

REPORT

LOVE THY NEIGHBOURHOOD

PEOPLE AND PLACE IN SOCIAL REFORM

Ed Cox
with Anna Turley,
Bill Davies and
Mark Harrison

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Institute for Public Policy Research



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IPPR North
3rd Floor, 20 Collingwood Street
Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 1JF
T: +44 (0)191 233 9050
E: north@ippr.org
www.ippr.org/north
Registered charity no. 800065

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Ed Cox is director of IPPR North.

Anna Turley is a senior research fellow at IPPR North.

Bill Davies is a researcher at IPPR North.

Mark Harrison is a research intern at IPPR .

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Neighbourhoods matter. For the vast majority of us, the place where we live shapes our identity and our relationships with others: who we see each day; the shops, schools and services we use; the kinds of houses we live in, and the parks we visit; the type of people and postcodes we are associated with. Some people may feel less attached to their residential neighbourhoods: they may live and work away from home for long periods of the day or year, and interact with online communities and with friends and colleagues who live further away, without having a strong sense of local community. However, even for these people, the idea of ‘home’ is still significant, and workplace neighbourhoods are important too.

Neighbourhoods are shaped by their varied histories and cultures, waves of migration, poverty and wealth, connections with other places and, of course, government policy. And they are continuing to change: responding to local, national and global economic trends; adapting to new technologies and forms of transport; and reflecting the changing shape of society in physical forms which can both shock and inspire.

Some neighbourhoods are flourishing – those where neighbours work together to resolve problems and make their area a better place to live. But other neighbourhoods are under pressure: some are overcrowded and unsafe, others are underpopulated and characterised by multiple deprivation. Some are polarised between different ethnic groups, others are characterised by a ‘nimbyism’ that stifles development and squashes opportunity.

The aim of the research presented in this report has been **to understand how neighbourhoods are changing in Britain, the pressures they face, the resources and capacities that exist within them, and how both people and policies can make them better places to live and work.**

What is a neighbourhood?

Neighbourhoods are dynamic places. They are constantly changing – as individuals move in and out, as the physical environment is altered through building, demolition and redevelopment, and as services and amenities change in response to shifts in needs and demands between one generation and the next. The way that a neighbourhood is viewed and understood by its residents – and, indeed, by outsiders – is a reflection of myriad social and economic interactions. Collective perceptions create what can be called ‘natural neighbourhoods’, with fuzzy and dynamic boundaries.

For researchers and administrators, the dynamic nature of neighbourhoods is difficult to deal with on an analytical or practical level. This is why neighbourhoods are sometimes defined as administrative units. Throughout this report we use a 'collective-dynamic-natural' understanding of neighbourhood, but we also use 'administrative-static' neighbourhood units for the purposes of statistical analysis and in relation to some recommendations.

The state of neighbourhoods

The 'pressures' on neighbourhoods can be measured in a variety of ways. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) was originally developed by the New Labour government as part of its wider initiative to tackle multiple deprivation and enable the systematic identification of the 'worst areas'. This was an effective tool for understanding economic and social variables and how areas rank against one another, but was less useful as a measure of absolute change.

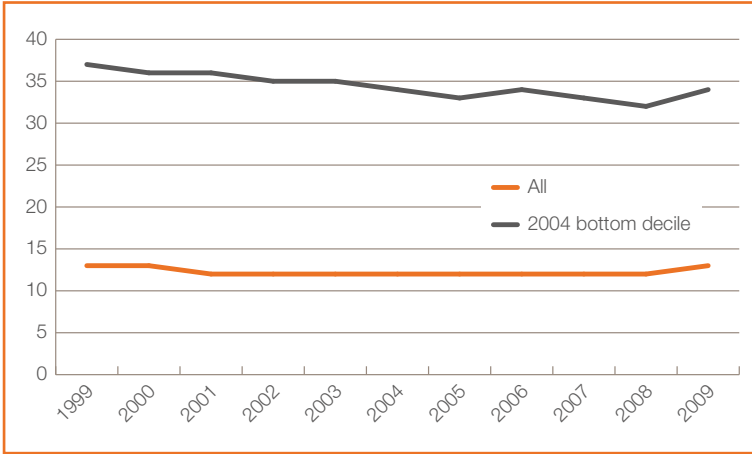
The Economic Deprivation Index (EDI) is a more absolute measure – this data shows that, against the three measures of income, employment, and children living in deprived households, most neighbourhoods actually improved in the decade up to 2008. Even the most deprived neighbourhoods saw significant improvements in terms of their economic deprivation, their levels of child poverty, and residents' level of satisfaction with their areas, with more than two-thirds of bottom-decile neighbourhoods showing EDI improvements between 2001 and 2010.

However, since 2008, the pressures on neighbourhoods have begun to grow again. Worklessness is closely correlated to IMD, and figure A2 below shows that the gap between the poorest neighbourhoods and the rest is widening in terms of the proportion who are receiving out-of-work benefits.

Since 2010, the government has stopped producing an Index of Multiple Deprivation. Although the pressures on individual households caused by the long recession are clearly evident, it is becoming increasingly difficult to measure the effects that these pressures are having on neighbourhoods. This runs counter to the government's commitment to transparency and open data.

Figure A1

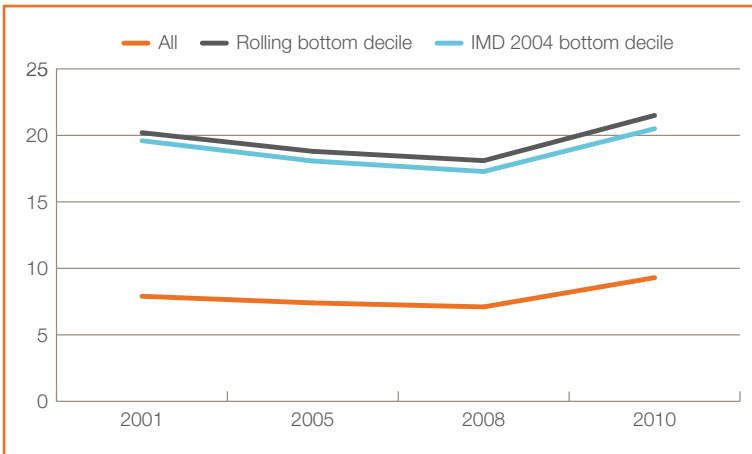
EDI neighbourhood income deprivation scores among neighbourhoods in the bottom decile of the IMD and the English average, 1999–2009



Source: DCLG (2012a) *Income Deprivation Domain Score, Economic Deprivation Index*

Figure A2

Average percentage of population in receipt of out-of-work benefits among the 2004 IMD bottom decile, annual bottom deciles, and all LSOA neighbourhoods in England, 2001–2010



Source: author's calculations based on DCLG 2011b and Nomis 2013a

Recommendation: state of the neighbourhoods report

A systematic approach to gathering and reporting data about neighbourhoods in England should be put in place, through a regular 'state of the neighbourhoods' report which should combine statistical data with information uploaded by neighbourhoods themselves. In order to achieve this, government should reinstate the collection of Index of Multiple

Deprivation data, and the ONS, the Department for Communities and Local Government, Locality, HACT, Third Sector Research Centre and other academics and interested parties should join forces to share data and to develop a process that enables neighbourhood 'self-reporting' on key local priorities.

Neighbourhood policy since 1997

While there have been public policy interventions based around geographical areas throughout the history of the modern state, local authorities were the early engines of locally-led change and place-based policy. This changed significantly under the Conservative government of the nineteen-eighties and early nineties, which attempted to use centrally driven and private-sector-led regeneration projects, particularly through physical urban development, to tackle neighbourhood decline. On coming to power in 1997, Tony Blair reacted to widening disparities between poorer and richer neighbourhoods by declaring that no one in future decades should be seriously disadvantaged by where they lived. This heralded a succession of centrally-funded neighbourhood renewal programmes targeted at particular deprived areas.

Labour's approach to neighbourhood renewal evolved over time. Following an initial phase of very targeted interventions through the New Deal for Communities programme, from 2001 there followed a period of more strategic, coordinated interventions under the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, supported by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. In 2007 the approach changed again, with a greater focus on worklessness and more freedom given to local authorities through Local Area Agreements and un-ringfenced Area-Based Grants.

This led to improvements against a range of targets – gaps were narrowed in areas such as employment, health, education and crime. Significant improvements were made to the physical fabric of deprived neighbourhoods, with £40 billion spent on improving homes, as well as on additional investment in schools, SureStart children's centres and community buildings (Lupton et al 2013). There was also heavy emphasis on the 'Cleaner, Greener, Safer' agenda of improving the quality of open spaces, with many areas reporting improved satisfaction, the establishment of a 'communities agenda', which had a lasting legacy in terms of community involvement and empowerment. These programmes were also recognised to represent good value for money – the reductions in worklessness achieved by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, for example, generated savings five times greater than the original amounts invested (ibid).

Yet despite many targets being met, the fundamental gap between rich and poor neighbourhoods remained wide. Furthermore, many have argued that it is impossible to measure the success of these programmes, given that wider economic conditions played such a large part in determining what was happening at the neighbourhood level.

When it was formed, the Coalition government had little by way of an explicit policy agenda for neighbourhoods. In the main this is because it has adopted the approach established in the later years of the New Labour government, and its focus on driving economic growth and jobs in sub-national economies and offering strong encouragement to those living in deprived neighbourhoods to move in order to pursue new opportunities. However, public spending cuts – not least to local government – have had particularly negative effects at the neighbourhood level, with the deterioration of local roads, the closure of libraries, children's centres and other local facilities, and significant reductions in the number of public sector staff working in frontline, community-facing roles.

The Coalition Agreement did, however, set out a 'driving ambition to put more power and opportunity into people's hands. We want to give citizens, communities and local government the power and information they need to come together, solve the problems they face and build the Britain they want' (HM Government 2010). This ambition has been translated into policy through two main programmes of activity: the Localism Act, passed in 2012, and a range of initiatives which were originally promoted under the banner of the 'Big Society'. Perhaps the most significant change to have come from the Localism Act has been a new approach to neighbourhood planning.

With the gap widening between deprived neighbourhoods and the rest, and without any specific policy objective to address such disparities, the risk is that the gains made under the previous government – however ameliorative – will be lost under this one. Neighbourhood pressures are building once again.

Neighbourhood change

The economic performance and deprivation levels of the majority of areas change relatively slowly. Four out of five of the poorest neighbourhoods in 2004 remained in the bottom 10 per cent of deprived neighbourhoods in 2010 (calculations based on DCLG 2011b). This 'path dependency' has a variety of causes, but is primarily driven by the gradual movement of people in and out of the area, their varying economic, social and cultural statuses, and the consequent changes in the overall composition of the local population.

The fact that population movement lies at the heart of long-term neighbourhood change has led many policymakers to the conclusion that an individual or household's personal characteristics (such as

employment status, educational attainment and health) should be the primary focus of public policy, and that neighbourhood 'sorting' is a natural consequence of individual differences.

But although an individual's characteristics are profoundly important for determining his or her life chances, places do matter. Neighbourhood effects have been found to be important in terms of the physical location of a neighbourhood, the development of neighbourhood stigma, and the result of the aggregate characteristics of the people living in a particular place. For example, a concentration of people who are out-of-work in one particular area can result in a lack of information about job opportunities, which reinforces the unemployment problem.

Statistical modelling shows that many of the most deprived neighbourhoods become stuck in poverty traps for precisely these reasons. According to a recent study, 1 per cent of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in the north of England are in this position, and residential patterns 'do not respond quickly to variations in market prices so spatial patterns are persistent', with the result that 'the neighbourhood has an independent effect on economic outcomes' (Meen et al 2013).

It is also possible to identify different neighbourhood 'types' and different roles that a place can play in relation to its wider economic area. Understanding the type of change occurring in a neighbourhood, the nature of its population flows and its role within the wider economic area is vital to identifying an appropriate policy response.

A 'theory of neighbourhood change' can be summarised as follows:

- Most neighbourhoods change only very slowly, and these changes are a function of the population movement mainly associated with wider economic factors.
- As a result, we can expect that there will always be gaps between neighbourhoods, and the principal means of narrowing these gaps will be through economic growth combined with measures to ensure that the proceeds of growth are better shared.
- There are nonetheless some important 'neighbourhood effects' which come about as a result of both this population sorting and the physical location and characteristics of particular places; these can 'trap' people who have less money.
- These effects reinforce concentrations of poverty in particular places, and in some cases cause neighbourhoods to enter a spiral of decline.

Neighbourhoods 'policy' is necessarily a long-term process and, although it may not produce immediate change, it is vitally important for three main reasons:

1. To make sure that all neighbourhoods can generate jobs and wealth themselves or, perhaps more importantly, they are connected to economic opportunities in the wider area.
2. To ameliorate the worst effects of wider economic trends and ensure that people in all neighbourhoods receive minimum standards of neighbourhood decency and service provision to prevent some places getting significantly worse.
3. To bring about the radical transformation of those neighbourhoods that have become caught in very costly spirals of decline.

Connecting neighbourhoods to economic opportunity

While there may always be a degree of divergence between the relative fortunes of different neighbourhoods, and while 'neighbourhood effects' may be a normal part of a dynamic economy, much more needs to be done by policymakers and practitioners to make sure that all neighbourhoods – not least those with the highest concentrations of unemployed people – can either create endogenous employment opportunities, or connect in to appropriate economic opportunities within their wider economy.

Recommendation: connecting neighbourhoods to economic opportunity

To ensure that the benefits of economic recovery are spread widely across and within regions, sub-regional plans and strategies for economic growth need to have a detailed understanding of the role that neighbourhoods can play in supporting and spreading economic prosperity – particularly those in the most deprived and marginalised areas. Local Enterprise Partnerships, transport authorities, welfare-to-work providers, colleges, universities and skills agencies should all work to incorporate a neighbourhood approach into their strategic planning and action.

Although it is right to emphasise the primacy of wider economic growth, it is legitimate for the state to seek to minimise the impact of the uneven distribution of economic wealth, particularly if this means preventing some places from becoming a growing burden on the taxpayer. Radical interventions in response to failure are normally the most costly.

Recommendation: preventing poverty traps

Government should recognise its responsibilities to citizens in all neighbourhoods, and actively seek to ameliorate the living conditions of those who may feel themselves trapped by where they live and victim to wider economic trends. It should build on

lessons learned from neighbourhood renewal approaches in the past, and fund such measures by decentralising housing, skills and transport funding to the sub-regional level.

However, it is clear that more deep-seated problems are unlikely to be significantly improved by such neighbourhood management techniques. In these places, it is likely that only some form of more radical intervention is likely to reverse or halt the process of 'residualisation' where people move out, the physical environment decays and services slowly diminish.

