extent the planners, and the local authorities in which they worked, play a role in transmitting racist attitudes on to the planned by means of operating the planning system. Thus Chizoma's study is set within the context of investigating town planning as a function

of local government, and looking at the extent to which the local government officers and members operating that system manifest racist practices. This perspective (and subsequent findings) reinforces the belief that local government does in fact have considerable power independently to influence public policy and decision-making, often in direct contradiction to higher-level central government guidance and directives on the importance of equal opportunities and anti-racist programmes. For example the 1966 Local Government Act (section 11) and 1976 Race Relations Act have long required local authorities to take race into account for over 30 years, but 'their weakness lies in their enforcement' (Dummett, 1984 :325) and they have had little effect on local authority practices, although 'racism' itself has created a whole new academic industry of theories, books and conferences. Therefore Chizoma spent a considerable amount of time in the early stages of her research, under the advice of her previous supervisor, investigating theories of the 'local state', local government and dual state theory and their applicability to race considerations. The following account is a summary of just some of the key issues and texts Chizoma explored in great detail in her draft PhD, and readers interested in this aspect are advised to consult the references given for more detail.

Local government may be seen as operating power over its citizens in two ways, firstly as a channel for higher level central government policy, and secondly as having a degree of autonomous role in decision-making as operated by members (councillors) and officers (planners in this case). But which is greater? Central or local influence? Ultimately, according to Dunleavy and O'Leary (1988), local government can be described as the passive agent of the central authority in the sense that it exists to execute decisions made by central government and is often seen as an extension of the central government at local level. In contrast according to Boddy and Fudge (1984) local government is more than simply a passive agent of central government, but operates as a 'local state' in its own right as explored further by Stoker (1988). Drawing on the work of Stewart (1987), Young (1987) and others, the 'localists' promote a positive argument as to the benefits of autonomous, elected local authorities and stress the ability of local government to generate innovation, maximise public choice, and promote pluralism and participation. Jones and Stewart in particular tried to establish a strong defence of local government in opposition to the harsh centralisation which was seen as part of Whitehall and Conservative ideology under the Thatcherism of the 1980s when Chizoma started her investigations (and which seems to be continuing to some extent under New Labour).

Whilst some see in the local state in a favourable light, and liberals in particular see the state (and sometimes the planner) as a fair 'umpire', a 'referee', a regulator and an arbiter of conflicting interests in society - and a welcome alternative to central government control - others, particularly a range of Marxist theorists (classic and neo) condemn the state (and the local government system) as 'an instrument' or 'executive' committee of a dominant 'class'. The state is seen as having 'a monopoly of legitimate [and arguably legitimised] violence within a given territory' (Dunleavy and O'Leary, 1988:6). Whilst much Marxist, and neo-marxist literature was written by those concerned with the domination of the oppressed 'working classes' (who often appear to be 'seen' as predominantly white, male and employed in northern manufacturing industry [and thus not much use for the London metropolitan situation]) the principles

were readily applied to the experiences of BEMS in the New Left and within the community who were concerned, for example, with the influence of racist chief officers and racist and powerful white residents and politicians).

Chizoma found that both traditional marxist and pluralist literatures had not considered ethnicity (or gender) enough as a valid factor in identifying social division and oppression. However gradually one begins to see various neo-marxist, managerialist, and later feminist writers take a more aware approach which began to identify the differential effect of the states' power upon the various minorities within society, particularly at the local level (Cockburn, 1977 being a forerunner in this respect). But, whilst the emphasis remained upon 'capitalism' and predominantly economic issues, there was little space left to raise issues of diversity. Indeed, as Clara had previously found in her research on gender, there was a major battle going on between those who reduced everything to 'class' and those who championed gender and race as well as class (Hartmann, 1981). Similarly, many of the theories that promoted the benefits of participation and pluralism within the local state assume that access to local authorities structures is easy for everyone and they fail to examine the internal politics of local authorities, and the differences among the populations concerned, which operate to exclude large sections of the authority's citizens (Solomos, 1989). Chizoma recalls that in 1984, a blackman in Easterly told a race officer who invited him to the office to discuss his case that [before the Race Unit was created in this borough] another council official had previously told him to his face, 'the only time you see a common black face at the Town Hall is when they come to register deaths, births or marriages'.

But Chizoma was also to find that as more BEM people entered the public realm of local government that class and power differences between different BEM individuals became more marked, as clearly ethnic minorities, and for that matter women, come in a wide range of socio-economic groups, and hold different levels of power and influence within society and over each other too. Chizoma's case studies of individual experiences were soon to uncover such differences, tensions, and variety within/among the BEM community, but it was found that the available academic literature did not (and does not yet) allow for such variety and disaggregation. Likewise in recent research, Clara and her gender mainstreaming team found that many local authority policies and initiatives, lacked sophistication, and only allowed one 'to go for', gender or race or class but seldom was there an allowance for the fact that individuals could be female and black, or that someone could be say old and white and disabled all at once with a range of factors and levels of privilege and disadvantage all combined in one human being (Greed, 2002 a and b).

Stewart (1987) and Greenwood (1986) have shown that the organisational arrangements for service delivery can be a hindrance to the capability for local choice. It is also argued that the dominance of service committees in decision-making can encourage a narrow functional focus rather than a wider understanding of community needs. At the same time, professional influences (such as the RTPI's and RICS's role in shaping planning practice) have often taken a 'national view' without space for consideration of the local factors and interests that the planner might encounter in a particular inner city local authority, that might be very different from the perceived

'norm' that much of the professional literature appears concerned with, and thus lead to 'exclusion of local factors and interests in decision making' (Stoker, 1988: 223). This was highlighted in an address to the Royal Town Planning Institute in 1985, by Paul Boateng MP, who pointed out that 'the same-for-all, colour blind approach' in town planning has resulted in the failure to give adequate consideration to the planning needs of BEM people in Britain. Likewise the Scarman report (1981), on the Brixton riots has apportioned blame to town planners for not taking into account the specific needs of BEM residents (1981: 160 and 163). Duncan and Goodwin (1988) have traced the history of the crisis in local government in the 1980s and pointed to differential local service provision in opposition to central wishes, as the common factor in each conflict and their further development of the concept of the 'local state' in respect of the need for an understanding of the spatial implications of uneven development and discrimination was particularly useful to Chizoma in seeking to relate such urban governance theories to the operation of the town planning system. Clearly, spatial differentiation was a key geographical factor in understanding the way in which discrimination operated within town planning, but, as Clara had found in previous research, much EO policy and theory seemed to operate in a 'spaceless vacuum' (Harvey, 1975:24) with little consideration of the differential effect apparently equal policies might have on people living in different types of areas. (Faculty colleagues reflecting on this occasional paper at draft stage, added that a similar point might be made about much sustainability, environmental and transportation policy too, much of which seems to be spaceless, and peopleless (in terms of differential effects on different areas and groups in society), particularly in London at present).

Chizoma also investigated the concept of the dual state, particularly in respect of casting light on the effects of such spatial differences. This theory originated mainly from the works of Cawson (1978, 1982) and Saunders (1986) and is broadly concerned with identifying the likely conflicts between the need for government to take into account the needs of national level production-oriented economic policy demands and the consumption-oriented social needs of people at the local state level. Saunders (1986: 301) argues that proximity to the service providing agencies means that consumers of state services find it easier to make their voices heard. This is a rosy picture, which does not apply easily to minority groups. For example, proximity to the housing office does not mean easy access for those in housing need who are often seen queuing up for days while the office doors are locked and no officer is willing to talk to them. Similarly, at the time of the investigation, complaints often received by the race relations unit have shown that even attempts to reach the housing services by telephone can be very frustrating for those in need. (Clara adds the problems of automated telephone services, 'if you have a star button press it now' etc might be the subject of several PhDs on the failure of local government to be accessible to its citizens.) The failure of the dual state thesis to deal effectively with the internal politics of the state is in her view, the weakest aspect of its contribution. It is the internal politics of the local state that most affects the interests of minority groups. Chizoma concluded that like other theories before and after it, the dual state thesis has not put forward sufficient argument to accommodate the issue of race and racism in local government nor to encompass the racial conflict and discrimination that was to become an enduring feature of local politics and life experience in many

inner London boroughs.

3.4 The Operation of Racism

3.4.1 Changing Manifestations

Having looked at 'racism' and 'the local state' Chizoma then sought to investigate quite how racism was operationalised at the service delivery level, at the 'micro' level of the individual. She looked for literature and experiences on how it actually 'worked' in terms of the lives and actions of the planners and the planned, that is how racism was maintained, transmitted and manifest at the personal and individual level. It is important to give some historical perspective to the issue. According to Gilroy (1987), 'racism does not move tidily and unchanged through time and history. It assumes new forms and attributes and antagonisms in different situations' (1987 :11), from colonialism and imperialism in the past, to racism and discrimination nowadays. The 19th century ideology of white superiority was unchallenged; transmitted into cultural superiority and reinforced by the might of the European Empire, the missioning of Christianity and the building of Britain on the backs of the colonised. According to Gordon and Klug (1986), the traditional view implied that racism is an ideology, a system of beliefs, which held that white people were superior to blacks. Such an ideology of racial superiority justified the conquest, subjugation and plundering by European nations of most of what is now termed 'the Third World'. This crude prejudice is still promoted by members of fascist groups like the National Front.

Clara notes in review of similar literature, Rex and Moore showed in their study of Sparkbrook in Birmingham in the 1960s, that inner city white people might have a charitable approach to putting money in the missionary box at church to help 'the natives in Africa and India' but at the same time did not connect this group to the new ethnic minority groups moving in around them, from the Indian sub-continent (Rex and Moore, 1967). Chizoma as a member of the worldwide Anglican community, and as an active church member, and at one time representing her church on the Diocesan and Deanery Synod), is deeply conscious of the racism dimension inherent in overseas missionary work (Nwabara, 1977). Chizoma had been on the receiving end of the good and bad effects of it in Nigeria, where she was educated to the highest level in church schools and college, and where family members are in senior positions in the church and government. But in contrast on coming to Britain she was to find that her professional qualifications, education and social status were to be questioned and assumed to be 'second rate', even among the wider Christian community and certainly by otherwise relatively socially-aware members of the planning profession and local government fraternity. Clara adds see the post-colonial work of American researchers on the diversity of social class structures in different parts of Africa and the inter-relationships with urbanisation, colonisation and traditional systems of stratification in Tuden and Plotnicov (1970).

Chizoma continues that today, things have changed, the old ideology is being challenged, equal opportunities policies, colonialism is out of fashion, and anti-racist initiatives are everywhere, but new and more subtle forms of racism have emerged. Firstly, the idea persists that blacks constitute 'a series of problems', is today expressed

at the core of racist reasoning. A second view which is equally pernicious, popular and integral to racial meanings, defines blacks as 'forever victims, objects rather than subjects, beings that feel yet lack ability to think, and remain incapable of considered behaviour in an active mode' (Gilroy 1987: 11). A third idea views black settlers as an external, alien visitation on white people. All these factors and views are at play in determining the way in which local authorities 'treat' BEMS. Racism continues to rest on the ability to contain blacks in the present day, and to repress and to deny them in the past. Consequently, as challenges grow and different situations unfold, so new kinds of racism spring up to match them. As Gordon and Klug (1986) pointed out, many people would deny subscribing to the idea of racial superiority, but claim that they are 'simply' recognising differences between peoples. They also argue that it is natural for people of one kind to unite and antagonise outsiders, and they refuse to see such attitudes as a belief in racial superiority of one group over another. This approach, which is termed the 'new racism', is more dangerous because its ideas are not associated with a systematic theory. It is difficult to identify, expose and tackle the ideas of new racism. An example of emergent racism (in the 1960s) can be found in Enoch Powell's speeches and writings about the danger of the increasing number of immigrants. The new racism is therefore defined as 'a cluster of beliefs which holds that it is natural for people who share a way of life, a culture, to bond together in a group and to antagonise outsiders who are different and seen to threaten the group's identity'. (Gordon and Klug 1986: 22). Gilroy (in Ball and Solomos, 1990) further points out that the new racism is held together, punctuated and periodised by racial politics, evident through issues such as - immigration, inner city riots and the 'loony left'. These carefully coded and significant terms enable people to speak about race without mentioning the word.

While the early form of racism thrived on the ideas of biological inferiority and superiority, the new form of racism seeks to present an imaginary definition which 'constructs and defends an image of national culture - homogeneous in its whiteness yet precarious and perpetually threatened by enemies within and without' (Gilroy 1990:196). Thatcher's warning about British culture being 'swamped' by immigrants, and Enoch Powell's bloody nightmare of the elderly white woman being chased around the streets of London by black youths sensationalised the issue. More recently (April 2001) a statement by a Conservative MP Mr Townsend - that Britain is becoming a 'Mongol society', and the National Front activities all contribute to racist attitudes. This form of racism results in peculiar and complex difficulties of social and political turbulence, which in turn necessitates crisis management by both central and local government.

3.4.2 Racism and Sexism by Proxy

Another dangerous form of new racism which developed in the 1980s, and which Chizoma sees as very important in the maintenance of racism in local planning authorities, can be described as 'Racism by Proxy'. BEMs are themselves used (by those in authority who do not wish to be identified as racists) to perpetuate racism against their own people. It is not yet clear why such people allow themselves to be used. This is similar to the old colonial method of 'divide and rule'. For example, one black woman junior planner explained to Chizoma how her manager (an ethnic

minority male, who had the rare opportunity of moving up the ladder'), turned out to be her worst oppressor in the office for no justifiable reason. Another black male planner cited the same manager as being very hostile to him and other black officers.

Clara adds that 'racism by proxy' is perhaps similar to what is sometimes known as false consciousness. Racism by proxy has been a classic means of control in the British Empire when black administrators identified more with their white masters than their fellow black colleagues for social and economic reasons, and seems to affect all levels of employment. The word 'proxy' means 'acting as an intermediary' and 'acting on behalf of another', usually a white, male boss. Clara has also struggled with these issues in respect of gender, for it is a fact that although women as a whole are institutionally disadvantaged relative to men, some women are not in the least supportive of other women. In her research many women surveyors and planners have told Clara of experiences that are what may be called 'sexism by proxy'. This is particularly the case in respect of professional women experiencing difficulties with women office staff (receptionists, secretaries, typists). Such traditional women often appear personally protective of the men who employ them and appear unable to cope, or possibly threatened or jealous, of other women who are in professional jobs and, therefore they feel justified in 'putting them back in their place'. (Accounts of phrases such as 'who do you think you are?' and 'oh you're the surveyor, sorry to keep you waiting I didn't realise you were anybody', 'Mr So and So can't just see anybody, you could be anyone just off the street for all I know', flow thick and fast in these situations). Of course if women, or ethnic minority individuals complain about the treatment they have received from such people they are likely to be told (by white male managers), 'I've never had any problem, it must be you, Ms Do Da is always very helpful, efficient and polite' (well of course that is the role of the Proxy to act as a house slave to serve and please the Master, thus collaborating in the maintenance of racism and sexism.) It is well known that some middle class women too (in managerial and professional roles usually over other women) act as the 'soft cops' of the Welfare State, exercising negative power over other women to keep them down, and, often, showing extreme contempt, even hatred for other women who they consider inferior to themselves, but also towards other professional women who they consider have got 'above themselves' whilst showing great deference to the men they serve. Patriarchy and sexist attitudes are promoted by women as well as men, indeed minority individuals are 'ideal' go-betweens for transmitting sexism and racism 'down' to their colleagues. Clearly, in spite of two centuries of sociological theory, there is much to be said for traditional folk wisdom and religious concepts of 'human nature' as one can never 'assume' that just because a person belongs to an oppressed minority they can be trusted or will be on the same side as others of the same race or gender. Chizoma notes from her study that some BEM managers in the work place become the worst enemies of BEM staff, who complain of being victimised by them. In some cases during public consultation, some BEM neighbours turn out to be the most vicious objectors to another BEM person's planning proposal, and council officers orchestrate such objections out of proportion to justify their decision to refuse planning permission. The various sectors of the BEMs are often set against one another. This generates unhealthy competition, extreme hostility and antagonism which results in lack of united front to fight the common enemy. Racism by proxy is very difficult to tackle because it leaves no room for the sufferer to make a case

against racial discrimination. There is a clear link between racism by proxy and institutional racism because this form of racism is supported/fostered by institutional racism. This is in Chizoma's view, a new form of social control and management of crisis. It is 'a ruling class strategy designed to divide the exploited groups and prevent them from developing revolutionary consciousness, (Dunleavy and O'Leary 1988:239). Clara adds that 'divide and rule' was always one of the key principles of maintaining the British Empire and the English class system (MacPherson, 1999).

Chizoma believes the only possible explanation for the attitudes of such ethnic minority managers is that an individual BEM manager is doing the 'dirty job' for his white bosses in order to retain and enhance his own position at the expense of his 'brothers and sisters'. This is worse than direct racism from white people, because the sufferer finds it difficult to complain. Clearly self-advancement and pragmatism win the day. Institutional racism in the planning system/profession can 'use' people like this manager, and may even promote more marginal BEM managers, if it serves the interest of the 'game'. The advantages of belonging to a privileged class and having a higher income than many other BEMs (albeit through hard work) could offset the effects of racism so much so that some BEM managers did not necessarily share the same life experience or problems of lesser BEMs. Clearly class and personal wealth cross-cut with race and gender, so much so that some ethnic minority individuals can 'buy themselves out' of many of the problems that beset lesser mortals.

Clara adds that patriarchy is so powerful that it not only affects men, but shapes women's attitudes towards other women too ('women are women's worst enemies' as the saying goes). Institutional racism, likewise, particularly when it is also part of the national culture, is so strong that it gets into the minds of BEMs in shaping their attitudes towards other BEMs as well as shaping white people's minds, creating a form of 'self-hatred' among minority groups (as discussed by Solomos and Back, 1996). This is also similar to the concept of 'inverted racism', which is a means of sustaining institutional racism (as discussed by Mirza, 1997:pp 193-5). But of course within academic (white middle class) feminism the pressure to close ranks (especially from white middle class women leaders) and to create an image of hegemony and unity within the feminist movement has often prevented the unthinkable being said. Likewise within the humanities and secular academia, much sociology and urban policy appears unconcerned with human nature (even dismissing it as an unscientific concept). In contrast from a Christian perspective, whilst social injustice, oppression and inequality are greatly condemned, the realities of the hopeless of 'human nature' and the 'equal' potential of all human beings to 'sin' and be deceitful towards their neighbours, family and nation is never questioned but acknowledged face on, with the proviso that only by the Grace of God can things be any different. Thus many inner city ethnic minority groups take their religion very seriously as the main source of power to change the intuitional, political and personal problems they encounter every day as a result of racism, classism and sexism (Beckford, 2000; Cone, 1997). Therefore places of worship and prayer are very high on BEM community agenda, and the subject of many planning applications as illustrated in the empirical chapters.

3.4.3 Varied Levels of Power

Making reference to the experience of Lee Rainwater and David Pittman (1967), Solomos (in Solomos, 1991:7) points out the inherently complex ethical and power issues involved in researching 'powerless' groups, and argues that the most important of these issues are the researcher's relationship to the communities that are being researched. This is a concept Chizoma adhered to throughout her work as she compared the fate of other ethnic minority groups' planning applications compared with her own. Chizoma witnessed during her employment with one of the local authorities and during her investigation that some BEM groups (e.g. the Orthodox Jews as a minority group) are more powerful than other groups. For example, she observed that their planning application cases seem to go through more easily at Planning Committee because they have more articulate and knowledgeable councillors to defend and put across their cases at committee and consultation meetings. They also appear to be more united when it comes to opposing and objecting to the planning applications of other minority communities and individuals. For example, at the time of investigation), the Orthodox Jewish community had a strong/powerful political representation at Easterly Planning Committee. Orthodox Jewish community (at the time of the investigation), had a fair political representation at the planning sub- committee (3 out of 12 members -25% were Orthodox Jewish, and of the remaining 9, one was African, one was Caribbean and 7 were white), their chances of gaining planning consent appear to be much higher than the rest of the ethnic minority groups (q.v. Quantitative Appendix).

Chizoma believed this made it easier for their development control applications (for example, house extensions in predominantly Jewish areas), to be successfully defended at committee, as well as block the passage of development proposals (such as minicab office), from other BEM applicants in a predominantly Jewish area. The rest of the borough's ethnic minority groups do not have the opportunity to live each in a similar concentration as the Orthodox Jewish community, and so their planning proposals at the consultation stage are at the mercy of hostile neighbours who have neither vested interest nor the good will to give support to the proposed development. Instead such proposals are seen as 'strange, un-usual and a source of nuisance' (for example, mosque, take away, minicab office etc). As Thomas and Krishnarayan have pointed out, there is 'evidence of increasing black and ethnic minority influence in local politics, but that it is uneven in its development' (1993: 270). Chizoma observed that under representation at decision making level considerably disadvantaged black groups in particular.

But Clara would add (and see Greed, 1994) Jewish people sometimes do better than other 'minority groups', but other times are subject to a strong anti-semitic backlash (based more on religion than race) that puts Jews back down the pecking order again, no doubt related to the fact that they have been so much more successful than many other groups. Indeed Jews, and to some extent Moslems, as non-Christians, although, 'white' have been subject to a great deal of blame over the centuries, as perceived 'enemies' of Christ and Christians. So they are likely to be subject to a double whammy of discrimination, compared with say Black Christian minorities when world events turn the tables against them (particularly so after 9/11 in 2001 and the situation in Israel and the Middle East.) Of course it is clinical to try to measure the relative degree of discrimination towards different groups, as at an individual human

being level racism can be extremely destructive and cuts deep into a person's soul. As one Jewish woman surveyor commented to Clara about the discrimination she was receiving, 'how can I tell in the heat of the moment that they are like that to me because of my sex, class, religion or race, it still hurts'.

Although one can develop sweeping 'structural' (macro-societal level) definitions of racism and racial divisions, in fact Chizoma found in the course of her research from observation and her own life experience that 'all BEMs are different', indeed all human beings are composite individuals made up of a range of personal characteristics. Whilst the concept of race is a very important baseline explanation, there are other inherent factors that can be taken into account, such as gender, class, political representation, power relations, age, personality, motivation, religion and personal life experience to better understand race and racism. So at the personal individual level one can't generalise, although one can identify key shared issues at the macro societal level and this is very important when dealing with institutional and dominant group organised racism. As Greed (1991) put it, 'Human beings are amazingly complicated and whilst 'types' are of value, to say that a person is always going to be treated in a particular way, in a particular situation, because of their class and gender is an oversimplification (1991:185). The same applies to race, colour and ethnicity. So sometimes BEMs behave 'wrongly' out of self-interest, pragmatism, and an unenlightened personal perspective. Clearly the situation is extremely complex and requires sophisticated analysis, and is a field for further development. Chizoma's experiences and analysis bring back the issues of personal accountability and the weaknesses of human nature back into the account of urban social analysis.

4: POLICY PERSPECTIVES

4.1 History: Policy Responses to BEM Community Issues

In this first Part, an account is given by Chizoma of the build up of policies related first to black migration, then race relations from post-war up to the run-up period and the time when she was doing her PhD research in London, which brings us to the mid 1990s. The second Part of this Section deals more specifically with 'race and planning', whilst Part 3 considers Best Value as a potential rival to Equal Opportunities, and the final Part brings us up to the present day.

In the 1950s, the social policy response to black immigration involved a two pronged strategy aimed at: (a) providing new immigrants with the basic needs and (b) enhancing racial harmony between them and the host community. The 1960s political intervention at local level to deal with race issues involved a complex interaction between central government, local authorities and voluntary agencies (Solomos, 1989:88-89). The racialisation of political debate in the 1960s, was pushed to a new level. As race and related issues aroused the interest of politicians, the press and voluntary agencies, it became necessary for legislative measures to be taken. Hence, at various stages since the 1960s, a number of Acts were passed in order to give central government a degree of influence in shaping the responses of local authorities to race issues. These included: the 1966 Local Government Act; 1969 Local Government Grants (Social Need) Act; 1976 Race Relations Act; and finally 1978 Inner Urban Areas Act. This supports the earlier statement that central government intervention is needed to bring about change at the local level.

