'*Support and Sanctions*'
A critical account of the professional 'realities' of homelessness

by

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Abstract

Despite the plethora of literature regarding the cause and characteristics of homelessness, there has been relatively little discussion regarding causal explanations emanating from policy makers and practitioners. This research sought to address this gap by examining the dual practice of support and sanctions introduced under the Labour Administration 1997 - 2007.Conducted within and between five local authorities in the North West of England and inspired by the philosophical arguments of critical realism (Bhaskar, 1989) alongside Elder-Vass's (2010) concept of relational emergence, a qualitative approach was adopted in which eighteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with senior managers in Supporting People and Community Safety teams. The overall aim was to examine professional beliefs and understandings of homelessness and explore its impact on practice.

A primary contribution of this study to the literature on homelessness is the framework used in which emergent properties, or causal powers, which construct a particular 'reality' of homelessness, were identified. Utilising this framework, the analysis explored how taken for granted assumptions about the pathological and deviant behaviour of homeless people not only informed policy, but also had a significant impact on practice which, in turn, served to maintain and reinforce the exclusion of people in acute housing need. This research also extends the current literature by recommending a move away from what could be described as 'traditional' methods in homelessness research and towards an approach which, by utilising the dialectic arguments of critical realism, seeks to develop transformative practice. This approach would not only challenge prevailing orthodoxies of homelessness, but, following the seminal work of Gramsci (1971 cited Joseph, 2002) could also support the development of a counter hegemonic discourse.

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Introduction

Identifying the research focus

My interest in homelessness developed over a number of years and emerged from a multiplicity of experiences which involved both voluntary and paid employment in the non-statutory homelessness sector. This included working on mobile food distribution services (commonly referred to as 'soup-runs'), in day centres providing a range of support services incorporating the provision of advocacy, advice and practical assistance and in supported housing projects for vulnerable homeless adults with multiple support needs. This experience of working directly with homeless and vulnerable housed individuals had both a powerful and profound impact on my understanding of the acute and precarious housing circumstances numerous people routinely endured on a day-to-day basis. For many, this lived experience was further complicated by persistent struggles to obtain appropriate assistance with long-term health and social care needs. To elucidate further, my work in the homeless voluntary sector predominantly entailed working with people to whom a statutory duty under the homelessness legislation (see Chapter One for a description of UK Homelessness Legislation) was denied. Those individuals, who were categorised as non-statutory or single homeless, faced additional barriers which made access to wider areas of welfare increasingly difficult. In the case of health and social care services for example, individuals requiring mental health support were often denied assistance on the basis that their 'problem' was deemed to be the result of drug and

alcohol misuse. This 'diagnosis' was often imparted without a comprehensive assessment being undertaken. Conversely, this approach was duplicated in drug and alcohol services. For example, as a result of being told that they had drug and alcohol problems, the same individuals sought treatment from substance misuse services. However, here too they faced similar procedures but in reverse. Specifically, they were often denied an assessment and treatment was refused, based on the professional judgement that the individual was suffering from a "mental health problem". The result was that many homeless individuals found themselves oscillating between services who consistently abdicated their statutory responsibility to provide treatment or support which was so clearly needed. Such instances were not one-off cases I witnessed these inconsistencies on a regular basis and despite increasing attention to the diagnostic category of 'dual diagnosis' which supposedly recognises the co-occurrence of substance misuse and mental health (Drake et al, 1991) the lack of appropriate treatment for the individuals I worked alongside left them with little alternative but to self-medicate, which both reinforced and perpetuated their problems.

The decisiveness of such encounters was further consolidated through academic knowledge gained by virtue of undergraduate and postgraduate research. The former, via a BSc Social Policy degree, promoted and engendered a critical understanding of the management and provision of social welfare systems and the latter by way of an MSc/PGDip Housing Policy and Practice. Validation by the Chartered Institute of Housing, the MSc/PG Dip programme in particular drew my attention to a prevailing and occupational ethos within housing management. Set within the context of social housing

systems and urban problems, the programme focused on the teaching, learning and development of skills and knowledge required by housing professionals. This included, for example, housing finance, law and management systems, which orientated towards a business model wherein, the management of stock, urban areas and the conduct of people and tenants took precedence over housing need. Taken together, this academic experience advanced my perception of wider structural and societal barriers that served to locate single homelessness within a historically established pathological discourse.

Whilst academic inquiry has persistently acknowledged the complexity and multifaceted nature of homelessness, there remains a lack of consensus as to its cause and thus no universally accepted definition (see for example Anderson 1999; Fitzpatrick et al. 2000). Consequently, causal explanations have in general been shaped by the prevailing political ideologies of welfare, gravitating between the two broad perspectives of structuralism and individualism (Fitzpatrick and Christian, 2006: 316). The former perspective, which has been predominantly associated with the political left, maintains that homelessness should be understood as a consequence of extensive socio-economic factors which, in turn, warrant direct state intervention (Jacobs et al, 1999). Conversely, individualists deny such accounts; instead equating homelessness as a direct result of personal characteristics, thereby informing a perspective through which a form of pathological dualism concurrently defines individuals as both vulnerable and deviant (see Fooks, 1999). Although it has been argued that both explanations are overly simplistic and inadequate (Neale, 1997; Fitzpatrick et al, 2000), these competing definitions can still be

identified in policy responses through the enduring and malleable concepts of the 'deserving' and 'undeserving'.

For Jacobs et al (1999), these definitions of homelessness have been central to its construction as a social problem, which is, they maintain, further reflected in policy and practice responses. They suggest that the State's ability to construct a social problem involves the exercise of power by dominant groups who attempt to impose their particular understanding of certain issues as 'problems'. They conclude that in political terms, policy-making is thereby built on the basis of certain prevailing ideological assumptions. Similarly, De Neufville and Barton (1987: p181), claim that in perpetuating assumptions or "myths" which "blame the victim" those in power legitimise policy responses and this allows them to maintain the illusion of caring without having to alter the systems which enables the so-called social problems to occur.

This assumption or "myth" of individual deviancy regarding the causes and characteristics of single homelessness was significantly highlighted when I gained employment in local government. Situated within Strategic Housing Services and, in particular the Supporting People team (see later), my experience of working in this environment further substantiated the existence of persuasive and dominant pathological explanations. To illustrate this further, in the Authority in which I was employed, it had been observed over a number of weeks that an elderly man had been sleeping rough in the rural areas surrounding the neighbourhood. As a consequence, his physical condition was deteriorating significantly, in that he was showing signs of poor mobility, infestation

and severe ulcerations. Following a night in which temperatures had dropped to -6 degrees, he conveyed to me that he would "like to find somewhere warm" to sleep even, he continued "if it was just a mattress on the floor". Whilst I wasn't at liberty to guarantee provision, I did, upon reaching my place of work inform the Lead Officer for the Supporting People team that the individual concerned required immediate assistance with accommodation and support. The response however, was somewhat alarming as I was informed that there was nothing to be done as "it was a lifestyle choice". As a result, any further action was strongly discouraged. Having previously worked in an environment that encouraged a pro-active approach in terms of contacting a wide range of suitable agencies both within and between the authority's boundaries, this dismissive response towards a person clearly in need of support was to me an anathema.

 Given that the Supporting People programme both promoted and commissioned the provision of support for vulnerable groups alongside the 'involvement' of the same said groups in determining the effectiveness of services, this exposure to welfare practices arguably highlighted the persistent failure of strategic actors, not only to respond to need, but to also develop a genuinely inclusive dialogue with single homeless people. This failure to authenticate homeless people's views was, as is demonstrated above, shaped by professional conjectures that position such 'forms' of homelessness as either a lifestyle choice or the direct result of deviant tendencies, accentuating a particular predisposition towards criminal behaviour.

Either way, this meant that people experiencing homelessness were rendered unable to participate competently. This supposition equating single homelessness with deviant and criminal behaviour was further verified through departmental relationships and responsibilities linked to a key policy consideration. As a result, in parallel with the requirements of new initiatives under Supporting People, a growing trend focused specifically on the 'anti-social' nature of homelessness and particularly directed towards the associated 'sub-group' of rough sleepers (see Pleace 2000; Johnsen and Fitzpatrick, 2008). This was accompanied by sanctions and exclusion orders orchestrated through strategic partners within Local Government. In drawing again on my own experience within Strategic Housing Services, the planned use of sanctions on people who were street homeless was illustrated in a meeting I attended with Senior Executives, in which they expressed with, what can only be described as relish, their satisfaction at being able to utilise powers under the 1824 Vagrancy Act. This Act previously dealt with the punishment of "idle and disorderly Persons, Rogues and Vagabonds, incorrigible Rogues and other Vagrants" (S. 3, 1824). However, the Senior Executive's plan was to utilise it in the removal of people from the Authority's town centre by making it an offence to sleep on the streets or to beg.

Hence, whilst there was a focus on the centrality of involvement in providing an effective avenue to inclusion, my own experience suggested there was a prevailing discourse and accompanying procedures towards a single homeless population which not only alienated them from determining the effectiveness and direction of service provision, but increasingly penalised them for a perceived insurrection towards and incompatibility

with, the "normative rules of engagement" as required within a civil society (Powell, 2007: 214).

These experiences, and particularly my dissatisfaction with the attitudes of professionals in the homelessness field, provided my key motivation for undertaking this doctoral research. My sensitivity to these issues also informed the value-based approach taken to this thesis. Therefore, I wanted to clearly adopt an approach which unapologetically aligned itself with the plight of homeless people. Being acutely aware of wider discourses of pathologisation and the accompanying criminalisation of homeless people, I believed that the frequency in which this understanding of homelessness was articulated, particularly within strategic services, not only highlighted a lack of compassion towards a basic human need for shelter, but also appeared to influence and inform the direction and delivery of practice. Therefore, I chose to undertake a methodological approach, which would not only critically explore and address these issues, but which may also offer emancipatory possibilities.

Relationship to past research

Predominantly situated within the discipline of social policy and in particular, the field of housing studies, homelessness inquiry has drawn on both positivist and interpretivist traditions. This has generated an extensive knowledge base into the cause and nature of this social phenomenon (Greve, 1964; Drake, 1994; Somerville, 1999; Fitzpatrick and Christian, 2006). Yet despite the breadth of analysis, it has been suggested that the methodological and theoretical focus of these studies remains conceptually weak (Anderson and Christian, 2006). Pleace and Quilgars (2003) maintain that these limitations result from the majority of research being undertaken within the policy arena, focusing either on homeless people directly, or on administrative remedies to alleviate the "symptom of homelessness" (cited in Jacobs et al, 1999: 22). Partly, Pleace and Quilgars (2003) suggests that this focus has resulted from the priorities of research funding streams and partly due to what they term a homelessness paradigm, in which ideological constructs and legislative definitions have induced a concept of homelessness groups as essentially different from others in mainstream society (Pleace and Quilgars 2003: 189). This, it is argued, has enabled individual characteristics to remain the key explanatory causes of homelessness and social exclusion, thereby allowing structural constraints and social concepts to remain largely ignored or hidden. For Higate (2000), the dominance of such explanations has resulted in a distorted perception of homeless situations which, in turn, has enabled the complex and interwoven levels of prejudice within policy and practice discourse to remain neglected and unaddressed. Similar distortions have also been directed towards the discourse and practice of involvement

which, in turn, has impacted on how participatory mechanisms are both implemented and accessed (Kemshall and Littlechild, 2000).

Methodological approaches which advocate involvement have by and large, been situated within the field of health and social care inquiry. Situated within an interpretivist framework, these more 'service user centred' approaches deploying the language of empowerment, have been instrumental in challenging pathological explanations within policy and practice. These approaches have tended to focus on developing more critical and emancipatory research with, alongside and even led by certain welfare groups including for example, disabled people, young people, people with mental health needs (see for example, Oliver, 1997 and the Shaping Our Lives Project at Brunel University). However, within the context of homelessness research, the concept and practice of involvement as a focus for analysis, has to date, elicited a paucity of academic inquiry (Fitzpatrick et al, 2000; Rosengard, 2001).

Hence, the initial aim of this inquiry was to adopt an Action Research (AR) approach, in partnership with homeless people as co-researchers in the process. Credited to the work of Lewin (1946, 1948 cited Kerr and Anderson, 2005:11) in conjunction with the group-dynamics movement of the 1940s (Reason, 1988), Action Research considers knowledge is best created through problem solving in real-life situations. Since then a plethora of terms have been used to rationalize the approach, reflecting the diverse disciplines in which it has been applied (see Zuber-Skerritt, 1996). Nonetheless, regardless of differences there remains an overall consensus that Action Research is a method of

inquiry that is *by* or *with* insiders of organisations or communities, but *never to* or *on* them (Kerr and Anderson, 2005). With the aim of shifting the locus of control from professional/academic researcher to those traditionally defined research subjects, Action Research has predominantly been undertaken within organisational or community settings that reflect the conflicting values and unequal distribution of power within mainstream society (Kerr and Anderson 2005). Subsequently, collaboration with others who have a stake in the problem under investigation is regarded as a prerequisite (Kemmis 2001cited Kerr and Anderson, 2005: 21).

Notwithstanding this, applying Action Research or participatory methods is not without pitfalls (see Cooke and Kothari, 2005 for a good critique of participation from a Foucauldian perspective). Whilst the philosophy of participatory inquiry endeavours to be an emancipatory process rather than one in which participants may be subjugated (Park, 2001 cited in Gibbon 2002 : 537), there is also a risk that such an approach can become patronising, manipulative and disempowering, thus reinforcing the exclusion and marginalisation already experienced. Although attempts were made to remain attentive to such dilemmas and despite my initial intentions, within the context of this doctorial thesis, the fundamental concept of collaboration vis-à-vis academic requirement for original work presented a paradox (Sankaran 2001; Reason, 1988). As a result, the regulatory process of doing a PhD alongside institutional constraints threw up too many difficulties for participatory methods within this particular research inquiry to be undertaken in a way that would minimise the risk of co-option or incorporation (see Cresswell and Spandler 2012). As a consequence, whilst I still purport that this is a

possible way forward for homelessness research, within the framework of this inquiry it had to be abandoned. Instead, because I wanted to avert the 'research gaze' away from the individual 'problem' of homelessness and approaches which focused on relieving the 'symptoms' of homelessness, I decided to adopt an approach which focused on powerful groups who have the ability to exert their influence on how homelessness is addressed. This approach was guided and informed by the theory and philosophy of critical realism (Bhaskar, 1989).

Theoretical focus

Critical Realism is regarded as a meta-theoretical perspective which negates accepted divisions between the natural and social sciences. Primarily influenced by the work of Baskar (1989), critical realism commences with a basic premise that "…there exists a reality independent of our knowledge and observations…" (Sayer, 2000: 4). Informed by this central principle, "reality" is thus said to be active on three distinct yet overlapping levels possessing both "transitive" and "intransitive" dimensions. Within the context of social inquiry, it is this fundamental distinction in the nature of 'reality' which has been used to challenge both positivist and empiricist accounts of causality.

Central to the analysis of causality from a critical realist stance, are social structures. Defined as "…sets of internally related objects and practices…" (Sayer, 1993:93 cited in Fitzpatrick, 2005:3) structures are considered stratified with different mechanisms working at various levels generating a range of outcomes within diverse contexts (Sayer,

2000). This implies that structures are not only situated within pre-existing social arrangements, but are also located at the interpersonal, conceptual and neurological level of human agency (Fitzpatrick, 2005: 11). Thus whilst pre-existing structures may constrain or enable action, they are also simultaneously mediated by human actors who both consciously and unconsciously reproduce and sometimes transform them. It is this focus on the possibility of transformation that underpins any critical realist inquiry. Essentially critical realist inquiry "enables the researcher to go beyond explanations of events in an attempt to identify the objective structures which generate events subjectively experienced" (Bhaskar, 1989: 2). To this end social inquiry must be seen as inherently "critical and…evaluative of existing vocabularies and social practices" (Basker, 1986: 183 cited in Winter and Munn-Giddings, 2001:175).

Analytical focus

Whilst methodological approaches applied in realist research differ dramatically, one central theme remains consistent throughout, namely that research fundamentally requires the linking of structure and action (Hart et al, 2004). Hence, the approach employed in the analysis of data drew on the combined influence of Yin's (2003) case study approach; Layder's (1998) "adaptive theory"; and Elder-Vass's (2010) framework for investigating the "emergent causal powers of structures".

Drawing on Bhaskars (1989) notion of "real causal powers", Elder-Vass (2010) developed an "emergentist" solution to the problem of structure and agency which

provides an explanation of how human agents can be causally effective. In arguing that human individuals are entities with emergent properties which can "interact to co-determine social events" (Elder-Vass, 2010: 193), Brock (2012: 27), also suggests that it is an approach which can be applied as a methodological framework to examine the relationship between a whole and its parts or, more particularly, between social structures and human agents. As Elder-Vass suggests (2010: 194) "the mechanisms through which human action is determined provide opportunities for action to be influenced by both social structures...but also by our own uniquely human powers of conscious reflexive thinking" (cited in Brock, 2012: 27). Whilst it is also recognised that social events are always the outcome of many interacting factors of which "agental input is only one" (Elder-Vass, 2010: 193), these factors can nonetheless affect our beliefs and dispositions which "then feed into a process of action determination that may proceed without our conscious awareness". These actions are in turn facilitated by what Elder Vass (2010) defines as the social phenomena of "normativity" and social structures within "normative social institutions" and "hegemonic norm circles" (Elder Vass, 2010: 194 cited in Brock, 2012: 27). In an attempt to identify this interconnection between the causal powers of human agents and particular social structures, Hart et al (2001) suggests that "adaptive theory" (Layder, 1998) provides a approach to organising data which both "...accounts for and captures the layered and textured nature of social reality" (Layder, 1998 cited in Hart et al, 2004: 24).

Building on the principles of critical realism and situated within an epistemological position which is neither positivist nor interpretivist, adaptive theory proposes an original

approach to theorising in social research. Developed from an amalgamation of influences, Layder's (1998) framework draws concurrently on deductive and inductive strategies in the integration of theory, data and analysis. For Layder (1998: 2) this amalgamation of theory and data essentially:

> "...should be understood as a continuous process which accompanies the research at all stages rather than as a discrete aspect that is only relevant at the beginning or end of data gathering".

This demands the researcher has a "firm grasp of the connections between the two" and a clear understanding of the fit between theoretical ideas and the data generated from the empirical material (Layder, 1998: 3). This central focus on the fit between theoretical ideas and data also requires the researcher to acknowledge and value positively the 'theoretical assumptions' they too bring to the research process. For Layder (1998: 81) the recognition and systematic channelling of these prior influences and preconceptions not only harnesses and controls 'researcher bias' but also enables the dual influence of existing theories to shape and, in turn, be shaped by the data that emerges from the research. In facilitating this process, Layder (1998) presents a framework for analysis which concentrates on the identification, exploration and analysis of what he terms "concept-indicator links".

Relating to the link between theoretical concepts and the empirical phenomena under review, concept-indicators are said to operate simultaneously, on two interrelated levels, as both "surface" and "underlying" aspects of the research activity (Layder, 1998: 79).

According to Layder (1998: 80), traditional approaches to data analysis have primarily focused on the "surface" aspects, and although these are regarded as important and essential in terms of producing reliable and valid research, he argues that in isolation they fail to identify the concealed or "underlying" features of social situations (Layder, 1998: 98). He therefore proposes an integrated approach which engages concurrently with "surface" and "underlying" aspects. This it is suggested, not only ensures a connection with the deeper stratums of a social phenomenon but "...also facilitates the production of more powerful and inclusive research explanations" (Layder, 1998: 79-80).

Contribution to knowledge

By drawing on the philosophy of Critical Realism this inquiry identifies the emergent properties or causal powers which constructs a particular 'reality' of single homelessness. In doing so, it identifies how taken for granted assumptions about the pathological and/or deviant behaviour of homeless people not only informs policy approaches, but also has a significant impact on practice which claims to address social exclusion. Hence, I believe the findings of this research will not only contribute to the wider homelessness research field but that it will also provide a deeper and critical understanding of causal effects which maintain and reinforce a hegemonic understanding of homelessness. Although the main focus of this inquiry relates to policy and practice under the previous Labour government, it is suggested that the research has contemporary relevance under the current Coalition government. In a climate of increasing cuts to welfare spending, local authorities are increasingly developing punitive policies towards non- statutory groups, or

more specifically individuals and groups of people who are not owed a statutory duty

under the homelessness legislation (for a description and overview of UK Homelessness

Legislation see Chapter One). For people deemed to be single or non-statutory homeless,

the recent criminalising of squatting and a renewed focus on 'vagrancy' is likely to

further increase their marginalisation. However, by focusing on the policy directives of

Supporting People and Community Safety, this research will provide a specific

contribution to research about the period under New Labour administration. Therefore,

the rest of this chapter describes this context in more detail. It does this by exploring

some of the key tenets of New Labour discourse and policy, including key programme

initiatives such as Supporting People, and policies of social inclusion and involvement.

New Labour

Between 1997 and 2007 under the leadership of Tony Blair, transforming the relationship

between the state and civil society had been a key political objective of New Labour

(Newman, 2001). Confronted with eroding welfare structures and an increasingly

fractured society, New Labour's impetus for change corresponded in part with an

acceptance of the nation states inability to address social problems within a global

economic age (Driver and Martell, 1999). Coupled with this acknowledgement was an

assumption that outdated ideologies - in terms of social democratic welfare and rights-

based citizenship - were no longer viable. Therefore, New Labour embarked on a series

of welfare reforms with the aim of rebuilding associations around a new social contract

(Bevir, 2005; Newman, 2005). For Jessop (1999, 335), this move towards the

reorientation of welfare concerned what he describes as "a shift towards a network paradigm" which not only involved new and complex relationships between central-local government and the non-statutory sector but also with citizens, in which the clarification of rights to welfare was at the same time linked to the explicit "responsibilisation" of welfare recipients (Fahey and Norris, 2011).

Tied to the demands of a global economy (see Lister, 1998), the facilitation of this new social settlement was also associated with an election commitment to address the legacy of 'cross-cutting' social problems inherited from preceding neoliberal regimes (Driver and Martell, 1999). Encapsulated within a philosophical belief in a 'Third Way' (Giddens, 1998) and articulated through a 'modernist' discourse advocating specific images of inclusion, community and citizenship, the Labour government assigned local authorities the strategic role to deliver, in partnership and with the participation of citizens, centrally determined policy solutions promoting community cohesion and challenging social exclusion (Newman, 2001). Amidst this changing welfare landscape, tackling and preventing particular 'categories' of homelessness was forthwith accorded a high priority.

Having risen to unprecedented levels throughout New Labour's years in opposition, the primacy afforded homelessness within the government's 'modernising' agenda, resulted in a raft of policy initiatives and legislative changes which promoted the strengthening of support structures to people experiencing acute housing need (SEU, 1998).Whilst this strategic focus was welcomed by academics and leading homelessness charities, it was

the progressive shift in the government's language and approach to homelessness and, in particular the explicit emphasis on enforcement, which raised concerns (Burchardt, 2005). In practice, the government increasingly advocated sanctions towards a remaining homeless population viewed as failing in their responsibilities to engage with the opportunities provided (Johnsen and Fitzpatrick, 2008).

Involvement and Inclusion

Within contemporary welfare discourse, the concept of involvement as a construct of social inclusion became a key political strategy in promoting ideas associated with community and citizenship. Synonymous with notions of empowerment, choice and control (Clarke, 2005), both the concept and discourse of involvement contained within current political directives has been characterised as intuitively attractive (Percy-Smith, 2000). Moreover, it was also explicated and justified in terms of increasing the influence of both existing and prospective welfare recipients in decision making processes (ibid).

With its origins in liberationist struggles linked to the cultural politics of difference, the foundations of involvement as a concept was built on the recognition of oppressed groups and the rights of welfare users as citizens (Cowden and Singh, 2007). However, expropriated under the consumerist ideology of the New Right, the notion of involvement in the promotion of rights and recognition became subsumed within a managerialist discourse in which improving service efficiency was paramount (Ward, 2000). Within contemporary political debates, the legitimacy extended to involvement as both a process

and outcome, is associated with addressing complex social problems and viewed in terms of "… strengthening communities and building civil renewal" through, amongst other strategies, extending the rights of responsible, independent citizenship to marginalised and excluded groups (Blunkett, 2003 cited in Barnes et al, 2003).

Croft and Beresford (1996) describe this differing ideological positioning in terms of two distinct approaches, the former identified as "democratic" and the latter characterized as "consumerist". Yet despite attempts to provide clarity, the proficiency with which contemporary political discourse has commandeered involvement is associated with the term's conceptual ambiguity. Essentially involvement can be seen as a word which "floats semiotically free" (Cowden and Singh, 2007:12) and as a result, its meaning is never concretely defined. Within the context of welfare, it has been argued that this lack of definitive meaning has enabled existing institutional structures to both interpret and enclose notions of involvement within a limiting and subjective discourse (Barnes et al, 2003). In terms of generating social inclusion it is maintained that such restrictions not only delimit possibilities for existing welfare groups but also for those traditionally on the boundaries of mainstream service provision (Barnes et al, 2003: 270-1).

Notwithstanding these critical considerations, initiating the inclusion of particular groups who are traditionally situated on the margins has resulted in numerous policy interventions focusing on neighbourhood renewal and countering social exclusion. Included amongst this focus has been the multiplicity of problems associated with

homelessness (Burchardt, 2005). As a result, the New Labour administration initiated two key relevant developments, Community Safety and Supporting People programmes.

Community Safety and Supporting People

New Labour's focus on community and neighbourhood renewal, not only transformed perceptions of crime but also the responses to it. In parallel with other government reforms, the introduction of the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) accentuated the centrality of partnership working and assigned local authorities a central role in implementation. Working alongside key agencies, including the police, local authorities were required to develop and implement a Crime and Disorder strategy, the objective of which was to protect the public and maintain community safety (Charman and Savage, 1999). A central part of this process was to involve and consult with the wider community in an effort to define patterns of crime and 'anti-social' problems in their area. Thus communities essentially became part of a mechanism of governance within a "wider policing family" (Crawford and Lister, 2007). With the development of Crime and Disorder strategies came new powers to issue a range of dispersal orders aimed at combating antisocial behaviour. Subsequently consolidated under the Anti Social Behaviour Act (2003) these powers gave local authorities the means by which they could protect the community from "behaviour that causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress" (Home Office, 2003).

Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) are basically civil orders that convert to criminal offences if breached. Since first introduced they have been employed in a wide range of areas to address a diversity of so-called 'social problems' (Crawford and Lister, 2007). What constitutes anti-social behaviour is essentially subjective and influenced by a range of cultural and mediating social factors and perceptions. As a result, whilst ASBOs were not exclusively targeted at social housing tenants in deprived neighbourhoods, enforcement was invariably directed towards what Charman and Savage (1999) refer to as "easy targets", namely disenfranchised sections of the population, including homeless people who sleep rough or beg. For Buchardt (2005) the association of particular forms of homelessness with anti-social behaviour was essentially based on a perception that rough sleepers and beggars had the potential to intimidate and/or offend the sensibilities of the wider community. In addition, Rutherford (1997 cited in Moore, 2008: 185) has referred to this targeting of so-called problematic groups as "the eliminating ideal":

> "...the eliminating ideal strives to solve problems and emerging problems by getting rid of troublesome and disagreeable people with methods which are lawful and widely supported" (Rutherford, 1997: 117 cited in Moore, 2008: 187).

Such a response can be seen as having a long history relating directly back to practices which sought to find solutions to 'deviancy' by clearing out from society those considered to be a threat to the social order. (For an in-depth account of responses to homelessness throughout history, see Humphreys, 1999).

Although forms of elimination vary, the underlying theme and processes remain the same (Moore, 2000). The aim was to basically get rid of the problem by getting rid of the people involved, firstly by projecting a fear of contamination and secondly, by the pathologising construction of the "contaminants" (Joffe, 1999 cited in Moore, 2000: 186). However, Moore (2000: 187) suggests that before the desire for elimination comes into play there must be a process by which certain groups come to be seen as falling into these perverse categories of eligibility. Within the context of homelessness, therefore, the Labour's approach to community safety and particularly the targeting of homelessness as anti-social resulted in what Tonry (2004 citing Squires and Stephans 2005: 521) describes as a "new politics of intolerance" towards individuals who are already marginalised. This not only influenced perceptions of homelessness but also mobilises the community against the so-called behaviour of 'others'.

At the same time, and in tandem with New Labour's approach to crime and anti-social behaviour, the Supporting People programme was launched in 2003. A complex policy and funding programme, the aim of Supporting People was, in part, to address the gap between housing and support (see Watson et al, 2003; Foord and Simic, 2005). This was designed to ensure that defined vulnerable groups, including households assigned non-statutory status, were afforded "…quality of life and independence…" (DETR, 1998: 8).

In achieving these policy objectives, the programme maintained the government's theme of partnerships emphasising a 'joined-up' approach in which consultation with key stakeholders in health, housing, social care and community safety was regarded as

paramount. This emphasis on collaborative working also demanded the involvement of both current and potential service users. For single homeless groups who are routinely situated outside the legislative framework, the programme theoretically facilitated a first point of access to service systems. Allied to participatory mechanisms, it would also potentially provide opportunities to influence the direction and delivery of service responses. Yet it is suggested that there was a key tension located at the interface between policy and practice relating to a dominant discourse which informed both explanations and institutionalised categories of homelessness. In combining concepts of support with the issuing of sanctions could conspire collectively to undermine the programme's participatory aims. In other words, there appeared to be at least a potential conflict between the strategies of simultaneously providing support alongside issuing sanctions. Hence investigating this inconsistency and understanding the complex relationship between support, sanctions and participation, became the central focus of inquiry.

Research Aims and Objectives

Applying a single case study approach located across five local authorities in the North West of England, this inquiry examines the insights of strategic managers within and between Supporting People and Community Safety teams in relation to conceptions of and interventions towards single homelessness. The justification for focusing on senior management primarily related to their roles within the aforesaid teams and specifically their ability to influence commissioning decisions, in terms of what services are prioritised, the power and influence they held over subordinate members of their teams,

including possessing the ability to induce coercion and consent. For example, senior manager had some degree of flexibility in terms of budgeting decisions and how a programme or strategy was implemented. This was in contrast to operational staff, who did not possess this level of freedom and who in general, whether they agreed or not, had to abide by the decisions of senior managers.

Hence, in utilising a Critical Realist approach, the aim was not to test a hypothesis, but to examine the interplay between structural properties and professional agency. In this respect the main unit of analysis was strategic managers' beliefs, knowledge and understanding of single homelessness. Embedded within this framework was the sub-unit of analysis, relating to the nature and constitution of relationships within and between individuals and organisational sites. The objective was to determine how, or if, the beliefs, knowledge and understanding of strategic agents within welfare institutions affected their actions towards a single homeless population.   With this in mind the inquiry focused on three broad questions[1]:

- How professionals located within the strategic partnerships of Supporting People and Community Safety teams, interpreted the causes of single homelessness?
- To what extent have interpretations of single homelessness informed policy actions involving support and sanctions and how are these respective approaches were combined?

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[1] For interview question guide see Appendix A

- To what extent the implementation of the aforesaid policy actions impacted on professionals responsibilities to facilitate an inclusive dialogue with single homeless people?

Before proceeding to discuss these issues in more detail, it is important to delineate and define the field of inquiry. Firstly, by providing definition and meaning to the term single homelessness and secondly by explaining what is meant by the term professionals.

Definitions of single homelessness

Fitzpatrick et al (2000: 9) identifies a continuum of descriptions which constitute single homelessness; from a narrow view of rooflessness through to concealed households involuntarily sharing accommodation. For the purpose of this thesis, single homeless people will refer to individuals defined in contemporary legislation as 'non-priority' and consequently not owed a statutory duty. However, in an attempt to recognise the multifaceted nature of homelessness, this definition encompasses concurrently individuals who may reside in temporary accommodation such as hostels, supported housing or B&Bs; who may also encounter periodic incidents of 'hidden' homelessness interspersed with periods of sleeping rough and who may have endured prolonged episodes of street homelessness. Furthermore, whilst it is recognised that not all homeless individuals require or wish to access service systems, this definition also acknowledges that periods within institutionalised care and experience of similar health and social care needs, is a contributory factor in the housing circumstances of a significant majority (see

Fitzpatrick, 2005: 12). In relation to the descriptions offered however, this thesis maintains the sentiments of Anderson (2001) that depicting people with labels such as 'single', 'hidden' or 'rough sleepers' is inappropriate, but these representations are recognized extensively in the literature and language of academic research, policy and practice, hence their usage is unavoidable.

Definition of Professionals

According to Laffin and Young (1990), the concept of professionalism in local government has several meanings which are equally contentious. However, in an effort to provide a working definition Singh and Cowden's (2009) discussion regarding the profession of social work draws on the Gramscian concept of "intellectuals" to distinguish between the concept of 'critical' and 'non-critical' public service professionals. In distinguishing between the traditional and non-traditional professional, the former relates to "occupational groups", for example teachers, doctors, social workers, whose "right" to professional status involves specialist training and established standards of practice, in which much of their work depends on the accumulation, dissemination and evaluation of specialist knowledge (Laffin and Young, 1990). In addition, the achievement of professional status also confers membership to professional self-governing bodies who can proffer advice on policy and exert a degree of influence over the actions of government.

With the rise of Thatcherism and the advent of neo-liberal socio-economic policies, it is suggested (Laffin and Young, 1990), that the skills and abilities of the critically engaged professional became increasingly devalued and replaced by a new kind of public sector professional. This new kind of public sector professional requires different types of knowledge and competences, including effective management and technical skills. As a consequence, many who rose to the higher echelons of welfare management have developed their bureaucratic careers through a process which, according to Laffin and Young (1990), was essentially political driven. Having broadly defined these two competing definitions of welfare professional, for the purpose of this research the term 'Professional' is used interchangeably with 'strategic manager[s]' and refers primarily to the latter category of welfare employees.

Structure of thesis

The thesis is structured in the following way:

Chapter 1: A Historical Context of Homelessness

The development of the post-war welfare settlement witnessed a climate of change in the Government's approach to the implementation of social policies. By the late 20th Century, an emerging globalised market economy witnessed the characterisation of new insecurities and risk (Culpit, 1999); and alongside an increasing polarisation between the 'haves and have-nots', resulted in chronic impoverishment and exclusion for a growing minority populations. This chapter will provide a brief explanation of the impact of these changes for people experiencing homelessness.

Chapter 2: New Labour and the 'modernisation' of Welfare

In 1997, the legacy of neo-liberal economic and social policies inherited by the New Labour government was a society polarised by entrenched inequalities in which homelessness had reached unprecedented levels. According to Lister (1998) this period saw the development of a centre-left perspective in which the goals of social justice and economic efficiency were regarded as 'two sides of the same coin'. Hence in rejecting simultaneously collective redistribution and neo-liberal free-market approaches, New Labour's 'modernisation' approach to welfare focused instead on a 'Third Way' (Giddens, 1998). This chapter directs attention to New Labour's modernising welfare

agenda examining specifically their ideology of a 'Third Way' and the key themes of Social Exclusion, Community and Citizenship (Neman, 2001).

Chapter 3: New Labour's policy context and homelessness

With the adoption of a 'Third Way' (Giddens 1998), New Labour's response to social marginalisation and poverty inherited from the previous administration was to embark on a series of welfare reforms with the aim re-defining the relationship between the individual and the state (Clarke, 2005). With a primary focus on 'rights and responsibilities' (ibid), and promoted through the rhetoric of inclusion (Levitas, 1998) active citizenship (Dwyer, 2004) and community cohesion (Goes, 2004); New Labour's objective was to tackle the exclusion of an "underclass of people cut off from mainstream society" (Blair, 1997). Singled out for particular policy attention was addressing the continued exclusion of homeless people. This chapter, will presents an overview of policy approaches directed towards addressing single homelessness focusing primarily on the Supporting People programme and the government's Anti-Social Behaviour agenda.

Chapter 4: Methodology

In an attempt to avert the 'research gaze' (Cresswell and Spandler, 2012) away from individual 'problems' and 'symptoms' of homelessness, this inquiry utilises the philosophy of Critical Realism (Bhaskar, 1989) alongside the relational emergence concept advanced by Elder-Vass (2010) to examine causal mechanism within practices aimed at addressing homelessness. This chapter directs the reader's attention to the methodological tools applied in this research.

Chapter 5: A Search for the causal power of agency - examining strategic managers understanding and beliefs into the cause of single homelessness

Situated within ElderVass's (2010) 'emegentist' approach to the interrelationship between structure and agency, this chapter presents the findings from Stage One of this inquiry. The objective of this phase was to explore the beliefs, knowledge and understandings articulated by strategic managers in both Supporting People and Community Safety Teams with regard to the primary cause of single homelessness.

Chapter 6: Support and Sanctions - Reconciling conflicting approaches to homelessness

Following an exploration of strategic managers' beliefs, knowledge and understanding of homelessness identified in Stage One, this chapter will present the findings from Stage Two of the inquiry. Drawing on the findings from Stage One, this phase of the research focused on exploring how or if professionals understanding of homelessness was reflected in the practice of support and sanctions. This chapter presents the findings in relation to how the perceived conflict between responsibilised and restorative procedures, specifically support and sanctions were reconciled in practice.

Chapter 7:   Facilitating Inclusion for single homeless people – involvement and consultation practices

Informed by the previous two stages of this research which sought to identify professional understandings of and practice towards single homeless people in regard to

procedures for support and sanctions, this chapter presents the findings from the third and final stage of analysis. For this stage of the inquiry, participatory approaches adopted by Supporting People and Community Safety Teams were examined. The objective was to identify how, or if, methods of involvement and consultation implement within the respective teams, facilitated inclusion for single homeless people.

Chapter 8: Conclusion - Developing a Critical Realist analysis

Situated within a critical realist theoretical framework, this chapter will provide a deeper analysis of the findings. In doing so, the aim is to demonstrate how the application of this philosophical approach can be useful in identify the underlying mechanisms which create and sustain particular problematic homelessness practices which ultimately marginalise people in acute housing need and further reinforces their exclusion.

In addition, this chapter also extends the current literature by recommending a move away from what could be described as 'traditional' methods in homelessness research and towards an approach which, by utilising the dialectic arguments of critical realism, seeks to develop transformative practice. This approach it is suggested, would not only challenge prevailing orthodoxies of homelessness, but, following the seminal work of Gramsci (1971 cited Joseph, 2002) could also support the development of a counter hegemonic discourse.