Good neighbourhoods, future neighbourhoods

Most people are concerned about the quality of their neighbourhood, and despite their differences and the particular problems that poor neighbourhoods face, many people who live in more affluent areas also express concerns about the type of neighbourhood they live in and the pressures they face.

Researchers have worked with mixed groups of people to develop 'minimum acceptable place standards' (MAPS). The MAPS methodology attempts to identify what members of the public think constitutes a minimum acceptable standard for places (Padley et al 2013, forthcoming). This represents a significant contribution to the neighbourhoods debate, not least in relation to spelling out some minimum 'service' requirements that should be treated as seriously as progressive policymakers have come to treat minimum income standards.

Recommendation: minimum acceptable place standards

Government should formally acknowledge the concept of minimum acceptable place standards, and take steps to incorporate it into neighbourhood planning guidance. Local authorities, housing associations and other agencies should introduce it to their local planning processes, identify which places fall below those standards, and take action to address particular issues. Residents and community organisations should use it as a basis for identifying key priorities and mobilising action to drive local improvements.

Another factor that determines a neighbourhood's success is its ability to adapt to future challenges. Our research has identified a number of interesting trends which we expect to become increasingly apparent coming years, and which will change our perceptions about what makes a good neighbourhood 'good'. These include:

- A decline in car usage, and greater use of car sharing and more integrated modes of public transport, leading to wider pedestrianisation of district centres and other public places.
- A growing number of joint service centres delivering health, leisure, housing, employment and other community services under one roof.
- More age-friendly public places with greater provision of seating, toilets and accessible shops and services.
- Changes to waste storage and collection, with growing use of communal waste collection points as opposed to individual bins.
- The transformation of neighbourhood high streets and district centres from retail destinations to leisure, culture and local business hubs.
- The development of district heating systems and neighbourhood approaches to energy production and supply.
- Greater use of digital technology and social media to enable community collaboration and action.

In each of these examples of neighbourhood futures, the transition being described is from an individual past to a collective future. While many global forces seem to be driving greater privatisation and fragmentation, at the neighbourhood level new approaches to collectivism and our shared social life seem to be coming together.

Neighbourhood policy and social renewal

The analysis above suggests that a new approach to neighbourhood policy and practice is the missing piece of the puzzle that will enable progressive policymakers to effectively address some of society's most profound challenges. This is exemplified in four areas.

Policymaking, democratic renewal and the role of the state

Neighbourhood-level working poses some significant challenges to the process of public policymaking, not least because the traditional modes of national and even local government policymaking have tended to have limited traction at the neighbourhood level. Complex social issues very often require complex solutions administered by interventions made very close to the source of the problem. Successful developments in any one of the aspects of a good neighbourhood mentioned above may well be assisted by a permissive national framework, but they require the collaboration of multiple actors at the neighbourhood level working on locally-specific projects. Such initiatives are very often better characterised as 'social innovation' than in terms of 'public policy'.

Such an approach would represent a marked difference in the way we address social problems. Indeed, it would mark a difference from the types of neighbourhood policy we have seen over the past two decades, putting far greater emphasis on the role that individuals and communities play in driving change by focussing on the qualities and resources that they have, and that exist within neighbourhoods, rather than what they

lack and what needs to be provided to them from outside. It would recognise the state as facilitative rather than interventionist, providing a policy framework, practical assistance and the ability to connect things up at different levels. And it would place greater emphasis on social transformation and innovation – doing things differently – rather than relying on simple economic redistribution in the hope that more money will improve the situation.

In many respects, this new approach to neighbourhoods represents a form of democratic renewal from the bottom up. It reflects and develops recent ideas about a more ‘relational state’ (Cooke and Muir 2012, Muir 2013 forthcoming), and suggests that these might find their most clear expression and fulfilment at the neighbourhood level. This is made all the more clear when we consider the implications that this might have for neighbourhood governance, for community development, and for political parties.

Neighbourhood governance

Neighbourhoods continue to be formally represented by ward councillors, but their role has been significantly undermined by changes in the way that local authorities now operate, and by the emergence of a wide range of other decision-making bodies at the neighbourhood level. While it may have its benefits, this opening up of the local democratic system also risks co-option by private interests, whether in the form of commercial companies with no local roots or by small groups of residents with specific or partial concerns. That being the case, there is still an important role for different forms of formal neighbourhood governance. The emergent neighbourhood planning process is a solid foundation upon which to build, and some areas will have town or parish councils, or neighbourhood councils or forums, for this very purpose. Nevertheless, the process can be enhanced.

Recommendation: enhanced neighbourhood planning

National and local government – led by political parties working at the grassroots – should do much more to promote and enhance existing neighbourhood planning opportunities by more widely promoting their importance and potential, and devolving key powers and funding to incentivise change.

However, it must be recognised that many – indeed most – neighbourhood groups will choose not to formally participate in a neighbourhood planning process. They must be recognised as vital elements in a healthy twenty-first century democracy, and actively supported by state actors when invited and where appropriate.

Community development

One of the most lasting and largely unreported legacies of the neighbourhood renewal era has been a transformation in community development practice. The transition in thinking among public bodies – from community involvement to community engagement to community empowerment – has been significant, and led to very different approaches being taken by frontline workers in different neighbourhoods. All agencies working at the neighbourhood level should recognise the importance of the growing body of evidence on community development practice, and ensure that frontline workers are equipped with the key skills to support an asset-based approach to social transformation.

Political parties

Political parties could be at the vanguard of neighbourhood action – yet a significant tension exists between political campaigning and new approaches to neighbourhood action. At the grassroots level, political campaigning needs to become more sophisticated. The best local councillors are supporting local initiatives irrespective of any immediate political ends: they recognise the value of independent voluntary action among groups that are unlikely to join their political party, and even among those who are unlikely to give them their vote. As well as changes to local party operations, a number of wider political reforms could also contribute to a new approach to neighbourhood working.

Recommendation: local democratic reform

Cross-party support should be given to a range of reforms to local democracy and local party processes. These reforms should enhance the role of ward councillors as key catalysts in their local neighbourhoods, including opening up selection processes, making it easier for working people to stand as councillors, and experimenting with new approaches to local democratic practices.

Public service reform

The government's recent Community Budget pilots have supported local authorities and other statutory and voluntary partners to pool and align their mainstream budgets, and channel human resources, to tackle so-called 'troubled families'. They represent an important example of how a neighbourhood approach can facilitate public service reform aimed at tackling complex social problems. However, similar approaches are needed in relation to crime and antisocial behaviour (such as neighbourhood justice panels, tackling worklessness, and dealing with chronic health problems). In each case, deepening relationships between service users, public sector professionals and other voluntary actors is key – and very often these interconnections will be best facilitated at the neighbourhood level.

Recommendation: ‘Community Budgets Plus’

Central government, local authorities and other statutory bodies should play a more enabling role, and liberate professionals and voluntary organisations working at the neighbourhood level to adopt bespoke approaches to tackling complex and interconnected problems through greater freedoms to pool and align budgets at the neighbourhood level.

Housebuilding and the private rented sector

Tackling the national housing crisis requires a complex response at many levels, but one of the most challenging problems which is restricting housebuilding in many areas is so-called ‘nimbyism’. At present the planning system favours those who already own homes, with wider community interests unable to have a voice in getting new schemes off the ground.

Recommendation: a housebuilding incentives scheme

Alongside changes to the neighbourhood planning system proposed above, more incentives should be given to local residents to allow new housebuilding by running local ballots, rolling-out community land auctions, and devolving the Community Infrastructure Levy and New Homes Bonus incentives to the neighbourhood level.

One of the biggest problems facing deprived neighbourhoods is the poor quality and high cost of homes in the private rented sector (PRS). While some aspects of the PRS are valued for their flexibility and choice, there is a growing sub-sector of the PRS market which thrives upon rent subsidy through both housing benefit and the growing numbers of people receiving local housing allowance, and which tends to be of a poor quality. This can blight neighbourhoods, and needs to be tackled head-on.

Recommendation: neighbourhood housing agencies

Local authorities should establish ‘neighbourhood housing agencies’ in targeted areas to provide better management and regulation of PRS properties – particularly those in receipt of housing benefits. These agencies should be responsible for the development and implementation of local landlord accreditation schemes, and offer tenant matching and property management services on a competitive but not-for-profit basis.

Energy and decarbonisation

Another set of significant social and economic challenges that have implications at a variety of spatial scales are those of energy security and decarbonisation. The neighbourhood is often the locus for a wide variety of community-led 'green initiatives', ranging from local growing and allotment schemes to local energy production (Platt 2011). The role of neighbourhood or community 'catalysts' in developing and running such schemes is key, but very often these are supported by public funding and other institutional support.

Recommendation: energy efficiency street-by-street

The government should adapt its existing approach to energy efficiency, of obliging energy suppliers to deliver improvements, in favour of a more neighbourhood-based approach. This would better target fuel poverty, lower energy bills, reduce carbon emissions and create local jobs.

Recommendation: district heating systems

Local authorities and other housing bodies should explore and develop district heating system proposals in targeted neighbourhoods, which should be supported by the Green Investment Bank. These schemes could make a particularly valuable contribution in low-income areas, where levels of fuel poverty are likely to be highest. In order to assist this, Ofgem should review its License Lite scheme with a view to overcoming existing barriers to take-up.

Conclusion

For the vast majority of people, living in a good neighbourhood is one of the most important aspects of their wellbeing – yet too many neighbourhoods are still experiencing entrenched problems like poor housing, antisocial behaviour and a lack of access to employment and some key services.

Neighbourhoods policy over the past two decades has made some significant impacts, not least in preventing many places from entering a spiral of decline, and there is much to be learned from the approaches that were adopted. However, neighbourhood change is a slow process which is primarily affected by the wider economic context, and government has had to change its approach and address wider issues of local economic development to become more effective in addressing neighbourhood decline.

That is not to say that there is no longer a place for neighbourhood policy: on the contrary, a new approach to neighbourhoods is vital to connecting neighbourhoods to areas of economic opportunity, and to improving and transforming those places that are experiencing concentrated and complex problems. It might also unlock solutions to some of the most profound challenges currently facing public policy.

When combined with concerted action across a range of spatial scales, a new neighbourhoods approach centred on unlocking social innovation by bringing together state, private and voluntary actors can be transformative. Local collaboration around a shared neighbourhood vision is the key to prosperous and dynamic neighbourhood futures.

1. WHY NEIGHBOURHOODS MATTER

BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

Neighbourhoods matter. For the vast majority of us, the place where we live shapes our identity and our relationships with others: who we see each day; the shops, schools and services we use; the kinds of houses we live in and the parks we visit; the ‘type’ of people and postcodes we are associated with. We, in turn, shape our neighbourhoods too, through the ways in which we choose to live in them: close-knit villages, commuter towns, cosmopolitan districts, no-go estates.

Some people may think that their residential neighbourhoods don’t matter a great deal, and may not feel a strong sense of local community – they may live or work away from home for long periods of the day or year, and interact with online communities and with friends and colleagues who live further away. Yet the idea of ‘home’ remains significant for everyone, and workplace neighbourhoods are also important.

One of the reasons why neighbourhoods matter is that they are very different. They are shaped by their varied histories and cultures, waves of migration, poverty and wealth, connections with other places and, of course, government policy. Neighbourhoods continue to change in response to local, national and global economic trends, and to new technologies and forms of transport. They reflect the changing shape of society in physical form, in ways that can both shock and inspire.

Some neighbourhoods are flourishing – those where neighbours work together to resolve problems and make their areas better places to live, often relying on their own energy and innovation rather than huge amounts of public money or institutional support. But other neighbourhoods are under pressure: some are overcrowded and unsafe, others are underpopulated and characterised by multiple deprivation. Some are polarised between different ethnic groups, others are characterised by a ‘nimbyism’ that stifles development and squashes opportunity.

Governments both local and national have long sought to influence neighbourhoods – from the grand plans of Corbusier and the garden cities of Ebenezer Howard, to the area-based regeneration initiatives that characterised the early part of the New Labour government and the ‘neighbourhood planning’ regime today. Yet neighbourhood ‘policy’ is now largely out of vogue. Since the economic downturn, policy has been overwhelmingly focussed on the macroeconomic conditions for recovery and the role of city regions, Local Enterprise Partnerships and combined authorities in driving local economic growth. Neighbourhood regeneration has been superseded by economic ambitions of a rather grander scale.

Against this backdrop, IPPR North has conducted research into the state of neighbourhoods today. Our goals have been to achieve a

greater understanding of which neighbourhoods are changing most and why, what role housing and the physical environment is playing, the importance of shops, public services and workplaces, the effects of transport and interconnectivity, and the social networks and relationships that are the very essence of what it means to be neighbours. We have also considered whether governments and government policy can shape neighbourhood developments in a way that is progressive and proactive.

The central aim of this research has been **to understand how neighbourhoods are changing in Britain, what pressures they face, what resources and capacities exist within them, and how both people and policies can make them better places to live and work.**

Our research has pursued four clear objectives:

- To build up a view about what makes a neighbourhood a good place to live, drawing on empirical and everyday perspectives.
- To develop a fresh understanding of ‘the state of neighbourhoods’ in Britain today, considering the types and distribution of neighbourhoods across the country and the trends and forces shaping their development.
- To review how services, institutions and government policies have affected neighbourhoods in the past, assessing the effectiveness of different approaches to neighbourhood and community policy.
- To consider what neighbourhoods are likely to look like in the future, and what strategies and actions – supported by government, but also drawing on other sources of agency and the capacities and resources that exist within local areas – might make different types of neighbourhoods better places to live.

This research forms part of IPPR’s Condition of Britain programme – a flagship social research and policy platform – which aims to offer fresh thinking about the major challenges facing contemporary society and the resources within the systems of everyday life, alongside those of government, that could be mobilised in response. This report considers how we can harness the state, market and community to make every part of country a good place to live, despite the economic pressures we are facing.

Research methodology

Our research has involved four different elements:

Literature review: we have reviewed a wide range of books and reports about neighbourhoods from sociological and ethnographic standpoints, but also policy documents and evaluative studies of the neighbourhood programmes that have characterised the past 20 years.

Neighbourhood workshops: we have brought together academics and other experts, policymakers, practitioners and community representatives

from across the country for two deliberative workshops to discuss their experiences, ideas and emerging themes. (See Annex 2 for a list of participants.)

Data analysis: we have carried out new quantitative work exploring the state of neighbourhoods in England today, and what potential there is for developing and enhancing the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

Case study analysis: we visited six different neighbourhoods in order to understand how they have changed over the last 15 years. Our work involved small community meetings, guided neighbourhood walkabouts, community questionnaires and stakeholder interviews.