The 1966 and 1969 Acts saw the beginning of initiatives aimed at providing central government support for local authorities to enable them tackle urban deprivation in multi-racial environment. Section 11 of the 1966 Act provided funding for those local authorities with large concentrations of BEM residents to help meet their special needs in Education and Social Welfare (Hansard, Vol 729, 1966: Cols 1331-8) The 1969 (Social Needs) Act, in form of the Urban Programme, provided special help to areas of acute social deprivation (Edwards and Batley, 1987; Higgins et al 1983). It is argued that the central government introduction of Section 11 funding was purely based 'on the problematic concept of special needs' with which a pathological view of black communities has been associated' (Solomos, 1993; Ball and Solomos 1990). Following its introduction, Section 11 provided substantial sums to a number of local authorities. There has however been some controversy about the direct impact of these monies on the needs of minority communities, and about the misuse of Section 11 funding by many local authorities particularly in education which means that hardly any meaningful benefit accrued to the local residents at whom such funding was targeted. For example, it was observed that many local education authorities appointed school cleaners and dinner ladies as Section 11 workers. This has no direct and meaningful relevance to BEMs, because as stated earlier, local government is engaged with social control and management instead of meeting the needs of culturally diverse communities. The implication of these measures for urban politics of racial inequality is two fold. First, Ouseley (1981), has argued that, given the extent of the deprivation which they were supposed to tackle the measures were symbolic

rather than adequate national programmes of action. Second, during the 1960s and early 1970s, only few local authorities gave some recognition to the existence of racial inequality, but this did not go beyond limited support for the work of community relations councils and grant allocations to some local community groups.

Race research carried out during the 1960s and the early 1970s by Rex and his associates focused on the sociological analysis of the position of black minorities in the housing and employment markets of Birmingham (Rex and Moore, 1967, Rex and Tomlinson, 1979). The research analysed the role of local and national political processes in structuring the incorporation of blacks into the institutions of the welfare state and into the employment and housing markets. In their study of Sparkbrook in Birmingham Rex and Moore (1967) analysed the interplay between race and housing in an inner urban area where there was a significant black population. They examined the reasons for the concentration of Asian and West Indian migrants in this declining area and the role of the policies practised by Birmingham Housing Department and their effect on the migrant communities in the housing market. They concluded that BEMs in these areas suffer disadvantage. Rex and Tomlinson's research focused on the position of black underclass in Handsworth, analysing the role of local and national political processes in determining this position, and looking at the political groups that developed within the Asian and West Indian communities in the area. The history of such groups and their interaction with local political institutions were also analysed. They also concluded that these minority groups stand at disadvantage. By inference, it would appear that the dominant white population in these areas did not suffer similar disadvantage.

During the 1970s political scientists (notably; Deakin, 1972, Newton, 1976, and Katznelson, 1976 referred to in Gilroy), concerned themselves with the political incorporation of ethnic minorities in the local political system, looking at the role of racial and ethnic politics in the political life of British cities since the 1950s. Whilst summarising the main themes of these studies as the impact of racial factors on local and national politics, the role of the media, the response of local authorities to the race question and the role of racial factors in elections, Solomos (1989:86) recognised the absence of detailed historical or comparative studies of the interplay between race and politics at local level. Once again the conclusion is that the injustice felt by BEMs is not clearly understood, and this calls for urgent and radical reforms. But racial inequality continued to receive a limited or no response at all in most local authorities (as against in academia). Consequently, when the 1976 Race Relations Act was passed, there was forceful argument to include an amendment about the role of local authorities in the promotion of better race relations.

This was eventually included as Section 71 of the Race Relations Act, which stated that:

'...it shall be the duty of every local authority to make appropriate arrangements with a view to securing that their various functions are carried out with due regard to the need:-

- (a) to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination; and
- (b) to promote equality of opportunity, and good relations, between persons of different racial groups' (Race relations Act, 1976)

Young and Connelly (1981, found in Gilroy, 1987) have argued that the policies and practices of most local authorities did not immediately reflect the statutory provision of Section 71. The 1976 Act is very weak and in particular Section 71. In the view of the researchers this is a flimsy argument because potentially the law is there to be interpreted and used effectively.

There is a moral as well as statutory duty for local authorities to look at the law and interpret it positively in order to respond to the needs of BEMs in their areas. Unfortunately most local authorities adopted the 'colour-blind', 'same for all' approach which made them assume non-discrimination and equal opportunities for all. Ouseley (1981) argues that this deliberate non-action on the part of these local authorities, is 'borne out of total apathy, political irresponsibility towards black people and bureaucratic inertia' (1981:18). Some authorities made formal declarations of intent not to discriminate and to give equal opportunities to all persons irrespective of colour, race, ethnicity, nationality etc. The problem here is that it assumes that everyone starts from an equal position. Those authorities did not achieve much because they had no complementary programme of positive action.

However, a few local authorities (notably, Lambeth) did actively pursue equal opportunities by recognising racial discrimination and disadvantage and embarking on positive action programmes to tackle the problem. Following the outbreak of urban unrest in Bristol, London and Liverpool during 1980-1, an increasing number of local authorities started to develop policies on racial discrimination. Solomos (1989) agrees with Ouseley (1984) and Young (1987), that the urban unrest of 1980-1 acted as a spur for local authorities to respond to the problem of racial discrimination in employment and service delivery. Although the impact of Section 71 remains unclear, it seems to have provided the basis of promoting policy change within the existing structure of local government (Solomos, 1989: 93).

The serious civil disorder of the early 1980s in many British cities have been blamed on racial discrimination, the policy of non-action by the central and local governments and marginalisation of race issues by people in authority. Inevitably the aftermath of the uprisings precipitated developments in local politics of race. The 1980s saw a major transformation of the local politics of race with such changes as: adoption of equal opportunities policy by some local authorities; establishment of Race Relations Unit (RRUs); introduction of various anti-racism initiatives. In seeking to know 'what factors helped to shape policy formulation and practice in this field', Ball and Solomos (1990) identified two reasons. The first of these was the belief that local authorities found it necessary to take lead role in the absence of central government initiative. Second, there was the local impact of urban unrest, the increasing political awareness and mobilization of BEMs at local level.

Research continued into the 1980s with an emphasis upon the relationship between race and local politics by Cashmore, (1987) Jacobs, (1986) and Smith (1987). Ball and Solomos (eds, 1990), looked at the role of social and economic change in the restructuring of race relations in urban localities and the response of the local state and political institutions to these changes. This body of research portrays the view of local

state as engaging in social control and management instead of meeting the needs of culturally diverse communities. In other words it identified the local state as being concerned with top-down control rather than bottom-up response to local needs. Ken Young (in Ball and Solomos, 1990:23), points out that local government pre-1981 responses to racial minorities in Britain were shaped by a desire to incorporate newcomers into British society. Young (1985) argues that most of the changes in the field of race and local politics have been unplanned and unintended. They resulted from diverse impacts of pressures for change at all local levels.

Ouseley (1981 and 1984) showed that policy development in the field of race owes much to the central role played by local black politicians, communities and administrators whose pressure brought about some changes in local authority practices. Ouseley's view supports the notion that the under-representation of a particular group in the local politics, disadvantages that group. Ouseley's (1982) view indicates that the roles played by various black community setting including Community Relations Councils with the consequent shifts in local and central government politics formed the basis for the change. Chizoma agrees with Solomos (1989) that the incorporation model put forward by Young has played an influential role on the debate about the local politics of race. She is inclined to endorse Ouseley's argument about the role of black community groups, a view supported by the work of Rex and Tomlinson (1979) in Handsworth with regard to political development within the Asian and West Indian communities.

Chizoma's knowledge of local authority race equality work leads her to endorse fully the explanations given above of the changes that were occurring by the late 1980s as outlined below. Evidence has shown that urban unrest is an 'ill wind' which blows no good to anyone' - BEMs and government alike. Even when the heavy hand of the law and the police descend mercilessly on the oppressed (BEMs), the cost of rebuilding the economic, social, or political damages resulting from riots can be painfully expensive. Hence, local authorities in the 1980s were forced to act. The role played by the actions of black communities and the mobilisation of political leadership is very crucial, as pointed out by Herman Ouseley. Another strong reason for policy change, is the desire to win the votes of the BEM communities. Anti-racism initiatives have been linked with voting rights campaign which generated votes from the previously apathetic BEMs.

By the late 1980s, Solomos (1989) could identify three main areas of policy change in relation to race and the local politics: service delivery; employment; and promotional measures. Chizoma adds a fourth measure which is, involvement in decision making. Most of the local authorities introduced ethnic recording to enable them monitor channels of access and allocation. For example, in Haringey, housing allocation was monitored to determine the quality of distribution and to change procedures that facilitated discretion and contributed to discriminatory outcomes (Solomos, 1989:93). Similarly, in Hackney, planning applications were monitored to show the number, nature and outcome of applications received from BEMs in comparison with other applicants. Ethnic monitoring reports went to the planning committee during the 1980s every six months to determine whether any change in procedure was required.

A second aspect of policy change was the emphasis upon employment issues. The aim was not only to increase the number of BEM staff in employment, but also to link 'the question of allocative equality with representation of black and ethnic minority staff in local government departments' (Solomos 1989:94). In Hackney for instance, the aim was to ensure that the numbers of BEM staff reflect the population of BEMs in the borough.

This resulted in the BEM workforce rising from 10% in 1983 to 35.15% in 1987 (Source: LBH Committee Reports), although this remarkable achievement was not extended to senior grade level. The third aspect of change as identified by Solomos was the promotional measures to improve communication and race awareness. Local authorities such as Hackney established a translation units. A fourth policy change which Chizoma considers very important is the direct involvement of BEMs in decision making. In some local authorities such as Hackney, BEMs became elected councillors and took part in major decisions at committees which would benefit the wider BEM communities. Most local community groups (in the 1980s) were allowed to select co-opted members to service committees, with equal voting rights as elected members at meetings. This gave support to the BEM councillors.

Analysts have found that these policy changes differ according to the level of commitment of the individual authorities. By looking at the environment of policy change and the contents of policy change, four different types of local authority responses to racial issues can be identified according to Young and Connelly, as described in Gilroy 1997. These were:

- i) 'pioneers': innovative authorities which created a new machinery of policy making and implementation on racial issues;
- ii) 'Learners': authorities that accepted the need for change, and learned from the experiences of the 'pioneers';
- iii) 'Waverers': authorities that issued formal statements but did little to put them into practice;
- iv) 'Resisters': authorities that did not accept the need for specific policies on racial issues

Among the local authorities that embarked on positive action programmes were Lambeth, Brent, Hackney, Haringey, Lewisham thus including case study areas chosen for this study (Haringey,2002,Hackney,1992,2002, Lewisham,2002). In addition to various anti-racism initiatives, these authorities established race relations units which helped to monitor, liase with, and coordinate the activities of local authority departments for the benefit of BEMs. Some of these authorities, notably Hackney and Lambeth, issued equal opportunities statements which fundamentally recognised the existence of discrimination on grounds of racism. The introduction of positive action programme was, therefore, an attempt to redress the unfairness. An example of the positive action programmes pursued included involving BEM people in consultation programmes in Hackney. For example the formulation of the borough plan is a statutory requirement which necessitates a series of public consultations. In the past, town planners usually consulted with the well informed, articulate members of the public without ensuring that those 'representatives' (mainly white middle class) of the local public opinion were actually representative. The result is that when the

final draft plan was published the black and ethnic minorities were unhappy with the provisions made for them in the plan as most of their views/needs would not be incorporated.

In Lambeth there were specific policies to help with employment of BEMs. An example is the construction service where the process of recruitment of manual workers was by word of mouth, nepotism, etc, which acted to exclude BEMs. The Council set up a positive action programme geared towards attracting more BEM applicants. The process engineered maximisation of applicants from the local community as job vacancies were circulated to BEM and white local groups or organisations. The effect was that 30% of the apprentices in September 1980 were BEM (who constituted 27% of those eventually appointed), as opposed to 11% apprentices in spring 1980. This shows that a fair selection process is most likely to result in the appointment of the best candidates.

Neither the Urban Programme Initiatives of the early 1980s nor the subsequent Inner City Partnership met the needs of the BEMs. In 1986 Hackney set up a positive action programme to attract applications from BEM voluntary organisations. This involved open evenings run by Council staff (jointly by the RRU and Planning Department) with BEM voluntary organisations and other interested agencies on how to access available services. As a result of this action, 25% of the successful urban programme bids for that year were submitted by BEMs. The action programme was also designed to ensure that the planners in conjunction with the RRU organised a working party which held several weeks of round table discussions with BEM individuals and groups including the Hackney Ethnic Minority Alliance and the Orthodox Jewish Community. The working party went through the Draft Borough Plan with the planners, gave their views which were then incorporated into the final plan. The outcome of this exercise was supported by RRU committee report which led to the inclusion of a separate ethnic minority chapter into the local plan document. This is one example of a specific positive action programme which addressed a previously operating discriminatory process.

In Hackney, between 1984 and 1991, the RRU had about 46 staff with the head of the unit on Assistant Director's grade, reporting directly to the Council Chief Executive. Most of the RRU staff held professional qualifications with vast experience in different fields. At least three race relations officers were attached to each service Directorate. Typically, they include an adviser, an assistant adviser and an administrative support officer. The race officers got directly involved in all the work of the Directorate. For example, in recruitment and selection, they physically took part in drafting job descriptions and job advertisements, short listing and interviews to ensure that recruitment and selection procedures and practices were carried out in line with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policies. Regular six monthly employment monitoring reports to committees formed part of the programme. Consequently, the RRU was instrumental in the achievement of employment targets. Ouseley (1990) paid tribute to the 'active race advisers' role in achieving equality targets in Hackney. In service delivery, the Unit identified and addressed the needs of BEMs. Between 1984 and 1987, many borough wide service delivery (Housing, Social Services, Economic Development etc) conferences were organised by the RRU to bring BEM

communities in face to face discussions with council officers regarding their specific needs. A service delivery working party was set up between planning department and BEM communities (by the author while working as RRA in Planning and Development Directorate). Similarly, in decision making, all committee reports included RRU monitoring comments, and clearly identified implications for BEMs. Race Relations officers attended service committee meetings to present reports and give advice to members on race related issues. In addition to inputs to policy review at local level, the RRU also contributed to wider policy and strategy consultation reports at the national level. In Hackney, some of the staff from the RRU were assigned to voting rights campaign duties (in the mid 1980s) in order to generate change at the higher national state level.

Many local authorities blamed their failure to adopt the positive action initiatives discussed above on financial constraints. A lack of such resources was a critical issue, but racist attitudes and structures were not addressed. Ouseley (1981) argued that the marginal responses of central and local governments to the problem could be seen in the context of a racist approach aimed at containment and control (rather than confronting and combating complexity). For example, it is doubtful whether Section 11 funding provided any significant help except in some isolated cases such as Hackney where it was effectively used to fund race relations work. According to Ouseley, ILEA received approximately, 8 million by 1981 for Section 11 posts, but there was no indication of how many posts existed and how the BEMs benefited from such appointments. Similarly, according to the Runnymede Trust (1981), the Urban Programme and the Inner City Partnership made little or no impact on urban deprivation and the specific needs of BEMs. Although it had considerable resources, the attendant bureaucracies made it difficult for it to meet BEM people's needs. Other central government programmes such as the Youth Task Force, had little or no real impact on the problems facing BEMs. The changes effected by the few model local authorities did not last long because racist attitudes and racist structures remain unchanged.

It has been argued that during the early 1980s, much hope was placed in the role of local authorities as an agent of change. Yet by the late 1980s the experiences of a number of local authorities seemed to indicate that any gains in this area were fragile and vulnerable (Solomos, 1989:95). It could be argued that 'in the context of the late 1980s racial equality initiatives are being pushed to the back of the local political agenda' (Ouseley in Ball and Solomos, 1990:132). Ouseley (1984) has shown that even in the early 1980s a variety of experiences emerged which confirmed resistance to race equality initiatives. At local level, many obstacles were placed in order to prevent effective change including resistance by some council officers. For example, in trying to implement effective race equality policies, some service heads referred to the race relations officers as 'the police of our directorate'. At central level, there was not much encouragement to aid genuine race equality programmes. Rather, the central government legislation in the late 1980s restructured local government services in a number of radical ways. Between 1974 and 1989, there were over 50 legislative measures concerned with local government. (Ouseley, in Ball and Solomos 1990:133).

For example, the 1988 Local Government Act destroyed the principles which some local authorities adopted in applying contract compliance programmes within their trading operations to secure goods and services from private contractors, who actively pursued equality programmes. This means that local authorities no longer have the right to review the companies' employment policy on equal opportunities before awarding contracts. The emphasis on Section 11 funding was on the need to consult with minority groups. However, the review at the end of 1980s required that Section 11 posts should be project based and time specific, with reduced local authority involvement. This meant that by 1992 all local authority Section 11 posts, (such as race relations advisers), ceased to exist. This justifies the view of critics such as Ouseley (1984), that the programme brought insignificant help to BEMs. With these legislative measures and the attendant changes within local government, it is not surprising that people questioned the effectiveness, relevance and value of local authority race equality programmes.

Other developments since the late 1980s such as negative and hostile media as well as campaign for resistance to change made it possible for anti-racism programmes to slow down if not come to a halt in most local authorities. The reference to the negative media coverage is a fact that cannot be denied. For example, a local authority such as Hackney has been labelled 'the poorest borough in Britain', while at the same time, the media continue to over-publicise how the so-called 'poorest borough' was wasting its resources, trying to make special provision for the BEMs. Such negative publicity only helps to generate hatred and hostility from the local white community who are driven to believe that such wasted resources could have been used effectively to improve their services. Hence the extreme reactions of some groups such as the National Front in the East End, particularly on housing estates.

Consequently, many BEMs faced physical and verbal attacks and their planning proposals are often known to face hostile reaction and strong objections from neighbours. With regard to the view that radical local authorities have been put on the defensive, there is no doubt that there has been a distinct lack of any national strategy to tackle race inequality (Ouseley 1990:135). This implies that neither the central nor the local state is prepared to confront and combat racial inequality, rather what is being done is to control and manage the complexity of racism as and when the need arises. With the continuation of the Conservative government, a sea change was occurring again regarding race. The phrase, 'A Dirty War', has appropriately been used by Gordon (1990) to describe the New Right onslaught against anti-racism in the late 1980s. He points out that the dirty war which the New Right has waged at different levels against anti-racism has resulted in 'not just a campaign against anti-racism, but a campaign which used as its means a fertile mixture of intellectual dishonesty, fabrication, smear, innuendo, half-truth and selection' (1990:177). To see anti-racism as a 'form of racism against white people' is nothing but mischief making on the part of the New Right.

One really needs to question whether anti-racism initiatives were ever meant to be a permanent process or a mere temporary diversity management and social control measure to ward off or calm down inner city unrest in the 1980s and win BEM votes. This question is vital in the argument because many observers believe that various

restructuring measures which were introduced in the late 1980s, helped to gradually dismantle anti-racism programmes wherever they were still in existence. Ouseley (1990) has drawn attention to the fact that 'local government has become a moving target with massive upheaval and changes which make restructuring race equality programmes for maximum effectiveness and impact an insignificant issue on the rapidly changing local political landscape' (1990:136). For example, the London Borough of Ealing closed down its Race Equality Unit in 1989, Camden and Haringey announced in 1990, the proposal to abolish their race relations committees; some other authorities eg. Hackney adopted a new policy of 'changing the culture' which introduced new core values whereby the emphasis on anti-racism was removed. If anti-racism initiatives were originally designed to be durable, one wonders why such an important and bold strategy should be allowed to fade away so quickly within such a short period without any resistance.

There is no doubt that the agents of resistance to change, aided by the 'dirty war' of the New Right School of thought, have stepped up their campaign, but one would have expected that these 'radical local authorities' with all their good intentions and aided by the left wing schools of thought, should have put up some reasonable counter-resistance in the hope that right would one day prevail over wrong. For example, the radical local authorities could have united to put up resistance against rate capping, the poll tax and the assault on the principles of contract compliance. To give up race equality initiatives after only few years of trial is surely not good enough. It does not in any way demonstrate genuine commitment to policy change in this area.

The continuing story of race relations is carried on within the context of the next Section which deals with the issues specifically affecting the operation of town planning within the local government context, bringing us up to the present day.

4.2 Town Planning and Race

'Race and Town Planning' is a topic that took many years to be taken seriously and the relationship has had a patchy and varied history. But town planning as a key function of local government has been found to be a means of perpetuating racism within the community. Town planning as a function of local government has also been affected to some extent by the various initiatives and legislation outlined above. However in this account Chizoma put emphasis upon changing and varied nature of attitudes of planners towards race issues, as well as the official legislation.

Chizoma encountered a range of attitudes covering the whole spectrum of racial perspectives. At the far end of the spectrum Chizoma encountered denial that any form of racism in planning exists; next along the spectrum was the attitude that planning should, as a matter of principle, be colour blind and provide an 'equal service to all' - (with, whatever is important and what is a priority only to be determined by the white male technocrat); then comes the view that black people are in some way 'disadvantaged' and therefore needed special treatment (thus, implying that disadvantage is inherent in being black, rather than being caused by racial discrimination; next came the view that ethnic minorities are 'special' and should have a whole range of policies directed to their 'special needs' (an attempt to marginalise black and ethnic minorities or at worst, generate the view that blacks do

not conform to the norm). This range of perspectives is in line with what Ball, Gulam and Troyna (1990) (found in Ball and Solomos, 1990) refer to as 'the problematic concept of 'special needs' with which a pathological view of black communities has been associated'. Finally, and more positively, at the other end of the spectrum, there exist more positive views that racism and discrimination are the problem, that is there is something the matter with the majority population's and traditional planners' attitudes towards race, and that the problem is not caused by the black people themselves.

Acknowledgment of racism within the operation of the planning system has been a relative recent phenomenon. However as 'minorities' have become 'majorities' in some areas and ethnic minority individuals themselves have entered the fields of town planning and urban renewal and gained credibility from within the system, greater acknowledgement has been given 'officially' that there is a problem. Whilst other areas of government, public administration and business have been more ready to introduce equal opportunity policies, and to implement the various race acts, it has only been in recent years that planning has done so. A range of authors have already investigated racism in planning, for example, Boateng (RTPI lectures 1985), Vaz (RTPI lectures 1987), Town and Country Planning Journal (Feb. 1981), CRE/RTPI (1983) Munt (1991), The Planner (Nov. 1992), Thomas (1994), Thomas (1995 and 1997). As discussed earlier, the local dimension of the politics of race has been neglected for a long time. Since the 1960s a steady flow of studies (notably Rex and Moore 1967; Lawrence 1974; Solomos and Singh in Ball and Solomos, 1990; Thomas 1995 etc), have looked at various aspects of race relations and conflicts in particular cities or localities. Before examining the findings of these studies, an examination of the concepts of race and racism needs exploring.

The planning and design of the built environment of British inner cities has had a major impact on the lives of BEM people, who make up around 6% of British population (Source: 2001 Census), but the way in which decisions are made about the use of buildings and spaces is a mystery to many BEMs. As the Scarman Report, (1981:160) shows, it is black and ethnic minorities who bear the brunt of poorly designed houses and estates. It is worth noting that two decades after the Scarman report, this Section of the society still experiences the problem of walking several miles to the shops, and lonely paths from bus stops to their homes. This problem of access also affects their use of town centres which are normally deserted at night, thereby exposing them to racial attacks. The tragic cases of Stephen Lawrence and recently Damilola Taylor confirm the gravity of the problem.