Chapter One

A Historical Context of Homelessness

Introduction

According to Anderson (2003:106), there is a significant corpus of literature on homelessness in Britain. Both directly and indirectly linked to political responses, explanations recounting the nature and cause of homelessness and the 'transient poor' can be located back to the time of the 1601 Poor Law and beyond (for example Humphreys, 1999). Within contemporary accounts however, the majority of literature acknowledges the 1977 Housing (Homeless Persons) Act as the "watershed" (Somerville, 1999:39) in the delineation of homelessness in Britain. This seminal piece of legislation, in conjunction with the ensuing political periods between 1979 and 2007, identify the differing yet prevailing welfare ideologies which shape how causes of homelessness are defined, conceptualised and addressed (Anderson, 2003:106).

The following chapter will provide a brief synopsis of the framework in which the 1977 Act was introduced. It will then proceed with an overview of the political periods 1979-1997.

The post-war welfare settlement

Since industrialization, theories concerning the role of the state in relieving poverty, inequality and homelessness have essentially gravitated between harsh, punitive measures and the provision of a 'safety net'. Such theories, Humphreys (1999) contends, have been broadly dependent on the economic cycle of the period and the political ideology of the day. With the establishment of the post-war welfare settlement in 1948, the concept of an egalitarian state brought forth a political acceptance that the nation state had a responsibility to ensure a minimum standard of welfare for all its citizens (Hughes, 1998).

Influenced by Fabian Socialism and the New Liberalism of Beveridge and Keynes, the development of the post-war model led to the implementation of fiscal policies in which a regulated market system linked capital and labour in a combined programme of full (male) employment and universal welfare provision (Penketh and Pratt, 2000). From its inception and initial administration under a social democratic Labour government, varying perspectives in regard to the delivery of the welfare programme were evident. Nonetheless, a degree of consensus transpired across the political divide certifying a commitment to the centralised delivery of social policies. Planned and delivered through central and local government institutions, the provision of welfare was reinforced by a concept of citizenship based on a tripartite system of civil, political and social rights which theoretically would lead "...towards a fuller measure of equality" (Marshall, 1950: 29 cited in Kennett, 1999: 38).

The assumption underpinning this paradigm of rights deployed citizenship as an inclusive process that would alter the structure of society, admitting full membership of the community (Marshall, 1950 cited in Kennett, 1999). Thus, in theory, previously marginalised members of society would attain the rights and status of citizenship by way of participation in a system which would ensure universal access to social security, health, housing and education. However, this symbolic imagery of universalism and citizenship was, according to Williams (1999), both highly gendered and racialised. Similarly Lee (1998) argued that, in the context of housing, the notion of collective rights was a misconception.

Homelessness and the 'social settlement'

With extensive documentation on the housing conditions in Britain following the hostilities of World War II (see for example, Lund 1996; Malpass and Murie, 1999), Timmins (1995:139) recounts how 450,000 homes had either been destroyed or were so severely damaged that they were uninhabitable. Hence with an ensuing commitment to greater economic and social equality, concerns over the housing needs of the majority were regarded as paramount. This lead to an increase in housing development and slum clearance programmes. However, Lee(1998) contends that although desirable, such programmes frequently resulted in the systematic dispersal of entire communities and, despite attempts to meet the growing need, demand repeatedly out-stripped supply.

Thus with a significant housing shortage, coupled with finite resources to meet welfare needs, allocation of a person's right to housing was contingent on the discretion of welfare professionals (Glendinning, et al 2002). This instigated a rationing system which, in turn, was further compounded by perceptions of homelessness, in which moral judgements pertaining to personal decency and behavioural 'norms' were directed towards households in need of accommodation. Consequently, those least able to negotiate contingencies were denied state assisted housing (Howarth and Manzi, 1999).

According to Humphreys (1999), the considered opinion of homelessness at the time was assumed to be rooted in individual pathologies. Hence, the state regarded any responsibility owed as one which provided support and correction. As a consequence, people finding themselves in housing need were afforded assistance under the 1948 National Assistance Act, in which institutionalised workhouse attitudes prevailed; families were separated and children placed in care (Langan, 1998). For households without dependents, the legislation not only considered them socially disadvantaged, but also believed they suffered some form of personal inadequacy. Thus attempts to differentiate specific needs resulted in the establishment of training hostels and rehabilitation centres. However, Somerville (1999) contends that, regardless of attempts to distinguish between 'types' of homelessness, in reality populist perceptions thrived which left many searching for shelter either by way of the private sector or through voluntary agencies. This marginalisation and exclusion of homelessness in general, went largely ignored against a backdrop of economic optimism, rising living standards and virtually full employment. It was universally considered that the problem of a small and 'different' minority would

rapidly disappear under such favourable economic and social conditions (Malpass and Murie, 1999).

By the 1960s however, various studies emerged which challenged the optimistic assumptions of the welfare state (Daly, 1996:70). Commissioned by the Department of Health, the Greve Report (1964) identified a successive rise in the number of homeless families concentrated within welfare institutions. Findings not only revealed the cause as predominantly the result of a housing shortage, but also identified the multiplicity of problems and characteristics of the people experiencing homelessness. Yet, despite the findings, recommendations were largely ignored by central government. However with the establishment of the Joint Charities Group in the mid-1970s, attention was drawn to the government's failure to address the problem, campaigns for a change in legislation grew and eventually culminated in the 1977 Housing (Homeless Persons) Act.

The 1977 Housing (Homeless Persons) Act

The principle duty of the 1977 Act was to clarify and reinforce local authority obligations to the homeless (for a detailed account see Drake, 1994). Transferring responsibility from welfare to housing departments, the Act created a legal framework in which people defined as 'priority' with a 'local connection' and 'unintentionally' homeless were entitled to long-term, state funded accommodation. The provision included households with dependent children, pregnant women, and households whose members were 'vulnerable' due to age and/or infirmity. Conversely, in an attempt to guard against perceived "rent

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dodgers and scroungers" (Williams, 2001:10), the legislation also identified a 'non-priority' category. This was attributed to individuals judged to be 'intentionally' homeless or without a local connection. As a consequence, they could claim no legal right to housing.

According to Fitzpatrick and Stephens (2007), the concept of 'intentionality' embedded within the legislation, was an attempt to restrict access to homeless households whose misfortune was deemed to be a result of their own fecklessness. Whilst not compulsory, some local authorities did nevertheless set aside provision. Notwithstanding these distinctions, the Act was nevertheless welcomed by campaigners and pressures groups on behalf of 'the homeless' despite the continuation in excluding a significant number of single homeless households who were generally left to find provision in private or voluntary sector hostels and common lodging houses. Humphreys (1999) identifies how official reports from this period increasingly focused on the individual in which "disturbances in personal relationships...[and]...indiscipline character" were regarded primarily as the cause of their homelessness. Cowan (1998) also argues that specific categories differentiating 'priority' and 'non-priority', coupled with restrictive definitions encompassing the conditional concepts of 'vulnerability', 'non-intentionality' and 'local connection', ensured local government interpretations could deny provision to those considered 'undeserving'. Subsequently, for people categorised as non-statutory homeless, predominantly single households, their attempts to participate in a universal system of welfare and by definition the rights of citizenship, were denied.

This denial of citizenship was also identified amongst other groups in society. Characterized through the rise of New Social Movements, critiques were directed at the "normative assumptions of nation, family and work" (Williams, 1999:342). It was argued (Lister, 1998) that the highly conditional concept of universalism and the limited focus on social class had neglected the unequal distribution of provision associated with 'race', gender, age, and (dis)ability. Simultaneously by the close of the 1970s, the cumulative impact of economic downturn, increasing unemployment and fundamental changes to the structure and role of the family, ensured the cost of welfare spiralled and provision was in crisis. According to Drake (1994), this impacted on the 1977 Acts legislative duties which failed to have the expected impact of reducing homelessness.

Although the delivery of welfare had always had its critics from both sides of the political divide, the cross-party consensus, throughout the period 1945 through to the late 1960s, had ensured the state's commitment to maintain a basic level of provision for meeting the economic and social requirements of its citizens (Hughes 1998). But with welfare in crisis, growing unemployment and a continuing homelessness problem, disillusionment with Keynesian economic management intensified. As the 1980s approached, dissenting voices on the Left were arguing that state provision had done little to advance the cause of socialism, creating instead a form of "socialised capitalism" (Wilson, 1997:185), which had "pacified" and "placated" the working class, resulting in a negligible distribution of wealth or power. Simultaneously it was also argued (see Cochrane, 2000), that the monolithic structures of the welfare state had become too costly, centralised and bureaucratic. Aligned with the ascendance and rhetorical claims of the political Right, the

latter contention proved effective in providing the first major challenge to the post-war settlement.

This growing opposition to the Beveridgean welfare state coincided with a transforming global economy. Castells (1989:307 cited in Daly, 1996:5) describes these changes as being

> "Characterised by a concentration of economic control in multinational firms and financial institutions…worldwide networks of production and a freer flow of labour, goods and services".

As a consequence, the nation state's ability to safeguard its citizens from the risks associated with economic instability was greatly reduced (Culpitt, 1999). In Britain, the impact of this global economic shift meant an explicit break in existing relations between the state and the economy which subsequently gave rise to the casualisation of labour, contributing to a growth in low-paid insecure jobs and a massive rise in unemployment. Thus, in tandem with increasing challenges to welfare state, global economic changes enabled a New Right challenge to pursue their ideological commitment to free market economics a reduction in the provision of welfare.

The Neo-Liberal Challenge

Walker (1997) illustrates how the function of the government prior to 1997 attempted to combat poverty and inequality. He argues that, although gradual, inequalities in wealth

had narrowed throughout the consensus period however, with the rise to power of the Conservative Government under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher, a "radical New Right philosophy emerged" (Walker, 1997: 5). The rhetoric underpinning this challenge formed the New Right which argued that state welfare provision had created a "dependency culture" that had "eroded personal initiative, independence and self-respect" leading to a "morally corrosive effect on individuals" (cited in Savage and Robins, 1990) which thus created, rather than alleviated, social problems. Levitas (1998: 14) identifies how the New Right challenge was constructed from "two apparently contradictory yet symbiotic strands of neoliberalism and neo-conservatism..." She explains this paradox by illustrating how the ideological commitment to the free market needed a strong state to impose and uphold social discipline in order to off-set any potential threats created by the instability of the market.

This in turn, both informed and propelled a combined ideological attack on welfarism and statism (Clarke et al 2000). By enabling the free-market to be the normative mechanism for allocating resources, goods and services, it was professed that economic prosperity would be assured and individual freedom enhanced (Clarke et al, 2000: 2). This philosophical belief sequentially honed the government's argument that state-run institutions were too controlling and that universal state provision drained individual autonomy, eroded choice, promoted a culture of dependency and lead to the moral decline of particular groups in society (Haworth and Manzi, 1999), creating what was subsequently described as an 'underclass' of people:

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"…who were dependent on benefits and had neither the means nor the motivation for self-improvement… [which in turn]… undermined responsibility, eroded virtue and indirectly promoted crime, drug use and other social ills". (Murray 1986 cited in Bevir 2005:67).

This concept of an 'underclass' culture in the rhetoric of the New Right, was profoundly influenced by the writings of political scientist Charles Murray (1986, 1990 cited in Humphreys, 1999: 163). Murray's theory was essentially targeted at people he regarded as no longer subscribing to the values of mainstream society but had instead "embraced welfare dependency and/or criminality as a way of life...", which had resulted from "...years of misguided profligate state welfare provision..." For Newman (1998, 2001) these collective beliefs were to prove central in the transformation of economic and social policies and imparted the government with the moral rationale for both redefining and reducing the role of the state in the delivery of welfare. As a consequence, the social democratic standards of "collective regulation, public ownership and state benevolence..." were overturned by a new morality based on private enterprise, wealth creations and self-reliance through alternative forms of welfare provision which incorporated provision from both the voluntary and private sector (Hewitt, 1992: 42 cited in Culpitt, 1999: 15).

From social administration to new public management

The Labour government's adoption of market principles coupled with an antipathy towards social democratic forms of provision, fundamentally altered the organisational structures of welfare. Central to these changes was the emergence of a new style of public management, in which the ethos of 'managerialism', derived from ideas and practices

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within the private sector, introduced the concept of a contract culture. With the focus on

efficiency, cost effectiveness and flexibility, a shift away from old forms of public

administration to post-bureaucratic organisational arrangements transformed the local

authority's role as the main provider of welfare (Heydebrand, 1989 cited in Hoggett,

1997). Through what Hoggett (1997:421) defines as a "centralised-decentralised system of

governance", the dispersal of local authority functions led to a set of quasi-market

relationships in health, housing, education and social care. This created distinctions

between purchasers and providers and advanced an ethos of competition in which the

compulsory 'contracting-out' of services replaced collective state provision with a

public/private split (Burchardt et al, 1999). Hence, with a reductionist role by the state,

alternative forms of provision were delivered within the context of welfare pluralism. This

incorporated a mix of state, voluntary and private sectors in the delivery of welfare

services.

This reorientation of welfare, combined with changing economic structures, had a

fundamental impact in altering the relationship between the state and the citizen.

According to Culpitt, (1999: 15) protection from "risk, insecurity and uncertainty" was no

longer regarded as the primary responsibility of the state but instead was recast in a

discourse pertaining to the 'duties' of 'active citizenship'. This accompanied a change in

the way citizenship was both interpreted and articulated (Lister, 1998). With the New

Right's motivation to attack a perceived 'culture of dependency', the Marshellian concept

of citizenship rights was replaced with a 'consumerist' discourse constructing a range of

'new welfare subjects' in the form of 'customers' (Hughes, 1998:65). Eventually

epitomised under the government's Citizen's Charter, the consumerist discourse of neo-liberalism reasserted the role of the market in which the idea of directly accountable public services, receptive to the needs of users, was regarded as central in the drive to promote efficiency (Smith et al, 2003). Dean (1999) maintains that the concept of consumer choice was underpinned by the notion of a self-reliant citizen. However, amidst increasing levels of unemployment, growing inequalities, the deregulation and casualisation of labour, and the reduction and erosion of welfare, it was argued (Smith et al, 2003) that for some, marginalised through lack of resources, the capacity to be 'active' and thereby exercise choice was severely constrained, excluding them from participating in societies and "increasing consumer individualism" (Bowring, 2000:317).

For Ferguson et al (2002), this was particularly acute in a housing context. It was argued that the neo-liberal market-led strategy of the Conservatives created profound difficulties within both private and public sector housing. Although space precludes extensive debate concerning policy outcomes established under successive Conservative governments between 1979 and 1997, evidence nonetheless suggests (for example Anderson, 1993, 1999, 2001: Pleace, 1998; Kemp, 1997) that the unprecedented growth in 'new' forms of homelessness amongst families and young people in particular, alongside the (re)emergence of street homelessness, was compounded by the Conservative's economic and social policies.

Neo-liberal policies and homelessness

Within the context of single homelessness, as identified previously, those deemed non-statutory in their right to accommodation were usually disregarded under the 1977 Housing (Homeless Persons) Act. Therefore, provision of accommodation for those denied state assistance usually entailed common lodging houses or large institutionalised hostels (Humphreys, 1999). By the close of the 1970s, mounting evidence identified that, within a significant majority of accommodation provided in such establishments, the conditions were both draconian and inhumane. Consequently, the Conservative Government's attempts to address this resulted in the Hostel Initiative. The aim was to replace large institutionalised hostels with smaller resettlement units. Drake (1994: 120) states that although desirable, the policy effectively exacerbated the problem. As increasing bed spaces were lost and resettlement units failed to provide move-on accommodation, escalating numbers resorted to squatting or residing in "grubby dilapidated" Bed and Breakfast Accommodation which often provided worse conditions that those found in the large hostels. For some however, their only alternative was the streets.

Consecutively, within the context of housing policy, the Conservative's ideological support for owner-occupation, coupled with attempts to revive a dwindling private sector, resulted in expenditure cut-backs for public sector housing. With the introduction of the Right-to-Buy policy under the 1980 housing legislation, alongside controls on the construction of local authority new builds, a drastic reduction and residualisation within

social housing left many, due to poverty, age, or infirmity, marginalised in the worst

accommodation (Malpass and Murie 1999). In parallel, the Conservative government's

commitment in promoting the acceleration of owner-occupation at any cost, the growth of

home-ownership expanded to entice households both economically and socially vulnerable

to the vagaries of the market (Forrest and Kearns, 2001). Amidst a precarious and

changing economic environment, this particular configuration of an unstable housing

market and tenure structure contributed towards a significant growth in mortgage

repossessions and negative equity (Forrest and Kennett 1996 cited in Cowan, 1998:331).

According to statistics from The Survey of English Housing (ONS, 1998 cited in Forrest,

1999:31) by the beginning of the 1990s, over 430,000 households had to forfeit their

homes because of difficulties with mortgage re-payments.

These overlapping issues served to increase the prevalence of homelessness and intensified

the pressure on local authority housing departments. However, with a dwindling stock the

need to accommodate families in housing need witnessed an expansion in the use of Bed

& Breakfast accommodation. This effectively created competition between the statutory

and non-statutory homeless. As the latter had no legal right to assistance under homeless

legislation, many had sought refuge in the voluntary or residual private rental sector.

However, as local authorities were increasingly forced to accommodate households owed

a statutory duty in the private sector, the possibility of provision for the non-statutory

homeless became progressively scarce. (Anderson, 1993).

Coinciding with this progressive use of Bed & Breakfast provision, changes in social

security policies were also orchestrated. McGlone (1990:160) describes how the

government's response to growing claims for board and lodgings payments, particularly

for claimants' under the age of twenty-six, resulted in restrictive conditions of eligibility.

Young people, he continued, also proved to be an easy target in terms of the erosion and

withdrawal of income support. Humphreys (1999: 160) illustrates how the impact of these

changes propelled a significant number of young people into homelessness. Reports at the

time established a fifty per cent increase in young people sleeping on the streets, and the

numbers living in squats almost trebled between 1987 and 1989.

 The impact of community care policies

In tandem with these changes, the organisational restructuring within local authority social

services departments witnessed an increasing commitment to the delivery of 'community

care'. The theoretical origins of community care originated in the 1950s and related to the

institutionalised care of people with mental health problems (Lund, 1996:160). Influenced

by theories of 'normalisation' and 'social role valorisation' (cited in Croft and Beresford,

1996: 185), the principles underpinning community care emphasised a 'valued life', social

integration and the abandonment of segregated institutionalised care. This led to the term

being applied to the provision of care of other vulnerable groups, including older adults

and people with a learning disability. With the development of New Right ideologies, the

philosophy of community care was to be provided within the context of welfare pluralism,

thus the main providers were no longer local authorities, but a mix of statutory, private and

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voluntary organisations. Encompassed within the confines of New Right ideology however, the reality of deinstitutionalisation implemented under the 1990 NHS and Community Care Act was problematic. Clapham et al (1996) suggests that despite the rhetoric of 'consumer choice' and empowerment underpinning these reforms, the rising demand for services coupled with financial constraints from the Conservative government created a 'care gap' between the level of need and provision of services (Langan, 1998). Significantly, a major weakness in the legislation was that housing did not feature as a crucial part of the policy, furthermore the discrepancies between defined categories of 'vulnerability' within community care and housing legislation respectively, became increasingly evident as concerns over the number of people with health and social care needs living without appropriate shelter or support grew (Lund, 1996: 159-175).

Street homelessness and the 1996 Act

Despite this acceleration in homelessness amongst single households, it was the visible impact of street homelessness that eventually prompted a reaction from the Conservative government. Launched in 1990, the Rough Sleepers Initiative (RSI) and simultaneously the Homeless Mentally Ill Initiative (HMII) formed the basis of this response (for a critical overview see Anderson 1993). To summarise, the RSI and HMII brought together key agencies in the voluntary sector, local authority and government departments to provide direct access accommodation, outreach and resettlement services for people sleeping rough. Over three three-year periods, £255 million was allocated to the initiative. Originally confined to central London, the three three-year programmes were eventually

extended to cover other geographical areas in England. In evaluating the initiative, Randall

and Brown (1999) found that despite initial reductions, from 1994 the volume of people

sleeping on the streets had reached a plateau. Although attempts at the time were regarded

as positive, counter charges argued that street homelessness was in fact the "tip of the

iceberg" – just a visible manifestation of a much wider problem (Humphreys, 1999: 185).

Despite these claims, paradoxically, within the same period, amendments to the homeless

legislation under the 1996 Housing Act served to further restrict access to the homeless

population. Based on a premise that the system was being exploited by, for example, the

young unemployed and single mothers, the legislation restricted eligibility and ended local

authorities' duty to provide permanent accommodation. In questioning the government's

motives, Somerville (1998) suggested that the rhetoric of market individualism enabled

minimalist pathological definitions of homelessness to be firmly reinstated in statute. By

simply focusing on the most visible and extreme form of homelessness, he claimed tight

definitional boundaries had, in effect, depoliticised the reality of homeless situations. Thus

the creation of homelessness as a 'special need' not only ensured the issue remained

detached from the wider context of poverty, inequality and lack of appropriate, affordable

housing but also that other 'forms' of homelessness remained unrecognised, unresolved

and excluded. Cowan (1998) further supports this claim. He maintains that changes in the

homeless procedures were a clear attempt by the Conservatives to re-catagorise and

restrict rights to housing based on assumptions about the deviant and/or criminal

behaviour of a morally deficient 'underclass' culturally distinct from the mainstream.

The nature and cause of single homelessness

This acceleration in the number of single people in housing need and the growing presence of street homelessness prompted research aimed at identifying the changing nature and causes of single homelessness. (see Drake et al 1982; Anderson 1993; Bines 1994). Findings established that despite the diversity of characteristics and causes, young people were significantly over-represented amongst the homeless population. It was also identified that a considerable majority suffered some form of discrimination and disadvantage, particularly in relation to their long-term employment prospects and inability to access affordable accommodation. Evidence also related to an interwoven problem characterized by unmet community care needs and a lack of affordable accommodation. This was identified through the high incidences of drug and alcohol misuse, experience of institutional care and health problems significantly worse than those found amongst the general population (Bines, 1994). Kemp, (1997) therefore concluded that single homelessness in Britain was an interwoven problem characterized by unmet community care needs and lack of affordable accommodation. Hence, by the late 1990s, social and economic changes had ultimately left many in society vulnerable to poverty and homelessness. This vulnerability, it has been suggested, was compounded further by a New Right ideological stance which resulted in the erosion and restriction of welfare provision. Thus for Pryke (1998), by the time New Labour came to power, the cumulative impact of eighteen years under a neo-liberal regime, either as a direct result of housing policy or the indirect way in which it intersected with other policy areas, had significantly increased the number of individuals exposed to the risk of homelessness.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a very brief historical overview in which approaches to homelessness were situated. It has identified that regardless of contrasting political ideologies in relation to the provision of welfare, perceptions of people experiencing homelessness reflected concepts of 'deserving' and 'undeserving' which have permeated throughout the history of social policy. Thus, for people deemed non-statutory or single homeless located in the realm of the 'undeserving' this ensured their exclusion from mainstream services persisted. However, with the advent of New Labour and its focus on inclusive citizenship within cohesive communities, the potential to overturn the exclusion that people in acute housing need had historically endured was, albeit tentative, a possibility. In an exploration of New Labour's approach to single homelessness, the following chapter will examine the political ideologies which underpin concepts of community, citizenship and social inclusion encompassed within New Labour's approach to the modernisation of welfare.

Chapter Two

New Labour and the 'modernisation' of Welfare

Introduction

According to Powell (1999), the election of New Labour in 1997 was in part the result of a general shift within the Party during their eighteen years in opposition. Both influenced and informed by new economic patterns and changing societal structures (see Ferguson, et al, 2002), the Party acknowledged that their adherence to old social democratic forms of statist government had increasingly rendered the party unelectable. Under the leadership of first, Neil Kinnock and subsequently John Smith, the party embarked on an extensive organisational and ideological transformation culminating in the establishment of the Commission for Social Justice (Driver and Martell, 1998).

Initiated following the election defeat of 1992, the aim of the Commission was to examine the Party's policies predominantly in the field of employment and social welfare. Making reference to the divisions in contemporary society, the ensuing report "Social Justice: Strategies for National Renewal", (cited in Levitas, 1998:33) recognized the need to create a "unified social order" (ibid). The report also suggested that fissures in society not only maintained inequalities, but also had significant economic costs. The report thus concluded that to ensure equality in a changing social and economic environment, policy responses had to regard the goals of social justice and economic

efficiency as "…two sides of the same coin…" (Driver and Martell, 1998:105). This perspective intensified under the leadership of Tony Blair and subsequently informed a centre-left perspective in which 'Old' Labour's analysis of class division, collective redistribution and hostility towards the market were rejected in favour of a modernising approach discursively articulated through the concept of a 'Third Way' (Cammack, 2004).

The following chapter will present an account of the ideological influences underpinning New Labour's welfare reform. Situated within the overarching framework of a 'Third Way' (Giddens, 1998), a précis of New Labour's specific conceptions of 'community', 'inclusion', and 'citizenship' will be considered.

The 'Third Way'

Against a background dominated by a global market economy and characterized by complex insecurities and 'risk' (Culpitt, 1999), the election of a 'New' Labour government not only confirmed the reappraisal and reconstruction of a political party, but also its ideological commitment to state welfare (Driver and Martell, 1998). Unified through the Commission for Social Justice, the adherence to 'old' social democratic forms of statist government were rejected, renounced too was the neo-liberal free-market approach. Instead a centre left perspective emerged in which the analysis of class divisions, collective redistribution, and hostility towards the market were discarded

(Driver and Martell, 1998). In its place, an alternative modernising social democracy through the imagery of a Third Way was advocated (Cammack, 2004).

Influenced by the sociological ideas of Anthony Giddens (1998), the Third Way was heralded as a pragmatic political strategy transcending the ideas of 'old' and 'new'. Foremost amongst the changes that the 'Third Way' imprinted on New Labour, and in particular Blair's own thinking, was the state's role within the context of economic globalisation and social change. (Martell, 2004). Necessitating the need for a new kind of politics, Giddens's Third Way professed that the distinction between 'left' and 'right' in political thinking had been exhausted. Arguing that neither the market solutions advocated by the New Right, nor the statism of the Old Left were appropriate in addressing social problems in a global economic age, (Giddens, 1998) the Third Way endorsed the advancement of market solutions, combined with in-direct government intervention through welfare-to-work and education policies. This permutation, it was claimed, would not only address the external imperative of strengthening Britain's competitiveness and promoting labour market flexibility, it would also provide the solutions to societal divisions that neither neoliberalist nor social democratic forms of government had previously addressed (Cammack, 2004).

Espoused in the language and policies of New Labour, the promotion of a Third Way in British politics professed that the state itself ought not to be seen as the sole administrator of change. Instead, emphasis was increasingly placed on redefining the relationship between the individual and the state. Hence in accepting the inevitability of capitalist

market systems, alongside an explicit aim of "rebuild[ing] the welfare state around work" (DSS, 1998), New Labour advanced a range of solutions "...in which the role of government...[would]...expand opportunities...encourage stronger communities...and empower people to make globalization work for [them]..." (Brown, 1998 cited in Lister 2001: 429). Consequently, the social democratic value of 'equality of outcome', espoused by previous Labour administrations, was transformed. Instead, promoted through the vernacular of 'community', the basis of welfare reform was constructed around a concept of 'equality of opportunity' which would be realised, not through the distribution of wealth, but through the 'active' involvement of citizens.

Community

New Labour's emphasis on community is regarded as a central feature of 'Third Way' politics and the distinct ideological difference between the party's philosophy and the previous neo-liberal regime (Jordon, 1998). According to Little (2002), this resurgence of community in contemporary political debate, stems from sociological theories of industrialisation and the ascendance of the modern capitalist state primarily influenced by Ferdinand Tonnies theory of Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft (1857cited in Little, 2002). Translated, the distinction between Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft, are said to contrast the features of community with those of a civil society (Little, 2002). In summarising the attributes of each, Bevir (2005:74) describes how structures of community or Gemeinschaft, are defined as featuring relationships within pre-industrial societies. It is suggested that these were typified by dense direct intervention, shared values and a close

connection between public and private virtue. In contrast the conception of a civil society

is allied with the rise of modern urbanised societies and the spread of market economics.

Featuring associations that are characterised by subsidiary networks and contractual

relationships, Gesellschaft is held responsible for the erosion of the traditional structures

of community (Bevir 2005:74). According to Elias (1974, cited in Hoggett, 1997: 4)

Tonnies sought to provide an analysis of the development of two different forms of social

bonds, one based on similarity, the other upon interdependence and exchange.

Despite a range of interpretations as to what constitutes a community (see Hoggett, 1997),

in terms of government policies, the idea of community according to Hoggett, (1997: 8)

first became a feature in the late 1960s. Associated with the growth of public housing and

urban renewal programmes, policy ideas of community focused on the disruption and

dispersal of neighbourhoods and the need to involve those affected by such programmes

in the design and implementation. By the late 1960s, as identified in the previous chapter,

with a growing awareness of the persistence of social inequality, political concepts of

community were increasingly linked to assumptions concerning 'systems of dysfunction'

either in terms of the dysfunctional outcome of social and economic progress or in terms

of dysfunctional social networks. According to Hoggett, (1997: 9) the notion that

'community' is something the poor and underprivileged 'need', has been a recurring

feature of government policy and remains resilient under New Labour.

The philosophical association with New Labour and in particular Tony Blair's concept of

community was cited as initially deriving from the writings of Scottish philosopher John

Macmurray (Hale, 2004). According to Blair (1996 cited in Prideaux, 2005: 540)

Macmurray's conjectural compositions were

> "…immensely modern…in the sense that he confronted…the critical
> political question of the twenty-first century: the relationship between the
> individual and society"
> (Blair, 1996 cited in Prideaux, 2005: 540)

For Hale (2004) a central feature of Macmurray's work focused on humanity and in

particular how an individual's potential as a human being is realised through the quality of

their relationship with others. Combining Christian beliefs with a politics of 'community'

(Wheatcroft, 1996 cited in Prideaux, 2005:58), Macmurray's fundamental theory relating

to the potential of human relationships informed his theoretical concept of community (for

an in-depth discussion see for example, Prideaux, 2005; Hale, 2004).

Distinguishing between the understandings of community and society, Macmurray argued

that relationships formed within the latter arose primarily from the external pressures of

an overtly competitive environment, which in turn were entered into entirely to achieve a

particular purpose: commercial interaction (Prideaux, 2005). Regarded as 'functional'

relationships, Macmurray acknowledged the necessity of such contacts, but believed these

forms of engagement were constrained in terms of established roles and norms which

gave centrality to ideas of power (Hale, 2004). Thus:

> "…however direct…[such relationships]…do not themselves suffice to establish community as they neither expressed nor enabled the realisation of human potential" (in Cost, 2002: 229 cited in Prideaux, 2005: 542).

In contrast, Macmurray's idea of community was regarded as the antithesis to the negative and impersonal bonds of society. Constituted and maintained by mutual affection, Macmurray envisaged community as a "unit of persons were one's self could only be realised in and through others" (Prideaux, 2005: 541)**.** However, in order for his vision of community to be realised, two key principles had to be established: equality and freedom (Hale, 2004). The former to avoid the exclusionary nature of societal relations, which Macmurray believed were formulated from positions of inferiority and superiority. The latter, related to freedom from forced bonds, imposed or maintained by society. According to Wheatcroft (1996, cited in Prideaux, 2005), Macmurray believed only reciprocal liking and 'friendship' were the basis on which unities of people should be formed. Thus, it was envisaged, with the establishment of equality and freedom, the 'functional' life defined within society would be directed towards the enhancement of a 'personal life' that "involved the treatment of persons as persons and not purely as objects" (Wheatcroft, 1996 cited in Prideaux, 2005:542).

For Macmurray, this led to what he regarded as the duty of government in a community orientated society; namely to primarily cater for all its citizens, fostering and supporting the internal growth of equally shared norms and values (Prideaux, 2005: 547). Yet, despite Blair professing Macmurray to be his "philosophical mentor" (Rentoul, 1996: 479 cited in Hale, 2004:97), it is argued that there is little resemblance of his interpretation of

community within the language and politics of New Labour. Hale (2004) suggests that a more noticeable influence on the government's thinking emanates from the modern communitarian movement, and in particular the writings of political scientist Amitai Etzioni (1995).

Concentrating less on a theoretical analysis of community, modern communitarianism focuses primarily on what they perceive to be the causes and solutions of social problems within contemporary society (Bevir, 2005). Although the philosophy retains many of the traditional features of community, unlike established theories, the modern communitarian movement views civil society as exemplifying the "spirit of community" through the institutions of family, work and voluntary association (Etzioni, 1995). Drawing on this analytical framework, modern communitarians including Etzioni (1995), developed what Goes (2004) refers to as a "blue print for political action containing prescriptive solutions on how to create the 'good society'" (Etzioni, 1995)

In attributing the breakdown in the values of community on excessive individualism promoted under a neoliberalist agenda, which not only created an alleged moral decline but the growth in a dependency culture through unfettered rights; modern communitarianism advocated the promotion of individual accountability and "a return to a language of social values, interests and above all social responsibility." (Etzioni, 1995 cited in Goes, 2004:109).

According to communitarians, the implementations of their agenda would create the foundations for a fully consensual and inclusive society fostered through individual autonomy which simultaneously enabled all members to contribute to the common good via shared values which in turn would operate as the basis for social rules and norms (Goes, 2004). Critics have argued that as a result of a perceived social decline, proponents of the modern communitarian movement seek to turn back the impersonal relations of gesellschaft, to a moral universe of gemeinschaft. Moreover, it is argued (Little, 2002: 24) the promotion of this so-called "ethical notion" of a civil society is dominated by an image of homogeneity that not only presupposes shared objectives, but undermines diversity and neglects the "multiplicity of relationships that formulate identity" (Gray, 1995:109 cited in Little, 2002:60). Furthermore, Bauman (2001 : 17-18 cited in Moore, 2008: 195) suggests that communitarian ideas of community are ideals that have never nor will ever exist. He argues that

> "...attempts to reconstruct community will produce the very opposite of people's imagined idea of community...it will add to their fears and insecurity instead of quashing them or putting them to rest. It will call for twenty-four hours a day vigilance and a daily resharpening of swords; for struggle, day in and day out, to keep the aliens off the gates and to spy out and hunt down the turncoats in their midst. And to add a final touch of irony, it is only through all that pugnacity, wolf-crying and sword-brandishing that the feeling of being in a community, of being a community, may be kept lingering and protected from evaporation. Homely cosiness is to be sought, day in and day out, on the front line (Bauman, 2001: 17-18 cited in Moore, 2008: 195)

In echoing this sentiment Jordon (1996: 1998) also suggested that such notions, as a consequence, enable the exclusionary nature historically associated with communities to

be neglected. Notwithstanding these critiques, New Labour nonetheless drew heavily on Etzioni's (1995) view of community to define their political agenda which, in turn, was carried through to inform a particular discourse on social inclusion/exclusion and citizenship.

Social Exclusion

It has been suggested that New Labour's commitment to the strengthening of community cohesion, was closely tied with a concern to achieve an inclusive society (Cammack, 2004). As a consequence, the reduction of social exclusion became a central feature of policy debates. Originating in France in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the term 'social exclusion' initially centred on the notion of social solidarity (Béland, 2007). Focusing on the marginalisation of certain groups detached from society, this formative concept of exclusion became increasingly important in debates about poverty and inequality within Continental Europe.

Within the context of British social policy, Lister (2001: 37) believes there is no clear consensus regarding the concept of social exclusion or in fact what is meant by an inclusive society. Supporting this sentiment, Hills (2002) suggests that the idiom of exclusion has become a contentious issue and is not easily definable. Furthermore, Silver (1994: 536 cited in Watt and Jacob, 2000) for example, regards the term as an

"expression that is so evocative, ambiguous…and elastic that it can be defined in many different ways making it applicable to every kind of social problem".
Silver (1994: 536 cited in Watt and Jacob, 2000: 14)

Proponents however suggest (see Room, 1995; Pleace, 1998; Kennett, 1999) that the term 'social exclusion' captures more effectively, than traditional concepts such as of poverty, the dynamic and multi-dimensional nature of social divisions in society. Room (1995) for example, is unequivocal in believing that the concept opens up deliberations beyond material disadvantage thus enabling a focus on multidimensional deprivation relating to a lack of participation and integration of groups existing outside the boundaries of mainstream society. In this respect, it is considerate to pay due regard to both agency and structure which Lister (2001:37) points out "...can be lost sight of when attention is fixed either benevolently or critically on individual experience or behaviour"

Gray (2000: 20) believes the focus on inclusion under New Labour, was an attempt to conserve something of social democracy's values at a time when classical social-democratic egalitarianism was no longer politically advantageous. Yet, he continues, an inclusive society is not easily reconciled within the workings of a global free market. Consequently in New Labour's move from what Gray (2000: 21) defines as social democracy to social liberalism, the concept of an inclusive society, no longer equated with egalitarian ideals but instead an ideal of common life in which every member of society participates fully and were none is denied access to activities and practices that are central within society.

In recognising the nebulous concept of social exclusion and thus inclusion, Ruth

Levitas's (1998) seminal work examining New Labour's discourse and politics of

inclusion identified three competing strands positioned within policy debates. The first,

defined as a redistributive discourse (RED), characterises poverty as the prime cause of

social exclusion which in turn broadens out to a general analysis of compounding

inequalities within social, political and cultural structures (Levitas, 1998). This aspect of

exclusion is primarily associated with critical social policy debates and the work of

campaigning organisations who argue that solutions must point to a

"radical…redistribution of resources and…power" (Levitas, 1998:25) underpinned by a

comprehensive model of citizenship that accounts for the discrimination and inequalities

associated with, for example, gender, ethnicity, sexuality and class.

In contrast, the second component within the discourse is identified by Levitas as a moral

'underclass' discourse (MUD). With connotations of 'victim-blaming', understandings of

an 'underclass' are commonly associated with the writings of neo-liberalist Charles

Murray (1990 cited in Levitas, 1998: 17). Although it too is regarded as a problematic

term, it has not prevented the expression being used widely to refer to groups at the

bottom of the socio-economic scale who, in turn, are alleged to be culturally distinct from

the mainstream (Watt and Jacob, 2000). Hence, the moral 'underclass' discourse regards

the cause of social exclusion as resulting from the morally corrosive behaviour of such

groups (Levitas, 1998). Rejecting structural inequalities, this strand of Levitas's analysis

posit solutions which focus on targeting perceived idleness and irresponsibility.

Advocating a withdrawal of state support, the objective of this strategy would attempt to

coerce a shift in behaviour amongst certain sections of the population towards a "social discipline of work" (Levitas, 1998: 28).