Defining neighbourhoods

As the description above demonstrates, neighbourhoods are dynamic places. They are constantly changing as individuals move in and out, as the physical environment is changed by building, demolition and redevelopment, and as services and amenities change in response to shifting needs and demand from one generation to the next. They are dynamic in more perceptual terms too: the way a neighbourhood is viewed and understood by its residents – and, indeed, by outsiders – is a reflection of myriad social and economic interactions which together create a ‘sense of place’ that can be communicated widely, and which also changes over time. Collective perceptions create what can be called ‘natural neighbourhoods’, with fuzzy and dynamic boundaries.

Although most people have a fairly clear perception of what constitutes a natural neighbourhood, for researchers and administrators their dynamic nature is difficult to deal with on an analytical or practical level. For this reason, neighbourhoods are sometimes defined simply as administrative units.

For the purposes of local democracy, the ward is very often considered to be the closest approximation of a neighbourhood, but for statistical purposes other definitions are used. The Office for National Statistics divides England into over 30,000 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) – areas with between 1,000 and 3,000 residents and 400 and 1,200 households. It also identifies larger Middle Super Output Areas (MSOAs).¹

Throughout this report we use a ‘collective-dynamic-natural’ understanding of ‘neighbourhood’, but we also use ‘administrative-static’ neighbourhood units (such as LSOAs) for the purposes of statistical analysis and in relation to some recommendations.

¹ <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/geography/beginner-s-guide/census/super-output-areas--soas-/index.html>

2. THE STATE OF NEIGHBOURHOODS

2.1 Measuring and mapping neighbourhood pressures

The 'pressures' on neighbourhoods can be measured in a variety of ways. Using an administrative definition of 'neighbourhood', the Office for National Statistics' Neighbourhood Statistics website² presents information on population, deprivation, health, housing and a range of other factors for every neighbourhood in England. But perhaps the most useful measure developed over the past two decades has been the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).

The IMD was originally developed by the New Labour government as part of its wider initiative to tackle multiple deprivation, in order to enable the systematic identification of the 'worst areas'. Its analysis was based on the designation of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs), which have a population of between 1,000 and 3,000 people and between 400 and 1,200 households. As noted above, although these are not 'natural neighbourhoods' they are the closest approximation of them that we have for statistical purposes. Each LSOA is identified by a nine-digit code.

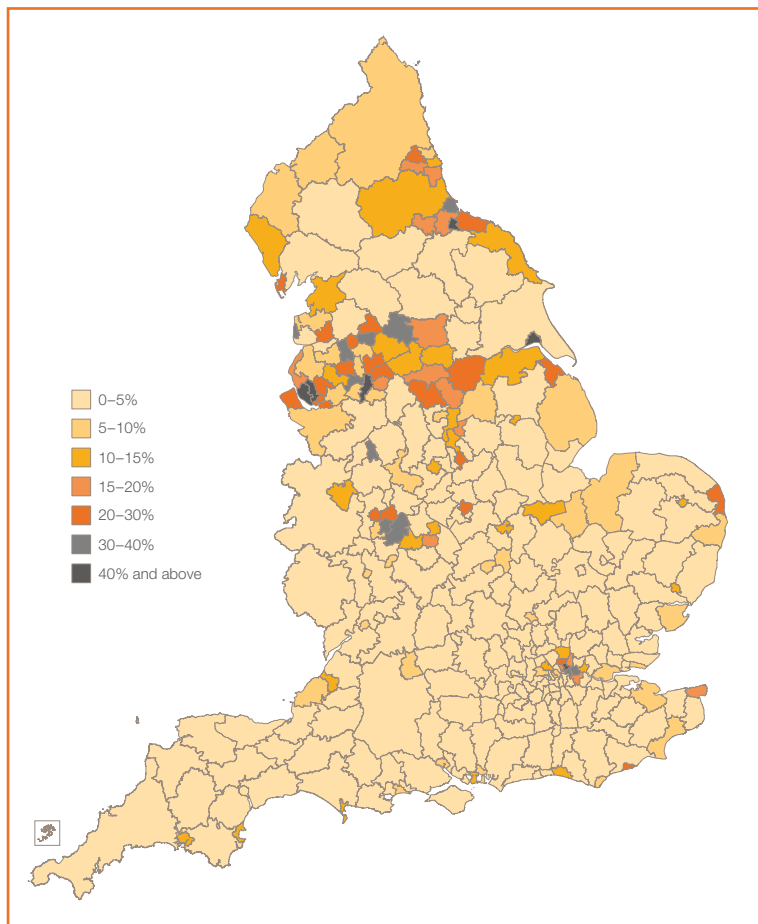
The IMD brings together 49 separate datasets, grouped into seven domains which are intended to demonstrate different aspects of neighbourhood deprivation. These are then weighted and counted to give each neighbourhood a score which can be ranked in order to determine the relative deprivation of neighbourhoods across the country.

The IMD was calculated in 2004, 2007 and 2010, and in each case it provided a valuable snapshot of the state of English neighbourhoods both across England and within particular cities.

This map clearly illustrates the significant variations that exist between neighbourhoods across the country. This is made more tangible by table 2.1 below, which shows the most and least deprived neighbourhoods from the 2010 Index of Multiple Deprivation alongside the key social security indicators.

2 <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/>

Figure 2.1
Index of Multiple
Deprivation (%) in
English LSOAs,
2010



Source: Based on DCLG 2011b

Five least deprived LSOAs								
LSOA code	Local authority name	IMD rank 2004	IMD rank 2010	JSA claimants (total)	Band A properties (%)	Incapa-city benefit (total)	Lone parents (total)	Pension credit (total)
E01023818	Three Rivers	32480	32482	10	0.00	10	0	10
E01023093	Rushmoor	32475	32481	0	0.00	10	0	10
E01030882	Waverley	32478	32480	5	0.38	10	0	10
E01016709	Wokingham	32481	32479	5	0.95	15	0	10
E01022863	Hart	32462	32478	5	0.16	15	0	15

Table 2.1
Five most and
five least deprived
LSOAs by 2010
IMD ranking,
with key social
security indicators
(including number
of claimants of
specific benefits)

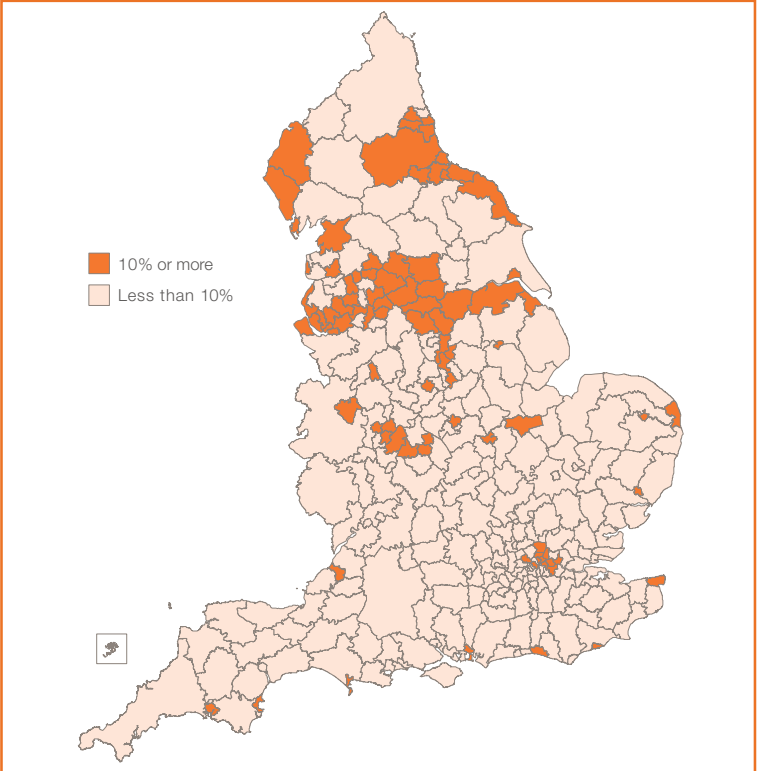
Five most deprived LSOAs								
LSOA code	Local authority name	IMD rank 2004	IMD rank 2010	JSA claimants (total)	Band A properties (%)	Incapacity benefit (total)	Lone parents (total)	Pension credit (total)
E01012721	Blackpool	124	5	60	83.76	305	80	170
E01006559	Liverpool	1	4	40	98.60	110	40	125
E01012673	Blackpool	361	3	90	92.54	210	60	150
E01013139	North East Lincolnshire	315	2	85	99.49	185	60	185
E01021988	Tendring	102	1	105	84.43	310	65	260

Source: DCLG 2011b, Nomis 2013b and ONS Neighbourhood Statistics 2013

Against all measures, the gaps between the five least and five most deprived LSOA neighbourhoods are large. The five least deprived neighbourhoods, for instance, had no parents in receipt of income support, and few, if any, properties in Council Tax Band A as a share of the total property stock.

Mapping the most deprived LSOAs also illustrates that there are significant concentrations of deprived neighbourhoods in particular parts of the country.

Figure 2.2
Local authorities in which 10 per cent or more of LSOAs were in the bottom decile of the 2010 IMD



Source: DCLG 2011b

Figure 2.2 shows that the highest concentrations of neighbourhoods that fell into the bottom decile of the 2010 IMD are found in local authority districts in the north of England, the West Midlands and the boroughs of inner London. Coastal local authorities also have high concentrations of bottom-decile LSOAs, and some of the neighbourhoods within these were selected to form part of our case study research.

2.2 Measuring neighbourhood change

Figure 2.3 shows the regional distribution of those LSOAs that fall into the bottom 10 per cent of all neighbourhoods in the IMD.

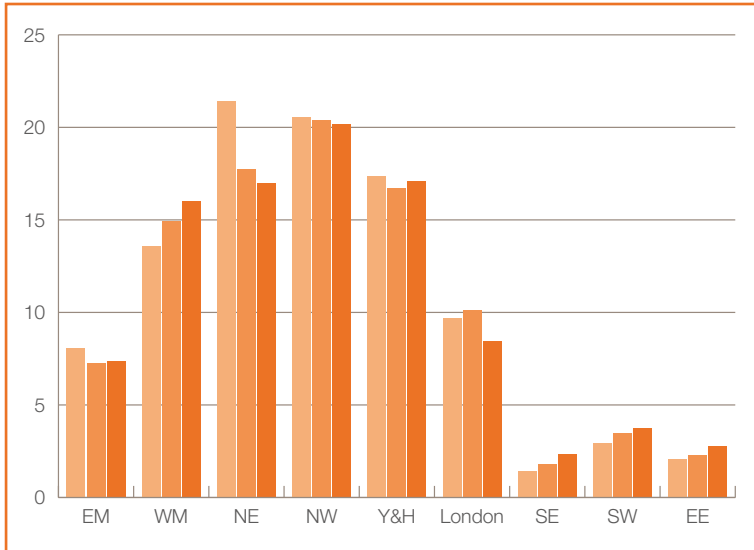


Figure 2.3
Proportion (%) of LSOAs in bottom decile of IMD, by region, 2004, 2007 and 2010

Source: DCLG 2011b

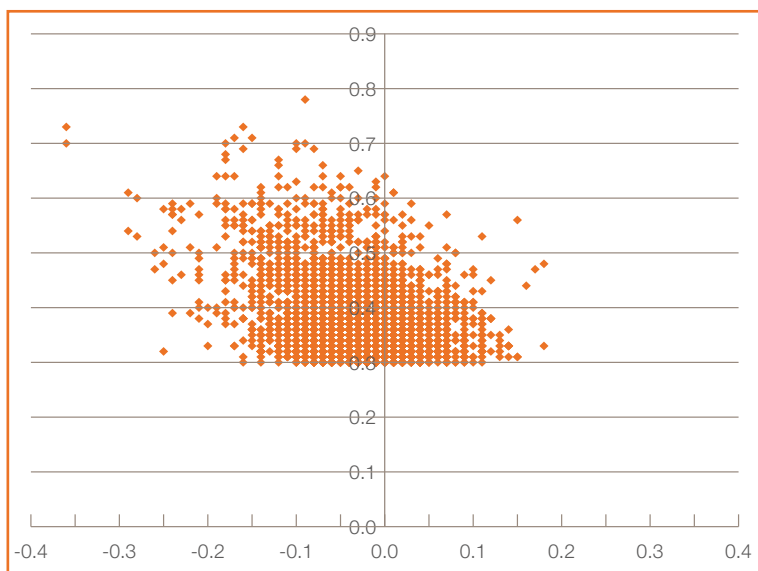
This chart is particularly interesting as it shows some relative change between regions between 2004 and 2010: it highlights the fact that there were some relative improvements in the North East, North West, East Midlands and London at the expense of other regions.

Using a similar measure of economic deprivation – the Economic Deprivation Index (EDI) – it is possible to illustrate neighbourhood change over time. The EDI is useful in that it is an absolute rather than a relative measure of deprivation, although it includes a smaller number of variables than the IMD. Figures 2.4, 2.5, 2.6 and 2.7 show changes in EDI scores for the poorest 10 per cent of neighbourhoods in England.

Of the 3,249 neighbourhoods that fell into the bottom decile of the 2004 IMD, the figure shows that – as measured by the EDI – 61 per cent of 3,249 neighbourhoods reduced their income deprivation over the decade (those positioned to the left of the Y-axis), compared to 33 per

cent whose levels of income deprivation worsened (those on the right of the Y axis). Therefore, despite progress being slow, and their relative positions remaining largely the same at the start of the decade as at the end, overall the poorest neighbourhoods appeared to become less impoverished over time.