The concerns and needs of BEMs have major implications for the way in which land is used. A planning policy which fosters light industrial and other small businesses (such as corner shops, minicab operation), as opposed to large warehouse on vacant land near their homes would be more beneficial for local BEMs because it would have recognised the dynamics of local economy. It may be noted that the post war and indeed the first planning legislation (1947 Act), on control of development, gave priority to white community interest. It focused on decision about location of British cities, villages and countryside. It made no reference to race and the socio-cultural needs of minority groups. Perhaps this is understandable given that the population of

BEMs in Britain at that time was insignificant but nevertheless many white commentators saw much of post war planning as 'anti inner city' or as escapist and middle class in perspective. Similarly, in the 1971 Town And Country Planning Act was primarily concerned with the use and development of land, no specific reference is made to race or the needs of BEMs resulting from changes in social reproduction.

As stated, the 1966 Local Government Act (Section 11) and 1976 Race Relations Act (Sections 20 and 71) have long required local authorities to take race into account. Section 20 makes it 'unlawful for any person concerned with the provision of goods, facilities or services to the public, or a Section of the public, to discriminate against a person who seeks to obtain or use those goods, facilities or service'. Town planning is a service for the purpose of Section 20. As with any other piece of legislation, the 1976 Act is subject to various forms of interpretation, and some of the interpretations expose the ineffectiveness of the Act and lend support to the concerns often expressed by the CRE. For example, in a suit brought in 1982 in the Manchester County Court, the judge found that planning was within the scope of Section 20. In 1983, however, the House of Lords in *R.V Entry Clearance Office ex parte Amin*, provided a different interpretation of the words 'goods, facilities and services'.

In 1983, the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) and the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) working party published a report in which the issue of race relations is looked at in the context of town planning and the professional approach of town planners. The report discusses: race and town planning, discrimination, equal opportunities, and race relations. It draws attention to: the characteristics and needs of BEMs in Britain as well as race and the statutory town planning system. It also discusses: good professional practice, other fields of activity in which planners play a part, involvement in the planning process, recruitment, selection and education of town planners. It lays emphasis on the recruitment and training of BEM planners and makes suggestions for action on the part of such institutions as: RTPI, Local Authorities, CRE, Central Government, as well as individual planners and political parties.

This report is an important landmark in the race equality debate because: it is the first time a government sponsored institution such as the RTPI and the CRE have recognised that town planning has any relevance to the issue of race relations. The report admits that the planning needs and requirements of BEMs differ from those of their white neighbours. Planning has always been seen as a highly technical field where professional practice should strictly adhere to the letter of the planning law. Consequently, planners have continued to adopt a 'colour blind' approach in their service delivery work to all communities who are affected by town planning. The report has broken the silence of earlier writers and researchers who had failed to see the need to look into what role town planning could play in the lives of racial minority groups in Britain for whom no clear provision was made in the Town and Country Planning Act, 1971. The report admits that both in recruitment and selection and education of planners, BEM people are under-represented and disadvantaged. The recommendations made in the report to address this problem are welcomed. Since then, a number of studies/reports have been carried out/published notably, Thomas and Krishnarayan (1993 & 1994); Thomas (1994a and 1994b); Khakee and Thomas

(1995); Thomas (1995); Thomas (1997). Each of these studies/reports have produced more information confirming the gravity of disadvantage and social exclusion facing BEMs in the planning system. For example, the research findings of Thomas and Krishnarayan confirmed that "There is so much of racism in the formulation and implementation of public policy in Britain that planning system must incorporate features which will alert those involved in it to the possibility of direct or indirect discrimination. Ten years after the RTPI/CRE report there are still a few local authorities which assert that there is no problem here', but can point to no systematic evaluation of their planning services which supports this contention (1993:6). Each study/report has made recommendations aimed at tackling the problems. Evidence from Chizoma's work experience and from an earlier survey (Onuoha 1985), shows that BEM planning proposals tend to generate extra hostility and strong objections from neighbours who are not prepared to tolerate what they see as 'strange' or 'unusual' proposals even when they are fully aware that such proposals meet the planning requirements and would help to meet specific needs of their BEM neighbours. It is therefore the duty of town planners to assess objections to ensure that they are not borne out of racial prejudice and also to perform their statutory duty under the 1976 and 1986 Acts.

In 1985 the CRE considered that there were grounds for suspicion that a local planning authority had dealt with a planning application in a racially discriminatory manner. Both the local authority and the CRE were advised that following the Amin ruling, planning permission was neither a facility nor a service within the scope of Section 20 (CRE,1987). Following the new interpretation to Section 20 of the Race Relations Act, the CRE decided to seek, through an amendment to the Housing and Planning Bill, to bring planning decision explicitly within the scope of the Race Relations Act. Thus, in addition to the general duty under Section 71 of the 1976 Race Relations Act, we now have under Section 55 of the 1986 Housing and Planning Act, a piece of legislation that makes specific reference to race in the context of town planning. With this legislative framework, there can be no justification for any local authority not to recognise its statutory duty to provide adequate town planning services to its BEM population.

Local planning authorities have statutory obligations to consult the public over local plans, so that in theory BEM groups can press for things they want. This is considered an essential process on land use planning policies. As argued earlier, in the past town planners have consulted with the public without ensuring that black people were represented. However, things have changed in some local authorities since 1980s. For instance, in Hackney during the preparation of the local plan, BEMs had the opportunity during the consultation exercise to emphasise the need to make provision for four or more bedroom units to meet their specific housing needs. However, one must point out that it is one thing to be consulted and another to have your views incorporated into the plan and implemented. For example, according to Ouseley (1981) in Lambeth, during the formulation of the borough plan, the planners consulted with BEMs, but failed to incorporate any of the things they had said. It took a specific action programme more than two years later to secure the inclusion of BEM people's views into the final plan.

Decisions on planning applications and on local plans are made by elected councillors at Committee or Council meetings on the advice of planning officers. The question is, how many BEM councillors are on the planning committee to safeguard the interest of BEM communities? Local planning departments vary in the way they are organised, some departments are split into two Sections: the 'development control' Section dealing with planning applications and the other, 'Forward Planning,' dealing with policy making and local plans. Some are organised geographically into area teams which operate on generic basis. This notwithstanding, the truth remains that black and ethnic minorities constitute only a small proportion of qualified and practising town planners. In Hackney for instance, until 1989, there was no BEM person on the Planning Management Team except for the Race Relations Adviser, and until the establishment of Race Relations Unit in the early 1980s there was not a single BEM planner in the department. Similarly in Tower Hamlets, until the mid 1980s, there was no BEM planner in the borough's planning department.

Each local authority now prepares a Unitary Development Plan (UDP) which combines the features of a structure plan and local plan policies with strategic guidance from the Secretary of State for the Environment. It was observed that the Strategic Guidance has not given adequate consideration to the specific needs and requirements of BEMs. For example, in Hackney, the PRRA (Principle Race Relations Advisor) submitted a written comment in 1988 to the Council Committee stressing the apparent lack of concern to BEM needs. The challenge facing the London boroughs then, particularly those that profess commitment to racial equality, was to demonstrate how well they would consult with local BEMs and to what extent they would incorporate the views of these groups into the final UDP document.

For instance, in Docklands area, planning decisions are no longer controlled by the elected council of the London Boroughs of Tower Hamlets, Newham, Southwark and Greenwich but by the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) which is not bound by the laws referred to above. The government has also introduced measures to speed up the planning process in Docklands area with the result that the time allowed for public participation and consultation has been reduced. This is detrimental to the interest of BEMs who due to cultural reasons and language difficulties as well as flaws in the system would require much longer time to reach. In terms of participation and consultation for black and ethnic minorities living in affected areas, it means that the old 'same for all colour blind' approach is the best they can hope for. Under Thatcherism, and subsequently under New Labour, such powers as local authorities had were greatly reduced, and were seen as 'too soft with their local direct labour organisations and weak on budgetary control', or 'hostile to big businesses'.

Consequently, the powers of such local authorities were reduced by the introduction of rate-capping, assault on contract compliance, compulsory competitive tendering (CCT) and ring-fencing. These measures were contained in some of the then central government legislation aimed at either by-passing or reducing the powers of local government. Under Thatcherism and now New Labour, the CCT demands that Council Direct Labour Organisations (DLO) be subjected to competitive tendering with outside contractors. The failure to win such tenders could result in the DLO

operatives being laid off.

In Hackney for instance, since most of the operatives (59%) are BEMs (Source: LBH 1991), there was genuine fear that they were the people who would stand to lose. Some of the operatives questioned at the time (Source: interview with MBA student 1991) expressed serious concern about this development. With a total of 633 operatives, Hackney DLO was seen as over staffed and the Council was anxious to reduce the labour force in order to reduce overheads and maintain the percentage of savings required by the Central Government. There was therefore, pressure both on the Council and the operatives whose jobs were at risk if contracts were not won regularly, not only within the Council services, but also from outside organisations.

4.3 Best Value

4.3.1 Shifting the Emphasis

A significant development, which was coming into force at the time that Chizoma was finishing her field work in the early 1990s was the introduction of Best Value programmes. Far from improving the quality of local authority performance Best Value may be seen as taking the emphasis away from Equal Opportunities, so that the emphasis is shifted, with little benefit to minorities, in spite of the fact that equality and minority issues, including race, are included in BV criteria. The concept of 'Best Value' originates from the Modernisation of Local Government Agenda, the central theme of which is the provision of best value services that is customer focussed and promotes social inclusion. This requires Local Authorities to prepare annual best value plans setting out how they intend to deliver improvements in the delivery of customer focussed services against best value performance indicators (BVPI) set out by the DETR and the Audit Commission. This process involves public organisations like local authorities comparing their services provisions to others, benchmarking services against the best, assessing whether the services are expensive to run or reaching the right people. Questions are also asked about whether the service is needed, should be revised or indeed expanded. It also involves consulting users and stakeholders. Best Value also means asking whether another organisation could provide the service more effectively. This process is sometimes called the four Cs:- Compare; Compete; Challenge and Consult. Consultation with service users for instance, is a key issue because this is how social inclusion can be achieved. In the following sections Chizoma lists the BV questions used under each category of relevance to the operation of the planning system.

4.3.2 Planning Services Best Value Questions

For planning services, a number of BVPI indicators have been outlined by the Government which include: BVPI 103, 106, 112. The later (BVPI 112) called 'The Planning quality check list Best Value Indicator', is the most recent and most relevant containing ten criteria/questions of which the following are the most relevant:

- Do you have a development plan which was adopted in the last 5 years? If No',

- For those adopted plans not adopted in the last 5 years, are there proposals on deposit for their alteration or replacement, and have you publicly adopted a timetable for adopting those alterations or the replacement plan?
- Does your development plan contain a comprehensive set of indicators and targets and do you monitor your performance against these?
- Has all supplementary planning guidance (including planning briefs) produced and adopted by you during the last year followed the guidance given in paragraphs 3.15-3.18 of Planning Policy Guidance Note 12, in particular the need for supplementary planning guidance to be linked and cross-referenced to an adopted plan policy and for adequate consultation before it is finalised?

4.3.3 Development Control Best Value Questions

- Do you provide for pre-application discussions with potential applicants on request?
- Do you have a publicised charter which sets targets for handling the different stages of the development control process (including enforcement and compliance) and arrangements for monitoring your performance against these targets?
- Is the percentage of appeals where the Council's decision has been overturned lower than 40%?
- Does your authority delegate 70% or more of its applications to officers?
- In the last financial year, have you run your planning service in such a way that:
 - a) you have not had any planning costs awarded against you;
 - b) you have not had any adverse ombudsman's reports issued against you finding mal-administration with or without injustice; and
 - c) there have been no court findings against you under Sections 287 and 288 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 or on judicial review?

Does your Council operate a one-stop shop service which includes the following characteristics:

- a single point giving initial advice to members of the public and other enquirers on all development-related consents operated by the authority;
- pre-application discussions covering all the development-related consent regimes operated by the authority which are appropriate to each potential applicant; and
- a nominated officer acting as the contact point within the authority for each planning applicant and co-ordinating the authority's response to the application including progress
- chasing and advising on the application's relationship to other development-related consents.

4.4.4 Fair Access and Best Value Questions

Have you implemented a policy for ensuring that different groups have equal access

to the planning process including, as necessary, the provision of advice in ethnic minority languages and in Braille/on tape based on consultation with relevant members of the community about the accessibility of the planning service, and do you have arrangements for keeping this policy under review?

One of the ten criteria of the BVPI 112 is, whether a Local Authority has set targets within its Development Plan and whether it has a mechanism for monitoring achievement of the targets. Where a local authority has no equality policies in their local plan they cannot develop a mechanism to monitor best value performance/effects on BEMs. Without such mechanism in place, unwittingly, racism and discrimination may become rife and adversely work against the service needs and aspirations of BEMs.

Another criteria of BVPI 112, is the requirement on local planning authorities (LPAs) to have a system to ensure access and improvement of access to planning services to all disadvantaged groups including BEMs. For example, addressing language barrier through translation. Where such access is lacking, racism and discrimination is bound to flourish.

4.4 Subsequent Developments

Clara adds (from recent research) that the EOC, CRE, the Audit Commission, and Best Value, and subsequently the LGA (Greed et al, 2002) continued to produce a range of indicators, measures and targets to show that race was being taken into account in planning, (Greed, et al, 2002a and b).

Indeed an Audit culture had developed within local government in which everything had to be measured, but as many have commented, quantitative methods, combined with a 'tick box' mentality did not necessarily improve the situation or get to the heart of the problems. Indeed if anything race related complaints and problems increased. During the 1990s, structural and funding changes were undermining all this surface activity. As Chizoma comments an assault on contract compliance removed certain safeguards and conditions of employment which were in line with a council's equal opportunities policy and which the council would like to build into any contract or agreement with outside firms which were operating within their area of authority. Rate capping, which restricts local authority power to collect more money from rates, has led to drastic reductions in council spending on services. This also led to the termination of many ethnic minority projects funded by the council. In the above examples, black and ethnic minorities are known to be the most adversely affected.

Some local authorities seemed quite comfortable with such arrangements and with central government impositions such as the CCT (Compulsory Competitive Tendering), and Housing Right-to-buy policy. Many of them seemed quite comfortable with the poll tax. However, in extreme cases where the burden becomes too heavy for the exploited masses, the residents of such local authorities may be forced to show their dissatisfaction by voting against the ruling party at the next local elections. This was the case over poll tax in the 1991 local elections, where the Tories lost control of about 40 authorities, with a net loss of 890 seats (Source: The Times

May 4 1991). It must also be stressed that the central-local conflicts are not always easily resolved in favour of the centre. The incidents of urban unrest are the example of such conflicts. These in turn resulted in the introduction of anti-racism initiatives. However Clara adds that with the subsequent arrival of a New Labour government, which seemed promising at first, little change and if anything the commercially orientated, Audit culture, in which 'they know the price of everything and the value of nothing' continued, equally at odds with local authority needs.

The Stephen Lawrence enquiry subsequently raised the profile of race issues, and the McPherson Inquiry (1999) highlighted the ways in which institutions were promoting racism, discrimination and social exclusion. The CRE (Commission for Racial Equality) produced an improved range of standards and indicators in seeking to mainstream race. But, as reported in the RTPI Planning Journal (13, April 2001), more than 30% of local authorities have not adopted or used these. It is now [more] illegal to discriminate against people in the provision of public services on the basis of race (previously under S.20 of the Race Relations Act 1976). But research has shown that discrimination still exists (de Graft-Johnson, 1999; 2003). Previously the Royal Town Planning Institute, Code of Professional Conduct, 1986, made it illegal to discriminate on the basis of race, sex, or creed, and religion and this alone should govern individual planner's conduct, and it should be 'his' duty to enlighten his local authority on these matters. New legislation on race equality could have a huge impact on local planning authorities as the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 requires organisations (such as Ipas) to take a more proactive role in preventing institutionalised racism and to prepare Race Equality Action Plans showing how they will tackle the issues. Emphasis is being put upon mainstreaming race equality too and organisations are required to publish a 'scheme' to promote positive measures rather than adopting a passive approach. That is a proactive rather than reactive approach is to be encouraged by legislation. Several local authorities are mainstreaming race alongside other EO diversity issues, including gender. LARRIE (Local Authorities Race Relations Information Exchange) provides a list of reports where race has been incorporated into EO in context of Best Value or planning. These include Camden, Lambeth, Hackney, and Haringey in particular have sought to mainstream race Haringey, 2002). As Peter Geraghty (Planning Journal 13, April 2001) predicts, "The new legislation on race equality could have as big an impact on local planning authorities as the Human Rights Act", because the new act gives the CRE powers to enforce the specific duties imposed on public authorities. Subsequently BEM groups such as Millennium Britons (MB1, 2001a and b) have been getting together, and networking at national level to try and shift the discourse of planning, whilst a range of professional built environment organisations have to improve the situation with the built environment professions such as SOBA (Society of Black Architects) and the Equal Opportunities Taskforce of the CIC (Construction Industry Council, which represents all the chartered land use professions) (Greed et al, 2002 for full bibliography on all currently active relevant EO groups). Since Chizoma undertook her initial research the pitch has become much more crowded with a whole range of Auditing, BV, EO, EU, and regeneration initiatives, and Chizoma identified this move as an important theme in understanding the nature of race relations (and the diversion of attention from race relations) with the boroughs studied.

Section 5: THE PLANNERS

5.1 Two Planning Departments: The Institutional Framework

In this section the attitudes of the 'planners' as against 'the planned' (see next Chapter) are presented. Firstly Chizoma explains the different approaches adopted towards ethnicity in the two boroughs studied, namely Easterly and Riverside. The account is illustrated throughout by comments from participants. A range of relevant planning policy statements from Local and Unitary Plans are given. The views of four different sets of 'official' level respondents (planning officers, councillors, insiders and watchdogs) are discussed. These were people who were either representing Easterly or Riverside, or in the case of the 'watchdogs' they were representatives of official organisations commenting upon these boroughs. A range of examples from development control are also given, which are used as illustrations of the views of the 'planners' are subsequently described 'from the other side of the mirror'. Thus in the next section (6) how the 'planned' that is the BEM individuals putting in planning applications 'saw' the same examples will be illustrated. Examples are also given of urban regeneration initiatives which nowadays are increasingly becoming another power level 'above' and not necessarily answerable to the local planning authority level. Following this Chizoma returns to the question of employment policy within the local planning authorities in order to understand the composition and culture of the organisations, which, arguably, have such a key role in shaping 'who' is making the planning decisions, and the nature of the planning decisions that shape planning policy in the boroughs drawing particularly on the views of 'insiders' (mainly BEMs who have experienced employment discrimination). Finally this section draws on comments from a range of outside watchdogs as to how they see the employment practices in question. It must be stressed again that much of the material in this Section is now of historical significance, but still very relevant to understanding the nature of racism within the planning system. It should be noted that this is the most revealing chapter of the paper in terms of the comments and views given by the respondents, but after careful consideration these are retained in this published version, because it is over 10 years ago since many of these comments were made and the material is anonymised.

There were marked differences between the two boroughs studied by Chizoma. In Easterly it was easy to identify BEM applicants because the Council had a policy of recording and monitoring of ethnic minority planning applications. Even where the applicants failed (as they often did), to give the vital ethnic monitoring information, the case officers would visit and interact face-to-face with the applicants. All officers since the mid 1980s were required to identify implications for BEMs on every development control committee report. The establishment of a Community Development Unit (CDU) in Easterly helped not only in the running and monitoring of community/voluntary sector projects, but in submitting planning applications on behalf of community groups when ever necessary. One interviewee said: 'The CDU applied for permission on behalf of the community group..... the planning officers were positive in processing and getting approval for community use'. However, this unit was restructured in the early 1990s and rendered less effective. The number of staff in CDU was drastically reduced and there were no more CDU officers attached

to community organisations as development officers by the early 1990s. Like the RRU (Race Relations Unit as introduced in the last Section), the CDU was also closed in 1993. Even when it functioned as an effective unit, some of the community centres were very critical of its role. Some of them who spoke to the author in confidence (at the time of the investigation) complained that the CDU was responsible for the downfall of their centres/projects. They argue that the CDU was merely set up to destroy their projects and make it impossible for them to have access to grant funding. Some community groups felt that the CDU officers tended to apply very rigid conditions to their grant aid and that the officers were in the habit of portraying a very bad image of the community organisations to the Council which in many occasions have led to grant withdrawal. Under the paragraph (of the planning document) titled, 'Implications for Black and Ethnic Minorities', officers would state the ethnic origin of the applicant and or the effect of the development proposal on the local ethnic minority needs. However, after 1993 this paragraph title was changed to read 'Equality Implications', which was more generic and did not pinpoint specific BEM issues. Also, as will be explained below, Chizoma was working for Easterly, and therefore the ultimate participant observer.

In contrast, the situation was very different in the case of Riverside which, at the time of the study, had no ethnic recording or monitoring. Chizoma frequently encountered an unwillingness to provide her with information for the study. She had to rely only on inference to identify ethnic minority applicants through the names of the applicants and with the help of some officers where possible. Consequently, some of the people she visited for meetings/interviews turned out not to be ethnic minorities, and some ethnic minority applicants were missed out. Chizoma was reliably informed (by well wishers) that a one-off monitoring exercise was commissioned in the early 1990s by the Council. She telephoned the head of the department who carried out this study and this was followed up with by a written request to provide some information from their findings. But no reply was forthcoming. Similarly, a written request at the initial stage of this study to interview the former head of a key Neighbourhood planning department was not honoured and the questionnaire sent to him was not returned. At the later stage of the research, a written request was made to all the seven Neighbourhood head of planning for interview and only four of them agreed to be interviewed. Only one out of three Riverside councillors who were approached agreed to be interviewed.

5.1.2 Development Plans

With regard to the Local Plan/Unitary Development Plan, Easterly has declared its commitment to equal opportunities and the Plan has a comprehensive set of policies integrated within it to promote equal opportunities. A specific chapter in the Local Plan/UDP is devoted to Planning for BEMs in the Borough and summarises the needs and relevant policies identified in specific topic Sections. This separate chapter came as a result of the input of the Race Relations Unit during the preparation of the Plan. One wonders what will happen in terms of implementation now that the race relations input is no longer there. Even with the race relations involvement, it is observed that some identified essential aspects of BEM cultural requirements were ignored by the lead officer of the UDP team. The Plan on the other hand, includes a policy of

retention of industrial sites and floor spaces which is often implemented rigidly to the detriment of BEMs. This is seen by BEM applicants as a failure on the part of the Council to recognise their own immediate needs for such things as religious, social, cultural facilities and other economic activities, which should have been allowed as an alternative use on a vacant industrial space particularly where there is a remote chance of a manufacturing industry ever returning to such floor space in the foreseeable future, in view of the fact that traditional industries in London have been shrinking since the 1950s. As one of the respondents put it, 'there are always empty buildings, factories and warehouses in industrial areas which will serve our purpose, why can't the Council allow us to use them? A Community Centre which was built in memory of a white woman received planning permission from the Council and is functioning successfully in an old industrial site, the council allowed it and yet they will not allow us to do the same. They should therefore change the policy to allow black community centres to be built and to function in old industrial areas too'.

What came through in this study is that in Easterly, the rhetoric and realities of the council's policies, procedures and practices in relation to anti-racism and equal opportunities are perceived differently by the BEM applicants/service users as their needs remain unmet. The arguments and demands cited above, cannot be ignored as they lend support to the view that the local state has failed to address the needs of culturally diverse community and ignored the dynamics of the local economy. In contrast Riverside was perceived by respondents, local press and residents as being blatantly racist at the time of the study. A number of its policies and practices support this view. The Council, unlike Easterly, had not considered it necessary to adopt an anti-racism programme. The Council had neither a Race Relations nor a Community Development Unit. Riverside refused to implement the CRE non-discriminatory notice over its housing policy which was issued in 1987, as opposed to the quick response by Easterly over a similar notice issued in 1984, by setting up a special project unit to monitor housing allocation under the joint line-management of the Director of Housing and the PRRA (Principal Race Relations Advisor). Also, unlike in Easterly, there was no policy of ethnic monitoring of planning applications in Riverside.