The third component in the lexicon of social exclusion derives from the European model and the notion of social solidarity (Béland, 2007). Prioritising the duality of economic efficiency and social cohesion, the social integrationist discourse (SID) emphasises labour market participation as the primary solution to exclusion. Proponents suggest that by fostering an 'active society', engaged through the integrated function of paid work, social bonds and social responsibilities would be both encouraged and developed (Walters, 1997 cited in Watt and Jacob, 2000: 16). Yet in focusing exclusively on participation in paid employment, Levitas (1998) argues that this element within the language of exclusion not only ignores the unequal nature of political and cultural structures but also obscures discrimination between workers. In concluding her analysis, Levitas (1998) suggests that whilst each facet within the discourse differs in their interpretation of exclusionary causes, within the language of New Labour, they are operationalised concurrently, albeit at varying degrees.

Critics have identified that the dominant policy thinking within New Labour's approach to exclusion is however, operationalised through a narrow focus on paid work. According to Horsell, (2006: 216) the language of social exclusion was thus seen primarily as an outcome rather than a process; it is a condition people are in, not something done to them. He suggests that whilst the lack of work is seen as the primary reason for social exclusion, the economic reasons for producing unemployment, was not

specification (ibid). As a consequence New Labour's policy focus was on the creation of citizens fit for work. In mirroring this analysis of social exclusion, Bowring (2000) also notes that the social exclusion paradigm did little to challenge labour market trends towards casualisation and lower wages and thus ultimately failed to adequately deal with poverty. In echoing these sentiments Béland (2007) suggests strategies that regard social exclusion as primarily labour market exclusion is an explicit attempt by governments to promote a flexible labour force through modernising welfare programmes in which national economic efficiency in the global market was central. However, Bowring, (2000) suggests the promotion of increasingly competitive and insecure labour markets would inevitably result in those who have the least bargaining power continuing to fall outside inclusive boundaries. Consequently the simplistic dichotomy of social exclusion as labour market exclusion concealed the importance of individualised and institutionalised discriminatory practices which exacerbate exclusions (Lister, 2001).

Furthermore, in drawing on Levitas's findings, Fairclough (2001) believes the simultaneous deployment of the term within the New Labour government's political discourse not only provided a powerful ideological tool in which to legitimise welfare reform, but has resulted in a "de-differentation" of social problems. Thus instead of attempting to find explanations that identify the underlying impact of cause and effect relationships, within the discourse espoused by New Labour, both structure and agency are assigned equal value. This not only reduced the differences between long-standing social problems but excludes the relationship between them (Fairclough, 2001). As a consequence, resultant policy solutions appear less concerned with the predicament of

individuals compared to the impact exclusion had on both the state and the wider society (Goes, 2004). Subsequently measures enacted in the eradication of exclusion were deployed through a revised role of the state alongside the development of a 'modern' understanding of citizenship in which 'activation' was inextricably bound with duty and obligation to a wider society.

Citizenship

In parallel with concepts of community and social exclusion, citizenship become a distinctive trademark in the language of New Labour (Lister, 1998; Dwyer, 2004). As early as 1993, Blair was proposing that the party's political objective in rebuilding Britain must have, at its heart, a modern image of citizenship (Blair, 1993 cited in Burden and Hamm, 2000:186). But what constituted this contemporary understanding of the status of citizenship remained contested, resulting in a term which was not easily defined (Dwyer, 2004). As a starting point however Oommen (1997: 224 cited in Hoffman, 2004: 17) suggests that whilst the term implied membership to some form of community, its meaning is vacuous unless it was anchored to notions of the state and therefore should be primarily viewed as an "intensely political" concept.

In acknowledging this connection between state and citizen Dwyer (2004) identifies two main traditions in the development of the present concept of citizenship: liberalism and communitarianism. Drawing on the philosophy of both libertarianism and egalitarianism, the former views citizenship as a status through which entitlement to civil, political and

social rights are bestowed. Implying a notion of equality, this particular strand of thought linked rights and particularly social rights, as a means by which citizenship is guaranteed. In contrast, the communitarian concept of citizenship focused primarily on ideas of reciprocity. Rejecting citizenship as a pre-existing status, this perspective subverts the language of rights and significantly those of social rights, in order to link them explicitly with individual responsibility and duty to both the state and the wider society. It was therefore suggested (Dwyer, 2004) that these core values of communitarianism were carried forward to inform New Labour's particular articulation of citizenship encompassed within their reforming welfare agenda.

In rejecting the Marshellian concept of social rights, New Labour's approach both reflected the direction of the Conservative's 'active' citizen, and accepted moralistic communitarian ideals of Etzioni (Burden and Hamm, 2000). Arguing that the promotion of social justice and equality, within pluralist welfare structures, can and should no longer focus rights entirely on entitlement, New Labour endorsed a concept of citizenship in which the conferring of social rights was based on the responsibility of the individual (Driver and Martell, 1998). Building on this theme promoted under the previous neo-liberal agenda, Labour sought to transform the status and practice of citizenship from passive recipients of welfare to active self-sustaining individuals by establishing a new 'contract' between the citizen and the state (Burden and Hamm, 2000). In the promotion of this contractual relationship, Clarke (2005), makes reference to a range of dynamic yet complex and contradictory 'activation' techniques employed by government and associated institutions, as part of the citizenship agenda. Although primarily viewed in

terms of encouraging economic efficiency and promoting social inclusion, Clarke (2005)

argues that these techniques were extended through a notion of 'choice' in an attempt to

encourage individuals to actively manage and self-direct their own life outcomes. The

objective being, he suggests, is that by conceptualising citizens as autonomous agents,

less direct acts of state intervention was required in achieving the governments aims.

Yet Flint and Nixon (2006) identifies that the rhetoric of New Labour's autonomous

citizen is not limitless in its application, they continue by describing how it is

underpinned by a moral discourse combined with a contractual discourse articulated

through the mantra 'no rights without responsibilities'. This dialogue it is argued was

applied as part of the then government's attempt to socially construct the 'good' citizen -

one whose duty was to adhere to defined norms and values of a fully consensual society.

Thus, inclusion into this view of citizenship becomes a matter of personal responsibility.

In contrast, exclusion from citizenship was directed to those perceived to be antagonistic

towards identified 'responsibilities' and 'duties'. As a consequence, the denial of certain

social rights was both vindicated and imposed (Flint and Nixon, 2006). Jordon (1998)

extended this argument by stating that representations of the responsibilised citizen, is

not equally applied to all sections of the population, but is primarily directed towards

those relying on, or attempting to claim, welfare. Thus inclusion into this model of

citizenship is tied to the kind of entitlement sought and dependent on the discretion of

welfare professionals (Glendenning et al, 2002). For Beresford (2001), this association

between welfare need and professional discretion, ensuring claimants were subjected to a

diversity of regime. Thus for some a 'hand up' was offered in assisting the attainment of

the 'good' citizen, but for others intense scrutiny was applied. Such strategies, he argued, were not only inherently unequal but enabled differing representations to isolate certain categories of welfare claimants both within and between a wider framework of citizenship. Although New Labour maintained a commitment to protect those who could provide evidence of their 'vulnerability', the acceptance of specified behavioural 'norms', resulted in the allocation of citizenship rights being contingent on welfare recipients obligation to 'overcome their dependency' (Dwyer, 2004; Field, 1997 cited in Lister, 1998: 229). Beresford (2001) suggests that this distinction between different claimants was not just confined to policy, but could also be witnessed in practice through the operationalisation of policies towards particular target groups.

According to Dean (1999) the allocation of social rights, have always partitioned the poor. In relation to the kind of entitlement sought, he continues, claimants have been subjected to different regimes, in which distinct categories have served to isolate welfare recipients both within and between a wider framework of citizenship. Thus, within the context of New Labour's modernising agenda, he argues, for the 'Third Way' in general, and welfare reform in particular; dependency is stigmatised, personal responsibility celebrated, and social rights to citizenship strictly conditional (Dwyer, 2008).

Conclusion

With the transition from 'Old' to 'New' Labour, the social democratic commitment to promote equality and address social problems through collective welfare provision was abandoned in favour of an approach that endorsed the advancement of economic efficiency in the promotion of social justice. With the ascendance of Tony Blair as party leader and eventually Prime Minister, New Labour's adherence to strengthening economic competence arguably overshadowed the advancement of social justice. In considering the philosophical influences underpinning New Labour's political discourse, this chapter focused on particular aspects of the then government's language, namely the construction of 'community', 'social exclusion' and 'citizenship'. It is suggested that within the context of welfare reform, the normalising logic of this discourse informed an assumption about the cause and solution to social problems which presupposes that both structure and agency are held equally accountable. Thus, within the context of agency, solutions were posited in terms of the duty and responsibility of welfare claimants to overcome their dependency. The following chapter will focus on the enactment of this ideology and the dialogue applied in relation to a particular group targeted within New Labour's reforming agenda: the non-statutory or single homeless.

Chapter Three

New Labour's policy context and homelessness

Introduction

New Labour's adoption of community, inclusion and citizenship became a central feature in their commitment to welfare reform. Against a backdrop of what has been termed the 'new realities' of globalisation (Fairclough, 2000; Finlayson, 2003) and amidst rising neo-liberal economic pressures (Newman, 2001), the government claimed that traditional modes of governance attached to long-standing typologies of welfare in Britain were redundant (Jessop, 1999). Tied to concepts of a 'Third Way' (Giddens, 1998) and articulated through the all encompassing term 'modernisation' their particular configurations of community, inclusion and citizenship initiated a profound shift in the process and governance of welfare. Although the vernacular of 'modernisation' is not new in terms of government rhetoric (see Cochrane, 2000; Powell, 2007), Finlayson believes that (2003: 66)

> "…if there is a single word that captures the essence of New Labour's social and political project, then it is 'modernisation'".

Applied across policy, government and society, New Labour's contemporary discourse of 'modernisation' became their mantra for reorganising and restructuring a range of social conditions and institutional processes.

Within the context of welfare reform, the term 'modernisation' has been associated with a complex configuration of approaches in which the devolution of power, by means of network-based forms of collaborative governance, was articulated through concepts such as 'joined-up' government, partnership working and the broadening of public participation at both national and local level (for extensive debates see Newman, 2001; Powell, 1999, 2007). Designating local authorities a strategic role in implementing the reforms, a series of policy initiatives were introduced and operationalised through multi-level processes of governance. This not only advocated joint approaches both within and between local government, the voluntary and community sectors, but was also extended to include the public sector.

Allied to these institutional changes, the language of 'modernisation' also witnessed changing assumptions around social issues and problems (Newman, 2001). Focusing on the concept of social inclusion combined with the ethics of community (Etizioni, 1995), the extension of the public in governance arrangements witnessed a redrawing of boundaries between the state-citizen relationships alongside a reconfiguration of welfare subjects (Newman, 2001). According to Powell, (2007) the objective of this reconfiguration was to break the "welfare equals state" mentality (Field, 1997 cited in Powell, 1999: 20), transforming 'passive' rights-based notions of citizenship to one of

'active' participatory citizens balancing rights with responsibility (Newman, 2001). However, for Newman (2001) these changing concepts of citizenship highlighted a potential source of contradiction. She maintains that despite the 'modernising' agenda enabling opportunities for new sites of 'agency' to emerge, for some in pursuit of welfare, it was also accompanied by constraints.

This chapter will examine this potential site of conflict in terms of specific policy approaches that have impacted on homelessness in Britain. Beginning with key legislation implemented to address particular forms of homelessness, the chapter will then progress to New Labour's approach to community safety and particularly approaches directed towards low-level disorder. The chapter will finally describe changing policy climate in terms of housing, care and support.

Modernisation

In the government's White Paper "Modernising Governance", Newman (2001:60), identified how a continued commitment to the previous neo-liberal reforms is counterbalanced by an undertaking towards a more holistic style of governance, encompassed within an overall reframing of policy problems.

Placing local authorities at the centre of change, New Labour rejected 'managerialism', orchestrated under the Conservatives, promoting instead a decentralised approach emphasising evidence-based policy outcomes, partnership working, and the broadening of public participation (Newman, 2001). With a shift away from the New Public

Management ethos, the focus on 'evidence' was not only in the promotion of efficiency, but also effectiveness in policy outcomes (Newman, 2001). However, Glendenning et al (2002) argues that despite fostering a decentralised approach through local discretion, centrally determined standards serve to bound and constrain effectiveness, performance, and outcomes, to the allocation of public funds.

With attempts, nonetheless, to move beyond a competitive culture, collaboration between strategic partners and stakeholders was emphasised (Newman, 2001). This collaboration was regarded as central to the discourse on 'joined-up government'. By enabling authorities to cut across institutional and departmental boundaries, the aim of integrated service delivery would allow broader political goals to be addressed. According to Rummery (2002), the rhetoric of partnership working projected an illusion of greater autonomy through decentralised initiatives however she argues that in reality, it directed attention away from the barriers created by inequalities of power and resource allocation between providers.

The focus on partnership working however, also witnessed an increasing commitment to promote the engagement and participation of communities and citizens (Glendinning, et al 2002). For policy programmes to be implemented effectively, the government advocated that the needs of the community were properly represented. Consequently, a requirement of local authorities' strategic role was to both mobilise and enable citizens to participate as partners (Glendinning, et al 2002). With the increasing growth of citizens' juries, panels and community based participation exercises, it was assumed that the direct

accountability of local government would be enhanced (Glendinning, et al 2002). In the provision of social welfare in particular, by facilitating consultation mechanisms with welfare recipients, a shift away from an exclusively provider-led method of delivery would allow user involvement to aid service evaluation and simultaneously, engender an inclusive approach that was responsive to need (Langan, 2000). By encompassing these reforms within an overarching framework of 'community sustainability', the government's language of 'modernisation' informed new narratives relating to social inequality and policy problems.

According to Lister (1998), New Labour's attempts directed attention away from debates on poverty, towards an alternative discourse relating to 'social exclusion'. As identified in the previous chapter, social inclusion/exclusion is essentially a contested and nebulous concept (see Bryne, 1999; Levitas, 1998), however, the dominant explanation of social exclusion related to the lack of participation, integration and power in a so-called 'underclass', existing outside the normative boundaries of society (Room, 1995). For New Labour, this primarily was attributed to past policy failure, thus deviating, in part, from the Neoliberal concept of an 'underclass' and the condemnation of a so-called dependency culture. Jordan (1998) believes the construction of the term within New Labour's discourse of exclusion related to the barriers in society which constitute people as 'insiders' and 'outsiders', hence within the framework of modernisation, policy solutions increasingly directed their focus towards enabling a transition from 'outsiders' across defined boundaries to become 'insiders' or included.

However Beresford (2001) argues that underpinning New Labour's policy approaches there remained an assumption that the cause of social problems was essentially behavioural. He argues that for people who could demonstrate a particular vulnerability, support in the transitions from included to excluded would be provided, however should support be rejected or denied, those affected essentially remained outsiders. This, he believes, not only highlights the ambiguities in the government's reforms, but suggests that a moralistic approach to welfare recipients, identified under the previous New Right policies, continued. Furthermore, in echoing the above sentiments, Dwyer (2004) believes that the New Labour's concept of policy problems remained narrowly defined, which not only continued to reflect the power differentials that served to stigmatise and exclude, but could also undermine attempts to promote 'community sustainability', or to broaden 'user' or citizen participation.

Welfare policies and homelessness

Accompanying changes to the organisation and delivery of welfare, attempts were made to analyse and establish the causes and conditions of social problems leading to the establishment of the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) in 1997. Focusing on neighbourhood renewal and countering the exclusion of marginalised groups (Burchardt, 2005); the Unit brought together ministers from various government departments alongside representatives from the police, business and the voluntary sector. Within months of its

formation, the Unit established a diversity of causal factors associated with non-inclusion comprising of, amongst others, homelessness and crime.

With the allocation of significant funding tied to specific targets, initial attention focused on tackling the problem of street homelessness. With the publication of the Social Exclusion Unit Report on Rough Sleeping (SEU, 1998) it was identified that in the course of a year 10,000 people slept rough on the streets of Britain. Concerns however, were not entirely focused upon the effect this had on the individuals concerned. Perceiving street homelessness as a threat to economic prosperity, it was also stated that "…the sight of rough sleepers, beggars and street drinkers…damaged business and tourism" (SEU, 1998:1). In determining the cause of rough sleeping, the report referred to a number of factors, including family and relationship breakdown, institutionalised backgrounds, specific mental and physical health needs and low educational attainment. Although reference was made to the impact of housing and benefit policies administered under successive Conservative governments, the report suggested that in practice these policies had not explicitly led to homelessness (SEU, 1998).

Drawing on the recommendations of the SEU Report on Rough Sleeping (SEU, 1998), the government subsequently launched the Rough Sleepers Unit (RSU), headed by former deputy director of Shelter, Louise Casey. The overall objective of the Unit was to deliver, in partnership throughout national and local government, statutory and voluntary sectors and with homeless people themselves, a reduction in the number of rough sleepers by two-thirds by 2002 (DETR, 1999). This target also entailed a number of sub-

objectives; to prevent the causes of rough sleeping, to target resources at the most

vulnerable and to reject approaches that sustained a street culture (DETR, 1999:31). With

the emphasis on joint working, expectations were also placed on the street homeless

population, as Casey (cited in Winchester, 1999:15) stated at the time:

> "…sometimes people don't take responsibility for themselves and don't make
> the right decisions and then don't take responsibility for those
> decisions…thinking they have a right to be mad and to live on the street and
> be drunk all day…"

As a consequence, obligations were placed on individuals to responsibly review their

lifestyles with an expectation that opportunities presented for a 'settled' way of life.

However, those perceived as failing in this 'responsibility' the report then alluded to a

possibly necessity for police action (DETR, 1999). Whilst Burchardt (2005:217)

suggested that the overall policy stopped short of overtly criminalising rough sleepers, it

nonetheless maintained an authoritarian stance in which self-responsibilisation strategies

were clearly evident.

This approach to rough sleeping was closely followed by an overarching strategy

addressing particular forms of homelessness. Acknowledging both structural and

individual factors associated with homelessness the report "More than a Roof" (DTLR,

2002) advocated the development of strategic approaches. The report focused on

reducing numbers of homeless families accommodated in Bed and Breakfast hotels,

sustaining the work of the RSU and strengthening the support offered to people who were

homeless, or at risk of homelessness (DTLR, 2002:2). This advancement of proactive solutions in which both support and prevention were regarded as a priority was subsequently consolidated under the 2002 Homelessness Act.

The Homelessness Act 2002

With the aim of strengthening the protection to homeless households, the Act overturned and amended duties and powers imposed under the 1996 legislation. In requiring local authorities adopt a strategic role in combating homelessness, a particular emphasis was placed on multi-agency working in which both statutory and voluntary agencies where cited as key players in preventing homelessness (Luba and Davis, 2002). Increasing access to services, the Act broadened the definition of 'priority' to incorporate defined groups identified as particularly vulnerable; this included 16-17 year-olds at risk, ex-offenders, people who had experienced institutional care, military personnel and people fleeing violence or threats of violence. This extension of the homelessness duty also allowed authorities greater flexibility to assist in securing accommodation for non-priority households, regarded as unintentionally homeless (Pawson and Davidson, 2007). However, restrictions remained on people deemed 'ineligible', this included individuals subject to immigration controls, persons without a local connection and persons deemed guilty of unacceptable behaviour. For Luba and Davis (2002:10), this potential to exclude provided authorities with a discretionary power to overturn the legislative rights of an applicant based on subjective judgements of behaviour. Despite these restrictions, the Act was broadly welcomed for its 'liberal' approach (see Pleace and Quilgars, 2003).

This extensive policy framework was further supplemented by a National Homelessness Strategy "Sustainable Communities: settled homes; changing lives" (ODPM, 2005) and the launch of yet another rough sleeping strategy "No One Left Out – Communities ending rough sleeping" (DCLG, 2008) which set out a fifteen point action plan to eradicate rough sleeping by 2012. Despite the plethora of initiatives, the underlying association between behaviour and homelessness became progressively more explicit within New Labour's concern with crime and community safety.

Homelessness, crime and anti-social behaviour

Prior to the election of New Labour, the party's approach towards crime and disorder had been described as essentially critical, both in terms of the criminal justice system and the link between crime and social deprivation. This particular stance was, however, to drastically alter under the leadership of Tony Blair (Charman and Savage, 1999). Between 1992 and 1996, a new discourse started to emerge which not only focused on the social causes of crime, but also on a less familiar discourse within the party: one of blame and responsibility. Commencing with the briefing paper "Tackling the causes of crime" (Labour Party, 1996 cited in McLauglin and Muncie, 2001: 172), the then Shadow Home Secretary, Blair, set out the party's objectives towards addressing 'low level disorders'. Advocating zero tolerance policing strategies, the rationale was underpinned by an assumption that addressing petty crime and incivilities would prevent the escalation of more serious criminal problems (Charman and Savage, 1999). Presented under the

slogan "Tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime" (Labour Party, 1997), the Party's election manifesto extended the theme, highlighting a number of priorities for action, including fast-track punishment for persistent young offenders, a crackdown on petty crime and neighbourhood disorder (Squires and Stephans, 2005). Once in government, New Labour's politics of law and order was reinforced under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act. For Charman and Savage (1999), this not only transformed perceptions of crime but also the responses to it.

In parallel with other government reforms, the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) accentuated the centrality of partnership working, assigning local authorities a central role in implementing the new reforms. Working alongside key agencies including the police, local authorities were required to develop and implement a Crime and Disorder Strategy, the objective of which was to protect the public and maintain community safety (Charman and Savage, 1999). A central part of this process was to involve the wider community in defining patterns of crime and problems within their area, thus becoming part of a mechanism of governance within a "wider policing family" (Crawford and Lister, 2007). With the development of strategies came new powers to issue a range of dispersal orders aimed at combating antisocial behaviour. Subsequently consolidated under the Anti Social Behaviour Act (2003) these powers gave local authorities the means through which they could protect the community from "behaviour that causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress" (Home Office, 2003).

Civil orders that convert to criminal offences if breached, Anti-Social Behaviour Orders

(ASBOs) have since been employed in a wide range of areas to address a diversity of

social problems (Crawford and Lister, 2007). Primarily, but not exclusively targeted at

social housing tenants in deprived neighbourhoods, what constitutes as anti-social

behaviour is essentially subjective and invariably enforcement is directed towards what

Charman and Savage (1999) refer to as "easy targets", namely disenfranchised sections

of the population including rough sleepers and beggars. For Buchardt (2005) the

association of particular forms of homelessness with anti-social behaviour was essentially

based on a perception that rough sleepers and beggars have the potential to intimidate

and/or offend the sensibilities of the wider community. Rutherford (1997 cited in Moore,

2008: 185) has referred to this targeting of so-called problematic groups as "the

eliminating ideal". Such a response has a long history and is related directly to practices

and discourses that date from the medieval period which sought to find solutions to

perceived forms of 'deviancy' by clearing out from society those considered to be a threat

to social order. (For an in-depth account of homelessness throughout this period, see

Humphreys, 1999). According to Rutherford, (1997: 117 cited in Moore, 2008: 187)

> "...the eliminating ideal strives to solve problems and emerging problems by
> getting rid of troublesome and disagreeable people with methods which are
> lawful and widely supported".

Although forms of elimination vary, the underlying theme and processes remain the

same, to basically disencumber the problem by casting aside or excluding those who fail

to conform to societal norms (Moore, 2000). These recurring themes are regarded as

firstly, fear of contamination and secondly, the pathologising construction of the "contaminants" (Joffe, 1999 cited in Moore, 2000: 186). However, Moore (2000: 187) suggests that before the desire for elimination comes into play there must be a process by which certain groups come to be seen as falling into the category of eligibility. These he refers to as "visibility", "demonization" and "pollution". The first "visibility" was first used by Slovic (1992 cited in Moore, 2000: 189), who questioned why communities tended to react to certain perceived threats. He thus argued that the key element was "visibility" and that the visible impact of a threat played a significant part in public perception of risk. Hand in hand with "visibility" is the process of "demonization". This process occurs when problematic people are classified as not belonging to society, existing only as outsiders and threats (Young, 1999 cited in Moore, 2000: 189). According to Young (1999 cited in Moore, 2008: 189) this process itself is composed of three elements; firstly the "ascribing of an essentialist other" in which the person being demonised is seen as profoundly different from 'normal' people, secondly "the reaffirmation of normality" namely a belief among the community that the behaviour of the 'problem' unambiguously crosses the line of reasonable behaviour and thirdly "distancing" in which the behaviour of the "essentialist other" results from personal failing and is not related to wider societal problems.

Finally the third process in elimination is "pollution" or "contamination", alongside the moralistic discourse as "social contagion", these "problematic" groups and individuals are, according to Morris, (1998 cited in Moore, 2000: 191) viewed as inferior and thus must be "cleansed" from decent society. For Moore (2000) such terms generate

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frightening reverberations, but also within the context of New Labour's reforms, ran in stark contrast to the notion of social inclusion as a central feature of their community policy.

In relating this to homelessness therefore, New Labour's approach to community safety, not only failed to account for criminal acts directed towards a homeless population (Hilal, 2004), but by defining it as anti-social resulted in what Tonry (2004 cited in Squires and Stephans 2005: 521) describes as "new politics of intolerance" had an influence on societal perceptions which mobilised community support against the so-called behaviour of 'others'. However, this concern with maintaining exclusion through the issuing of ASBOs was acknowledged by the Home Affairs Select Committee in 2005 (Squires and Stephans, 2005). Pointing to the ambiguities in approaches to anti-social behaviour, the committee concluded that enforcement alone was unlikely to provide sustainable solutions in the long-term. As a consequence a joined-up approach involving support alongside sanctions for perpetrators of anti-social behaviour was endorsed.

Supporting People

The recurring focus on support and prevention in addressing homelessness also coincided with a range of reviews highlighting the need to address the inconsistencies in the provision of housing, care and support. In brief, under the previous administration changes in the focus and provision of health and social care services, gave rise to the growth of the supported housing sector and encouraged by the Conservative government,

the financial burden of this developing market was maintained through the housing benefit system (Watson et al, 2003). Foord (2005: 8) identifies that as a result of this financial strain, expenditure on the housing benefit had risen to £11 billion per annum by 1998. In tandem with this increasing financial burden, a number of court cases at the time led to decisions that housing benefit should not be used to meet the cost of housing support (Foord, 2005; Watson et al, 2003). This paved the way for a significant transformation in the funding environment for housing related support. (Watson et al 2003).

Within the context of homelessness, traditionally housing related support for a non-statutory homeless population has been delivered primarily through the voluntary sector. Initially provision was basic, namely large institutionalised hostels; however as demand for services intensified, it became increasingly evident that in addition to accommodation, a significant number of people in acute housing crisis also had varying complexities of support needs (Pleace, 1998). This led to the development of smaller units ranging from shared housing to independent flats, offering peripatetic support to particular sub-groups within the single homeless population (Franklin, 1999).

Nonetheless despite the growing evidence of support needs, the non-statutory homeless continued to remain largely outside the identified population within statutory housing and support services (Leigh, 1994 cited in van Doorn and Kain, 2004:4). With this lack of formalised links between housing, community and support, funding arrangements for service development was often uncoordinated patchy and wasteful. For many in need of

provision this resulted in duplication and an oversupply in some areas, for others it left

them either with little or no access to accommodation, with many consigned to outdated

institutionalised hostels waiting for move-on accommodation long after their support had

ceased (Pleace, 1998; Foord, 2005). It was against this background, that the Supporting

People Programme was introduced.

Launched in 2003, the Supporting People Programme's aim was:

> "...to be an integral element of the emerging strategies for modernising social services, for crime and community safety, for combating social exclusions and for the development of housing services in line with the Housing Green Paper. The provision of housing can play an important part in the delivery of each of these programmes and each authority will be expected to identify how best to ensure that the provision of support and supported housing under the Supporting People programme can complement them" (DETR, 1999: 8)

The objective of which was to provide "quality of life and independence" (DETR, 1999:

8) to defined vulnerable groups, this included people assigned non-statutory or single

homeless status. Strategically led with amalgamated commissioning and funding from a

number of sources including transitions housing benefit, probation accommodation grant

and the supported housing management grant, Supporting People was generally regarded

as a positive step forward in addressing past inconsistencies in the provision of housing,

care and support (Watson et al, 2003). Administered under a unified single fixed budget,

the planning, commissioning and development of Supporting People provision was to be

managed and monitored by local authorities in partnership with representative agencies

consisting of associates from the housing authority, social services, health and probation

through which the need for and supply of services must be identified within a Supporting People strategy. The strategy in turn was to be delivered in parallel with other national and local policy directives including, tackling and preventing homelessness and the reduction of crime (DETR, 1999). Furthermore it should also demonstrate that so-called 'hard-to-reach' or arguably more appropriately 'seldom heard' groups including rough sleepers, were enabled access to services.

In achieving policy aims a fundamental requirement of the programme necessitated joint working in which consultation with statutory and voluntary partners was regarded as paramount. This emphasis on consultation also demanded the involvement of both current and potential services users. Associated with mechanisms for inclusion, involvement processes aimed to promote empowerment by facilitating people to exercise agency in contributing to the effectiveness of service responses (Cleaver, 2001). Inferentially, for single homeless households including rough sleepers simultaneously experiencing acute housing need and limited access to health and social care provision, the programme theoretically offered a first point of entry to service systems. Allied to participatory mechanisms, the programme presented an opportunity to contribute towards assessment of need and service responses, whilst simultaneously enabling a space in which recipients of services could develop their own identities and voice.

User Involvement

In 2002 the then Minister of State responsible for Social Care, Jacqui Smith stated that "a fundamental shift...[was needed]...to shift power towards service users; service users need "more power and that of course means more choice" (Cowden and Singh, 2007: 6) This commitment to shifting the balance of power from professional to service users was epitomised in New Labour's requirements for the consultation and involvement of service users in service development and delivery. According to Taylor (1996) however, traditionally, the participation and influence of citizens in both the formulation and implementation of welfare policies has been at best limited and at worst none existent. Nonetheless, with New Labour's focus on modernising welfare, the development of community cohesion and the promotion of social inclusion, the spotlight on consultation and involvement of welfare recipients, at both policy and service level, placed a renewed emphasis on the participatory role of service users (Percy-Smith, 2000).

This commitment was in turn accompanied by a wealth of guidance from central government funded research. The research promoted a range of 'best practice' initiatives on how organisations, management and staff can best facilitate participatory initiatives. The guidance also identified mechanisms that enable users to develop the skills and capacity needed to "assume greater control in making their own life choices" (Godfrey et al 2003: 3).

Yet despite the increasing centrality and high desirability attached to the concept and practice of 'involvement' and the associated language of participation and empowerment, the general consensus amongst social analysts is that both the discourse and mechanisms connected with user participation accentuates the contradictions between political, professional and user's understanding of the concept (Braye, 2000). For example Baistow (1994), when examining the rise of empowerment as a professional practice and its implications for recipients, suggests firstly, that empowerment involves a more complicated set of processes than its invocation as a moral imperative implies; and secondly, though it may have the potential to free citizens from a network of professional bureaucratic regulation, empowerment has also become a social project intimately connected with the exercise of governance.

Deriving from the concept of power, empowerment is regarded as a process by which

"people who are disadvantaged or excluded acquire something of the character of citizens...[because]...control over their own lives is increased" (Somerville, 1998: 233 cited in McKee and Cooper, 2008: 3)

In this respect, Braye and Preston-Shoot (1995) believe it enables power to be captured by the powerless. However, Adams (1990: 43 cited in Baistow, 1994: 3) defines empowerment as:

"a process in which individuals, groups and communities become able to take control of their circumstances and achieve their goals thereby being able to work towards maximising the quality of their lives"

McKee and Cooper (2008) suggest however, that this understanding of empowerment highlights a mode of subjectification that endeavours to direct human conduct towards a particular end. As a consequence, the notion of empowerment embodies, paradoxically, both regulatory as well as liberatory possibilities. Accompanying this regulatory notion of empowerment is, according to Baistow (1994), a particular conception of the empowerment subject for people who lack the competence and confidence to take action themselves and/or, to exert control over their own lives. Thus, concluding that

> "...the motion of taking control over one's life or particular aspects of it, is not only seen as being intimately connected with the formation of reformation of the self as empowered, it is increasingly becoming an ethical obligation of the new citizenry...therefore, if you are unable to do it yourself you may need professional assistance to do so" (Baistow, 1994: 37)

For Langan (2000: 165), such practices are particularly significant in relation to people who are "...inducted into service usage as a consequence of life experience or the social context in which they find themselves." Croft and Beresford (1996) also maintain that owing to these differing perspectives, competing approaches aimed at the empowerment of individuals through the involvement mechanism have resulted in a lack of common understanding or definition. Hence, in recognising the implications of competing perspectives, they attempt to comprehend this conceptual ambiguity by framing involvement practice within the broader concept of participatory rights, through the identification of two distinct and conflicting ideological themes; consumerism and democracy.

Consumerist Model of Participation

Emerging from the reorganisation of public services in the 1980s and 1990s and the rise of managerialist approaches, the accompanying consumerist model of participation essentially viewed users as "quasi-purchasers" within a pluralist welfare system (Ward, 2000). Based on the premise that welfare subjects had the ability to choose from a range of services, needs became commodities or functions to be met through the operation of the market (Ward, 2000). Thus embedded within policy guidance and practice requirements and expressed in the language of 'choice' and 'empowerment', user involvement theoretically provided mechanisms for representation and redress and was regarded as fundamental in ensuring services were more responsive, flexible, and relevant to the needs of the individual (Langan, 1998). However, Braye (2002) suggests that the mechanisms utilised were driven less by emancipatory principles and more by pragmatism, precipitated by central government requirements to adhere to market doctrine. Thus limited by resource distribution and constrained by "manipulative managerialism" (Pollitt, 1996 cited in Langan, 2000:164), approaches to involvement have reflected, in parallel, both political and professional directives. For Ward (2000), such mandates have resulted in superficial consultation mechanisms, in which the agenda is both devised and controlled by organisations. This not only fails to meet individual need, but, according to Croft and Beresford (1996), reinforces pathological concepts of welfare recipients, enabling stereotypical views to underplay structural issues. Furthermore, by focusing attention on specific service user groups, forms of

administrative segregation rely on definitions to construct "otherness" (Riggins, 1997) thereby justifying limited participation.

Democratic Model of Participation

This potential to underplay structural issues has, in turn, served to "mirror rather than challenge broader oppression and discrimination" (Ward, 2000:47) and consequently pressure for change has come from what Croft and Beresford (1996) define as a democratic model of participation. In contrast to the latter, a democratic approach is about achieving greater influence and control. With a strong emphasis on collective rather than individual action, it seeks improvements not just in service provision, but also in the wider avenues of citizenship. As Beresford (1993:17 cited in Braye, 2000:19) states, it is about "people want[ing] more say in their lives, not just in services". In this respect, the agenda is chosen and expressed by people themselves, in contrast to the enactment of professional programmes.

The emergence of this form of participation has been linked to the rise of new social movements; including black and minority ethnic, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender, women's and disability movements. Associated with the crisis in post-war welfare and the collapse of western market economies, these movements argued that class-based analysis of social division and the oppression of minority groups subsumed the complexity of social differentiation (Bradley, 2000:478 cited in Ferguson et al, 2002:96).

In relation to the provision of welfare, the prominence of these movements was accompanied by an increasing emphasis on identity as the basis for organising collective action to secure rights and needs (Ferguson et al, 2002). Described as "new social welfare movements" (Williams, 1992:16 cited in Taylor, 1996:177), these groups identified themselves in terms of challenging institutionalised social oppression and concerns over participation and empowerment (Taylor, 1996). Particularly prominent within the disability movement, these challenges have pointed to the institutionalised practice of welfare structures; in which professionals pathologise disability as "individual sickness", emphasizing a notion of dependency (Ellis, 2000). Consequently, it was argued, service provision was geared towards helping people adjust to, rather than transform, their experience of society (Barnes et al, 2003). In challenging these assumptions, disability theorists have sought to redefine the dichotomy between absolute dependency and independence through a liberationist politics, in which people's ability to participate in the decisions and choices affecting their lives counteract oppressive assumptions (Oliver, 1997; Shakespeare, 2002). It is within the context of this research that the above arguments against oppressive assumptions presented by disability theorists expose similarities within the discourse and practice of institutionalised responses to people defined as non-statutory homelessness.

Conclusion

In transforming the governance of welfare, New Labour's 'modernising' discourse purported to overcome social exclusion by transforming communities and promoting participatory citizenship. In focusing on neighbourhood renewal and countering marginalisation, particular forms of homelessness were identified as a priority within the context of the Supporting People programme and its potential to facilitate agency and promote inclusion through the involvement of single homeless groups.

Yet at the interface between policy and practice there were arguably significant tensions. For Watson et al (2003) such tensions were particularly evident in requirements to demonstrate strategic relevance with national and local priorities. Furthermore, local institutionalised cultures and perceptions of vulnerability coupled with inadequate interpretations as to what constitutes 'hard-to-reach' she argued, fail to recognise homeless situations and overlap of needs (Watson et al, 2003). However, within the context of this thesis, it is suggested that the New Labour's endorsement of a policy discourse, which constructed single homelessness within a bounded notion of deviance and vulnerability, provided the justification for solutions which advocated both sanctions and support. Hence, it is proposed that potential conflict may arise in attempts to reconcile practices within this broader strategic framework with involvement processes.

Chapter Four

Methodology

Relationship to past research

Despite a plethora of academic inquiry into the nature and cause of homelessness, homelessness inquiry has been predominantly situated within the discipline of Social Policy and in particular the field of Housing Studies (Fitzpatrick and Christian, 2006). Pleace and Quilgars (2003: 187) contend that partly, this focus results from the funding environment in which institutions operate and partly due to an acceptance of what they term "a homelessness paradigm and the ideological constructs and definitions within homelessness legislation" (Pleace and Quilgars, 2003: 187). As a consequence, they argue that both the methodological and theoretical focus of these studies have remained conceptually weak (see also Neale, 1997; Fitzpatrick et al, 2000; Anderson and Christian, 2003).

Drawing on both positivist and interpretivist traditions within social science research, homelessness inquiry has historically primarily focused on causal explanations which have gravitated to either individual and/or structural accounts. Dominating pre- and early post-war understandings of homelessness, (see for example, Humphreys, 1999) individualist accounts emphasise a personal pathology, which assigns causal primacy of homelessness to the actions and/or characteristics of individual homeless people.