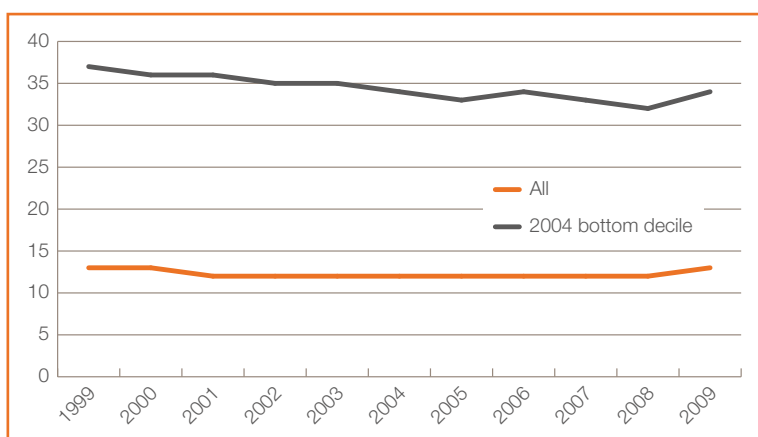
Figure 2.4
 EDI income deprivation change 1999–2009, by EDI income score and percentage point change, among neighbourhoods in the bottom decile of the IMD



Source: DCLG 2012a

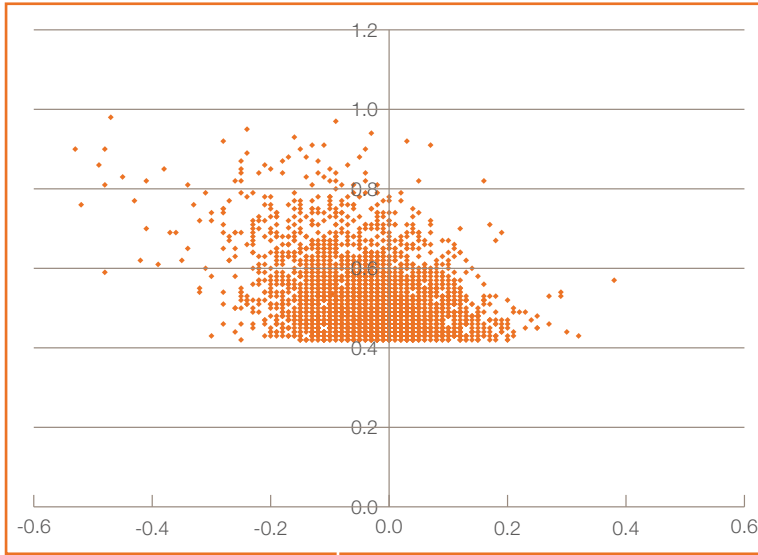
Figure 2.5 below shows that, between 1999 and 2009, this general improvement helped to close the gap between the most deprived neighbourhoods and the English average, albeit relatively slowly.

Figure 2.5
 EDI neighbourhood income deprivation scores among neighbourhoods in the bottom decile of the IMD and the English average, 1999–2009



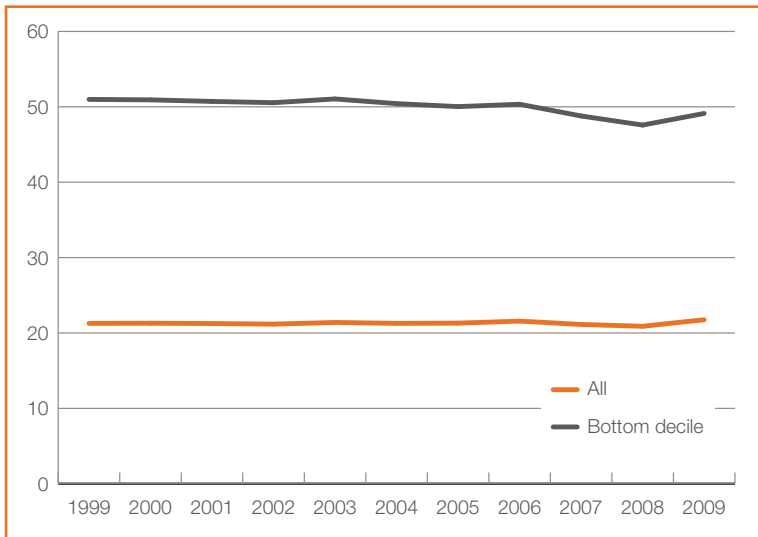
Source: DCLG 2012a

Similar patterns can be observed by looking at the EDI child deprivation measure. Again, figure 2.6 below tracks those neighbourhoods that were identified by the IMD as being in the bottom decile of deprivation as of 2004, measuring the changes in their child income deprivation scores.



Source: DCLG 2012b

Figure 2.6
EDI child income deprivation change 1999–2009, by income score and percentage point change, among neighbourhoods in the bottom decile of the IMD



Source: DCLG 2012b

Figure 2.7
EDI child income deprivation scores among neighbourhoods in the bottom decile of the IMD and the English average, 1999–2009

Figure 2.6 shows that of the 3,249 neighbourhoods in the bottom decile of the 2004 IMD, 66.7 per cent reduced their levels of child deprivation over the decade, as indicated by their position to the left of the Y-axis compared to 27 per cent whose levels of child deprivation worsened (those on the right of the Y-axis). This fact was also reflected in a very small narrowing of the gap between the poorest and the England average between 1999 and 2008, as shown in figure 2.7.

The four figures above also highlight two further facts:

- Neighbourhood change occurs in very small increments.
- After 2008, the gap between poor neighbourhoods and the English average appears to be widening again.

2.3 The slow pace of change

Whether observing shifts in the proportions of bottom-decile IMD neighbourhoods in different regions, or the evolution of neighbourhoods' EDI scores over time, it is striking just how little change occurs. Even where neighbourhoods gradually improve across the aggregate, the geographical location of the relatively poorest neighbourhoods changes little. For instance, if we look at which English local authority areas contained the highest concentration of the most deprived neighbourhoods in 2004, it was still largely those local authorities that had the most deprived neighbourhoods in 2010.

Table 2.2
Local authorities with the top-ten highest concentration of LSOAs (as % of all LSOAs within their boundaries), 2004 and 2010

IMD 2004	% LSOAs in Bottom 10%	IMD 2010	% LSOAs in Bottom 10%
Manchester	59.8	Liverpool	50.9
Liverpool	59.1	Middlesbrough	46.6
Tower Hamlets	55.4	Manchester	45.6
Knowsley	52.5	Knowsley	45.5
Middlesbrough	50.0	Kingston upon Hull	42.9
Hackney	48.9	Hackney	41.6
Kingston upon Hull	46.6	Tower Hamlets	40.0
Nottingham	44.9	Birmingham	39.2
Hartlepool	39.7	Blackpool	37.2
Birmingham	37.9	Hartlepool	36.2

Source: Author's calculations based on DCLG 2011b

The table above shows that nine of the 10 local authorities that were found to have the most deprived LSOAs in the first IMD (2004) continued to have the most deprived LSOAs in the last IMD (2010): only Blackpool moved into the bottom 10, and only Nottingham moved out. A similar picture of slow change can be discerned from other indicators. For instance, out of an average population of 1,500, the average numbers of welfare claimants in each LSOA neighbourhood have not shifted considerably over time.

Table 2.3
LSOA
neighbourhood
averages of
key indicators
of economic
deprivation, 2001,
2005 and 2008.

	Neighbourhood averages		
	2001	2005	2008
Out-of work benefits claimants	119.1	114.0	112.1
Lone parents	23.7	21.0	19.9
JSA claimants	23.2	21.6	23.0
% Band-A dwellings	24.9	24.3	24.3
Pension credit claimants	-	69.5	70.2

Source: Nomis 2013a and 2013b, ONS Neighbourhood Statistics 2013

These patterns in the geographical distribution of the most deprived LSOA neighbourhoods, and those shown in the maps above, clearly reflect the old industrial geography of Britain, and the fact that it takes many years for neighbourhoods to properly recover from the kinds of economic shift that have taken place over the past century. What little improvements there might have been in deprived neighbourhoods during the decade to 2008 may well have been supported by government policy (a topic we will address in the next chapter), but were most likely effects of the period of relative economic improvement in the wider national economy. It is no surprise, then, that this situation deteriorated during the subsequent recession (Tunstall 2009).

2.4 The state of neighbourhoods since the recession

The Coalition government decided to discontinue the collection of IMD data after 2010. As a result, it cannot be used to properly compare the state of neighbourhoods before and since the recession. However, the EDI data above does show a relative downturn in the fortunes of the poorest neighbourhoods up to 2009, and a number of other datasets paint a similar picture.

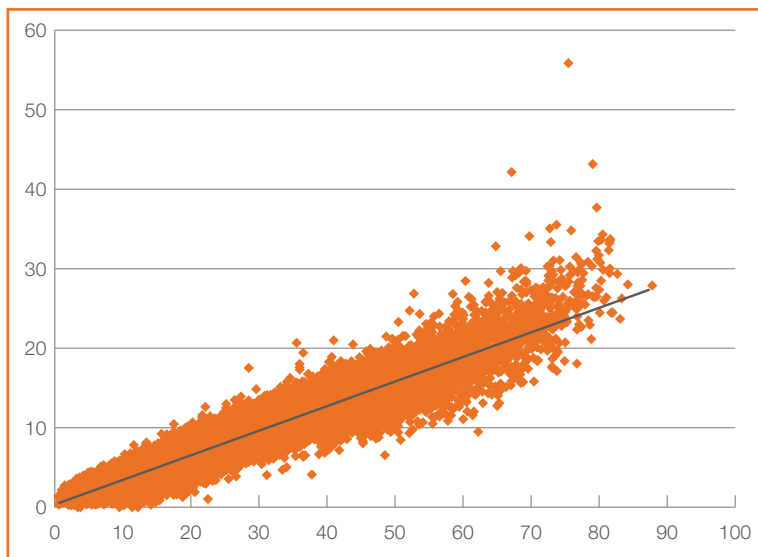
Figure 2.8 shows that the number of people claiming out-of-work benefits shows a strong correlation with the IMD. This is not surprising, as worklessness was one of the most heavily weighted IMD variables. It therefore makes a very useful proxy indicator for neighbourhood deprivation.

Using this proxy measure, we can show that since 2008 the proportion of people on out-of-work benefits has increased for all neighbourhoods, but that it has increased at a faster rate in the poorest neighbourhoods, thereby widening the gap between the poorest neighbourhoods and the rest and eating away at the gains made in the pre-recession years.

Figure 2.10 shows that for every claimant in the average neighbourhood in 2001, there were nearly 2.5 times as many claimants in the bottom 10 per cent of neighbourhoods. The gap narrowed to just over 2.3 during eight years of economic growth that lifted those neighbourhoods with the weakest labour markets. However, as the recession hit, the average neighbourhood's claimant count rose more rapidly than those at the bottom, narrowing the gap further. Now, as the economy begins to show

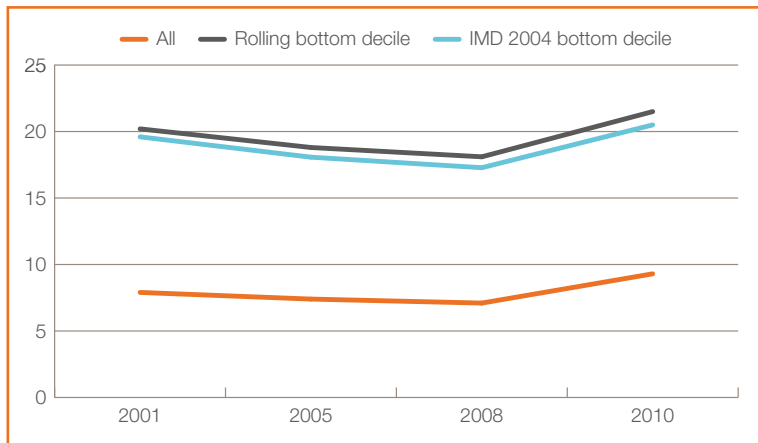
signs of recovery, that gap has widened again to 2.4 as the average neighbourhood improves, but those at the bottom are left behind.

Figure 2.8
Association between IMD scores (2010) and worklessness rates of LSOA neighbourhoods in England (2008)



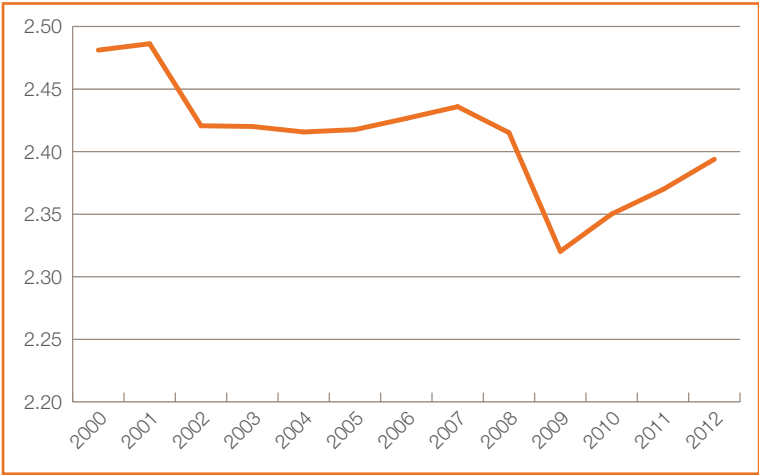
Source: DCLG 2011b and Nomis 2013a

Figure 2.9
Average percentage of population in receipt of out-of-work benefits among the 2004 IMD bottom decile, the annual bottom deciles of, and all LSOA neighbourhoods in England, 2001–2010



Source: DCLG 2011b and Nomis 2013a

Figure 2.10
 'Worklessness gap' between
 the LSOA
 neighbourhood
 average and
 the 2004 IMD
 bottom decile,
 2000–2012



Nomis 2013a

2.5 The future of IMD

As this chapter has demonstrated, the Index of Multiple Deprivation was a vital tool for understanding the state of neighbourhoods in England. While it had some limitations, and the ranking of neighbourhoods that it provided was actually instrumental in stigmatising some areas, each iteration of the index improved on the previous one. Further improvements could have been made, not least in terms of collecting data that reflects the capacity and collective efficacy that communities in deprived neighbourhoods so often have – but for now it is not collected at all.

Recommendation: a state of the neighbourhoods report

A systematic approach to gathering and reporting data about neighbourhoods in England should be put in place, including the publication of a regular 'state of the neighbourhoods' report combining statistical data with information uploaded by neighbourhoods themselves. In order to achieve this:

- As part of its commitment to transparency and open data, the government should reinstate the collection of Index of Multiple Deprivation data with immediate effect so that we can continue to monitor the relative fortunes of neighbourhoods over time.
- The ONS, DCLG, Locality, HACT, Third Sector Research Centre and other academics and interested parties should join forces to share data and develop a process that enables neighbourhood 'self-reporting' on key local priorities.

Creating a new Index of Multiple Deprivation

IPPR North ran a number of experiments attempting to simulate a new Index of Multiple Deprivation, using previous IMD scores as the basis for predicting future ones. The results of these experiments are not included in this final report, but a brief discussion of the experiment is necessary in the hope that others will take up the challenge.

Initially, IPPR North explored variables that were available annually at the LSOA level, selecting them on the basis of their correlation to the IMD scores over successive periods. The thinking behind this was that, in the absence of a current IMD, alternative but similar datasets could be used to predict a future IMD score – or, at the very least, the decile in which a particular neighbourhood might be placed. Data was therefore selected on the basis of its correlation with the IMD scores of neighbourhoods, and, critically, its continuing availability beyond the lifespan of the IMD. The three core variables that we ultimately adopted were ‘out-of-work benefit claimants as a percentage of total population’, ‘council tax band A properties’, and ‘pension credit claimants as a percentage of the population’.³ The combination of these variables produced strong correlations with neighbourhood IMD scores.

