

Promoting equality and sustainability through housing market renewal: A strategy for Bridging NewcastleGateshead Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder

ROBINSON, David, REEVE, Kesia <<http://orcid.org/0000-0003-2877-887X>>, CASEY, Rionach and GOUDIE, Rosalind

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Promoting Equality and Sustainability Through Housing Market Renewal

A Strategy for Bridging
NewcastleGateshead Housing Market
Renewal Pathfinder

June 2007

Promoting Equality and Sustainability through Housing Market Renewal:

A strategy for Bridging NewcastleGateshead Housing
Market Renewal Pathfinder

*Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research
Sheffield Hallam University*

*David Robinson
Kesia Reeve
Rionach Casey
Rosalind Goudie*

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Introduction

This report builds on findings to emerge from a recent study of minority ethnic residential situations, experiences and preferences in the Bridging NewcastleGateshead (BNG) area to set out a focused, innovative and evidence-based strategy for meeting housing need and promoting cohesion through the activities of the BNG Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder¹. The aim is to ensure a positive process of change for all residents of the BNG area. This involves maximising the potential of BNG activities to be a force for good, as well as recognising the need to effectively manage potential difficulties associated with the ongoing process of transformation brought about by housing market renewal.

To this end, guidance is provided to support BNG and its partners (including Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, social landlords and voluntary and community sector agencies) in responding to the inequalities and disadvantages encountered by different groups in housing and neighbourhood choices and outcomes and in managing the consequences of shifting patterns of residential mobility and social interaction associated with housing market change.²

Report Structure

The report is divided into three distinct sections, that, in turn, provides: BNG with a conceptual framework that promotes understanding of the potential of housing market renewal to promote cohesion, as well as the ongoing need to monitor and manage emergent threats to cohesion; good practice advice regarding interventions that will support the realisation of this potential and; applies this knowledge and understanding to the specifics of the BNG context.

Part 1 - Understanding the relationship between cohesion and housing market change

- provides a framework that will help BNG recognise and respond to the potential of housing market renewal to promote cohesion, as well as managing the unforeseen threats to cohesion that will emerge as a by-product of renewal activities. This framework is organised around three essential elements of cohesion: choice and opportunity for all; neighbourhood sustainability and; community relations.

Part 2 - Promoting cohesion through housing market renewal - identifies the principles and particulars of good practice in the delivery of the core housing market renewal activities of stock development and renewal and a related suite of interventions, that support the promotion of equality, positive relations and sustainability.

Part 3 - In pursuit of equality of opportunity, positive community relations and neighbourhood sustainability - sensitises this framework and relates this suite of interventions to the particular challenges apparent across the BNG area and in specific localities therein. In particular, attention focuses on locations subject to BNG strategic commissions and draws on findings from the survey of minority ethnic and refugee households in the BNG area to consider potential challenges to cohesion and interventions that might be actioned in response.

¹ Minority Ethnic Residential Experiences and Requirements in the Bridging NewcastleGateshead Area (2007).

² Bridging NewcastleGateshead is one of nine housing market renewal pathfinders set up by the government to tackle problems caused by low demand for housing.

Understanding the Relationship between Cohesion and Housing Market Renewal

1.1. Introduction

In 2002 the government approved nine Housing Market Renewal Pathfinders in areas identified as in need of specific housing market renewal support. Pathfinders are partnerships made up of local authorities and other key regional and local stakeholders. Each Pathfinder has been tasked with examining the problems being experienced in their areas and deciding on the most appropriate action to revitalise the local housing market and to promote renewal within local neighbourhoods. Bridging NewcastleGateshead (BNG) is one of these nine Pathfinders.

The challenge for BNG is to promote positive change in the local housing market and to manage the negative consequences of transformation. Housing market renewal represents a significant opportunity to address inequality and disadvantage in housing and neighbourhood choices and outcomes. BNG and its partners will also need to manage the impact of shifting patterns of residential mobility, social interaction and local housing market dynamics brought about by housing market renewal on neighbourhood sustainability and community relations. This section of the strategy provides a framework designed to help BNG and its partners recognise and respond to these challenges and realise associated opportunities.

1.2. Promoting Cohesion through Housing Market Renewal: A Conceptual Framework

This framework promotes an understanding of cohesion that recognises the direct connection between the housing choices and opportunities generated through housing market renewal and the inter-connected issues of community relations and the renewal aspect of neighbourhood sustainability. The result is a threefold classification of cohesion that integrates attention to the consequences of renewal for individual households, communities and neighbourhoods:

1. *Choices and Opportunities* - responding to disadvantages in housing and neighbourhood choices and outcomes experienced by certain households and groups (exemplified by poor housing conditions, overcrowding, constrained choices, limited engagement with service providers etc.) will need to be a core concern for BNG and its partners that permeates all renewal activities.
2. *Community Relations* - renewal activities can prove divisive, the process of change giving rise to tensions *within* neighbourhoods as a result of population change, while the differential benefits accruing to different locations can fuel tensions *between* neighbourhoods. In response, BNG will need to focus on areas marked by actual or potential tensions between different social and ethnic groups. One should not assume, however, that the entire area will be marked by ethnic tension or social dislocation. Many of the neighbourhoods in the BNG area will be stable and self-sustaining. The promotion of positive community

relations will therefore need to identify and focus on particular localities that are marked by actual or potential tensions between different ethnic groups. In some cases, local authorities and other agencies will need to adopt *pro-active* measures which anticipate negative consequences of neighbourhood change and in others they will need to adopt *reactive* measures to mitigate the impact of overt conflict and tension.

3. *Neighbourhood Sustainability* - neighbourhood sustainability is informed by a complex patchwork of mobility patterns, that are related to shifting demand profiles for different locations or segments of the housing market and shaped by the pattern of local housing opportunities and constraints. The challenge for BNG is to be alive to the factors that are sustaining and might challenge sustainability, as a result of shifting patterns of minority ethnic settlement. This will include attending to sustainability issues that might emerge in particular neighbourhoods as a result of interventions in adjacent areas. In doing so it will be helpful to reflect on the fact that housing market sustainability can be challenged by two distinctive processes (Cole et al., 2004). First, by a decline in community stability, that might be related to rising turnover and associated turbulence within the population, that undercuts the formation of any local sense of community. Sustainability can also be challenged by too much stability associated with limited turnover. These two aspects of sustainability are the local manifestations of broader housing market dynamics and associated patterns of local mobility and shifting demand profiles for different segments of local housing markets. In the BNG area these dynamics are closely associated with the spatial differentiation of the area into distinct sub-housing market areas, on the basis of form, function and population.

Two fundamental principles guide the application of this framework:

- these different realms of cohesion are recognised as being inter-related and inter-locking. A deficit in one realm can have significant knock-on effects in another realm; individual experiences of deprivation and disadvantage can impact on community relations, particularly when experienced as a shared inequality by a particular population group, and, in turn, undermine neighbourhood sustainability. Alternatively, efforts to address inequalities in housing opportunities by opening up neighbourhoods historically closed to a particular group can impact on sustainability of both the neighbourhood that households leave to settle in the new area (the sustainability of which might have been dependent upon the constrained choices of its residents) and in the new area into which people move, as population change risks social dislocation and rising tensions
- the second guiding principle of this framework relates to the development of practical interventions intended to promote a virtuous circle of cohesion, through the generation of choice and opportunities for all, positive community relations and neighbourhood sustainability. On the one hand, there is a need for an overarching commitment to equality. The pursuit of equality must be understood as a cross-cutting concern to be mainstreamed across the full portfolio of BNG activities. On the other hand, area differentiation needs to be recognised from the outset, given that housing market renewal will raise distinct opportunities and particular challenges for cohesion in different neighbourhoods.

These two fundamental priorities - the mainstreaming of equality and responding to area differentiation - are explored further in the remainder of this section of the strategy.

1.3. Promoting Equality in BNG

Racial inequalities in housing - poor housing conditions, overcrowding, harassment, restricted housing choices and constrained outcomes - have been revealed across the BNG area. The pursuit of race equality must therefore be a priority throughout the area and permeate all renewal activities. To this end, it is important that two essential concerns are addressed:

- *deficits in equality* - these include inequalities in material conditions, such as housing conditions and overcrowding, as well as bounded choices and restricted housing opportunities, that confine certain groups to particular housing sectors and neighbourhoods
- *equality in the provision of services and associated opportunities* – this requirement is closely associated with the legal obligation of public agencies under the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000), to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between different groups and to eliminate direct *and* indirect discrimination in all aspects of their activities.

1.3.1. Deficits in Equality

Analysis of minority ethnic housing situations and experiences has revealed deficits in race equality in housing in Newcastle and Gateshead. These inequalities require remedial action. Traditionally, the ability of housing agencies and planning bodies to address situations such as poor housing conditions and overcrowding is severely limited. Deficits reflect, at least in part, a mismatch between the local housing stock (size, design and location) and the requirements of particular groups. Addressing this mismatch can take years. BNG, however, is in a unique position to positively impact on the local stock profile. Strategic commissions involving the development of new stock and renewal activities that renovate and convert existing properties represent a significant opportunity to rebalance the profile of local housing options to better reflect the requirements of the local population. It is therefore vital that new developments and renewal activities recognise and respond to the aspirations and requirements of local populations, while breaking down the barriers that limit access for particular groups to certain sectors of the housing market and specific neighbourhoods. These are issues to which we return in Parts 2 and 3 of the strategy.

1.3.2. Equality in the Provision of Services and Associated Opportunities

Housing market renewal provides a significant opportunity to address the apparent mismatch in the BNG area between the housing aspirations and requirements of different groups and the form and nature of the local housing market. Delivering on this potential has and will continue to require the pursuit of equality, in its various guises, and is central to the BNG programme of intervention. Renewal and new build developments in the private and social rented sectors will need to respond to the distinct situations, aspirations and requirements of different groups in different areas. Sectors of the housing market historically closed to certain minority ethnic groups will need to be opened up. Barriers preventing the movement of particular groups into certain neighbourhoods will have to be broken down. Securing these objectives will be a challenge, but BNG and its partners commissioned this research in a bid to rise to this challenge.

The pursuit of race equality and the elimination of direct *and* indirect discrimination in all aspects of housing provision, policy and practice is a statutory requirement under race relations legislation. The specific duties under race relations legislation that should guide BNG's approach to race equality are detailed in Appendix 1, along with

summary comment on associated guidance and regulatory requirements. These requirements are also integrated into the principles and particulars of the intervention advice developed in Part 2 and 3 of this strategy. Supporting this strategy for delivering equality, it is vital that BNG and its partners promote a culture of performance monitoring, in order to identify (and thereby respond) wherever inequalities in access to services and associated opportunities arise. Ongoing monitoring also allows the impact of service reforms and revision to be assessed. Agencies should also engage in the ongoing proofing of all aspects of policy, provision and service delivery and their relevance to the situations and requirements of different groups.

1.4. Critical Arenas and Targeted Interventions

As well as mainstreaming the pursuit of equality during the development of new housing opportunities and the renewal of existing stock, BNG and its partners will need to develop an associated suite of interventions relevant and appropriate to the cohesion challenge apparent, or likely to emerge, in certain neighbourhoods as a consequence of the changes wrought by housing market renewal. This will involve appreciation of what we term '**critical arenas**'. In some cases, these will be localities where BNG and its partners will need to adopt pro-active measures to deliver equality in the choice and opportunities provided through new developments or stock renewal. In others they will need to adopt reactive measures to mitigate against the rise of community tensions and/or threats to neighbourhood sustainability that could emerge as a consequence of population change driven by housing market renewal.

Reflecting on current residential patterns, housing situations and unmet demand and ongoing and proposed strategic commissions, it is possible to outline the different types of critical arena that exist across the BNG area, each of which will require a different suite of interventions to address problems that exist or might emerge:

- **'Reception' localities** - these are points of initial arrival and settlement for incomers to the city and are often low-value or highly pressurised housing sub-markets. The population in these areas is often growing rapidly, as a result of new immigration and the relatively young profile of the population and the fact that people are having children. Demand for affordable housing in such areas typically outstrips supply, resulting in overcrowding. Some households with the resources to finance a move out of the area often relocate to an adjacent area. The result can be a narrowing of the social and economic profile, which can be reinforced by new immigration into the area
- **Transforming localities** - these are areas marked by a shift in their ethnic profile, especially if they become sites of settlement for new minority ethnic population (new immigrants) or as new generations of households move out from established areas of settlement. Relations between different ethnic groups may be relatively benign, but there may still be a need for interventions to ease the transition of new groups into the neighbourhood. Transforming localities have the potential to develop into **contested localities**, distinguished by sporadic or continuous tensions and conflicts between different ethnic groups. These localities might experience flashpoint incidents, that develop from long-standing resentments or suspicions
- **Dynamic and Changeable localities** - these neighbourhoods are marked by high levels of residential mobility, often associated with a relatively large private rented sector. These areas may be functioning well, as an important lubricating part of the wider housing market, where ready access and high turnover are at a premium. The neighbourhoods are not necessarily problematic, and may not

display cohesion problems – but the key aspect is that the character of such areas may change relatively quickly, if the pattern of in-movers and out-movers alters. The relationship between established long-term residents and mobile households may also change, and give rise to tension (as in some student housing markets in recent years)

- **Dormant localities** - these are stable, often White-dominated, neighbourhoods with low household turnover and household formation, often high levels of resident satisfaction and established local amenities. However, the area may be dominated by a large cohort of aging households that may not be replaced organically once residents leave (for example, for reasons of care and support) or die. This may lead to a higher vacancy rate and emerging signals of low demand and neighbourhood decline, despite the internal popularity of the area. As values start to fall, such areas might become attractive to households living in pressurised localities seeking more affordable options, as well as providing opportunities for social landlords to accommodate households in housing need (for example, new immigrants). This in-migration may change the ethnic and age balance of the neighbourhood and this transition to a more mixed community will not necessarily be a smooth experience.

This four-fold categorisation of critical arenas is intended to provide BNG and its partners with a tool for recognising the challenges existing in different localities. The next step is to then identify the types of intervention that may need to be actioned in each of these areas by the different agencies involved in housing market renewal. The various tools that might be employed are reviewed in **Part 2**. **Part 3** considers the particular suite of tools to be employed in specific critical arenas in the BNG area.

Figure 1.1 summarises the processes of change and the potential implications for cohesion associated with each of these critical arenas.

Table 1.1: Critical Arenas, Processes of Change and Implications for Cohesion

Critical Arena	Processes of change	Potential implications for cohesion
Reception Localities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ in-migration of 'new' ethnic groups (e.g. ASs, refugees and migrant workers) ▪ continued chain migration of established ME groups ▪ rapid natural population growth ▪ increasing demand for low cost housing ▪ increasing numbers of 'trapped' households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ worsening housing conditions (e.g. overcrowding) ▪ increased pressure on housing and services ▪ increasing concentrations of deprivation ▪ limited housing opportunities within locality ▪ limited opportunities for out-migration for some households
Dynamic and Changeable Localities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ high levels of household turnover ▪ may be rapid change in social profile ▪ younger, smaller household predominate ▪ demand for private renting/short-term tenancies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ may be conflicts with long-term population ▪ often locus of 'informal' housing markets ▪ 'loose' markets may tighten up if external pressures increase ▪ overcrowding may increase
Transforming Localities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ inflow of 'new' ethnic groups ▪ might involve movement of ME households into traditionally White British areas ▪ might involve in-migration of a 'new' ME group into areas in which other ME groups have traditionally settled ▪ outflow of particular ethnic groups ▪ inflow /outflow of particular ethnic sub-groups (e.g. young households) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ changing patterns of demand (tenure, property type) ▪ the emergence of 'new' needs ▪ changing neighbourhood function ▪ potential to develop into a 'contested locality' (community tensions, racial harassment, increased competition for housing and services) ▪ changing patterns of demand
Dormant Localities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ natural population decline ▪ declining demand ▪ possible allocation of unpopular housing to in-need groups (e.g. refugees) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ potential for housing market collapse ▪ opportunity for increasing BME (including new immigrant) housing and neighbourhood choices

Promoting Cohesion through Housing Market Renewal: A Review of Relevant Interventions and the Principles of Good Practice

2.1. Introduction

Central to the delivery of housing market renewal are two essential activities: the development of new properties for rent and sale and; the renovation, redesign and conversion of existing stock. Success in delivering housing market renewal, however, also demands attention to a range of associated interventions that serve to promote cohesion (choice and opportunity, positive relations and neighbourhood sustainability). This part of the strategy reflects on the principles and practicalities of good practice in the delivery of these fundamental aspects of renewal activity and supporting interventions.