However, from the 1960s onwards, structural accounts increasingly came to the fore. Underpinned by increasing public awareness and pressure group concerns, a series of academic studies (see for example Drake,1994; Greve, 1964) identified homelessness amongst individuals and families as largely resulting from macro-structural factors associated with for example, poverty, unemployment and lack of affordable accommodation. However, amongst contemporary inquiry, this polarised view distinguishing between individual and structural causes, has been regarded as overly simplistic, naive and lacking in theoretical clarity (Neale, 1997). In an effort to provide a more comprehensive and theoretically informed understanding, contemporary studies which examine the interconnections between both structural and individual have led to what Pleace (2000) defines as a 'new orthodoxy' which suggests homelessness occurs when people experiencing particular problems or vulnerabilities are susceptible to the adverse social and economic trends created by social structures (Pleace, 2000). However, for some (for example, Fitzpatrick, 2005; Ravenshill, 2008; McNaughton Nicholls, 2009), whilst informative in providing explanations of homelessness, this 'new orthodoxy' remains conceptually and theoretically ineffective. In recent years, this critique of homelessness inquiry has led to research which focuses on the interrelationship between structure and agency.

For example, in exploring what could arguably be construed as the controversial concept of a 'culture of homelessness', Ravenshill (2008) draws primarily on Anthony Giddens' theory of Structuration (Giddens, 1984 cited in Carter and New, 2004: 5). This particular theory of structure and agency regards them as mutually conducive in determining

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causation. The former is presented as a prevailing set of 'rules and resources' (Jessop, 2005: 45) existing within the basis of human knowledge and occurring in human action at any given point in time. Set apart, but equally influential in producing causal effects, the concept of agency portrays individuals as knowledgeable and skilled actors who apply the aforesaid rules and resources in reproducing social order (Jessop, 2005: 45).

According to Carter and New (2004), this explanation implies that a given structure is equally constraining or enabling for all actors and in all actions and that individuals choose a given course of action freely within the prevailing rules and resources. This not only obscures institutional aspects of structures, but depicts the actions of individuals as one of "conscious intentionality" (Jessop, 2005: 45). It is thus argued (Carter and New, 2004), that despite attempts to construct an explanatory theory of structure and agency, structuration (Giddens, 1984) ultimately maintains a bias towards individual agency in assigning causal primacy. Therefore, applied within the context of Ravenshill's (2008) explanation, it has been suggested that, despite positing the interdependence of structure and agency, attempts to provide a theoretical explanation of homelessness remain essentially individualistic (Drummond and Foord, 2009). This focus on the theoretical and conceptual debates between structure and agency has resulted in a growing interest in the philosophy of Critical Realism (Bhaskar, 1989) within the domain of homelessness research. Whilst at the time of writing studies undertaken have been limited, a developing focus on explaining causes of homelessness utilising this perspective, was been advocated by leading academics in the field (Fitzpatrick, 2005, Fitzpatrick and Christian, 2006; McNaughton Nicholls, 2009).

Fitzpatrick (2001: 15) for example, in her attempt to engage "with a developing critical realist framework" draws on the philosophy as a potential approach for analysing the causes of homelessness. In suggesting that the "new orthodoxy" (see Pleace, 2000 above) provides a useful descriptive analysis of causation it is, she argues, "unsatisfactory" (ibid, 14) at a conceptual level. Fitzpatrick (2005) therefore, adopts a critical realist stance which, it is suggested, enables the "full range of potential casual factors" (ibid, 14) and their interrelationships to be taken into account. By initially hypothesising that homelessness may exist on four levels, cited as economic structures, housing structures, patriarchal and interpersonal structures and individual attributes, enables her findings to identify an array of internal and external relationships which increase the possibility of homelessness occurring "amongst certain poor people" (ibid, 14) without making one level logically prior to all the others. She therefore suggests, that in contrast to the "new orthodoxy" (Pleace, 2000), it is unnecessary to "smuggle" in individual factors that merely make individuals susceptible to structural explanations. Instead, by utilising a critical realist framework it enables "personal factors to be identified as causes of homelessness in their own right without undermining the importance of structural conditions" (ibid, 15).

Building further on this theme, Fitzpatrick and Christian (2006), undertook a comparative evaluation of homelessness research traditions in both the United States and United Kingdom. Drawing on conceptual and methodological approaches used in both countries,

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it was identified that the former have predominately undertaken research within the positivist tradition heavily dominated by clinical psychology and medical perspectives. This is in contrast to the latter where despite some positivist research, there is more focus on interpretivist approaches and policy orientated research. It was identified that despite some convergence between the two traditions, a significant discrepancy in how the causes of homelessness was understood was evident. The authors suggested that whilst this could reflect 'real' differences in the nature of homelessness in the two countries, the inconsistencies in data generated suggested that it was difficult to test this hypothesis. The recommendations therefore suggested that academics on both sides of the Atlantic could enrich their indigenous research traditions by adopting a more theoretically guided research that builds on the strengths of both countries' approaches. Hence, Fitzpatrick and Christian (2006: 329) cite the potential of critical realism as a "means of pushing forward" theoretical understandings of homelessness. They advocate that in using this approach it would overcome the limitations of the "individual vs. structural" debates by enabling "individual factors to be acknowledged as a causal effect in their own right..." without neglecting the structural explanations. Within the context of this research utilising critical realism is particularly relevant because it assists in understanding how welfare professionals' beliefs and perceptions of homelessness can shape how the policy of sanctions and support are interpreted and implemented.

In adding to this growing interest in critical realism as a philosophy for explaining causes of homelessness, McNaughton Nicholls (2009) attempts to provide an alternative

theoretical understanding. She suggests that in the past there has been little, if any, attempt to inform understandings of causation that result from the actions of homeless individuals. Hence, in utilising contextual rational action theory within a critical realist perspective (Somerville and Bentsson, 2002: cited McNaughton Nicholls, 2009: 72) and drawing on three case studies, she identifies what are described as "considered transgressive acts" which leads to homelessness. These are identified as, for example, refusal to engage with support services, alcohol misuse and street sex work. Although the importance of structural factors are stressed McNaughton Nicholls (2009) also argues, that in an attempt to inform a more conceptual understanding of causation, individual agency or more specifically the insubordination and noncompliance of individuals affected, must be "writ[ten] back into the equation" when searching for explanations of homelessness (McNaughton Nicholls, 2009: 69).

Attempts to endorse such explanations, whilst undoubtedly interesting and insightful have, I suggest, preserved an understanding of homelessness which, albeit unintentionally, upholds what could be described as a form of 'pathological dualism'. Pathological dualism, not only defines individuals as both deviant (Fooks, 1999) yet simultaneously vulnerable (Neale, 1997), but also suggests that the homeless person, in some way, possesses different characteristics that ultimately results in acts that "challenge the boundaries of normative social behaviour" (McNaughton Nicholls, 2009: 69).

In contrast, this inquiry is underpinned by a belief that is fundamentally at odds with approaches that search for the causal truth of homelessness within concepts of individual pathology. Hence, despite attempts to broaden theoretical debates, I propose that within contemporary politics and practice, this imagery of homelessness, resulting from the "transgressions" of homeless individuals, has actually never been written out. Such understandings of homelessness, it is suggested (see Jacobs et al, 1999), are regarded here as the product of historical constructs which are in turn, informed by the normative values of powerful groups of individuals (Brock, 2012). This is not to say, or dispute, that the cause of homelessness is not complex and multifaceted - it undoubtedly is. But it is suggested here that in the search for knowledge, social inquiry should be confronting the political and social 'reality' that maintains this pervasive individualist understanding of homelessness. As Higate (2000) suggests, the increasing prevalence and reliance on such individualistic interpretations, both restricts and averts the attention away from the complex and interwoven levels of prejudice within policy and practice. As a consequence, this distorted and dominant understanding of homelessness remains (Higate, 2000).

Thus, in an attempt to avert the 'research gaze' away from the individual 'problem' of homelessness, including approaches which focus on the 'symptoms', circumstances and lifestyles of homeless people, this inquiry extends the debate by examining the complex and interwoven levels of practice and policy implementation. It does so by adopting an approach which focuses on powerful groups who, it is argued, have the ability to exert their influence on how homelessness is addressed. Furthermore, in endorsing Higate's

(2000) view, it is also believed that it is the responsibility of social inquiry to illustrate how the normative values and beliefs which construct a particular 'truth' of homelessness are maintained. Hence, in drawing on the philosophy of Critical Realism, this inquiry will therefore attempt to identify where this particular 'reality' of homelessness transpires; what exists, in terms of ontological depth beneath it, how is it maintained, and what, if any, possibilities are there for an alternative 'reality' (Bhaskar, 1989: 20 cited in Brock, 2012: 14). In doing so, whilst not focusing on the causes on homelessness itself, it is hoped that this inquiry will indirectly contribute to a deeper critical understanding of the causal effects of homelessness by elucidating some of the key mechanisms involved in maintaining and reinforcing hegemonic understandings and practices around homelessness.

Theoretical perspective

Regarded as a meta-theoretical perspective, Critical Realism takes ontological questions about the nature of the social (and natural) world as its starting point for inquiry (McEvoy and Richards, 2003: 10). Primarily influenced by the work of Roy Bhaskar (1989) Critical Realism is underpinned by a position that views emancipation as a central goal of social inquiry and starts with a basic premise that "there exists a reality independent of our knowledge and observations" (Sayer, 2000: 4).

Combining the search for causal explanations of naturalism with the explanatory principles of the social sciences, "reality" Bhaskar (1989: 3) exist on three distinct yet overlapping levels: the "empirical" which consists of experienced events and

phenomenon collated through our senses; the "actual" which is defined as comprising all events whether experienced or not, and finally, the "real". Encompassing simultaneously the "empirical" and the "actual" dimensions, the "real" refers to deep-rooted mechanisms in the social world which have the capacity to generate or produce a causal effect. Put simply, this model of "reality" it is argued is made up of "mechanisms", "structures" and "powers" which cause social events to occur (Brock, 2012: 16).

According to Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009: 42) 'mechanisms' in critical realism can loosely be defined as "that which is capable of making things happen" (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009: 42). Existing as complex networks in the social world, mechanisms are regarded as present even when they are not active or when their effect is impossible to trace. Thus, whilst not directly observable, it is purported that (Carter and New, 2004), once generated, mechanisms produce effects that nonetheless, may become realised or known. To this end, the level of the 'real' is said to possess both 'intransitive' and 'transitive' dimensions.

Although descriptions of these two abstract dimensions are complex, the "intransitive" and "transitive" are fundamentally associated with knowledge. Briefly, the former, "intransitive" dimension relates to knowledge *about* real objects in the social world which exist and act independently of our mental activity. In the latter, the "transitive" dimension, knowledge exists *as* a real social object and is thus regarded as, "temporal, value-laden and specific" (Bhaskar, 1989: 5). In this respect, knowledge is regarded as both irreducible *and* constituting an object with its own level of causality (Bhaskar, 1986

italics added). Thus combining both the "actual" and the "empirical" dimensions of "reality", the concept of "intransitive" and "transitive" dimensions within the "real" (ibid), suggest that "knowledge of the real-world should not be solely constituted from our experiences of it" (Sayer, 2000: 6). From a critical realist perspective, this understanding of the 'intransitive' and 'transitive' dimensions of the 'real', raises fundamental questions regarding the nature and claims of objective knowledge in social inquiry, which in turn, has led to challenges of both positivist and interpretivist approaches.

Positivists, according to Bryman (2001: 11), search for knowledge through objective empirical regularities, the purpose of which is to seek established predictable patterns and exact relationships between cause and effect (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009). For critical realism however, whilst it shares an interest in the objective world and in searching for causal effect, the study of observable regularities alone is regarded as too simplistic and limited. Primarily this is because such approaches disregard the unobservable or deep-rooted mechanisms that produce a given social phenomena. In contrast, critical realism suggests that for any given event or phenomena in the social world, there are many causes and, as such, "...final decisive tests of hypothesis are not possible" (Bhaskar, 1989:185). Similar challenges have also been directed by critical realism, towards interpretivist approaches.

Bryman (2001: 13) identifies that in the search for knowledge, interpretivists seek the autonomy of human perception and the subjective meaning attached to social situations.

While perception and meaning are important to critical realism, in terms of identifying reason, beliefs and intentions which initiate the construction of a social phenomenon, it is nonetheless argued, that a central focus on the concept of a social occurrence is insufficient and misleading. For critical realism, causal events are believed to "transpire beyond individual conception and definition of a situation" (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009: 43). Thus in isolation, an interpretivist approach fails to identify deep-rooted mechanism which may generate a causal event. In contrast to both positivism and interpretivism, critical realism views causal relations in the social world as far more complex and, as a result, cause and effect should be understood as contextual, emergent and varied in changeable societies. Thus, to paraphrase Brock (2012: 39), whilst critical realism does not deny the reality or real consequences of the 'world-as-it appears' (cited in Brock, 2012: 39) in experience, nor does it 'deny the value-laden character of our knowledge of the world' (Wainwright, 1994: 104 cited in Brock, 2012: 39).

The primary focus of critical realism is how to make explicit the mechanisms by which social entities or 'things' come into existence and the casual powers by which social events transpire. Therefore, in an effort to transcend the dichotomy between positivist and interpretive approaches, they combine the two in an effort to discover deeper-level mechanisms at work which make explicit the powers social entities possess and how the research can make these powers possible objects of knowledge (Jessop, 2005; Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009; Brock, 2012).

Central to a critical realist analysis of mechanisms, is the ontological positioning of 'structures'. Within critical realism, 'structures' are defined as "sets of interrelated objects and practices" which are stratified within and between pre-existing social arrangements and human agency (Sayer, 2000: 93). Put simply, within critical realism social structures are best understood as the causal powers of groups and individuals (Brock, 2012: 32). However, unlike proceeding accounts (see account of Gidden's theory of Structuration), a critical realist view of structure and agency highlights the distinct properties and powers of each. In providing an example of the distinctive properties of 'structures', Jessop (2005: 5) refers to legal systems and linguistic practices, which he suggests are regarded as both relatively enduring features of society, possessing powers of both enablement and constraint. Likewise, the distinct properties of agency are regarded as self-consciousness, reflexivity, intentionality and cognition. Thus, as inhabitants of the social world, the primary power of agency, whether individually or collectively, is the ability to alter or reinforce social arrangements (Jessop, 2005: 6). For critical realism, this interplay between structure and agency suggests that 'structures' are not only situated in pre-existing social arrangements, but are also located at the interpersonal, conceptual and even neurological levels of human agency. Hence, whilst pre-existing structures may constrain or enable human action, critical realism suggests they may also be simultaneously mediated by human actors who both consciously and unconsciously reproduce or transform them (Jessop, 2005).

This complex interplay between structures and agency renders them both temporal and 'intransitive' objects of knowledge. In this respect, Carter and New (2004) purport the

'reality' of a given social phenomenon afforded us by our interaction with 'structures' may be deceptive, which in turn, produces an inaccurate understanding of causal processes. However, for a critical realist inquiry this suggests that:

> "…a false conception of a phenomenon may be just as important information to the researcher as correct information; it may be an essential aspect of the phenomenon itself that it can be understood in this wrong way" (Danermark et al, 2002: 36 cited in Carter and New, 2004: 6).

As a consequence, in a critical realist search for deep-rooted mechanisms which may generate or produce the 'reality' of a given social phenomena, an exploration of the causal powers or what is referred to as the "emergent properties" of structures (see Bhaskar, 1989), is essential.

Emergent properties are defined as "powers of a whole that are not possessed by its parts" (Elder-Vass, 2010: 16). To illustrate the point further, Elder-Vass (2010: 16) presents a frequently used example from the literature of John Stuart Mill (Mill, 1900: 243 cited in Elder-Vass, 2010: 17):

> "the properties of water are very different from those of its components, oxygen and hydrogen, when these are not combined with each other in the specific form that constitutes water... for example, fire cannot be put out with oxygen or hydrogen... [h]ence, water has emergent properties" (Elder-Vass, 2010: 17)

Thus, irreducible to their constituent parts, within critical realism the emergent properties or powers of structures refers to the nature, attributes or facets of an object in the social

world. These objects include for example, the attributes or facets of rules, resources, relations, practices and knowledge and like the deep-rooted mechanism which produce or generate them, emergent properties or powers may or may not make themselves known as observable events. However, properties and powers are regarded as continually present and once activated, become known by their effects (Carter and New, 2004). The effect created is referred to as "emergence" (Elder-Vass, 2010) and is described as:

"…the way in which particular combinations of processes and practices in social life frequently give rise to new emergent properties and powers…that result in the organisation and maintenance of inter-relationships between individual ontology and inter-dependent structure." (Carter and New 2004: 7)

This relational concept of emergence suggests that emergent properties, or causal powers, "arise because of the particular relationships that hold between the parts" (Brock, 2012: 52). Likewise, Elder-Vass (2010: 20) identifies the source of emergence as:

"[T]he maintenance of a stable set of substantial relations between the parts that constitutes them into a particular whole"

Thus, an emergent phenomenon is more than an aggregate product of the entities or parts of a system, but arises through their structural organisation (Smith, 2007 cited in Brock, 2012: 52).

For Elder-Vass (2010: 4) it is within structures that groups of individuals, or what he describes as "norm circles", gain their emergent causal powers or properties based on the organisations of shared norms. For Brock (2012: 52), these shared norms relate to

mechanisms, such as beliefs, ideology and discourse and because of their organisation, are known as "normative institutions" (Elder-Vass, 2010 cited in Brock, 2012: 52). Breaking the link between conventional sociological theories of society and institutions, Elder-Vass's (2010) concept of "normative institutions" are described as the collective representation of normative beliefs and values which simultaneously produces and guides behaviour. As a consequence, "normative institutions" are considered to have a causal effect "...either through enforcing conformity within the "norm circle" or group, or encouraging conformity external to the group itself" (Bowker and Star, 1999 cited in Brock, 2012: 16).

The focus then for a critical realist inquiry is how, within a given social phenomenon, to make explicit the mechanisms, structures and powers, through which the occurrence transpires. According to Brock (2012: 39), this requires the researcher to identify the mechanisms of an entity within underlying emergent properties. Within critical realism, this process is known as 'retroduction'. According to Lawson, (1997 cited in Brock, 2012: 39) retroduction is:

> " a mode of inference characterised by the move from knowledge of some phenomenon existing at any one level of reality, to knowledge of mechanisms at a deeper level or stratum of reality, which contribute to the generation of the original phenomenon of interest"

 As a consequence, an approach is required that favours a deeper exploration, which not only surpasses normative explanations and critiques, but is also "intrinsically critical and

evaluative of existing vocabularies and social practices" (Bhaskar, 1986: 183 cited in

Winter and Munn-Giddings, 2001: 175). In this respect, the research approach must be

viewed as "a constant digging in[to] the ontological depth of reality" (Alvesson and

Sköldberg, 2009: 42). Or as Archer (1998:196 cited in Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009:

43) both eloquently and succinctly explains:

> "...the stratified nature of reality introduces a necessary historicity (however
> short the time period involved) for instead of *horizontal* explanations relating to
> one experience, observation or event to another, the fact that these themselves
> are conditional upon antecedents, requires *vertical* explanations in terms of the
> generative relationships indispensible for their realization..." (Italics added)

It is suggested (Bhaskar, 1986) that the application of such an approach, tied to the

central realist aspiration of empowerment through possibilities for transformation,

orientates the researcher towards an ethical and political investigation which questions

the legitimacy of existing social arrangements that stand in tension with emancipatory

aims. For Connelly (2001: 47), such an approach not only provides an understanding of

the 'reality' of interactions within a specified situation, but has the potential to also

transform the normative acceptance of a given social phenomenon.

Within the context of this thesis, the intention was to undertake an in-depth investigation

into welfare professionals' interpretation and implementation of policy directed towards

single homelessness. This required a course of action that went beneath surface

approaches and manifest meanings, to one which enabled the researcher to investigate the

subtle and complex features of organisational relationships, individual practice and

beliefs into the cause of single homelessness. Consequently, it was determined that utilising aspects of critical realism, with its focus on transformation and empowerment, would not only enable the researcher to identify in-depth complex mechanisms and causal powers which, however partial, maintained and legitimised a particular homelessness 'reality', but may also identify properties which have the potential to transform understandings of the phenomenon. This awareness of the complexities involved in facilitating this process, informed and influenced the decision to apply a case study approach.

Research Design

In defining the case study as a research method, Yin (2003: 13) describes it as:

> "…an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident"

Therefore, in attempts to gain an in-depth understanding of a given social phenomenon, case study research provides a mechanism by which the researcher retains the holistic and meaningful characteristic of 'real-life' consequences whilst simultaneously expanding knowledge through an engagement with, and contribution towards, wider theoretical concepts (Yin, 2003).

Closely associated with the work of the Chicago School of Sociology, the development of the case study as a research method gained prominence in the 1920s and 1930s. Primarily focusing on aspects of immigration amongst different national groups, the approach was applied in pioneering research relating to urban sociology, poverty, governmental processes and the analysis of 'deviant subcultures' (Dobson, 1999). Despite the significant influences of these studies, Trellis (1997) argues that many were brought into disrepute by methodological limitations, particularly in terms of providing generalised conclusions. Such criticisms also coincided with a general move in academia towards more rigorous scientific methods with culminated in the denigration of case research as an overall method of inquiry (Dobson, 1999).

This disparagement of case study research continued until the 1960s when, in tandem with the rise of identity politics, social science researchers became increasingly sceptical towards the use of scientific measurements on social groups and institutions (Bryman, 2004). It was increasingly argued that the application of such approaches produced an inert view of social life that was devoid of people's experiences and interpretations. Coupled with the emergence of new concepts such as grounded theory, a renewed interest in, and use of, the case study as a stand-alone research method re-emerged (Glasier and Strauss, 1967 cited in Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

With its changing reputation, case study research thrived and has since been employed in a multitude of ways. Drawing on positivist and interpretivist philosophical traditions, qualitative and quantitative approaches have been applied to both single and multiple

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designs (Yin, 2003). According to Yin (2003), the former is generally applied to critical approaches to confirm, test or challenge existing theory and can help to re-focus future investigations relating to a particular phenomenon. In contrast, a multiple design is associated with comparative studies and follows a replicatory logic which can be either literal or theoretical (Stake, 1995). Although regarded as more robust that the single approach, multiple case designs often require extensive resources and time. In addition to the different designs, there are also distinct approaches. Stake (1995) for example identifies two separate types; the 'intrinsic' and the 'instrumental'. The former is primarily descriptive in which the purpose is not to understand some abstract concept or generic phenomenon, but to allow the case itself to reveal its 'story'. In contrast, the instrumental study attempts to provide insight into an issue and although important, the case itself plays a supportive role in facilitating understanding. Yin's (2003), interpretation of these approaches, regards the latter two as 'descriptive' and 'explanatory' designs but, in contrast to Stake (1995) , identifies a third type of case research, the 'exploratory' approach which is primarily used as a prelude to a larger research project.

For Blaxter et al (2001), this adaptability towards both large and small scale projects is particularly advantageous for the individual student researcher, particularly in relation to constraints on time and resources. Yet, despite this apparent popularity, many criticisms remain. For example, in detracting from the idea of the case study as a 'stand alone' method, Mitchell (1983: 195) instead suggests that it is a quasi-experimental design combining "idiosyncratic elements which cannot be used to describe or test propositions"

and as a consequence, is only useful at the preliminary stage of the research process. Similarly Trellis (1997) argues that the emphasis on flexibility points to a lack of systematic procedures, particularly in relation to qualitative approaches. He contends that the reliance on subjective data can allow biased views to influence the direction of the findings and conclusion. Furthermore, the particular focus on social context upholds preceding critiques relating scientific generalisation which Trellis (1997) believes, not only questions validity but also the ability to replicate studies. However, in response to these accounts, Blaxter et al. (2001) propose that neither the social nor natural sciences are completely objective. They consider that all inquiry at some point is powerfully affected by the researchers own motivation and values. Heaton (1998) also suggests that research, whether positivist or interpretivist, is dependent on the researcher's ability to form critical insights based on their own subjective understanding. In response to this sustained attack from critics regarding the validity of case study research, Yin (2003) contends that the purpose is not to provide representative samples, or to enumerate frequencies, but fundamentally to construct or expand on theoretical concepts.

According to Dobson (1999), the choice of theory in qualitative case study research has essentially been reliant on three main interpretivist approaches. A grounded approach (Glaser and Strauss, 1967 cited in: Dobson, 1999: 261) which allows the theory to "emerge" from the data; a single theoretical perspective (Alvesson, 1996: 262) that purports the attainability of deep understanding, or multiple theories (Walsham, 1995 cited in Alvesson 1996: 263) which professes the superiority of diverse perspectives in the interpretation of causality. For Easton (2009) however, the application of these

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differing perspectives cannot objectively be discernable from the researchers own interpretations and consequently questions of validity may remain. However, as the central aim of the case research is to provide a comprehensive understanding of a complex social phenomenon, Dobson (1999) suggests that it is the reality of the situation under investigation which should fundamentally drive theory selection. Thus, in an attempt to provide an alternative to the main theoretical approaches applied, he suggests the use of a context-dependent approach that relies on a critical realist perspective. This, he continues, not only substantiates case research as an overall method, but also enables the subjective nature of knowledge and the importance of structure and agency to be recognised throughout the research process. This is further endorsed by Easton (2009), who suggests that from within this philosophical position, case research is both particularly fruitful in identifying structures and processes that cause particular events to happen and simultaneously in recognising the necessary conditions in which these events occur. However, guidance in conducting and analysing case research within a critical realist framework is both complex and limited. As a consequence, the method and analysis for this inquiry was simultaneously guided by the work of Yin (2003) as well as Layder (1998) and Elder-Vass (2010).

Research Method

Initial interest in this area of inquiry developed from the researcher's extensive practice experience in both the voluntary homeless sector and strategic housing services. This experience not only enabled me to witness directly both the practice and impact of policy

implementation towards people deemed single homeless, but also provided the opportunity to engage in an open dialogue with a diversity of people enduring acute housing need. This latter opportunity had a profound impact on me and as such was central in the formation and focus of this inquiry. This practice experience was further consolidated by the undertaking of an extensive review of literature. Focusing on the administration, nature and provision of post-war welfare and utilising both qualitative and quantitative research conducted on the cause and characteristics of homelessness, this initial review included literature from academic reports, government departments and national homelessness agencies. This, in turn, was further supported by an examination of theoretical concepts consisting of philosophical debates on the relationship between structure and agency within the constructs of particular 'social problems' (such as homelessness).

These preliminary insights 'in the field' coupled with the introductory literature review suggested New Labour's initiatives aimed at tackling and preventing single homelessness took place within a context of a complex configuration of policy directives under the all encompassing concept of social inclusion.   In practice, these initiatives took the form of targeted interventions which promoted mechanisms for both 'support' and 'sanctions' simultaneously. In particular, the strategic relationship between Supporting People and Community Safety Teams was deemed as central to administrating and implementing these measures. Within the structure of welfare institutions this partnership between Supporting People and Community Safety Teams brought together professional agents with contrasting departmental aims and differing modes of professional practice. As a

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consequence, addressing homelessness 'successfully' became dependent on individual practitioners within the aforesaid teams, reconciling the tension between the implementation of support and the application of sanctions. The evidence was further examined in an attempt to identify whether, and in what combination, the provision of support and actions of enforcement influenced participatory outcomes for the individuals involved.

In drawing on aspects of critical realism, this inquiry proposed to examine the insight of strategic managers within and between Supporting People and Community Safety Teams, in relation to conceptions of and interventions toward single homelessness. The justification for focusing on senior managers primarily related to their roles within the teams. Specifically, their ability to influence commissioning decisions, in terms of which services are prioritised, the element of power they hold over subordinates within their teams, including an ability to reward and penalise, the element of flexibility they have in terms of budgeting decisions and how a programme or policy is implemented. This is in contrast to operational staff, who do not have this level of freedom and who in general have to apply the decisions made by senior managers, whether they agree with them or not.

Applying a single case study approach located across five local authorities, the aim was not to test hypotheses but to examine the interplay between structural properties and professional agency. In this respect, the main unit of analysis was strategic managers' beliefs, knowledge and understanding. Embedded within this framework was the sub-unit

of analysis, or the nature and constitution of relationships within and between individuals and organisational sites. The objective was to determine how, or if, the beliefs, knowledge and understanding of strategic agents within welfare institutions affected actions towards a single homeless population.   With this in mind the inquiry focused on three broad questions:

1. How professionals located within the strategic partnerships of Supporting People and Community Safety Teams interpreted the causes of single homelessness?

2. To what extent have interpretations of single homelessness informed policy actions involving support and sanctions and how are these respective approaches combined?

3. To what extent the implementation of the aforesaid policy actions impacted on professional's responsibilities to facilitate an inclusive dialogue with single homeless people?

Sample

Sampling techniques involved in the collection and interpretation of data entailed a broad, overlapping approach encompassing a combination of convenience, purposeful and theoretically driven frameworks (Silverman, 2001). Initially in the identification of Local Authorities, pragmatic reasons relating to the researchers time and locality necessitated a strategy of convenience and accessibility regarding the geographical area. However, there was an attempt by the researcher to stratify the aforementioned Authorities in terms of levels of deprivation and housing[2]. It was supposed that in areas of greater deprivation, higher levels of private rented accommodation, discrepancies

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[2] Additional supplementary data pertaining to participating Local Authorities is included in Appendix A

between supply and demand, overcrowding and affordability, would elicit different interpretations regarding the cause of single homelessness than in neighbouring Authorities with areas of relative affluence.

The second part of the sampling framework involved the selection of participants; this stage adopted a purposeful approach incorporating variables relating to departmental setting, participants experience, leadership and levels of responsibility[3]. Linked to the research questions, the objective was to focus on strategic managerial roles. It was deduced that the strategic nature of participant's roles within the respective departmental teams of Supporting People and Community Safety Teams would assume a greater levels of authority in budgeting responsibilities, commissioning decisions and overall policy implementation. As this relationship between participants in both Supporting People and Community Safety Teams was an essential element in the detailed analysis of the phenomenon under investigation, it also prompted a theoretically driven framework. Thus, in building on participant's responses to the research questions, I was able to build and test the theoretical framework utilised in this inquiry (Mason, 1996: 93-4 cited Silverman, 2001: 105).

Data Collection

The case study was conducted within and between a sample of five out of a total number of ten local authorities situated in the North West of England. Guided by the research focus, the process of data gathering generated a triangulation strategy involving the collection of qualitative and quantitative data from primary and secondary sources

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[3] For further information regarding participant's background, experience and roles see Appendix B.

respectively (Yin, 2003). The objective of this approach was to ensure that the available 'evidence' pertaining to the area under investigation was maximised (Layder, 1998).

In the gathering of secondary data, information was utilised from a multiplicity of sources including localised statistics, organisational and departmental reports and promotional literature. This documentary evidence centred on levels of homelessness in the respective areas; the provision of housing related support for a single homeless population, (including services for 'rough sleepers'); and the level of enforcement action directed towards specific 'forms' of homelessness. Evidence about the levels of enforcement action proved difficult to quantify as localised data did not distinguish between 'offences' (Johnsen and Fitzpatrick, 2008). The evidence was further examined in an attempt to identify whether, and in what combination, the provision of support and actions of enforcement influenced participatory outcomes for the individuals involved.

The researchers own strategic position in one of the five authorities enabled supplementary data to be gathered through non-participant observations within and across a range of institutional and departmental settings. This included cross-authority working groups, departmental reviews, joint-commissioning meetings and consultation forums organised for residents of the borough and within commissioned services for homeless individuals with support needs. All observational accounts were collated in note form and added to the existing corpus of data. Although this stage of the research did not provide an explanation in itself, it did help to refine the research focus and provide supplementary data which enhanced overall understanding.

As this research was fundamentally a qualitative inquiry, the generation of primary data was principally qualitative in nature and was gathered from eighteen in-depth semi-structured interviews with strategic managers in and between all five local authorities. Conducted on a one-to-one basis or in small focus groups of no more than three, all participants interviewed were employed in policy or strategic positions. When consent was given by participants interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim; for participants who did not wish to be recorded, contemporaneous notes were taken throughout the interview process and written-up immediately afterwards. As the objective was to elicit the interviewee's experience and subjective views of homelessness, the interview process avoided utilising a rigid sequence of wording or questions. However, by implementing a semi-structured arrangement alongside in-depth probing, the researcher attempted to ensure that prior assumptions about what was relevant to the inquiry were not imposed on the participants (Layder, 1998)[4]. In organising and documenting the data gathered from each stage of the research, a computerised filing system enabled both primary and secondary sources to be comprehensively organised, thus ensuring expeditious retrieval for analysis.

Framework for Analysis

Whilst methodological approaches applied in realist research differ dramatically, one central theme remains consistent throughout, namely that research fundamentally requires the linking of structure and action (Hart et al, 2004).

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[4] For interview question guide is included in Appendix C

Within the context of a critical realist framework, the approach employed in the analysis of data drew on the combined influence of Yin's (2003) case study approach, Layder's (1998) "adaptive theory" and Elder-Vass's (2010) framework for investigating the "emergent causal powers of structures". Drawing on Bhaskars (1989) notion of "real causal powers", Elder-Vass (2010) developed an emergentist solution to the problem of structure and agency which provides an explanation of how human agents can be causally effective. In arguing that human individuals are entities with emergent properties which can "interact to codetermine social events" (Elder-Vass, 2010: 193), Brock (2012: 27), also suggests that it is an approach which can be applied as a methodological framework to examine the relationship between a whole and its parts or, more particularly, between social structures and human agents. As Elder-Vass suggests (2010: 194),

> "the mechanisms through which human action is determined provide opportunities for action to be influenced by both social structures...but also by our own uniquely human powers of conscious reflexive thinking" (cited in Brock, 2012: 27).

However, it is also recognised that social events are always the outcome of many interacting factors of which "agental input is only one" (Elder-Vass, 2010: 193), yet these factors can affect our beliefs and dispositions which "then feed into a process of action determination that may proceed without our conscious awareness" (ibid) which is facilitated by particular social phenomena of 'normativity' and particular social structures referred to as "normative social institutions" and "hegemonic norm circles" (Elder Vass, 2010: 194). Thus in an attempt to identify this interconnection between the causal powers of human agents and particular social structures, Hart et al (2001) suggests that

adaptive theory (Layder, 1998) provides a approach to organising data which both

"...accounts for and captures the layered and textured nature of social reality" (Layder,

1998 cited in Hart et al, 2004: 24).

Building on the principles of critical realism and situated within an epistemological

position which is neither positivist nor interpretivist, adaptive theory proposes an original

approach to theorising in social research. Developed from an amalgamation of influences,

Layder's (1998) framework draws concurrently on deductive and inductive strategies in

the integration of theory, data and analysis. For Layder (1998: 2) this amalgamation of

theory and data essentially:

> "...should be understood as a continuous process which accompanies the
> research at all stages rather than as a discrete aspect that is only relevant at
> the beginning or end of data gathering"

This demands the researcher has a "firm grasp of the connections between the two" and a

clear understanding of the fit between theoretical ideas and the data generated from the

empirical material (Layder, 1998: 3). This central focus on the fit between theoretical

ideas and data also requires the researcher to acknowledge and value positively the

"theoretical assumptions" they too bring to the research process. For Layder (1998: 81)

the recognition and systematic channelling of these prior influences and preconceptions

not only harnesses and controls researcher bias but also enables the dual influence of

existing theories to shape and in turn, be shaped by the data that emerges from the

research. In facilitating this process, Layder (1998: 90) presents a framework for analysis

which concentrates on the identification, exploration and analysis of what he terms "concept-indicator links".

Relating to the link between theoretical concepts and the empirical phenomenon under review, concept-indicators are said to operate simultaneously, on two interrelated levels, as both "surface" and "underlying" aspects of the research activity (Layder, 1998: 79). According to Layder (1998), traditional approaches to data analysis have primarily focused on the 'surface' aspects, and although these are regarded as important and essential in terms of producing reliable and valid research, he argues that in isolation they fail to identify the concealed or 'underlying' features of social situations (Layder, 1998: 98). He therefore proposes an integrated approach which engages concurrently with surface and underlying aspects. This it is suggested, not only ensures a connection with the deeper stratums of a social phenomenon but "...also facilitates the production of more powerful and inclusive research explanations" (Layder, 1998: 79-80). To investigate and thus analyse these multidimensional facets, Layder (1998: 82) moves on to identify four types of concept-indicator linkages which are defined as 'behavioural', 'structural', 'mediating' and 'general' or 'theoretician' concepts.

In brief, behavioural concepts represent the nature or quality of interpersonal relationships in particular settings or social situations. Applied extensively in social research they may focus on issues of identity or the qualities of specific relationships which also includes meanings, interpretations, aspects of behaviour and predispositions or attitudes. The fundamental principle however, is that they all must meet by some

measure the criteria of "subjectivity" (Layder, 1998: 85). In contrast, systematic or structural concepts are described as non-behavioural and refer primarily to the objectively defined social relations that are reproduced at both macro and intermediate levels of social reality (Layder, 1998: 88). This encompasses the structural facets of institutions, language, culture and various forms of knowledge that are responsive to the transformative powers of individuals and social groups. Indicative of historically emergent conditions, these structural or systematic concepts are viewed as part of the contextual environment which represents the wider social setting (Layder, 1998: 89).

The third concept-indicator linkage focuses on the combined efforts of behavioural and systematic conceptions. Referred to as mediating concepts, they emphasise the dual effects of objective and subjective aspects of social life (Layder, 1998: 90) According to Layder (1998: 92) there are broadly three kinds of occurrences on which mediating concepts act as a "bridge" between the behavioural and the systematic. Firstly the duality of reference to subjective behaviour and objective conditions under which a phenomenon is dealt with; secondly, concepts which denote the mediating role of certain social actors who occupy strategic positions of control; and finally, concepts which characterise the nature of social relations that are influenced by structural features and which express the motivations and contributions of agents involved (Layder, 1998: 92). By combining behavioural and structural concepts which constitute the settings and contexts in which social activities are played out, mediating concepts are distinctive in that they represent the connection between fundamental aspects of social reality (Layder, 1998: 83).

The fourth and final concept linkages referred to are general or theoretician concepts and this primarily relates to the validity of concepts which have been extracted in the preceding links. In analysing behavioural, structural and mediating concepts, Layder (1998: 98) contends that ultimately they can never be examined as standalone views within the immediate topic of investigation. As a consequence, the differing cluster of concepts identified must not only be located within the wider context of theory from which they are drawn but also positioned in relation to other competing or complementary concepts. Therefore, an analysis of the interconnectedness of meaning and fit - and the range of questions and problems that are posed and answered as a result - requires establishing a "chain of reasoning" (ibid) which constantly shifts back and forth between the different 'levels'. This not only allows the researcher to make connections between emergent and extant theory but also to enhance understanding of the specific social phenomena under investigation.