Running simulation modelling using these three variables at two IMD points (2007 and 2010) yielded results that were too wide of anticipated results to be accurate for the purposes of either ranking or assigning deciles to neighbourhoods with sufficient degrees of confidence. Nevertheless, organisations with sufficient resources may be able to deliver compelling research in this area.

Research which takes the IMD forward might also include a broader spectrum of neighbourhood indicators to account of factors such as civic engagement. For instance, if electoral turnout could be identified or modelled at LSOA level then such additions could aid our understanding of neighbourhood life through statistics.

3 Sources: DCLG 2011b, Nomis 2013a and 2013b, and ONS Neighbourhood Statistics 2013

3. NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY SINCE 1997

3.1 Background

While there have been public policy interventions focused on specific geographical areas throughout the history of the modern state, the early engines of locally-led change and place-based policy were local authorities. It was them who developed local responses to poor relief, public health and sanitation and, after the Local Government Acts of 1888 and 1894, standardised systems of local administration. In the 1930s, regional measures were put in place to attempt to tackle high levels of unemployment, and the Industrial Development Certificates of 1945 and 1947 were an attempt to steer industry away from London and the Midlands and into designated development areas (Crowley et al 2012). But the development of the national postwar approach to social security, health, welfare and housing meant that solutions to place-based problems tended, over the following half-century, to be driven by an ever-more centralised state.

The Conservative government of the eighties and early nineties attempted to use centrally driven and private-sector-led regeneration projects, particularly through physical urban development, to tackle neighbourhood decline. In the nineties, initiatives such as the City Challenge, Urban Development Corporations and Enterprise Zones and then the Single Regeneration Budget Fund all sought to regenerate areas hit by urban industrial and manufacturing decline and mass unemployment. They attempted to use property- and market-led approaches to regeneration, in the hope that benefits would 'trickle down' to the local area. However, there was little evidence of this – indeed, if anything, wherever regeneration was most visible, greater social polarisation occurred (Ball-Petsimeris 2004).

By 1997, it was clear to New Labour that these approaches were not enough. Evidence showed that entrenched inequality and deprivation could be found in geographical pockets both within and outside cities, and that combatting them with physical regeneration alone would be insufficient. On coming to power, Tony Blair reacted to the then widening disparities between poorer and richer neighbourhoods by declaring that no one in future decades should be seriously disadvantaged by where they lived. This heralded successive centrally-funded neighbourhood renewal programmes targeted at particular deprived areas.

3.2 The objectives of New Labour's neighbourhood policies

One of the greatest challenges in assessing the nature and the success of New Labour's neighbourhood policies is to achieve a clear understanding of what it was they set out to achieve in the first place. While it is obvious that New Labour initially recognised the importance of 'place effects', many of its aspirations were more focused on ensuring better opportunities and outcomes for people rather than places⁴ – less worklessness, better health, better skills and so on. Other neighbourhood renewal objectives were more place-focused, such as lower crime, better housing and cleaner and greener physical environments. While it is more straightforward to measure achievements against the latter type of objectives, when considering more people-based outcomes it is much more difficult to disaggregate the impact of neighbourhood renewal programmes from the wider and longer-term effects that may lie behind any improvement or deterioration.

Underlying both people- and place-based objectives, there emerged within New Labour neighbourhood policy a third strand of thinking concerning the role of communities themselves. This began as a general commitment to community involvement in neighbourhood renewal programmes. However, over time – and particularly after the London bombings in 2005 – community cohesion and community empowerment became ends in themselves.

This chapter explores these objectives, and considers extent to which neighbourhood policies can be considered successful in relation to each of them.

3.3 Narrowing the gap

3.3.1 The New Deal for Communities

Launching the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal in 2001, Tony Blair outlined his vision 'of a nation where no-one is seriously disadvantaged by where they live' (Social Exclusion Unit 2001). This commitment to narrowing the gap between rich and poor neighbourhoods had been heralded some three years earlier with the introduction of the New Deal for Communities (NDC) programme, one of the biggest area-based initiatives to tackle deprived neighbourhoods ever undertaken.

The NDC was a 10-year programme which aimed to transform 39 deprived neighbourhoods in England, each of which accommodated around 10,000 people. Thirty-nine NDC partnerships implemented local regeneration schemes, each of which were funded by a central government grant of, on average, £50 million. The programme was designed to achieve six key objectives:

- to transform these 39 areas over 10 years by achieving holistic change in relation to three place-related outcomes – crime, community, and housing and the physical environment (HPE)

4 See chapter 4 for a discussion of people and place effects.

– and three people-related outcomes: education, health, and worklessness

- to ‘close the gaps’ between these 39 deprived areas and the rest of the country
- to deliver a value-for-money transformation of these neighbourhoods
- to secure improvements through partnership-working between bodies such as the police, Primary Care Trusts (PCTs), schools, Jobcentre Plus, and their ‘parent’ local authorities
- to place the community ‘at the heart of’ the initiative, and
- to sustain a local impact after the cessation of the NDC programme’s funding (Batty et al 2010).

Various evaluations suggest that the NDC programme was a success. A departmental evaluation of the NDC programme found that the biggest improvements were in indicators of peoples’ feelings about the neighbourhoods they lived in (Batty et al 2010). According to research by Lupton et al (2013), the NDC areas saw an increase of 13 per cent in the proportion of residents who said that they were ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ satisfied with the area, compared with 8 per cent in comparator areas’ during the period to 2007. Lawless (2007) found that:

‘there has been continuing, if generally relatively modest change across the 39 areas. Analysis of some 36 core indicators suggests 32 moved in a positive fashion. Those thinking the NDC had improved the area rose more than any other indicator – 24 percentage points,’

and that:

‘between 2004 and 2007 there were absolute improvements in the liveability indicators and the gaps between deprived areas and others closed.’

However, it is difficult to separate the success of NDC from a range of other neighbourhood renewal initiatives that soon followed it – particularly because local authorities often chose to focus them on NDC areas. These included Health and Education Action Zones (local partnerships to develop and implement local health and education strategies), Employment Zones (employment mentoring for long-term unemployed over-25s), welfare-to-work programmes and Drug and Youth Action Teams. Between 1999 and 2003, 524 Sure Start centres were set up in neighbourhoods with high concentrations of child poverty in the 80 most deprived local authority areas. Evaluations of Sure Start reported local reductions in rates of burglary, vehicle crime and exclusions from schools (Eisenstadt 2011).

3.3.2 The National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal

Following this initial wave of targeted, area-based neighbourhood renewal initiatives, the 2001 National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal (NSNR) adopted a more strategic approach to neighbourhood renewal. Where NDC and other initiatives were based on top-down additional grants, the new approach involved more ‘joined-up’ working between a range of local agencies and central government with the intention of ‘bending’ mainstream spending towards poorer neighbourhoods.

At the local level, this new approach was guided by ‘local neighbourhood renewal strategies’, with support from a new Neighbourhood Renewal Fund worth £500 million per annum and shared between 95 local authority areas. At the central government level, a Neighbourhood Renewal Unit was established within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to corral government departments and oversee a number of new, less costly initiatives in NRF areas, such as Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders, Neighbourhood Wardens and Community Empowerment Networks (DCLG 2007).

Underpinning all of these more mainstream initiatives was a strong performance-management regime. Alongside a new Neighbourhood Statistics service and the introduction of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) described in chapter 2, a series of ‘floor targets’ were established – minimum standards below which no area should fall, many of which focused on individual outcomes.

As shown in the previous chapter, between 2000 and 2008 good progress was made on measures of multiple deprivation, particularly in terms of narrowing the worklessness gap between deprived neighbourhoods and the English average. The reduction in worklessness that the NRF achieved delivered savings of £1.6 billion – five times the estimated £312 million that the fund spent on work in this field (Lupton et al 2013).

The NSNR’s objectives of reducing the proportion by which deaths from circulatory diseases and cancer in deprived neighbourhoods were higher than average were met, and there were significant improvements in educational attainment at Foundation Stage, Key Stage 2 and at GCSE level. But on other measures, targets were not met. This is particularly true of health targets: the aim to reduce the life expectancy gap by 10 per cent was not met, and nor were low birth weights improved (ibid).

In relation to environmental or ‘place-based’ indicators, the NSNR evaluation (DCLG 2010a) showed that many residents considered their streets to be cleaner, their parks and open spaces improved, and environmental conditions better than they were before the strategy was rolled out. There were reductions in burglary, vehicle crime and litter and vandalism too (Eisenstadt 2011) – and crucially, the gap in neighbourhood satisfaction between deprived areas and the national average fell from 16 to 12 per cent (Lupton et al 2013).

Yet despite this progress, the NSNR was not generally perceived to be a success. There are two main reasons for this. First, despite narrowing of the gaps between neighbourhoods, the gaps themselves remained very wide. Second, it was very difficult to attribute success to the programmes themselves: many took the view that what narrowing did occur could be better accounted for by the wider economic improvement that took place throughout the early 2000s.

3.3.3 Broadening the approach

In 2005 the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit undertook an assessment of the range of factors that can affect conditions within neighbourhoods. While recognising the intrinsic characteristics of particular neighbourhoods and the failures of public services and 'delivery systems', their report placed heavy emphasis on the external economy, economic restructuring, and those 'dynamic interactions and processes of change' that stem from them (PMSU 2005, Crowley et al 2012). This heralded a further widening of the approach.

The Working Neighbourhoods Fund replaced the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, and was allocated to 65 local authorities on the basis of their levels of people who were out-of-work and claiming benefits, rather than on measures of multiple deprivation. It was allocated as part of an un-ringfenced Area-Based Grant, which included a range of other previously ringfenced funds. The intention of this approach was to give local authorities and their partners more freedom to address local needs, necessarily focussing on neighbourhoods. Instead, Local Strategic Partnerships were asked to produce Local Area Agreements around a number of more general outcomes.

The focus on worklessness at the local authority level was accompanied by the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative to boost enterprise and focus more intensively on the failure of local housing markets. The Housing Market Renewal Initiative, established in 2002, allocated £275 million per annum to transform 12 sub-regional housing markets across 28 local authority areas. Furthermore, in its final years the Brown government introduced the Total Place initiative, which was charged with intensively focusing on and addressing service delivery failures around particular locations, and on locally-identified priority issues.

It is very difficult to differentiate the impact of these wider, un-ringfenced programmes from the general trends set out above. However, in Lupton et al's most recent overarching analysis (2013), the authors argue that these initiatives were successful in achieving:

- 'a new, better informed and better co-ordinated approach to tackling spatial inequalities'
- 'improvements on specific issues such as employment, education, crime and health'

- ‘a reversal in the trend towards widening neighbourhood disparities’, and
- ‘value for money’.

So, while the overall gap remained wide, for those living in deprived neighbourhoods even the ameliorative effects of this investment would appear to have been worthwhile. But perhaps the greatest legacy of this period was that of the physical infrastructure it left behind.

3.4 Physical regeneration

Given the New Labour government’s sophisticated and evolving approach to narrowing the gaps between neighbourhoods, it is easy to overlook the simple logic and significant investment that went into the physical regeneration of many neighbourhoods.

3.4.1 The Decent Homes Programme

Perhaps the Labour government’s single biggest investment in physical regeneration was in the Decent Homes Programme, which was started in 2000 and aimed to provide a ‘decent home for all’. It been estimated that this programme made £40 billion available through the social sector alone, which paid for – among other things – 700,000 new kitchens, 525,000 new bathrooms, and over a million new central-heating systems. It was targeted at individual properties rather than neighbourhoods, and was not considered part of the neighbourhood renewal programme, yet ‘given the correlation between social housing and poverty, there is no doubt that this programme made a difference to conditions in many of the poorest neighbourhoods’ (Lupton et al 2013). The National Federation of ALMOs (arm’s-length management organisations) has attributed a list of positive benefits to the programme, including improvements to health, reductions to crime and poverty rates and greater civic pride (CLGC 2010).

3.4.2 The Housing Market Renewal Fund

Alongside Decent Homes, the Housing Market Renewal Fund was allocated to nine (later 12) sub-regional partnerships in the north of England and the Midlands from 2002. According to Cole and Nevin (2002), these areas all exhibited housing market weaknesses evidenced by high vacancy rates, increasing population turnover, low sales values and, in some cases, neighbourhood abandonment and market failure. The fund was established to address structural issues of failing housing markets, which were threatening to undermine the success of area-based neighbourhood interventions (*ibid*), but it ended up focussing primarily on demolition and housing refurbishment.

The Housing Market Renewal Fund’s aim was to enable a holistic sub-regional approach to planning, economic development and housing market restructuring to ensure that older urban areas could compete at a regional, national and international level. The cessation of its funding after May 2010 has left many neighbourhoods in limbo,

coping with the impact of clearance but without a clear plan for what happens next.

Other challenges that emerged from the Housing Market Renewal Fund initiative include:

- achieving wider community impacts from capital investment
- handling the process of demolition, displacement and resettlement as part of a neighbourhood remodelling programme in a sensitive manner, both in terms of supporting existing residents and helping new households to settle in
- sustaining any gains resulting from the introduction of more intensive housing management (whether or not that management is locally based), given the inevitable pressures on the revenue resources of social landlords
- involving residents at the right stages of what are often extremely long-term programmes of intervention, avoiding 'activist burn-out' on the one hand and the marginalisation of community input on the other, and
- gaining commitment from mainstream providers in other services and policy domains, so that more holistic objectives for neighbourhood renewal can be achieved (Cole et al 2010).

Despite its scale, the programme raises significant questions regarding how far a policy of this nature is genuinely able to address more fundamental problems in the wider housing market.

3.4.3 The New Deal for Communities

It has been calculated that 64 per cent of funds that the New Deal for Communities (NDC) programme spent on housing and the physical environment went towards three types of project:

- land and asset acquisition, demolitions and stock transfer
- environment improvements, infrastructure, buildings and landscaping, and
- homes built or improved, and property maintenance (DCLG 2010b).

It is also estimated that £427.3 million was spent on community infrastructure, with a further £298 million of complementary funding levered on the back of this – equivalent to 70 pence for every pound of NDC spend (ibid).

If property prices are to be taken as an indicator of housing and neighbourhood demand, the average property price in areas in which the NDC was active increased by 70 per cent between 2001 and 2007, to £154,000. This was a greater increase than was witnessed in comparator areas (58 per cent) or parent local authorities (63 per cent) over the same period (Cole et al 2010).

However, the evidence is equivocal about the success of this investment. An evaluation by DCLG highlighted the fact that ‘ten years has rarely proved long enough to deliver comprehensive housing renewal programmes, involving demolition and new build’, and that ‘failure to secure the support and co-operation of key housing and planning agencies can block progress and put at risk the wider objectives of regeneration programmes’ (DCLG 2010c).