A written request to get some information on monitoring of planning applications for the purpose of this research from Riverside received no response whatsoever from the relevant department. Finally, the Borough's Local Plan/UDP has no consideration whatsoever about the specific needs of BEMs and would not even consider the suggestion of its officers for a separate equal opportunity chapter in the plan document. Once again, Chizoma found the local state has failed to recognise and address the complexities resulting from changes in social reproduction and the dynamics of local economy. This is in line with the Macpherson Report of 1999 definition of institutional racism as identified in Section 3.

As to forward planning policy in the two boroughs, the LPAC (London Planning Advisory Committee) reports on the draft UDPs of Easterly and Riverside (5 Nov. and 25 Sept. 1991 respectively), can be used to compare the two Boroughs' commitment to addressing the needs of their local BEM communities: Easterly's UDP stressed the objective of addressing the diverse needs of the different communities in the Borough,

and followed it up by producing a specific chapter devoted to Planning for BEMs in Easterly. The plan also gives attention to the needs of disadvantaged groups in relation to access to affordable housing. On the other hand, Riverside UDP's only emphasis in terms of the Borough's UDP major equal opportunity commitment is, 'the need to provide and improve access and opportunities for the disabled..... in relation to employment, housing..... and social facilities'. This statement is then followed by another loose and short statement which says, 'the Plan also gives attention to the needs of the disadvantaged groups'. This short statement does not in any way demonstrate any genuine commitment or give any hint of what the needs of these disadvantaged groups are and how the plan intends to address them.

The planning respondent from Easterly said: 'The discussion we had with Members led to the conclusion that Equal Opportunities should be seen as an integral part of the plan making process and the plan itself and so the introduction to both the local Plan and the UDP became a principal area taking into account not only the Councils' policies but also the current Race Relations Legislation and the advice document jointly prepared by the CRE/RTPI (1983). We took advice from our Directorate Race Relations Adviser and the Central Race Relations Unit which existed then to advise on equal opportunities. In addition, we established a comprehensive consultation list as part of the consultation process targeting discussions on the topic areas of the draft document at various groups that represent BEM cultural/religious organisations as well as people with disabilities. The draft document was subject of at least two re-writes before the council went public. In under-taking these re-writings, officers worked closely with the Race Relations Unit to examine results of consultations and tested implications of the policies as drafted for equal opportunities problems which might arise as a consequence of not appreciating implications of policies as they affect the needs of different groups in the borough. It is fair to say that of the groups we held discussions with, the Orthodox Jewish community became very involved; discussing not only land-use policies but the supplementary planning guidance notes which were produced to explain how to use the plan document. The Race Relations Adviser introduced my officers to the HEMA (Easterly Ethnic Minority Alliance) and other BEM groups. We had comprehensive correspondence with those who wrote on Equal Opportunities. All these were used by officers to establish a comprehensive central consultation list for the Council.

During the course of producing the plan and at Public Inquiry we decided jointly with the Race Relations Adviser and the Principal Race Relations Adviser that although we have integrated Equal Opportunities into the document but for the benefit of BEMs it was best to introduce a separate chapter for the ethnic minorities. We set up an Equal Opportunities drafting group. The biggest difficulty we encountered related to housing policies and framing them in such a way that as far as possible the particular housing needs of groups were recognised and this influenced housing mix policy. Also, we attempted to achieve this in an effective way because of people's ability to pay (owner occupation) or to obtain Council and Housing Association tenancies.' (Easterly Chief Officer 1992)

Equally too, existing policies were assessed to ascertain whether they have any direct or indirect discriminatory effect on BEMs. An example of a package of policies is

given below. With regard to community services, Easterly's UDP Ethnic Minority chapter stated:

'There is a growing demand to use houses and flats for the provision of community services such as synagogues, schools and advice centres that are vital elements of the everyday lives of black and ethnic minority communities in Easterly. To meet these needs, Policies CS1, CS2, CS3, CS5, CS6, CS7, CS8 and CS10 collectively attempt to address this problem of scarcity of suitable sites and premises for particularly ethnic minority use' (Easterly UDP, Deposit Draft 1992:31).

Policy CS1 deals with safeguarding sites and buildings, as shown on the Proposals Map, for a range of community facilities. Policy CS2 is concerned with the provision of community facilities as part of the larger development schemes for housing, retailing, offices and other major uses. Policy CS3 lays emphasis on the retention of community facilities, and of keeping community buildings and sites in some form of community use---the requirement to protect existing community services and to accommodate newly arising community needs. Policy CS7 refers to the Council's wish to encourage community groups to secure suitable sites and premises to meet their various cultural, religious and welfare needs. The policy specifically relates to the requirements of the BEM communities for facilities in the Borough's main shopping centres and most northerly wards. It notes the pressure for sites for community facilities and promises sympathetic consideration to proposals for adapting residential and similar properties for this type of purpose. Policy CS8 stresses the Council's recognition of the important role of religious worship in the lives of many local residents and the need to provide suitable sites and premises to meet a wide range of religious worship requirements, and especially the more recently established congregations which do not have their own satisfactory places of worship. In comparison with Easterly, Riverside did not include a specific BEM Chapter with policy statements in both documents to highlight the planning needs of the local BEMs. Riverside Chief Officer A gave a very brief and what seemed to be an uncaring response to this question as follows: 'The Strategic Unit is preparing the UDP to replace the Local Plan. There's a lot of discussion as to whether BEMs/Women should have separate Sections but I think a general policy is better than separate policies for groups.'

When asked about how much consultation with local BEMs in Riverside had taken place, the respondent simply said:

'I am not sure. Council departments were divided into groups, each operated in a different way. The Housing group for example did their consultation in a huge way, but the Environmental Health group was done more on theoretical basis. I hope they contacted local people.'

Riverside Chief Officer D gave a similar response. He said:

'In relation to BEMs, there is no separate Chapter but reference is made to BEMs in the strategy. In one inner area, because the UDP is linked to land use, there is no need for reference to be made to BEMs in the Neighbourhood Chapter. Whereas in the 1960s, planning was pushed towards economic/social issues, in modern times it is now pushed towards land use issues only. One neighbourhood has a significant population of BEMs especially Bengalis but there is no provision made specifically

for them in town planning.' Chizoma confided that she did not much like this alternative.

Chief officers of other neighbourhoods interviewed gave similar responses. In line with what the Council wanted, officers abandoned equalities, and introduced a chapter called 'Planning for a balance of needs.' In terms of the Council's decentralised structure, the UDP introduced a chapter termed 'Planning for local needs'. What this means is that there is no chapter on 'planning for women' or 'planning for black and ethnic minorities.' The respondent argued that what they were trying to achieve was to 'make sure that all policies in the plan reflect the need for balance and fairness and equality of access to town planning service.'

The respondent also confirmed that community support for BEMs as well as other service users is grouped together in one broad strategy, and the specific strategy for religious facilities which was drafted by officers was taken out by Councillors who felt that religious facilities should be subsumed within general community facilities. Here the position of Riverside is one of doing things in a general sort of way for all. Thus, it adopts the 'same-for-all, colour blind approach', which cannot solve specific issues and needs of the disadvantaged groups. This attitude demonstrates lack of commitment to social and economic development needs of culturally diverse communities. The Council's lack of commitment is confirmed in the responses obtained from the insiders (employees) from Riverside who stressed that 'there is no definite policy on race in relation to town planning and there is no special consideration in policy terms for disadvantaged service users.'

Things looked better in Easterly but planning policy was not always interpreted as it should have been. Take for instance, Policy CS1 which deals with safeguarding sites and buildings as shown on the proposals map. This has already become a controversial policy for failing to safeguard/protect a site which was earmarked for community use in the Local Plan adopted in 1989. Site 345 was identified in the Local Plan for development as an Afro-Caribbean Community centre, having had extensive preparatory work including the laying of a commemorative plaque on the site. Shortly after that, the new UDP identified the same site as 'suitable for redevelopment for Housing Neighbourhood office/residential'(Easterly, UDP Deposit Draft, 1992:249). This change of policy/proposal and the follow up removal of the plaque laid on the site by a black ex-mayor was viewed by the affected black community as an act of bad faith, and indicative of an insensitive and uncaring attitude on the part of the council. According to a leading member of this community, this was done without any consultation with them and this has heightened their bitterness with the Council. This informant went on to say, 'Easterly is the only Labour authority around here without a very well protected African-Caribbean Centre' (Afro-Caribbean Community Leader, March 1992).

In another example, policy CS8 recognises 'the need to provide suitable sites and premises to meet a wide range of religious worship requirements, and especially the more recently established congregations without their own satisfactory places of worship'. It is however sad to say that a good number of BEM churches have complained that they are denied access to the use of derelict and disused white

traditional church buildings purely on the grounds of their race/ethnicity. For example, a Black church group complained that they wanted to acquire an old church building, but the white owners refused to allow them. A ward councillor who was sympathetic to this black Church group confirmed the allegation and also confirmed that his single-handed personal intervention did not help in any way. Similarly another Black Church group wanted to acquire an old Anglican church building nearby and met with the same resistance. Subsequently the two church buildings received planning permission from the Council to be used as dance/music theatre. In each case the Council was aware of the earlier attempt to acquire and use these buildings as religious places of worship. Yet the same Council felt able to allow non-religious related use contrary to the provision of Policy CS8. We have a situation in which on the one hand, the white community would not accept the use of their traditional church buildings as a place of worship by a Black religious group, while on the other hand, the Council, while recognising this need and makes provision in its policy, would not intervene to allow such use. Instead both the owners and the Council prefer an entertainment theatre to a place of worship in an old church building. Against this background it is not surprising that the affected black community are inclined to perceive this as a double standard and a reflection of a lack of genuine commitment on the part of the Council. This is yet another failure of the local state. (The way in which 'the planned' saw this example and how individual BEMs responded is described in Section 3).

5.1.3 Development Control

In respect of Development Control policies and practices, the two case study boroughs show some similarity but differ in approaches to some topics. For example, Easterly has adopted an ethnic monitoring policy which has no equivalent in Riverside. Easterly Chief Officer explained in detail how the Council's Equal Opportunities policies have been taken on board in the areas of development control for the benefit of local BEMs:

'We have since 1983 adopted a careful monitoring policy to identify the needs of BEMs, take into account the circumstances of individual applicants and groups. To achieve this, we have an arrangement whereby the Race Relations Unit are consulted on major development proposals and on all applications where there are implications for race relations/BEMs. Observations of the Principal Race Relations Adviser are always included in reports referred to Members for decision. In the case of delegated authority (where the service head takes the decision), these observations are included in the papers prepared prior to decision. Where appropriate and in discussion with the Race Relations Adviser, meetings are called to discuss applications and policy issues at public meetings with local communities/ neighbours allowing them to raise concerns which they may have. Meetings are held with individual or smaller group of neighbours where application give rise to equal opportunities concerns. In the case of unreasonable objections (ie racial prejudice), one to one meetings are established between the people involved. On many occasions people's innate prejudices are revealed by the way they voice their objections. In some cases the Race Relations Adviser and the case officers have to tackle issues in order not to allow people to hide behind planning policies when making representations'. (Easterly Chief Officer,

1992). The respondent also explained that Supplementary Guidance Notes were prepared and reviewed by officers with the Race Relations Adviser to cover issues relating to the needs of disadvantaged groups. He also said that guidance notes are attached to help people understand legal implications in planning applications. Officers and the RRA helped individuals who needed support and assistance in completing forms.

The councillors from Easterly were firm in their belief that the local BEM applications are not treated equally/fairly and most of the blame for this lay with local politics, hostile neighbours and the attitude of the officers. But local BEM people were not so convinced, for example a councillor from Easterly said, 'Applications from BEMs are treated differently. Officers are always prepared to listen to neighbour objections no matter how trivial. For example in one area a minicab company's application was turned down for no good reason. The area has been a popular location for prostitution for ages and yet it was used as a reason for protest by neighbours. Some other people (non-black) operated at the same site earlier and there was no protest. Human element is not taken into consideration. When BEMs apply for grants, officers will be satisfied with the application and recommend approval, but councillors will go out to investigate the applicant in private in order to raise strong protest and turn the application down. In some cases the committee chair will use his casting vote to frustrate applications from BEMs.' (Easterly Councillor A 1992). The informant went on to give several examples where the actions of officers, neighbours and politicians had worked against the BEM applicants. Another informant from Easterly confirmed that fair and equal treatment does not exist for BEMs because, 'the council so far has not taken into account the realities of languages, culture and power structures. Each cultural group has its needs and power structure. It is always assumed that it is the same for everybody and so these realities are not taken on board. I am convinced that this ignoring of the realities is done deliberately at least by some officers as well as politicians. In fact the politicians are worse. This is an act of racism as well as the effect xenophobia'. (Councillor C from Easterly, March 1992).

Breakdown in communication was cited as a major part of the problem between BEMs, officers and neighbours. One respondent said: 'Cultural diversity/flexibility is something white officers find hard to accept. Because of prejudice, there is no definite policy which clearly defines acceptance of a culturally sensitive architectural design. There is often the tendency to refuse shop front design on architectural grounds. Reference to 'eye-sore' and breach of 'environmental character of an area', is an indication that officers are rejecting non-white architectural design' (Insider 'B' from Easterly Sept 1993).

In comparison, responses from Riverside chief officers and other informants show some similarity of attitude with Easterly respondents in relation to questions about development control policies and practices. Comments from a Neighbourhood chief officer sums up this general attitude.

Quotes From Riverside Chief Officer on Development Control:

'As far as development control policies and practices are concerned, I am not aware of any DOE guideline, guidance note, etc regarding BEMs. We do not have any special

policy for these groups. We are not allowed to do Ethnic monitoring as other councils do so we don't know their problems and needs and there is no policy to address them. The Council don't like any special attention to BEMs. They call it equal treatment for all; so no pressure from the politicians to even make us do translation in a comprehensive way to make our documents worthwhile for those who can't speak English. We are forced to use little kids (8 year olds) to help with interpretation.' (Riverside Chief Officer B, 1992). The informant explained further that 'the planning law is used against BEMs by rigid interpretation and without flexibility to accommodate their specific needs/circumstances. Even when their proposals meet the legal requirements, they still will not receive planning consent because their neighbours object out of racial prejudice; and this time the elected members would not bother with the legal framework and would rather lend their support to the views of racist local residents while compromising the planning rules.'

Little provision exists towards addressing the needs of the 'new communities' (BEMs), what this informant has failed to point out is that there is room for flexible interpretation of laws, local policies/initiatives, procedure and practices to accommodate the specific needs/requirements of BEMs as identified in his response, but these are clearly lacking in Riverside. As explained from the planned viewpoint seems to be bias., ' Both the insiders and watch dog respondents from Riverside also confirmed the views and concerns expressed by one of the chief officers who complained that politicians are in the habit of rejecting officers' positive recommendations, and such wrong decisions are taken out of racial bias. Under these circumstances, it is hard to foresee how the BEM specific planning needs will ever be adequately addressed. My informants stressed the need for an anti-racist policy to provide a framework for committed officers. However, given the fact that Councils like Easterly which introduced anti-racist policies in the early 1980s have started winding their clock back and are no longer putting such policies into practice, it is less likely that a council like Riverside will embark on such a policy now. Even if they do, there is no guarantee that the policy will affect Members' attitude at the Committee decision stage if officer recommendations based on planning rules/regulations can easily be thrown out. As far as Riverside is concerned, this confirms the view expressed in the Guardian Newspaper (19 May 1992) that BEMs are in 'for a long wait for equality'.

One informant also recognised the need to educate the wider community and pointed out that at the moment there is a lack of information to BEMs and a councillor has a role to play in this: 'As a councillor I would like to see that BEMs are made fully aware, and given good advice before and during the processing of their planning applications, not only to enable them submit acceptable applications but also to ensure that they make good representation at committee when it becomes necessary. This group has a problem and the large part of the problem is that they do not know how to communicate with officers or how officers should speak to them, or how they should speak to their neighbours. For example, the Turkish Restaurant (location anonymised) which local people wanted to close, I mediated between the officers, the people and the restaurant owners. The restaurant is now very successful - frequented by the local people, the very people who wanted to close it. Similarly, the Black-led church in Road, is another example of a break down in communication between a

black applicant and officers. Although this particular case has become very difficult to solve, but using my position as a councillor, I was able to introduce the church owners to the officers which they would not have been able to do by themselves.' (Easterly Councillor C, 1992)

5.1.4 Inner City Regeneration Initiatives

With regard to Inner City Regeneration Initiatives, the interview responses once again show, that on face value, the policies and practices in the boroughs differ considerably, although the needs of BEM communities were recognised in both. In the case of Easterly, for example, the chief officer said that the Council maintained the policy of ethnic monitoring to ascertain the number of urban programme projects and financial allocation obtained from projects. From this monitoring, it became clear that BEMs were not benefiting much from the Urban Programme. This led to a policy of targeting the BEMs which resulted in more take up of Urban Programme monies by the BEMs. According to the chief officer responsible for Regeneration Initiatives, 'each Urban Programme application has to be evaluated in line with Equal Opportunities policy. To identify priorities, projects should meet equal opportunities criteria in order to go forward. To take up urban programme projects for grants, the shape/form of the project should achieve the balance of different communities in the borough, i.e., there should be reasonable access to urban programme monies to all communities.' He also pointed out that other regeneration programmes such as City Challenge and Task Force started with positive attempts to get BEMs involved early in the programme through the auspices of Black and Ethnic Minority Service Delivery Working Party (BEMSDWP) and through such initiatives as Community Forum, Business Forum and capacity building programme.

Despite the chief officer's claim, the PRRA expressed different views and said: 'the fact that there has been little financial resources available to local authorities meant that desirable projects could not be funded. For example, a 3 million pound project to build an African/Caribbean Centre was dropped because the DOE eventually declined to fund it. The cut back into the 'start-up business grants' that were initially targeted to the most needy sections of the BEMs has caused disappointment and demoralisation with this community.' The PRRA expressed concern about the existence of unequal access to financial and other resources which place BEMs at a disadvantage in urban regeneration. As argued previously, the issue of equal attention/ unequal access is very crucial in a local authority debate. Cut back in 'start-up grants means that potential BEM businesses are denied the opportunity of becoming business owners due to lack of funds.

Riverside, on the other hand, had no policy of ethnic monitoring to ascertain who and to what extent people benefitted from urban programme. The existence of the Neighbourhood system meant that each respondent chief officer had his or her views of how the urban programme benefitted the local communities. Similarly, none of the respondent chief officers had detailed knowledge of how the City Challenge or Task Force would benefit local BEMs. The responses from most of the chief officers were not positive. There was a clear demonstration of racist reasoning as well as very limited knowledge of, and lack of interest in what is happening around them. For

example, by a statement such as, 'urban programme/City Challenge are DOE awards based on problem of the area, either black and ethnic minorities or deprivation', one chief officer chose to label or see BEMs as 'problem' of any area where they live. This negative image of BEMs is in line with what Gordon and Klug (1986) and Gilroy (1987) have described as a new and more subtle form of racism-- 'the idea that blacks comprise a problem, or more accurately a series of problems, which is today expressed at the core of racist reasoning'.

Riverside Neighbourhood chief officers generally considered urban programme, City Challenge and other inner city initiatives as 'a different thing from planning because it specifically makes provision for disadvantaged groups, ie BEMs. Urban programme is centrally run but Neighbourhoods help split up/share the monies depending on Neighbourhood bids'. Most of them claimed not to know much about the general running of the urban programme. For example, one chief officer said: 'As far as planning is concerned, through projects, we identify and make bids accordingly. We promote projects that are of interest to us. Sometimes we make applications for urban programme funding. Other initiatives whereby you can bid for money include: Derelict land; urban regeneration grant; city grant etc. City Challenge is a new initiative with clear connection for BEMs but not as much as urban programme'

5.1.5 Local Authority Employment Practices

In relation to the issue of employment, the Easterly chief officer said:

'Working in a community with cultural mix means that staff should be mixed and representative. We have nearly 50% women and large proportion of BEM staff. We introduced the Access Scheme to train BEMs. Some have completed the course and have been absorbed fulltime after the degree course. Career development scheme in the Division is aimed at affording staff the opportunity to progress and move to the top of Career grade P02 so that junior staff can move up. Having said that, the expectation of some staff is that they should move two grades up each year'. This contrasts with an insider's views about policies/practices (Easterly):

'In the area of employment, although the Council claims to have an equal opportunities policy, there have been instances of discrimination and unfair treatment of black planners in terms of training and promotion. Black officers have been denied promotion because they failed examinations (or asked to refund the money the Council paid for their training), even when the examination does not affect the work they do in any way. Applications by black officers to attend management courses organised by the Council have been refused on the grounds that future use of such qualification could not be envisaged by management. This implies that black officers are already condemned to remain in non-managerial position through out their lives in Easterly. There is no single black planner in Easterly at the moment who has direct line management responsibility. Even those two who are on PO 4 grade who should be included among middle managers are denied the opportunity of having people to supervise or manage.' (Insider A From Easterly 1993).

These employees cited numerous examples of negative practices against BEM staff:

Negative practices against BEM staff (Easterly):

(a) 'The sudden cancellation of career grade scheme which affects 95% of BEM staff;

- (b) The hierarchy of the department, in which the top of the pyramid is filled by whites with BEMs at the bottom. This discourages BEM staff;
- (c) Some individual black officers have been singled out for victimisation - a clear issue of racism. Sadly, racism in the department is so subtle that one may not realise that one is being discriminated against' (Insider A, Easterly).
- (d) 'Good jobs are taken away from black staff and given to whites. For those black officers at the bottom, provided you keep quiet and remain where you are you will be left alone and ignored. But if you show sign of aspiring to the top you will be punished - via denial of training opportunity; (e) Training opportunity appear to be open to everybody but the types of courses blacks are allowed to attend are useless ones. The good courses are reserved for managers who are all whites'. (Insiders B, Easterly, 1993).

The insiders stressed that with the demise of the RRU, the progress made in the 1980s as mentioned above, is fast disappearing both in service delivery and in employment. For example, 'the post of the community planner which is rendering very useful service to the local BEMs is not properly resourced and the post holder is receiving little or no support which is sure to hinder effective performance. There is no more reference to the implications for BEMs on planning application reports nor any more regular ethnic monitoring reports to committees. There is also little or no career progression/promotion prospects for many BEM planners and no management or supervisory responsibilities for BEM planners' (Insider B from Easterly 1993). These responses seem to confirm not only the prediction made in Chapter two, but also confirm the view expressed by the PRRA during his interview: 'Unfortunately, I cannot be optimistic. In recent years, Easterly council has steadily lowered the priority given to tackling racism. Indeed, the situation is worst in Easterly because the Council feels that having achieved more than probably any other council in the county, it is time to take it easy and relax. In these circumstances one cannot anticipate a more vigorous challenge to racism' (PRRA 1992).

Similarly, the councillors interviewed highlighted other rhetoric and realities of the Council's policies and practices and expressed serious doubt about the existence of any genuine commitment to implement policies that would have long term benefit for BEMs. The informants stated that 'there is no deep rooted commitment to continue to implement the policies because many officers are reluctant to do so due to racial bias/prejudice and many elected Members have no political good will towards BEM issues.'

Jackie Wills, (in an item in the Local Government Chronicle 5 August 1994) supports the views and concerns expressed by Easterly insiders, PRRA and respondent councillors. Wills gives details of what she terms 'claims of a backlash', and states that, 'Easterly LBC, once seen as a pioneer of equal opportunities, is being accused of racism by black staff'. Wills also confirms, that the CRE Chair Herman Ouseley has written to Easterly Council in March 1994 highlighting 'the CRE concerns' as illustrated by the following comments.

'- Since the beginning of 1992 the Commission has received more than 30 applications from current and former Council employees for assistance with complaints of

discrimination.