Criteria for Analysis

In an effort to recognize generative mechanisms[5] and emergent properties[6] contained within the differing clusters of concepts, the organisation of data was informed by the work of Elder-Vass (2010). In the development of Bhaskar's notion of real causal powers, Elder-Vass (2010) provides an emergentist explanation to the problem of structure and agency. This is significant for social science research which draws on the

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[5] Generative mechanisms refer to beliefs, ideologies and discourses. See page 86-87 for further explanation.
[6] Emergent properties are defined as "powers of a whole that are not possessed by its parts" (Elder-Vass, 2010: 16). See page 87 for further explanation.

philosophy of critical realism as it renders explicitly the unique powers of human agency; specifically, it shows *how* human agents can be causally effective (Brock, 2012). For Brock (2012:10), such an approach is necessary for a social research project which is concerned with the identification of practices or structural forces within and towards a given social phenomenon. Briefly, Elder-Vass (2010) suggests that causal significance is not just contained within a monolithic concept of society; but that specific groups of people have causal powers which in turn are dependent on the contributions of human individuals. Thus in applying a critical realist understanding of the social structures within individuals, groups, normative institutions and organisations, Elder-Vass (2010) examines the mechanisms through which interactions between human agents generate the causal powers of social structures. However, in establishing the value of generative mechanisms and emergent properties within interrelationships between structure and agency, Elder-Vass (2010:10) contends that whilst all structures are relevant, it is not always necessary to consider or examine them all in order to establish emergence. Hence, for the purpose of this inquiry, the researcher specifically focused the examination on the structural interconnections between individuals, groups and institutions; specifically, those contained within local government and between Supporting People and Community Safety Teams.

Thus, guided by Elder-Vass's (2010) framework and informed by orientating concepts identified in the initial literature review, the direction of data analysis centred on three broad themes. Firstly, structural and individual concepts; this theme focused attention on both the construction and representation of homelessness within and between

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professionals and included beliefs, understanding and knowledge as to the nature and

cause of single homelessness. The second theme drew on the concepts of prevention and

intervention. Concentrating on the nature and practice within welfare institutions, this

focused specifically on inter- professional relationships between Supporting People and

Community Safety Teams. Deliberating on aspects of departmental language, culture and

actions, the objective was to examine professional interpretations of approaches

addressing homelessness which promoted concurrently support and sanctions. The final

theme focused on mechanisms for involvement the intention was to investigate inter-

professional knowledge, understanding and application of participatory processes for

single homeless groups and how, alongside interventions advocating support and

sanctions, this objective was reconciled in practice.

Process of Analysis

Whilst aspects of critical realism were applied to this inquiry, in terms of a theoretical

focus, Bhashar's (1989) philosophy does not provide a detailed method by which the

researcher can identify structures, mechanisms and properties, which may produce and

impact on the social phenomena under investigation (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009). As

a consequence, for the purpose of this inquiry, a range of approaches were utilised in the

analysis of data.

As already indicated, primary influences on the approach used derived from Layder's

(1998) adaptive theory in conjunction with Elder-Vass's (2010) framework investigating

the causal powers of social structures. Further guidance, however, was also drawn from Yin's (2003) presentation of case study methods alongside Strauss and Corbin's (1998) approach to qualitative analysis. Commencing with Layder's (1998: 79-80) recommended "multipronged approach", to data collection, the process involved the compilation of both primary and secondary data. The former, the primary data, comprised of transcribed notes derived from recorded semi-structured interviews and annotations from non-participant observations. The latter, the secondary data, consisted of academic literature, government documents and empirical research on single homelessness. In addition, documentation in the form of localised strategies, policy guidance and programme reviews pertaining to the inquiry, were used to supplement primary sources of data.

This composition of both primary and secondary data was further organised in three ways: first, by organisational site, second, by policy teams, and finally, by data source. This arrangement of primary and secondary sources enabled qualitative data pertaining to the 'unit of analysis'[7] and 'sub-units of analysis'[8] (Yin, 2003), to be analysed through a process of oscillation thus facilitating a course of action which enabled both surface and deeper level concepts to emerge. As the nature of the research design was a single case study, addressing concerns relating to internal validity (see Yin, 2003) and objectivity (Strauss and Corbin, 1998), was assisted by means of iteration, specifically repeating the process ensure identified concepts were neither misinterpreted or eliminated. This

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[7]'Unit of analysis' refers to professionals belief, knowledge and understanding (Yin, 2003).
[8] 'Sub-units of analysis' refers to the nature and constitution of relationships within and between individuals and organisational sites. (Yin, 2003).

occurred through a process of conceptual ordering (see Strauss and Corbin, 1998) against both competing and complimentary concepts.

Procedure

Adopting a triangulated (Yin, 2003), or multipronged approach (Layder, 1998), to data collection enabled a variety of sources to inform the basis upon which to examine the case study under review. This also allowed both similarities and differences to be analysed between complimentary and competing concepts, at surface and deeper levels of the data.

To ensure a fit between data and theoretical ideas, a process of descriptive and interpretive coding was undertaken. Initially, an open-ended approach was applied. This was guided simultaneously by the research focus, concepts derived from the literature and discursive terms used by the participants which in turn, allowed the data to be organised into behavioural, structural and mediating concepts. However, in an effort to avoid a 'force fit' between the data and coding, a flexible approach was adopted. This enabled coding to be revised as the inquiry progressed whilst simultaneously remaining conceptually organised within the investigation. As the central objective of this inquiry was to locate generative mechanism which may, in turn, activate causal or emergent properties towards a single homeless population, both structural and post-structural theories were applied to mediating concepts within the data and then analysed for causal effects.

Evaluation of Method

The aim of this inquiry was to identify the complex and interwoven levels of policy and practice. As a consequence, the method proved useful in identifying generative mechanisms and emergent properties within the data gathered. By adopting a triangulation (Yin, 2003) or multipronged approach (Layder, 1998) to data collection, the analysis of documentary evidence, specifically government policy directives and academic research, provided the context and initial concepts in which homelessness is both situated and understood. In addition, localised documentation and field observations were effective in providing supplementary contextual evidence which helped to highlight the environment from which the data derived from semi-structured interviews was situated.

However, a number of caveats need to be noted regarding the present study, firstly the sample size which was taken from five local authorities within the Northwest of England and whilst regularities were evident in the data, the overall findings cannot be generalised to all strategic managers working in Local Government. Furthermore, by only concentrating on local government meant that contributions from agencies within the voluntary or Third Sector were not sought. However, the lack of voluntary agencies was justified on the basis that in utilising a Critical Realist approach, analysis requires depth as opposed to breadth.

Finally, as part of this inquiry focuses on the involvement of single homeless people, it could be suggested that the choice of participants which favoured 'powerful elites' in a localised setting was a paradox, as it failed to represent people directly affected by homelessness. For example, it has been argued that not directly involving people experiencing homelessness in the research process, ensures that self-definition and experiences which could question or challenge constructions of what is means to be homeless, are ignored (see Hutson and Liddiard, 1994), However, in contrast to this argument, Third (2000) suggests that homelessness has become an over-researched issue, thus to embark on a project with some of the most vulnerable members of society for intellectual curiosity alone, is ethically unacceptable. As the focus of this inquiry was specifically to ascertain the mechanisms and causal powers within policy implementation and practice towards a single homeless population and in taking note of the sentiments of Third (2000), it was believed that to engage people experiencing homelessness for academic gain alone, would have been morally questionable. Furthermore, by focusing critical attention on powerful elites, as opposed to the homeless individual would, it was believed, significantly contribute to an enhanced understanding of the dynamic between structure and agency that maintains and perpetuates the continued marginalisation and exclusion of homelessness.

Chapter Five

A search for the causal power of agency: examining strategic managers understanding and beliefs into the cause of single homelessness

Introduction

Situated within the context of New Labour's modernising welfare agenda, the motivation for developing a contractual relationship between the state and civil society was based on the concepts of rights and responsibilities. With a focus on transforming citizens from passive recipients of welfare to 'active' self-sustaining individuals (Clarke, 2005:448), the central philosophy underpinning Labour's approach was described by Clarke, (2005: 448), as an ideological 'hybrid' which "simultaneously draws on social democratic and communitarian concepts of citizenship", but was also "overwhelmingly dominated by neo-liberal concerns with 'liberating' the citizen from the state (ibid). Navigating between control and governance and underpinned by a moralising discourse, the consequences of this rhetorical focus on the transformation of welfare recipients informed the development of a range of policy initiatives including Supporting People and Community Safety whose respective remits and incentives, in the implementation of policy goals centred on responsibilisation and restorative practices[9]. Encompassed within this ideological commitment to the restructuring of welfare and situated within ElderVass's (2010) 'emergentist' approach to the interrelationship between structure and agency, the following chapter presents the findings from Stage One of this inquiry. The

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[9] Also see pages 79 and 83 respectively, in regard to the development of Community Safety and Supporting People within the context of New Labour's modernising agenda

objective of this phase of the investigation was to explore beliefs, knowledge and understandings articulated by strategic managers within Supporting People and Community Safety Teams in relation to the primary cause of single homelessness.

According to Elder-Vass (2010: 141), empirical research which identifies emergent properties and generative mechanisms requires an acceptance of the structural elements or causal powers of agency. Avoiding a purely reductionist view of agency, he argues that in the search for emergent properties "...an individual's ontological status... [is]...not made up in isolation". Hence, within a realist framework, the causal powers of agency are viewed as the culmination of a complex configuration over time and space of neurological, biological and social entities including, but not limited to, organisations and social groups which, when combined in particular ways, contribute to the shaping of belief systems (Elder-Vass, 2010: 88). Encompassed within these belief systems are what Elder-Vass (2011: 115) refers to as "discursive circles". In an attempt to reconcile the causal power of discourse with that of agency and action, discursive circles are said to operate through individuals whilst simultaneously being the product of wider interactions between both consistent and conflicting dispositions. Accordingly, within this context depending on an individual's experience, their knowledge, beliefs and understanding may be modified, strengthened or weakened. When situated within large-scale organisations, for the purpose of this inquiry - local government, belief systems can also, in part, be influenced by the particular roles occupied. Thus, prior to the investigation, it was deemed both necessary and appropriate to gain an insight into previous and current roles undertaken by participants within the respective teams, As a consequence, each was

invited to recount the length of time employed in their current role alongside a brief overview, of their previous employment.

Within Supporting People teams, the majority of participants originated from a social housing background, either within local government or within the Registered Social Landlord sector. Nine out of ten interviewed had progressed from front line services, overseeing and managing properties, to their current strategic positions. One, however, had extensive experience within the statutory homeless sector across various authorities within the North West. Within Community Safety teams, one participant from the nine interviewed had previously been employed within the Voluntary Homeless Sector, four had progressed from a variety of non-related roles within their respective local authorities and the remaining four had previously been serving officers in the Police Force. This understanding of the different pathways to their current roles as strategic managers within their respective teams was useful in facilitating a deeper understanding of the knowledge and beliefs which may underpin the implemented of policy action towards a single homeless population[10].

Causes of Homelessness: Professional Interpretations

Within the context of the investigation, the first stage of the analysis focused on strategic managers' individual understanding and beliefs in regard to the primary cause of single homelessness as a result of their experience and knowledge of working in local

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[10] For further information regarding the composition and remit of both Supporting People and Community Safety Teams see Appendix A

government. Throughout this process, interpretations identified both similarities and differences in terms of participants' awareness of and attitude towards, individuals in housing need:

> I think obviously homelessness for a lot of people especially single homelessness...is a dramatic illustration or symptom of something else. So if someone's got a chaotic drug or alcohol problem, at some point, it's likely that they'll become homeless. In that way it's often a symptom of something else (SP #6; LA-B)

In this first extract for example, there appears to be some recognition of the multifaceted nature of causes which is highlighted in the reference to wider elements or 'symptoms' at work. However, despite this inference to 'wider elements', it could be suggested that in an effort to both conceptualise and contextualise succinctly their response, the participant appears to resort to narrowly defined 'problems' associated with illicit substance and alcohol misuse in an attempt to explain the key factors in the likelihood of homelessness occurring. In the following extract, however whilst there are some similarities to the above, there are also subtle differences too:

> A fair percentage I would say is a result of drugs and alcohol, especially single young men. Most people I've met tend to have a mindset, they've got into this mindset...erm...y'know, put themselves down. They are overwhelmed helpless some have drug problems and alcohol problems which exacerbates their problems (CS # 12; LA-C)

In the second account, like the first, the central theme of participants understanding

focuses on causation as primarily linked to drug and alcohol misuse. However, unlike the

previous interpretation, the participant introduces other factors associated with gender,

age and vulnerability. Hence, in recounting their understanding, the misuse of drugs and

alcohol is associated with the vulnerability of 'helpless young single men'. Although this

second extract, differs from the first in highlighting wider 'symptoms', at a deeper level

in acknowledging a particular 'helplessness' or 'mindset' amongst people experiencing

homelessness, it could be argued that there is an implied understanding of wider issues

such as poverty and unemployment which exposes particular individuals to the risks of

homelessness (Pleace, 2000).

Also, linked to individual behaviour, a third participant's understanding appeared to

reflect a local and national focus that associated homelessness with a predisposition

towards anti-social behaviour:

> In terms of causes...[of homelessness]...lot of the time people are left to their
> own devices, like, when you get a group of young people with access to
> drink...they're mixing with dyed-in-the-wool characters who aren't prepared to
> change lifestyles and are good at leading people astray getting involved in all
> sorts of rubbishy scams...and I think there's y'know a general lowering of
> acceptable behaviour (SP #2; LA-A)

In referring to problems associated with anti-social behaviour (Home Office, 2003),

specifically in the recounting of young people and alcohol abuse consorting with "dyed-

in-the-wool characters", suggests the notion of a particular 'culture' amongst

homelessness individuals (see for example Ravenhill, 2008). Aligned with low-level

crime and a perceived unwillingness to conform to a notion of 'acceptable behaviour', the extract above also arguably indicates, a concept of a lifestyle choice. For example in the notion that some people "are not prepared to change their lifestyle", could suggest that in some way individuals play a part in their own homelessness (see McNaughton Nicholls, 2009).

For others, albeit a significant minority, the individuals' behaviour was not the primary factor leading to their homelessness:

> On the evidence that we've got...fleeing domestic violence is the one...[cause of homelessness]... from like the monitoring of Housing Options, that comes up highest on the list
> (SP #15; LA-E)

In the above extract there appears to be an acceptance of factors which are predominantly associated with homelessness amongst women (Watson, 1999). However, this recognition and understanding of homelessness was limited to just the one participant. Thus, despite legislation recognising the impact of domestic violence in terms of womens homelessness, the narrow view applied by the majority arguably demonstrates that this issue was marginalised from dominant understandings of causation (Watson, 1999).

The propensity for interviewees to focus on the behaviour of homeless individuals as a primary causal factor was substantiated further in subsequent accounts. This ensured that within both Supporting People and Community Safety teams, the cause of homelessness

was increasingly located in the realm of sub-criminality as the following extracts demonstrate:

> Well you can look at the statistics and statistics will say that for example, eighty per cent of people who reoffend are homeless y'know they've no settled address, so...the chances of reoffending are very very high. I mean that's a bare fact really. (SP #7; LA-B)

> The primary... [*cause of homelessness*]...there are many really. I would say in [*Authority*] a big impact is offending. Quite often single people have either been in prison or they've lost their tenancy as a result of offending, when that happens you tend to find other things aren't working. They might be involved in anti-social behaviour, there might be drugs involved, there might be crime involved etcetera. (CS #11; LA-C)

In the above two accounts, there appears to be a strong belief and understanding that the cause of homelessness amongst non-statutory or single homeless groups, is the result of offending behaviour. In the first extract of the two particularly, this belief is justified with reference to statistical evidence which, for the interviewee are "the bare facts" and unproblematically reflect what could be described as their 'reality'. Similarly, the second explanation cites offending behaviour but also adds to this the loss of tenancy which can lead to re-offending behaviour associated with "anti-social behaviour" and drug misuse. Although not expressly articulated, the second participant appears to allude to a lack of support for the individual in involved. For example "when things aren't working" could refer to the limited input from service upon their release from prison (Cowan and Fionda, 1994) and as such, exposes them to further re-offending behaviour and ultimately homelessness.

In the following account although offending behaviour and tenancy breakdown are cited, there is a distinct contrast in their understanding of the cause of homelessness. This account takes a more critical approach particularly in relation to statistical evidence about the causes of homelessness:

> ...I think there [some homeless people]... that are not showing on official records for example y'know like people leaving...people leaving prison or people who have had a period of time in prison and their housing situation has broken down and they can't go back to their family or they've lost their tenancy...they don't show on official statistics...even the reasons behind tenancy breakdown y'know they don't actually keep record of why that's happened like things like y'know arrears even if it's things like arrears they don't look under that like it might be drug and alcohol issues or I don't know lack of skills, poor budgeting (SP #16; LA-E)

Although the loss of tenancy and experience of prison is identified as a characteristic of homelessness, the explanation in the above account suggests that unlike the previous two extracts, they believe discrepancies in statistics can in fact fail to acknowledge the risks to homelessness that certain individuals are exposed to on their release from prison (Cowan and Fionda, 1994). Hence, in questioning the validity of organisational statistics, the above account also mirrors previous research (see Cloke et al, 2001) which challenges the methods and validity in the enumeration of homelessness data. Furthermore, again in contrast to the previous extracts, whilst drug and alcohol issues are referred to, it would appear that their understanding of tenancy and family breakdown, "lack of skills and poor budgeting", suggests an underlying recognition of external factors such as organisational practice and lack of appropriate support which impact on the lives of the individuals concerned. That is to say, as a result of the findings from the aforesaid statistics, certain

risks which can precipitate homelessness go unrecognised in the commissioning of services and as a consequence, support to overcome them is not adopted within organisational practice.

Indeed the perceived deficiency in appropriate support for homeless individuals, compounded by structural disadvantage, was a theme that emerged amongst some participants within both the Community Safety and Supporting People teams in relation to their understanding of causation:

> Well nationally you've got all sorts of issues. Certainly in [*Authority*] there's issues around demand for housing and what is left of social housing and there's also issues with private landlords. You know as well as I do with private landlords, one black mark and you're out they're not tolerant of issues with housing benefits and non-payment of rent. That's another issue as well around housing the benefit system...[*it*]...often doesn't help people stay in their tenancy...especially if people are not getting any support (SP #14; LA-D)

> I think fundamentally a lot of single homelessness is...erm...apart, from the lack of places to live and that sort of stuff, a lot of it is for want of the right sort of intervention at the right time. There's an awful lot of people who come through, thinking of like the non-priority need type cases, that for a bit of intervention or a bit of support at the right time they wouldn't had to become homeless. Y'know basic stuff like not reacting to letters from Housing Benefit, not understanding things very well (CS #3; LA-A)

The above interpretations suggest that the cumulative effect of structural problems, including a lack of appropriate and affordable accommodation; the complexities associated with housing benefit claims; the intolerance of private landlords; and lack or appropriate support propel some individuals with particular vulnerabilities into homelessness. Although the type of support was not elaborated on, the above account

suggests that for "the right sort of intervention", homelessness for the "non-priority need type" could be avoided suggests that people who experience homelessness do not possess an ability to cope with, for example, everyday responsibilities. This is illustrated in phrases such as, homeless people possessing a limited "understanding" of "basic stuff" and "not reacting to letters".

This particular understanding corresponds in part, with the wider literature in terms of what Pleace (2000) defines as a "new orthodoxy". This proclaimed 'new' understanding in terms of causes of homelessness, particularly amongst non-statutory groups, relates to the notion that particular vulnerabilities experienced by certain individuals within society increases their susceptibility to homelessness. Such notions are certainly not without merit in recognising structural factors at work and the need for comprehensive support arrangements. However, at a deeper level it could be also argued that the focus on an individual's inability to cope reinforces a concept of pathology which sets them apart from the rest of society who may also experience similar structural challenges. This distinction was further elaborated on by a strategic manager within one of the Supporting People teams. Here, however, whilst behavioural facets of homelessness were identified in this account, which reflected the previous responses, it was the lack of intervention from partner agencies that was perceived as culpable in exacerbating homelessness:

> Coming from the strategic housing side, I'd say the most problematic ones are
> the ones with more than one issue. If you've got somebody with a mental health
> problem and also drug abuse and alcohol, trying to get support for those people,
> particularly in the borough, they have to accept they have a drink problem before
> they get help. That person may have the mental health problem first which
> wasn't addressed, and then they develop a drink problem. I mean I can think of a
> particular individual it wasn't a young person it was...he was splitting up...but he

had a mental health problem before any of it all started. When you tried to get Social Services to support him they just say he's got a drink problem and won't acknowledge it, then we can't help him. But these people do fall through the net. Even if you want to help them, the services aren't there to help them. I think housing officers are very very tuned into their tenancies on the patch that they cover particularly identifying their support, but were they struggle is getting that support. It's almost like well they're sorted now they've got a property they don't need the support (SP #1; LA-A)

In the interpretation of causes of homelessness, the above extract provides a dramatic example of the contested notion of 'vulnerability' across the housing and care divide. For Supporting People services in particular, it suggests that the limited input from Social Services Departments, particularly for individuals with a complexity of needs, not only puts increasing pressure on housing and support providers, but exposes people to a greater risk of homelessness. It is important to note that this criticism is not just one-way as similar accusations have also been levelled at housing services themselves. For example, Social Services also express concern about the lack of input *from* Housing services and the implications this has on their statutory responsibilities for social care (see, for example, Foord and Young, 2007). This would suggest that despite both national and local strategies professing coherent links and multi-disciplinary working within and between Social Service departments and housing services in addressing contemporary homelessness, this remains lacking in actual practice. Indeed the above extract suggests that the historic tensions between Housing and Social Services (Lund and Foord, 1997) towards a single homeless population, remains difficult to shift.

Despite the identification and implications of disputed notions of 'vulnerability' identified above, it is suggested that the above extract nonetheless, continues to draw on

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previous understandings in relation to the causes of homelessness. This is particularly

evident in the way the interviewee expresses their interpretation of people affected, for

example, in the phrase "the most problematic ones are the ones with more than one

issue...". The language used to identifying people in such terms implies not only that

"these people" are difficult or a problem to deal with, but it also suggests that on a

conceptual level they are somehow detached from the majority of tenants that housing

officers have contract with. Furthermore, whilst the account does provide a glimpse into a

process by which an individual's struggles can spiral out of control when personal

support networks breakdown, there is nonetheless, a limited acknowledgement of wider

structural factors that can not only generate, but also exacerbate, issues such as mental

health and relationship breakdown.

However, this acknowledgement of relationship breakdown as a primary causal factor for

non-statutory homelessness was further clarified in a number of accounts from both

Supporting People and Community Safety teams:

> I suppose with family breakdown. One partner leaves and obviously we're not talking about women with children, but it can leave men in a situation where maybe they've left the house to the partner and the kids. You have problems... [then]... with single men who then find it hard to manage on their own, especially if they've been in a long-term relationship and they've been well looked after, so you do end up with a lot of men who are like sofa-surfing or who are staying intermittently with family members but who aren't really settled and don't have a base and then quite often alcohol comes into play and people lose their jobs and it becomes a downward spiral (SP #3; LA-E)

The above extract can be seen as describing what has been called a homelessness

"pathway" (see Anderson, 2001). It identifies a gender difference in terms of distinctions

between statutory and non-statutory homeless and although the gender difference has

been alluded to in previous extracts, the above provides an illustration of the consequence

of this aspect of the homelessness legislation, particularly for men who may find

themselves in housing need. Furthermore, unlike preceding accounts, in terms of

understanding causes of homelessness, there is a noticeable divergence in the discourse.

Here, the focus on individual traits which dominates previous accounts appears less

evident. Despite referencing similar factors such as drug and alcohol misuse, which have

been previously identified as contributory factors; the above appears to suggest that it

might actually be a *consequence* of homelessness, rather than the other way round (i.e. a

cause of homelessness). Significantly therefore, within this particular understanding of

causation, there is less evidence of a direct link between homelessness, substance misuse

and criminal activity. However, these more nuanced accounts of family breakdown, were

not only in the minority, but primarily situated with Supporting People teams.

As highlighted in the following accounts, for some participants (primarily but not

exclusively, within Community Safety teams), the main cause of homelessness was

understood to be a result of specific problems within particular family environments. The

following two extracts were taken from members of different Community Safety teams:

> Family breakdown I'd say. In my experience one of the key issues is lack of
> support within the family network...some people will opt to go on the streets,
> some fall into crime and y'know other types of anti-social behaviour. So a lot of
> it stems from their upbringing... (CS #3; LA-A)

> I think perhaps parenting initially and the children the kids see parents y'know
> drinking all the time knocking hell out of each other perhaps and then they grow
> up they don't see anything different they go into that sort of life...erm...they hit

the beer at an early age...erm...drugs and it sort of leads to crime. Then again they'll get a house on [*local housing estate*] y'know on their own and then the repercussions are y'know they'll get into the realm of anti-social behaviour (CS #5; LA-A)

In alluding to the phenomenon of homelessness as essentially an issue affecting younger people, these interviewees both felt the primary cause of homelessness resulted from an individual's immediate family environment. Specific examples were cited such as 'lack of support'; incidences of domestic violence fuelled by alcohol; and parental neglect. Whilst these could themselves be the consequences of wider structural issues, participants appear to view them as key factors which lead "the children" to choose homelessness or more specifically, to "opt to go on the streets". As a consequence, the repercussion of this 'choice' was perceived as leading, almost inevitably, to a lifestyle of drug and alcohol abuse, crime and anti-social behaviour. This, I suggest, highlights a depiction of homelessness which draws heavily on concepts associated with disfunctionality. This, in turn, links to wider debates relating to 'problem families', a category of people who are increasingly maligned within contemporary populist culture for their perceived negation of accepted 'norms' and 'values' associated with family life and parenting (Burney, 2005; Jones, 2011).

Furthermore, in citing the presence of drugs, alcohol and crime alongside a concept of choice, this depiction of homeless young people also reveals a correlation with behaviour identified as 'youth nuisance' across all of the participating local authorities Community Safety and Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategies. This relationship between causes of homelessness amongst young people and anti-social behaviour stemming from

dysfunctional family environments was, to varying degrees, reiterated by most other

participants in both Community Safety and Supporting People teams.

However, unlike the above extracts, the following minority accounts do appear to

recognise the consequences of wider structural disadvantage on immediate family

environments:

> I suppose poverty within those families, I suppose. It isn't really my remit so it's
> quite difficult, mine is in tackling anti-social behaviour. Perhaps people, I don't
> know, but perhaps because of domestic violence within a property whether that
> prompts people to move out early because it's probably an escape... (CS #10;
> LA-C)

> It's like when a 16 or 17 year old falls out with the parents to the extent that the
> person says y'know you can't live here anymore your behaviour's too bad I
> can't cope...I mean I've got a teenage daughter so I know it can be difficult
> y'know and I'm supposedly educated with good communication and coping
> skills we're not on the breadline y'know there aren't sort of tremendous pressure
> that other people feel there in so despite the difficulties I'm not looking to throw
> her out every time we have a bust-up or something (SP #2; LA-A)

Although reflecting a similar understanding to those cited in the previous extracts the

above accounts both implicitly and explicitly identify wider structural disadvantages. For

example, the former interpretation not only appears less certain of their knowledge of

homelessness, but openly acknowledges that it is an area of policy which is not a strategic

focus within their specific Community Safety team. However, it is the acknowledgement

of poverty as a contributory factor in precipitating homelessness that was significant.

This was, however, the only interpretation within both Supporting People and

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Community Safety teams interviewed, that suggested a direct correlation between socio-economic disadvantage and homelessness.

Notwithstanding this, and despite the former extract appearing to recognize the link between wider disadvantage and homelessness, it is the direct comparison with the latter's own family situation which reveals a number of interesting points. On the surface, the second extract suggests a more nuanced view of families than is portrayed in earlier accounts, for example, in acknowledging a lack of social capital as a result of structural disadvantage. However, it is through the direct comparison with the participants own family situation in terms of "education", "communication" and "coping skills", that arguably a discourse of 'difference' begins to emerge (Riggins, 1997). This discourse, it could be suggested, is particularly evident in relation to a 'normative' understanding of parenting and the conceptualisation of responsibility. Thus, whilst it is acknowledged that difficulties occur within most families, it also appears to suggest that the more disadvantaged the family is at a social and economic level, the more likely they are to evict their children from the family home and as a consequence, expose the young person to a greater risk of homelessness.

In exploring strategic managers' understanding and beliefs into the primary causes of homelessness amongst people deemed non-statutory homeless, specific distinctions also emerged regarding the categorisation of homelessness. Fuelled in part by Central Government documents, legislative guidance and national strategies, including the Supporting People programme (DETR, 2001), this concept of 'categories' of

homelessness, further informed participants beliefs into causes and was established on the

'type' of people involved. This was particularly prevalent in distinctions between 'single

homelessness' and 'rough sleeping':

What I would say in [*the authority*], the people that I see, is that you've got different categories of homeless people. The homeless people, who sleep rough but don't worry anyone, aren't involved in crime and have got their own reason why they're homeless. Then you see a different type of homeless person, who doesn't take care about how they look and they're homeless because of drug misuse and they're begging all the time because they want money to feed their drug habit. That's the different types of homelessness (CS #3; LA-A)

There are definitely longer-term rough sleepers who have a different catalogue of issues as opposed to single homeless people. (SP #7; LA-B)

There are people who choose to be rough sleepers and they may have been single homeless and they have done hostel, lived on their own and may have kind of opted out for whatever reason. (CS #11; LA-C)

There might be about three or four [*in the authority*] long-term rough sleepers who are older men, kind of ex-forces y'know, drink dependent, I think a couple have dogs, who are just not interested in living in a house or living in a hostel and are just happy on the streets and won't accept services. Generally people who attempt to engage and bring them in general, say it's mental health that's involved, generally it's drink, their problems are drink related, y'know stereotypical rough sleepers that's their lifestyle and they beg on street corners y'know harass people. (SP #6; LA-B)

As the above extracts identify, professional interpretations appear to draw a distinction

between causes of homelessness based on a belief that the 'types' of people involved are

in some way different, not only from normative concepts associated with behaviour,

family and community, alluded to in earlier extracts, but also from each other. For

example, in articulating this belief, strategic managers in both Supporting People and

Community Safety teams suggest that people who experience street homelessness, or what is commonly referred to as 'rough sleeping', are not only "older" than people experiencing single homelessness, but also have "their own reasons" as to why they are homeless. These so-called 'reasons', are further defined through what could be suggested as the concept of choice. These are specified in comments such as "they are not interested in living in a house or...hostel" and are "happy on the streets". Whilst, as previously identified, the concept of choice has been linked to causes of single homelessness, this is arguably associated with the choice to act or behave in particular ways. Whether this relates to behaviour resulting from a troubled family environment or actions associated with illicit substance misuse, crime and anti-social activity, for professionals' interviewed, it is the *single* homeless persons 'choice' to adopt or maintain the aforesaid behaviour which is seen to cause their homelessness. In other words, it is a more complex view of choice which is limited, at least in part, by context. In contrast, the understanding and belief regarding the 'choice' enacted by people experiencing *street* homelessness, appears to be linked to an understanding of how they wish to live their lives. In other words, this is seen as a more straightforward idea of conscious choice. This is outlined in the comment "they have done hostels, lived on their own and...kind of opted out". This is coupled with a further suggestion of their "refusal" to accept assistance with identified health and social care needs.

Regardless of professed notions of "different types" with "different issues", in an effort to clarify the variation, it is suggested here that there is an element of contradiction between strategic managers' accounts. This was particularly evident in the first and fourth extracts

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in relation to the activity of "begging". Whilst the accounts of "begging" on the surface appear similar, it is suggested that the distinction made between "feed[ing] their habit" and a "stereotypical...lifestyle" suggests the former is linked to illicit activity in which homelessness is seen to be an direct outcome of criminal and anti-social behaviour, whereas the latter, appears to draws on mythical notions of homelessness as it use to be, to be precise, the "rugged individual...unshackled by cultural and social norms" (Parsell and Parsell, 2012: 1-3). This not only creates further distinctions between an implied notion of what is regarded as 'authentic' homelessness - conjuring up the old 'deserving and undeserving' distinction - but it could also suggest that the former are perceived as a malignant threat, whereas the activity of the latter, as a benign intrusion.

This suggests that whilst both 'types' of homelessness are regarded, understood and believed to be 'different', it could also be tentatively argued that the way in which these so-called different categories of homelessness are articulated, creates a portrait of street homelessness as, in the main, a 'romanticised tragedy' and single homelessness as the 'demonised criminal' (Gendelman, 2006). Adding to this, the concept of a lifestyle choice, for the former it is suggested, is thus understood as resulting from 'pathological' problems and the latter believed to result from 'problematic' behaviour. Combined these understandings and beliefs would therefore appear to reflect ideas about people who supposedly transgress from the normative values of society as either being 'mad' or 'bad'

This underlying idea that homelessness is the result of a lifestyle choice was nonetheless, vehemently challenged by a minority of participants within Supporting People teams:

I don't personally, my personal opinion is, that you shouldn't categorise somebody as a rough sleeper as if it's a social category. There are people who sleep rough from time to time and that might be during a period of unsettled, y'know an unsettled period, they might be having nights on friends floors and that might break down then they might sleep rough and then that might...I think the notion of rough sleepers, is a kind of, it's come from central government and it's a London focus thing and y'know this idea that there are people who think that once somebody's been sleeping rough for three weeks, then they develop a career of a life on the street. That [11]Louise Casey perspective and that might be true for some people, but I don't know if it's a metropolitan thing. But I would object...on principle, it's like seeing people as 'the homeless' like it's a social category not something you experience, so I would say that rough sleeping is something that you might do during a period of homelessness...so that's my opinion (SP #5; LA-E)

There's this myth that some people actually choose to sleep rough as a way of life...what a stupid notion that was, that it's all about choice. People make wrong decisions at certain points in their lives, or they don't have the range of choices that perhaps people like us have and that your choices just y'know just gets diluted till you've hardly got any choices at all and you find yourself y'know rough sleeping or homeless. I mean some people we work with just don't have the choices that perhaps we would have. Also some people might have had very negative experiences in the services that we provide for homeless people, because they can be frightening places, so there may be occasions were somebody may feel safer sleeping on the streets instead of going into a hostel...so that might be a reason but I don't think it's a category (SP #16; LA-E)

In contesting the previous notion of choice resulting from professional understanding of a

particular 'homeless behaviour', the above extracts suggests such notions are the direct

result of a particular ideology orchestrated by central government which perpetrates "the

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[11] Louise Casey, former deputy director of the homelessness charity Shelter, was appointed head of the New Labour Government's Rough Sleepers Unit (1999). In 'achieving' the government's target of reducing rough sleeping, Ms Casey became director of the New Labour's Homelessness Directorate. Following this appointment, Ms Casey headed the government's crusade against antisocial behaviour (Whiteley, 2002).

idea that... once somebody's been sleeping rough...they develop a career of a life on the street". This seeming opposition to previous understandings of homelessness was extended further in the second account. The participant interviewed suggested that the idea people choose to become homeless was a "myth", and also suggested that "people [can] make wrong decisions at certain points in their lives" and as a consequence, "choices...get diluted". Furthermore, in direct opposition to the previous account which suggested homeless people, particularly people sleeping rough, 'refuse' assistance from services, the second account in particular suggests that people's rejection is linked to the "negative experience[s]" often encountered in hostels and other forms of temporary accommodation (see, for example, Rosengard, 2001; Crane et al, 2005). Thus what could be described as a somewhat more informed view of homelessness, the above two accounts provided a counter-image of the homeless person, in contrast to the majority of the strategic manager's understandings and beliefs previously identified. Having said that, however, in spite of the above clearly challenging previous constructs of single homelessness and its primary causes, the comment in the second quote that describes "they don't have a range of choices that perhaps people like us have..." can be read as implying what I regard as a problematic distinction between 'Us' and 'Them'.

Challenges aside, these deeply critical accounts were, however, in the minority and whilst other participants challenged the notion of 'difference', in terms of categories of homelessness, the 'difference' was predominantly regarded as problematic in relation to the "monitoring and reporting of data":

The term category single homelessness doesn't really mean much you've got to look at single homelessness and you've got to break it down to what exactly does that mean 'cause single homelessness can be defined as a generic term drug, alcohol, mental health, complex needs etc etc etc...and whether or not that individual is seen as a priority or whatever [authority] has got a statutory duty to provide accommodation...which is hit and miss really (SP #13; LA-D)

It's wrong to categorise because when you are looking at monitoring and reporting on data you can doubly report trebly report 'cause once I access the service I'm no longer a rough sleeper guaranteed I might have a drug problem guaranteed I might have a string of offences behind my name y'know the chances are that erm I've got some mental health problem whether it's mild depression anxiety erm y'know I might have other types of cognitive behavioural kind of disorder which might not be picked up...what I'm seeing is well are we actually putting a barrier against somebody by putting them in a box? (SP #9; LA-C)

As the above explanations identify, despite the objection to different classifications of homelessness, there was nonetheless a familiar understanding of causation which conformed to the established pattern of thinking identified. For example, in the first of the two extracts, single homelessness it is suggested is best understood as a "generic term" for problems associated with "drug[s], alcohol, mental health and complex needs". Similarly, the second account, whilst challenging the concept of categorisation, the cause of homelessness is still understood as a "cognitive behavioural" problem. Hence, despite the objection to distinctions in terms of homeless groups, the participants overall belief regarding causation, conformed to the established pattern of thinking, that is to say, an understanding and belief that causes of homelessness resulted from either the specific pathological or problematical behaviour of individuals affected.

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However, there was one participant who did not only challenge the categorisation of

homelessness but also the established thinking in terms of causation:

> I don't think it's about anything other than that from my point of view...it
> distorts the picture you've got this massive issue about putting the right category
> on client record forms...I think it reaffirms that pigeonholing of people of
> stereotyping...I don't think it's a useful thing. People will have different needs
> depending on what their like experiences have been so if somebody has...might
> have has an experience of sleeping rough maybe they may or may not have
> higher support needs than somebody who hasn't...than say a woman fleeing
> domestic violence y'know it might depend on what their previous experiences
> have been and what's happened to them during their period of homelessness...I
> think what we do has created this kind of thinking (SP #10; LA-C)

In diverging from the normative views expressed in the previous extracts, the above

account suggests that current understandings and beliefs of causation not only 'distorts'

the picture of homelessness but underpinned by organisational processes, serve to

maintain a way of thinking that "reaffirms [the] stereotyping" of individuals affected.