Assessing the overall progress made in the domain of housing and physical environment by the NDC programmes is extremely difficult: the local problems faced by NDC partnerships are significantly affected by wider housing conditions, the state of the local housing stock, demographic changes including referrals and placements of residents from other local authorities, and the housing market cycle.

However, it does not necessarily follow that, because local housing markets are porous and not entirely self-contained or self-determined, area-based programmes such as the NDC have little impact or purpose. As the evidence from the NDC evaluation demonstrates:

‘the benefits of investment in housing and neighbourhood infrastructure will also “leak out” into other areas – such as residents’ overall quality of life, satisfaction with the area and their willingness to stay put rather than move away. Just as a good quality neighbourhood is made up of more than its constituent amenities and dwellings, so investment in “bricks and mortar” can bring benefits that reach well beyond the physical realm and impact on broader measures of resident satisfaction and well-being.’

Cole et al 2010

3.4.4 Other physical investment

Alongside investment in housing, a wide range of other physical investments were made during the New Labour era. Building Schools for the Future, an investment programme established in 2004, was intended to be a 15-year initiative which would result in the entire stock of school buildings in England being refurbished by 2020. The programme was targeted according to neighbourhood deprivation – the fund was first prioritised to 14 projects in 17 socially deprived local authorities in a bid to raise their educational attainment. Ultimately it resulted in over 160 new and refurbished schools in deprived neighbourhoods (Lupton et al 2013).

A massive amount of investment was made in 3,500 new SureStart centres in deprived neighbourhoods. Although provision in these centres was targeted on early years, many of them became more general hubs for the wider community.

New Labour also put a great deal of emphasis on the ‘Cleaner, Greener, Safer’ agenda of improving the quality of open spaces, especially after

2006. Evaluations of NSNR and NDC have highlighted environmental and street improvements as some of the most widely-acknowledged positive achievements of both programmes (DCLG 2010a).

In sum, New Labour's investment in housing and physical infrastructure was clearly very considerable and, although housing markets may continue to struggle in areas of high deprivation, the legacy of good-quality homes, schools and community facilities remains intact to this day. As with the wider objectives of neighbourhood renewal discussed above, the long-term benefits of physical amelioration in areas of high disadvantage should not be underestimated, regardless of whether or not that investment achieved a more fundamental transformation.

3.5 Community-building

The third objective of New Labour's neighbourhood renewal approach was less explicitly articulated, but evident in most if not all neighbourhood renewal programmes: community development. Although couched in a wide and sometimes bemusing range of terms, consistent emphasis was placed on the importance of communities themselves in bringing about neighbourhood transformation.

From the outset, the NDC programme was heralded as a 'community-led regeneration programme' and the NSNR placed heavy emphasis on 'community involvement' at every level, including voluntary- and community-sector involvement in Local Strategic Partnerships. The Neighbourhood Renewal Unit developed a range of programmes focusing on community engagement and capacity-building, including neighbourhood wardens, Community Empowerment Networks and the National Community Forum, an initiative to ensure that community representatives were able to input into national policy thinking.

This approach was adopted more widely across government, with the formation of the Cabinet Office's Active Communities Unit – which supported community capacity-building – and Voluntary Sector Compact, the Home Office's Civil Renewal Unit, with its focus on tackling the decline in 'active citizenship', and a range of other departmental initiatives which were ultimately brought together into a single cross-departmental framework which was launched in 2005 as the 'Together We Can' action plan (Home Office 2005).

These initiatives achieved mixed success in and of themselves. The initial NDC partnerships led by community stakeholders soon struggled to achieve the delivery demands of impatient civil servants, ministers and other residents, so councils soon assumed control of all but two or three. Disputes about 'representativeness' and 'places at the table' too often preoccupied local partnerships, distracting from their core purpose of neighbourhood renewal.

However, community empowerment slowly but surely gained recognition as being increasingly beneficial at the grassroots level, and this was supported by wider political narratives about ‘double devolution’ and a ‘new social contract’.⁵ Unlike other neighbourhood policy objectives, the communities agenda, with its lower profile, was less subject to radical review and was slowly entrenched over time. This process was accelerated by the increased focus on community cohesion and integration that was prompted by the disturbances in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford in 2001 and the London bombings in 2005. Both of these events led to the initiation of a variety of local and national programmes to encourage interaction between people from different ethnic and faith backgrounds.

In many respects, New Labour’s communities agenda reached its climax with the publication in 2008 of *Real People, Real Power: Communities in Control*,⁶ the government’s white paper on community empowerment and localism. While this white paper did not bring forward a wave of new legislation – indeed, it gained relatively little traction in many government departments – it did crystallise the thinking behind many of the community empowerment initiatives of the previous decade, and made the case for the importance of community empowerment beyond the realms of narrow neighbourhood renewal. In this regard, it laid the foundations for the subsequent government’s ‘Big Society’ campaign.

3.6 Neighbourhoods policy under the Coalition government

The Coalition government was formed with little by way of neighbourhood policy. In the main, this is because it has adopted the approach that was established in the later years of the New Labour government, and its focus on driving economic growth and jobs in the sub-national economies and offering strong encouragement to those living in deprived neighbourhoods to move in order to pursue new opportunities. However, public spending cuts – not least to local government – have had a particularly negative effect at the neighbourhood level, with the deterioration of local roads, the closure of libraries, children’s centres and other local facilities, and a significant reduction in the number of public sector staff working in frontline, community-facing roles.

The Coalition Agreement did, however, set out a

‘driving ambition to put more power and opportunity into people’s hands. We want to give citizens, communities and local government the power and information they need to come together, solve the problems they face and build the Britain they want.’

HM Government 2010

5 <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2006/feb/21/localgovernment.politics1>

6 <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100407022214/http://communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/communitiesincontrol>

This ambition has been translated into policy through two main programmes of activity: the Localism Act, which was passed in 2012, and a range of initiatives which were originally promoted under the banner of the ‘Big Society’.

With the Coalition already having cancelled a number of key funding programmes such as the Working Neighbourhoods Fund and Area-Based Grants, the Localism Act scrapped many of New Labour’s more institutional initiatives to tackle neighbourhood deprivation such as Local Area Agreements and the duty to co-operate. In their place came a range of rights and powers extended to all community groups and individual residents, rather than to neighbourhoods per se or to deprived neighbourhoods in particular. These included community rights to challenge, to bid and to build, as well as initiatives to develop free schools.

However, perhaps the most significant neighbourhood approach to emerge from the Localism Act was a new approach to neighbourhood planning. Building upon previous legislation granting greater rights to parish and ‘neighbourhood’ councils, this new neighbourhood planning regime enables:

- The formation of a neighbourhood forum that comprises at least 21 people, reflects ‘inclusivity, diversity and the character of the area’, and involves at least one councillor (where there is no town or parish council).
- The identification of a ‘neighbourhood area’, which can be based on a ‘natural neighbourhood’ rather than an administrative boundary.
- The development of a neighbourhood plan about the use and development of land, as well as other social, economic and environmental issues, which takes into account wider, national planning policies and any existing Local Plans.⁷
- Neighbourhood development orders, which allow certain kinds of development to take place as ‘permitted developments’ without the need to apply for planning permission. This can include actual built development, such as new housing (the ‘community right to build’).
- Formal adoption of neighbourhood plans, subject to a 50 per cent ‘yes’ vote in a public referendum, which means that it becomes part of the statutory development plan, and that the local authority and planning inspectors will have to take it into account when making planning decisions. This gives neighbourhood plans more weight than some other types of plan, such as parish and community plans (Urban Vision 2012).

7 <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/planningsystem/localplans>

While neighbourhood planning can be used in any neighbourhood, some have criticised it as a charter for the sharp-elbowed middle classes which is unlikely to be taken up in more disadvantaged neighbourhoods. We will return to this point in subsequent chapters.

Alongside, the Localism Act, a number of 'Big Society' programmes with a broad 'communities' agenda have been rolled out. Among these is the Community Organisers programme, under which 500 community organisers have been recruited and trained to mobilise community activity in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. This is supported by the Community First initiative, which includes a small grants programme. These two programmes represent perhaps the only remaining government policies that target deprived neighbourhoods.

In summary, there are three significant differences which clearly divide the Coalition government's neighbourhood policies with those of the New Labour era:

- There is very little particular focus on deprived neighbourhoods – programmes apply to all communities regardless of their capacity to use them, and few if any targets or indicators of success are in place.
- There is very little investment in physical regeneration, and what does take place is led by the private sector.
- Programmes largely depend on community initiative – they are supported by only very small sums of public money, and largely avoid or exclude local government and other state actors.

With the gap between deprived neighbourhoods and the rest now widening, and without any specific policy objective to address such disparities, the risk is that the gains made under the previous government – however ameliorative – will be lost under this one, and that neighbourhood pressures will grow once again.

4. NEIGHBOURHOOD CHANGE

4.1 The importance of neighbourhood effects

The quantitative analysis set out in chapter 2 of this report clearly shows that the majority of neighbourhoods change relatively slowly in terms of their economic performance and levels of deprivation. Four out of five of the poorest neighbourhoods in 2004 remained in the bottom 10 per cent of deprived neighbourhoods in 2010, and nearly three quarters of all neighbourhoods in the bottom decile for out-of-work benefit receipt in 2000 were in the bottom decile in 2012 (calculations based on DCLG 2011b and Nomis 2013a). This 'path dependency' has a variety of causes. Studies of long-term change in neighbourhoods have demonstrated the impact of geology and proximity to other natural resources on the location of different neighbourhoods in cities such as Melbourne and London, which continue to influence residential patterns today (Meen et al 2013). But neighbourhood change is primarily driven by the gradual movement of people in and out of the area, their varying economic, social and cultural statuses, and how these change the overall composition of the local population.

Despite being a slow process, this change is not unimportant. The choices that households make about where they choose to live can lead to the creation of highly segregated neighbourhoods – most visibly in terms of race and ethnicity, but also in terms of social class. Research over many decades has shown that even mild preferences about the characteristics of your neighbours can lead to more highly segregated neighbourhoods than might be expected (Schelling 1971, Meen 2009, Neal 2012). The steady out-migration of populations – and of young people in particular – can result in some neighbourhoods becoming unable to sustain a range of important services and entering a spiral of decline. This process is sometimes known as 'residualisation', and in the UK it has particularly affected areas with high concentrations of social housing (Gibbons et al 2005, Hills 2007).

The fact that population movement lies at the heart of long-term neighbourhood change has led many policymakers to two conclusions. First, that the wider economic context is the most important factor in determining the immediate and future prospects of any given place (as discussed in chapter 3); and second, that an individual or household's personal characteristics (such as employment status, educational attainment or health) should be the primary focus of public policy, and that neighbourhood 'sorting' is the natural consequence of individual differences. This second point is key. Many studies find little evidence of a so-called 'neighbourhood effect' on employment chances which, combined with the fact that many poor people do not live in deprived

neighbourhoods, has led some to argue that policies should target people and not places (Orr et al 2003, Gibbons et al 2005).

However, although an individual's characteristics are profoundly important in determining his or her life chances, places do matter. Studies have found important neighbourhood effects in fields such as crime and education, and that individuals living in deprived areas have poorer access to goods and services (Bennett et al 2008). There are four particularly important aspects of neighbourhood effects:

- Some neighbourhood effects are the result of physical location – such as relative isolation, quality of infrastructure, or the availability of services or green spaces.
- Some result from the aggregate characteristics of the people living in a particular place. For example, a concentration of unemployed people in one particular area can result in a lack of information about job opportunities, thereby reinforcing unemployment problems (Gregg and Wadsworth 2003, McCabe et al 2013).
- Reputations can develop which stigmatise neighbourhoods and their residents, particularly where there are high rates of crime or where a particularly notorious incident has occurred (Gourlay 2006).
- People are not always rational economic actors: they develop attachments to particular places and people which can constrain as well as enhance their horizons (Green and White 2007).

Statistical modelling shows that many of the most deprived neighbourhoods become stuck in poverty traps for precisely these reasons. According to a recent study, 1 per cent of LSOAs in the north of England are in this position, and residential patterns 'do not respond quickly to variations in market prices so spatial patterns are persistent,' with the result that 'the neighbourhood has an independent effect on economic outcomes' (Meen et al 2013).

So, even if neighbourhood effects are relatively small and neighbourhood change is largely determined by wider trends, the evidence suggests that neighbourhood policy still matters. IPPR North research published in 2010 presented further evidence which showed that while economic growth was necessary to improve deprived neighbourhoods, it was not sufficient. It identified a series of other, more local factors that resulted in statistically significant differences between those neighbourhoods where residents were found to be connected with areas of economic opportunity and those where they were not. These included the existence of good quality housing, the nature of welfare-to-work programmes, and the 'outlook' of local residents – their social networks and community spirit (Cox and Schmuecker 2010).

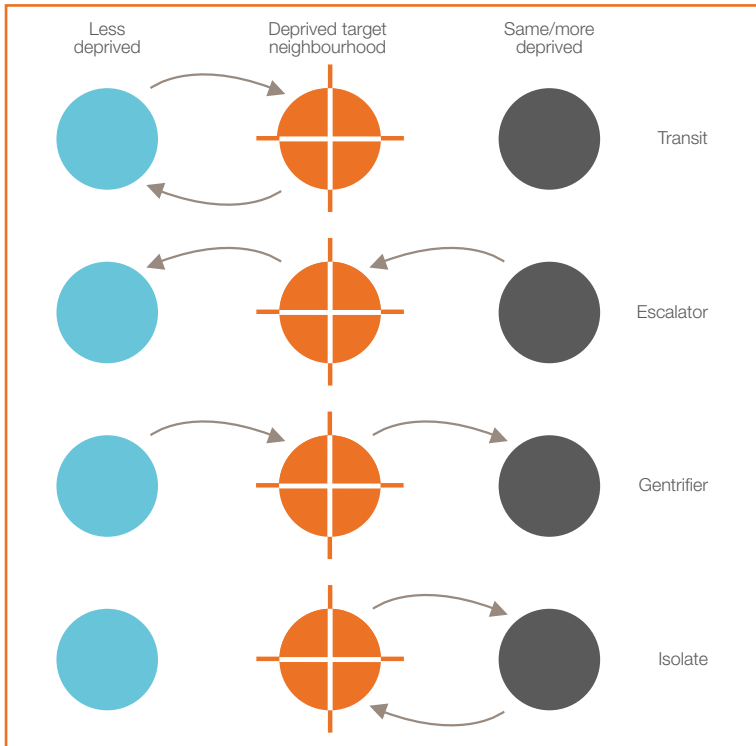
4.2 Different neighbourhood types

Another important factor in understanding neighbourhood change is neighbourhood 'type'. There are a wide range of different typologies which seek to explain differences between places. Experian produce a 'Mosaic'

consumer classification that identifies 67 different types of household group, and which can then be plotted spatially in order to show how different neighbourhoods have different clusters of household type.⁸ This provides a useful insight into current neighbourhood types, but is less useful in identifying patterns of change.