- There is over-representation of ethnic minority employees in disciplinary action and dismissal for gross misconduct.
- the Council's September 1993 audit showed ethnic minority employees made up of only 35.2% of APT&C posts graded PO2 and above despite making up 53% of the overall grade.
- Council figures showed that from 1 April 1992 to 28 February 1993, 22.7% of white applications were short listed and appointed for internal promotion compared with 8.9% and 1.9% respectively of ethnic minority applicants.
- 70% of the Council's redeployment register was made up of ethnic minority employees from July 1992-June 1993.' (CRE, March 1994)

Consequently, 'the CRE is unhappy with the situation and will review its decision not to launch formal investigation on the council as requested in 1993 by Easterly Race Equality Council' says Wills. It is important to note that Herman Ouseley who (in Ball and Solomos, 1990:152), had given credit to Easterly's 'undeniable and commendable progress' in tackling racism, is now forced, in his position as head of the CRE to write to Easterly to express concern about racism.

In the case of Riverside, the chief officers have no common approach as to how the Council's equal opportunities policy should be interpreted and implemented for the benefit of the BEMs either in service delivery or in employment. Chief Officer A was not prepared to go into details of how her department delivers service to BEMs. When she was asked to give her general view of service delivery to BEMs, she said: 'It is a reflection of the make up of the population of the area. We do our best to treat everybody the same way. Positive discrimination is a topic that comes up from time to time, whether it is a good idea or not is another question'.

In relation to employment of BEMs, the respondent said:

'Riverside has equal opportunities policy. Job applications are monitored by personnel and management don't have the information, so can't act on it. In any case, it does not apply to planning jobs because it is not targeted to local community. It is not normal for planning officers to be drawn from local community. Jobs are advertised nationally.'

This chief officer was asked, about positive action/access scheme under Section 38 of the Race Relations Act. Her response was: 'I do not think planning can do that. We are not a large enough department to do this for ourselves. No school leavers can come straight into planning via training, Personnel won't let you take freshers like that. This is a product of decentralisation in Riverside'.

With regard to staffing in planning department the respondent said, 'Riverside Neighbourhood planning departments have six black and ethnic minority officers out of a total of twenty six, (23%). In the centre, it is about the same. May be planning is by nature a profession that does not readily attract people from ethnic minorities. There is a high quality of applicants coming forward in recent years'

Some bad practices in Riverside: The Insiders' view:

- (1) Employees who apply for jobs internally are never told what happens to their

applications.

- (2) Nobody gives you any feedback after you have completed your performance appraisal form. You don't even know the purpose of the performance forms.
- (3) No promotion. Since I joined this council more than five years ago, I have not been promoted.
- (4) Every thing here is surrounded by secrecy.
- (5) No one tells you what is right and what is wrong. It is a question of one operating in the dark.
- (6) The system has no real checks and balances. It favours those on top and ignores those below.

With regard to service delivery, the bad practices include: lack of special consideration on the part of politicians for any disadvantaged service users which affects adversely, the needs of BEM community; Only the politicians have the right to say yes or no; Officers have no right to introduce flexibility; Lack of ethnic monitoring of planning applications [the respondents requested that this research recommend this strongly to the Council]; Politicians bending to the pressure of neighbours/objectors to BEM applications; Officers always 'hide under the cloak of fictitious good planning grounds' to reject BEM applications whenever there are serious objections from white neighbours and to appease angry politicians' (The Insiders From Riverside, 1993).

- (7) Respondents also described the Council's Equal Opportunities policy as 'mere paper policy with no commitment, and no guideline or programme for implementation and no performance indicator.' All these respondents confirmed the existence of both individual and institutional racism in the Council.

Most of the chief officers failed to recognise the nature of the needs of the various sectors of ethnic communities. They also failed to recognise the importance of flexibility in the interpretation and implementation of planning law where it affects the specific needs of BEMs. This inflexibility has been highlighted by a respondent in Chapter six where an application for a mosque was delayed for a very long time and the applicant was forced to appeal to the DOE against non-determination. One chief officer was so strong about the idea of flexibility that he had this to say, 'we have to deal within the context of the planning legislation. If a use is going to cause a nuisance, I am afraid, that's it. There is no positive discrimination policy in Riverside, unlike Easterly'. The institutional and individual lack of commitment towards the specific needs of BEMs was clearly demonstrated by another respondent who said, 'it is not public duty to provide a mosque'.

The idea of equal opportunities and race relations training for officers was perceived as, 'moving away from planning'. With regard to employment of BEMs, most of the Riverside chief officers failed to recognise the need for a multi-cultural community to be served by a mixed and representative work force. There is no anti-racism initiative or race equality policy and the absence of a borough wide guideline in terms of procedures and practices seem to have simply helped to make Riverside' case more hopeless with the non-committed individual officers feeling more defiant or shifting the blame to other quarters, while the few committed officers watch helplessly and become more frustrated by the lack of opportunity to effect change in the system. It is important to note that in some Riverside Neighbourhoods where there is a reasonable

percentage of BEM staff, it has been described as 'purely an accident more than anything else'. This is confirmed by the fact (as admitted by one chief officer) that those BEM officers have not been afforded any opportunity for career progression or council sponsorship for their training needs.

5.2 The Watchdogs

In the preceding sub-section, the discussions were based on the interviews with two different elements within the local authority structure, namely, the key actors - the chief officers and the politicians - and the powerless insiders - the BEM employees. In this final section the discussion will focus on the responses obtained from the interviews with the watchdogs of the local government system, which includes, the trade union - NALGO (or UNISON), the Docklands Forum, and the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) including the local Racial Equality Councils. The purpose of this investigation is to assess the views and awareness of respondents to the issues facing BEMs as well as gauge their reactions towards the performance of the two case study boroughs in relation to their BEM residents and/or employees.

The Docklands Forum was included in the investigation for two main reasons. Firstly, because the Forum plays a 'pressure group'/watchdog role over the activities of the LDDC which has 'unlimited power' and is not answerable to the Docklands local authorities. Secondly, because none of the chief officers from the Neighbourhoods in the Docklands area agreed to be interviewed. Responses obtained from the Docklands Forum would help to back up other (documentary) evidence which highlights the experiences of BEMs in the LDDC area of Riverside. The analysis of the responses would help to draw some comparison and conclusions between the two boroughs. The findings of this chapter will form part of the evidence to support the themes of this thesis.

There were three sets of interviews covered in this section. The first set of interviews was directed at the trade union: NALGO (Riverside Branch) and NALGO (Easterly Branch.) The second set of interviews was directed at the Docklands Forum. The third set was directed at the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and its local equivalents, namely the Riverside Association for Racial Equality (THARE) and the Easterly Council for Racial Equality (HCRE).

Based on the views of the watchdogs, the analysis of responses illustrates how in the two case study boroughs, BEMs continue to suffer from the effects of individual and institutional racism aided and abated by lack of political goodwill and bureaucratic inertia. The researcher found that most of the respondents were fully aware of the issues facing BEMs and were prepared to speak out in condemnation, while a few either tried to dodge the issues by deliberately giving a vague and unrelated answer to the question or pretend they were too busy to do interviews or they did not know much personally and so directed the researcher to more junior officers. In fact, some tried to cover up. One respondent from the CRE surprisingly chose to dwell on Easterly's past performance in the 1980s and ignored recent developments. It was particularly disappointing to note that the watchdogs do not seem to have real power to impose sanctions that will bring about real/lasting change in the local authority

system. Even the CRE appears to be reluctant to speak out in certain areas and instead finds some excuses for not launching formal investigations where repeated requests have been made for such.

Interview with NALGO (Riverside and Easterly)

Riverside NALGO described the situation as follows:

'In addition to the news from the media, people complain to NALGO of racial abuse/harassment. Racism in Council departments is not fading away at all, rather it is getting worse and more subtle. Riverside NALGO does not keep statistics of Council disciplinary cases, but the most affected are black women. You hear such sayings as, 'you should be grateful that you have got a job here'. Nigerian women are often victimised and perceived as rude. Cultural dimension is not taken into account in the council departments.' (Riverside NALGO, December, 1991).

The respondent from Easterly produced some statistics which confirms the outcry of many BEMs that they are victims of not only individual and institutional racism, but also made the scapegoats whenever anything goes wrong. The respondent said: 'All local governments are facing crisis at the moment and for NALGO this means that the job security of our members is at risk. Management are using the situation to victimise the work force, principally via the disciplinary procedures. This is affecting the BEM workers disproportionately. For example, out of 137 disciplinary cases handled through this branch between October 1991 and September 1992, 135 of them (98.5%) have involved BEM staff. The overwhelming majority of chief officers are white, so BEMs perceive themselves as 'a berry in the brunt' of the on-slot (sic) and they are being victimised by all powerful white managers' (Easterly NALGO, October 1992).

It is rather strange and disappointing that the Riverside NALGO has not kept any statistics of disciplinary cases affecting their members. One wonders why this should be the case. However, information from the CRE as shown in Table 7.1, indicates that in 1990/91, 20 complaints were received by the CRE from Riverside workers as against 35 from Easterly. In 1992/93 the commission received 13 complaints from Riverside workers, as against 31 from Easterly (Source: CRE, March 1993).

In response to questions on the views/experiences of the interviewees of Council policies and procedures, the respondent from Easterly tried to avoid the question by stating, 'It is not my area. My perception of most Council policies is that they operate at minimum level.....' The initial response was vague and irrelevant to the issue being investigated which was clearly explained to the respondent. Judging from his response to the first question, one finds it difficult to accept that this respondent is unable to relate this question to the topic of our investigation, given that it is the responsibility of the Trade Union to analyse and monitor policies/procedures and their implications for their members. The researcher therefore decided to press on to get the respondent to say something specific about the planning department. He then said, 'the general problems/policies of the council must be reflected in the planning department. The planning profession is an institution which is white dominated, I see no evidence currently of any attempt to improve the lots of black and ethnic minorities.' (Easterly NALGO, October 1992).

The response from the Riverside NALGO was quite relevant to the issue in question. The respondent said: 'Riverside in theory has Equal Opportunities policy which means nothing in practice. Yesterday, Riverside lost a case of discrimination - refusing to promote a black woman. The court found the Council in breach of their own equal opportunities policy. The Leader was recently quoted as saying 'We do not want more Bengalis in this area, we have had enough of them'. Despite their equal opportunities policy the Council spends a lot of money on Christmas decorations while hundreds of Bengalis are starving in abject poverty. You are welcome here if you can fit in. Many Somalis are here because they cannot help it. They would rather stay at their homes, but the condition does not allow it. Equal opportunities in Riverside is a mere piece of paper' (Riverside NALGO, December 1991).

With regard to planning, the respondent also expressed the view that planning is an all white dominated profession and there is no evidence in Riverside of any genuine attempt to make things easier for BEMs. The views expressed here by Riverside NALGO is supported by Khanum whose article (1988, not referenced from NALGO journal) which among other things claims that despite Riverside paper equal opportunities policy 'no attempt has been made by the Council to adopt a race - equality strategy, no work programme has been developed to ensure the elimination of discrimination and promote good race relations'. There were many other examples and the respondents have fully demonstrated that in the two boroughs, BEMs suffer disproportionately as a result of racism. The respondents also have shown that the BEM victims of racism are bitter and often unable to help themselves hence they rely on NALGO services or justice from the Industrial Tribunal.

The respondent from Riverside said: 'Black and ethnic minorities (workers and service users) are not at all on the Council's Agenda, nor on the NALGO agenda. People are still not considering positively the problems of workers or the problems of the Bangladeshis and Somalis. There is no established translation unit to assist in service provision for ethnic groups except where there are chances of a clerical staff around who can interpret on the spot. BEMs (both workers and service users) are merely seen as a 'problem', morale among BEM workers here is very low throughout Riverside Council' (Riverside NALGO Dec. 1991). The Easterly respondent said: 'BEMs are on the council agenda only in so far as the council need to mention BEM issues in order to maintain power. I do not think that the majority of people in power have any conception of the needs and aspirations of BEMs. Councillors are overwhelmingly white, and why should they bother with BEM people and their needs. BEM workers are totally demoralised. They feel that their jobs are particularly at risk and that the council is using the financial crisis as an excuse to victimise and get rid of them' (Easterly NALGO, Oct. 1992). With regard to their role as watchdogs and protector of BEM workers, the Riverside respondent stated: 'No, NALGO is no different from the society as a whole. It reflects the main culture of the white man. Issues of sexism and racism are not seriously considered. Only one branch officer in the whole borough is black.' (Riverside NALGO, December 1991).

Easterly's, respondent expressed a much stronger view, that 'the white managers are abusing their powers and this abuse is likely to spill over to other areas of operation such as redeployment procedures and practices'. He argued that although the Council's

head of personnel is black, there is concern that 'the recent unfair variation to redeployment procedures which were introduced by his overall boss (the Director of Corporate Services), will undoubtedly undermine any commitment and effort by the head of personnel to operate fair redeployment procedures'. It can be seen from the above responses, that the situation in the two boroughs with regard to the attitude of managers is similar. The managers' hostility and abuse of powers are having detrimental effects on BEM workers. The reference to racism by proxy made by the respondent from Riverside confirms the argument which was put forward in Section Two that 'a more dangerous form of new racism' has developed where BEMs are themselves used by those in authority who do not wish to be identified as racist, to perpetuate acts of racism against their own people.

What has emerged from this part of the investigation, is that it is evident that BEM workers in the two boroughs suffer disproportionately as a result of racism. For example, Easterly NALGO statistics show that 135 out of 137 (98.5%) complaint cases handled in one year related to BEM workers. Equal opportunities policy is either non-existent in practice (as identified in Riverside) or not operating in the best interest of BEMs (as identified in Easterly). BEMs are not on the two Councils' agenda. Even with the watchdog (NALGO/UNISON) who should be protecting them, the BEM workers feel that their interest/welfare is equally marginalised. With regard to planning, the current position is that, the planning profession continues to be white dominated and there is no evidence that any genuine effort is being made to improve the lots of BEMs in the two boroughs.

5.2.1 Personal Cases (from Nalgo related interviews)

'Racial/sexual harassment cases are often played down because it affects blacks. For a white offender, you can only get 'a talking to', but for black offenders, you surely face disciplinary action. You often hear whites in the office making such comments as, 'black women are unable to keep their legs closed, and they always drop babies in the bush'. NALGO took up one such case sometime ago against a white manager. The case was lost because the council defended the manager's action by saying that 'the manager had an attitude problem and is not a racist', and all the council would do was to suggest that the offending manager should be retained while at the same time, the black woman victim was removed from the office and branded 'a trouble maker''

Case A

A 22 year old Bengali woman who lost her husband was quickly sacked for altering sickness record. 'English people do not care about other people's culture. They overlooked this woman's pressure and frustration following her bereavement. NALGO on appeal got an Imam from the mosque to testify to this woman's problems and so we were able to get her job back for her' (Interview with NALGO, Riverside, December 1991).

Case B

The same respondent made reference to many other cases in Riverside where the cultural background and needs of BEMs have been ignored by council managers. For

example, a Nigerian member of staff who lost her father and needed enough time travel home for the funeral was allowed only 3 days bereavement leave which would certainly make it impossible for her to achieve that objective. In another case, a black woman was sent to investigate a complaint of racism against white tenants on a housing estate. The white tenants came back to complain that she attacked them and the council suspended her.

Cases C and D

One victim from Riverside (who refused to be interviewed) lost her job because she was suffering from domestic violence and post-natal depression and her perception is that the NALGO did not fight hard for her. In Easterly, the researcher was able to talk to someone who was involved in a recent case. In this case, this black officer was the victim of violent/physical attack by his white colleague. The management suspended the offender the same day of the incident. Nine days later, the same management decided to suspend the victim as well, alleging that he was heard using some threatening language at the time of the incident. An officer hearing was quickly fixed after which both the offender and the victim were sacked. The victim alleged that his (white) union representative made no real effort to argue his case strongly, rather, he joined with the management and personnel to say that the two officers involved were guilty of gross misconduct. The victim asked the most prominent NALGO officer to represent him on appeal and at the Industrial Tribunal. His request was turned down and instead, the white offender's request for the same top NALGO officer was accepted, thereby making the black officer's case much weaker since he would be represented by a more junior black NALGO representative. This black NALGO member/victim feels very bitter, helpless and betrayed by his trade union. He also believes this to be a double act of racism - from management and from the Union.

5.2.2 Interview With Docklands Forum Representative

To get a wider perspective on what was taking place in the borough, an interviewee from the Docklands forum was asked to describe his overall impression of what is going on in the Docklands and how it affects the BEM communities. The respondent explained that the redevelopment of the Docklands is currently led by the LDDC. Decisions are made in terms of land value, ie the greatest value for land and not on planning considerations. Development briefs are not made public, and community interest, particularly BEM needs are marginalised. For example, LDDC housing developments are un-affordable to local people and this affects BEMs disproportionately. The respondent said 'The Docklands Forum has raised this issue but has been dismissed by the LDDC which claims it is not a planning issue, what matters is that houses are being built on the land; it does matter who lives in it' (Docklands Forum, December, 1991).

Another agency which at the time was having a considerable influence on planning in Riverside is the LDDC (The London Docklands Development Corporation). Since the LDDC is a planning authority which is not accountable to Riverside Council, it is important for the purpose of this study to mention its policies and practices separately from that of Riverside. The LDDC policy which has particular implications for BEMs who make up 20% of the population in the UDA has been criticised (L.D. Housing

Survey, 1990) for not showing a genuine commitment towards meeting BEM needs. The Docklands Consultative Committee (1990) shows that the policy's aim was to reduce the population of these poorer residents rather than address their needs. Consequently more than 85% of the 17,000 new homes built in the Docklands are in owner occupation (1990:11). BEMs are disproportionately represented on key indicators of housing need. Overcrowding level among BEM families in Riverside Urban Development area is high, particularly, the Bangladeshi households (47%) {source: Docklands Forum, 1993}. The failure to provide larger units despite the overriding need of BEMs was criticised in the London Housing Inquiry (1988): 'large units are not built to house larger families in the many black communities'. The whole planning and design process exclude their needs' (1993:20). The conclusion to be drawn from this is that like Riverside, the LDDC policies and practices have not got much to offer in terms of meeting the specific needs of BEMs, rather, the LDDC has engaged in management and control of peculiar difficulties of the changing social reproduction.

'Most LDDC policies are unacceptable because they are of little or no benefit to local people especially the disadvantaged communities' (Interview with Docklands Forum, December 1991). The informant was of the view that the needs of BEM groups are not very high on the political agenda of the LDDC. 'The boards are mainly racist. There is only one black person so far on the LDDC boards - a tokenistic gesture which is not effective' (Docklands Forum, December 1991).

Regrettably, the interviewee revealed that the Docklands Forum plays no role towards the BEMs. 'It is a struggle getting BEM people/issues into the work of the Forum. The reason is that the Forum is more concerned with the planning process which is not directly linked with the main concerns/needs of BEMs, namely, racial harassment and housing problem. The Forum is a white entrenched organisation, so the membership can be very racist and so there is a problem in trying to pursue equal opportunities policy' (Docklands Forum, December, 1991).

Interestingly, the informant admitted that the Docklands Forum is a white middle class entrenched organisation and that its membership can be racist. Consequently, the BEMs are neither on the LDDC agenda nor on the priority list of the Docklands Forum. What emerged from this investigation is that the Docklands Forum is neither in a powerful position to effect changes in the operations of the LDDC nor are the welfare and main concerns of the BEMs very much on their priority list.

5.2.3 Interview With Representatives of the Commission For Racial Equality

The respondents were first asked to make an assessment of the performance of Easterly and Riverside on equal opportunities and race relations. With Easterly, the respondents stated that, although the council has got a good equal opportunity statement and a very good training course on equal opportunities and selection, there was very little evidence to show that the equal opportunity policy is being implemented in Easterly from top to bottom. The respondents stated: 'We have received written statements from NUPE (National Union of Public Employees) and NALGO requesting the CRE to investigate Easterly formally because the Council

appears to be dismissing a disproportionate number of black staff. Effectively, the CRE think that Easterly's performance is very poor. Currently there are about fifteen cases against Easterly on employment matters from different departments of its workforce. One of the worrying aspects is that discrimination is coming from top officers and top councillors. Officers are being encouraged to disregard procedures. In fact LBH is a big problem, very difficult for the CRE to handle' (Interview with the CRE, June 1992). The respondents expressed concern at the demise of the former Race Relations Unit and at what has succeeded it since January 1992. They said that, 'Many cases have been handled recently without any input from the Race Relations Unit, or where they are involved, they have not made any impact at all on decision reached.' (CRE, June 1992).

On employment matters, Easterly performed extremely poorly. The respondent said that, 'There are lots of cases against London Borough of Easterly; in fact there are more cases against Easterly at the moment than any other local authority in England. There are disproportionate number of applications against Easterly at the moment and nearly all of them are African and Caribbean members of the community.' (CRE, June 1992).

The respondents observed that the Asian staff get better treatment than the African and Caribbean staff, and are sometimes set against their black counterparts in the office. This confirms what was described in Section 2 as 'racism by proxy'. Figure 7.10 below sets out the full text of their observation. CRE views about the treatment of Blacks in Easterly:

'Africans seem to suffer more than any other group, followed by the Caribbeans. The non-black ethnic groups get better treatment on promotion side. The way Easterly deals with promotion/training is that they push BEM staff to go on training courses and while they do that the whites get the promotion. We were told that, management say that Africans and Caribbeans don't have enough knowledge to be managers. Easterly need to be honest to themselves and bring out their true policy in the open. It appears that Easterly's equal opportunities is merely on paper. This policy is not working well judging from the complaints we receive. Easterly should look into their equal opportunities policy. They should treat staff as humans and not use them, set them against each other, and throw them onto the street. Top Easterly managers don't listen to their staff cry, they condone everything that is happening to black staff. Top managers do nothing to help suffering black staff until they voluntarily leave Council employment out of sheer frustration and agony. Some of the complaints we got here are absolutely disgusting. No honest system to follow in line with the declared equal opportunity statement. Even the equalities officers are not capable of protecting black staff because their own jobs are also threatened, so they are forced to protect their own jobs first. There are a number of confidential statements from Easterly officers who requested that we do not say it out, and so we can't help them because our hands are tied as we can't use the information we gather from sufferers. Hence, people complain that the CRE can't help them but we need facts and not probabilities. It is very frustrating when you are unable to help these people'. (CRE, June 1992).

On housing, planning or other related services, the respondents highlighted that there were cases of discrimination in Easterly housing services which led to the CRE making formal investigation and serving a Non-Discrimination Notice which started

in 1984 and finished in 1989. They further stated that the CRE has not yet received any formal complaint about Easterly planning service, either because they have a good race relations adviser, or the service users are not aware that concerns can be raised with the CRE. In the case of Riverside, the respondents also felt that its performance is very poor. This assessment was based on the council's blatant racist policies and practices in housing services. The respondents said that the CRE received a lot of complaints from Riverside mostly related to housing services. These complaints concern a 'Sons and Daughters Policy' which emerged from CRE monitoring. This policy gives special allocation right to people who have got parents in the Borough. The CRE think that it is discriminatory because the Bangladeshis and other BEMs are unlikely to have their mothers/fathers living in the Borough and therefore cannot qualify for housing.

The respondents said that the CRE have taken High Court action against Riverside because of their housing allocation policies and practices. 'We are still monitoring them very closely at the moment. Our Non-Discriminatory Notice ends in October 1992 and we have to make sure that there is a system in place to continue the required practice and procedure after October. The CRE issued the Notice in September 1987 and have had to go back to court in April 1991 to get a court order to last one year to enforce the Non-Discriminatory Notice. This means that the whole exercise has taken 5 years from September 1987 to October 1992'. (CRE June 1992). The respondent further stated that, 'the fact that the CRE have to go to court to get Riverside to comply with its order shows that there is less commitment to equal opportunity policies in Riverside, than in Easterly. The political dimension/councillors in Riverside is very difficult. The brand of liberalism which operates in Riverside is very unique, this is quite different from Easterly'. (CRE, June 1992).