Conclusion

Encompassed within broad concepts associated with structural and individualist theories

of homelessness (see for example Jacobs, et al 1999; Neal, 1997), the examination of

professional's beliefs, knowledge and understanding of primary causal factors elicited a

complex and at times contradictory tapestry of interpretations. Highly gendered in terms

of a primary focus on male homelessness and with a significant concentration on young

people, responses on the surface deviated between individual culpability and structural

deficiency. However, whilst the former was explicit in expressing constructs of

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dysfunctionality, lifestyle choice and deviancy, the latter was less so. Yet even for those who did identify structural concepts relating to poverty, demand for housing, an inability to access support and relationship breakdown, at a deeper level of analysis, their accounts still conveyed an implicit assumptions which linked to individual pathology. In tandem with interpretations of causation, there were a significant number of professionals who distinguished between concepts relating to notions of genuine and non-genuine homelessness.

However, albeit in the minority, there were some notable exceptions which not only challenged these arbitrary distinctions, but appeared to construct an alternative 'reality' to the taken-for-granted 'truths' presented by the majority.   Yet despite these differences, interwoven throughout interviewee's accounts was a particular language in which homelessness individuals were portrayed as somehow distinct from the rest of the population. Conveyed through a discourse of difference and expressed in pathological terms, strategic managers understanding of homelessness, arguably informed a dialogue which not only verbally ensured a separation between 'us' and 'them' but arguably enabled the human consequences associated with experiences of homelessness to become "conceptually marginalised" (Gutting, 2005: 76). In this way, these accounts can be seen as situating and viewing the homeless individual as the "Other" (Riggins, 1997).

Nonetheless, whilst such configurations of homelessness may identify an emergent tendency within the interpretations, these do not in themselves create a causal effect. According to Elder-Vass, (2010), the activation of causal powers requires the interaction

of "communities of practice" (Bucholtz, 1999 cited Elder-Vass, 2010: 151) that is to say, groups or "norm circles" bound together by certain characteristics (Elder-Vass, 2010: 115). Therefore, the next stage of the analysis, will identify professional understandings of targeted interventions aimed at addressing homelessness.   In order to achieve this, the following chapter will examine the inter-relationship between Supporting People and Community Safety teams specifically focusing on aspects of departmental language, culture and action.

Support and Sanctions: Reconciling conflicting approaches to homelessness

Introduction

Following the identification of professionals' knowledge, beliefs and understandings of causes of single homelessness; the inquiry preceded with an examination of the inter-relationship between Supporting People and Community Safety teams. The aim was to ascertain how, or if professional's beliefs and understanding of homelessness was reflected in their approach to policy implementation. For Supporting People teams this related to the commissioning of support and prevention services and for Community Safety teams, the management of low-level crime and anti-social behaviour. The primary objective being to elicit how, within the context of single homelessness, the implementation of a perceived conflict between support and sanctions was reconciled in practice. The following chapter presents the findings from this stage of the inquiry.

According to Elder-Vass (2010 cited in Bocheltz, 1999: 151), within the structures of 'communities of practice'[12] or 'associations', the identification of emergent properties or

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[12] Communities of Practice: are defined as groups or "norm circles" of two or more people who have a continuing allegiance to the group (or, as in the case of this inquiry, the respective teams). This allegiance or commitment persists beyond the duration of a single interaction. One implication of a community of practice is that although there may be transference of members within the group, there is a degree of stability of membership over time (Elder-Vass, 2010: 151-153). In this respect, communities of practice are regarded as social entities with emergent causal powers and as such, can exert a causal influence over their members. The mechanisms responsible for these causal powers are relationships and status within the group, degrees of consensus and the extent to which the consensus affects behaviour and finally, incentives. Specifically, what behaviour is incentivised, encouraged or rewarded within communities of practice (Elder-Vass, 2010: 154).

causal powers, between members of these social groups or "norm circles" (Elder-Vass, 2010) is, at its most basic, generated through frequency of the aforesaid members interaction and their strength of commitment and consensus to shared goals. However, within the context of this inquiry a significant factor attributed to the social grouping of Supporting People and Community Safety teams is that they are both inextricably bound together through the complex organisational framework and associated relationships within Local Government. Although similar generative mechanisms and emergent properties can exist within "communities of practice" and "organisational structures", Elder-Vass (2010:151) contends that the latter differs fundamentally by reason of the robust structuring of specialist roles. Operating within "discursive circles"[13] (Elder-Vass: 201: 1), these aforesaid roles are, in turn, marked by significant authority relations which not only define the associations between them, but can also possess the capacity to reward and penalise. This includes relationships both within and between organisations and with what Elder-Vass, (2010:152) defines as "higher level entities"[14]. Briefly applying this to the present inquiry, such authority relations may not only exist within and between the respective teams but also within the structures of "higher level entities" within Local Authorities including, but not exclusively, Executive Directors and Elected Members. In turn, these "higher-level entities" within local government are themselves answerable to prominent establishments, which in the case of Local Authorities is

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[13] Discursive circles: Elder-Vass (2011: 1) are a realist approach to the social ontology of discourse. It synthesises elements of the approach to discourse found in the early work of Michel Foucault with a critical realist understanding of the causal power of social structures. Elder-Vass (2011) thus argues that discursive structures can be causally significant when they are normatively endorsed and enforced by specific groups of people; that it is not discourse as such but these groups—discursive circles—that are causally effective; and that such an account allows us to reconcile the role of discourse with that of the subject

[14] Higher-level entities: Linked to the concept of emergence in the sense that higher-level entities always emerge from collections of lower-level entities that are their components parts. Thus the identification of emergence is whether the group as such has causal powers in its own right, or whether a group constitutes a higher level entity with causal effects of its own (Elder-Vass, 2010: 152).

primarily Central Government. Hence, whilst the respective teams constitute part of a system of government which in turn generate their own emergent properties, both Supporting People and Community Safety teams are themselves an organisational structure and as such, still possess the capacity to generate a causal effect.

According to Elder-Vass (2010:155) this distinguishing feature of organisations produces two sets of generative mechanisms which he defines as "norms"[15] and "coordinated interaction"[16]. In terms of the former, within the context of organisational relations, the incumbents' of professional roles adopt specific "norms" (ibid). These relate to the adoption of a certain language and behaviour, which defines, either implicitly or explicitly, how individuals assigned to them communicate not only with existing members or colleagues but also towards persons beyond organisational boundaries. Sequentially, in embracing the characteristic behaviour and language, the mechanism of "coordinated interaction" relates to the professionals commitment to coordinate their actions in accordance with their role. Thus, within certain configurations the amalgamation of behaviour, language and actions adopted by processionals, not only possess mechanism with emergent properties, but also has the potential for these to produce a causal effect within the organisation (Elder-Vass, 2010 155).

Within the context of this research, the search for generative mechanisms and emergent properties or causal powers continued with an examination of professional interpretations

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[15] Norms: a collective belief or disposition which endorses a particular social practice (Brock, 2012 p54).
[16] Coordinated interaction: mechanisms that produce causal powers depend on the interactions between members that occur when they perform their specialised roles. Elder-Vass (2010:155) refers to this as *coordinated interaction.*

as to level and frequency of interaction between Supporting People and Community

Safety teams. The objective was to identify if a "discourse of difference" (Riggins, 1997),

highlighted in phase one of the analysis, influenced the level of commitment to the shared

policy goal which seemingly oscillated between support and sanctions. Encompassed

within this was an exploration of "discursive circles" (Elder-Vass, 2010), within each of

the respective teams, which may contribute and inform a specific departmental language,

culture and action towards a single homeless population.

According to Riggins (1997: 3), in relation to what has been described as "the Self" and

"the Other", or as in this instance, "the professional" and "the homeless person",

discourse forms part of a system of structures. As a consequence, the identification of

discursive strategies can assist the researcher in highlighting "crucial underlying

cognitions" (Van Dijk 1997: 41) that may play a part in producing, reproducing, or

transforming, language, culture and practice towards minority groups. Hence, within the

context of the main analytical framework and in an attempt to highlight 'discursive

circles' operating within the respective teams, this stage of the analysis drew on two

discourse strategies of "meaning making" and "storytelling" (Van Dijk, 1997: 42).

To begin with, "meaning making", can be summarised into three elements. The first,

relates to generalised references to inherent "traits" or "typical" actions and behaviours of

minorities, which may in turn, reflect a particular attitude or ideology. The second

element of 'meaning making' is the reference to "universal or "in-group" norms and

values (ibid). According to Van Dijk (1997: 42), these norms and values may express the

"building blocks of ideology". Finally, the third element relates to "in-group goals" which may dominate group interest and the overall orientation of ideologies.

The second discursive strategy, "storytelling" involves the "the Self's" presentation or personal experience with minority groups. For Van Dijk (1997: 42), this essentially relates to anecdotal information which expresses a particular belief or understanding of events and the opinions of the so-called "storyteller" has about them.

Thus applying the above to "discursive circles" (Elder-Vass, 2011) and focusing on the level and frequency of interactions between Supporting People and Community Safety teams, this second stage of the analysis sought to examine how, within the context of single homelessness, the seemingly conflicting agendas of support and sanctions, were reconciled within and between strategic managers in the aforesaid teams.

Strategic interaction: Professional approaches to joint working

Commencing with an overview of collaborative working, the analysis proceeded to explore how, or if, the level of partnership or joint-working between Supporting People and Community Safety impacted on a shared policy goal. However, despite New Labour's focus on joined- up approaches to policy problems, the gathering of data for this phase of the inquiry proved somewhat problematic. This principally resulted from a lack of recognition amongst participants, primarily within Community Safety Teams, relating to the enactment of policy towards single homelessness. For example, although most

Community Safety teams had joint arrangements in place with agencies such as the

Police, Probation and Drug Action Teams, the concept of working in partnership with

Supporting People teams, particularly in addressing homelessness, was articulated by

many as beyond their strategic and operational remit. As a consequence, when questioned

about partnership arrangements regarding homelessness, it was inferred by a significant

majority as being beyond both their strategic and operational remit. Thus, responses were

either contextualised with their existing knowledge of so-called 'problematic' families

and/or individuals. Or it was stated categorically that homelessness was only relevant if it

became a problem for the local neighbourhood. This complexity in garnering levels of

joint-working between Supporting People and Community Safety teams was exemplified

by a participant from one Supporting People team who stated:

> ...we've tried to engage with them...[the Community Safety team]...around this
> issue [of homelessness] but they're just not interested...they don't return calls or
> answer emails so we just don't bother now (SP# 13; LA-D)

For the remaining team's interviewed, the facilitation of collaborative approaches elicited

responses identifying both similarities and differences amongst both Supporting People

and Community Safety teams:

> What Supporting People here's done over the past four or five years in [the
> authority] is, it's brought together those agendas and looked at "right what's the
> best solution?" so all partners and all stakeholders have got the opportunity to
> say "right lets come together and let's try and address this this way". So
> everybody's got a commitment to it...so everybody's got erm...a similar vision
> y'know... (SP # 15; LA-E)

> Well the core strategy group and the commissioning body are the governance
> side of the [Supporting People] programme and representatives come from DAT
> [Drug Action Team] and from probation, so issues regarding anti-social
> behaviour respect...erm y'know issues such as rough sleeping begging etcetera.

would be picked up there. If we thought it was a significant problem...it would lead to the commissioning of support through erm...cognitive type interventions (SP # 9; LA-C)

From the perspective of participants interviewed in two of the participating Supporting People teams, the above comments suggest that the organisational ethos of partnership working between Supporting People and Community Safety teams was considered relatively robust. This was illustrated in the reference to "governance" procedures which enabled relationships between "all partners" to jointly address policy priorities. Expressing an understanding of homelessness identified in the previous section of analysis, the focus on achieving policy outcomes within both extracts suggested a joint commitment to a shared policy goal. For example, in terms of bringing together agendas, the first extract intimates an allegiance to "a shared vision". This concept of a "shared vision" was, however, articulated in detail in the second extract for example, in relation to policy implementation, the language used, suggests that "support" was not allied to the provision of Housing Related Support as defined within the policy framework of Supporting People (DETR, 2001) but instead, was linked to changing the behaviour of homelessness, or more specifically "rough sleeping" and "begging". As a consequence, this perception of "support", involved the commissioning of "cognitive type interventions". This understanding of a joint-approach in dealing with the so-called behavioural aspects of homelessness was also reflected in responses from participants in Community Safety teams:

we've a good framework in the [Authority]. There are provisions in place to encourage information with all agencies. Under the Crime and Disorder Act there's legislation there which enables...erm...all agencies, regardless of whether

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you're an enforcement agency or a support agency, to exchange information for the purpose of reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. Our partner agencies meet up on a regular basis in what are called community sector areas...[the partners are]...made up of various representatives from all agencies to discuss like hotspots and problems, a part of the meeting is to discuss individuals...[or]...specific families, the approach is about trying to resolve the problem for that person getting support agencies involved to try and assist that person but as an enforcement team we obviously stand by and encourage that... (CS #10; LA-10)

Whilst reflecting some similarities to the previous accounts, particularly in reference to "information sharing" between "enforcement and support agencies", what constituted as collaborative working, appears somewhat weighted towards the strategic aims of Community Safety, namely their priority to safeguard their local neighbourhoods. Whilst the account suggests a clear understanding of what joint working entails, the style of working outlined above implies, that in relation to a partnership with Supporting People and in particular, the amalgamation of differing agendas, a joint-working approach is largely "for the purpose of reducing crime and anti-social behaviour". There is a particular recognition that support and "assistance" for some individuals and families is both required and necessary. However, what emerges from the above extract is that whilst "support" agencies are encouraged to be part of a collaborative dialogue, particularly in sharing and identifying "hot spots" and "problems" for the most part, is directed towards assisting Community Safety teams fulfil their strategic priorities. Further, in defining what constitutes as "hot spots" and "problems", the behaviour of families and individuals is cited. Although homelessness as such, is not revealed directly within the above account, the implied association between behaviour, families and homelessness, identified in the previous chapter, was a feature of joint-working arrangements amongst other participants interviewed:

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... [joint-working]...is sort of embryonic. We work closely with the family intervention project which is part funded by Supporting People to work with families to avoid homelessness but [in terms of strategic collaborative working], unfortunately I haven't been able to make the Core Strategy meetings but I'm on the erm attendance list to go to those meetings so there is some linking (CS # 17; LA-E)

There are a number of interesting points made in the above accounts, in relation to a joint strategic partnership between Supporting People and Community Safety; the extracts above suggest that whilst a framework for joint working was in place, the links between respective teams appears less robust than the previous extract. For example, although partnership working was undertaken, it was essentially regarded as "embryonic" appearing only to be undertaken at the operational level of policy implementation. According to Roche (2004), developing joint-working is neither straightforward nor a process that happens instantaneously. He suggests that difficulties in developing a partnership approach can emerge from a number of sources, including diverse departmental concerns and priorities. Thus, whilst operational joint-working can be effective, the suggested lack of robust, formalised arrangements at the strategic level of policy implementation could be an indication of cultural differences between the two departmental teams (Asthana et al, 2002). Hence, when questioned further on formalised collaborative links between Community Safety and Supporting People, in relation to the practice of regularly attending meetings and the 'linking' of both teams, the participant appeared to struggle in their response hence, their account of engaging in regular

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discussions with, and being a member of, the "Core Strategy" group appeared somewhat evasive and ambiguous.

The following extract also suggests limited joint strategic working arrangements but, unlike the above account, the response was more forthcoming in identifying the problem:

> From the Respect Agenda there's a lot of outcomes in which homelessness also needs to be added to. For example we've got a family intervention project for the worst families in [the Authority] to offer them intensive support...that fits with Strategic Housing Services and in particular the Supporting People programme because the objective is to reduce homelessness, so obviously, I think, now we're going to have more chance to do joint working were as in the past we haven't I think the Respect Action Plan will force that... (CS #10; LA-A)

In expressing previous difficulties in formulating joint arrangements, the above account alludes to an essentially a lack of 'fit' between departmental objectives directed in particular towards Supporting People and its focus on the support and reduction of single homelessness. However, in overcoming this, the participant suggests that the wider objectives of the New Labour Government, particularly in terms of achieving the priorities of the Respect Agenda (Home Office, 2003), not only requires joint-working arrangements between the respective teams, but the political imperative to meet policy goals, may also impose an element of coercion on Supporting People.

A further comment from a separate Community Safety team below also linked together the priorities of the Respect Agenda (Home Office, 2003) with addressing homelessness.

Mirroring accounts relating to causes of homelessness identified in the previous stage of analysis, the focus both remains and is directed, towards a particular homogenous concept of 'problem families' to whom, it is implied, a degree of enforcement is require to instil the normative attributes of 'respect' and 'responsibility'. This link between homelessness and 'problem' families, as opposed to homeless individuals, was justified on the basis that it is the dictate of both local and national policy priorities:

> ...they've got to be families and it's got to be defined as a family so we wouldn't work with a single household so it's not going to have any impact on single homeless households (CS #14; LA-A)

The difficulties of joint-working relating to a lack of 'fit' between the departmental objectives and understandings of homelessness, was also reiterated by participants within Supporting People. As the following extracts show, participants assert that despite attempts to engage with Community Safety teams within their respective organisations, the arrangement or protocols to facilitate an interconnection between the two were either tenuous or incompatible.

> erm...our services, we try and see them as being complementary [but] it's difficult because things get disjointed, y'know especially communications. We've got an anti-social behaviour team [but] it would be quite rare to feed information through to our core strategy group 'cos basically they're the ones that decide 'does it link into the Supporting People strategy, will it link into the Government's Respect Agenda? (SP #16; LA-E)

> There isn't any set down protocol but, what we do have is an overarching information exchange protocol which covers Supporting People. So the head would be able to supply information through the exchange programme (CS# 17; LA-E)

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This recurring theme of communication, or more specifically, the lack of a collaborative dialogue between the different organisational departments, appeared to have a significant effect on the level and commitment to joint working. Furthermore, there is also a suggestion amongst Supporting People participants in particular, that within some Authorities not only did the priorities of the Respect Agenda (Home Office, 2003) dominate, but it also appeared to determine the proviso of partnership arrangements. For example, this was outlined specifically in the comment; "basically they're (Community Safety) the ones that decide 'does it link into the Supporting People strategy, will it link into the Government's Respect Agenda?'"

Yet conversely, whilst seemingly to focus priorities on the Respect Agenda (Home Office, 2003), there also appeared to be a lack of recognition of Labour's commitment to addressing the so called overlapping or 'cross-cutting issues' which requires effective inter-organisational collaboration, to address not only issues of community safety, but also health, the environment and employment (Clarke et al, 1999). In the same way, the inability of strategic partners to facilitate a collaborative dialogue was also directed towards a lack of recognition of a homeless problem within certain authorities:

> ...the thing is in [the Authority] you talk to anybody, this is just what I gather
> from talking to people, 'we don't have a problem with
> homelessness...erm...rough sleeping'. That is what we're told by the
> homelessness service erm...so, if you try and approach them about it, they say
> there's not a problem. So the only time we're going to actually hear about them
> is if they start to be prolific, in relation to erm...aggressive begging, y'know
> intimidating passers-by and things like that and then they become a...priority in
> the prolific offenders group. I think this lack of recognition is impacting on

services definitely but I think it's down to resources and funding because if you admit you've a problem with rough sleepers you've then got to do something about it (CS #4; LA-A)

As identified earlier in the chapter, this focus on 'problem families' was a distinguishing feature of Community Safety managers understanding of homelessness and thus, for them, the main reason for working in partnership with Supporting People. There was, amongst a minority, the recognition of a so-called "prolific" and "intimidating" behaviour resulting from what is recognised as "street-level activity" (Johnsen and Fitzpatrick, 2008) commonly associated with single homelessness. In voicing their frustration regarding their inability to address the 'issue' effectively, the participants interviewed cited barriers as a lack of communication with departmental colleagues within homeless services. This lack of communication was speculated to be the result of funding constraints imposed by the Labour government, thus initiating the non-recognition and inaction towards homelessness in certain areas. The speculated problem of funding constraints however, was clarified in detail by one strategic manager in Supporting People:

> The rub really... [*is*]...the way the funding works when that whole sort of rough sleepers stuff kicked in...it was still at a time when housing demand was relatively low...so I think at the time rough sleepers were the real hard core type people...on the back of that we [*the authority*] got additional funding from the homelessness directorate now there's a lot of sort of anecdotal sort of information that there are more and more people sleeping rough...what we've got to remind ourselves is that if we do a head count and we get more than ten the government will go mad...[*and*]...take the money away (SP #2; LA-A)

Informed by a stylised discourse of homelessness as particular 'types' identified in stage one of the analysis, the above it could be suggested, is an example of what Elder-Vass (2010) defines as the "power of higher level entities". Thus, the allocation of resources from Central Government to 'tackle' homelessness is constrained by specific requirements. As a consequence, if (or when) authorities fail to adhere to these requirements, it is suggested they may experience negative repercussions. Subsequently such restrictions not only appear to create a distorted picture of the extent of homelessness, but also permit a localised policy of inaction. This lack of joint strategic working arrangements with Homelessness Services was not the only department cited. The deficiencies in coordinating a joint approach to homelessness, was also directed at other statutory agencies within the authority, particularly health and social care.

Whilst the majority of participants did not raise the concept of limited joint-working with Health and Social Care services, for a minority of participants however, a perceived lack of input from this sector had a negative impact on homelessness and its perceived relation to anti-social behaviour:

> What I think what is more of a problem, and it affects the anti-social behaviour agenda, is around Mental Health Services. This impacts on both Supporting People and Community Safety Agendas. I think, quite often people need specialist input but the services aren't there which often leads to further deterioration of an individual's behaviour. That worries me, especially when services are not equipped to deal with the complexities coming through the door...a lot of people I think, are managed when what they really need is very specialised mental health provision (SP #8; LA-B)

...if you look at our core strategy group, we've got more people who would be on the side of community safety than probably social care...if you weigh it up, Because we've got community housing service managers, y'know around homelessness, we've got YOTs (Youth Offending Teams), we've got drug and alcohol, we've got the anti-social behaviour coordinator and we've maybe got three representatives from...no maybe only two representatives from social care (SP #7; LA-B)

In reflecting comments in Stage One of the analysis and underpinned by a plethora of academic literature highlighting the limited access to health and social care provision for people defined as non-statutory homeless (see for example, Burrows et al, 1997; Pleace, 1998; Neale et al, 2008;), the above would suggest, that despite an increasing emphasis on policy networks and 'joint working' with strategic partnerships, it would appear that the lack of access to health and social care provision for individuals in acute housing need continues. For example in 2009, Carnwell and Carson, identified that despite policy directives presiding over the imperative for partnership working, many professionals continued to work within pre-existing arrangements, in which discrete identities and bodies of knowledge, impacted on the effectiveness of joint-working. In contrast, the former extract in particular appears to imply that the need for social care intervention, specifically mental health issues, is primarily related to the behavioural implications. Whilst there is undoubtedly the recognition of a "complexity of need" requiring "specialised...provision", the comment simultaneously suggest that, as a result of gaps in health and social care provision, a person's "behaviour...deteriorates" which subsequently impacts on both the Supporting People and Community Safety Agendas. This lack of appropriate intervention thus ensured that people who are concurrently experiencing homelessness and mental ill health become enmeshed, through no fault of their own, in the combined structures of Community Safety and Supporting People teams and the

subsequent consequences of an approach which arguably alluded to notions of "care and control" (see Parton, 2000: 457)

Reconciling Policy Goals: Professionals approaches to joint outcomes

Inhibited by facets ranging from central government funding constraints to localised policy priorities, participants' responses identified that a culture of coordinated and strategic interaction between Supporting People and Community Safety teams contained significant geographical irregularities. Out of the five authorities, only two identified joint strategic working arrangements that incorporated the sharing of information, planning and commissioning. The remainder ranged from lower level networking with agencies at the operational end of policy implementation to an absence of joint activity with little or no connection between departments, which also included a lack of recognition of joint policy goals. On the other hand, despite the disparity in joint strategic working, it is suggested here that the discourse underpinning many of the accounts, reiterate the concepts of 'deviancy' and 'disfunctionality' identified in Stage One. This not only informed a belief and understanding of a 'problematic' homeless behaviour, but appears to provide an incentive for combining the practice of support and sanctions. Within the context of this inconsistency in partnership working, the inquiry proceeded to examine professionals' ability to reconcile jointly these respective policy aims with regard to intervention and enforcement strategies directed towards single homeless groups:

In terms of reconciling it [support vs. sanctions] I think it depends on each individual case and it depends on how someone will engage with services. Naturally that goes back to how chaotic someone is, I mean the most chaotic service users won't abide by the rules, so there's more antisocial behaviour and [they will] probably end up in prison. But if you've got someone who's ready to work with you and who says 'I'll support you to do this but you'll have to do this', in that respect, I think other agencies alongside Supporting People need to be involved (SP #1; LA-A)

I see the anti-social behaviour order as one aspect of a twin-track approach. If you like, the anti-social behaviour order is from our perspective, a community protection order, the other side of the coin to that is, that it should also be a kick-start for somebody to come along and say 'well that's where we need to do more intervention or further prevention work'. So you're not only protecting the community, but you're also putting in place...erm initiatives to help rough sleepers not to breech the ASBO. That's what we firmly believe; we are doing something that's protecting the community (CS #10; LA-C)

In response to reconciling policy aims, both extracts appear to agree that there is no conflict, in the integration of both Supporting People's and Community Safety's objectives . In demonstrating this, the second account in particular uses the concept of "...a twin track approach" to describe this combined approach in addressing homelessness. Defined a "two simultaneous actions or processes" (Chambers English Dictionary, 2000), this concept suggests that the duality of support and sanctions are not contradictory but complimentary in which the effectiveness of this joint approach rests with the individual in housing need. Thus, informed by participants understanding and beliefs in terms of causes of homelessness and the behavioural threats to communities identified in the previous chapter, the discourse used reflects notions of responsibility in which the onus is on individuals to conform to the required aims of altering their so-called anti-social behaviour. Conversely however, despite Community Safety's focus on 'problem families' identified in the previous chapter, they nonetheless appear to suggest

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that single homeless populations and particularly those having to endure homelessness on the streets are not exempt from enforcement measures. In parallel, it also suggests that the "putting in place" for example a framework of support implies that interventions are not primarily aimed at mitigating homelessness as such, but are essentially to protect the community from the behaviour of homeless people. This primary focus on "protecting the community" suggests that for the strategic manager interviewed, the homeless person is essentially regarded as a threat to the community. This combined notion of individual responsibility, community protection and conditional support (also see Dwyer, 2008) was elaborated further by strategic managers in both Community Safety and Supporting People teams:

> I don't see it as conflicting; I mean my view is, each service has to have an understanding of each other's responsibility. Our main priorities are protecting communities and resolving problems, it very much links to the Respect Agenda that both support [and] enforcement and intervention should be run alongside each other. So even though the homeless person may be engaged in support it doesn't mean that any enforcement type action must stop...it runs alongside each other... (CS #8; LA-B)

> I think that there are a range of solutions individuals need. I've worked with people and there's no doubt about it they respond to boundaries. In [neighbouring authority], they've got an anti-begging squad they've two outreach workers and a couple of police who tour the area. It's the carrot and stick that they offer...[they]...very rarely book someone first time for begging or rough sleeping, they get a warning. But I haven't got a problem with it being criminalised, it's a bit like y'know, there are two ways these things can work, it's usually 'you're not allowed to come here but you've got to attend there once a week', that means that services bind together [and] there's a recognition of support needs. But I think that you do have to have sanctions because there are people who knowingly and deliberately, and not through any problem around mental health, do not want to alter their life style. (SP #1; LA-A)

Whilst demonstrating a general agreement in relation to the practice of sanctions and support, there is, particularly in the first extract, the suggestion that effective partnership working is a necessity to effective implementation of joint policy goals. However, it is in the second extract that an explicit justification for enforcement strategies is clearly articulated. Again, as in the previous stage of analysis, the language used mirrors an understanding of homelessness as a 'problematic' behaviour and the belief in a notion of 'choice'. For example in "knowingly and deliberately...do not want to alter their lifestyle". As a consequence, there is clear encouragement for disciplinary measures, which combine with support, which is further justified on the basis that "they" namely, the homeless person, "respond[s] to boundaries". This populist phrase commonly applied and associated with controlling the behaviour of children, not only appears to infantilise people experiencing homelessness, but also suggests that to address the phenomenon itself requires both paternalistic and authoritarian measures. Hence, decisions that suggested a negative consequence for the homeless person was defended as something that was essentially 'for their own good'.

However, whilst in agreement with the concept that support and sanctions were not contradictory in themselves in terms of addressing homelessness, one participant identified what they believed undermined their organisational capacity to enact joint goals:

> I think there are gaps...I think one of these is the Homelessness Act...I'm thinking sometimes when people are evicted through anti-social behaviour there is always that option then that...that person then can present themselves as homeless...erm...and depending on if that person is considered vulnerable then

there's a possibility that they are re-housed...erm because that's what the
Homelessness Act actually says...erm...it just doesn't seem right that erm...we're
evicting somebody for causing anti-social behaviour that they have the right to
seek advice and support...my view is that they should be found intentionally
homeless. I would like to see things like that tightened-up by Central
Government
(CS #17; LA-E)

Taken together, it is suggested here that the above extracts clearly project a belief that

regardless of limitations in joint-strategic working, a consensus to the policy goal of

support and sanctions was evident. Ling (2002: 626) defines this style of joint working as

an "ideological partnership" which arises from a shared outlook. Hence, whilst such

partnerships may differ in terms of the commitment they undertake to work together, they

nonetheless possess certain shared viewpoints which they are convinced is the correct

way of seeing and addressing specific social problems. Therefore, portraying a similar

outlook and encompassed within a discourse of surveillance (Rabinow, 1984:190), which

is manifested through the language of reward and punishment, the above extracts appear

to suggests that in terms of the management of specific homelessness behaviours, access

to support mechanisms are conditional on an ability to conform to prescribed 'norms' of

conduct. Ostensibly directed by policy requirements, identified in the Respect Agenda

(Home Office, 2003), it would appear that both Supporting People and Community

Safety teams have become bound together in an overarching effort to protect a

homogenised concept of community from the preconceived behaviour of homeless

people. In recounting specific examples from their professional experience, the adoption

of this joint approach to tackling and preventing homelessness, was further justified in the

following extracts:

there was one guy in particular...[*he*]...was a beggar and he was begging to fund a drug habit...he was quite intimidating in the way he use to do it y'know in the entrance to parks so he was intimidating passers-by who were going about their daily business...[*they*]...shouldn't have to put up with that (CS #11; LA-C)

this begging business...it's a tricky one there's a few people who beg regularly most of them aren't homeless, I mean they maybe in this twilight zone of homelessness but some of them have got tenancies (SP #2; LA-A)

a lot of those people aren't homeless that's their culture they don't want services...they just want to be out there drinking taking drugs...they're happy with what they are doing...congregating in the church with the blessing of the bloody priest...that was the problem the priest said they could stay there so then we had problems (CS #18; LA-E)

There's a guy who causes us a lot of problems...he's been banned from more or less every service (SP #13; LA-D)

In recounting their experience, a number of participants in both Supporting People and Community Safety teams, provided similar examples to justify the practice of sanctions towards what they believe is not 'genuine' homelessness. Expressed in what Van Dijk (1997: 42) describes as the discursive strategy of "storytelling" namely, processes which disclose through anecdotal representations, the beliefs and orientation the speaker holds towards "Others". For example, when asked if any of the people they were referring to had been engaged with either Supporting People or Community Safety services, all but one participant gave a negative response. None had either spoken to the people involved or had any direct contact, they were described by three out of the four participants above as 'the usual types you see on the street' These accounts arguably provide an insight into the underlying attitudes of dominant groups and arguably, the practice of discrimination.

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Hence, in mirroring the language identified in this, and the first phase of the analysis, professionals reiterated the distinction between 'genuine' and 'non-genuine' homelessness. With a focus on the latter, this was clearly articulated in the expression "a lot of them aren't homeless". This understanding however, was not only associated with a lifestyle choice but arguably a 'culture' of behaviour, citing examples such as "begging" and substance misuse. Together, this combined understanding not only ensured the homeless person was portrayed as 'different', but arguably emphasized a perception of deviancy and danger towards the wider community who "shouldn't have to put up with that (behaviour)". It is suggested here that this articulated understanding of professional beliefs, in turn provided them with both the impetus and justification to issue sanctions.

Whilst thus far, the majority view appears to reconcile the tensions between support and sanctions, or in some accounts appear to favour sanction over support, there were however, some participants in which the allegiance to this collective approach was at least, in part, questioned:

[Although]...I don't necessarily agree with all that the Respect Agenda is saying in terms of the criminalisation and all those issues, I think that it has made services high profile. The government is looking very much at a preventative agenda around that group and are realising that they need to offer support to people at the early stages otherwise, they are going to cause problems. I think from a government point of view, that's very much what they're interested in, 'cause they cost you money when you have to put them in prison. So in that respect, the agenda is monetary based...in some respects, I don't think that's a bad thing. In terms of local authorities [they] have now started to look at community safety and how that agenda has kind of rightly increased... (SP #4; LA-B)

I think in terms of some services, I think it can be reconciled by Supporting People services in terms of single homelessness. We've got problems with a [single homeless supported accommodation] service on the outskirts of the town centre and we've got massive issues. So we're having joint meetings because of the crime and anti-social behaviour [and] street drinking that causes problems. Currently that doesn't affect their tenancy, but what the police would like is to look at having restrictions enforced. We're trying to act as arbitrators really because y'know our view is you don't want crime but, then there's the issue that if they're rejected from the service they're on the last rung of the ladder. So you get back to the issue of, if someone's better supported within an environment where there are support workers, at least there is some monitoring...if you don't they eventually become more of a problem in terms of anti-social behaviour. It's that merging of the carrot and stick approach. Y'know the respect agenda is very much focused on limiting people's rights curtailing those because, it affects the enjoyment of the rest...and that's understandable. (SP #5; LA-B)

In articulating a similar discourse both participants appear to recognise and concur with the concept of a homeless 'behaviour' and its impact on the wider community. However, with regard to criminalising homelessness per se, the comment in the first extract appears somewhat more circumspect. Whilst the importance of community safety as a general priority is acknowledged, it indicates that the approach incorporating sanctions alongside support is essentially financially driven by "the government". As a consequence, local authorities in general, and Supporting People together with Community Safety teams in particular, are required to implement these measures. The second extract, again identifies behaviour as primary but also appears acutely aware of the implications of the implementation of sanctions and particularly its impact on homeless individuals if support is withdrawn. In this respect whilst acknowledging the importance of a community safety agenda, the second participant reconciles their role in a commitment to shared objectives. Depicted as 'the merging of the carrot and stick' or more explicitly a process of coercion characterised by both the offer of reward and the threat of

punishment, the second participants portrays their work as one of advocate for the homeless individual, regarding support, namely the reward element, where as enforcement agencies seek to withdraw or curtail support constituting the punishment aspect. However, unlike the majority who appear to view the support element as a method for personal reform, the second extract projects a more humanitarian view by recognising the implications for homeless individuals if support is withheld and sanctions are imposed.

Conclusion

Following the analysis of professional beliefs, knowledge and understanding into the cause of single homelessness, the focus of the inquiry shifted to an examination of professionals interpretation of policy action employed to address homelessness, specifically the practice of support and sanctions and how these seemingly contradictory facets of policy were reconciled in practice. By investigating partnership arrangements between Supporting People and Community Safety teams, in tandem with the level of commitment to a shared policy goal, the inquiry identified both similarities and differences. Whilst approaches to joint-strategic working were, primarily lacking a coherent framework, the allegiance to a shared policy goal was, in the main, consistent throughout. Whilst acknowledged as being initiated and in part, constrained by central and local government, this adherence to a shared policy goal ensured primacy was conferred to the protection of communities from the purported behaviour of homeless people.

Operating in what Elder-Vass (2010) describes as 'discursive circles', professional concepts of a particular homelessness behaviour were expressed, both overtly and in more subtle forms, as predominantly resulting from individual choice. This choice was in turn influenced by, what was essentially described as typical or inherent 'traits' as a consequence of either personal pathology and/or a deviant nature, which was further perceived as either an intrusion or threat to the wider community. Thus informed by what could be described as a "discourse of difference" (Riggins, 1997: 4), actions to address this 'problem' of homelessness, resulted in a combined strategy of support and sanctions. The former, often referred to as a "carrot and stick" approach - directed towards personal behavioural reform with additional assistance from civil and legal actions to enforce the latter on the homeless person if they chose not to conform to the "normative values prescribed" (Rose, 1999:269).

It is suggested here that this collective allegiance to addressing homelessness through prevention and intervention strategies, or support and sanctions, has informed a moral authority which not only ensured the holistic needs of the homeless person is depicted as separate from, but also subordinate to, those of the wider community. This division between 'the community' and 'the homeless' is reminiscent of distinctions between 'Us and 'Them' (Van Dijk, 1997), which not only accords the homeless individual negative value (Rose, 1999), but becomes embedded within practice discourse, thereby strengthening an ideological construct which categorises people in acute housing need as the 'Other' (Van Dijk, 1997).

Paradoxically within a policy environment which exhorts inclusivity, this characterisation of homelessness alongside the subjugation of need may not only reproduce but actually reinforce exclusion. However conversely, within a wider strategic framework, the dual approach of support and sanctions is not the only practice advocated in the prevention and intervention of homelessness. Encompassed within New Labour's modernising welfare reform was the concept of inclusion. In terms of welfare provision this notion of inclusion was promoted through the involvement and participation of people in receipt of services including people who had, or continued to, experience homelessness. In the following chapter the third and final stage of analysis will focus on professional approaches towards the facilitation of involvement of single homeless people in terms of the design and delivery of services to meet their needs.

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Chapter Seven

Facilitating Inclusion for single homeless people – involvement and consultation practices

Introduction

In the previous chapters, the findings presented suggest that professional understanding of the causes of homelessness, informed an ideological commitment to the practice of support and sanctions as a way of addressing this specific social phenomenon. At the same time, informed by a discourse of difference, a rhetorical distinction between 'Us' in terms of the 'community' and 'Them', the homeless population (Van Dijk, 1997) ensured the homeless person became situated within the realm of the 'Other' (Riggins, 1997).

In parallel with the above findings, it was also identified that strategic managers' ability to maintain these ideological and rhetorical structures towards a homeless population was informed, in part, by the policy priorities of both Central and Local Government. Thus, as representatives and agents in the organisation and implementation of governmental action, professional's beliefs, understanding and actions, may also be construed as the beliefs, understanding and actions, of the institutional structures of government as a whole (Elder-Vass, 2010). Nonetheless, as Elder-Vass, (2010: 161) suggests, when individual actors become part of an organisational structure, they are not entirely deprived of their capacity to act as individual agents. Hence, although constrained as a

result of their role, any existing beliefs and understandings beyond the realm of the organisation will continue to influence their actions.