Discussion begins by concentrating on the issue of housing location, layout and design, considerations fundamental to new developments and stock renewal. The potential to promote cohesion through these activities is highlighted and specific considerations (for example, the layout of new developments, general design issues and room by room design concerns) are addressed. Attention then turns to the supporting interventions that will need to be actioned in order to both maximise the potential to promote cohesion through new developments and stock renewal and to tackle the challenges to cohesion that can emerge within and beyond locations subject to renewal activities. In particular, attention focuses on the following realms of intervention:

- understanding aspirations, requirements and outcomes
- managing the private rented sector
- marketing opportunities and challenging perceptions
- social landlord allocations and lettings
- resident and community participation
- supporting residents and tenants
- managing neighbourhoods
- managing community relations.

Table 2.1, over the page, summarises this relationship between the key realms of activity and the specifics of renewal, and supporting interventions intended to promote cohesion and tackle associated challenges.

Table 2.1: Promoting Cohesion through Renewal Activities and Supporting Interventions

Realm of Activity	Specific Interventions	Promoting Cohesion	Challenges to Cohesion	Supporting Interventions
<p>New Developments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>new build schemes for sale, rental and intermediate markets</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ design, size, tenure and location ▪ development process (who, what, where?) ▪ community engagement (involvement, ownership, leadership) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ bringing the local stock more into line with the requirements and aspirations of the local population ▪ drawing in new households by diversifying the local stock profile ▪ countering the constrained choices of certain groups ▪ addressing housing deprivation and severe needs ▪ widening choice and facilitating residential mobility and retention of households within the areas as their needs and aspirations change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ potential divisiveness of targeted interventions ▪ potential resentment if groups perceive they have 'lost out' ▪ tensions arising from changes in the profile of population, as well as 'raw' numbers ▪ unpopularity of neighbourhoods limiting access to new opportunities for certain groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ monitoring experiences and the process of change ▪ marketing of new opportunities ▪ allocations and lettings ▪ resident and community participation ▪ supporting residents and tenants ▪ neighbourhood management ▪ managing the PRS ▪ managing community tensions
<p>Renewal of Existing Stock</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>renovation, redesign and conversion</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ repair and maintenance of existing stock ▪ remodelling of local stock ▪ remodelling of physical environment ▪ community engagement in renewal (engagement, ownership, leadership) ▪ renewal process (who, what, where?) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ engaging local residents in discussion and decision making about the future of their area ▪ improving quality of life through the remodelling of the physical environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ tensions rising from actual or perceived biases in targeting of activity ▪ potential tensions arising from the inflow of new residents ▪ risks to sustainability if renewal activities undercut commitment of existing residents 	

2.2. New Developments and Stock Renewal: Location and Design

The development of new properties and the renewal of existing stock as part of the housing market renewal process represents a significant opportunity to address the historical mismatch between the local stock profile and the housing requirements of the resident population. It also represents an opportunity to underpin the sustainability of an area, by drawing in new residents, who might not have previously considered moving into a particular neighbourhood. In doing so, the constrained housing choices of particular groups can be extended beyond traditional areas of settlement. This section provides BNG with a checklist of design issues and associated responses against which to proof new housing developments and stock renewal activities in the BNG area³.

The approach outlined below mirrors the Lifetime Homes approach⁴, by recognising key features that will help ensure that a new or renovated house or flat will meet the needs of most households, regardless of their cultural background, life stage and associated requirements. This should not mean the inclusion of design features that many households will not need. The emphasis is on features that make the property flexible enough to accommodate the requirements of different kinds of households.

It is important to point out that there is little evidence or good practice guidance about how to cater for the needs of households from different cultural backgrounds in housing design. Indeed, other than the National Housing Federation report '*Accommodating Diversity*', which was first published in 1993, there is no comprehensive guide available. This discussion therefore draws heavily on the advice provided in '*Accommodating Diversity*', which is supplemented by insights from other reports including:

- CSR Partnership (2002) *Asian Housing Design Study*. Rochdale Housing Initiative
- Karn, V., Mian, S., Brown, M., Dale, A. (1999) *Tradition, Change and Diversity: Understanding the Housing Needs of Minority Ethnic Groups in Manchester*. London: Housing Corporation
- Sodhi, D. and Ahmed, A. (2001) *Asian Elders: Housing and Social Care Needs in Rochdale and Oldham*. Rochdale: Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council/ Oldham Metropolitan Council.

In addition, discussion also draws on insights from the survey of minority ethnic housing experiences in the BNG area, which asked respondents about design issues, as well as anecdotal evidence of good practice in the accommodation of diversity into the development of new properties collected during conversations with academics and housing association officers.

Discussion is organised under the following headings:

- location
- site layout and mix
- general design considerations
- room by room issues

³ The important issue of community engagement in the development and renewal process is addressed in Section 2.3.

⁴ The Joseph Rowntree Foundation developed the concept of Lifetime Homes in 1991. Lifetime Homes have sixteen design features that ensure a home will be flexible enough to meet the existing and changing needs of most households.

2.2.1. Location

The survey of minority ethnic households in the BNG area revealed people to have very specific neighbourhood preferences. In Gateshead, the clear preference was to live in Bensham and Saltwell. In Newcastle, opinion was more divided, reflecting the variable settlement patterns of different minority ethnic groups, although locations to the east of the city centre (Byker and Walker) were rarely mentioned by respondents as popular destinations. The survey also revealed, however, the wider horizons of some (particularly younger) minority ethnic households. These findings concur with numerous recent studies of minority ethnic housing preferences and aspirations. In response, good practice in relation to the location of new developments targeted at meeting the needs of minority ethnic households has tended to encourage striking a balance between responding to the broadening area preferences of some households and the ongoing requirement of other households to live close to community facilities, resources and services and to benefit from the safety and security that can be gained from living within an ethnic cluster.

It is important that BNG and its partners are mindful of these considerations when locating new developments. Although the location of new developments in the BNG area is largely determined by where opportunities for land assembly arise, BNG and its partners will need to recognise and counter the potential for the issue of location to restrict access to new housing opportunities for certain ethnic groups. Failure to do so will risk reinforcing restricted choices and compounding housing deprivation within existing areas of minority ethnic settlement. In response, therefore, BNG and its partners will need to implement a series of supporting interventions, in addition to the provision of relevant and appropriate housing, to counter the impact of location on housing choice and opportunity. These supporting interventions are discussed in Section 2.3. There are a number of additional considerations that might help overcome the reticence of some minority ethnic households to move into certain neighbourhoods, including:

- attention to the design issues outlined below will increase the attractiveness of new developments to different ethnic groups and may help overcome the reticence of some households to consider moving into particular neighbourhoods where opportunities for land assembly and new developments arise
- attention to issues of accessibility, for example, through public transport, between a new area of residence and the established area of settlement from which households are moving, can serve to provide ongoing access to key services and facilities, including cultural resources, that might be essential to a household's well-being
- environmental improvements, including the provision of green spaces, identified as an important consideration in the residential choices of respondents to the survey of minority ethnic households in the BNG area, could help to increase the attractiveness of neighbourhoods beyond traditional areas of settlement
- the social rented sector is particularly well placed to open up new locations to minority ethnic groups. New developments can be provided in tandem with marketing and lettings initiatives, tenancy support and community development work to introduce and foster interaction between new and long-standing residents. Social landlords are also on the frontline of the government's assault on anti-social behaviour and neighbourhood nuisance and are well armed to tackle the hostilities and harassment that minority ethnic people can encounter when venturing into new areas of settlement

- partnership working between BME-led and white-led housing associations can serve to marry sensitivity in service provision and development capacity, thereby increasing lettings in new developments to minority ethnic households.

While recognising the importance of opening up new locations to households with limited neighbourhood choice, it is also important to reiterate the importance of promoting new developments and renewal activities in areas of established minority ethnic settlement. Not only are such areas characterised by high levels of housing deprivation, the sustainability of these areas could be threatened if the only new opportunities for households to meet their housing aspirations are to be found outside these neighbourhoods. To this end, even if problems of land assembly limit the potential for the development of new housing in these locations, renewal activities should be considered. Stock conversion can provide a means of responding to inadequacies in the local stock profile, for example, by knocking through smaller houses to provide larger properties. Demolition and the partial remodelling of neighbourhoods can help counter a negative image that might undercut sustainability and also provide an opportunity for designing out opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour. Major renewal programmes can also serve to increase social mix. For example, innovative designs can allow an increase in density levels, even in some already densely populated neighbourhoods, permitting existing residents to be assured of a place to live if they want to remain in the area, as well as facilitating the inflow of new residents to take up opportunities in the social rented and private sectors.

Finally, the potential divisiveness of neighbourhood focused interventions, especially when targeted at a location where a particular population group is concentrated, must be acknowledged and addressed. Tensions can arise as a result of real or perceived biases in the allocation of resources and the focus of renewal activities. Renewal activities also risk alienating the commitment of existing residents, while the inflow of new residents can result in tensions and conflict. The supporting interventions detailed in Section 2.3 will be critical in responding to these challenges.

2.2.2. Site Layout and Mix

A fundamental consideration when designing any new development is how the layout might contribute to the *safety and security* of its residents. The layout of a new development can effectively serve to minimise the potential for crime, including burglary, violence against the person and racial harassment. Accommodating Diversity identifies the following key principles that should be followed:

- public spaces should be overlooked by surrounding houses
- private spaces should be adequately fenced off, but the creation of possible hiding places should be avoided
- it should be clear to all what is private and what is public space
- alleys or walkways hidden from the public gaze should be avoided
- adequate lighting (including security lighting) should be provided.

The Police crime prevention officer might be included in discussion of layout and design issues, in a bid to ensure that the Secured by Design principle of 'designing out crime' is incorporated into new developments (<http://www.securedbydesign.com>).

Another important consideration is the layout of dwellings in a development. Courtyard-type layouts, where dwellings are organised around a central space that is used for access and parking, are reported to have proved effective in meeting various needs, including security, interaction and sense of community. Thought

needs to be given, however, to the vulnerability of the backs of houses arranged in such a configuration. The mix of dwelling types can also foster a sense of community. For example, a new development with a mix of dwelling types, including sheltered and family housing, might help preserve and strengthen family networks.

2.2.3. General Design Considerations

This section summarises some general design considerations, before the next section takes a room by room approach to the internal layout and design of the property.

- **household structure and size** - it is important to distinguish between large households and 'extended' families. The former will require a single property large enough to cater for their needs. The latter might be accommodated in various situations. It is important not to assume that (for example, Bangladeshi or Pakistani) extended families will inevitably want to live together. Social norms within these population groups are changing, while continuing evidence of co-habitation is, in part, a *reflection of restricted housing choice*. More appropriate options might be the provision of large units that can subsequently be subdivided (Accommodating Diversity refers to the example of two internally semi-detached houses, which can easily be separated) or the housing of families in smaller dwellings near to each other
- **men and women and the use of space in the home** - in many cultures there is a tradition of women and men using the space in the home in distinct and different ways. In some Muslim households women do not enter the 'men's space' when guests are present. In some Orthodox Jewish households men and women do not socialise or worship together. Clearly this is a sensitive and controversial issue, but it is also one that can be easily be accommodated in housing design, an issue to which we will return in the room by room discussion
- **religious practices** - two particular design considerations are associated with religious practices. First, there is often a need for a place for a shrine or some other such feature. Various common design features - alcoves, bays and niches - can accommodate most prayer practices that need shrines. Secondly, there are needs associated with particular practices, such as ritual washing. These issues are considered in the room by room design discussion
- **multiple needs** - it is important to look beyond cultural requirements and to recognise that minority ethnic people can also have multiple needs, for example, associated with health problems and disabilities. Indeed, minority ethnic households have been revealed to experience relatively high levels of health problems and disability. The principles of the Lifetime homes agenda should therefore be integrated into the design of any new development. There might also be the need to provide units that allow aged parents or other relatives to live with and be looked after by younger family members
- **shared facilities** - communal facilities can prove a positive feature of a new development, particularly in sheltered accommodation. This is particularly true if a development is remote from alternative community facilities and meeting places. Communal courtyard areas with water features, for example, are reported to provide positive spaces for engagement among Chinese residents
- **safety and security** - important safety design considerations have been identified as including window locks and laminated glass in ground floor windows, external/security lighting and entry phones. Steel letter boxes installed on an external wall is one response to problems with things (burning rags) being pushed through letterboxes on doors. Peep-holes in doors help residents to monitor who is calling at their property without having to open the door.

2.2.4. Room by Room

The table below reflects upon flexibilities that should be incorporated into the design of individual rooms.

Room	General Issues	Issues Specific to Particular Ethnic Groups
Circulation Spaces	<p>The key considerations that will need to be addressed regarding circulation space within the properties conform with established good practice in design for accessibility. These include attention to circulation spaces in large family houses (e.g. entrance halls and landing spaces), the siting of stairs (stairs rising from the entrance hall adjacent to the front door are unpopular) and the ability to circulate around the house without entering private spaces (e.g. reception rooms).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ it is common among certain groups (Muslim / South Asian / North African) to remove outdoor shoes upon entry. It is therefore useful to have a space to place shoes ▪ the ability to move around the property without having to enter private spaces is valued by Muslim households ▪ Chinese people prefer for stairs not to be located immediately adjacent to the front door
Kitchen	<p>The kitchen consistently proves to be the room prompting the most comment amongst many minority ethnic groups when asked about housing design. A common concern is the size of kitchens. More specific concerns include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>storage</i> - there is a tendency across different minority ethnic groups for households to buy food in bulk. A pantry or larder is an effective way of dealing with the specific needs of different groups ▪ <i>cooking</i> - the type and volume of cooking that takes place in many cultures (cooking with large amounts of oil or long-term simmering) demands high ventilation standards. Gas cooking is preferred by most groups ▪ <i>washing facilities</i> - running water is considered essential to cleanliness in many cultures. Mixer taps, allowing temperature control of running water, are therefore preferred. Double sinks are also preferred, for different reasons by different groups, and larger/deeper sinks are often required for washing large pots and pans associated with cooking for large social events ▪ <i>surfaces</i> - should be able to deal with being wet for long periods of time. White surfaces should be avoided, as they can easily stain and are harder to keep clean ▪ <i>sheltered provision</i> - vegetarian residents might require separate facilities 	<p>Different groups have very different and distinct cooking practices. The consequence of these different practices, however, are a series of shared requirements regarding the size of kitchens and associated facilities.</p>
Reception Rooms	<p>Two key concerns were apparent among all groups in the BNG area when asked about design issues in relation to reception rooms (living room/dining room): more space and two separate rooms. The reason for requiring two separate rooms varies between groups, but is a shared need.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Orthodox Jewish households require a succoh (part of the living space which can be opened to the sky to enable people to eat and sleep under the open sky, as part of an annual commemoration). This can be achieved by building a single storey extension (or conservatory) with a roof light that can be opened. ▪ Muslim households indicated the importance of two separate living rooms, to accommodate traditional family/cultural practices

<p>Bathrooms and WC</p>	<p>Many cultures (Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, some Chinese and Vietnamese and many African) consider running water to be essential for proper hygiene. The provision of a shower fitting in the bath is the common response to this requirement, although a separate shower is desirable. Mixer taps are also preferred as they allow washing in running water. Bathing in running water is likely to result in more splashing, so thought should be given to finishes in and around the bathroom.</p> <p>It is preferable to have toilets adjacent to the living area and the bedroom area. In large family housing it is also worth considering installing an additional shower room, possibly on the ground floor, which would also be of use to a family member with mobility problems. These concerns reflect priorities considered in the Lifetime Homes programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ritual washing among Muslim households. One response is a low mixer tap at a wash place, located on the main living floor (e.g. in ground floor WC, which will satisfy the need to wash after going to the toilet). This facility would also be of use to other occupiers, for example, for washing dirty shoes etc ▪ some groups, including Muslim households, require to wash with water after using the toilet. One obvious solution is the provision of a bidet. Other options include a pot with a spout that can be filled from a low level tap or a shower head fitting adjacent to the toilet ▪ devout Muslims object to a WC aligning in the direction of Mecca
<p>Bedrooms</p>	<p>Bedrooms are the part of the house that prompts least comment when people are asked about design features and requirements. A common response when asked specifically about bedrooms is the need for more space. This comment often relates to preference, rather than a need, but there are some reasons why larger bedrooms might be required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ double rooms provide flexibility, for example, allowing children to share ▪ large rooms can provide workspace and storage ▪ larger rooms (and additional bedrooms) can allow guests (e.g. regularly visiting extended family members) to be more readily accommodated 	<p>Different groups have different practices regarding the precise configuration of bedrooms, the orientations of beds and the sharing of bedroom space. The result, however, is a shared requirement for larger bedrooms.</p>

2.3. Promoting Cohesion: Supporting Interventions

The opportunities provided through new developments and stock renewal will only be translated into long-term, positive housing outcomes if the ongoing impact of various factors on the housing outcomes of minority ethnic households are recognised and addressed. Research into the residential experiences of minority ethnic households in the BNG area has revealed experiences and perceptions of particular neighbourhoods to be critical among the factors restricting access to housing opportunities. In response, effective neighbourhood management and support mechanisms will need to be put in place, to manage potential tensions and conflicts between established and incoming residents. New housing opportunities will also need to be effectively marketed, so that they appeal to all. This might involve recognising and explaining how previous failings in service provision (for example, the management of conflict and harassment) have been addressed.