5.3 Conclusions

Chizoma looked at the two boroughs, one with an overt policy one without, and looked at unitary forward planning and development control, and at the extent to which development control policies, procedures and practices which are flexible, as well as culturally specific inner city regeneration packages in order to accommodate the special circumstances of BEM planning needs.

In development control, adequate policies and procedures will help to tackle such problems as undue delays in processing planning applications, the adherence to common standards which are based on British household sizes and their requirements, inflexible interpretation of planning laws which play into the hands of hostile neighbours and give uncommitted planners the opportunity to indulge in racist attitudes and 'same-for-all, colour-blind' approach.

With regard to inner city regeneration, adequate policies and procedures will enable local authorities to: assess how to make regeneration programmes respond to the specific BEM needs; make BEMs aware of what is on offer in terms of grants; encourage them to apply and educate them on how to apply; monitor their success rate; carry out a constant review of policies and procedures.

With regard to Employment, a policy of Positive Action Training Scheme based on section 38 of the Race Relations Act 1976 and a policy of ethnic monitoring, employment targets and career development programmes will combine to provide a more positive approach towards addressing the needs of the BEMs.

The responses obtained from some of the informants show that in some cases, there is evidence that some steps have been taken in the right direction. For example in Easterly where the ethnic minority Chapter has been included in the Local Plan and the UDP. However, in most cases, the chief officers have chosen either to exhibit an exaggerated image of themselves and their own achievements, while at the same time playing down other essential issues or remaining defiant, inflexible, and nonchalant to the issues in question.

It must be pointed out that during the interviews, the role of Central Government and the resultant cut backs in government spending figured prominently as a major obstacle to adequate delivery of service to meet the needs of the disadvantaged groups. This confirms the argument in Section two where the Dual State Theory is applied in the explanation of the struggle between the central and local government as it affects the provision of services to BEM and other disadvantaged groups. However, as it was argued in the conceptual sections, and in line with Ken Young's (1986) Localist view, in the context of race and racism, to ignore the internal politics of the local state is to overlook the repressive influence of local authority managers and politicians in the areas of employment, service delivery and participation in decision making as it affects BEMs.

There is mistrust between employers and employees as to the common goals in relation to service delivery to BEMs and the treatment of BEM staff. My research shows that this situation applies equally to the two authorities. Some employees complain that they do not get the full support of their managers when they deal with BEM service delivery cases. In Riverside, one of the respondents confirmed that their managers would not have allowed them the opportunity to become aware of what the planning laws expect planners to do for BEM service users.

In employment BEM employees from the two boroughs expressed dissatisfaction over the way their employers handle recruitment, retention and careers progression of BEM staff, as well as redeployment and disciplinary procedures and specifically that most black staff are kept down each year during the grading review. Although the two authorities profess to being equal opportunity employers and service providers, the research shows that with Riverside, equal opportunities is nothing but a statement on paper. With Easterly, the policy and strategy came about not out of the council's free will, but as a result of the CRE Non-Discriminatory Notice served on it.

Easterly's anti-racism initiative is not working well nor could it be sustained because it did not originate from a deep-rooted commitment to the welfare of BEMs. This is evidenced by the increase in the withdrawal of support to local BEM groups and the number of staff dismissals and industrial tribunal cases against it. There is evidence (notably from the insiders, the Trade Union and the CRE) of unacceptable attitudes and abuse of power among the white dominated council managers which tend to put a

lot of pressure on BEM staff. The pressure is such that some officers are forced to leave Council employment while others face harassment and unfair dismissal.

While the chief officers in Riverside are unable to make any claim to any visible or specific achievement in the way of equal opportunities, the chief officers in Easterly claimed to have taken fully on board the planning needs of BEMs in line with the council's equal opportunity policy. For example, its UDP has an ethnic minority chapter and there is ethnic monitoring of planning applications. However, the research has shown that various BEM community sectors are not receiving equal treatment. The perception of most respondents still remains that the Council's equal opportunities are not there any more, nor are they working well for the majority of BEMs, and that more needs to be done in order to address adequately the needs of each and every sector of the BEM communities.

Things appeared to be changing fast for the worse in Easterly. From Chizoma's own observation, it seems that the future is bleak indeed for these communities judging from a number of developments: the rate at which BEM staff are being dismissed from the Council's employment; the withdrawal of political and financial support to some local community organisations which they have enjoyed since the early 1980s. There is also the use of 'racism by proxy' effectively against BEMs, and the practice of hostility in the work place against black staff by their colleagues. A number of BEM employees had complained that hardly any work they do, 'is given the credit it deserves'. Line-managers tried very hard to 'put them down during appraisals and grading reviews' and every move they make is reported to line-managers by their spying colleagues.

While recognising some very good progress made over the last ten years in Easterly, evidence suggests that the Planning Department has not reached the employment target of 48% set by the Council; and has not made more progress in service delivery, and that it is unlikely that the department will continue to have the dedicated services of race relations officers, given the fact that there are currently no new policies for racial equality. The argument about the internal politics of the local state lends support to the fact that the council is lowering the priority given to tackling racism. The end of anti-racism cannot be blamed entirely on the pressure from the central state. The internal politics of the local state has equally played a very devastating role in this to the detriment of minority groups. The internal politics of the local state is responsible for the repressive influence of local authority managers, work mates, and politicians in the areas of employment, service delivery and participation in decision-making as it affects black and ethnic minorities.

The research findings show that all respondents recognise the importance of the role/contributions of an effective race relations unit towards Easterly's progress in the 1980s in the area of race equality strategy and implementation. It also shows that respondents, including those from Riverside accept that anti racism initiatives and an effective race relations unit are an essential mechanism for addressing service delivery and employment issues affecting BEMs. The view that black and ethnic minorities suffer from bias and racial prejudice in the hands of their white neighbours when they apply for planning permission is also confirmed. The need to retain (in Easterly), and

to introduce (in Riverside), an effective race relations unit was also emphasised. It is believed that this will help planning officers understand fully the needs and requirements of the BEM communities. This in turn will help reduce the impact of neighbour hostility as officers learn to ignore non-planning related objections from neighbours.

SECTION 6: THE PLANNED

6.1 BEM Application Case Studies

Chizoma investigated a range of development control applications that derived from BEM individuals and organisations, thus, she was looking at the 'same' planning issues as were discussed in the previous chapter from the viewpoint of the 'planners', but this time from the perspective of the planned. In addition to the applicants and the planning officers, Chizoma found that the problem of dealing with the planning department itself is made worse by the non-tolerant attitudes of many of the white neighbours towards ethnic minority business and residential development proposals. So as the research developed Chizoma gave considerable emphasis to neighbour issues. Every development proposal has implications for two parties (a) the person who is carrying out the development and hopes to benefit from it; (b) the people who live/work near the development site, and may fear some adverse effect on their existing amenities as a result of the proposed development. The law provides for the protection of neighbours, hence it becomes necessary to consult neighbours when a planning application is being considered. While it is expected that consultation should be carried out in a manner that protects the interest of both parties, many BEM applicants argue that their neighbours use their right to be consulted as a legitimate opportunity to unleash racism by objecting to their proposals beyond the limits of reasonableness and thus making it difficult or even preventing them from winning the prize of planning consent. Therefore Chizoma, sought to investigate the nature of neighbour objections.

Chizoma undertook a survey of neighbour attitudes whilst working on her PhD in London (Quantitative Appendix). From this she sought to elicit the extent to which the applicants and the neighbours actually knew about the planning system, and therefore the extent to which they knew about the scope and nature of planning controls. This, she considered, was vital in understanding the sense of disappointment (indeed frustration) on the part of applicants, and the apparent confidence found among some white neighbours in assuming BEM planning applications were bound to be illegal. However, although she was previously encouraged to use a questionnaire approach (presumably as something that could actually be 'counted'), her subsequent supervisors (Clara and Huw) considered that this, in retrospect, was not necessarily the most productive way to find out these things, as a more qualitative interview approach might get to the root of the problem more successfully. In particular the level of understanding could not readily be measured by a formal questionnaire because respondents might imagine they knew the planning system well, and answer questions in the affirmative, when in reality they have little idea of its provisions, confusing it with Building Regulation control or general local authority policy. In fact what the neighbours freely said in conversation was often more significant than the results of a more formal questionnaire situation. This chapter covers a range of planning applications and recounts the frustration of the applicants at the decisions of the planners, along with the views of the neighbours. Applications will be discussed within the categories of employment, worship, and housing, which appear to be the three key concerns of BEM community members. Most of the examples given date from the early 1990s within the boroughs studied, but since this is a published

document, Clara, in editing this account, has purposely made the exact source and date of these examples a bit vaguer, but fuller details are given in Chizoma's empirical work.

6.2 A Range of Examples

6.2.1 The Business Case

Sheer economic survival was a primary consideration among BEM communities. The problems of gaining acceptance within the majority economy and employment structures, coupled with poor access to specific services, have prompted many ethnic minorities to opt for self-help in the form of independent (albeit small scale) economic activities through self-employment. (Clara adds that this is not a form of incipient capitalism or false consciousness, as setting up small businesses and running local shops, have often been so judged by middle-class neo-marxist sociologists, rather it is a logical way of making a living among marginalised groups who have gained acceptance as potential 'workers' among the predominantly white, male, working classes.) Munt (1991) and Cashmore (1991) point out that: 'Entry barriers strew the path of any potential business owner'. For Britain's BEMs, a number of obvious and concealed restrictions for entry and expansion have been identified. These include access to suitable business premises and 'the benefit of capital resources which are notoriously hard to come by for ethnic minorities as finance companies have regarded them with suspicion' (Cashmore 1991:353). Chizoma notes that all this is another dimension of BEM needs scarcely met by the state (expressed in terms of disadvantage, racial discrimination, humiliation, racism by proxy and frustration) as shown in various works including Cashmore (1991) and Jones, 1982, and by the UK-Caribbean Chamber of Commerce. This in turn has resulted in the desire to win not only the prize of planning consent but also 'receiving the prize' of getting local authority grants to help set up business premises.

6.2.2 Small Shops and Street Trading Licences

Many BEM applicants will initially start getting a foothold in business, through street trading, and so they have to get a street trading licence (for a market stall). But they found this very difficult as they were confronting another regulatory function of the local authority. A respondent pointed out to Chizoma that once a BEM business finds shop premises he also faces problems of 'unhealthy competition' generated by the granting of new street trading licences to whites who now sell the same articles as he is selling (presumably outside the BEM shops), thereby posing a threat to his business. A BEM applicant's situation is made worse by the refusal to give him a street trading licence which would have made it easier for him to compete equally with the white traders. This is similar to the findings of Thompson (1991) where the respondents complained of white traders who were selling the same articles at a much cheaper price, thereby, attracting potential customers away from BEM traders who could not afford to reduce the prices of their own articles.

A particular problem was that small shopkeepers with very limited financial reserves were left waiting too long by the local authority determining their planning

applications. They were often also made subject to 'improvement' policies' (and urban regeneration initiatives), which they could ill afford. An applicant told Chizoma, 'I had no say whatsoever in what the officers from Planning and Economic Developments did in my case. They gave all the command and I obeyed. They did what they wanted because it was the Council that asked for Shop front improvement. Now that the work is done, the officers don't want to know any more about me and my claim to 50% grant which the Council promised us. Work was completed nearly a year ago, I have not received the grant. Mr. A. (the grant officer) is now asking me to give him the breakdown of expenses incurred so that I may be considered for future local grant support. Mr. A. has got copies of all invoices relating to the work, what else does he want from me? Why is he talking about future consideration for local support grant when in fact it was the Council that asked me to do the shop front and get 50% grant for it.'

The shop front applicant quoted above had his case handled by two different council departments. Chizoma considered that the attitude of the grant officer who refused to process the 50% Council grant is symptomatic of the general racist mentality among officers within the operation of institutional racism. It is hard to say whether the attitude of the planner could have been any better since the scheme was approved in advance by the Council. One would have expected the relevant departments to liaise with each other to make the necessary grant available without delay, particularly since the scheme was an Urban Programme Scheme. This is another case of denial of access to financial support which adversely affects the progress of BEM businesses as identified in Kazuka's study (1980) and NDHS Lambeth study (1977-78). Clara adds it is also typical of the effects on small businesses (both BEM and white) of top-down improvement, access improvement and urban design schemes, that are imposed on local shopping streets, and that takes no account of the realities of ordinary traders finances and business pressures, especially when operated by council officials who are salaried employees, who appear to have no respect for other people's money and particularly not for shopkeepers and the self-employed who have no guarantee of a regular secure salary.

Another interviewee said: 'I would not say that planning officers were not helpful. Those I contacted were helpful. They listened, gave advice and direction. It is only the system they operate in that is hostile to us. I cannot say whether other people's experiences with those officers were the same. I can only speak for myself and my organisation at the time.' (Interview with cultural centre applicant in Easterly, March 1992). There is also the argument that the attitude of and relationship with planning officers can be determined in some cases by the status of the applicant or his/her agent. One respondent made this point during the interview.

6.2.3 Car Show Rooms

More established BEM businessmen also found problems. For example, a Turkish applicant for a car show room development confirmed that his proposal would help him expand/remain in business saying, 'The building of the car show room will enable this ethnic business to operate efficiently, expand, retain the existing workers and employ two more workers. The existing premises are badly exposed to vandalism and

we have had many of our vehicles damaged because of poorly secured premises. The proposed show room will help us remain in business.' (Interview with Car showroom applicant in Easterly, April 1992). But, Clara notes many inner city employment policy and urban regeneration initiatives seem more concerned with bringing in new larger businesses from outside than helping BEM individuals who can offer employment to others getting established.

Another interviewee pointed out that some neighbours go all out to raise objections to proposals and are not prepared to listen to any suggestions from the applicant for compromise. For example the car show room applicant commented of his neighbours, 'Even neighbours who were not affected by our proposal were stiffly opposed to it for the sake of opposition. They were not even willing to listen to our offers - no parking in the street, no repairs, no weekend operations, - all these were mentioned in the objections. We were quite prepared to accept any conditions that will accommodate the neighbours worries, but they still did not care to know.'

When Chizoma visited the application site as a race relations officer (her role at that time) with the planning officer during the processing of his application, the applicant mentioned that his neighbours were very willing to put up with, and support the existence of a white funeral director's shop next to their residential homes but not a car repair workshop owned by an ethnic minority person. The applicant claimed that in spite of all his effort to make a case for his application, neither the officers nor the planning committee was sympathetic to him. Chizoma did her best to highlight the economic need of this applicant and the fact that he should be given a chance to remain gainfully employed in his own workshop with the necessary/reasonable conditions attached to the planning consent. But all the advice was ignored and in fact the race relations unit was viciously attacked at Committee by one of the councillors who was solidly behind the angry neighbours. The applicant responded, 'Yes, I turned what had been a rubbish dump into a good living space, but because I am a foreigner, the council try to make trouble for me, and turned down my application.'

This particular case continued for a considerable time, and the applicant commented to Chizoma subsequently, 'It is now one and half years since there was a public meeting on my planning application for a car show room. Following that meeting, the planning officer was going to put forward a report to Committee. We never heard anything more about the report and our application. The officer was not helpful to us, in fact in my opinion, he is bloody racist.' Chizoma notes that conceptually, once again, the theme of relationship between race, class and power is highlighted with particular reference to the process of planning. The slowness, the extended timescale that planning officers took to deal with this application, and the subsequent bureaucracy and legal processes all sapped the energy of the applicant. In this case the slow pace of service delivery by the planners, and the nature of the attitudes and views held by the neighbours and planners all conspired to ensure that the applicant was bound to lose in the long run. It is therefore justified to argue that because the applicants have not received equal treatment from planning officers, the opportunity to win the prize of planning consent has been denied them.

6.2.4 Mini Cab Firms

A common form of application from BEM areas is for mini-cab premises, for reasons that are explained by one such applicant in defence of his case within the context of the example given. Minicab business applicants often felt that the planners were giving the white neighbours more information and help than they themselves. One interviewee expressed concern about the way he believed planning officers withheld important information which would have helped their case while the same information was given to their objecting neighbours, saying, 'We were not well informed as to our right to be represented at Committee in the way the objectors were informed, which gave them upper hand to the point of providing a full house in terms of number of people and presenting their case fully at Committee. I believe that if we were given the same opportunity to be properly represented, our case would have received better consideration than it did.' He added, 'The need for the services we provide here is very crucial. People need us a lot particularly for their shopping, going out to meet friends as many people around here don't own cars. The Jewish community also rely heavily on us especially during their feast of Passover, Tabernacle, and Feast of Dedication. Because of racial and sexual attacks, women and black people need our services especially after dark for safety reasons. Old people need our services for fear of being mugged.' This appears to demonstrate lack of commitment on the part of planners in service delivery, with particular reference to consultation and advisory role towards BEM service users in relation to equal opportunities. Arguably, if ethnicity, gender and age issues were mainstreamed into transport planning decision-making, minicab drivers and their businesses would be much more highly valued.

Similarly, the interview shows that the applicant's open invitation to the local residents to discuss the management of the minicab office was refused. One respondent felt that neighbours simply would not tolerate their presence in a neighbourhood that is traditionally English. In summary, according to an applicant, neighbours gave the following range of reasons for objecting to the proposal.

- Minicab offices are a notorious local haunt of prostitutes and their 'pimps'
- The minicab office causes severe traffic congestion on nearby road
- The office is being used as an amusement arcade as there is a space invader machine on the premises
- Cars tend to be parked on the corners of roads, causing obstructions and making it difficult for school children to cross
- At night, noise is a problem with car doors slamming and music blaring from car radios
- There is extreme noise disturbances caused to residents in the area
- Vehicles coming and going at all hours.

In addition to the reasons quoted above, which were given to the local planning department, the Area's Action Group handed a petition signed by 302 people. One needs to ask whether the 302 people who signed the petition really live within the proximity of the cab office. The applicant stated during the interview, that they had 'no immediate next door residential neighbours.' One would have expected the

decision makers to relate the number of petitioners to the vicinity of the minicab office before drawing conclusions. At the public meeting, the applicant stated that the minicab office had nothing to do with drug peddling, or prostitution which had existed in the area for over 30 years. He further stated that a video camera had been installed to monitor the activities around the cab office, and could also play a 'watch dog' role over the area which would assist the police. The applicant pointed out that noise from cars, was not from minicab drivers, but touts of the prostitutes. With reference to traffic congestion, significantly, the head of Engineering carried out an assessment of the issue and made observations which were more supportive as shown later.

The minicab applicant noted, 'We do not have immediate next-door neighbours as the office is located away from residential houses, but we are in good relationship with our next door business neighbours who are plumbers. The nearby residents labelled us with all sorts of accusations, eg, obstructive parking. I expected them to raise the same complaints when the next door business neighbour moved in, but because they are white, they are entitled to park anywhere they choose. In fact I can see that you can get away with anything as long as your colour is the right one (ie white). Only last Saturday (21/3/92), we made a phone call to the police to come and inspect a van which was dangerously parked near our door, causing a big obstruction. The response from the policeman was, 'there is nothing I can do, I do not have any officers to send around to you.' The same van remained there until Monday. I believe that we also have a right to be protected in case that van was loaded with explosive and yet the police did not respond positively to our request. We were accused of aiding and abating prostitution and drug trafficking. I believe the law must be respected and as a Christian, I disapprove of prostitution and drug dealing. I therefore cannot see any reason why our cab operation should seek to aid prostitution and drug trafficking.' (Interview with Minicab applicant in Easterly, March 1992).

Whilst the town planners were unsupportive of the application the following more supportive comments were given by a senior figure in the Borough's Engineering (Highways) department. 'Officers have visited the premises on numerous occasions in order to establish whether the acknowledged traffic problems in this area can be attributed significantly to the minicab use. Ten visits were recorded by officers both during the day and in the evening. On no occasion were any significant problems observed that could be related to the minicab use. The congestion that occurs in this area is primarily caused by traffic queuing from XXX Hill/ YYY Road junction, and also the volume of traffic crossing YYY Road at ZZZ Bank. From the observations of the Head of Engineering the minicab vehicles do not contribute significantly to the problem.'

Likewise, the Head of Environmental Health did not object in the proposed use. In fact the planning department too observed that the objections raised by neighbours were not planning issues and that the applicant's premises were constantly being monitored. The planning officers stated that they did not support the neighbours' objections to this proposal. Although his case officer (who was black), and the officer from the engineering department were both not in support of the allegations made by his neighbours, at the planning committee, elected members allowed such wild allegations to gain more consideration.

Although this application was recommended by officers for approval, the objecting neighbours attended the committee in great numbers and argued for the politicians to overturn the recommendations. The applicants claimed that officers had advised the objectors of their rights to attend and present their case at the Committee without giving the same advice to them (the applicants). Therefore the applicants felt that this denied them the opportunity of putting their case before the Committee as the petitioners did. The applicants blame the Committee members for not asking such important question as to why there should be 302 signatures to the petition when there are much fewer residents around the minicab office. They also feel that politicians have not shown sufficient goodwill towards their case which they believe they deserve as of right. The applicants felt very disappointed by the role of their neighbours, officers and the politicians and were convinced that the treatment they received was discriminatory and racist. They also felt that the politicians overturned the recommendations because there were not sufficient number of Afro-caribbean councillors on the planning committee to support them and argue in their favour.

Chizoma notes that the politicians rather than the planners were therefore the key players in deciding the fate of this application, suggesting that local politics (and the autonomy of the local state) was more powerful than the statutory national planning system. The case also brings to focus, the theme planners as key players in anti-racism/equal opportunities, but in this case they appear to be non-committed and not particularly helpful. Why did the planners advise the objectors of their right to attend and present their case to the committee, without giving the same advice/opportunity to the black applicant? This action defeats the whole exercise of recommending the application to committee for approval. Clearly the officers of the local state were not acting as impartial 'umpires' but were arguably showing a certain amount of bias and lack of racial awareness. Chizoma was to uncover more serious allegations of planners being obstructive by not even putting forward an applicant's case to committee in a similar case. The applicant feels strongly that he has been treated in a discriminatory manner by the planning and valuation officers both in terms of planning consent and the purchase of the premises which he desperately needs to help him remain in business. To refuse planning permission or grant only a temporary one with rigid conditions to economic oriented proposals can be seen as an attempt by the state institutions to discourage black and ethnic minorities from gaining economic independence, under the pretext that the proposals will have detrimental effect on the neighbours. It would therefore seem that the degree of importance the council attaches to neighbour objections is influenced by the nature of service to be provided by a particular proposal.

6.2.5 Restaurants

Hot food takeaways, ethnic minority restaurants and food premises in general are another category of planning application that causes much distress with the BEM community. Applicants for a Turkish Restaurant argued their businesses not only provided employment for themselves and other people, but also addressed an unmet need of the local ethnic minorities. In this case the applicant was represented by a white agent, who commented, 'The proposed restaurant provides the best Turkish

food. The local Turkish Community would like to eat their own food prepared by their own people, in a decent environment.' The Turkish applicant noted, 'When the first application was submitted, it was recommended for refusal because the hours of use relate to the cultural needs of the Turkish community which generated a lot of neighbour objections. When the application was re-submitted, the specialist intervention of the race relations unit and our local community leaders as well as one councillor made it possible for better understanding and consideration, which resulted in planning approval on this occasion. I would like to thank the race relations officer in particular who helped to explain to the officers the cultural /religious dimension to our application. But for her, my application would have been turned down a second time. I would like to recommend that the cultural needs of ethnic minorities be adequately considered whenever they put in planning applications.' The application in question was for an extension of hours of business in a special restaurant for muslims during the 'Ramadan'.