The ONS has developed an area classification distinguishing 13 different types of local authority area throughout the country (ONS 2008). Research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation has combined these classifications with housing market data in order to come up with a neighbourhood typology which identifies which neighbourhoods are under particular kinds of pressure (Wong et al 2009). This typology is helpful in identifying the kinds of policy approach that might be appropriate in different situations.

Another, perhaps even more useful set of neighbourhood typologies has been developed by the Centre for Urban Policy Studies. It identifies four types of deprived neighbourhood according to residential flows and their role within the wider functional economic area (Robson et al 2009; see figure 4.1 below).



Source: adapted from Robson et al 2009

8 http://www.experian.co.uk/assets/business-strategies/brochures/Mosaic_UK_2009_brochure.pdf

Figure 4.1
A typology of deprived neighbourhoods, with arrows showing the direction of the predominant residential flows

'Transit' areas are deprived neighbourhoods in which most in-movers come from less deprived areas, and most out-movers go to less deprived areas. In 'escalator' areas, most of the in-movers come from areas that are equally or more deprived, so that the neighbourhood becomes part of households' continuous onward-and-upward progression through the housing and labour markets. 'Gentrifier' areas are those in which there is a degree of social improvement, since most in-movers come from less deprived areas and most out-movers go to similarly or more deprived areas. Finally, 'isolate' areas represent neighbourhoods in which households move from and move to areas that are equally or more deprived – hence they can be seen as neighbourhoods that are associated with a degree of 'entrapment' among poor households who are unable to break out of living in deprived areas (Robson et al 2009).

Once again, the significance of this typology is clear in policy terms. Understanding the type of change occurring in a given neighbourhood, the nature of its population flows and its role within the wider economic area is vital to formulating an appropriate policy response. We will return to this point in section 4.5 below.

4.3 Neighbourhood 'shocks'

As set out above, it is the nature of neighbourhood change that they usually change only very slowly, although in a small number of neighbourhoods change can occur much more rapidly. Meen (2009) sets out a number of situations in which neighbourhood change can be more dramatic. He refers to these as 'shocks', and they can be:

- Major external events such as wars, acts of terrorism, floods, earthquakes or other natural disasters.
- Major infrastructural changes such as slum clearance or the building of a new housing estate or road.
- New 'technological' innovations such as the building of a new factory or call centre.
- Sudden influxes of migrant populations, as occurred in certain rural neighbourhoods in England after the accession of 10 additional countries, most of them in Eastern Europe, into the EU in 2004.

Such shocks occur irregularly, and need to be very large in order to have a discernible long-term impact. In many cases shocks such as these have a negative impact on a neighbourhood, but in certain cases they can bring about positive change in the long term. Our interest in these more dramatic neighbourhood changes was central to the methodology we used for our case study research.

4.4 Case study neighbourhoods

To explore the nature of neighbourhood change we identified the deprived neighbourhoods that changed most significantly between 2001 and 2008 according to their Index of Multiple Deprivation score. From the bottom

decile of LSOA neighbourhoods we identified the top 25 ‘improvers’ and the bottom 25 ‘decliners’. We then screened out those in which there had been obvious ‘shocks’ such as new housing developments or demolitions which were likely to have caused their rapid change. We were left with five LSOA neighbourhoods whose transformations were less obviously explicable, and these became the focus of our further case study research.

Case study neighbourhoods

Rapid Improvers:

- Moss Side, Manchester
- Lisson Green, London Borough of Westminster
- Leasowe, Wirral

Rapid Decliners:

- Mabley Green, London Borough of Hackney
- Central Blackpool

We also considered Cliftonville West in the seaside town of Margate.

Further details of these case studies are included in Annex 1.

By conducting qualitative research in each of these areas, we were able to identify a number of factors which appeared to facilitate or inhibit the improvement of each neighbourhood. These can be summarised as follows:

Facilitating factors	Inhibiting factors
Housing market interventions to increase the proportion of owner-occupied properties in the area and encourage a more mixed-tenure neighbourhood.	Large stocks of social housing with little opportunity for residential mixing or gentrification.
Councils using planning and licensing and working with housing associations to maintain good quality housing stock in all tenure types.	High levels of private rented stock where a significant number of tenants are in receipt of housing benefits.
Major physical interventions such as the demolition of tower blocks or investment in community infrastructure, which can have a radical impact but need to be sustained in the longer-term.	Major physical interventions with little community involvement and no plans for long-term sustainability.
Physical regeneration being combined with high-quality community involvement, including holding local ballots on new housing developments.	Lack of connectivity to and alienation from big projects outside of the immediate neighbourhood.
Using the regeneration of iconic buildings to trigger a wider concern for environmental improvement (an inverse ‘broken windows’ effect).	Symbolic gestures and ‘folly’ projects with little community involvement or ownership.
‘Designing-out’ crime by undertaking physical improvements to reduce the number of places and spaces in which criminal activity can take place.	High levels of crime and antisocial behaviour.

Table 4.1
Factors that facilitate and inhibit neighbourhood improvement

Facilitating factors	Inhibiting factors
Good transport connectivity, which is critical to linking poor neighbourhoods with jobs in city centres and other employment hubs.	Neighbourhood isolation through poor transport links and perceptions of the area as a marginalised place.
Improvements to the street scene to encourage the 'permeability' of ward boundaries and encourage interaction between adjacent neighbourhoods. For example, through pedestrian crossings and traffic calming measures along main roads to make it easier and safer for pedestrians to cross, and opening up roads and cul-de-sacs.	Physical boundaries – high fences, roads, rivers – acting as barriers to connections between neighbourhoods.
Close partnership-working between the council, housing associations and other locally-based organisations focused on a clear vision or strategic plan.	Council-dominated planning, or the absence of any structure for inter-agency collaboration.
A dynamic approach to neighbourhood management, led by the local housing agency but involving wider partners and co-located with community and voluntary sector services centred on a local hub.	
A dynamic voluntary and community sector with activities often centred on a local hub, and close partnership-working with statutory agencies and housing providers.	Tired tenant and residents' associations dependent upon a single individual, and a tense relationship with external agencies.
Locally-based public agencies and voluntary organisations that drive improvements in local schools and encourage local residents to take up employment opportunities.	
Local councillors galvanising inter-agency action both at the very local level and between the neighbourhood and wider areas.	

4.5 Implications for neighbourhoods policy

The above discussion of neighbourhood change leads us to a number of conclusions, which can be summarised as follows:

- Most neighbourhoods change only very slowly, and these changes are a function of the population movement mainly associated with wider economic factors.
- As a result, we can expect that there will always be gaps between neighbourhoods. The principal means of narrowing these gaps is economic growth combined with measures to ensure that the proceeds of that growth are better shared.
- There are nonetheless some important 'neighbourhood effects' which are brought about as a result of population sorting and the physical location and characteristics of particular places, and which can 'trap' people who have less money.
- These effects reinforce concentrations of poverty in particular places, and in some cases cause certain neighbourhoods to enter a spiral of decline.

Neighbourhoods policy is, then, necessarily a long-term process and, although it may not produce immediate change, it is vitally important for achieving three vital objectives:

- To make sure that all neighbourhoods are able to generate jobs and wealth themselves – or, perhaps more importantly, that they are connected to economic opportunities in the wider area.
- To ameliorate the worst effects of wider economic trends, and ensure that people in all neighbourhoods receive minimum standards of neighbourhood quality and service provision to prevent some places from growing significantly worse.
- To bring about the radical transformation of those neighbourhoods that have become caught in costly spirals of decline.

The remainder of this chapter looks at each of these objectives in turn.

4.5.1 Connecting neighbourhoods to economic opportunity

There is strong evidence that a neighbourhood's prosperity is primarily determined by its position in relation to the wider sub-regional and national economy, and by the ability of its residents to find good jobs within a reasonable proximity. The link between neighbourhoods and economic opportunities is therefore critical. For too long, economic development thinking and practice has assumed that wealth will 'trickle down', and that people, as rational economic actors, will simply move neighbourhoods to be close enough to decent jobs. For too many neighbourhoods and individuals, this has not been the case.

It may be true that there will always be a degree of divergence between the relative fortunes of different neighbourhoods, and that 'neighbourhood effects' are a normal part of a dynamic economy. But much more needs to be done by policymakers and practitioners to make sure that all neighbourhoods – not least those with the highest concentrations of unemployed people – can either create endogenous employment opportunities, or connect into appropriate economic opportunities within their area's wider economy.

There are a number of ways in which the policymaking process can be strengthened in order to make this happen.

Recommendation

To ensure that the benefits of economic recovery are spread widely across and within regions, sub-regional plans and strategies for economic growth need a detailed understanding of the role that neighbourhoods have to play in supporting and spreading economic prosperity – particularly those in the most deprived and marginalised areas. More specifically:

- Just as Local Enterprise Partnerships and local authorities develop detailed plans for Enterprise Zones, new business parks or other infrastructure assets, they should also develop more coherent plans for key neighbourhoods. These plans should ensure that neighbourhoods can play a fuller role in the wider economy, drawing upon the typological work set out above, and should be developed in conjunction with Strategic Economic Plans, Growth Deals and EU structural investment plans currently being developed. Government should include a neighbourhoods dimension within their assessment frameworks for such plans.
- Local employment and skills plans should incorporate a neighbourhoods dimension, identifying particular places where concentrations of low-skilled people may require a bespoke, neighbourhood-focused approach, for example through a 'communiversity'.⁹
- Transport authorities should challenge local transport providers to balance the exploitation of the most profitable routes with investment in services that could transform more marginalised neighbourhoods, and set out detailed plans showing how they intend to connect particular places to areas of job opportunities.
- There should be stronger local involvement in welfare-to-work commissioning, which should have more scope to target provision in particular neighbourhoods, to join up with other service providers, and to access neighbourhood knowledge in providing bespoke support to those in need of employment.
- The neighbourhood planning process should be enhanced, with more emphasis put on looking beyond physical improvements, and more attention devoted to supporting local businesses and other local employment opportunities as well as to skills development and local transport priorities.

4.5.2 The importance of amelioration

Although it is right to emphasise the primacy of wider economic growth, it is legitimate for the state to seek to minimise the impact of the uneven distribution of economic wealth, particularly if this means preventing some places from becoming a growing burden on the taxpayer. Radical interventions as a result of failure are normally the most costly.

⁹ The concept of 'communities' has been pioneered by Alt Valley Community Development Trust. The organisation is a resident-led community hub with a range of education and training services, including vocational training courses and an apprenticeship training programme. See <http://communiversity.co.uk/education-training/>

Neighbourhood effects are very real, not least to those who find it too expensive to travel outside their neighbourhoods in search of employment opportunities and good quality services. The state has a responsibility to ensure such individuals receive some minimum standards of service provision and support (this will be covered in more detail in chapter 5).

As was demonstrated in chapter 3, can be argued that the ameliorative effects of New Labour's neighbourhood renewal programmes were actually a sign of their success, insofar as they mitigated far more costly problems and facilitated some significant capital improvements in schools, health centres, community facilities and in general environmental improvements at relatively low cost. Ironically, some of the most expensive programmes, such as Housing Market Renewal Initiatives, were actually the least successful in achieving their desired outcomes. Furthermore, our case studies show that above and beyond amelioration, significant improvements can be made in some places at minimal cost through the use of neighbourhood management techniques, more collaborative action and the mobilisation of community groups and resident action.

Recommendation

Government should recognise its responsibilities to citizens in all neighbourhoods, and actively seek to ameliorate the living conditions of those who may feel themselves trapped by where they live and victim to wider economic trends. More specifically:

- Government should commit significant centrally-held funds in areas such as housing, transport and skills to the un-ringfenced Single Local Growth Fund. In turn, LEPs and their partners should commit to developing the kind of neighbourhoods approach set out in the recommendation above.
- In conjunction with the above, local authorities and their partners should learn the lessons of neighbourhood renewal programmes and adopt some of the key principles as they advance new plans for neighbourhood investment and change – not least the importance of mobilising local residents to contribute to neighbourhood change.

4.5.3 The case for radical intervention

It is clear that, in some neighbourhoods, deep-seated problems are unlikely to be significantly improved by such neighbourhood-management techniques. In these places, it is likely that only some form of more radical intervention is likely to reverse or halt the process of 'residualisation', in which people move out, the physical environment decays and services slowly diminish.

Such interventions should not be prescribed lightly, and require considerable amounts of imagination and community engagement. In many cases it is the most costly form of intervention too. There is also a risk that such interventions are prescribed from the centre with insufficient understanding of the specific dynamics of a local problem: these matters are better determined at the local level.

While housing demolition should not be ruled out in certain neighbourhoods, this should not be the first or the only response. There are good examples of housing improvements which may be brought about through transformative investment, such as getting rid of the overhead walkways in our Westminster case study (see Annex 1). Local agencies might consider some neighbourhoods for more radical experiments in social innovation, such as pooling all public budgets and turning them over to complete community control through a radical participatory budgeting approach, or galvanising the community in a scheme to make the neighbourhood completely self-sufficient in generating its own energy supplies. Local Enterprise Partnerships and other inward investment agencies could deliberately target particular neighbourhoods for the location of major inward investments. Equally, given the potential role for strategic planning described in section 4.5.1 above, Local Enterprise Partnerships and their partners must have the freedom to identify some areas in which they will invest in long-term, managed decline.

5. GOOD NEIGHBOURHOODS AND FUTURE NEIGHBOURHOODS

5.1 What makes a good neighbourhood?

Up to this point, much of this report has focussed on the economic dimensions of neighbourhoods, and on the challenges facing the most deprived neighbourhoods in particular. However, neighbourhoods are not exclusively economic entities. They have very important social and cultural dimensions, too – dimensions that are, in many cases, interwoven with their economic fortunes. Furthermore, living in a good neighbourhood is something that concerns most people. Despite the differences between poor and more affluent neighbourhoods, particularly in terms of the specific problems they face, residents of all kinds of neighbourhood express concerns about their local area.

These wider considerations about the nature of neighbourhoods are reflected in a clear consensus that appears to exist on the question of what makes a good neighbourhood. Through our case study research, and in two deliberative workshops, we asked people for their opinions.

What makes a good neighbourhood?

'Somewhere where there's a bit of community spirit – where you know your neighbours.'

'Where you've got decent local amenities like shops and a post office – places that are accessible and affordable.'

'Being able to get the bus to get into town.'

'Having people-friendly streets where you can have a chat with people you bump into – or a community centre or something like that.'