This section outlines a suite of intervention principles for BNG and its partners to draw on when seeking to determine the appropriate range of activities that will support the provision of new housing opportunities for all groups resident in the BNG area through development and renewal. Each of the tables below explains the ways in which a particular realm of activity can contribute toward the key objectives of promoting choice and opportunity for all, positive community relations and neighbourhood sustainability. For each area of activity, examples are provided of the interventions that might be considered and the factors that might limit the success of interventions are discussed. The potential of interventions to undercut, as well as promote, cohesion, are also highlighted.

Good practice examples of specific interventions with each of these realms of activity, drawn from research evidence base and accumulated by the CRESR research team during the delivery of other projects, are detailed in **Appendix 2**.

1. UNDERSTANDING HOUSING SITUATIONS, REQUIREMENTS AND ASPIRATIONS

Relevance to Cohesion

- appreciating diversity of housing situations and requirements among and between different groups
- acknowledging and understanding housing inequalities, in order to contribute to efforts of policy and practice to ensure people from different backgrounds have similar housing opportunities
- analysing the impact of housing market trends and interventions on different groups
- predicting points of tension and conflict where intervention will be required

Indicative Contributions

- discrete studies exploring the housing situations, requirements, aspirations, views and opinions of different ethnic groups (whilst avoiding consultation fatigue) - the study on which this strategy document builds is an obvious example of the value of this approach
- attention to minority ethnic housing needs in all monitoring and survey activities
- analysis of service user experiences and the differential impact of policy and practice on different populations, with a view to considering unintended, as well as intended, effects (i.e. supporting delivery of the legal duty of all public authorities to avoid discrimination on racial grounds - directly or indirectly or by victimisation - in carrying out any of its functions)
- time-series analysis of shifting patterns of residential settlement, segregation and integration within and between different ethnic groups. The Census can provide a useful benchmark, but more regularly updated information (administrative and survey) will also need to be drawn on. Innovative approaches to data gathering and interpretation may be required.
- review and evaluation of local initiatives to determine the strengths and weaknesses of practice and its relevance to cohesion objectives
- mapping of housing market change and the shifting function of different sub-markets
- analysis of interactions and relations within and between different ethnic groups

Factors Limiting Success

- failure to recognise ethnic diversity and appreciate the distinct housing experiences, aspirations, and outcomes of different minority ethnic groups
- failure to generate data capable of spatial disaggregation in order to provide neighbourhood-level analysis
- failure to appreciate dynamism, for example, in the population profile (ethnicity, age, household structure etc.), the aspirations, attitudes and requirements of different groups, settlement patterns, the housing market function of different neighbourhoods etc.
- failure to counter the insensitivity of conventional needs surveys to minority ethnic experiences, perceptions and aspirations and move beyond analysis of where and how far there is a shortfall or deficit from some (political or professional) defined standard or norm
- failure to review the impact (positive or negative) of reforms actioned in response to identified weaknesses or failings in policy and practice and to ascertain what is working where

Risk of Undercutting Cohesion

- failure to incorporate the principles of good practice (dynamic, ongoing data collection and analysis, disaggregation and analysis of data at different geographical scales and the recognition of the full extent of diversity within the local population) can undermine the validity of findings and the relevance of associated interventions
- research and analysis can be regarded by community members as an excuse for inaction and serve to foster further dissatisfaction
- the exclusion of particular interests or groups from the research process can feed perceptions of exclusion and discrimination. This can be addressed by feedback on the research to the communities in question.

Current BNG Activity in this Area

- appreciating the housing situations and requirements of the increasingly diverse minority ethnic population of the BNG area, through discrete commissioned research and the analysis of ethnic data collected through housing needs surveys and other relevant surveys and studies
- mapping of housing market change and the shifting function of different sub-markets, through the Housing Market Intelligence model (HMI), which facilitates neighbourhood-level analysis, including areas where minority ethnic communities are known to be resident
- survey findings and news of our programme of interventions are disseminated via diversity forums, the BNG website, newsletters and press releases

2. MANAGING THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR

Potential Relevance to Cohesion

- improving living conditions and quality of life
- tackling anti-social and criminal activity
- underpinning neighbourhood sustainability

Indicative Contributions

- the National Asylum Seeker Support Service (NASS) has the power to enforce financial sanctions and to terminate the contract of private landlords providing accommodation for people seeking asylum. Through these powers NASS can help contribute to the maintenance of quality and standards in the private rented sector. Local authorities, RSLs and other organisations can assist with enforcement by contacting NASS if complaints are received about the condition / management of PRS accommodation used by asylum seekers.
- local authorities have responsibility for inspecting all temporary accommodation provided for asylum seekers by Social Services departments. These powers can be utilised to tackle poor standards in the private rented sector. More stringent powers are available in relation to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), through mandatory / additional licensing of landlords.
- accreditation schemes have been developed by local authorities as a means of working with private landlords to raise standards on a voluntary basis. Accreditation involves the voluntary compliance by private landlords with good standards in the condition and management of their properties and their relationship with tenants. Good practice is encouraged and supported, with landlords and properties being accredited. Possible outputs include improvements in stock condition and the provision of appropriate amenities and safety features.
- local authorities have various statutory powers under housing and environmental protection legislation for enforcing physical condition and management standards in the private rented sector and for protecting tenants from harassment and unlawful eviction
- local authorities have the power to designate areas and instigate special measures in locations experiencing problems of low demand and/or anti-social behaviour, under selective licensing measures introduced in the Housing Act 2004. Aspects of ASB that might be addressed include misuse of public space, disregard for community/personal well being, acts directed at people and environmental damage.
- extending support and management initiatives available to social tenants to private tenants

Factors Limiting Success

- the availability of evidence regarding the size, form and distribution of the private sector and information about tenant situations and experiences
- the growing speculative market in private rented accommodation and the associated increase in the number of absentee landlords
- the low priority afforded to the private sector within some local authorities, reflected in levels of strategic engagement and commitment to private rented sector concerns, resource limitations and low staffing levels
- the difficulties of identifying and engaging with, in particular, poor performing landlords, absentee landlords and minority ethnic landlords, who are often outside existing consultative mechanisms
- the failure to secure landlord commitment to voluntary schemes
- the limited awareness of private tenants about how and where to report problems and the difficulties some tenants can encounter doing so (language issues, fear of intimidation etc.)

Risk of Undercutting Cohesion

- the potential divisiveness of targeting locations where private landlords and/or tenants are predominately drawn from a particular ethnic or cultural group
- the stigma that can be associated with the designation of area-based initiatives

Current BNG Activity in this Area

- work to improve the quality and management of Private Rented Sector properties, supporting the Newcastle Private Rented Project and Gateshead Private Rented Sector Team and their work - including voluntary landlord accreditation, selective licensing and guidance for landlords and tenants
- joint funding of improvements to sustainable private sector housing (owner occupied or private rented) in renewal areas
- recent BNG studies have investigated private rented sector landlord practices and perceptions, the views and forecasts of letting agents and the scale of housing market speculation

3. ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGING PERCEPTIONS

Potential Relevance to Cohesion

- fostering a shared sense of pride and belonging
- increasing the choices available to historically excluded or under-represented groups by tackling limited awareness and understanding of available opportunities
- challenging perceptions and convincing different groups that policy and practice is increasingly aware, sensitive toward and willing and able to accommodate their wants and needs
- helping to exploit the full potential of other local initiatives to contribute toward cohesion

Indicative Contributions

- challenging negative perceptions of particular neighbourhoods or tenures among certain groups. Social landlord activities, for example, might include the translation of all key documents into local community languages; attention to the representation of different ethnic groups in publicity material; the provision of information in forms relevant to different populations; and special initiatives to engage and inform hard-to-reach populations.
- advertising campaigns and guided tours to promote a positive image and sense of belonging across all sections of the local population
- general needs landlords working in partnership with BME-led housing associations in an attempt to overcome the various barriers that limit applications from minority ethnic communities, including image and reputation
- staff recruitment from across the local population, in a bid to challenge perceptions of the service provided by an agency and signal increasing awareness and sensitivity to the requirements of different communities
- innovations in practice, such as choice-based lettings, can provide an opportunity to repackage and represent provision (such as council housing) and distance current practice from the legacy of past failings and inequalities in service delivery

Factors Limiting Success

- difficulties sensitising advertising and marketing toward minority ethnic populations if the staff base does not contain the relevant skills and expertise (cultural awareness, community language skills and so on) required to engage with the local population
- the challenge of marketing new initiatives if certain groups continue to encounter difficulties, for example, living in particular neighbourhoods or engaging with certain housing providers
- the difficulties of overcoming the entrenched opinions and negative perceptions among certain groups that are the legacy of past failings in service provision

Risk of Undercutting Cohesion

- the resentment and tensions that can arise if targeted advertising and marketing results in one group feeling it is losing out at the expense of another
- the failure to fully appreciate the diversity within the local population and to reach out to all groups and interests

Current BNG Activity in this Area

- strategic and local consultation and planning has taken place to develop the BNG programme. Attention was paid to ensure consultation methods and timing did not exclude certain communities from taking part and specific discussions have taken place with some communities
- news of the BNG programme of interventions have been disseminated via diversity forums, the BNG website, newsletters and press releases
- perceptions of renewal activities and outcome are to be reviewed using the BNG research, newsletter feedback and local authority resident satisfaction surveys

4. SOCIAL LANDLORD ALLOCATIONS AND LETTINGS

Potential Relevance to Cohesion

- potential for innovation and good practice to increase applications from historically under-represented groups
- promoting fairness and equality in the allocation of housing
- increasing commitment to local neighbourhoods, by giving people a say in where they live
- increasing integration through choice
- increasing commitment to the local neighbourhood
- targeting explicit populations, to increase social mix and foster integration

Indicative Contribution

General

- changing the names and boundaries of allocation areas can help with efforts to challenge perceptions and engender a willingness among groups to consider locations traditionally viewed as 'no-go' areas

Choice Based Lettings (CBL)

- the introduction of CBL in the context of high demand can engender a degree of realism in the expectations of applicants by laying bare the constraints under which local social landlords are operating, as well as providing transparency regarding the basis on which decisions are made
- the institutional reorganisation and injection of resources associated with the introduction of CBL can result in a dramatic improvement in the profile and reputation of social housing

Points Based Systems

- adjustments in allocation systems, such as the grounds on which points are awarded, can help better sensitise the allocation process to the situations and requirements of different populations (for example, an increase in the points available for overcrowding, which disproportionately affects certain populations)

First come, First Served Systems

- first come, first served systems ensure properties are open to all groups and communities and suggest transparency and fairness in the allocation process

Local Lettings Schemes

- cohesion objectives can be made a local priority factor under a local lettings scheme
- work with applicants associated with the operation of local lettings policies (for example, to explain about the neighbourhood, the expectations placed on tenants and to emphasise that nuisance behaviour, including racial harassment, will not be tolerated) can help improve sustainability
- involvement of tenants in developing the scheme (within race equality ground rules) can help foster a shared sense of place and commitment to the neighbourhood

Factors Limiting Success

General

- the failure to underpin letting initiatives designed to encourage groups into new areas with management initiatives that raise interest within the target population and support tenants who take up new opportunities

Choice Based Lettings

- complicated systems of registering and bidding that can be associated with CBL schemes might create access problems for some people
- continuing limits on choice, even following the introduction of CBL, as a result of demand outstripping supply for particular types of property, certain locations or in the context of high demand housing markets characterised by affordability problems
- the potential difficulties of developing local lettings programmes, such as group lettings, in the context of CBL

Points Based Systems

- difficulties of recognising the diverse requirements and priorities of different population groups within measures of need

First Come, First Served

- failure to support disengaged and excluded population groups to participate

Local Letting Schemes

- the danger of the objectives of local letting programmes being undermined by the allocation practices of other landlords
- housing association difficulties negotiating local lettings initiatives with local authorities, particularly in situations where local authorities have nomination rights

Risk of Undercutting Cohesion

Choice Based Lettings

- introduction of choice may result in increasing segregation, with different groups choosing to live together (although emerging evidence suggests this is not tending to be the case)
- variable ability of households to wait could lead to the concentration of applicants in greatest need in the least popular neighbourhoods and the least desirable housing, undermining the principle of equality and reinforcing segregation

Points Based Systems

- potential for steering applicants away from particular areas and reinforcing existing patterns of settlement
- the priority afforded to homeless people, including asylum seekers granted leave to remain, can raise animosity toward these groups and needs to be explained and justified

First Come, First Served

- danger of reinforcing existing patterns of segregation
- discrimination against new residents
- undermining of efforts to encourage applications from previously excluded groups

Local Letting Schemes

- divisive, in that they can be viewed as exclusive by households who are not prioritised

Current BNG Activity in this Area

- while the legal responsibility for letting social rented homes rests with the local authorities, Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), BNG tracks 'churn' and vacancy rates, including long term empty homes, in social housing; both Council and RSL stock. This housing market evidence can aid management of social housing stock, for instance by highlighting areas where demand is low or falling. This information is shared with BNG partners.