Chizoma noted from other examples that there was a considerable dislike of the Turkish people for language reasons. A Turkish respondent commented, 'They were very rude to us, aggressive, very unfriendly, very difficult. Quite out to create trouble. They simply wanted us to move out of their traditional area. They even said to us 'why don't you go back to where you come from?' We told them 'That we are British too, even though we speak Turkish.' They hated to hear our children speaking their mother tongue -Turkish.' The above quote was given by a woman homemaker who found that she had to apply for planning permission to operate her sewing machine, commenting that she was forced to apply apparently for no good reason, except that the system wanted to satisfy our neighbours who don't like us.' The informant and her family had bought a house in a traditionally English residential area, and their presence would not be tolerated by their white neighbours. As it turned out in this case the applicant received considerable help from the planning officers to resolve the situation in spite of the neighbours' objections.

6.2.6 Places of worship and cultural centres example

A particular area of great concern was the way in which BEM applications related to places of worship (whatever their religion), and related cultural premises. For example, one applicant told Chizoma, 'Planning laws are not fair at all to meeting the needs of minority people. They do not allow us to have the amenities we need for our worship. The planning law restriction about change of use and alteration of property is very horrible. When we try to do things our own way, we are painfully denied opportunity because of planning law that has no consideration for ethnic minority groups and their needs, particularly, religious needs.' Likewise an applicant for a cultural centre commented, 'I think planning control laws and other government/local authorities regulations are very rigid, biased and unfair as far as BEM needs are concerned. These laws and regulations give local authorities and their officers the opportunity to gear the system to what suits white people and not what other members of the community need or like. For instance, there is always opposition when black people hold parties which go beyond the length of time that white people will enjoy.'

Applicants who were knowledgeable of planning law and saw the necessity for it, still

felt that the law operates in a manner that gives BEMs room for concern, for example a representative of a Bangaldeshi community project commented, 'I am aware of planning control law and I see it as necessary in terms of urban planning. However, the BEM communities' perception of it is generally different. They see it as an unnecessary and bureaucratic, expensive and external control of their living environment. It is a preventive measure for people doing their own things rather than a guiding measure. Some say it is quite insensitive to the needs of BEMs. Some say it is a legitimate way to unleash racism ie. some of the rigidity, lack of flexibility and lack of understanding of BEM needs are borne out of racism of the institution or the individual officers.'

In Easterly, BEM applicants saw the Council's policy of retention of industrial sites and floor spaces as a failure to recognise their basic economic, social and cultural needs which vacant industrial premises can solve, particularly where it is unlikely that these premises will return to industrial use in the foreseeable future, given the fact that traditional manufacturing industries in London have been shrinking since the 1950s. This policy fails to recognise local requirements of a changing social reproduction as shown in the quotes below. Significantly, unlike many white churches, many BEM churches (especially Afro-Caribbean ones) and some mosques are overflowing and really need more space. A BEM church representative commented, 'The law and policies do not allow us to have what we need for our worship. The restrictions about change of use and alterations of property is very horrible'. Another interviewee made a case for community/cultural centres to be allowed on old/vacant industrial sites and premises in order to minimise the neighbours' racism and hostile reactions, by being well away from residential areas. A respondent commented, 'The very sight of black people is very offensive to many white people. There are always empty buildings and warehouses in industrial areas which will serve our purpose. Why can't the Council allow us to use them? Anne Taylor Centre (built in memory of a white woman) is functioning successfully in a light industrial area with schools nearby, the Council allowed it and yet no complaint. They should therefore change the policy to allow black community centres to be built and function in industrial areas. Then, there will be no problem and no complaint from white neighbours.'

Again the problem of neighbour objection loomed large. One respondent commented, 'During the last six years existence of the present mosque, there has not been a single occasion when local non-Muslim residents were caused any inconvenience by what we do, yet our non-Muslim neighbours have not shown any support for this project.' Even when most of the neighbours cannot see anything detrimental with a development proposal, there is unusually a campaign for a united front against a BEM planning proposal. Another place of worship applicant commented, 'Most of our neighbours were initially supportive but one of them was nasty to us and he went round to stir up hostility against us. He succeeded in doing so. In fact, he originated all our problems.' There are many incidents of hostile reactions from neighbours in the form of protest letters, petitions, telephone calls and representations/deputations at committees and public consultation meetings, objecting to BEM planning proposals. One racist neighbour can easily persuade those not directly affected into signing a petition against a BEM proposal. The applicants themselves feel helpless and frustrated when they realise that they have no means of challenging neighbour racism

and the injustice it generates.

The study also found that BEMs are often blamed for local social, economic and environmental problems. An applicant commented that white people have the tendency of blaming any noise around here on the BEM cultural centre, even when others play their music overnight. The leader of a church group bitterly complained that, 'the neighbours have even gone as far as accusing our church members of urinating in the street and making the environment dirty. Is this not an insult?' (Clara notes that street urination has now become a popular pastime for white 'lager louts' as a result of the expansion of the evening economy of our cities, and yet the same level of outrage is not levelled at them, as is against innocent BEM church goers).

There were also cases where a space might actually be provided with planning permission for an ethnic minority group to build a community centre, but access to the necessary grant funding was denied, thus again 'achieving the prize' depended upon both getting planning permission and funding. This was the case with one of the Community Centres discussed in this study where lack of funding made it difficult for a community centre to be built even though a planning consent has been granted since 1986. Clara adds that in the case of churches, mosques and temples it is often the local congregation that sets up a fund to pay for the building themselves, and many members will tithe at least 10% of their income. On the other hand they may adopt a wary, cautious approach to any government funding that is offered which might come with ties as to how they use the building.

On the other hand, it was in particular instances in the field of worship-related planning applications that Chizoma found the respondents were more complimentary towards the planning officers (compared say with minicab applications). One place of worship applicant commented, 'Ann (not real name, the planning officer) was angelic. I wish all officers would be like her. John (the Conservation Officer) is good but Mr. J (the Valuer) is horrible. Ann explained the application forms, how to complete them and what to do in the event of the application being refused. She gave us every hope/assurance that she would continue to assist us. I would like all officers to be like Ann in the way they treat black applicants. It is a lesson I would like Mr. J to learn.' Clara adds that arguably, but not necessarily, because women planners are more likely to be aware of equal opportunities policies being in a minority and newcomers themselves to the planning system, they are generally more sensitive to BEM issues especially if they are also black themselves (although not always so of course as racism by proxy is a strong theme in BEM experience too).

Chizoma, from her experience of the above three local government officers, noted that it was not the first time some one has expressed strong reservation about Mr. J.(the Valuer). Another BEM applicant who did not take part in this study, once described the same officer's attitude in a similar manner; even the involvement of a Race Relations Officer would not make him change his attitude. Although he is not a planner, he works in a planning related field where he plays a key role of processing applications for access to council premises in the way of leasehold, without which planning consent will be meaningless. It can be argued that, without the necessary understanding, tolerance and flexibility towards BEM needs, it is hard to see how

officers with Mr. J's harsh attitude can make it easy for BEMs to receive the desperately needed Council services. Officers behaving like Mr. J. usually fuel 'the reproduction of institutional racism' (Munt, 1991: 584), and adopt a colour-blind approach to service delivery. Officers behaving like Mr J. bring to focus the theme of individual racism/prejudice against persons of other racial groups and its impact in denying access to services to members of that group. Both the conservation and planning officers mentioned above often demonstrated high level of awareness when dealing with BEM cases. The planning officer in particular has won the admiration of a number of applicants. She is a black woman who also lives in the inner city. Perhaps being black and a woman, this explains why she appears to understand the race and gender issue and as a junior officer could only give the limited support within her reach to BEM applicants since institutional racism and the operation of the system will not allow her to influence any real change. Although most applicants get upset when their applications are unsuccessful they normally appreciate the role of officers who understand and give due consideration to their needs. In the end the applicant quoted above did not receive planning consent despite the 'hope/assurance' and help she received from the planning officer.

Race and gender seem to conspire together to disadvantage BEM applications for places of worship. The leader of the African church group who is a woman and who also represented their community during the interview said, 'We applied to change an industrial unit to a place of worship for an African Religious group. We need a larger space because the nature of our religious worship requires sufficient space to wash our legs, hands, heads, etc, like Muslims do. We also need extra space for 'mercy ground' where you fall down to ask God for mercy.' This church leader explained to Chizoma, that being a black woman did not make things easy for her and her community during the processing of their planning application. She felt that much importance was not attached to her as a church leader by those in authority. Clara adds that she suspects that the planning officers concerned did not understand what a mercy ground was and found the concept alien, whereas she recalls such customs in South London churches herself. Likewise Clara recalls examples of pentecostal churches being refused permission because of fears from neighbours of 'flooding' because of baptism and foot washing practices.

Eade (1989) has referred to the claims of Pakistani activists, to represent 'their community' to the dominant host society and various sectors of the state. The church leader's response and similar responses as shown below demonstrate the eagerness of many ethnic minorities to represent their community and maintain the culture or stick to what they are 'used to' in the form of communal institutions such as churches, mosques and cultural centres. Two Islamic Leaders in Easterly stressed this during the interview:

'We applied for it as X Mosque and Islamic Cultural Centre. Our particular needs are religious, cultural, social and welfare of the growing population of our community in the Borough. When we first applied in 1984 there was no such place in this area to serve our people, we only had a small house in a local street as a place of prayer. With the completion of this mosque, we have achieved a lot towards meeting important needs of our people.'

Although the interviewees felt they have achieved a 'lot towards meeting the needs' of their people, they are concerned that the big mosque has no facilities for women worshippers because Muslim culture does not permit men and women to worship together. This particular type of unmet need was also highlighted during an interview with other applicants:- We wanted to build a mosque and a dome as a cultural/religious centre where men worshippers will be separated from women worshippers in accordance with Muslim culture'. Clearly the interaction of gender and race is complex. But presumably in the case of the muslim application the lack of provision for women was seen as 'extraordinary' compared with white facilities. Yet it was only a few weeks ago in another London borough that Clara heard an account of a council leisure development being approved by a planning committee, where provision was only made for men's needs, a local councillor commented laughing, 'well there's nothing for women as well, as we ran out of money by then'. Clearly he was not being judged in the same way as the BEM leaders who made the 'same' decision.

6.2.7 Housing Attitudes

Housing policy and planning applications were another major area of contention and dissatisfaction. In Riverside for instance, the Council operated a 'Sons and Daughters' policy, which gave first rights to predominantly white relations in the area to 'inherit' council houses. The Council was heavily criticised by the CRE about this policy because it favours only the sons and daughters of tenants who have been tenants for a long time. It is a policy that is not based on housing need and in the Stepney Neighbourhood, in statistical terms, the people who are in the greatest housing need are members of ethnic minorities. This was seen by many as a racist policy which stands in the way of meeting the housing need of local BEMs. Although Riverside 'sons and daughters' policy was prohibited by High Court Order in 1988, it was felt it still affecting the Borough's BEMs, not least in the institutionally racist attitudes it generated as to 'who was a worthy applicant'.

Similarly, the Docklands Forum has criticised the LDDC development policy for not identifying and adequately considering the BEM housing needs and affordability. For example, 78% of new housing completed in the LDDC area was in the private sector (source: LDDC Key Facts and Figures, March 1992). The Docklands Housing Needs Survey 1985 (London Research Centre) found that 75% of households in the Docklands Boroughs have been excluded from access to new housing because of insufficient income to purchase properties in Docklands. The Docklands Forum report on 'Race and Housing in London's Docklands, 1993' also showed that 'black people are grossly under represented in the new housing schemes'. A respondent stressed that even with the Docklands Forum's criticism, the policy remains unchanged. The Forum's views were dismissed as a non-planning issue. 'What matters to LDDC is building houses rather than tenants' circumstances.' Clara adds that ten years later the Docklands area of London has become a focus of very high house prices, and the process of major social restructuring, colonisation and gentrification has continued unabated, inflating local house prices, and affecting both black and white residents in the process.

But attempts by BEM groups to enter the new Docklands housing market were received with particular opposition. Docklands Forum (1993) has described how the LDDC were inundated with protest letters arguing against planning permission being granted to a Bangladeshi group housing project in Wapping in 1991. Most of the protest letters talked about 'the fact that the new development proposal would lead to a devaluation of their surrounding properties'. The applicants were certain that their proposed housing project would not devalue the properties in the area. They saw their neighbours' objections and hostility as borne out of racism. This is similar to the minicab applicant's argument about his cab office being blamed for 'prostitution and drug trafficking'. He denied involvement in such practices which he said 'were existing in the area long before the cab office moved in'. The reasons for neighbours' objections were not planning-related, they were merely objecting because 'they did not want the presence of black people in their area'. This clearly highlights the theme of neighbour racism and the link between this and ethnic structuring of urban space.

Likewise an application from a Bangladeshi housing association in Riverside received strong/hostile objections from the neighbours because the proposal would lead to 'the problems of too many children living on the site and fall in property value.' The above discussions support the view that ethnic structuring of urban space seems to provide a link between institutional racism and neighbour racism. It is imagined that a black residential development will attract similar hostility from neighbours who simply do not want an increase in the number of BEMs living next to them. One interviewee described their neighbours simply as: 'Very hostile, selfish, racist-everything, you name it, it is there.' An officer of Docklands Forum confirmed that BEM housing development projects are often subjected to strong objections from neighbours. Making reference to a Black Housing Association development site in Wapping, he said, 'The piece of land in question is very small and yet it attracted very hostile and racist objection led by a very obnoxious right wing guy. Docklands area is predominantly racist and all the BEMS there are subjected to severe harassment.' The same informant made reference to an LDDC Social Housing development on the Isle of Dogs, and confirmed that the Isle of Dogs area has a history of racism. This came out clearly during the consultation and public meeting on the planning application of the Mast House Terrace when the local white residents objected strongly to the proposed 5, 6 and 7 bed units [larger houses] because according to them, 'these sort of houses are not made for our type of communities'. Chizoma considers that these examples show there is a clear link between neighbour racism and ethnic structuring of urban space.

It can be argued that the cases referred to above, lend support to the argument by Docklands Forum (1993) that BEMs suffer a high level of discrimination in the hands of their neighbours and in many cases, such discriminatory reactions result in racist policies being introduced by the local authorities. For example, Docklands Forum has reported with considerable concern that 'pressure from local white residents not to house homeless Bangladeshi families on the Isle of Dogs' has led 'the Isle of Dogs Neighbourhood Council to alter its decision on how it would use the units at Timber Wharves' (Docklands Forum, 1993:11). The response from the minicab applicant, the statements of objection obtained during consultation and public meeting which Chizoma also attended and the final Committee decision on this application combine

to justify the applicant's argument that they failed to win the prize of planning consent for no reason other than racism a combination of individual, neighbour and institutional racism. They are not wanted in the area because they are ethnic minorities.

House extensions are another major area of concern. Chizoma typically heard accounts along the lines, 'We wrote a letter to the planning department explaining our circumstances, and the need to extend our family home, but because the neighbours did not like the idea and objected to it, the planning department turned us down.' The applicants did not know the planning law and interpreted it that way as a personal attack. Clara adds BEM families may have extreme difficulty finding another house elsewhere because of racist attitudes, and the desire to stay within the local community and so refusing planning permission for housing extensions can actually attack the social cohesion and family structures of the area.

6.2.8 Care Homes

Another area of contention is that of 'care homes' for example in the case of an application for a care home there was evidence of bias, a respondent commenting, 'Many of our neighbours are biased because of our colour. When we were trying to rebuild the derelict site, they were all nice to us. Once the building was finished and we started the community work - bringing in the young homeless BEM kids, all their smiles and friendliness evaporated and turned into hostility, unreasonableness and bias because we are black and they object to the work we do. They do not realise that these kids must be housed and looked after as members of the community. They are very hostile to the black and ethnic minority kids but their attitude to the few white kids we have here is more sympathetic and accommodating.' Chizoma attended the planning committee where this application was discussed. There was a huge deputation led by objecting neighbours with numerous hostile/ racist comments against the proposal (a care home for homeless young blacks between the age of 15 and 18). The applicant denied allegations against the young black persons he caters for. He went on to make a strong case for his proposal and in particular, the fact that his 'care home' is providing an essential service for local black youths who would otherwise be out in the street to the detriment of the wider community. He emphasised that the 'care home' is very efficiently managed. The case was hotly debated by Members but the applicant was able to win the vote narrowly, and approval was granted. Once again it can be argued that the narrow victory won by this applicant was made possible because he was providing an essential service which the local state has neglected. As the applicant pointed out, these young blacks will be out in the street if not cared for in a properly managed home. The local state was neither willing to take the responsibility of providing the service nor was prepared to face the consequences of its own negligence. The applicant talked about the neighbours being 'very hostile to BEM kids, but more sympathetic and accommodating to the white kids.' What this shows is that the neighbours are not objecting to a 'Care Home', but to a Care Home run by a black person for BEM children. The fact that the few white children in that same care home are treated differently and kindly, is a clear indication that the neighbours attitude would have been more favourable to, and more supportive of, the entire project had it been owned and run by a white person, for white children. One

therefore cannot help arguing that it is an act of racism both neighbour racism and individual prejudice against persons of other racial groups.

But care homes for Elderly BEMs can more surprisingly also be the subject of great opposition. An applicant seeking planning permission for some conversion work to the care home, linked to a local BEM church, said that the neighbours 'complained that we cause obstruction and that we double-park in the street, which we don't do. They even tried to double-park their cars in the street and claimed that we did it. Although our reconstruction work was internal and so did not affect them much, yet they complained that we sing in the church and we make noise.' In response to the question on ethnic origin, the respondent said, 'yes, our neighbours reacted in a hostile manner because we are black, but the council eventually saw with our case'. He went on to say, 'they tried to victimise us even when we try to help by providing free service. Our application was for a day care service for black elderly people. I would love to see a good old people's home in Easterly, provided by the Council to care for the black elderly people rather than leave everything to the church like ours and charity organisations.' The respondent indicated that they are providing this service not out of choice but because the council (the local state) has failed to do it and they do not want to allow their own elderly people suffer as a result of the failure of the state. It can then be argued that the council is consciously granting planning permission to care services so that the black community initiatives can be employed to provide essential services to their own people and so relieve the local state of its statutory duties.

In the case of a daycare nursery one respondent said, 'Before the planning permission was granted, I was made to spend a lot of money in order to meet the demand from the neighbours such as sound proofing'. The application was for an Under 5 Day Nursery, and among the rigid conditions mentioned by the respondent were: 'children can only play for three hours each day; no week end service even when the need for this service was clearly demonstrated to the authorities'. This respondent went on to say that both the council and the high street banks' treat black people in a discriminatory manner when they seek financial support for their businesses. 'Both the council's local business centre and the banks turned down my application for grant and loan to enable me carry out the work the planning department and the Environmental Health insisted must be done before the application could be considered.' She went on to make some recommendations: 'the banks and other public bodies should be educated to recognise the needs of black people and to give them the assistance and support they deserve.' The respondent argued that the refusal to give bank loan or council grant is a way of denying black people the opportunity to gain economic independence. According to the respondent, in refusing her request for loan, the bank manager asked, 'why do you want to establish your own business when you can continue comfortably in your job as a midwife.' The informant found this view very patronising as it implicitly suggested that a black woman, was not capable of running her own business.

6.3 Conclusion

Chizoma concludes that the effect of all these intolerant attitudes which result to strong objections is that the BEM applicants find themselves in a position of either

failing to win the prize of planning consent or gaining the planning consent with severe conditions attached to it which reduces the real benefit the applicant will get from the development. The reactions of the affected applicants towards the failure of the planning system (and their applications) as illustrated above, are ones of anger, frustration and a feeling of helplessness. This is because the BEMs have realised that they have a long wait for equality as many of their needs remain unmet and as they continue to have obstacles in their efforts to fill those gaps through self help initiatives. In this and preceding chapters, the author has emphasised how discriminatory practices are well enshrined in public and private institutions. The quotes above reflect the concerns of most of the applicants who were interviewed and tallies with the views of Paul Boateng (1985 - RTP1 Lecture) who argued that planning operates in a colour-blind manner to the detriment of BEMs. From this view, it can be argued that racism in planning is protected to some degree by existing legislation, which affords most local authorities the opportunity to assume non-discrimination and equal opportunities for all. Local authority officers process BEM applications rigidly without flexible interpretation of the law. This in turn makes it easy for them to avoid reference to different social groups and their economic, religious and socio/cultural needs and requirements. In contrast planners could, and might yet, act as key players in bringing about an anti-racist, equal opportunities based approach to planning, in respect of development plan policy, development control practice and simply in helping and advising applicants better as to their rights and needs.

SECTION 7: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Mind the Gap

This research has shown that in spite of all the rhetoric about equal opportunities, and the development of a veritable race relations industry - still - among the 'planned' BEMs feel that they are shortchanged by the planning system, and many feel quite alienated from local government itself too. Indeed, many planners see a concern with equal opportunities and racism, as 'moving away from planning'. On the other hand (as Chizoma notes) in line with the views of Tagg (1993) (quoted in Thomas, 1997), the 'planners' are having to deal with huge cultural and social diversity as well as challenges of interaction and language and a rapidly changing demographic situation in the two boroughs studied. In particular the nature of BEM planning applications tends to differ in many cases from the traditional British types of uses. BEM planning proposals conflict with the ideals and standards already set by existing laws, regulations, policies and procedures. Chizoma concludes that both the central and local state have failed to make adequate provision for meeting the BEMs' divergent cultural, religious, educational, social and economic development. As a result BEMs seek to meet their own needs, by trying to fill the gap (left by government neglect and ignorance) through self effort. But attempts to help themselves by setting up businesses, community centres, places of worship and alternative forms of housing provision often result too in increased hostility and objections

The local state is portrayed as engaging in social control and management instead of meeting the social and economic development needs of culturally diverse communities. In some of the cases this can be positive where a genuine Race Relations Unit (RRU) has been established, but in many cases BEMs feel that such bodies have little understanding of their particular needs, and often there appears to be a weak link between RRU and EO initiatives and the work of the local planning department. Meanwhile BEMs adversely affected by the operation of the planning system feel helpless, frustrated and angry because they realise they still have a long wait for equality and their needs remain un-met while obstacles continue to be placed in their way in their effort to fill the gaps in service provision themselves, as illustrated, for example, in the case of care homes, community centres, and small businesses. As a Guardian Newspaper article, 'Long Wait for Equality,' (19 May 1992) has reported, racial discrimination is still with us in many aspects of everyday life despite a framework of laws aiming to outlaw it. It can be argued that the existing legislation has not done much in terms of changing people's attitudes. This is a failure on the part of the central state. This view is in line with that of the Scarman Report (1981) which concluded that the race-relations legislation had failed to tackle the roots of racial disadvantage effectively. The CRE said in 1992: 'Unless the law is significantly sharpened, and as a matter of urgency, the rate of progress towards racial equality in Britain will be dis-spiritingly low'. (Guardian Newspaper, 19 May 1992).

Chizoma considers her findings, as discussed below, support Ouseley's (1991) view that despite enlightened noises made by a handful of local authorities (including those studied by Chizoma), BEMs still believe that they suffer discrimination at the hands of both their neighbours and those in a position of relative power and influence in the

local government at all levels. Chizoma concluded that many senior officers have a nonchalant attitude towards recognising these divergent constituent groups and providing adequate services which are sensitive to their needs; the reason for this appears to be that race issues and the welfare of BEMs are not high on the political agenda of any of the local authorities, the LDDC and other urban policy and regeneration agencies.

Many of these problems have continued since the conclusion of Chizoma's original research. There has been a rolling back of the structures that supported anti-racism. The Race Relations Unit staff strength in Easterly was reduced from 46 to 4 (including the head of the unit). Posts and units specifically set up to deal with Racism in several London boroughs and in the planning departments have been abolished, restructured or combined in a wider generic 'equalities' initiative which does not disaggregate or distinguish between race, gender, disability etc, nor recognise the complexity and variety of different ethnic minority needs. Clara adds that we found a similar problem in many planning departments when undertaking our study for the RTPi on gender mainstreaming, with few Women's Units left either, such 'special units' often having been replaced or 'neutralised' by a wider, more woolly form of generic mainstreaming that achieved little (Greed, 2002b). Likewise we were to find that a superficial approach, based on a 'tick box' mentality seemed to predominate, accompanied by endless performance audits, but little concrete to show for all this effort. Of course a major background problem has been cut in local government finance in general, and a reduction in the status and support given to planning departments, resulting in lack of funding, staff vacancies and a general demoralisation.