Moreover, whilst roles within an organisation provide standards for behaviour and action, they also offer an element of flexibility which may present opportunities for alternative ways of performing a prescribed function. This flexibility enhances opportunities for individuals, particularly those employed in strategic managerial positions, to both impact on and affect the behaviour, understanding and action of the organisation in prominent ways (Elder-Vass, 2010). Hence, for the participants in this inquiry, the autonomy afforded them in their role as strategic managers, was felt to be particularly relevant in terms of implementing the wider strategic framework. This chapter will present the findings from the third and final stage of analysis in which an exploration of participatory approaches undertaken by both Supporting People and Community Safety was examined. The aim of this, was to ascertain whether professional's challenged or transformed the aforesaid exclusionary structures through the facilitation of inclusive approaches for single homeless groups.

New Labour's aim to enhance a modernising welfare system was accompanied by the promotion of a discourse of 'empowerment' in which citizens were to be actively engaged in the development and delivery of services (McKee and Cooper 2007). Thus within local government departments, the vernacular of "user involvement", "tenant participation" and "local control" have gained increasing momentum (ibid: 1). As a consequence, within both Supporting People and Community Safety teams, alongside

approaches advocating prevention and intervention strategies towards a single homeless population, the necessity to facilitate inclusive mechanisms through a range of participatory techniques was also required. For the single homeless person, this presented a unique opportunity for self-representation in the assessment of need and development and delivery of services. Hence, within the framework of this analysis, the final phase of this investigation concentrates on professionals' advancement of participatory processes for single homeless groups.

In an attempt to examine approaches to inclusion through the participation and engagement of local individuals and communities, the evidence suggested that methods employed by Supporting People and Community Safety teams reflected both similarities and differences. In terms of the similarities, this was identified in methods used by both Community Safety and Supporting People teams to engage groups and individuals. The differences materialised amongst the groups and individuals that were included in participatory structures. For Community Safety teams their focus was on engaging with tenants and residents within their respective local neighbourhoods, for Supporting People teams, their primary focus involved clients within the programmes twenty one pre-determined categories, which incorporated people who had, or were currently, experiencing homelessness.

In demonstrating this the extracts below, taken from two of the Community Safety teams within separate local authorities, reveal the similarity of methods used in terms of

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approaches used to engage members of their respective local communities and their focus

on tenant and residents:

> We have a consultation group that is made up of tenants from all across the [authority] and [it's] around developing the services, their ideas and views about the services, what works well, what doesn't. We also attend resident meetings, again that's about listening and listening to what the tenant or customer wants from us as an organisation. (CS #11; LA-C)

> We have various forums in the [authority]. So for example, all the small areas throughout the borough [named areas], we'll have monthly forums were a Community Safety Officer and Police ASB enforcement will go along and listen to what people have got to say and also reports for the last three months if anything has come out about anti-social behaviour and crime. So erm...there's quite a lot of meetings throughout the borough with the community that we tend to look at all aspects of crime. (CS #3; LA-A)

In the development of participatory processes, the methods of engagement identified

above, appear similarly structured around formal meetings or "forums", which are

coordinated and led by professionals in partnership with other statutory bodies.

According to the responses given, the primary objective of engagement was to

simultaneously "listen" and respond to the "tenants or customers" in their respective

neighbourhoods on "all aspects of crime and anti-social behaviour". The extracts suggest

a genuine attempt to engage with local communities and the strategic managers

interviewed believed that the methods used did enable a considerable degree of influence

in the direction of localised policies. However, a tension also appears to exist between

the language of involvement and the actual approaches implemented. For example, in

utilising terms associated with a marketised discourse (Croft and Beresford, 1996)

particularly the notion of "customer" creates an impression of choice and control in the

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direction and delivery of services (Smith et al, 2003). However, it could be suggested

that the adoption of standardised processes which are coordinated, led and thus

influenced by professionals, is inconsistent with the notion of 'customer' choice and

control. Amongst the remaining Community Safety teams interviewed, the approach,

methods and focus of engagement with communities, outlined in the previous extracts,

were a consistent feature amongst neighbouring authority teams.

In contrast, for strategic managers in Supporting People teams, the focus on

commissioning housing related support necessitated an alternative approach to

engagement. This centred on specific groups identified within the programmes remit. For

a number of participants interviewed this required closer links with people and different

methods of engagement:

> ...basically again we're on a journey with this...we're getting there we have
> what's called a [service user group] and we consult them on basically all aspects
> of the programme, in terms of the way things are going and how services work.
> We're involving them much more in that through peer reviewers who are going
> to go out looking at services...and then that feeds into our strategy every year.
> We always make sure service users are involved in terms of what out services
> should be like...(SP #6; LA-B)

> We were recently audited and got two stars and one of the commendations was
> our service user involvement in the whole of the programme, because it comes
> from the bottom up we've got service users informing the contract
> commissioners and then driving that down... (SP #9; LA-C)

> I think there are models of good practice and I think a lot of Supporting People
> teams certainly in the [North West Region] have done a lot of work in trying to
> engage with service users. I think there's a lot more work that can be done...I
> know a lot of work goes on, trying to sort of bring people on...and I think

> they've looked at people who have passed through the service and try and retain them if you like as sort of erm y'know representatives (SP #2; LA-A)

The above examples, taken from three of the authorities interviewed, clearly identify a strong commitment to involve 'users' of Supporting People services in "all aspects of the programme". Orchestrated and facilitated by professionals, approaches included the "development of peer review schemes" which it was stated enabled the views and opinions of 'users' to feed into commissioning decisions. Commonly associated with best practice, peer reviews involve groups of people in receipt of housing related support, coming together to jointly compare and assess each other's services. The findings of which, theoretically, should inform decision making processes. On the surface, the above responses, like the previous comments from Community Safety professionals, suggest that the processes used did enable users of services a significant degree of influence in the programmes development. However, whilst the procedures adopted by Supporting People differed in terms of the strategic focus, it also reflects similarities with Community Safety in terms of the development of participatory processes. Hence, involvement appears to be both driven and directed by professionals within both teams with little evidence of 'communities' or 'users' influencing how they are involved or, in fact, what they are involved in. For example, whilst it appears that both users and communities possess a degree of influence, this primarily related to the providing of information for the respective (pre-set) policy agendas, suggesting that their involvement is one of notifying key decision makers in terms of "feeding into strategy", who ultimately have the final say.

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Despite these discrepancies however participants, particularly within Supporting People teams, strongly believed that individuals, who were engaged in participatory processes, had benefited on a personal level from their experience. This was explained by a participant from a neighbouring Supporting People team:

> We've built up this relationship over two years...it takes time to build up that trust before you can get to do some really interesting work with people...they're a brilliant group to work with it's really good and it's good to see them y'know their personal development...a few of our users have gone on to do other things with the Arts Council and some of the young people especially have gone on to do work and are learning new skills...and they're doing really well so in terms of confidence it's done quite a lot for people at the moment we're doing some peer review training so they'll be involved in coming out and reviewing services...so that's really new and really exciting because you get such a different perspective coming from service users (SP #13; LA-D)

In detailing this seemingly close working relationship between the 'professional' and the 'user', the above account provides a number of positive examples in terms of the benefits of involvement for the individual. These include gaining confidence, "learning new skills", and undertaking work and training. However, on closer inspection, the discourse used to describe individuals, in particular the term "our users", could be construed as problematic. It could be suggested that used here in particular, the term "our" is arguably a term which may convey notions of mutuality, protection and belonging. Yet within the context of the relationship between the 'professional' and the 'user' it could be suggested that identifying people within a possessive discursive framework of ownership and belonging could, at the least, suggests a paternalism but might also denote a subtle form of dominance which disguises a fundamental power differential between the two.

Furthermore, given that the mechanisms and methods of involvement are both devised and driven by strategic managers, the account of individual successes identified above implies that without direction from professionals, individuals, particularly those in receipt of services commissioned through Supporting People, would have been unable to gain in personal capacity or improve their life skills. This suggests a perception of users of Supporting People services as somehow lacking individual capacity, thus requiring the assistance of professional not only to participate effectively, but also to achieve a degree of self reliance. The understanding of users from the professional within this one Supporting People team also draws attention to subtle distinctions between the concept of 'users' of welfare services and Community Safety teams perception of 'communities'.

As identified in the previous extracts, participatory processes undertaken by both Community Safety and Supporting People teams were both devised and driven by strategic managers. However, it is suggested here that the distinction in perceptions of 'communities' and 'users' identifies subtle differences between the respective teams. In relation to facilitating participation and involvement, within Community Safety teams the notion of an ongoing dialogue with local neighbourhoods is encompassed within a consumerist discourse through which community members are regarded as 'customers' with the ability to choose and control local policy direction. This notion of the 'active' community member, arguably contrasts with the concept of a 'passive user' within Supporting People teams (also see Dwyer, 2008). This suggests that for participants within Supporting People, "users" of services are in some way different from "community members" and as such, are in need of greater professional intervention, not

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only to engage in participatory processes, but also to gain in self-reliance, life skills and personal reform. As outlined in the previous sections implicit in this is an assumption that the homeless person's difficulties resides in themselves and relates to their lack of life skills, lifestyle choices and behaviour.

Yet equally within Community Safety teams, the concept of 'community' was also found to be problematic. As noted in the previous sections of the analysis, the view of local communities held by participants implies a notion of homogeneity, particularly in relation to the normative values and ideals they are believed to hold regarding perceptions of anti-social behaviour and crime. Consequently, groups and/or individuals who fail to conform to these normative ideals risk exclusion. It is suggested here that the division, articulated amongst professionals interviewed, between people who find themselves homeless and the wider community may have significant implications for groups who are pejoratively described as 'hard to reach', as if the problem lies with the individual person, rather than the services that are not 'reaching' them...(Lister, 2002).

In the context of local government, 'hard-to-reach' is a term used to describe sections of the community that are perceived as difficult to engage in services or to involve in public participation mechanisms (Brackertz, 2007). This difficulty, for Ward (2000: 48), results from the marginalisation and exclusion that particular groups and individuals defined in such terms often experience. Consequently, the methods and approaches to participation used by professionals can, if they are not sensitive to incidences of marginalisation and

exclusion, add to their sense of alienation. Amongst such groups and individuals defined

as so-called 'hard-to-reach', 'entrenched' or 'service resistant' (Johnsen and Teixeira,

2010), are people with experience of homelessness. Thus within the context of the

research, the focus of analysis proceeded to explore how participants facilitated the

engagement of single homeless groups:

> … the first chair of our user group was a guy in his early forty's who hadn't really experienced any homelessness in the past. Due to a relationship breakdown with his partner erm, he found himself homeless sleeping in the park, subsequently he lost his job erm, didn't know what to do erm, got depressed, started drinking more erm and managed to find his way into the Salvation Army. This provided him with a space to actually, whether you want to call it, whether it's to reflect, to think about things and then to act...[but]...in the end he got involved in settin' up our user group. The guy was pretty vocal, particular on issues regarding erm single homeless. [These] were discussed at the user group level and what was identified was that erm, that in some services we found there were a number of single homeless individuals who wouldn't meet the statutory criteria for accommodation. On the back of that, this report was written and it spoke about erm, y'know a group of individuals who the local authority may not see as having a statutory duty to provide housing and what the consequences of that were with regard to mental health deterioration such as depression, anxiety, erm worklessness, education, access to other services etcetera. So we produced [a report] and it was written by the core user group and it went through our erm, Core Strategy and Commissioning Body with a number of recommendations. The end result basically, was that we had erm an open day where our Chair of the Commissioning Body, Accountable Officer and Lead Officer at the time and our Homelessness Advisors, were sat down as a panel erm and where asked questions about certain bits and pieces about y'know homelessness about services about access to services. (SP #8; LA-C)

Within Supporting People teams, examples of individuals who had experience of

homelessness that were currently involved in participatory processes were strikingly

similar in that all appeared to be directed by management. For example, in the extract

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above, on the surface, the illustration given suggests that the concerns raised in terms of a lack of provision for people in housing need were genuinely listened to. However, on closer analysis, whilst the reference to individual reflection could refer to limitations in terms of provision, it could also allude to the individual "reflecting" on his past and as a result, making the choice to alter or change his way of life. This latter interpretation links with understandings of homelessness identified in the previous stages of analysis, namely, that support is obtainable to individuals wanting, or deciding to, transform their 'homeless behaviour'. Secondly, the method of involvement utilised suggests that issues raised by the group in reference to homelessness are treated with some authenticity. However, when questioned on the impact of the report on service provision, the outcome of the report was a one off "event" involving a "questions and answer" session with leading professionals. Thus rather than acting on the recommendations of the report, the respondents offered no concrete evidence of any specific changes resulting from these events. Some have argued that these kinds of events are symptomatic of a tokenistic approach to involvement in which users of services are placated with a gathering of strategic players as opposed to having the recommendations identified addressed (Ward, 2000).

> …. We're currently going through three strategic reviews, one's single homelessness and those service users, or potential service users, will be involved in order to shape what services to provide in the future with single homelessness. It's a difficult one because we've got some people who could give us excellent feedback, but somehow capturing people's views they've got to understand about the programme and have some idea about what Supporting People is about. [But] if you get a service user in here now and ask them all sorts of questions, they will probably look at you a bit blank so there's a lot of capacity building to be done with them. (SP #4; LA-B)

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With the priority placed on "service reviews" a second extract from a neighbouring authority identified above, suggests that the involvement of people with experience of homelessness is not dissimilar to approaches applied to other categorised groups within the Supporting People programme. For example, older adults, people with mental health needs or people with a learning disability, particularly. Hence, it would suggest that like other pre-defined groups within the programme, homeless individuals appeared to be "parachuted in" (Fountain et al. 2007 cited in Roy, 2011: 7) as and when the programme requires departmental 'evidence' of service outcomes. Furthermore, the suggestion that the individuals with experience of homelessness may possess a limited understanding and capacity to be meaningfully engaged implies a presumption that people who had, or continue to experience homelessness, are somehow lacking in the cognitive ability to comprehend the objectives of the Supporting People programme. In addition, the "capturing of people's views" requires an "understanding of the programme" which suggests that individuals in receipt of Supporting People services need to possess a strategic understanding and knowledge of this particular policy directive, in order for them to participate effectively, as opposed to starting from the perspective of the homeless person and enabling them to set the agenda and terms of involvement. It is has been suggested (see Braye, 2000; Ward, 2000) that this devaluing of an individual's capacity and competency to engage, not only highlights power differentials in terms of who has, and who does not have, access to 'specialist' knowledge, but it may also identify an underlying fear of power sharing by the professionals concerned.

Notwithstanding this, not all accounts regarded approaches employed in the involvement of homelessness individuals as positive. The following extracts from interviews with strategic managers in two separate participating Supporting People teams, identified what they perceived as difficulties in attempts to engage with a single homeless population:

> People in homeless welfare and housing advice, keep in touch with people who have been really useful and have helped a lot in consultation, but it's hard because it's a transient group people we were consulting with three years ago. [Today] they could be in [*neighbouring town 1*] they could be in [*neighbouring town 2*] they could be happily settled in a house and I think some of the issues around that is that we don't get the information y'know the outcomes of services. In the short term we know someone's moving somewhere, or sometimes we don't know where they're moving to they just go, but then there's nothing telling us about what actually happens in the long term...I appreciate that people may not want to identify themselves as having been homeless once they leave but, in terms of providing services, how do you know what's effective in the long term...to improve services in the long term then we need to know that outcome information. (SP #10; LA-C)

In the above extract, the perceived difficulty in engaging with a single homeless population, appears to be linked to the notion of 'transiency' in which individuals will leave or break away from services to move on or stay for a short period of time in and around neighbouring areas. Whilst there is some recognition that people who have, or may continue to experience homelessness, may not wish to be associated with service defined labels, the consequence for Supporting People is that they are, in effect, powerless to maintain links with previous users of services and thus, unable to measure the impact of service provision. The perceived problem in maintaining the involvement of homeless groups arguably identifies the continued focus amongst all strategic professionals interviewed with Supporting People teams namely; that the raison d'être for

participation, is to generate evidence of 'outcomes' regarding the implementation of the programme as opposed to emancipatory outcomes for service users. Furthermore, the unrelenting drive to identifying 'outcomes' as a panacea for measuring the effectiveness of services also creates a tension with the overall policy aims. Not only is the concept of involvement reduced to its narrowest definition in terms of addressing managerial priorities (see Braye, 2000; Croft and Beresford; 1996), but in wishing to maintain links with previous recipients of services, it arguably creates a paradox between the policy aim to promote and maintain independence (DETR, 2001).

In contrast to the above, the following account suggests that the difficulties in engaging with homeless groups are primarily associated with the methods of involvement and specifically those employed at the strategic level of Supporting People services:

> I think involvement in [authority] is defined by Supporting People y'know deciding what involvement is...I know there's the standard within the QAF [*Quality Assessment Framework*] but it's sort of been a struggle. Like erm people living at [the Boroughs Direct Access Hostel] they've got support plans and part of that service plan is consultation. Y'know, it's an opportunity too for the service users not just to talk about their particular service plan, but it's an opportunity to talk about the service they're receiving on a very localised sense. But I don't think that's recognised it's a bit sort of 'oh well that's just about individual services' in a way it depends on the mechanism...but it's very hit and miss different services are doing it slightly differently. It doesn't feel coordinated it's sort of left to the people providing the individual service, so it's not particularly standardised or coordinated and it's a bit ad hoc. I know you've got a transient group but it could still be fed back...(SP #2; LA-A)

In exposing the differences between involvement processes at operational and strategic levels of service delivery the above, suggest that strategic methods are "defined by Supporting People". Employed through 'top-down' process imposed by professionals,

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this they suggest, requires recipients of services in general and homeless individuals in particular, to align themselves within pre-determined categories and organisational timescales and structures in order to engage with strategic professionals. For the above participant it is the process at operational level of service delivery which they believe ensures a more meaningful dialogue by enabling people to not only discuss their individual 'support' but also the provision of 'services' to meet their needs. However, resulting from the 'ad hoc methods' employed and the lack of 'coordination' between strategic and operational services it is arguably suggested that opportunities to effectively involve homeless people are neglected. This notion of 'ad hoc' methods of involvement is further supported in the following extract taken from a participant within a neighbouring authority's Supporting People team:

> ...in terms of influencing strategies influencing the homelessness strategy as well as the Supporting People Strategy I think more often than not it's done on an ad hoc basis in terms of "right we're coming up to consultation we want to know what the demand is, what services we're not providing that we need to provide, what services are delivering currently that isn't meeting need, and how we can develop and change those. (SP #16; LA-E)

In reflecting the previous account, the above extract also identifies that for people experiencing homelessness to participate in processes of involvement, they firstly, have to identify themselves as 'the homeless' and secondly, they would then be required to make themselves available at a time which suits strategic managers, when "consultations are coming up" . This clearly identifies what Croft and Beresford (1996) define as the "consumerist model of participation" in which evidence based practice and service outcomes take priority over the so-called emancipatory potential of involvement (see for

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example Croft and Beresford, 1996, Braye, 2000). This suggests that for a single homeless population, the primacy given to methods of involvement within the context of such an approach may not only subjugate their experience of homelessness but, as Cowden and Singh (2007: 16) suggest, it could also "...militate against them challenging the circumstances in which they exists".

Within yet another Supporting People team, one participant also challenged the concept that homeless individuals should have to align themselves within existing formalised structures of involvement:

> Because of this client group's mind-set, that is their feelings of powerlessness, they don't feel capable and the structures of involvement are too formal. Structures need to be none threatening, make them feel comfortable. If this was in place then yes, perhaps they would be more involved, but these things need to be in place first.
> (SP #12; LA-C)

Whilst the personal capacity of homeless individuals, in terms of "their feelings of powerlessness" are alluded to in the above extract, unlike previous accounts it is suggested that the lack of a 'capacity' to engage with participatory processes also results from the way in which methods or involvement are employed. It is suggested that the use of formally organised and professionally directed processes not only lack flexibility to the needs of diverse groups, but for the homeless person in particular, such approaches can be perceived as "threatening" and as a consequence may inadvertently construct barriers to them being able to fully engage in an inclusive dialogue.

This tendency for involvement processes to constrain the emancipatory potential of participation amongst homeless individuals was also a significant feature within the Community Safety teams interviewed. Despite, as identified earlier in the analysis, the frequency of consultation mechanisms orchestrated through Community Safety teams, from the responses of participants, the involvement of people experiencing homelessness appeared limited. Despite this, there was one participant within a Community Safety team who identified processes of consultation for young people who, in terms of their understanding, may or may not have experience of homelessness:

> ...there's the youth offending team who will consult with people we don't just erm apply for an ASBO outright there's a process we go through and that is that erm is trying to engage with that person through intervention...the youth offending team get very much more involved in that and it's fed back through the local partnership business group...so again it's about this twin-track approach erm…in the event that the anti-social behaviour continues then we've got to think about the wider community we've got a duty to protect communities and we would ultimately proceed if the problems were continuing and that person wasn't engaging (CS #17; LA-E)

As identified in the previous stages of analysis, for strategic professionals in Community Safety teams, their understanding of homelessness was encompassed within a broader crime and disorder framework. For example, the term 'youth nuisance' was a catch-all expression used to define causes of crime and anti-social behaviour in all participating Authorities' Community Safety strategies. Yet it was in their understanding of consultation that the distinction between 'engaging' with communities and 'addressing behaviour' associated with homelessness was identified.

In accounts presented at the start of this phase of the analysis, consultation processes

undertaken by Community Safety teams identified a form of engagement that linked with

policy priorities and feedback regarding perceived successes in meeting community

concerns. However, the form of engagement identified above suggests a form of

consultation which is tied to the regulation of behaviour. Thus, whilst there appeared to

be a willingness to engage, it was closely linked to what was described as 'a twin-track

approach' in order to fundamentally protect the wider community from homelessness

behaviour. Within all the remaining authorities interviewed, attempts to incorporate

single homeless groups within community consultation mechanisms were not evident.

Primarily this was related to a number of factors, including departmental priorities of

which homelessness was considered not within their remit. Consequently, in terms of

engaging with homeless individuals, one local authority identified:

> ...nothing currently exists and there are no plans to implement anything" (CS #8;
> LA-B)

For others, the notion of involving homeless individuals may conflict with their overall

policy aim:

> ...consulting with people who were homeless would create confusion for them,
> we can't be seen as a supportive figure and at the same time issue sanctions (CS
> #5; LA-A)

This understanding that homelessness was not the responsibility of Community Safety

teams and that consultation mechanisms within communities were neither accessible nor

open to individuals and groups experiencing homelessness was elaborated in greater

detail by two strategic managers from separate Authorities. Interviewed together in a

small focus group setting, the dialogue between the two followed from the question

relating to forms of consultation and engagement with a single homeless population

including people defined as street homeless: This account was reproduced at length as it

was felt that by presenting the dialogue in-depth, it illustrated how an open dialogue

between two competing understandings of homelessness in relation to anti-social

behaviour can create a shift in both the understanding of issues involved in homelessness

and approaches to address them:

> ...no no there is no consultation at that level whatsoever the only way that the homeless or those street drinker could become involved is via the crime surveys that we do like you wouldn't see anyone going out onto the street saying 'right what could we do for you that could resolve this problem'... (CS #3; LA-A)
> ...perhaps we should why don't' we do that... (CS #4; LA-A)

> ...I don't know... (CS #3; LA-A)

> ...because you know what the answer is going to be 'provide us with somewhere where we can go and have a drink' now [Authority] are never in a million years going to provide a 'wet house' regardless of what they're saying and I think you're going to have more issues when they look at closing [Direct Access Hostel] like they're proposing to do I think that you are going to have even more major issues because a lot of our hotspot areas are around those homeless units erm where we'll have the types of complaints we get you can guarantee that they going to be around those homeless units so it's people that are coming and going at all hours they've got all their mates and they're all sat out there drinking burglaries have gone up in the area erm there'll be certain properties were say someone's move out of [Local Direct Access Hostel] and they've moved into a property private rent which is on the same street and then everyone's going to be going in there and they going to be taking all their stuff so on and so forth I think people just think why should we bother asking them because they shouldn't be there anyway so why ask them how we can solve this problem because we just don't want them there... (CS #4; LA-A)
> ...I agree with what your say but I don't quite agree with the last bit I think we need to be challenging them but how I don't know but I think...I think there needs to come a time where we challenge them saying listen what do you want although

perhaps we know what they want but how're we going to stop the problem then... (CS #3; LA-A)

...that's what I'm saying all our enforcement powers and stuff that we've done so far doesn't stop it so doesn't that make you think right maybe we ask them what they want they may come up with something that we've never thought of but whose ever asked them nobody and they haven't asked them because they're not bothered because they don't want them there... (CS #4; LA-A)

...I would say that they are not defined as part of the community... (CS #3; LA-A)

... yeh yeh... (CS #4; LA-A)

... I think that people see them as the problem in the community not as being part of the community but the problem... (CS #3; LA-A)

In commencing their response to the involvement of homeless individuals in consultation mechanisms, the above dialogue between two strategic managers in a Community Safety team initially reiterates the previous accounts, particularly in relation to the concept of a homeless behaviour associated with criminal and anti-social activity. As a consequence, their exclusion from participatory processes is justified on the basis that if "asked what they want" responses would revolve around provision that enabled them to continue a lifestyle of illicit drug and/or alcohol misuse. The basis of this assumption is elucidated through the recounting of "major issues" that already exist in areas where hostel and move-on accommodation is available for homeless applicants. However, what is interesting in the conclusion of this illustration is the remark that it is the "people" in and around these so-called "hot spots" that do not want persons residing in such accommodation to be included in community consultation. This arguably would suggest that decisions about who is and who is not included in participatory mechanisms rests nominally with strategic managers, but ultimately with the local neighbourhood. More

specifically, it might be construed from this that decisions regarding inclusion are made with implicit reference to the assumed views of the local community, which are themselves considered homogenous and consensual. In continuing the dialogue, the second participant, although in general agreement with their colleagues explanation, diverges moderately by suggesting that perhaps if homeless individuals *were* involved, it would enable this problematic behaviour to be "challenged". Both seem to agree that this would be a useful approach as "enforcement powers" currently in place do not appear to have the desired effect. Whilst it would appear from the above that this notion of homeless individuals having solutions that neither professionals nor 'communities' could propose, was something that had not been considered previously within the remit of a Community Safety agenda. However, within the field of homelessness, utilising the knowledge and expertise of people affected has long been a feature of organisations advocating for their involvement (see for example Groundswell, 2012). Homeless organisations, primarily within the voluntary and independent sector, have argued that the inclusion of people with direct experience of homelessness in participatory processes would not only create effective services but could also enable negative assumptions of homelessness to be contested. Whilst the above dialogue presents a very different goal of involvement, nonetheless, this embryonic seed of thought may, if realised, offer the potential not only for an alternative dialogue, but for a transformative one.

Conclusion

In the search for generative mechanisms and emergent properties that may transform the understanding and actions towards a single homeless population, the final stage of analysis sought to examine professional's approach to inclusion through participation. In general however, attempts to facilitate inclusion elicited responses which appeared to reflect particular dominant understandings and beliefs about homelessness and homeless people.

Within Supporting People teams, despite the positive intent, approaches used to engage people in receipt of housing related support, including single homeless people, were arguably "fixed and inward looking" (Roy, 2012: 13). Characterised by 'top-down' models of participation, the methods employed predominantly centred on the pursuit of service-defined outcomes. As a consequence, with the power of decision making remaining with strategic managers, 'users' of services including homeless individuals had a limited influence in the direction of service responses. It could be argued that instead of contributing to the creation of opportunities for self-defined empowerment and self expression, individuals essentially became objects for service-defined personal reform and improvement. Furthermore, in terms of identifying the barriers to facilitating the involvement of single homeless groups, participants tended to see the problem residing in the individual homeless person's behaviour or lifestyle, rather than the involvement mechanisms used. For example, obstructions to involvement were either directed at the transient nature of homelessness or functional limitations, a lower level of understanding, capacity and inability to comprehend the programmes requirements.

Within Community Safety teams, although participatory processes used were similarly coordinated and led by strategic managers, the focus was on consulting with a particular 'mythical' local community which, in turn, was seen as ascribing to certain normative values of conduct (see Rose, 1999; De Neufville and Barton 1987). Thus equally informed by their particular understanding of homelessness, in the main, their overriding response was that the homeless person was not perceived as a member of the community and thereby arguably not conceived of as an equivalent citizen (Roy, 2012). Instead, the homeless individual was openly regarded as the 'problem' for the community which, in turn, provided the justification to exclude them from participating.

In contrast, there was a minority of participants within both Supporting People and Community Safety teams who provided an alternative or counter perspective. The former, in relation to the strategic focus of participation, criticised the 'top-down' approaches predominant within Supporting People and also the requirement of homeless individuals to align themselves within pre-determined categories and timescales. Prompted by the research interview, the latter however, emerged from a dialogue between two colleagues in the same Community Safety teams there was a general agreement that the homeless person was the 'problem' in terms of crime and antisocial behaviour, there was nonetheless an intimation that perhaps homeless people should be included, if only to identify solutions to their own behavioural problems.

Despite the wider policy emphasis on the potential value of participatory mechanisms in health and social care, there was little evidence of any wider or emancipator aspects of participation in this study. Overall the approaches applied within the respective teams were regulated towards maintaining power differentials, in which power remains with the professional in determining who was included and how people were involved. In some cases pre-conceived ideas about the views of 'the community' were drawn upon to justify, rather than challenge, these decisions. Indeed for Community Safety teams the 'users' were seen to be 'the community' rather than the homeless people themselves. Hence, for single homeless individuals, the process of 'Othering' ensured that their own ideas and input remained essentially on the margins. Consequently, despite the rhetoric of involvement, approaches to participation utilised in the above accounts, failed to create transformative opportunities which, are arguably, essential if alternative understandings and responses to homelessness are to be developed.

In presenting the final stage of analysis, this chapter has attempted to establish how, or if, the beliefs, knowledge and understanding of strategic agents within welfare institutions affected actions towards a single homeless population. The subsequent chapter will develop this analysis further by drawing on the philosophy of Critical Realism (Bhaskar, 1989). The aim is to demonstrate that applying a critical realist framework provides a useful way of elucidating the underlying mechanisms which create and sustain particular problematic homelessness practices and policies which, not only maintains exclusion but it is argued, ultimately reinforces it.

Chapter Eight

Conclusion: Developing a Critical Realist Analysis

Introduction

The aim of this inquiry was to undertake an in-depth investigation of policy actions

directed towards non-statutory or single homeless groups implemented during the New

Labour administration under the leadership of Tony Blair. Applying a single case study

approach across five local authorities in the North West of England and focusing on the

organisational departments of Supporting People and Community Safety, the objective

was to examine what strategic managers within the aforesaid teams, understood to be the

causes of homelessness and how it informed their practice towards people in housing

need. The unit of analysis was strategic managers' beliefs, knowledge and understanding

of homelessness and contained within this was the sub-set analysis regarding the inter-

relationship within and between individuals and organisational sites. In the preceding

chapters a reading of the interview findings was presented and this final chapter will

develop this analysis further by situating the research within a Critical Realist theoretical

framework (Bhaskar, 1989). In doing so, the aim is to demonstrate how the application of this philosophy can be useful in providing ways of identifying underlying mechanisms which may not only create, but sustain practices which have stigmatised and marginalised people who experience homelessness.

Identifying emergent properties and causal mechanisms

The philosophical ideals of Critical Realism (Bhaskar, 1989) alongside the concept of relational emergence (see Elder-Vass, 2010) sequentially suggest that the social world is comprised of normative relational structures which are, in turn, made up of diverse collectives of human agents with unique causal powers (Brock, 2012). This implies that causes and subsequent approaches towards a given social phenomenon - as in the case of this inquiry, the occurrence of homelessness - can be understood as having developed through and have become entwined within, historical and multiple determined dialectics. It also means that through empirical research they can be rendered explicit at a given point in time (Brock, 2012). However, to claim that groups of individuals posses such unique powers require the identification of mechanisms which are able to generate and produce a causal effect.

This process of identifying mechanisms which generate a causal effect has been referred to as 'retroducing' (Elder-Vass, 2010) and, according to Elder-Vass (2010: 70-76), can include both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Within this inquiry, a

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qualitative approach was adopted in which the central focus rested on the inter-relationship within and between Supporting People and Community Safety teams and specifically the dual practice of support and sanctions directed towards single homeless people. The overall objective being to elicit how, within a broad policy framework advocating inclusion, alleged tensions between support and sanctions were reconciled whilst simultaneously ensuring avenues for inclusion remained accessible. It was recognised by the researcher from the out-set, that the aforesaid teams constitute a system of governance, that is to say they are concurrently directed and regulated, in part, by intersectional relational structures within local and national government. However, it would not have been feasible in this thesis to provide an in-depth investigation of all co-acting mechanism involved. As a consequence, the focus of this inquiry concentrated specifically on the mechanism contained within what Elder-Vass (2010) specifically refers to as 'norm circles', or for the purpose of this research, groups of strategic individuals within Supporting People and Community Safety Teams.

To clarify, whilst 'norm circles' or groups of individuals, can take different forms, for example in terms of size and composition, for Elder-Vass, (2010), the concept of a 'norm circle' relates to individuals in the social world whose association is marked by significant authority relations. Such relations in turn encompass a number of facets including, the level and frequency of interaction between individual members, a capacity to reward and reprimand subordinates, a commitment or consensus towards a shared goal and finally, the adoption of a specific language or discourse which is endorsed and encouraged within the group. Thus in drawing on the interpretations of strategic

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managers within the organisational structures of Supporting People and Community

Safety teams, the data identified that whilst inter-organisational relationships between

teams were varied, mechanisms were generated through the overall adoption of 'norms'

relating to the beliefs, ideologies and values associated with notions of family,

community and conduct. Collectively these 'norms' constituted a set of belief systems,

or a 'normative social institution' (Elder-Vass, 2010) which, in turn, framed strategic

agent's beliefs and understanding as to the cause of single homelessness. Underpinned by

this set of beliefs, the cause of homelessness was thus considered to be predominantly the

result of pathological and/or deviant behaviour and consequently counter to the 'norms'

ascribed by a 'mainstream' society.

Although there was a minority of participants, primarily within Supporting People teams,

who did not wholly subscribe to this dominant belief, it is argued that a consensual effect

was created as a result of the inter-relationships within and between the 'normative

institution' of Supporting People and Community Safety Teams. This ensured any

counter discourse that may deviate from the shared approach to addressing homelessness

was restrained. For Elder-Vass (2010), this is an example of what he refers to as a

"downward causal mechanism", specifically how the structure of a normative institution

affects the individual. He suggests that the influence of a downward causal mechanism

can be either implicit, by way of the subconscious, or explicit through rules and norms

which aim to either encourage or enforce conformity. Either way, the affect of this

downward causal mechanism between Supporting People and Community Safety teams

ensured the dominant belief system was reproduced (Elder-Vass, 2010). Therefore, in

terms of this inquiry, the overriding belief and understanding as to the cause of

homelessness amongst strategic managers, resulted in the concept of a specific

'homelessness behaviour' and as a consequence was regarded as an emergent property.

The effect of this sequence of events was that people who experience homelessness were

sequentially viewed as 'different'. This difference, it is suggested here, was further

sustained through a discursive process of 'Othering' (Riggins, 1997) which was

articulated by strategic managers in distinctions made between 'Us' and 'Them'. Thus,

taken together, the inter-relationships between Supporting People and Community Safety

Teams resulted in a structure of interconnecting beliefs systems and discursive processes

which produced what Elder-Vass (2010: 123) refers to as a "hegemonic norm circle".

According to Elder-Vass (2010), a 'hegemonic norm circle' is facilitated through

intersecting normative institutions. To this end, it is argued that together, the normative

institutions or belief systems within and between Supporting People and Community

Safety Teams towards the causes of homelessness, helped to facilitate a hegemonic norm

circle. This not only increased individual conformity to a shared goal but maintained a set

of belief systems, facilitated through the rhetoric of 'Otherness' (Riggins, 1997) which

reinforced what was commonly referred to as a "twin-track" approach to addressing

homelessness namely, the corresponding or dual practice of support and sanctions.

Moreover, informed by the hegemonic norm circle, this twofold approach was justified

on the basis of protecting a homogenised concept of community from behaviour or

misdemeanours associated with professionals understanding of homelessness. Here the

provision of support, in parallel with the issuing of sanctions, was construed as providing

access to behavioural treatments for personal reform with the additional assistance from civil and legal enforcement action for the homeless person who "chose" not to conform to the normative values prescribed (see Rose, 1999). Thus conceptually marginalised and underpinned by a discourse of difference, the distinction between strategic managers concept of 'the community' and 'the homeless' influenced their approach to participation. Although participation, in policy terms, meant the involvement of clients and community members in the direction of services and provision, the findings from this inquiry suggested that for people experiencing homelessness this was not the case. On the one hand, within Supporting People teams, approaches to the involvement of homeless people were generally regarded as part of the wider process of behavioural change. On the other hand, for Community Safety Teams, the primacy awarded to the needs of the 'community' over that of the 'homeless person' enabled strategic managers to justify their non-inclusion. As a consequence, the findings suggest that for homeless people to be included in processes which could offer possibilities to transform or create an alternative dialogue was denied. This not only ensured historical discriminatory practices towards homeless people were maintained but it also ensured their exclusion was further exacerbated.

Notwithstanding this inquiry's attempt to provide a framework in which to identify emergent properties and causal mechanisms at the level of policy implementation, it is important to acknowledge that strategic managers within welfare institutions encounter many overlapping and co-acting mechanisms which can also generate causal powers. This includes inter-related structures which "position them, motivate them and

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circumscribe their opinions and capacity to respond" (Carter and New, 2004: 4). As such, whilst the inter-relational structures between Supporting People and Community Safety teams clearly possess a level of flexibility and power to choose how they implement policy into practice, they are nonetheless situated within historical normative structures which are not of their choosing (Carter and New, 2004: 3). In this respect, if the beliefs and actions towards single homelessness are to be understood they also need to be viewed within the context of National Government policy specifically, New Labours 'modernising' welfare agenda.

Professional actions in relation to New Labour's welfare agenda

We can view the ideology of New Labour's 'modernising' welfare agenda as, in part, the result of a general shift within the party during its eighteen years in opposition. Powell (2000) identifies how the 'seeds' of change within the party grew from the recommendations of the Commission of Social Justice in which it was claimed that to ensure equality in a changing social and economic society, policy responses had to regard the goal of social justice and economic efficiency as "two sides of the same coin" (cited in Driver and Martell, 1999: 105). From this, a centre left perspective developed in which the 'old' Labour analysis of class divisions, collective redistribution and hostility to the market were rejected in favour of a 'Third Way' (Giddens, 1998). For New Labour their ideological commitment to a Third Way witnessed the party increasingly accepting and acknowledging the inevitability of capitalist market systems which, in turn, influenced and informed their 'modernising' approach to welfare.