5. RESIDENT AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION
Potential Relevance to Cohesion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fostering a shared understanding and a common sense of purpose and vision • assisting with efforts to ensure that the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated in service delivery • assisting in developing strong and positive relationships between people within local neighbourhoods
Indicative Contributions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tenant and resident participation programmes in areas experiencing a rapid change in the population base can serve to bring together different groups and minimise tensions and assist with efforts to prevent and challenge racial harassment • regeneration and renewal can serve as a mechanism for drawing residents and tenants (from across tenures) into participatory structures, giving people a clear reason to engage and providing a focus for deliberations. • resident conferences, targeting disengaged and historically excluded groups, can help build bridges between these communities and local agencies and resident bodies. One-off events can serve to uncover issues and concerns about which local service providers (including landlords) were previously oblivious. • community specific (e.g. women or ethnic group) resident associations can provide a vehicle through which disengaged and previously excluded groups can find their voice and be heard • specific interventions might be required to improve the representation of different sections of the population in resident and tenant groups. One example is the employment of community development workers with specific responsibility for encouraging tenant and resident groups to be more representative of the communities they serve.
Factors Limiting Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the failure to fully appreciate the diversity of the local population and assume, for example, that a minority ethnic tenant representative is able and willing to speak on behalf of all minority ethnic groups living within a neighbourhood • the failure to review and reform the operating principles of tenant participation structures (time and location of meetings, management of meetings and such like) in order to maximise accessibility for all • the difficulties of fostering resident participation if agency practice is insensitive to cultural diversity • the difficulties of developing resident structures beyond the social rented sector and outside renewal and regeneration areas • involving people from different groups is an intensive exercise, demanding a range of skills (community language expertise, negotiation skills, appreciation of the recent history of the area and different groups etc.) and significant resources, that are not always available
Risk of Undercutting Cohesion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the potentially divisive consequences of failing to ensure that participation structures are representative of all aspects of the local population • the unequal distribution of power across the resident population, that can foster resentment and tensions, particularly if one group is perceived to benefit from decisions taken at the expense of another • the potential for groups and partnerships to generate tension and conflict between groups, if not adequately managed • consultation, participation and active involvement can serve to raise expectations. Failing to meet these expectations can have serious consequences for the sustainability of an area.
Current BNG Activity in this Area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • efforts are made to disseminate information about interventions and the outcomes of consultation and research. As part of this process, for example, this research will be fed back to residents via the Gateshead Diversity Forum, meetings with interested community leaders and the BNG website, newsletters and press releases • BNG has recognised the importance of communication to residents and community groups being timely and ongoing, rather than infrequent and sporadic • plain English is used in communications, wherever possible, and BNG offers translated and audio versions of documents on request • local residents have been engaged in planning exercises

6. SUPPORTING NEW TENANTS AND RESIDENTS

Potential Relevance to Cohesion

- assisting in opening up the restricted choices of disadvantaged groups, by underwriting the success, for example, of new developments and lettings initiatives designed to draw new population groups into an area
- facilitating the movement of groups into new areas, by countering the fear of harassment and attack
- introducing and fostering interaction between new and long-standing residents

Indicative Contributions

- support services targeted at vulnerable groups can help raise awareness of the housing system and local services and facilitate interaction with service providers and local communities. As a result, refugees, for example, can be better placed to negotiate the challenges of living in a new country, feel less alienated and develop a greater sense of belonging in their new city.
- providing support and information to existing tenants can help challenge assumptions, prejudices and myths about groups moving into the area (such as refugees and asylum seekers) and thereby limit tensions and conflict
- tenancy support schemes have proved an essential element of initiatives designed to facilitate the movement of minority ethnic tenants into traditionally white neighbourhoods. One approach is the employment of induction workers. As well as assisting with practical needs, informing people about local services and serving as a point of referral to specialist services, workers can facilitate engagement with neighbours and local groups.
- floating support services can help vulnerable tenants across a wider geographical area to sustain their tenancy. The assistance provided might include general support, benefits advice and assistance liaising with service providers, such as utility companies. Good practice might involve the recruitment of staff from specific communities to work with groups recognised as being disengaged from and in need of the help provided by the project.

Factors Limiting Success

- tenancy support schemes often focus attention on new tenants and are unresponsive to problems, such as harassment, that might emerge through time
- there is a tendency for support to focus on households with obvious vulnerabilities, for example, signalled by an experience of homelessness, a health problem or disability. People vulnerable to harassment and abuse on the grounds of culture, ethnicity, colour or religion can therefore be neglected.
- housing support initiatives are typically developed and delivered by social landlords and therefore focus on new social tenants and neglect private tenants and owner occupiers
- failure to maximise the contribution to be provided by community-led agencies, through funding mechanisms and partnership working aimed at capacity building
- support services provided by different agencies can often be disconnected and overlapping

Risk of Undercutting Cohesion

- the actual or perceived focus of support activities on particular groups or on new tenants/residents can raise resentment among tenants about preferential treatment for particular groups, leading to rising tensions between new and long-standing tenants

Current BNG Activity in this Area

- BNG is working to facilitate what it refers to as "high specification homes", which are suitable for households of diverse size and circumstance. This includes building to Lifetime homes design criteria
- flats have been converted into larger, multi-bedroom houses in areas identified as requiring such properties, including areas of minority ethnic settlement

7. MANAGING NEIGHBOURHOODS

Potential Relevance to Cohesion

- limiting the fear and experience of abuse, harassment and violence that can restrict the housing choices of particular groups
- tackling the anti-social and nuisance behaviour and crime that can undercut community sustainability and reduce the housing choices available to certain groups

Indicative Contributions

- practical help and support to local authority and housing association tenants with a history of alleged anti-social behaviour can serve to limit the incidence of ASB and the reliance of landlords on costly and time consuming legal measures
- caretaking activities can serve to deliver improvements to the local environment, forge closer relations between the community and housing services, identify environmental crimes and anti-social behaviour and prompt a more rapid response from the relevant agencies
- security patrols can provide a visible presence in an attempt to deter crime and anti-social behaviour, deal with problems when they arise and limit the likelihood of incidents escalating
- tenancy enforcement officers can usefully lead a response to incidents of neighbour nuisance and anti-social behaviour
- disseminating guidelines to local residents about unacceptable behaviour and action to be taken as and when incidents occur signals that a stand is being taken against such behaviour

Factors Limiting Success

- the absence of local intelligence about the locations and situations in which tenancy management initiatives are required
- the traditional propensity of some landlords to focus their response to harassment on relocating the victim, thereby risking perpetuating the perception of particular neighbourhoods as no-go areas for certain groups
- the good practice of one landlord or agency can be undone by the failure of another (social or private) landlord to work to the same agenda or standards
- the failure to act swiftly in cases of nuisance or anti-social behaviour or racial harassment
- the failure to involve all social and private landlords in tenancy management initiatives, given that the problems encountered by the tenant of one landlord might well be caused by a tenant of another landlord

Risk of Undercutting Cohesion

- the failure of initiatives to deliver significant improvements can serve to reinforce perceptions about particular groups, neighbourhoods and associated housing opportunities, undercutting efforts to widen choice

Current BNG Activity in this Area

- BNG's partners, including the two local authorities, the police and other groups, are ultimately responsible for addressing issues associated with the Respect agenda and community cohesion more generally. However, BNG supports the Respect Agenda, in partnership with Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships and the local authorities, and is involved in the development of Respect Housing Management standards
- BNG is actively supporting the delivery of neighbourhood management initiatives, including the provision of neighbourhood wardens in key market renewal intervention areas
- 'Secured by Design' principles are integrated into new build developments

8. MANAGING COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Potential Relevance to Cohesion

- limiting the fear and experience of abuse, harassment and violence
- helping develop understanding between different groups from different backgrounds
- fostering a shared commitment to the neighbourhood and a common sense of place

Indicative Contributions

- collaborative schemes that actively encourage and support residents to report racial harassment can raise awareness of problems in a particular area, prompt consideration of the problem among relevant services and signal to perpetrators and victims that harassment will not be tolerated
- community development schemes can bring together residents from different neighbourhoods and ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Activities might include day trips and fun days for residents and events intended to bring together particular groups, such as young people.
- mediation initiatives can help tackle tensions before they escalate. For example, individuals or groups involved in a dispute can be encouraged to meet with a trained community facilitator to talk about and work through disagreements
- as well as working with residents, facilitation programmes can also bring together community-led organisations and statutory agencies and service providers, to help develop mutual understanding and facilitate co-operation and partnership working

Factors Limiting Success

- the absence of local intelligence capable of spotlighting where and when problems and tensions are emerging between different groups
- the weak links between mediating or facilitating agencies and certain sections of the local population (for example, young people or certain ethnic groups)
- the time limited nature of many such initiatives
- the potential for improvements in community relations to be undermined by a one-off incident or event (crime or ASB, comments or report by key institutions, such as the police or local authority, negative media reporting of a group or area etc.)
- the failure of initiatives to recognise the multi-identities and allegiances of local residents (i.e. not merely along the lines of ethnicity of religion)
- the failure of initiatives to recognise and respond to the rapid changes in the local population that can occur at the neighbourhood level

Risk of Undercutting Cohesion

- the divisiveness of initiatives if they fail to engage with all sections

Current BNG Activity in this Area

- BNG project officers, such as those involved in relocation, neighbourhood management, Private Rented Sector Teams, highlight community relations issues to partners with the capacity and knowledge to tackle these matters

In Pursuit of Equality of Opportunity, Positive Community Relations and Neighbourhood Sustainability: Targeted Advice for BNG and its Partners

3.1. Introduction

This final part of the report generates specific advice for BNG and its partners for promoting cohesion - equality of opportunity, positive community relations and neighbourhood sustainability - in critical arenas across the BNG area. The challenge apparent in key locations subject to BNG strategic intervention is outlined, reflecting on the insights provided by the research into minority ethnic and refugee housing situations, requirements and preferences. Drawing on the suite of interventions presented in Part 2 and the good practice advice detailed in Appendix 2, the interventions that might be actioned in response are summarised and the future trajectories of different neighbourhoods are considered.

Discussion is divided into three sections, each focusing on a different zone of the BNG area:

- *Gateshead* - discussion focuses on four specific locations in the Gateshead BNG area: Bensham and Saltwell; Felling Bypass Corridor; Teams and; Dunston
- *Newcastle Outer East* - discussion focuses on two specific areas in the eastern zone of the BNG area: Byker and Ouseburn and; Walker Riverside
- *Newcastle Inner West* - discussion focuses on six areas in the west End of Newcastle: Arthurs Hill; Fenham; Benwell; Scotswood; Elswick and; the Discovery Quarter.

3.2. Gateshead Strategic Intervention Area

Bensham and Saltwell

Critical Arena	'Reception' Locality - history as the point of arrival and settlement for new immigrants. Population growing rapidly as a result of new immigration and reproduction, given the relatively young age profile of the area. Outward movement of more established minority ethnic populations limited by cultural concerns (e.g. Orthodox Jewish population) and concerns about living in neighbouring areas.
BME Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13% of population belonged to minority ethnic group in 2001. Largest groups were the Orthodox Jewish and the Pakistani populations.
Process of Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in-migration of 'new' ethnic groups (refugees and migrant workers) continued chain migration of established ME groups rapid natural population growth increasing demand for low cost housing increasing numbers of 'trapped' households
Housing Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> worsening housing conditions (including overcrowding) increased pressure on housing and services potential for increasing concentration of deprivation limited housing opportunities within area - especially houses limited opportunities for out-migration for some households
BNG Strategic Interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> refurbishment and extension of Tyneside flats to create five+ bedroom properties creation of more open/green spaces development of aspirational new houses with gardens
Suggested Additional Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> there is an urgent need for more large dwellings, but opportunities for new developments are severely limited. Demolition and new building could provide more appropriate dwellings; flats and apartments are likely to prove unpopular with families who have a preference for houses with gardens. Complementing new build with ongoing conversion/extension of existing stock where appropriate will increase supply of housing for minority ethnic households. loans and other forms of assistance for the redesign and adaptation of owner occupied stock should be made available, given both poor conditions in the owner occupied sector and the difficulties encountered by households looking after elderly relatives at home (for example, Bangladeshi households) it is vital that affordable options are provided. Shared ownership appears particularly popular among Jewish households efforts to provide access to housing opportunities on the fringes of the area are likely to be more successful if they involve agencies with an established reputation for providing relevant and appropriate housing (e.g. Home Housing is reported to have a good reputation with the Jewish population, following the success of Hartington Street)
Suite of Supporting Interventions	The popularity of the area, together with the potential for the population to grow rapidly (as a result of new immigration and the relatively young age profile of the population), point to the urgent need to provide and actively promote relevant housing opportunities in neighbouring locations. A key challenge will be tackling concerns among households about living in neighbouring areas. To this end, it will be important to market opportunities and challenge perceptions regarding neighbouring locations and currently less popular areas of Bensham. Preparatory work should be considered with existing residents and tenants and residents moving into adjacent locations will need to be supported. Neighbourhood management initiatives might need to be strengthened to respond effectively to the possibility of harassment and community tensions. The Orthodox Jewish population will not be able to take up such opportunities unless within reach of religious facilities given religious practices.

Felling Bypass Corridor

Critical Arena	Transforming Locality - evidence of an emerging process of change, resulting in the gradual transformation of the ethnic profile of the area. This process of change could be promoted further by BNG interventions in the area, which evidence suggests could increase the willingness of minority ethnic households to consider moving into the area. A key challenge will therefore be the management of the area in a bid to avoid it becoming a contested locality, characterised by tensions and conflict.
BME Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • small minority ethnic population (less than 4% in 2001)
Process of Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • small scale movement into the area of minority ethnic households from adjacent area, which is likely to continue, given proposed BNG interventions • potential for a rapid process of change to prove unsettling for established residents and prompt tensions
Housing Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • potential for tensions between established and incoming populations • 'loose' markets may 'tighten up' if external pressures increase, with housing choices becoming more restricted for poorer households as a result • overcrowding may increase
BNG Strategic Commissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new build and improvements in the Sunderland Road area • neighbourhood management around Howe Street, adjacent to Sunderland Road • land assembly and future new development on brown land adjacent to the Bypass
Suggested Additional Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure the incorporation of flexible design considerations into new developments • provision of opportunities to enter owner occupation through shared ownership and other innovative approaches to addressing affordability issues
Suite of Supporting Interventions	<p>The area is relatively unpopular with minority ethnic people, but is relatively close to existing areas of settlement and has the potential to release some of the demand from Bensham and Saltwell. Although BNG interventions appear likely to encourage some people to consider moving into the area, the opportunities being created will remain beyond the reach of many people unless safety and security concerns are addressed. In response, it will therefore be important to introduce initiatives aimed at countering fears and managing problems likely to emerge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • market opportunities and challenge perceptions regarding neighbouring locations • resident and community participation • monitoring and managing community relations • neighbourhood management • supporting new residents • understanding and responding to evidence regarding the long term housing outcomes of new residents

Teams

Critical Arena	<p>Dormant Locality/Transforming Locality - this strategic commission area splits into two distinct localities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the area between Bensham Road and Askew Road West is adjacent to the Reception locality of Bensham, and has the potential to be transformed, given the provision of community facilities within easy reach and the ongoing and proposed new build activity. As a consequence, the locality can serve to release pressure on demand in Bensham and Saltwell the area sandwiched between the River Tyne and Askew Road West exhibits more of the characteristics of a dormant locality. The area is dominated by social rented housing and the local population is predominantly White British. The area is unpopular with minority ethnic residents
BME Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small minority ethnic population: around 3% in 2001
Process of Change	<p><i>Between Bensham Road and Askew Road West:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> potential for the inflow of minority ethnic groups inflow of particular ethnic sub-groups (e.g. young households) <p><i>Between the River Tyne and Askew Road West:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> natural population decline declining demand
Housing Challenges	<p><i>Between Bensham Road and Askew Road West:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> potential for tensions between established and incoming populations the market might tighten up as its popularity increases overcrowding may increase <p><i>Between the River Tyne and Askew Road West:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> potential for falling demand and housing market decline opportunity for increasing minority ethnic housing choices
BNG Strategic Commissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> new build and land assembly in the area between Bensham Road and Askew Road West
Suggested Additional Activities	<p><i>Between Bensham Road and Askew Road West:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> integrating culturally sensitive design principles into new build developments including the provision of larger properties in new developments mixed developments to facilitate the movement of family groups (for example, developing sheltered accommodation alongside general needs housing) <p><i>Between the River Tyne and Askew Road West:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reflecting on longer term options for future new build activities in the area, in a bid to bolster demand and to release pressure from neighbouring locations (Bensham and Saltwell)
Suite of Supporting Interventions	<p><i>Between Bensham Road and Askew Road West:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> marketing opportunities and challenging perceptions about the area among residents of Bensham and Saltwell supporting new residents who move into the area promoting resident and community participation monitoring and managing community relations neighbourhood management monitoring the long term housing outcomes of new residents <p><i>Between the River Tyne and Askew Road West:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consider the potential for the Bensham Road area to serve as a 'stepping stone' for minority ethnic households to eventually cross Askew Road West

Dunston (South)

Critical Arena	Dormant Locality (with the potential for transformation) - the part of Dunston in the BNG area has exhibited many of the characteristics of a Dormant locality, but in recent years has begun to go through gradual (and so far limited) process of transformation as a result of the active dispersal of people seeking asylum to the area and the subsequent settlement of some households in the area once granted leave to remain. The history of this part of Dunston, as a predominantly White British, council housing dominated location, with little history of minority ethnic settlement, indicates that this process might be contested. Area preferences, however, indicate that few minority ethnic households are keen to move to the area, although the local asylum resettlement programme might result in some continued growth of the area's minority ethnic population. Experience from beyond Newcastle and Gateshead also suggests that the settlement of refugees in an area can challenge the preconceptions of other minority ethnic households about an area being a 'no-go' zone for non-White people.
BME Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small minority ethnic population: around 3% in 2001
Process of Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • potential for some limited inflow of additional minority ethnic households, although difficult to quantify • potential future growth of minority ethnic households, given the relatively young age profile of the population
Housing Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • potential for tensions between established and incoming populations • changing nature of local demand (design, size etc.) • managing potential problems of harassment
BNG Strategic Commissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • land assembly around Ravensworth Road
Suggested Additional Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integrating culturally sensitive design principles into new build developments • including the provision of larger properties in new developments, recognising the limited provision and urgent need for larger family housing
Suite of Supporting Interventions	This area is very unpopular among minority ethnic households. Other areas are far more likely to provide new housing opportunities for households venturing beyond the pressurised housing market of Bensham and Saltwell. However, the BNG interventions in Dunston appear likely to increase the willingness of some minority ethnic households to consider moving into the area. Movement into the area is likely to be a slow process and to be reliant on the emergence of intermediate areas between Dunston and Bensham, that serve as 'stepping stone' locations for 'spatial pioneers'. In the meantime, bridge building work between communities might be undertaken, in a bid to minimise tensions that might arise as and when minority ethnic households settle in the area. The process of change should also be closely monitored, with an additional suite of interventions being developed as and when population change begins to take place.