Similarly, Chizoma found that the watch dogs, notably the Trade Union and the Docklands Forum, did not put the welfare of BEMs high on their list of priorities. This is not surprising as these organisations are mainly white dominated with the interest of BEMs being marginalised. On the other hand, the CRE (Commission for Racial Equality) as a watch dog has no real legal power to move swiftly to the rescue of BEM victims of racism, while the local Race Equality Councils are handicapped primarily by the fact that they rely on financial and political support of the very local authority they are set up to monitor. This support is not assured on a regular basis because of low priority given to BEM issues.

Chizoma concluded that not only were the local authority officers at fault but more broadly, local politicians and white neighbours all exacerbated the problems of the BEMs. It is the view prevalent among BEMs that management and councillors are in mutual unwritten agreement to discriminate against them either in service delivery or in employment. The few politicians, mainly BEM councillors, who are sympathetic to BEM issues are in non-powerful position to influence policy or translate their intentions into action. Overall there is evidence from the insiders and the watch dogs of unacceptable attitudes and abuse of power among council managers which put severe pressure on BEM staff resulting in an increased number of dismissals or voluntary resignations of BEM staff from council employment, thus weakening any achievement in employment targets made by the councils in the past, particularly in Easterly. There is mistrust between employees and their chief officers and politicians

as to the common goals to be achieved in relation to service delivery to BEMs and the treatment of BEM staff in terms of recruitment, retention and career progression. Some employees complain that they do not get full support of their managers when they deal with BEM cases nor are they allowed the opportunity to become aware of what the planning laws expect planners to do for BEM service users.

Although the two authorities studied profess to being equal opportunity employers and service providers, insiders interviewed were of the view that racism is rife and that equal opportunity is nothing but a statement on paper. It is not surprising that both the watch dogs and the insiders share the view that racism by proxy and the tactics of divide-and-rule are frequently applied by management as a more convenient way of effecting discrimination, thereby making it difficult for the sufferers to unite and fight back, while at the same time sustaining and perpetrating individual and institutional racism. A sustained anti-racism initiative and an effective race relations unit are recognised by both the insiders and the watch dogs as essential mechanisms for addressing the service delivery and employment issues affecting BEMs. Chizoma concluded from her investigations that Riverside is perceived as blatantly racist by BEMs while Easterly is also seen as racist but displays this in a more subtle way.

7.2 Summary of Chizoma's Key Points

1. Institutional as well as individual racism is endemic in Local Government town planning service.
2. There is a rolling back of anti-racism strategy through the deletion of the structures that supported anti-racism, for example, the demise of effective race relations units, and the deletion of the assessment and monitoring of equality implications of planning procedures and practices.
3. Key actors (chief officers, managers and politicians) who are expected to tackle racism are themselves heavily involved in perpetrating racism.
4. BEMs have specific planning needs (economic, housing, socio-cultural and religious), which planning policies, procedures and practices should respond to.
5. The philosophy of the existing laws and regulations constitute a restrictive framework within which it is difficult to extend a positive planning service to BEMs.

These findings were supported by other studies such as CRE/RTPI (1983), Cashmore (1991), Munt (1991a and b), which confirmed that planning plays an integral part in the problems of accessing services encountered by BEMs. Boateng (RTPI Lectures, 1985) also argued that planning operates in a colour-blind manner to the detriment of BEMs.

7.3 Recommendations

In this research, the need for action on research findings was recognised at the early stage, in the hope that some specific policy at local level (at least in Easterly) would follow immediately after the research, since the then PRRA (Principal Race Relations

Advisor) strongly supported this study and was then in a position to formulate the relevant policy based on research findings. Unfortunately, Easterly's RRU was restructured and made ineffective before the research was concluded. However, as Solomos(1991:7) has argued, 'the mere act of carrying out research on 'race relations' necessarily involves questions relevant to policy makers and general political debates. Thus, whatever the values and beliefs of the researcher, the research findings and beliefs about research findings, may gain currency outside the immediate academic environment'. As it turned out little changed although some did.

But what can be done? The 'do nothing' alternative has a number of implications. It means maintaining the status quo so that BEMs continue to suffer discrimination and their needs remain unmet; racism continues to proliferate; the multi-cultural dimension of British society not being acknowledged with the resultant blatant breaking of the law. Ouseley (1981:18) argues that deliberate non-action on the part of local authorities is 'borne out of total apathy, political irresponsibility towards black people and bureaucratic inertia'. Such an approach makes it difficult for BEMs to win the prize of planning consent, or to go through the planning process with ease.

One of the primary needs, arising from the identification of the problems, is the need to incorporate socio-cultural and economic issues in land use planning. Again and again, Clara too has found in her research that any planning application that requires 'different' provision for 'other' social groups, be they women, ethnic groups, the elderly, is bound to result in the response, 'social issues are not a land use matter'. As Munt (1991) points out, some local authorities had hoped that the preparation of the new Unitary Development Plan would afford them the opportunity to incorporate issues of race which were previously ignored in local plans, but this hope was dashed by the fact that the ministerial strategy advice from central government insisted that UDPs should concentrate on matters 'directly related to the use and development of land' (DoE 1989). The point Munt (1991) is making here is that the Government's guidelines for the UDP requires policies and proposals to be limited to land use and transportation matters. Although these can be set in their wider economic and social context, such guidelines have left little room for committed local authorities to manoeuvre around planning related issues such as change of use from industrial to place of worship which are specific to the needs of BEMs. This implies that the future of race and planning remains uncertain unless the central state demonstrates a more positive commitment towards race issues. This decision seems to have played into the hands of local planning authorities as it can be used to justify the inability of local authority to meet the service needs of BEMs.

But the RTPI itself has recommended that planning authorities should avoid discriminating against those whose needs are significantly different or more intense than 'normal' (RTPI/CRE 1983: 25). It is also in line with the views of Keeble (1969:296) that, 'powers of development control are so wide and, as regards some subjects, so vague, that the framing of a clear policy based upon definite principle is essential if control is not to degenerate into either, on the one hand, an irritating petty tyranny, or, on the other, into an ineffective and formless confusion unlit by either principle or precedent'. In relation to planning and allied services, discrimination may take one form or another, including: refusal of planning consent; with-holding advice

and necessary information; unduly delayed processing of application; attaching rigid/difficult conditions to planning consent; denial of access to premises; denial of access to grant funding to enhance implementation of the proposed development. This means that where the local state fails to provide clear policy guidelines, aimed at protecting the specific interest of local BEMs, the control law is simply left open for individuals within the system to use and abuse as it suits them. Obviously, the central state shares the blame for introducing legislation that is colour-blind in the first place. The only way to change all this is by carefully assessing and making adequate provision for economic, religious, and socio-cultural needs of BEMs, after thorough research into their specific needs and requirements in respect of the planning system.

For this to happen Central Government has to play a role in ensuring that these issues are incorporated within the philosophy and practice of planning at local government operational level. To do this there is a need to revise the current PPGs (Planning Policy Guidance). Chizoma argues that there should be a specific PPG on race issues, as well as revision to existing PPGs on topics as diverse as industry, transport and housing to incorporate a race dimension. The development of a PPG on race issues would involve looking at the various aspects of planning and how they affect the various communities that make up Britain. A PPG on race needs to include advice amalgamated from different planning topics. For example, a race PPG on housing issues, will advise on number, orientation and room sizes, number of bedrooms, kitchen layout/sizes and so on, because of cultural and religious needs of various groups of users. With regard to race issues on shopping, the PPG needs to spell out an understanding of the role of retailing and its employment implications for BEMs, the need to maintain market stalls, the need to diversify uses within town centres to accommodate various cultural groups that make up a particular community (ethnic as well as white market). It is not suggested that ethnic minorities should be given different treatment. What is being suggested is that, since the law says that everybody should be treated equally, within this equality framework of the law there should be room for choice and flexibility to accommodate cultural diversities that enhance choice.

As well as changing policy guidance, Chizoma argues there is a need to integrate issues of cultural diversity within local authority services as contemporary important dimensions in local government politics have been argued. BEMs often feel alienated and excluded from decision making bodies, and therefore it is very important to facilitate 'cultural accessibility' not least in respect of public participation and consultation. Equal opportunity training should include how to tackle racism at consultation and planning application public meeting stages. Some respondents expressed the view that such consultations/public meetings are deliberately organised to give neighbours the opportunity to come out and attack them and demolish the credibility of their proposals before officers to justify officers' recommendations for refusal of planning consent. Some also argued that neighbours are given better opportunity to prepare and make deputations to Committee meetings which help councillors take decisions against BEM applications.

Chizoma would also like to see more BEMs on planning committees and thus involvement in local politics too. She especially would like to see changes relating to

political representation and appointment of black councillors to key service committees. Here again the various political parties have a lot of work to do. One of the suggestions being put forward is that of empowerment of BEM councillors. There are a number of well qualified/well educated BEM politicians who are either not given the opportunity to become councillors or not appointed to responsible positions on the relevant key service committees where they could play useful roles to the benefit of BEM communities. The system of selection for Local Government councillors elections and appointments to council service committees by political parties needs to be looked into, reviewed and monitored to see how opportunities are being extended to everyone. For instance, in Easterly, at the time of her study there were about 20 BEM councillors out of a total of 60 councillors, but of the 7 main service committees, none (in 1994/95) had a BEM councillor as the chair. Similarly, in Riverside where there are 11 BEM councillors out of a total of 50 councillors, but not one BEM councillor was the chair of any main service committee. In the two boroughs, the highest position attained easily by BEM councillor is that of a mayor which is a mere ceremonial position. What is being argued is that if there are three or four BEM councillors chairing main service committees or are chief officers in the local authority structure, there will be opportunities for these people to act as checks on the excesses of white officers who under perform in the achievement of anti-racism initiatives.

Chizoma identified examples of bias, and favouritism within the planning system. Therefore she argued that it is very important to introduce monitoring of all planning applications in relation to ethnicity. Local authorities would then be able to give information as to the number of applications received from BEMs, the number approved, the number of applications refused, time spent on each application and the conditions attached to approved applications. This would make a number of local authorities sit up, knowing fully well that they are being monitored. As we were to find in the course of undertaking our RTPI study by 2001 all local authorities are now meant to mainstream and monitor equalities issues, through national standards established by the Local Government Association (EOLG,2001) and as a result of a series of Audit Commission and Best Value initiatives in the late 1990s. But in practice few local authorities have really taken all this on board. Whilst personnel, education and social services are relatively 'good' at this, it has been found that little progress is being made in the more technical departments (such as highways, building, valuation and in some cases planning) where a social dimension and cultural awareness has never, arguably, been a strong feature which, as we have seen, so affect the fate of BEM applications.

Chizoma also argued for central government to take a much stronger role by means of introducing new legislation. As it turned out this did take place under the new Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 Act, which as indicated in Section 4, was itself the result of national concern after the Lawrence Enquiry. Nowadays there is requirement that local authorities should take a proactive role in mainstreaming ethnicity considerations into planning policy, practice and procedures, rather than just waiting for complaints of discrimination to roll in. However, progress is by no means widespread. As Chizoma suggests, there is a need for some kind of national Practice Guide for local authorities as to how the suggested PPG on race could be

implemented. The RTPI has prepared a Planning Advisory Note (PAN) on best practice approach to be adopted by planners regarding planning issues affecting women. This could provide the model for the Central Government to adopt. The areas that can be covered in such a Planning Advisory Note should include: consultation mechanisms, outreach work, information leaflets, public education programmes and any other problem areas for BEMs. These four areas suggested above are the areas the author believes should be covered to tackle the research findings that relate the role of the Central Government to the existing restrictive legislative framework.

With regard to the major actors within the planning system who are themselves involved in perpetrating racism, this problem needs to be addressed in a number of ways. Local authorities should consider comprehensive awareness courses as essential at every level (both for politicians, chief officers and staff), particularly on induction programmes or seminars which senior management must attend. The course contents need to be directly related to the service delivery issues of the various professional departments, rather than generic and they need to be policy (rather than personnel) orientated. For example, specific training issues could include: how to identify the cultural planning needs of BEM service users; how to detect racist remarks and racially motivated objections from neighbours which should not be part of planning consideration; how to deal with racist neighbours themselves; how to structure committee reports to inform councillors positively about the needs of BEM applicants; how to attach conditions that are not racially biased and unreasonably restrictive. Some respondents during the research interviews complained that the conditions which are sometimes attached to planning consents are so severe that planning permission becomes meaningless. As a result some applicants do not bother to go ahead with their development proposal even after consent has been granted.

The recruitment of BEMs into senior and management positions in planning is essential to help effect changes. One of the research findings is that there is always tension and mistrust between officers and managers/employers and some BEM workers who were interviewed indicated that they are in a relatively weak position to be of any help to BEM service users even though they are aware of their planning needs and would like to work positively towards meeting these needs. It is not suggested that BEMs should be selected and given managerial positions if they are not qualified. What is being suggested is that there are indeed many BEM staff with the required experience and qualifications, who should be given the opportunity. Employers both in the private and public sectors should re-examine their selection, recruitment, training and promotion policies to eliminate procedures and practices that have direct and/or indirect discriminatory effects built into them. It is a waste of resources if experienced and qualified BEM personnel are not recruited. Secondly it is also a waste of resources and talents if they are recruited and then not given positions of responsibility and the opportunity for their talents to be tapped for the benefit of employers and service users. This makes a mockery of the legislation and equal opportunity policies when it is very clear that such discrimination exists in the case study boroughs as much as it does elsewhere. It is not suggested that white officers should be dismissed or new ones not recruited but that a good number of BEM officers should be recruited and placed in their rightful positions. This gives a lot of confidence to their own people who are service users, that their interests are being

protected in the system. At the same time Chizoma recommends that if senior white planning officers do not respond to anti-racist, and awareness training then further disciplinary and possibly criminal prosecution measures should be taken against them as at present. Clara adds that from more recent research it still seems that no-one seems to take such matters seriously enough, but just as an interesting training option for junior staff of no relevance to them, and so they get away with it.

These mechanisms/structures are considered as the way forward to minimise the ugly effects of racism. There is hope that this will be feasible now that the political climate has changed in the borough with a backlash against the British National Party (BNP) and the Liberal Party's lukewarm attitude towards racism in Riverside. If the political parties are sincere in their public statements, one would hope that the adoption of these structures and mechanisms will not pose a major problem. In view of the fact that the borough has no experience of the suggested structures and mechanisms, it is further suggested that a phased implementation of rolling programmes of mechanisms and structures be instituted over a two or three year period. Within the first year, it will be necessary to create the unit and sub-units, recruit the staff and compose the service committee. The first two years will concentrate on a programme of staff training in various departments along the lines suggested earlier. For each service department there will be a tailor-made service training programme. The second/third year is when to start monitoring the performance of the various service departments. From past experience one would expect some conflict with the departments' staff who are not used to being dictated to or closely monitored. It is hoped that with political good will and regular monitoring reports to service committees any major conflict can be resolved. But, Chizoma concludes that much still needs to be done to get this point, as from her interviews and experiences in the research she finds that racist attitudes are still deeply ingrained both at institutional and individual levels and so there is a need for a great deal of change.

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SECTION 9: QUANTITATIVE APPENDIX

9.1 The Areas Studied

The two boroughs studied both have a high percentage of ethnic minority citizens, both around 40%, but the boroughs studied have a mixed population and the research focuses on BEMs which include not only blacks, but also people from Eastern and Southern Europe, Near, Middle and Far East. The 'problem' was not solely one of 'colour' as, for example, Chizoma interviewed Turkish people too, who although 'white' have often found themselves treated differently from other whites, and effectively seen as 'black' particularly if they are Moslems too. Religious differences were often as important as ethnicity differences. Chizoma's research gravitated towards the districts within the boroughs where there were the greatest concentrations of ethnic minority populations, although, much of 'the problem' was the fact that 'white' areas, especially high property value white areas, showed evidence of active attempts to keep ethnic minority developments and people out, sometimes using the planning system to do so.

DETAILS OF THE TWO BOROUGHS DEMOGRAPHICS AND PHYSICAL LAND USE CHARACTERISTICS ARE GIVEN IN THE THESIS BUT NOT HERE TO RETAIN ANONYMITY

9.2 The People Studied

The purpose of Chizoma's research was not to compare black and white people's experience of the planning system in order to 'prove' racism existed, for this was already established (as shown from previous research by others in the literature review Section). Rather she sought to understand quite how it operated, to understand and make sense of the situation. To do this she sought to investigate and contrast the different perspectives of **the planners and the planned**, in terms of assumptions, expectations, and attitudes as to what was 'normal' and what was 'different' in respect of planning applications and policies. She was interested in researching the experiences of BEM applicants and understanding how institutional racism within the local authority worked its way out on to the community, through the local planning department. Whilst initially Chizoma did investigate comparative figures as to levels of refusal, and those categories of BEM applications that were most likely to be refused, the purpose was not to undertake a huge quantitative black/white statistical comparison. As explained in the literature review other researchers have 'proved' that BEM applications are more likely to be refused, although it should be born in mind that for all applications (black and white) the success rate is not necessarily high (although the speed with which applications are dealt with has speeded up a little in recent years), particularly in already highly developed inner city locations (see Development Control Statistics: England, issued by the ODPM (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister at: www.planning.odpm.gov.uk/dev.con/devsta02/index.htm

(using Adobe Acrobat Reader 5 to access the tables and text.)

9.3 Methods used: Questionnaires and Interviews

Chizoma sought to approach the research by undertaking first a series of questionnaires and then a set of interviews. As explained in the methodology Section of this Report, Chizoma's research originally took the form of a fairly conventional, quantitative and objective approach using formal questionnaire and interview methods. But as time went on, she found herself, of necessity, moving towards a more qualitative and ethnographic approach to encompass all that she was experiencing, finding and seeking to understand better. She found that more open-ended, and sometimes lengthy, interviews were far more useful, giving an opportunity for face-to-face interaction, and thus to probe certain areas in depth. In the case of the planners, this method made it possible for Chizoma to extract vital information relating to council policy and practice which officers regard as too confidential to give in writing. In the case of the planned, a more relaxed natural approach enabled respondents to open up and share their experiences with her more readily.

Within the two boroughs Chizoma chose to concentrate her research investigations on neighbourhoods which contained the majority of the boroughs' ethnic minority populations. For example, nearly two thirds of the ethnic minority population was concentrated in just three neighbourhoods in Riverside, and a slightly more spread distribution in Easterly. Attention was also given to investigating a range of planning background, planning policy and procedure documents at borough level, as well as investigating planning applications in her chosen district and neighbourhood planning offices. In the case of Easterly where ethnic monitoring existed, Chizoma was able to carry out a more rigorous investigation of all ethnic minority development control applications over a period of a whole year - July 1989 to July 1990. In the case of Riverside where there was no ethnic monitoring in force at the time, it was more difficult. Of the 582 development control cases processed in the chosen three Riverside neighbourhoods, 137 were identified as BEM planning applications, while in Easterly the figure was 81 from 425. In this identification process it should be pointed out that Chizoma did receive the help and co-operation of planning officers (when the study was at its early quantitative 'non-threatening' stage). The number of applications from BEMs in the two boroughs for the study period of July 1989 to July 1990 came to a total of 219.

As to the planned a series of questionnaires were distributed to all the identified BEM applicants thus identified with a covering explanatory letter. Questionnaires were first posted or delivered by hand with self addressed, stamped envelopes. This was followed by telephone calls wherever possible and personal visits to facilitate the completion and return of questionnaires. Subsequently a series of interviews were undertaken of a selection of BEM applicants, who were the 'visible key players' namely: Africans, Caribbeans, Asians, Irish, people from Eastern and Southern Europe, Near, Middle and Far East (e.g. Orthodox Jewish, Turks, and Chinese). Meeting people and interviewing them face-to-face also made it easier to get information from applicants who could not have been in a position to give full response to questionnaires due to language

difficulties. Interviews were conducted with 15 individual applicants and/or their agents during 1992, drawn from the total BEM applicants who were originally contacted in the two boroughs, in order to gather information about the different categories of needs of BEM communities and how these needs are addressed at the planning application stage. Notes were taken and the responses were written up in full immediately after the interviews. They were not taped because the interviewees would not allow it or because the researcher had no access to a tape recorder at the time. The interviews were structured and questions were tailored to the specific individual's planning proposal, and their responses used (as set out in the empirical Section) in developing key themes. For various reasons including the need to obtain further information from some of them, the controversial nature of some planning applications such as for a place of worship, some initial contacts were unable to participate. In addition Chizoma drew on a wealth of information and personal accounts that she had gathered from her work as a planner concerned with ethnicity issues within Easterly, and from her involvement in a range of church, community and ethnicity groups in her life outside of work. In all her investigations she found a great deal of frustration and disappointment among the planned, and many of the applicants blamed the planners personally for not receiving the desired planning permission. Whilst this reaction was to some extent justified as the result of racist practices, Chizoma also found that some applicants held uninformed expectations as to the remit of the planning system. So they assumed that refusal was the result of racism rather than the legal scope of the planning system, especially if they felt the planners had been rude and unhelpful towards them personally. One result of her initial interviews with the planned was that over 40% told her that they considered the views of their [white] neighbours had a disproportionate effect on the result of their planning application. Therefore Chizoma also interviewed a selection of neighbours too where possible.

As to the planners an equal sample of twenty planners of various grades were selected from each borough and these received a questionnaire (40 in all). Each recipient was given a written invitation to complete the questionnaire, and in the case of Easterly colleagues a verbal request and explanation to participate in the research. All this was followed up after a couple of weeks with telephone calls and personal visits particularly to those in Riverside. The planners chosen comprised a range of senior, middle, and junior level planning officers, equalities staff, councillors (politicians) and a range of policy makers and 'informers' related to urban regeneration, Docklands, housing, and urban renewal programmes in the boroughs (who were not strictly speaking part of the local authority itself). She extended her research, when the opportunity arose, to talk to ethnicity experts (planners and planned) in other London boroughs, ethnic minority organisations, professional bodies (including the RTPI), trade unions, other academics, EOC, and national-level politicians and policy makers. Interviews were also undertaken with a selection of planners.

15 in-depth interviews were undertaken from 1992 with chief officers and local councillors from the two case study boroughs, whom Chizoma considered to be the key actors involved in planning decision making. Three councillors were approached from

each borough. All the heads of the 7 Riverside Neighbourhood Planning Departments and 3 other chief officers were contacted in writing, but only six agreed to be interviewed. Most of the equivalent officers contacted in Easterly agreed to be interviewed. With Easterly respondents, due to the researcher's familiarity and good working relationship with most of them, and her knowledge of the issues in question, the interviews were quite informal, relaxed and became a source of clarification and recording of things she already knew. With Riverside respondents who were not familiar with the researcher, the interviews were quite formal and shorter. In all cases the interview questions were based on the same key set of thematic topics. The interviewees were informed in advance about the topics to be discussed. The interviews lasted between forty-five minutes and two hours. They were tape recorded and transcribed in full after the interviews. Important details minuted in the researcher's diary during the interviews were used to enrich the transcription. The interview responses were used to illustrate or highlight specific themes. In addition Chizoma picked up a great deal more information through more informal methods and from her experience of working with planning departments herself. A series of interviews were also undertaken with what Chizoma called watchdogs and insiders. 10 in-depth interviews were undertaken by the end of 1993 with the watchdogs and insiders, made up of officers from the race equality industries, the Docklands Forum, the Trade Unions and some BEM employees who might have counter views to those managers who hold key positions within the local government structure. Their responses were similarly handled as described in the case of planning applicants.



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