With the explicit aims of "...rebuild[ing] the welfare state around work..." (DSS, 1998 cited in Lister, 2000: 39), New Labour's modernising agenda combined market mechanisms with a moral restructuring of community and citizenship in which measures to address inequality focused on the social exclusion of a so-called "underclass" who had become disconnected from the mainstream of society (Blair, 1997 cited in Lister, 1998: 222). Amongst the numerous individuals and groups singled out for particular attention were people experiencing homeless. However, in portraying the concepts of exclusion, community and citizenship as a policy focus, New Labour played what Jones (2006: 7) described as a "neat rhetorical trick". In an attempt to appeal to the "national populous" (Gramsci, 1971 cited in Jones, 2006: 7), the discursive practice within New Labour downplayed the concepts of poverty, inequality and injustice which would have inevitably exposed the failings of their neo-liberal economic policies and focused instead on the image of a civil society which it is suggested, exposed distinctions between an included 'Us' and an excluded 'Them' (Fairclough, 2000). To elaborate this distinction further, the included 'Us' arguably projected an image of belonging within the "safe" (Bauman, 2001:1) confines of a "wholesome" (ibid) community through which the normative values of law abiding citizens were ascribed and upheld (Etzioni, 1995).

Applied in a different context, to what is described as the 'social inclusion imperative' in mental health services, Spandler (2007) argues that these distinctions between included and excluded within the modernising discourse of New Labour implies that society is comprised of a comfortable and satisfied 'included majority' and a dissatisfied 'excluded

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minority'. She argues that such implications tap into certain common sense established ideas; that the socially excluded should want to be involved and take part in a mainstream society which is not only desirable, but also unproblematic and legitimate (see also Levitas, 2004; Faiclough, 2000). Moreover, it also implies the existence of an "ideal of common life" (Gray, 2000, cited in Spandler, 2007: 6) in which everyone could and *should* aspire to (italics added). In practice, this assumes a general consensus about the inherent value of involvement in community, work and family. Despite this shared and "common sense" belief, Spandler (2007) contends that the link between inclusion in mainstream society and increased wellbeing has not been clearly established. She goes on to argue that the focus on the excluded minority (Them) fails to take seriously the difficulties, conflicts and inequalities in the wider society (Us) which from the outset, actually generates and sustains exclusion.

Situated within the context of this inquiry, attention is also drawn to an additional dynamic at play specifically the not-so-implicit links that are routinely administered by senior professionals within welfare institutions. Here, the findings suggest that people experiencing homelessness, or the excluded 'Them', are interpreted as the dangerous 'Other' whose subversive lifestyles and values contradict the normative morals of responsible citizenship, resulting in their dislocation from the realm of community (Dean, 1999). A corollary being that the construction of 'Us' was predicated on the denigration of an assumed anti-social 'Them' (Jones, 2006: 8). Therefore, despite the rhetoric of 'modernisation' and the related notions of inclusion, community and citizenship, in order to maintain this 'common sense' understanding of homelessness , it is suggested that the

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New Labour government not only contributed towards the continuation of a historical

consensus about how such 'problems' should be dealt with, but through responsiblisation

strategies, actively promoted it.

Historically, the need for welfare has, according to Erskine and McIntosh (1999),

consistently been regarded as a moral weakness. In relation to homelessness, an outcome

of this is that despite the lack of affordable accommodation, understandings of

homelessness have never wholly been defined in economic terms, but in political and

legal terms which in turn are actioned by professionals within welfare systems.

Consequently in determining rights to housing, the dominance of professional

understanding have arguably been projected through 'common sense' notions that have

historically been used to classify homeless individuals around specific categories of

'deserving' and 'undeserving' (Jacobs, et al, 2000). Lavalatte (1998, 58) also describes

how, as part of a system of government, professionals within the welfare system occupy a

particular level or stratum within civil society which specifically executes the dominant

interests of capitalism. In order to do so, he suggests that in particular senior

professionals, (or in the case of this inquiry, strategic managers) have a tendency to align

themselves, and even at times merge with, the governing elite through adopting and

maintaining an ideological hegemony. As a consequence, understandings of

homelessness based on historical concepts of 'deserving' and 'undeserving' has been

used to regulate disciplinary controls through which distinctions within homelessness

categories. This has ensured provision is allocated to those who can display their

'vulnerability', but does not extend to people whose behaviour is judged to be in conflict

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with the core assumptions of the market and civil society. Furthermore, strategic managers understanding of homelessness as primarily a behavioural problem, clearly suggests an "uncritical absorption" (Ferguson et al, 2002) of New Labour's ideology and in particular that people experiencing single homelessness were fundamentally a threat to community cohesion and, as such, were to be either controlled through crime reduction programmes or supported to assimilate with the normative values of a mainstream society. According to O'Brian and Penna (1987) such narratives towards vulnerable and marginalised groups have historically worked as a vehicle through which status, rights, entitlements and penalties are either bestowed or denied. Hence within the context of these research findings, professional understanding of homelessness resulted in what Flint (2002: 635) describes as "[the] use of community as a territory of governance" through which a blurred distinction between support and crime reduction strategies not only controlled boundaries to provision, but justified approaches to involvement. As a result, the methods used to facilitate participation amongst homeless people primarily focused on producing change at an individual level by, for example, enhancing personal coping strategies and/or changing behaviour.

In addition, despite the rhetorical language of involvement and participation advocating choice and empowerment, the reality for individuals in housing need appeared to focus on persuading people to take increasing responsibility for their lives within a fixed notion of normativity. Subsequently, approaches adopted were essentially based on "moral rehabilitation...[which was]...expected to open the way to economic and social integration (Procacci, 1995: 20 cited in Culpitt, 1999: 4). The findings of this inquiry suggests that

for people experiencing homelessness, their " moral rehabilitation" through the dual practice of support and sanctions, not only fails to secure any form of social inclusion, but arguably maintains and exacerbates their continued exclusion.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In applying a Critical Realist perspective (Bhaskar, 1989), this inquiry has identified how the inter-related structures and discursive practices within and between Supporting People and Community Safety teams, generated mechanisms which informed a specific understanding of 'homelessness behaviour'. The establishment of these mechanisms produced a causal effect in relation to the institutional practice of support and sanction. Findings suggest that despite the wider policy focus on inclusion, the implementation of this dual practice not only resulted in the preservation of a historical discourse of homelessness, but further reinforced the exclusion of an already marginalised section of the population.

To this end, questions remain as to how this prevailing ideology and subsequent discursive practice towards homelessness can change. For example, how can an alternative discourse of homelessness develop? What role do academics engaged in homelessness research have, not only in pursuing a counter discourse, but one which also informs practice? Finally, in the quest for an alternative dialectic, what form of research

should academics aspire to engage in with people who directly experience homelessness? In an attempt to provide a resolution to these questions, it is suggested that in preference to continuing with, what could be described as 'traditional' research methods which can, albeit unintentionally, maintain and reinforce the dominant ideology of homelessness, academics should seek to develop a transformative intellectual activity (see Singh and Cowden, 2009; and Cresswell and Spandler, 2012) in which research is engaged directly *with,* rather than *on,* oppressed communities, - in the case of this inquiry, people with direct experience of homelessness.

Drawing on research undertaken with social movement activists (Cresswell and Spandler, 2012; Brock, 2012), the idea of an "engaged intellectual" (Cresswell and Spandler, 2012) applies Gramci's theory of "intellectuals" (ibid) to argue that in an effort to overcome pre-existing power structures which serve to marginalise and exclude, academics undertaking social research must fully engage and align themselves with people who collectively act to promote or resist social and/or organizational change (Turner and Killian, 1987), both within and beyond the research processes. However, within the context of homelessness, the social isolation and nature of people's experience has meant that a coherent movement which challenges and resists pre-existing structures, remains limited. It is therefore suggested that researchers could draw on the cumulative ideas emanating from the study of other social movements (in particular the work of Cresswell and Spandler, 2012 and Brock, 2012) to have a critical impact on the future direction of homelessness research. To elaborate further, I argue that by offering a combined approach which re-examines the history of homelessness whilst simultaneously

supporting the development of egalitarian research methods, could inform an alternative or 'counter-hegemonic' discourse of homelessness.

Re-engaging with history would not just mean exploring the *how* of homelessness, but also the *why* in regards to why the discourse and knowledge associated with homelessness eventuated in a particular way (Brock, 2012). Specifically, it could seek to explain why this understanding of homelessness was produced, who produced it, and why it became privileged (Bhavnani, 1993). Viewed through the lens of Gramsci's theory of hegemony and utilising the dialectical arguments of critical realism, Brock (2012) suggests that such an approach would identify the "rationality and regularity" (Brock, 2012: 96) not just in the arbitrary nature of historic understanding and knowledge, but also the "depth and cause" (ibid) of how the phenomenon of homelessness is situated. However, whilst such an approach can explain why the prevailing discourse of homelessness emerged, it does not as Thompson (1995:68 cited Brock, 2012: 96) suggests, explain the "whole or theoretical truth". Similarly Bhaskar (1989) also points out that such historical 'truths' will inevitably possess many "absences". Therefore, in order to formulate meaning to these absences of 'truth', or more specifically the mechanisms which generate the continued problematisation of homelessness, an understanding of the evaluative nature of experience is required. For the development of homelessness research this is where a commitment to transformative intellectual practice is crucial. Through the formation of alliances *with* groups and individuals in housing need and engaging with the consequences of inequality, engaged academics in the field of homelessness could, utilising critical research methods, begin to support the development

of a what Brock (2012) describes as "norm circles of resistance" to the prevailing

orthodoxy of homelessness.

The nature of such research is not without difficulties, particularly in the unequal power

relations between researchers and researched which are bounded by institutional

constraints in terms of research design and resource availability which, if not addressed,

can result in the continued objectification of the researched (Cresswell and Spandler

2012). Bhavnani (1993: 19) also argued that the consequence of this power differential

between the researcher and researched ultimately produces "knowledge which is

fragmented, resulting in the re-enactment of history" In an effort to circumvent this,

Cresswell and Spandler (2012: 4) call upon academics to adopt approaches which

throughout, "turns the research gaze back" to themselves and the research process, in

order to ensure that power differentials are not reinforced or maintained. In recognising

these challenges, Bhavnani (1993) also argued that these power differentials are not

something just to be noted, but require continual analysis throughout the research

process. Expanding on this further, Bhavnani (1993: 98) posed three distinct questions

which she argues are required when undertaking research directly with people and

individuals. Firstly, in what Bhavnani (1993: 98) describes as "accountability" questions

need to be centred on whether the research reproduces or challenges prevailing 'norms'.

For example, within the context of homelessness inquiry, this would challenge the

researcher to examine whether the representations of homeless people reproduced the

prevailing notions of passive victim and/or deviant criminal. Secondly, in what is defined

as "positioning" (ibid), questions need to address the extent to which the research process

deals with relationships of domination and subordination. Thirdly, the focus on addressing "difference" (ibid), means that questions need to be asked about how, for example, social class, ethnicity and gender is dealt with throughout the research process. Within the context of homelessness inquiry, it thus follows that in "re-directing the research gaze back" (Cresswell and Spandler, 2012: 4) on the relationships between the researcher and researched, in conjunction with a critical research methodology, could assist in avoiding a continued focus on the personal vulnerabilities and/or transgressions of people with experience of homelessness.

Finally, drawing on the findings of this inquiry in tandem with my experience working in Strategic Housing services, this kind of approach to homelessness research could potentially inform the practice of future professionals in welfare services. I would suggest that the findings from a critical alternative approach to homelessness research could be built into the teaching and learning of future professionals through the use of critical pedagogy methods (Friere, 1996). By utilising democratic learning processes that support intellectual engagement with the reality of homelessness could not only help to challenge the prevailing orthodoxy but also inform, and eventually provide support for, the creation of an alternative or counter hegemonic discourse of homelessness.

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Appendix A

Contextual Background on Participating Authorities

Introduction

The case study presented was conducted within an opportunistic sample of five local authorities situated within the North West of England. The subsequent chart draws on data from local sources, including but not exclusively, strategies relating to Housing, Homelessness, Community Safety, Supporting People and Anti-social Behaviour. The primary objective of the following is to provide an overview of the operational background and context in which the research participants were situated. Consequently, the ensuing table presents supplementary data gathered from each participating authority between 2005 and 2007, when the fieldwork for this thesis was undertaken

Local Authority	LA: A - Metropolitan Borough	LA: B - Metropolitan Borough	LA: C - Metropolitan Borough	LA: D - Metropolitan Borough	LA: E – Metropolitan Borough
Population	Overall population is estimated to be 265,000	Overall population estimated to be 217,273	Overall population is estimated to be 206,500,	According to the 2001 census, the borough has a population of 216,103.	The overall population of the borough is estimated to be in the region of 214,000
Levels of Deprivation	48% of the population live in areas ranked amongst the	According to the index of multiple deprivation,	In 2004, the Indices of Deprivation Scale identified	The Borough was ranked the fourth most deprived in	At the time of the fieldwork, the

	25% most deprived in the country.	seven out of twenty wards in the authority are situated within the 10% most deprived in the country.	that the borough was one of the most deprived in England, ranked 12th nationally and 46th most deprived at district level. Research undertaken by the authority, identified that eighteen neighbourhoods in the borough were in the bottom 7% of deprived districts on a national level and of the twenty-two areas identified, seventeen were within the authority's social housing estates.	the North West and the twelfth nationally. This had a marked impact on the socio-economic status of residents, particularly in relation to the affordability of housing.	Authority was ranked 49th most deprived in the country with 11 of its 19 wards falling into the 10% most deprived with 5% of adults in these areas in receipt of state financial assistance.
Housing	Affordability of housing is regarded as serious which impacts on the level of home ownership. 115,000 with the majority in the private sector, both rented and owner occupied. The remainder was provided either through the council or Registered Social Landlords. Housing Need and Stock Condition Survey, identified that 55% of tenants in council property were unemployed	The Borough has approximately 86,000 properties of which 15,708 are council stock and 7,122 Registered Social Landlord properties; the remainder is either privately owned or rented. Although, at the time of the fieldwork, the borough had, with financial assistance from the government, a number of initiatives to alleviate	In 2005, housing stock in the Borough was estimated to be 89,325, 74% of which were in the private sector, 17% council and 9% Registered Social Landlord property. According to the authority's Housing Stock Condition Survey, 5.1% of property in the private sector was "unfit for human habitation" with a further 16.2% seriously defective. Major problems in the	In the past, the authority had an oversupply of terraced housing and council stock, many of the former in particular, deemed unfit for habitation. Coupled with high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour in many of the areas resulted in many residents abandoning their properties. Those that did remain faced negative	Identified in the authority's stock condition survey, 32.4% of properties in the private sector failed the Decent Homes Standard, with 26.4% of households receiving one or more means tested benefit. Further problems were also cited as overcrowding, discrepancies between supply and demand,

	and overall standards within the private rented sector were significantly worse that the owner occupied sector. It also high levels of overcrowding and a growth in single households, with considerable unmet need and excessive demand for housing.	some of the Boroughs housing and neighbourhood problems, significant challenges remained. This included an imbalance between supply and demand, affordability issues, overcrowding particularly in the most deprived areas, anti-social behaviour and homelessness.	Borough related to the level of overcrowding and the high levels of homeless. Coupled with these identified problems, further complexities which affect housing in the inner areas of the Borough were cited as poor design, poor maintenance, crime and anti-social behaviour all of which were identified as affecting resident's quality of life.	equity with prices dropping from £28,000 to £7,000. Combined with poor health, high unemployment and high dependency on benefits were identified as contributing to severe levels of deprivation in the area. However, in recent years a number of factors have contributed to a shortage of affordable homes, this included increases in house prices, a decrease in council house vacancies, an expansion in right-to-buy applications and a dramatic escalation in the number of homeless applicants. In an attempt to address these issues and to prevent further decline, the authority implemented a number of strategies which involved improving the standard and management of housing and surrounding environment by addressing anti-social behaviour.	high levels of homelessness particularly amongst young people and anti-social behaviour.

| Homelessness | Homelessness Services borough face increasing competition and difficulty in securing either temporary or long-term accommodation due to an increasing lack of available move-on accommodation. It is also recognized that households with a history of arrears, abandonment and/or anti-social behaviour faced greater barriers accessing settled accommodation. | Homelessness particularly amongst 'priority' groups was identified as a significant problem. At the time of the fieldwork, the authority had the highest level of homelessness acceptances in comparison to neighbouring authorities which equated to 107 per 1000 household. In addition the authority's homelessness service has seen increasing number of presentations from people under 25 years old. Broadly reflecting national trends the main causes of homelessness in the borough was cited as parents or friends no longer willing or able to accommodate, the termination of assured short-hold tenancies and people leaving institutional care including local authority care. Also, particularly in relation to young people in housing need, the deregulation of | In terms of homelessness in the Borough, local statistics identified an increase, in the number of people applying for housing, with the majority of presentations from single people. In mirroring national trends, the main reasons for homelessness in the borough was cited as: friends and families no longer able or willing to accommodate the person, women fleeing domestic violence, the cessation of an assured short hold tenancy and drug and alcohol abuse. In an attempt to alleviate some of the issues, the Borough provides both temporary accommodation and emergency direct access accommodation which is delivered either directly by the authority or through established partnerships with the voluntary homeless sector. Collaboration with the voluntary sector has a long history in the borough, | At the time of the research, the Authority witnessed a dramatic increase in homelessness presentations from 483 in to 1278 resulted in 72.9% being 'accepted' as a priority, which resulted in many accessing temporary accommodation. Reasons for acceptances related to households with dependent children, domestic abuse and age, specifically the presentation of people aged 16 to 17 years of age. The latter was particular identified as a major issue for the authority. Consequently in partnership with key stakeholders the authorities approach to addressing homelessness in the area, focused on reduction and prevention. | In addressing homelessness, the authority has a considerable difficulty addressing youth homelessness in the borough and especially in deprived areas. Although many were accepted as a 'priority' due to their age, the causes were nonetheless associated with high levels of unemployment, low educational attainment, low parental support and high levels of involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour. For priority households in need of accommodation, causes again reflect national trends, including people being asked leave by friends and/or family, termination of assured short-hold tenancies and domestic violence. Consequently in |

	rents, capping of housing benefit and reduction on benefits were also identified. Specific causes relating to the Authority included overcrowding, affordability and supply.	particularly in the provision of support and accommodation to single homeless groups. With the implementation of the Supporting People programme, these partnerships were consolidated with the specific commissioning of services to deliver housing related support.		partnership with key stakeholders the authorities approach to addressing homelessness in the area, focused on reduction and prevention. A significant partner in implementing solutions was the authorities Supporting People programme.
Supporting People	Situated within Adult Social Care service and with a budget of £9.21 million, the programme commissions 28 service providers to deliver a total of 95 supported housing schemes and 6,513 units of housing related support. In 2004/5 the largest proportion of the budget, 32%, was allocated to learning disability services, 20% for older people with support needs and the third largest, 12%, was allocated to services for single	Located within the authorities Adult Social Care service and with a budget of £8,259,000, the Supporting People programme commissions housing related support services to 4888 households in the borough. This accounts for 4502 accommodation based services and 386 floating support or outreach services. The largest amount of funding is to	Located in Strategic Housing and with a budget of £15.3 million the authorities Supporting People programme commissions 299 services and over 4,500 places to a diverse range of defined vulnerable groups. Second only to commissioned services for people with a learning disability, provision for single homeless people with support needs receives	Located in the authority's Housing and Planning department and with a budget of approximately £13,170.00, the boroughs Supporting People programme commissions 5,009 units of accommodation based support, including 444 floating support units. Following a local study of homelessness provision in the area, the programme allocated £2,199,678 to the	Located within the Housing and Regeneration department and with a budget of £7,217,707, the authority's Supporting People programme commissions 199 services and over 1,813 units of support. With the largest amount of funding providing services for people with a learning disability,

	homeless people with support needs. Although, the programmes initial aim was also to facilitate cross-authority arrangements, for victims of domestic violence and rough sleepers (DTLR, 1998), for the latter there were no specific services funded in the borough.	services for people with a learning disability amounting to £2,404,426. For single homeless groups with support needs, the amount allocated is £1,083,314 it was the fourth highest primary client group funded by the borough's Supporting People Programme. Although the programme commissions cross-authority services, these focused on women fleeing domestic violence there was no specific provision for the allocated for street homelessness.	£4,082,590. It was identified through local data that over recent years rough sleeper counts have not found anyone sleeping on the streets; consequently there is no specific provision available. However, the borough has a concentration of direct access and supported accommodation which, at the time of the fieldwork, was receiving 27% of referrals from outside the borough.	commissioning of support for single homeless people with support needs, second only to the funding of services for people with a learning disability. At the time of the fieldwork, an examination of the programmes performance had not been undertaken; a subsequent inspection identified that overall the programme delivered a good service. This was due to a range of identified strengths including, the provision of flexible and relevant accommodation for young homeless people and the utilisation of innovative approaches to the involvement of service users in the development and delivery of services.	13% is targeted as services providing support for single homeless people. Although cross-authority provision is in people for women fleeing domestic violence, there is no provision for rough sleepers. At the time of the fieldwork, the programme had not been officially reviewed by the Audit Commission however; a subsequent assessment concluded that the programme delivered an 'excellent' service specifically citing the reconfiguration and development of services for young homeless people.
Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour	Introduction of national legal and policy tools designed to address crime and anti-social behaviour. In partnership with the statutory and voluntary	In 2002, a specialist Anti-Social Behaviour team was launched in the Borough with the aim of adopting a robust approach	In addressing anti-social behaviour, the Authority states that it adopts a partnership approach involving colleagues in,	With the development of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, working alongside the police, local business and	Informed by national government priorities, the authorities focus on anti-social behaviour utilised a partnership

sector and informed by community consultations 70% considered "juvenile nuisance" an increasing irritant in the area. Also identified anti-social behaviour, in the form of the prolific use of Class 'A' drugs and the public consumption of alcohol in areas as "immensely problematic". Increasing fears within the community that they were at risk of becoming victims of crime and anti-social behaviour. Priorities of action included, tackling robbery, violent crime and the use of Class 'A' drugs alongside the targeting of prolific offenders. Although homelessness not specifically identified as an anti-social problem street level activity, such as begging and street drinking, commonly associated with homelessness was apparent in the authority's interpretation of anti-social behaviour (also see Johnsen and Fitzpatrick, 2007).	to tackling crime and anti-social behaviour. Alongside partner agencies including Registered Social Landlords (RSL's), the Police, Environmental Health and Probation, the Authority undertook a strategic assessment of crime and disorder in the borough. Informed by community consultations, and focusing on the key themes of prevention, intervention and enforcement, problematic issues which emerged centred on victims of crime, offenders and locality problems. These in turn, were linked to specific behaviour associated with drugs and alcohol abuse, hate crimes, criminal damage and violence. In reflecting, the neighbouring Authorities approach to anti-social behaviour, it suggests that the problematic behaviour identified, although not specifically associated	housing, the police, probation, environmental health and residents of the borough. Utilising categories defined by national government, anti-social behaviour is classified into four broad groups; the misuse of public space, acts directed at people, disregard for community or personal wellbeing and environmental damage. These were further identified as specific behaviours, which included substance misuse, street drinking, begging, rowdy behaviour, criminal damage and vandalism. According to local data, the most frequently reported types of behaviour are "nuisance behaviour" linked to young people, criminal damage, public disorder and domestic disturbance. Utilising a range of strategies which combine preventative interventions with elements of	probation, the Authority undertook a strategic assessment of crime and anti-social behaviour in the borough. Underpinned by priorities set by national government and informed through community consultations, particularly with residents in the most severely deprived areas, concerns identified centred primarily on drug and alcohol misuse, "rowdy behaviour" associated with young people, criminal damage and violence. Utilising a three strand approach, the partnership focused on, "prevent and deter, catch and convict, and rehabilitate and resettle". In addition linked to the borough's priority to improve neighbourhoods a focus on the creation of open spaces to "design out crime" in central areas was also identified as a priority.	approach involving representatives from, housing the police, environment health and the wider community. Informed by national categories of anti-social behaviour, the authority recognises a wide range of activities including drug and alcohol misuse, rowdy and/or inconsiderate behaviour, begging, environment damage criminal damage and violence. Based on these activities a survey of residents identified that 41% perceived anti-social behaviour as a problems in their local area, with "rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour" accounting for 61% of reported incidents. In tackling the aforesaid problems, the authority utilises a range of measures which centre on prevention, intervention

| | | with homelessness, did however, mirror activities often linked to begging and/or rough sleeping (see Johnsen and Fitzpatrick, 2007). | enforcement, the authority has identified a reduction in incidents from 14,831 to 14,029. | | and enforcement. This included the issuing of ABC's (Acceptable Behaviour Contracts), ASBO (Anti social Behaviour Orders) which led to criminal prosecutions if required. |

The above supplementary evidence provides an overview of the different authorities in which the participants of this research inquiry were employed. Although the statistics identified differences, overall this was marginal as all identified significant levels of deprivation with a high number of people residing in sub-standard accommodation. In terms of the specific research focus, all the authorities had unresolved issues of homelessness amongst both statutory and non-statutory groups. Whilst this was partially addressed through the Supporting People programme, there continued to be a considerable number of people who failed to gain assistance as a result of a lack of move-on accommodation. Notwithstanding, despite acknowledging a homelessness "problem" none of the boroughs commissioned services specifically for people who were street homeless. In addition linked to levels of deprivation in the respective boroughs, were problems with crime and anti-social behaviour, specifically associated with substance misuse, begging and "juvenile nuisance".

Appendix B

Participants Roles, Background, Remit and Composition of Teams

Participant	Job Title	Professional Background	Length of time in current post	Agency	Remit	Client Group	Composition of Team
1	Strategic Commissioning Manager for Supporting People	Work 35 years in the Authority starting as a Housing Officer, worked in Housing Options as a manager and progressed to Strategic Housing Services	3 years	Local Authority A	Overall responsibility for the implementation of Supporting People programme including overseeing the budgeting, commissioning and contracting of services for vulnerable adults	The 21 client groups within the Supporting People Programme including single homeless people with support needs and rough sleepers	Team members include four policy offices who undertake service reviews/inspections and involvement with service user, two contract officers responsible for commissioning/ decommission of service contracts and two administration officers
2	Lead Officer for Supporting People	Worked in numerous authorities and the voluntary sector. The former in the social housing sector and the latter in supported housing for vulnerable adults	18 months	Local Authority A	Lead on the implementation of Supporting People programme including overseeing budgeting and	The 21 client groups within the Supporting People Programme including single homeless people	Team members include four policy offices who undertake service reviews/ inspections and involvement with

					managing effective collaboration with operational staff and the participation of stakeholders in the development and monitoring of service outcomes.	with support needs and rough sleepers	service users, two contract officers responsible for monitoring the commissioning/ decommission of service contracts and two administration officers
3	Lead Officer for Community Safety Team	Worked 20 years in the Authority commencing in administration in Corporate services. Had a number of secondments over the years including Environmental Services, Corporate Complaints and the Authorities Business Unit	6 years	Local Authority A	To lead manage and coordinate the provision of services including the monitoring of budgets which relate to consumer protection and safety in the locality. Develop and implement effective strategic and operational plans in relations to reducing crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour and to develop	The community throughout the Borough including, tenants, residents and local business	Team members include three officers who respond via visit and monitoring (through the Courts if necessary) neighbourhood complaints of unacceptable behaviour, also undertake consultations in partnership with various tenants, resident and business groups in the Borough. The team also includes

					partnerships with statutory, voluntary and community sector to achieve effective outcomes for residents and communities. Consult with the local communities on service quality and emerging trends associated with crime and anti-social behaviour		three administration officers
4	Team Manager for Community Safety Team	Worked In Housing Association for 15 years and the Homeless Voluntary Sector with homeless individuals in Supported Housing	5 years	Local Authority A	Responding to and resolving ASB across housing tenancies and estates in the Borough. Assists in the delivery of strategic plans including directorate and corporate strategies. Responsible for maintaining appropriate relationships and	The community throughout the Borough including, tenants, residents and local business	Team members include three officers who respond via visit and monitoring (through the Courts if necessary) neighbourhood complaints of unacceptable behaviour, also undertake consultations in partnership with various tenants, resident and

					partnerships within and beyond the Council		business groups in the Borough. The team also includes three administration officers
5	Assistant Team Manager Community Safety Team	Worked as a Police Officer in the Northwest area for 15 years during that time worked closely with LA housing departments on issues of problem neighbours and nuisance behaviour and crime	2 years	Local Authority A	To support the team managers act periodically as Lead when appropriate. Responsible for delivering pro-active approaches to investigate and resolve ASB. At times also required to act as a professional witness and attend/give evidence at court when required. Also to produce performance information for the Team Manager and contribute to the setting of targets in dealing with ASB	The community throughout the Borough including, tenants, residents and local business	Team members include three officers who respond via visit and monitoring (through the Courts if necessary) neighbourhood complaints of unacceptable behaviour, also undertake consultations in partnership with various tenants, resident and business groups in the Borough. The team also includes three administration officers

6	Strategic Manager for Supporting People	Worked for 25 years in the Authority commencing in the Authorities Housing Department overseeing and managing properties. Moved to Strategic Housing services working in the private rented sector department, then move in 2002 to oversee the development of the Supporting People programme	4 years	Local Authority B	Overall responsibility for the implementation of the Supporting People programme. Also Chair of the Commissioning Body	The 21 client groups within the Supporting People Programme including single homeless people with support needs and rough sleepers	Team members include two policy offices who undertake service reviews/inspections and involvement with service users, one contract officers responsible for monitoring the commissioning/ decommission of service contracts and two administration officers
7	Lead Officer Supporting People Team	Worked ten years for Registered Social Landlord managing and overseeing properties. Four years ago moved to Strategic Housing Services	18 months	Local Authority B	Responsible for the on-going day-to-day implementation of the Supporting People strategy. To ensure the commissioning of housing related support services is part of the Authorities wider prevention service. To work collaboratively	The 21 client groups within the Supporting People Programme including single homeless people with support needs and rough sleepers	Team members include two policy offices who undertake service reviews/inspections and involvement with service users, one contract officers responsible for monitoring the commissioning/ decommission of service contracts and two administration

				with all partner agencies and various statutory and non-statutory organisations		officers
8	Team Manager for Community Safety	Worked in Authority for 20 years. Initially in Environmental services, then 6 years in Planning Department	3 years	Local Authority B	Responsible for the investigation and resolution of ASB and hate crimes. Responsible for achieving service targets and the continued development of the team. Acts as chair in multi-agency case conferences and ensures agreed actions are implemented. Responsible for the performance management of the team	The community throughout the Borough including, tenants, residents and local business	Team members include two officers who respond via visit and monitoring (through the Courts if necessary) neighbourhood complaints of unacceptable behaviour, also undertake consultations in partnership with various tenants, resident and business groups in the Borough. The team also includes one administration officer
9	Lead Officer for Supporting People	Worked in LA Housing Department overseeing and managing properties. Relocated to the Arms	2.5 years	Local Authority C	Implement and manage the Supporting People programme which	The 21 client groups within the Supporting People	Team members include two policy offices who undertake service

		length company following stock transfer.			involves the development of strategic plans covering the need for housing related support. Also involves the management of monitoring and inspection of commissioned services and budgets. Required to represent the council on Core Strategy Group and to involve partners in the statutory and voluntary sector and service users in the development of service	Programme including single homeless people with support needs and rough sleepers	reviews/inspections and involvement with service users, two contract officers responsible for monitoring the commissioning/ decommissioning of service contracts and two administration officers
10	Commissioning Manager for Supporting People	Started as a housing officer in Merseyside moved to homelessness service in Lancashire area progressed onto management from there.	5 years	Local Authority C	Direct and coordinate the work of the Supporting People Team including the Commissioning Body and Core Strategy Group. To implement the	The 21 client groups within the Supporting People Programme including single homeless people with support needs and rough	Team members include two policy offices who undertake service reviews/inspections and involvement with service users, two contract officers responsible

					Supporting People Strategy in collaboration with other agencies including Housing, Social Care, Health and Voluntary Sector	sleepers	for monitoring the commissioning/ decommissioning of service contracts and two administration officers
11	Team Manager for Community Safety	Worked in the business development unit of the Council, then in democratic services supporting Overview and Scrutiny committee. From there worked as a Commissioning Officer for the Substance Misuse Team	3 years	Local Authority C	Lead on the development and delivery of the Community Safety Strategy. Manage day-to-day operation of the team. Manage and monitor budgets and build relationships with key partners including other service areas and the wider community	The 21 client groups within the Supporting People Programme including single homeless people with support needs and rough sleepers	Team members include two officers who respond via visit and monitoring (through the Courts if necessary) neighbourhood complaints of unacceptable behaviour, also undertake consultations in partnership with various tenants, resident and business groups in

							the Borough. The team also includes two administration officers
12	Assistant Team Manager for Community Safety	Worked as a police officer for the local neighbourhood	3.5 years	Local Authority C	Support the team manager to undertake the reduction of crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour in the locality	The community throughout the Borough including, tenants, residents and local business	Team members include two officers who respond via visit and monitoring (through the Courts if necessary) neighbourhood complaints of unacceptable behaviour, also undertake consultations in partnership with various tenants, resident and business groups in the Borough. The team also includes two administration officers
13	Strategic Manager for Supporting People	Commenced working for the Council as a housing officer, oversaw the management of 'Right to Buy' movers to Strategic	4 years	Local Authority D	Direct the work of the Supporting People Team. To work with stakeholders,	The 21 client groups within the Supporting People Programme	Team members include three policy offices who undertake service reviews/inspections

					service providers and users to develop and improve services and to develop policies and procedures to manage to commissioning and decommissioning of Supporting People services as appropriate. Also required to identify and prepare capital funding bids for new initiatives to maximise the programmes opportunities	including single homeless people with support needs and rough sleepers	and involvement with service users, one contract officer responsible for monitoring the commissioning/ decommissioning of service contracts and two administration officers
14	Lead Officer for Supporting People	Started as a Housing Officer for the Authority, then moved to the Regeneration Team as Housing Development Officer eventually promoted to Principle Development Officer	18 months	Local Authority D	To lead on the implementation of the Supporting People Strategy including reviewing current and future need for housing related support services. To manage the work of officers	The 21 client groups within the Supporting People Programme including single homeless people with support needs and rough sleepers	Team members include three policy offices who undertake service reviews/inspections and involvement with service users, one contract officer responsible for monitoring the commissioning/

					within the team and to ensure the development and maintenance of systems and procedures such as commissioning, contract management and budgeting is maintained.		decommissioning of service contracts and two administration officers
15	Strategic Manager for Supporting People	Initially worked in the probation service as a Senior Probation Office before moving to Supporting People	2 years	Local Authority E	To have overall responsibility for the Supporting People team including the implementation of the Strategy	The 21 client groups within the Supporting People Programme including single homeless people with support needs and rough sleepers	Team members include two policy offices who undertake service reviews/inspections and involvement with service users, one contract officer responsible for monitoring the commissioning/ decommissioning of service contracts and one administration officers
16	Lead Officer for Supporting People	Worked as a Management and Information Officer for	3 years	Local Authority E	Project manage the implementation of	The 21 client groups within the	Team members include two policy

					the Supporting People strategy including the development of procedures for the allocation of resources, monitoring and performance	Supporting People Programme including single homeless people with support needs and rough sleepers	offices who undertake service reviews/inspections and involvement with service users, one contract officer responsible for monitoring the commissioning/ decommissioning of service contracts and one administration officers
		Integrated Youth Service. Then as a Housing Service Manager for RSL before moving to Supporting People					
17	Team Manager for Community Safety Team	Worked in the police prior to undertaking role for the Council	6 years	Local Authority E	To manage the development and implementation of the Community Safety Strategy in partnership with statutory, voluntary and community sector	The community throughout the Borough including, tenants, residents and local business	Team members include two officers who respond via visit and monitoring (through the Courts if necessary) neighbourhood complaints of unacceptable behaviour, also undertake consultations in partnership with various tenants, resident and

							business groups in the Borough. The team also includes three administration officers
18	Assistant Team Manager for Community Safety	Police officer dealing with neighbourhood issues	4 years	Local Authority E	Act as manager for the team in the absence of the Team manager. That includes acting as chair for any of the partnership meetings and community consultations	The community throughout the Borough including, tenants, residents and local business	Team members include two officers who respond via visit and monitoring (through the Courts if necessary) neighbourhood complaints of unacceptable behaviour, also undertake consultations in partnership with various tenants, resident and business groups in the Borough. The team also includes three administration officers

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Appendix C

Question Topic Guide

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Professional Background
 ➢ Job title/role, professional background, responsibilities of the role, target client group

Interpretations of causes of single homelessness

 ➢ Structural causes

   - Probe poverty, inadequate support, unemployment, housing market
 ➢ Individual causes

   - Probe behavioural facets including mental health drug and/or alcohol misuse
 ➢ Interpersonal

   – Probe institutional care, military background, domestic violence, relationship breakdown
 ➢ Demographics

   - probe gender, age, ethnicity, local or transient

Strategic Interventions

 ➢ What interventions used locally?
   – probe support including outreach facilities, supported accommodation, resettlement, support with mental health, access to rehabilitation facilities for substance misuse
   – probe sanctions including Anti-social behaviour orders, injunctions, move-on, criminal arrest, Acceptable Behaviour Contracts

 ➢ What level of joint working occurs in implementing interventions?
   – probe commissioning, strategic decision making, level of dialogue between teams,

- How are interventions combined/linked?

- What is the effectiveness of specific interventions?
  - probe is the balance between support/sanctions appropriate? Why/why not?

Facilitation client involvement

- What methods of involvement are in place for targeted client groups and individuals?
  - probe questionnaires, one-off consultations at pre-determined stages, membership of reference and/or management groups, more than one method

- How are methods of involvement chosen?
  – probe management decisions, government policy directives, client group decisions

- What support is given to clients to encourage their participation?
  – probe jargon busters, accessible policy and financial documents, engaging with isolated clients and groups including homeless individuals

- How are homeless individual's encouraged and/or motivated to participate?

- How well have methods used worked for homeless and isolated groups
  – probe what hasn't worked and why?

- What are client groups and individuals involved in?
  – probe programme/policy development, identifying unmet needs, developing peer support networks other?

Further information

> ➢ Data, reports, policy documents, other potential participants

Thank you