3.3. Outer East Strategic Intervention Area

Byker and Ouseburn

Critical Arena	Dormant locality - this White-dominated area exhibits many of the characteristics of a dormant locality. The area has seen rising vacancy rates and emerging signals of low demand in past years. This process of change, however, has presented opportunities to households living in more pressurised housing markets. The result has been relatively rapid house price rises in recent years, which have outstripped local and regional averages. Low demand in the area has also provided social landlords with opportunities to accommodate households in housing need, including new immigrants, resulting in a small shift in the ethnic profile.
BME Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7% of population belonged to a minority ethnic group in 2001. White Other and Pakistani were the largest minority ethnic grouping
Process of Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> declining demand, which presents opportunities for households from tighter markets and landlords seeking to meet housing need natural decline in established population, which is countered by the inflow of new residents small change in the ethnic profile of the local population
Housing Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tightening up of the local housing market emergence of new needs (accommodation and services) ongoing unpopularity of some of the social rented sector in the area, although planned investment could serve to address this issues potential of new housing opportunities for minority ethnic households potential for racial harassment and community tensions
BNG Strategic Commissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> clearance activities have provided two development sites (St Lawrence Park and Whickham Gardens) with 233 new units due for development. The proposed developments will include 44 four bed properties and nine five bed properties land assembly activities to the west of the area
Development/ Renewal Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> integration of flexible design considerations into new developments
Suite of Supporting Interventions	The area is far from being a 'no-go' zone for minority ethnic households, although it is not a popular destination and it appears unlikely that many people will seek to move from the West End, across the city centre to Byker. Myth-busting work could counter negative perceptions of the area and promote greater interest in moving to the area among minority ethnic households. There is also some evidence that new immigrants placed in the area, including Chinese households, have remained. The growth of this population, although still relatively small scale, is a possibility in future years. If these households are to be able to take up the opportunities being created by BNG and its partners it will be important to develop a suite of interventions including: marketing of opportunities; support for new residents and; sensitising neighbourhood management to potential problems that might emerge at the local level.

Walker Riverside

Critical Arena	Dormant locality - this White-dominated area exhibits similar characteristics to Byker (though more removed from the city centre and West End) and might be categorised as a dormant locality. Locations within Walker Riverside saw rising vacancy rates and emerging signals of low demand in past years. As in Byker, this process of change presented opportunities to households living in more pressurised housing markets, resulting in recent house price rises. Low demand in the area has also provided social landlords with opportunities to accommodate households in housing need, including some new immigrants.
BME Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> only 4% of population belonged to a minority ethnic group in 2001, the largest group being Pakistani
Process of Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> declining demand, which presents opportunities for households from tighter markets and landlords seeking to meet housing need natural decline in established population, which is countered (to some degree) by the inflow of new residents small change in the ethnic profile of the local population
Housing Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tightening up of the local housing market emergence of new needs (accommodation and services) unpopularity of some social rented accommodation in the area potential of new housing opportunities for minority ethnic households potential for racial harassment and community tensions
BNG Strategic Commissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> group repair activities focusing on some 60 properties of mixed type and tenure adjacent to the riverside (St Anthony's) Western Gateway land assembly and new development, in the west of the area (McCutcheon Court), involving demolition and the development of 107 new homes for rent and sale Cambrian new build in the east of the area, providing 143 new properties Stack and Old Walker Baths sites, involving the development of 60 new properties for sale, including affordable home ownership option appraisal for the Walker multi-storey blocks management of the private rented sector
Development/ Renewal Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> integration of flexible design considerations into new developments
Suite of Supporting Interventions	The area is unpopular among minority ethnic households and few residents in the West End are willing to consider moving across to Walker. However, myth-busting work could counter negative perceptions of the area and promote greater interest in moving to the area among minority ethnic households in the longer term. In addition, some minority ethnic households are already resident in Walker. However, access to new housing developments is often a contentious issue and the take up of new opportunities by minority ethnic households could raise tensions among long-standing residents. This situation will need to be closely monitored and support offered to new residents and neighbourhood management interventions actioned if problems are predicted or emerge.

3.4. Inner West Strategic Intervention Area

Arthurs Hill

Critical Arena	Dynamic and Changeable Locality - this is a multi-ethnic area that has historically been marked by high levels of residential mobility, in part, reflecting the relatively large private rented sector in the area. As with all such localities, there is potential for the area to change relatively quickly, as the profile of in-movers and out-movers alters. In recent years, available evidence suggests that the area has proved increasingly popular with people from neighbouring 'tighter' housing markets, where first time buyers and people on low incomes have been struggling to access home ownership. This process might lead to a more stable population, although the relationship between established long-term residents and incoming residents could be a source of tension.
BME Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> relatively large minority ethnic and new immigrant population - largest minority ethnic groups in the area are Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian
Process of Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> market might tighten up if external pressures continue change in the social profile potential for conflict between old and new residents – even though new residents might bring new stability and lead to a reduction in traditional tensions (e.g. evident in some similar student markets in recent years)
Housing Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> affordability problems for established long-term residents, given house price rises potential increase in housing deprivation among the established population, particularly if committed to the area but unable to meet housing needs (for example, children unable to afford to move out of the family home) potential for the turbulence of the private rented sector to undermine positive developments
BNG Strategic Commissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a renewal area was declared in Arthurs Hill, Wingrove Terraces and the Elswick Triangle in April 2006. It is hoped that the first phase of improvement work will start by January 2007, involving major improvements of existing properties.
Development/ Renewal Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> there is a need for larger dwellings, but opportunities for new developments are severely limited. A focus on extending existing properties appears to be the most productive approach to increasing supply there is therefore a need to improve perceptions of (and lived experiences in) the neighbouring areas of Elswick and Benwell, where more new build will take place a focus on security concerns during renewal activities
Suite of Supporting Interventions	The proposed BNG interventions in the area appear likely to increase willingness of people to consider living in the area. Given the fact that the area is already relatively popular, the result could be tensions about who gets what. It will therefore be important to monitor housing needs and outcomes and to manage community relations issues that might emerge. In addition concerted effort should be put into marketing opportunities in adjacent areas, in a bid to extend the housing choices of residents.

Fenham⁵

Critical Arena	Transforming Locality - this area, adjacent to traditional areas of minority ethnic settlement, has witnessed a shift in its ethnic profile in recent years, as new generations of households have moved out from established areas of settlement. The area also appears to have experienced the inward movement of households from the 'tighter' markets of South Gosforth and West Jesmond, attracted to larger properties adjacent to Nuns Moor. The combined consequence of these processes has been dramatic house price rises. Although relations between different ethnic groups may be benign, this process of change is likely to raise challenges that might need to be managed.
BME Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some 12% belonged to a minority ethnic group in 2001, with the largest population being Pakistani and other groups including Indian, Bangladeshi and Chinese
Process of Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • market has tightened up considerably, potentially limiting access to the area in future years for minority ethnic households seeking to move out of established areas of settlement • change in the social profile • potential for conflict between old and new residents
Housing Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • affordability problems for established long-term residents, given house price rises • potential increase in housing deprivation among the established population, particularly if committed to the area but unable to meet housing needs (for example, children unable to afford to move out of the family home)
BNG Strategic Commissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • management of the private rented sector
Development/Renewal Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the emergence of Fenham as an aspirational area for socially mobile South Asian (Pakistani and Indian) households should be supported. The commitment of these households to the area serves to widen the social profile and underpin its sustainability, while releasing pressure from adjacent locations. New developments might be considered in the area, focusing on family housing • the provision of accommodation (supported and sheltered) for older people, allowing the collective relocation of family groups • developments in other areas of the West End represent an opportunity to deflect some of the demand from Fenham, which is forcing up house prices beyond the reach of many people seeing to move into aspirational housing in adjacent neighbourhoods
Suite of Supporting Interventions	Like all transforming areas, it will be important to keep a close eye on the process of change and any tensions that might arise. Proactive interventions might be developed to foster positive relations (such as resident and community participation). Reactive interventions will be required if problems do emerge.

⁵ Fenham falls within the BNG area but is characterised by relatively buoyant demand. It is not, therefore, an area of major BNG activity

Scotswood

Critical Arena	Dormant Locality / Transforming Locality - this White-dominated area has recently exhibited many of the classic features of a dormant market, with housing abandonment and low demand featuring in its recent past. Demand, particularly for flat and terraced properties, as reflected in relatively low house price rises in recent years. However, high demand for semi-detached properties, along with relatively stable levels of turnover, suggest that the reorientation of the local stock profile could see an improvement in the area's fortunes. The major new development in the area promoted by BNG could therefore prove attractive. One consequence could (and should) be a process of transformation, which might include the inward movement of minority ethnic households from adjacent areas where housing choices are constrained by the restrictions of the stock profile.
BME Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • small minority ethnic population in 2001 (5%), when Pakistani were the largest minority ethnic group
Process of Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • potential for the inward movement of a more diverse population • change in the ethnic and social profile • potential for conflict between old and different new residents
Housing Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the market has been sluggish but could tighten up • neighbourhood reputation and perceptions among potential new residents could restrict the process of positive change • failure to attract new residents would signal ongoing housing market decline
BNG Strategic Commissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • major new development, beginning with the Housing Expo in 2010, which will provide the catalyst to generate new homes and challenge perceptions of the area and market the location. The stated aim is that the homes built for the Expo will become part of a new sustainable community in Benwell Scotswood • stock renewal activities and environmental improvements within the area stretching from Benwell village to Denton Dene
Development/ Renewal Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integration of flexible design considerations into new developments • inclusion of bigger properties (five and six bedrooms) in new developments for sale and rent • including the development of community centres and other such facilities into the design of the Expo site • responding to the demand for gardens and private space around properties • provision of mixed housing provision, catering for general and specific needs, including housing for older people, allowing the inward movement of family groups • provision of opportunities to enter owner occupation through shared ownership and other innovative approaches to addressing affordability issues
Suite of Supporting Interventions	<p>This area is unpopular among minority households, despite being adjacent to established areas of settlement. Concerns about living in the area centred around issues of safety and security. These issues will need to be addressed if the significant new housing opportunities being developed in the area are going to be open to minority ethnic households and are to serve to release some of the pressure from neighbouring locations. To this end, an extensive suite of supporting interventions will need to be developed, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • marketing opportunities and challenging perceptions • innovative social housing allocations • supporting residents and tenants • resident and community participation • neighbourhood management • managing community relations • managing the private rented sector

Benwell

Critical Arena	<p>‘Reception’ Locality - a marked difference is evident between North Benwell and South Benwell. North Benwell has a long history of serving as a point of arrival for groups new to Newcastle. It is characterised by low-value housing and, often, extreme levels of housing deprivation. The population is relatively young and growing rapidly. In recent years the area has also witnessed the arrival of new immigrant groups. Demand for housing outstrips supply and households with the resources to do so often move out, resulting in a narrowing of the socio-economic profile. South Benwell is less ethnically diverse and has a very different stock profile, with less private rented housing and a larger social rented sector. This area exhibits many of the characteristics of a dormant area. However, the area has experienced the in-migration of new ethnic groups in recent years, including new immigrants.</p>
BME Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some 6% of the population belonged to a minority ethnic group in 2001, the largest groups being Pakistani, Indian White minority ethnic groups
Process of Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in-migration of ‘new’ ethnic groups • continued chain migration of established groups • rapid natural population growth • increasing demand for low cost housing • many ‘trapped’ households, who cannot afford to take-up opportunities in adjacent areas, but are also reluctant to consider moving into South Benwell
Housing Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • worsening housing conditions due to low incomes among minority ethnic owner occupiers • increased pressure on housing and related services • increasing concentrations of deprivation • limited housing opportunities within the area • potential for conflict between established populations and new immigrant arrivals
BNG Strategic Commissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Benwell terraces are a designated renewal area. Improvements to private dwellings have been funded by BNG and 20 empty properties are being converted into 10 family homes for sale • North Benwell Neighbourhood Management Initiative has promoted closer working between different agencies, including the Police and local street wardens. • management of the private rented sector • stock renewal and environmental improvements in South Benwell
Development/ Renewal Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • integration of flexible design considerations into new developments • critical importance of the provision of larger properties, including five and six bedroom accommodation • loans and other forms of assistance for the redesign and adaptation of owner occupied stock should be made available, given both poor conditions in the owner occupied sector and the difficulties encountered by households looking after elderly relatives at home (for example, Pakistani households)
Suite of Supporting Interventions	<p>On the one hand, a key challenge will be managing demand within N Benwell among minority ethnic households. One option is opening up S Benwell and Scotswood to minority ethnic residents. However, doing so could undermine the sustainability of N Benwell, which has been underpinned by residents having few alternative options. Widening housing opportunities is important to improving housing conditions, but attention will need to be paid to the residential offer within N Benwell in order to maintain demand for the area.</p>

Elswick

Critical Arena	<p>‘Reception’ Locality - market differences are apparent between the north and south of Elswick. The area adjacent to the West Road and neighbouring North Benwell and Arthurs Hill has a long history of serving as initial point of arrival and settlement for population groups new to Newcastle. The area is characterised by low-value housing, high levels of private renting and housing deprivation.</p> <p>The area south of Elswick Road is less ethnically diverse but more diverse in terms of tenure. This area includes the multi-storey blocks of Cruddas Park, which in recent years has exhibited many of the features of a dormant locality.</p>
BME Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> more than 25% of the population belonged to a minority ethnic group in 2001, with relatively large Bangladeshi and Pakistani populations, as well as other groups, including a small Chinese population and an African population
Process of Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in-migration of ‘new’ ethnic groups across the area, including Czech Roma households and Congolese new immigrants in Cruddas Park continued chain migration of established groups natural population growth demand for low cost housing many ‘trapped’ households, who cannot afford to take-up opportunities in adjacent areas and reluctance to move into the south of the area
Housing Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> worsening housing conditions increasing concentrations of deprivation limited housing opportunities within preferred locations in the area, the south of the area proving unpopular among many minority ethnic households potential for conflict between established populations and new immigrant arrivals
BNG Strategic Commissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> refurbishment of Cruddas Park renewal area declared in the Elswick Triangle in April 2006 options appraisal for the New Mills Estate proposals for a new development of family homes along Westmorland Road and Loadman Street management of the private rented sector
Development/ Renewal Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> integration of flexible design considerations into new developments and into the remodelling of Cruddas Park provision of small schemes providing sheltered accommodation for the increasing number of older people. Culturally sensitive design features will need to be incorporated into such developments incorporation of community facilities into the renewal of Cruddas Park/other schemes exploration of the potential for providing outside spaces through the development of Cruddas Park (for example, substantial balconies)
Suite of Supporting Interventions	<p>The challenge in Elswick is to open up the new opportunities being developed in the south of the area to minority ethnic households living in poor conditions in the north of the area and in nearby North Benwell. Access to a resource as scarce as renewed and newly developed accommodation can prove divisive, however. In addition to efforts to market the area to new residents, it will therefore be important to minimise potential tensions through community participation activities and community relations work. Monitoring of housing outcomes and community relations will help to signal if and when problems emerge.</p>

Discovery Quarter/Brewery Site

Critical Arena	This area cannot be considered a critical arena. The recent history of the area involves only limited residential settlement. It is not possible, therefore, to identify any ongoing process of change and emerging issues and challenges. Plans for the development of residential accommodation within the area, however, do serve to prompt consideration of the area's future trajectory.
BME Population	N/A
Process of Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the development of new properties on the brewery site are likely to prove attractive to households from different minority ethnic groups, including Chinese, Bangladeshi and Pakistani, that are currently living in adjacent neighbourhoods the result could be the emergence of a relatively diverse local population properties are likely to be in high demand (conditional on type and price), if the comments of respondents to the survey of minority ethnic households in the BNG area anything to go by the location of the site is likely to attract demand from beyond the BNG area
Housing Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demand is likely to outstrip supply the opportunities available to residents of the BNG area seeking aspirational housing near to existing areas of settlement could be limited the rapid settlement of households from a diverse range of backgrounds might need to be managed
BNG Strategic Commissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> proposed development of (aspirational) family housing on 2.2 hectares of land immediately adjacent to the city centre
Development/Renewal Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> integration of flexible design considerations into new developments development of accommodation for Chinese elders. For example, the apartments around a central courtyard with a water feature and the provision of on-site support and more intensively supported housing schemes
Suite of Supporting Interventions	This new development is likely to prove popular to all sections of the local community, although the intention to provide top quality, high density houses will mean that properties will be beyond the reach of many local residents. There is therefore significant potential for the access to new developments to become a contentious issue that could foster disharmony and tension. It will therefore be important to market the availability of opportunities to all sections of the local population and to operate a transparent allocation process, countering myths that might emerge about who got what and why. Participation activities might be necessary to foster a sense of community once people move into new developments.

Appendix 1: Specific Duties and Good Practice in Promoting Race Equality

A1. Statutory and Regulatory Requirements

Summary

- race relations legislation provides a framework of legal duties and obligations within which local authorities, housing associations and other housing agencies must operate
- statutory codes, regulatory guidance and associated action plans detail minimal standards that local authorities and housing associations must meet in relation to race equality and profile the principles of good practice in the provision of housing and related services
- various other pieces of legislation, codes of practice and guidance place obligations or expectations on housing agencies regarding issues of race equality.

A1.1. Introduction

This section of the report sets out the legal and regulatory framework arising from various legislation and statutory obligations that local authorities, registered social landlords and other agencies have to comply with in relation to race relations, equality of service provision and meeting the housing and related needs of BME populations.

A1.2. The Legal Framework

Overview

- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003.

A1.2.1. Race Relations Act 1976

The Race Relations Act 1976, as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, makes it unlawful to discriminate against anyone on grounds of race, colour, nationality (including citizenship), or ethnic or national origin. Under the duty, public authorities must aim to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity, and
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

A1.2.2. Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act provides new powers to tackle racism in public authorities by outlawing any discrimination (direct and indirect) and placing a duty on public authorities to seek to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups (the "duty to promote race equality").

A1.2.3. Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003

The Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations implement the EU Directive on race discrimination. The main changes include a new definition of indirect discrimination, a freestanding definition of racial harassment, and changes to the burden of proof, which in theory should mean that complainants can bring a case against their employer more easily. The directive includes coverage of access to and the supply of goods and services that are available to the public, including housing. However, unlike the Race Relations Act 1976, the changes introduced apply to acts of discrimination on grounds of race, ethnic or national origin only, they do not apply to acts of discrimination on grounds of colour or nationality. This is because the EU race directive only prohibits discrimination on grounds of race and ethnic origin.

Other pieces of legislation with direct relevance include the European Equal Treatment Directive (1997) and the Human Rights Act (1998).

A1.3. Statutory Guidance and Regulation

Overview

- CRE (2006) Statutory Code of Practice on Racial Equality in Housing England
- CRE (2002) Statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality
- Housing Corporation (2005) The Regulatory Code and Guidance Regulatory Guidance
- Housing Corporation (2005) BME Action Plan 2005-2008
- Housing Corporation (2002) Regulatory Code Good Practice Note November 2002 - Race Equality and Diversity
- DTLR (2001) Addressing the Housing Needs of Black and Minority Ethnic People: A DTLR (Housing Directorate) Action Plan.
- Audit Commission Key Lines of Enquiry
- Equality Impact Assessments.

A1.3.1. CRE (2006) Statutory Code of Practice on Racial Equality in Housing England

This Code replaces the Statutory Codes of Practice in rented (1991) and on-rented (1992) housing. The Code applies to all providers of housing and related services in England (public and private) and covers all tenures. However, elements relating to promotion of racial equality and good race relations only relate to public authorities. Courts and tribunals must take its recommendations into account in cases brought under the Race Relations Act.

The Code includes guidance on good practice regarding:

- governance and the role of governing bodies
- new and improved housing, rented and non-rented
- sales and lettings
- neighbourhood development and community cohesion
- mortgage lending and insurance
- tenancy and housing management
- racial harassment and anti-social behaviour
- contractors and procurement; and
- involvement of residents and tenants.

A1.3.2. Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) (2002) Statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality

This code offers practical guidance to public authorities (including local authorities and the Housing Corporation) on how to meet their duty to promote race equality. That is, to:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity; and
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

This code of practice is a 'statutory' code. This means that it has been approved by Parliament. It also means that the code is admissible in evidence in any legal action, and a court or tribunal should take the code's recommendations into account.

A1.3.3. Housing Corporation (2005) The Regulatory Code and Guidance Regulatory Guidance

The Regulatory Code sets out the fundamental obligations of housing associations in meeting the Corporation's regulatory requirements. Regulatory Code 2.7 states that:

"Housing associations must demonstrate, when carrying out all their functions, their commitment to equal opportunity. They must work towards the elimination of discrimination and demonstrate an equitable approach to the rights and responsibilities of all individuals. They must promote good relations between people of different racial groups."

The associated Regulatory Guidance states:

1. The association is fair in its dealings with people, communities and organisations with which it has relationships and takes into account the diverse nature of their cultures and backgrounds.
2. The governing body has adopted an equalities and diversity policy that covers all aspects of equalities and includes race, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or age.
3. Specifically in relation to black and minority ethnic (BME) people, the policy incorporates targets associations should set in the following areas:

- lettings: are proportionate to BME housing need, or census data where this information is deficient, in the area where the association has homes. An association specialising in particular client groups establishes different targets based on ethnicity data available for such groups
- tenant satisfaction: is at least as high as for non-BME tenants
- dealing effectively with racial harassment: the association establishes targets for reporting, victim support and satisfaction, and action taken against perpetrators
- governing body membership: the proportion of BME new appointments and re-appointments to the governing body is the same as under 'Lettings' above
- staffing: new appointments and promotions achieve the same levels of representation, at all levels of the organisation, as under the application of the 'Lettings' criteria
- representation in tenants/residents associations: reflects the ethnic mix of the association's tenants in the relevant area
- employment performance of suppliers, contractors and consultants: as a criterion for award of work or contracts and a condition of doing business, associations should pass on requirements in respect of staffing, customer satisfaction and dealing with racial harassment (set out above) to their consultants, contractors and suppliers.

A1.3.4. Housing Corporation (2002) Regulatory Code Good Practice Note November 2002 - Race Equality and Diversity

This Good Practice Note covers:

- the Corporation's role in relation to Race Equality and Diversity
- why Race Equality and Diversity are important for housing associations
- the standards of performance that associations must meet
- the target dates for meeting these standards
- how the Corporation will regulate performance on Race Equality and Diversity
- other sources of Good Practice and information.

A1.3.5. Housing Corporation (2005) BME Action Plan 2005-2008

The Action Plan sets out a series of commitments and actions to be taken that are supportive of the Housing Corporation's commitment to the vision and objectives set out in the Race and Housing Inquiry Challenge Report 2001, as well as the Corporation's existing BME Housing Policy. Fundamentally, it is an action plan for the Corporation, but it serves to provide further clarification for housing associations regarding the Corporation's expectations on race and housing.

A1.3.6. DTLR (2001) Addressing the Housing Needs of Black and Minority Ethnic People: A DTLR (Housing Directorate) Action Plan.

This Action Plan complements the 2000 Housing Green Paper statement by setting out what the, now, DCLG is doing to address the housing needs and aspirations of black and minority ethnic groups across a range of housing responsibilities and activities. The Plan is 'owned' by DCLG, but the Department states that it "will be looking to local authorities, Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), and other housing service providers to do their part."

A1.3.7. Audit Commission Key Lines of Enquiry

The Housing Inspectorate have produced a number of key lines of enquiry that inform their assessment and measurement of housing services. Whilst many of the key lines of enquiry impact upon minority ethnic housing provision and services, the most directly applicable is No.31 Diversity Lines of Enquiry. This enquiry covers the following broad areas:

- corporate culture and Governance
- access to customer services
- service user involvement
- partnerships
- harassment and domestic violence.

The Diversity Key Lines of Enquiry set out a number of questions in each of these areas along with criteria to be met in measurement and assessment, as follows:

A1.3.8. Corporate Culture and Governance

- is there clear and consistent leadership in the promotion of equal opportunities and diversity?
- are external requirements- legislative or good practice, being addressed?
- have service users and relevant stakeholders been involved in determining priorities? How have these priorities been disseminated?
- do the governance structures receive the reports necessary to judge whether the organisation is delivering on diversity?

A1.3.9. Access and customer care

- is communication with service users conducted in a manner that meets their needs, and can all service users access all relevant services?
- is there up to date information on the vulnerabilities of different service users, which is easily available and used to provide an appropriate service?
- are the needs of vulnerable service users monitored to ensure that they are getting the right amount of support?
- is there the facility to bring in more support for service users where this is needed?
- do all service users who need them, have aids and adaptations provided appropriately?

A1.3.10. Service user involvement

- is the organisation aware of the diversity of its service users, and is it taking steps to ensure diversity?
- are the views of specific and minority groups and the diverse needs of service users taken into account when developing and improving the service?

A1.3.11. Partnerships

- how does the organisation ensure contact with its various communities? What is it doing to involve other agencies and partners?

- how does the organisation ensure that it understands cultural requirements of service users?
- how does the organisation ensure that its contractors and consultants are committed to diversity in service provision?
- does the organisation act to promote community cohesion?

A1.3.12. Harassment and domestic violence

- does the organisation have an effective approach to dealing with harassment and domestic violence?
- are there effective means of offering support to residents who suffer harassment?
- is there a clear message to residents on the stand that the organisation takes against those who harass and in support of those who suffer harassment?
- does the organisation encourage a community response against harassment where appropriate?

A1.3.13. Equality Impact Assessments

Under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, 2000 Local Authorities have a legal responsibility to assess their policies and functions in order to ensure that policies are not unfavourably affecting some racial groups. Local Authorities and other public bodies have specific duties to produce and publish a race equality scheme. Public authorities that are required to produce a race equality scheme are also required to undertake Equality Impact Assessments to ensure that policies are not having adverse affects on any racial groups. Although housing associations are not included in this list of public authorities, the Housing Corporation is and housing associations are effectively covered by this requirement through the Housing Corporation's statutory and regulatory codes.

A1.4. Other Relevant Legislation, Guidance and Reports

Overview

- The Race and Housing Inquiry Challenge Report (2001)
- The ODPM Code of Practice for Social Landlords in tackling Racial Harassment
- The Housing Act (2004)
- The Local Government Equality Standard
- Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society.

A1.4.1. The Race and Housing Inquiry Challenge Report (2001)

This report set out changes required in the RSL sector to ensure positive and measurable outcomes for BME communities and that race equality outcomes were promoted in RSL organisations.

A1.4.2. The ODPM Code of Practice for Social Landlords in tackling Racial Harassment

This sets out the action that all social landlords should take to prevent racial harassment, to ensure that racist incidents are reported, to support tenants and their families when harassment occurs and to take action against perpetrators.

A1.4.3. The Housing Act (2004)

The Act requires local authorities to include Gypsy and Travellers in local housing needs assessments and to demonstrate how these needs are being met.

A1.4.4. The Respect Agenda

All social landlords are required to have a written anti-social behaviour strategy, under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act (2003). The responsibilities of social landlords to tackle ASB were reinforced in the government's Respect Action Plan (2006) and the subsequent Respect Standard for Housing management (2006), a voluntary standard that recognises good practice in delivering ASB services. In addition, HMR Pathfinderers have to develop a Pathfinder Respect Protocol, which involves establishing and implementing a respect delivery plan.

A1.4.5. The Local Government Equality Standard

This Standard provides a tool for local authorities to ensure that gender, race, and disability equality outcomes are mainstreamed into all local authority strategies, policies and practices.

A1.4.6. Home Office (2005) Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society

This is the government's race equality and community cohesion strategy. It sets out the Public Service Agreement targets to monitor and reduce race inequalities between 2005 and 2008 with specific objectives of reducing perceptions of discrimination in public services, including housing.

A1.5. Conclusion

The statutory and legal framework establishes clear requirements upon housing providers and other public agencies to ensure equality in their planning and provision of housing services and meeting housing needs and to demonstrate that their housing strategies, policies and procedures are based on a knowledge and understanding of the needs of their BME and other communities and subsequent appropriate responses to these needs. In addition to statutory requirements, the regulatory and good practice framework sets out a range of expectations about how housing providers and related agencies will identify and meet the housing needs of BME individuals and communities. The specific statutory and regulatory framework requirements for local authorities, housing associations and community and voluntary organisations is set out in Table 3.1.

Table A1.1: The Statutory and Regulatory Framework

	Local Authorities	Housing Associations	Voluntary/Community Organisations
Race Relations Act 1976	√	√	√
Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000	√	√	√
Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003	√	√	√
CRE Statutory Code of Practice Racial Equality in Housing	√	√	
CRE Statutory Code of Practice Duty to Promote Race Equality	√	√	√
Housing Corporation Regulatory Code 2005		√	
Housing Corporation BME Action Plan 2005-2008		√	
Housing Corporation Regulatory Code Good Practice Note 2002		√	
DTLR BME Housing Needs Action Plan 2001	√	√	
Audit Commission Key Lines of Enquiry	√		
Equality Impact Assessments	√	√	
ODPM Code of Practice: Social Landlords & Racial Harassment		√	
The Housing Act 2004	√		
Home Office: Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society 2005	√		

In order to ensure that these requirements and expectations are met, there is a need to ground strategies, policies and procedures within an understanding of the evidence about local BME housing need, based on appropriate data collection and research. The following section identifies the key lessons and pitfalls relating to researching BME households and their housing needs.

Recommendations 1 and 2

- all housing providers in the region should ensure that they are fully meeting their statutory and regulatory requirements
- all housing providers in the region should seek to implement related codes of practice and guidance

Appendix 2: Selected Good Practice Case Studies

	Project	Understanding aspirations, requirements and outcomes	Providing housing opportunities through new developments	Housing Renewal	Managing the private rented sector	Challenging perceptions & increasing awareness	Social landlord allocations and lettings	Resident & community participation	Supporting residents and tenants	Managing neighbourhoods	Managing community relations
1	Canalside project		✓				✓		✓		✓
2	The Joint Community initiative					✓	✓	✓		✓	
3	Northfields estate			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	Community Induction Project			✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	
5	Homehunter						✓		✓	✓	
6	Derwent refugee support					✓			✓		✓
7	Database, Leicester	✓							✓		
8	BME Housing Strategy, LB Newham		✓	✓							
9	Tower Hamlets Housing Choice		✓	✓				✓			
10	Gateshead PRS Project	✓			✓				✓	✓	✓
11	Hartlepool PRS Project	✓			✓				✓	✓	✓

1. CANALSIDE PROJECT (ROCHDALE)

An initiative that received various plaudits as an example of good practice in community sustainability, minimising tensions that might arise as a result of Bangladeshi households moving into a traditionally white neighbourhood. Delivered in partnership by BME-led and mainstream/white-led housing associations and Rochdale MBC.

Aims & objectives

- to ensure the sustainability of a new housing association development, built to alleviate overcrowding among the local Bangladeshi community, developed on a brownfield site beyond the traditional Bengali area of central Rochdale

Activities

- new build scheme of 49 houses and flats managed by the Bangladeshi led Surma Housing Co-operative and developed with the support of Ashiana, a South Asian-led housing association, Rochdale MBC and the Housing Corporation
- development is sited adjacent to a predominantly white area of older terraced housing and was outside the traditional areas of settlement of the South Asian community in the town
- development includes houses with seven bedrooms that are suitable for extended families, but are constructed such that they can be converted into separate flats in the future if necessary
- there is a block of purpose built flats, some of which are occupied by younger professional people

Stated achievements

- the scale of the development has reportedly produced a sustainable and safe environment for the residents
- relationships with the established white community are reportedly good
- the involvement of a BME led housing association and the active support of the council is reported to have given the project credibility in the eyes of the South Asian community
- problems were reported to have emerged following the termination of the project, including increasing turnover and rising void levels

Key Insight

- sustaining the gains made through special initiatives is an ongoing challenge

Further information

Source: Offering Communities Real Choice- lettings and community cohesion, CIH briefing paper, p11 AND Robinson, D. et al. (2004) How Housing Management Can Contribute to Community Cohesion. Coventry: Chartered Institute of Housing.

2. THE JOINT COMMUNITY INITIATIVE, BRADFORD

The project, rather than developing as a response to a particular incident or problem, evolved out of an informal partnership that had developed between the William Sutton Trust (WST) and Manningham Housing Association (MHA). The Tyersal estate in Bradford, an estate managed by the William Sutton Trust and described by one respondent as a 'white island' in an ethnically mixed area. Indeed concern was expressed by WST staff about the limited number of applications received from minority ethnic households and it was suspected that WST tenants were not engaging with the wider community and actively participating in the neighbourhood. MHA, meanwhile, was keen to draw on the expertise of WST regarding tenant engagement and participation.

Aims & objectives

- to develop racial and cultural awareness in relation to key housing and community challenges
- to lead development work on initiatives to increase race and cultural awareness
- to explore and develop multi-cultural community-based initiatives
- to assist in meeting Bradford's objective of maximising choice in re-housing for all communities across the city
- the partner agencies also recognised the potential of the initiative to advance understanding within the city of how to foster community cohesion

Activities

- a Community Initiatives Worker was employed and based at MHA, but is supported by a management team involving directors of housing from both associations and a Tenant Participation Advisor from WST. The Community Initiative Worker undertook research to scope the experiences of residents on the estate, including harassment and community involvement, and to access views about service delivery.
- then the Community Initiatives Worker worked closely with the Community Development Officer (from WST) based on the estate to build trust with the local residents. Following a number of joint meetings and partnership working by the two workers, the two groups realised they shared similar concerns and priorities for their neighbourhood, and have continued to share their experience.
- the Community Initiative Worker has also forged a partnership with a local agency, 'Integrity Beatz Muzic', which aims to bring together different communities and promote integration and interaction
- people from the WST estate have been invited to attend activities at a local community centre in a nearby, predominantly minority ethnic, neighbourhood, where the music project is based
- the project has also arranged incorporating multi-cultural entertainment in the annual gala, multi-cultural dance classes, cooking classes exploring food from different cultures, residential trips for young people from the WST and MHA

Stated achievements

- "Comments from local residents suggest some subtle gains, however, with people suggesting it is "good and interesting" to learn about other cultures and to have more diverse activities in the neighbourhood. Minority ethnic residents of the estate also suggested that awareness raising activities were well overdue and to be welcomed. It was suggested by some minority ethnic residents that awareness raising might help limit harassment, allowing them to feel more comfortable and content living on the estate."
- "increasing awareness of different cultures and fostering acceptance of diversity among different groups"
- "supporting the presence and increasing the confidence of the small number of minority ethnic tenants living on the estate"
- "encouraging the involvement of white residents of the estate in the wider neighbourhood, for example, by making them aware of local facilities and services and encouraging them to utilise these opportunities"
- potential of the initiative to facilitate future gains and limit potential problems

Key Insight

- the importance of looking beyond minority ethnic or ethnically mixed neighbourhoods when promoting community cohesion and recognising the significant gains that can stem from working in white dominated neighbourhoods

- the lengthy and intensive process involved in fostering contact, promoting interaction and increasing understanding and tolerance between different ethnic communities in a situation of segregation and limited interaction
- the mutual benefits that can stem from partnership working between white-led and BME-led associations
- challenging assumptions and changing attitudes is a drawn out process that requires a long-term, well resourced, commitment
- Initiative objectives need to be acknowledged and considered in the delivery of core housing management tasks. The gains made by such initiatives can easily be wiped out by insensitive management practices
- the challenges that minority ethnic staff can encounter working with and trying to engage residents on predominantly white estates
- local staff with a knowledge of the area and well known to residents can serve as a vital source of local information and provide a important bridgehead into the community
- The presence of well developed tenant participation structures can provide a useful vehicle through which to engage with local residents and foster understanding and support for the project at the outset. Tenant participation structures are, however, often unrepresentative of the local population, minority ethnic representation often being limited. Alternative strategies will therefore have to be developed to engage such groups
- the ongoing support and involvement of senior staff can help drive forward the development and delivery of such initiatives, and signals to staff that the association is committed to the project and its objectives and assists with efforts to ensure that that initiative objectives are appreciated and considered in the delivery of core management tasks
- the devolution of responsibility to initiative staff to secure additional funds from alternative sources and to develop interventions appropriate to the local context can help ensure the relevance and effectiveness of the initiative
- the active involvement of white-led and a BME-led housing associations can simplify the challenge of engaging and bringing together white and minority ethnic residents

Further information

Source: Robinson, D. et al. (2004) How Housing Management Can Contribute to Community Cohesion. Coventry: Chartered Institute of Housing

3. THE NORTHFIELDS ESTATE (LEICESTER)

A local authority estate of some 400 properties and an adjacent area of 300 private properties, which has historically had a predominantly white population and is located adjacent to the city centre and bordering neighbourhoods popular with different minority ethnic groups.

"Rather than being an explicit and carefully co-ordinated initiative, this example focuses on a series of inter-related activities and projects that have together facilitated the accommodation of asylum seekers and other minority ethnic households, particularly Somali Dutch Nationals, in a difficult-to-let estate that historically had a predominantly white population."

Aims & objectives

- ensuring the future sustainability of the estate
- accommodating asylum seekers waiting a decision and housing asylum seekers granted leave to remain in the UK in the context of a relatively high demand housing market
- providing long-term housing opportunities for previously excluded groups
- responding to the concerns of local residents and limiting potential tensions between long-term residents and new tenants
- limiting the likely incidence of racial harassment and anti-social behaviour

Activities

- local authority housing department: introduced a new lettings policy, whereby everyone who lived on the estate was subjected to a police check, with any applicant who was found to have a conviction for anti-social or violent behaviour, burglary or drugs-related offences not being offered accommodation on the estate.
- the estate boundaries were also altered to encourage applications to the more unpopular part of the estate.
- anti-social behaviour and neighbour nuisance teams and neighbourhood wardens were introduced, in an attempt to resolve issues before they got out of hand and to pursue the eviction of tenants responsible for harassment and ASB. More visible policing was introduced and CCTV cameras were placed on the estate. The Tenants and Residents association (TARA) served as a bridge between the community and the police and housing department, providing a channel through which local residents could report criminal activity and related problems.
- 12 months of preparatory work preceded the accommodation of asylum seekers on the estate. This involved convening meetings where local people could voice their concerns and TARA again played a crucial role liaising between the local residents and asylum and housing associations.
- subsequently a forum was set up to facilitate the communication of information about new populations settling in Leicester and to bring people from different backgrounds together.
- support has been provided to new residents through the leasing of properties to the Refugee Housing Association, who offered support to their tenants and through the STAR tenancy support project.

Stated achievements

- the area now has a live waiting list.
- "it was suggested that the successful settlement of refugee families on the estate had encouraged minority ethnic populations in adjacent neighbourhoods with demand problems and experiencing overcrowding to consider moving onto the estate"
- "tensions between new and long-standing tenants and different population groups had been kept to a minimum"
- "an understanding, appreciation and tolerance of different cultures was being nurtured, both through explicit initiatives and interaction in the community"
- "the advice centre served as a forum for mundane, but apparently important, interactions"

Key Insight

- "the importance of targeting the needs of all residents, including long-standing tenants, in order to prevent resentment and rising tensions and assert the principle of equality"
- "preparatory work with the existing community is vital to minimise the tensions that will likely stem from the accommodation of asylum seekers and refugees in a neighbourhood"
- "only through the engagement of an array of service providers and local organisations can the

breadth of expertise and local knowledge necessary to support the integration of a new community into a neighbourhood be successfully managed and tensions minimised"

- "the commitment and co-operation of local community-led groups, such as a TARA, can play a vital role in facilitating a dialogue between statutory agencies, service providers and local residents, particularly if the TARA has the trust and confidence of the local population"

Further information

Source: Robinson, D. et al. (2004) How Housing Management Can Contribute to Community Cohesion. Coventry: Chartered Institute of Housing

4. THE COMMUNITY INDUCTION PROJECT (CIP)

The CIP operates in the Newbold area of Rochdale, an area with a relatively large South Asian population that was reported to be under-represented on social housing estates in the neighbourhood. However, the project also operates in the Coldhurst and Chadderton areas of Oldham. The project was designed to tackle the fact that although there were rising void levels, increasing turnover, tailing off of participation and rising concerns about the sustainability of the neighbourhood, the growing South Asian population in adjacent neighbourhoods was living in overcrowded and sub-standard housing.

Aims & objectives

The Community Induction Project (CIP) provides assistance and practical support to help South Asian families take-up housing opportunities outside traditional population clusters, although services provided through the project are available to all residents. More specific objectives include:

- promoting the Newbold area as a place to live
- supporting new and existing tenants and residents from all groups to live in the area
- making the area safer place to live
- facilitating interaction between residents
- binding agencies working in the neighbourhood into partnership structures to support the achievement of common goals
- creating a sustainable community

Activities

It builds on the Canalside Community Project which ended in 2001. The CIP serves as an intermediary between applicants and landlords, as well as supporting new and existing tenants through community development and advice work, as follows:

- the local ALMO and all housing associations with stock in the Newbold area refer South Asian applicants on their waiting list to the CIP, who then contact applicants to see if they might be interested in considering a tenancy in a location outside their area of choice and with a landlord that they might not otherwise consider. This contact may take the form of home visit to discuss any concerns and discuss available opportunities.
- CIP staff hold surgeries in the community; guided tours of the neighbourhood and local facilities can be provided; and South Asian tenants are sometimes used as mentors to inform applicants about life in the area
- landlords keep CIP abreast of new lets as and when they occur
- if an applicant is interested they can undertake an escorted viewing of the property and before they sign up for a property they are shown where the key services and service providers are located
- CIP also provide information, advice and sign-posting to relevant services for all Newbold residents, and this and other CIP activities are advertised through open days and fun days

Stated achievements

- "Everyone interviewed was reported to consider that there had been an increase in participation and social cohesion and residents reported feeling that the area was a safer place to live. The work of the project with local South Asian residents was reported to be a particular success and to be linked to the employment of front-line staff representative of the local population and skilled in community languages."
- "various events and day-trips have been organised and were reported to have drawn together residents from all sections of the population"
- "support was reported to have been provided to over 400 clients in the six months that the CIP workers had been in post"
- "The scheme appears to be extending the housing choices of South Asian households, by opening up the possibility of moving into what were reported to previously have been "no-go" areas. The number minority ethnic tenants on the Guinness Trust estate for example, was reported to have doubled during the first six months of the CIP, although the numbers still remain relatively small"
- "sustainability of the neighbourhood appears to be successfully underpinned, landlords reporting a waiting list of applicants wanting to live in Newbold"

Key Insight

- "Respondents also pointed to various housing management activities underpinning the viability and ensuring the success of the CIP. Examples included ongoing action against harassment and nuisance behaviour, stock redevelopment, including the knocking through of adjacent properties to make larger family homes, and the transfer of stock from white-led associations to BME-led housing agencies with a better record of attracting applications from minority ethnic households."
- "the importance of employing staff representative of and able to engage effectively with both the incoming and receiving populations"
- "the importance of a local presence in the neighbourhood"
- "the importance of new residents having easy access to existing population clusters and related provision"
- "the role that group lettings initiatives can play in opening up a neighbourhood to a new population"
- "the limiting effect of the local stock base (design, size and condition) if not appropriate to the requirements of particular populations"

Further information

Source: Robinson, D. et al. (2004) How Housing Management Can Contribute to Community Cohesion. Coventry: Chartered Institute of Housing

5. HOMEHUNTER (BRADFORD)

The impetus for the project was reported to be the report 'Breaking Down Barriers: Improving Asian Access to Social Housing' which highlighted evidence of a need and aspiration among the city's South Asian population to move into social housing, and argued that housing allocations should move away from the complex points system to choice based lettings. The South Asian population was also perceived to be a relatively untapped source of housing demand at a time when landlords were struggling with low demand.

Aims & objectives

"The principle objective of Homehunter is to promote greater choice in housing and, in doing so, to extend the choice of tenure and location for minority ethnic households across the city by improving access to the social rented sector. It is also presumed that Homehunter might facilitate greater mobility within the minority ethnic population and foster greater ethnic mix in the city."

Activities

- "Homehunter is a web-based property system, providing a site with information about all available social housing in the city. Customers are able to register, browse and bid for properties." The service is accessible through kiosks and computers at accredited access points across the district and there is also a telephone hot-line and two weekly newspaper advertisements. All the council's stock and some housing association stock is included in Homehunter.
- Specially recruited staff, representative of the local population and skilled in community languages, provide pre-tenancy advice and tenancy support, including help with benefit claims. Particular attention is paid to those with personal vulnerabilities such as a disability or language difficulties.
- two marketing officers with community language skills, actively marketed Homehunter to the minority ethnic population, in particular, the South Asian population
- Homehunter staff have been in discussions with housing association to try and persuade them to let larger properties through Homehunter and to facilitate the development of new properties in locations relevant to target groups to which Homehunter will have nomination rights
- Homehunter staff have also identified "areas adjacent to traditional areas of South Asian settlement where stock conversions and the creation of larger properties are likely to attract South Asian households."
- Homehunter staff have worked with the planning department to "mainstream consideration of the provision of stock appropriate to the needs of minority ethnic households at the planning stage of all new developments."

Stated achievements

"Available data indicates that since Homehunter went live in 2002 applications from minority ethnic households in the city have increased by 800 percent and lettings to minority ethnic households have increased by 68 percent. The difference between applications and lettings appears, in part, to be explained by the popularity of locations adjacent to traditional population clusters and demand for larger properties outstripping supply."

Key Insight

- "Marketing activities were reported to have been assisted by the impression that Homehunter created among the local minority ethnic population of a clean break with the old council housing regime, with its negative image and poor reputation with certain groups and interests within the city."
- "the importance of Homehunter being perceived by minority ethnic communities as a service 'for them'"
- "the importance of Homehunter staff members being representative of the local population, skilled in community languages and possessing knowledge of different cultures and associated preferences and requirements"
- "the importance of guiding people through the application process and making assistance available to new tenants, in order to translate applications into lettings"
- "the impact of the local stock base (design, size and location) on the choices of minority ethnic applicants"
- "the challenge of opening up estates and neighbourhoods located beyond traditional minority ethnic population clusters"

- "the challenge of overcoming the reluctance of some landlords to let stock through CBL schemes and making the full range of properties and locations available to applicants"

Further information

Source: Robinson, D. et al. (2004) How Housing Management Can Contribute to Community Cohesion. Coventry: Chartered Institute of Housing

6. DERWENT REFUGEE SUPPORT PROGRAMME (DERBY)

The project focuses on a white working class estate with little history of minority ethnic settlement.

Aims & objectives

Aim: "to help and support refugee asylum seeking families resident in the area and provide a safe environment for them to interact socially with other residents, to foster a mutually supportive relationship"

Objectives:

- activities focus on 30 families, but the hope is to have a positive impact on the whole community
- increasing local people's awareness of issues surrounding refugees and people seeking asylum
- providing an honest and unbiased source of information
- reducing community tensions
- encouraging refugee and asylum seeking families to access mainstream local services and projects

Activities

- the project uses community liaison and outreach work to address the problems encountered following the dispersal of refugees and people seeking asylum to an inner city estate that had little previous experience of accommodating new immigrant households
- the project is managed by the Development and Integration Directorate of Refugee Action, and funded by Derwent NDC and Refugee Action
- provides a drop-in facility which is open twice a week
- acts as a signposting and referral agency rather than providing specialist advice
- services are available to everyone, not only refugees and those seeking asylum
- employs as a Community Link Worker, a local resident, who has first hand knowledge of the estate, the people who lived there and the challenges it faces, thus placing local knowledge above qualifications
- has invested heavily in training for the Community Link Worker
- co-Chairs the Racial Harassment Steering Group
- intends to train volunteers for a 'buddying scheme' which will involve voluntary mentors befriending and supporting refugees and people seeking asylum
- undertakes continual or formative evaluation engaging the local steering group and project staff

Stated achievements

- provided much needed support services to refugee and asylum seeking families
- has built close links with other organisations in the area - encouraged networking, and in particular, has facilitated an effective cross-agency response to incidences of racial harassment
- modified the extreme attitudes towards refugees and helped with their integration

Further information

Source: www.renewal.net

More details: Gail Pringle, 01332 361 189, gailp@Refugee-Action.org.uk

7. HELPING REFUGEES THROUGH A DATABASE OF TRANSLATED HOUSING OPTIONS (LEICESTER)

Aims & objectives

- "provide a tailored language service to newly emerging communities in Leicester for essential housing advice, including 'move on' advice"
- "contribute to the integration of process of these communities"
- "significantly reduce the burden of translation costs and make better use of key staff time"

Activities

- research was undertaken to profile ethnic groups within the community, particularly the newly emerging communities. This indicated translation support was needed for seven key language groups.
- material was developed for the voluntary sector, housing officers and refugees working with their own communities
- material placed on the Council's website and 400 CD-ROMs produced for distribution amongst partners and refugee groups
- NRF funds used to fund monthly training sessions for anyone working with asylum seekers and refugees
- subsequently carried out a re-profiling exercise which led to additional languages being included on the CD

Stated achievements

- demand for the translated material is high
- estimated that every housing officer uses the CD every day
- less photocopying is needed
- 13 voluntary and statutory agencies report savings in translation costs and in staff
- refugees can help themselves to the material
- 300 people are on the waiting list for the monthly training sessions

Further information

Source: www.renewal.net

More details: Emmanuel Akiygyina, 011625 28742, Akyim001@leicester.gov.uk

8. BME HOUSING STRATEGY, LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM
"London Borough of Newham has a BME population of 56 percent. As part of its approach to diversify the borough has developed a BME HA strategy to ensure that the sector is effectively represented in partnership."
Aims & objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Mainstream HAs playing a more active role in ensuring that the needs of BME communities are identified and addressed by all HAs" • "Encouraging partnership working between mainstream BME HAs and local communities to address BME needs" • "Providing a framework for supporting BME HAs" • "Encouraging the participation of BME consultants, contractors, committee members and staff in mainstream HAs"
Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "All housing developments must include partnership arrangements with BME HAs in delivering affordable housing" • "A BME housing strategy has been agreed, which defines the council's expectations of mainstream and BME HAs operating in the borough" • "At least thirty percent of mainstream developments are expected to be owned or managed by HAs catering for the needs of BME residents and be supported by Newham. This could be by way of direct development or through stock transfers." • "HAs are expected to build sustainable relations with BME partners in terms of stock transfers. Once this has been done the council expects a percentage of properties (agreed by the parties) to be transferred from the mainstream HA to the BME HA annually. Newham sees this as: "serving as a means of assisting viability and contributing to Newham's housing strategy. Stock should be transferred at a price below market value where this is possible to allow BME HAs to cover costs, redeem any outstanding loans, let and manage the stock within their rent policy." • "Newham plans to target thirty per cent of the Housing Corporation Approved Development Programme S106 sites and Local Authority Social Housing Grant (LASHG) for BME HAs. Criteria for Newham's support for bids from RESs will include a clear strategy for partnership work with BME HAs." • "Newham will also provide support for BME HAs as developers where they can demonstrate their ability to deliver schemes and provide value for money whilst meeting strategic objectives." • "Where HAs are unable to achieve the above, the borough will support opportunities for them to act as managing agents. The plans emphasise the fact that, over the last few years, HAs working on large development schemes in Newham have worked in partnership with one or two BME HAs with the intention of offering them the management of a number of the units on completion. Other options referred to include development agreements that allow an allocation made to a BME HA to be transferred to a larger HA, which would develop the units and transfer them to the BME HA at a fixed price on completion." • "Newham has developed an initiative to lease sixty nine properties to the BME HA ARHAG Housing Association over the current year (2003/04). This follows a successful development programme between the council and ARHAG in 2002/03, which brought back into use forty five properties that had been derelict and empty for a considerable time." • "The new programme addresses the issue of how to bring void properties back into use, retaining council ownership without being a drain on council resources. ARHAG's involvement suits its business development strategy and also meets the needs of its priority groups. ARHAG will undertake the following duties in the coming year: Properties will be transferred to ARHAG for two, four or fifteen years. ARHAG will apply for Housing Corporation grants to refurbish the properties to a high standard. The properties will be refurbished within a given time scale and all nomination rights will be granted to the council for the duration of the lease. ARHAG will undertake management responsibilities, maintain the properties to a high standard and bear the costs. At the end of the lease period (15 years) the properties will be handed back to the council in a good and well-maintained condition."
Stated achievements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Twelve of the thirty-eight HAs operating in the borough are BME led."
Further information
Source: ODPM (2004) Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Associations and their involvement in local authority stock transfers. London, p23-25

9. TOWER HAMLETS - HOUSING CHOICE

"Tower Hamlets has developed an innovative approach to potential stock transfers. 'Housing Choice', which involves residents and tenants, encourages them to consider whether they would benefit from a change of landlord. The initiative was launched after the Council's business plan showed that it did not have the money it needed to bring its housing up to the Government's Decent Homes Standard."

Aims & objectives

- bring homes up to the Decent Homes Standard
- consult with residents about the preferred means of achieving this

Activities

"A borough-wide referendum was held. Every estate in the borough voted to continue with the concept of Housing Choice and to look at options in more detail."

"Other parts of the initiative have meant the dividing up the borough into over eighty defined areas that can potentially be included in the transfer of properties. These areas can be single estates or groups of estates. Some of the original housing 'packages' have changed marginally in the light of residents and tenants agreeing to work with other areas."

"After the initial stage, HAs were invited to provide expressions of interest of being involved in the Housing Choice programme. Sixteen registered HAs have now been placed on the list for resident/tenant groups to choose from. Also, on the list is East End Homes, a community/social-led landlord set up by the council. All HAs had to be local or have a local presence. The three local BME HAs on the list are: Spitalfields, Labo and Mitali, along with some other relatively small HAs. Ujima HA, in partnership with the William Sutton Trust, is also included."

"Each HA has been invited to provide a list of the 'top ten' estates for which it may be interested in bidding, along with reasons. However, this does not necessarily restrict HAs from bidding for more estates."

"A steering group of tenants/residents has been set up on each estate. As far as possible these are based on existing organisations. New organisations have been set up where none exist. This approach reflects the driving force behind Housing Choice, which is trying to involve as many tenants as possible in the process to decide on whether to transfer its housing stock and to which Housing Association."

"The council has carried out various training and capacity building programmes for the steering groups to help them deal with the considerable responsibilities involved under the Housing Choice programme."

"A key consideration has been ensuring that the steering groups are represented and that they effectively reach out to all communities. This is important, as some steering groups have not been sensitive to this area. For example, some have had to be persuaded that holding regular meetings in pubs, effectively excludes members of significant local ethnic communities."

"The process has now started, with steering groups choosing their preferred partners. Each steering group prepares a customised questionnaire for completion by HAs, which is followed by presentations and meetings. There is no set format for steering groups to choose their preferred partner, but the council provides advice, and officers are involved at all stages. The council has also made clear to the HAs that the bidding process should be as 'formal' and as open as possible, and that lobbying particular steering groups is actively discouraged."

Stated achievements

"Inevitably, Tower Hamlets is keen for the Housing Choice programme to succeed, and is working to ensure that the first ballots will be successful. By May 2003, steering groups covering four estates had selected their preferred partners – none were BME HAs."

Key insight

"The BME HAs are keen to be part of the process in Tower Hamlets and they want to grow, while retaining a local base and continuing to meet specific community needs. At present some of the

BME HAs aim to become the sole preferred potential landlord for at least one estate or standalone grouping, while recognising that their main chance of success will be to work in partnership with a larger organisation. Hence, for example, Spitalfields HA is working in partnership with the Guinness Trust on some potential estates. Guinness is emphasising the strength of its financial management, size and experience, whilst Spitalfields emphasises the added value it brings in terms of specific skills and experience in working with particular communities."

"The BME HAs and other agencies are aware that, being small, they have a disadvantage in convincing tenants/residents of their viability. It is also important that they meet the Housing Corporation's concerns that they do not overreach themselves. On the other hand, BME HAs argue that all the large HAs started relatively small. They were given the encouragement and support to grow."

"One concern expressed by several organisations, was that most of the groupings of estates in Tower Hamlets are relatively large (500-600 to over 1,000), which makes it difficult for any small HA to win a potential bid. There was also a feeling that the council wants the early stages of the initiative to succeed. Inevitably it will want to see the larger organisations get the initial contracts. However, the BME HAs recognise that their main chance of success is obtaining more stock and thus growing with the demand for them to manage stocks. This is likely to be based on working in partnership, with the BME HA. (Initially often playing a purely management role.)"

"There were also concerns expressed that some communities would vote against a BME HA simply because it was BME-led. At the same time, it was emphasised that the fact that they were small and possibly seen as marginal was as important a factor. It was also noted that BME communities would not necessarily vote for them simply because they were BME led. The BME HAs therefore emphasised the need to sell themselves to all residents and tenants, presenting a range of skills and experience."

"Tower Hamlets has set no target for BME HAs' potential success in the process and, indeed, it is difficult for it to do so given the system in operation. However, BME HAs are relatively optimistic that they will have some success in obtaining stock as part of the tenant choice programme. They believe this to be so, given their track records. The added value they bring to the process, and the potential support they receive nationally and locally."

"A frequent observation was that locally some HAs were keener to work with BME HAs than others (that is, generally working with them, with a commitment to their values and ideals, and not just for business reasons). Toynbee, Guinness Trust and Tower Hamlets Community Housing, are a few that were identified as being keen and active in developing constructive partnerships with BME HAs. Some HAs were seen to be not interested in working with BME HAs or with smaller organisations at all."

"Inevitably the process being developed in Tower Hamlets is both challenging and complex. Such community-led processes have a price tag. In order to involve communities closely in the process, there is an increase in cost in terms of consultation involvement, which is not cost effective. Given their greater reserves, large associations were seen to be likely to pick up most of the estates, and the smaller HAs were seen always to have a problem in terms convincing tenants/residents that they could manage large numbers of stock."

"Finally, a related point strongly made by several organisations and individuals, was that the smaller HAs based in Tower Hamlets need financial support in terms of having opportunities to expand and compete on a 'level playing field'. The use of 'dowries' or gap funding was recommended by several individuals who were interviewed, and the ODPM was asked to consider options in this area."

Further information

Source: ODPM (2004) Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Associations and their involvement in local authority stock transfers. London, p26-28

10. GATESHEAD PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR PROJECT

- The Gateshead PRS project was developed as a response to problems identified in the area such as low demand, occupied properties in poor state of repair, high incidence of crime, high proportion of poorly managed privately rented property, highly visible environmental abuse, increasing incidence of voids which would become vandalised and an increase in speculative purchases to rent and reduction in owner occupation. Furthermore, whilst the local minority ethnic population was quite small at the 2001 Census, this is believed to have subsequently grown as a result of asylum seeker dispersal policies and a substantial element of the tenant population as a whole is transient with little affinity to the area. Neighbourhood disputes are not uncommon, there are drug related problems - which residents are often too scared to report - and landlords are either not contactable or do not take action against 'problem households' causing a nuisance.
- "There are broadly shared perceptions of deterioration in both relations between people living in the area and the property they live in."
- "Whilst a core of older residents has lived in the area for a long time, the incidence of short term letting and property abandonment is believed to be increasing."

Aims & objectives

- "The approach is to pilot a combination of engagement and enforcement, under-pinned by an ambition locality mapping and data management exercise, to explore the potential for and impact of a variety of interventions to halt the decline and residualisation of the private rented sector and the project area."

Activities

- supports the growth and further development of the Gateshead Private Landlords Association (GPLA)
- extend and enforce the long established property accreditation scheme and align with the scheme operating in Newcastle
- uses and helps develop an existing data base of properties, owners, actions and outcomes to map trends and identify what works where
- generates detailed information on local residents' priorities and on properties through street by street action, door knocking, surveys and consultation events
- has integrated property and people based intervention strategies to address anti-social behaviour, nuisance and crime by creating a focused private sector team within the local authority
- facilitates environmental improvements through cross tenure capital works, cross departmental liaison within the local authority and multi-agency working
- makes more proactive use of existing powers relating to enforcement and demolition
- promotes the pilot scheme and the role of the private rented sector in area renewal to gain access to a wide range of funding sources
- seeks to develop good practice and explore innovative solutions to long-standing problems
- "Officers in Gateshead PRS Service have adapted and developed two proprietary IT systems to track, monitor and manage enforcement actions, grants, empty properties and relations with individual landlords. The ITECS (data base) and CRYSTAL (analysis) systems allow officers to record contacts with and actions taken against individual property addresses and named landlords. The resulting database can be searched by address, post code, name, complaints or actions to show a history of problems and engagements."

Stated achievements

- "Within the local authority, working across departments (with environmental services, housing benefit, neighbourhood managers etc) is good and progressing from personal relationships towards service level co-operation. Relations with some statutory agencies, such as local police, are also good"
- "Work by GPLA staff is producing a trusting and dynamic relationship with a growing number of landlords, in particular the rising percentage directly managing a small number of properties."

Further information

Source: PRS Pilot Project Summary Reports, May 2004, Appendix 1, ODPM.

11. HARTLEPOOL PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR PROJECT

- anti-social behaviour, including "drinking on the street, noise problems, verbal and physical abuse, nuisance caused by kids, car 'ringing' "and arson as well as issues "connected with gangs and drug dealing" were a problem in the three project areas.
- another major problem in the area was considered by some to be caused by irresponsible or absentee landlords, who have invested in property but are never seen as they often live abroad. This means that both the properties and the tenants are dealt with by managing agents - in effect, creating another layer to get through between the problem and its resolution.
- tackle the problem of over-supply of housing in Hartlepool across all tenures.

Aims & objectives

- "join up current local authority schemes as well as enhancing enforcement and advice provision, and introducing new initiatives"
- "arrest the deterioration of private sector mixed tenure areas in the town centre, adjacent to the NDC area
- bridge the gap until the introduction of selective licensing of private landlords
- use existing local authority powers to greater effect to tackle 'rogue landlords'
- tackle increasing numbers of empty properties
- meet the concerns of residents
- achieve a higher enforcement profile
- provide assistance and support for landlords facing difficulties
- provide support for vulnerable tenants in the private rented sector
- establish partnership working with residents, private landlords and with the CAB-run Voluntary Landlord Accreditation and Property Registration Scheme
- evaluate feasibility of service agreements to landlords

Activities

- set up a Steering Group with representatives from the Council's Housing Services, Community Safety and Housing Benefit Teams, Rent Officer Service, Anti-Social Behaviour Unit, Landlord Registration Officer, Tenancy Relations Officer, Endeavour Housing Association, the Police, Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB), Hartlepool New Deal for Communities, Residents' Organisations and landlords
- In the past, enforcement action taken against a landlord frequently led to the tenant moving out, which meant the enforcement action could not proceed, so a system was put in place so that if one tenant leaves, Housing Benefits are alerted by the residents' association when a new tenant moves in, and as soon as they receive a new claim the Housing Benefits section will notify the enforcement team so their action can be re-started.
- "Some resident association members in the project areas have taken on the role of vetting tenants and operate as an informal letting agent. When local residents let the team know there is an empty property, it is secured in a way that makes it look less 'void'"
- "Housing Benefits Service level agreements have now been introduced for landlords to sign up to as partners"

Stated achievements

- "Inter-agency working is, by and large, functioning well in the project"

Key insight

- "The Landlord Liaison Officer felt that the enforcement officers had insufficient power to prosecute. There was no incentive for landlords to carry out repairs voluntarily, as Housing Benefit continues to be paid on substandard properties, and there is a steady supply of tenants. She hopes that liaison with the Rent Officer will be effective in linking Housing Benefit levels to property conditions."
- "Basing the Landlord Liaison Officer in the Housing Benefits section has had obvious advantages."

Further information

Source: PRS Pilot Project Summary Reports, May 2004, Appendix 1