'Where there's no Cash Converters and betting shops.'

Forthcoming research by Padley et al attempts to take a more systematic approach to a similar question. Researchers have worked with mixed groups of people to develop 'minimum acceptable place standards' (MAPS). It is intended that this research complements the increasingly influential work led by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on minimum income standards – the income that people need in order to reach a minimum 'socially acceptable' standard of living (Bradshaw et al 2008). Similarly, the MAPS methodology attempts to identify what members of the public think might constitute a minimum acceptable standard for places (Padley et al 2013 forthcoming).

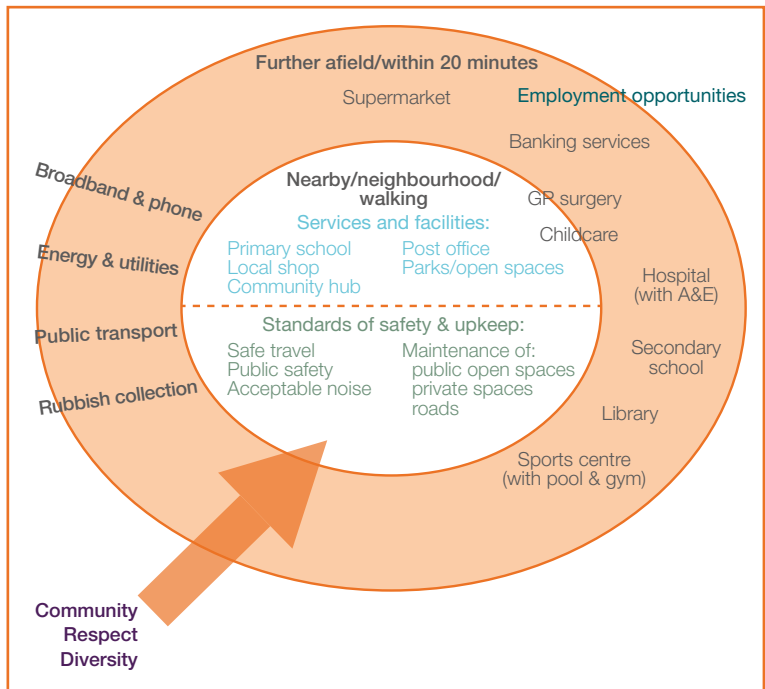
The MAPS methodology focuses on three domains:

- The services and amenities accessible from places
- The maintenance of places
- Community and neighbourliness in places

Through deliberative workshops, Padley et al have identified a number of services and facilities within walking distance of, and standards of safety and upkeep that are considered critical to, a good neighbourhood. Beyond this, the research has identified a wider range of services and facilities – including employment opportunities – which people feel should be available within a 20-minute journey

These are set out in the figure 5.1 below:

Figure 5.1
Services and amenities within walking distance, and within a 20-minute journey, of a place which are critical to a good neighbourhood under the MAPS methodology



Source: adapted from Padley et al 2013 (forthcoming)

Padley et al's research (2013 forthcoming) marks a significant contribution to the neighbourhoods debate, not least in relation to spelling out some minimum 'service' requirements that should be treated as seriously as progressive policymakers have come to treat minimum income standards.

Recommendation

Government should formally acknowledge the concept of Minimum Acceptable Place Standards, and take steps to incorporate it into neighbourhood planning guidance. Local authorities, housing associations and other agencies should use it in their local planning processes, and identify those places that fall below these standards and address the particular issues that they raise. Residents and community organisations should also use it, as a basis for identifying key priorities and mobilising action to drive local improvements.

However, the MAPS methodology does have a number of limitations:

5.1.1 Housing

MAPS takes the view that housing ‘falls within an individual’s domain as opposed to an aspect of neighbourhood’ (Padley et al 2013 forthcoming), and to this extent it does not feature as part of the minimum standard. Despite this, participants in the research did raise the cost of housing as a key issue, one that constrains movement and can therefore limit access to key services. Minimum standards of service provision are particularly vital where people feel unable to move.

While this might be true, more can and should be said about minimum standards for homes. A number of different housing agencies set specific standards for the quality of housing itself. *Building For Life 12* is the latest industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods – it is endorsed by government and based on the National Planning Policy Framework (Building for Life Partnership 2012). It includes questions about a housing development’s integration within the neighbourhood, its design and sense of place, and its connectivity.

5.1.2 Community

Although the MAPS methodology has a whole domain about community and neighbourliness within places, the report itself recognises that the significance of this domain is hard to capture as a ‘minimum standard’. Certain aspects of behaviour were raised by research participants as important – the absence of certain types of antisocial behaviour, and the freedom to travel in safety – but beyond these the more positive dimensions of community life were not articulated as part of the MAPS work.

Others have carried out important work in this regard, and there is a growing literature on the importance of social capital, neighbourliness and collective efficacy at the neighbourhood level (Halpern 2010, Chanan and Miller 2013). One of the most useful expositions of the minimum requirements for nurturing community life at a neighbourhood level is the guidance issued by the Civil Renewal Unit at the Home

Office, *Firm Foundations* (2004). This sets out five areas of necessary support to facilitate community activity:

- a meeting space or community hub
- access to seedcorn funding through a small grants programme
- access to support from community development workers
- a forum or network to offer mutual support and planning
- learning opportunities to equip local residents for engagement and active citizenship (Civil Renewal Unit 2004).

We will return to the importance of these factors in chapter 6.

5.1.3 The limitations of ‘minimum’ standards

It is a fundamental problem that minimum standards by definition describe ‘not bad’ as opposed to truly ‘good’ neighbourhoods. The problem with such an approach is that it does not encourage aspiration or promote a sense of neighbourhood vision. Yet vision and aspiration are vital components of a good and positive neighbourhood. At the moment there is no formal requirement for a neighbourhood plan to include a statement of vision, but there is a significant body of guidance on good practice which suggests that this is a valuable aspect of any local planning process which galvanises collaborative effort (Urban Vision 2012).

Another important factor that is not addressed by minimum standards is the extent to which a neighbourhood is prepared for the future. The following section of this report addresses some of the future challenges that neighbourhoods face.

5.2 Future neighbourhoods

As part of our research, we attempted to identify some of the important trends and issues that could be instrumental in shaping the neighbourhoods of the future. In each case, we tried to identify an initiative that might give a glimpse of what the future might look like. We considered four different areas:

5.2.1 Transport

Current trends in car ownership demonstrate a shift in behaviour: the rise of cars that occurred throughout the twentieth century has been stalling in recent years. The number of miles travelled by car in the UK has remained fairly flat, at approximately 240 billion miles, across the last decade, and the number of miles travelled by all road vehicles has recently dropped after peaking in 2007; it currently stands at just over 300 billion miles. At the same time, there has been an increase of more than 50 per cent in annual train journeys since 2001/02.¹⁰

10 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/36545/Transport_statistics_great_britain_-_2012_summary.pdf

There are a range of reasons for the downward trend in road usage, but the cost of private car ownership and the proximity of more integrated public transport systems are two factors that are only likely to accelerate this trend. This has implications for neighbourhoods, as being well-connected to an integrated transport network becomes ever more necessary. However, the decline in private car ownership has implications too, as collective models of car-sharing are emerging which might provide the convenience of a private car with less pollution and with lower costs to individuals.

A private-collective model of shared car ownership is currently being expanded by companies such as Zipcar. Zipcar customers pay a subscription to participate in its car-sharing scheme, and receive a 'zipcard' which is used to unlock Zipcar vehicles which are distributed around those cities in which Zipcar operates (which in the UK is currently Bristol, Cambridge, London, Maidstone, and Oxford). By collectivising not only the cost of buying a car but also insurance and maintenance, users save an average of £3,000 over owning their own car. There are green benefits too, both from there being fewer cars on the road, and because Zipcar also offer a limited number of plug-in hybrid vehicles.¹¹

An example of a public-collective model is offered by Berlin's BeMobility scheme, which builds upon the huge increase in public bicycle rental schemes in Western Europe in the twenty-first century. The scheme provides bicycles, pedelecs, e-scooters and electric cars on the 'Boris Bike' model, with vehicles recharged at solar-powered docking stations. The system is also integrated into more conventional public transport by journey planning apps, the idea being that smaller BeMobility vehicles will be used to connect with more conventional metro transport systems. During the 2010/11 pilot scheme – 'BeMobility 1.0' – 32 electric/hybrid rental vehicles were borrowed approximately 2,850 times by 1,200 unique customers, who travelled a total of 200,000 kilometres. The 'BeMobility 2.0' scheme is currently underway in Berlin.¹²

Collective car ownership linked to integrated public transport hubs is likely to shape future urban neighbourhoods – reducing the need for private driveways and garages, increasing the space needed for neighbourhood transport hubs, and making possible further pedestrianisation and traffic management measures in neighbourhood centres.

5.2.2 Reshaping the high street and 'district centre'

Public spaces and streets show some of the most visible signs of neighbourhood change. With the advent of out-of-town shopping facilities and the pull of city centre retailing, district centres have been on the wane for many years (Oram et al 2002). More recently, the

11 <http://www.zipcar.co.uk/>

12 <http://www.bemobility.de>

impact of the recession on the high street has been an increase in payday lenders, pawnbrokers, and cheap retail. However, in the longer term it may open up the high street to more positive changes.

Research by PricewaterhouseCoopers and the Local Data Company into changes in high street usage demonstrates the impact of the recession on our shopping parades.¹³ The largest net increases in high street presence for 2012 were cheque-cashing and payday loans shops (121 units), pound shops (99), pawnbrokers (89), charity shops (87), betting shops (77), and supermarkets (62). However, the data also suggests a shift in high street usage in certain areas towards leisure and away from retail. The seventh largest increase was in coffee shops (58 units) and, in places where councils have encouraged 'meanwhile use' of vacant properties, a range of small art galleries, studios and 'pop-up' restaurants and cafes have been particularly popular. Could it be that the high streets of the future become more leisure-focused, and evolve into places where local communities can meet and socialise?

This may well be accompanied by a growing trend in favour of the pedestrianisation of major shopping areas. Clearly this may not be feasible for many neighbourhood high streets, but the prioritisation of pedestrians over vehicles is a trend that will have implications for most places.

Another trend that may help shape and revitalise the high street is the ageing population. The immediate neighbourhood is likely to have a greater impact on older people's quality of life than that of younger people – people who are 70 or more years old typically spend 80 per cent of their time at home or in the surrounding neighbourhood. In an attempt to promote good practice, the World Health Organisation have published a checklist for age-friendly spaces and buildings, which will have an increasingly significant bearing on the development of neighbourhoods as the population continues to age (WHO 2007). These guidelines include: pavements that are wide enough for wheelchairs, clear of obstructions, smooth, non-slip and have low kerbs; ample outdoor seating that is evenly spaced out; roads with non-slip pedestrian crossings that allow enough time for older people to cross; and, running counter to recent trends, an increased provision of public toilets (see also Phillipson 2012).

However, it is not only public planners and local councils that can act to ensure older people are not excluded from everyday life. We are highly likely to see a range of private customer service institutions making their premises increasingly age-friendly in an attempt to win more custom.

For instance, the Kaiser supermarket chain in Germany revamped their stores in an attempt to win more of the 'grey euro'. This included better lighting, wider aisles, non-slip floors, larger price labels, smaller packages, lighter trolleys with a drop-down seat for resting, magnifying

13 <http://www.pwc.co.uk/retail-consumer/issues/high-street-closures-reach-twenty-a-day.html>

glasses on chains attached to shelves and trolleys, red 'help' buttons throughout stores, and relaxation zones with comfortable chairs. In the coming years, we are likely to see more and more stores compete on comfort elderly comfort as well as price – Tesco recently sent a group of over-65s to visit a Kaiser supermarket in Berlin with the intention of informing the design and building of the first pensioner-friendly supermarket in the UK (UK Urban Ageing Consortium 2013).

With a rapidly ageing population, and given the desirability of keeping older people involved in collective life in urban areas, we are likely to see local authorities making public spaces more age-friendly with greater provision of seating and toilets, as well as neighbourhood shops and services taking measures to increase the attractiveness of their premises to older individuals.

Another way in which high streets and neighbourhood centres are likely to be revitalised is through the growth of joint service centres. The traditional model of public services, distributed across various sites within a neighbourhood, requires not only multiple physical buildings but also multiple support staff, communications systems, and so on. The current drive to cut costs is likely to result in more services being housed under one roof, thereby reducing the amount spent on things that are tangential to the delivery of services themselves.

One such example of an effective and popular joint service centre is the Wythenshawe Forum in south Manchester.¹⁴ Adult learning, a library, swimming pool, leisure centre, events hall, nursery, café, pharmacy, and newsagent are all housed within the same building. A health centre was also incorporated into the forum in 2006, providing not just GP surgeries but a wide range of services including dentistry, district nursing, sexual health services and even minor surgery. Many of these services would have previously made it incumbent on people in these neighbourhoods to travel to central Manchester to access them, which again highlights the need to carefully locate joint service centres to make those services more accessible than before.

The success of this scheme has been largely put down to its support from a wide range of stakeholders, including Manchester, Salford, and Trafford Local Improvement Finance Trusts; South Manchester PCT; Salford University; Manchester University; and the local community in the form of the Wythenshawe Forum Trust.

5.2.3 Energy and waste

Choices about energy production and delivery have both environmental and economic implications. As highlighted in recent political debate, the current system of large energy companies selling to individual consumers

¹⁴ <http://www.wythenshaweforum.co.uk/index.php/forum-health>, and http://www.communityhealthpartnerships.co.uk/uploads/images/file/Wythenshawe%20Health%20Centre_%20Manchester%2013%20nov%2008.pdf

has led to continuous rises in energy bills squeezing household incomes more and more.

However, a collective neighbourhood solution can offer both a cheaper and greener way to provide energy. District heating systems utilise a variety of green techniques to heat homes and businesses. By taking the place of individual household boilers, users of district heating systems are able to purchase energy more cheaply than if they were to do so from a national provider.

Nottingham currently has one of the largest district heating systems in the UK.¹⁵ The Eastcroft Energy from Waste plant generates electricity from refuse, and its waste steam is piped to Enviroenergy Limited, an energy services company owned by the city council. Enviroenergy then administers the energy infrastructure, metering, and billing much in the same way that an energy company would, but providing customers with cheaper energy. The scheme provides heating to around 5,000 homes and businesses.¹⁶

In Nottingham, as with many other district heating systems, the infrastructure necessary to heat commercial and residential buildings has been added after their initial construction. Due to its green and energy-price appeal, the usage of district heating systems should be considered for new developments, with the necessary heat sources and piping infrastructure being built into houses by developers.

With a number of councils implementing fortnightly rather than weekly bin collections, and an increasing drive for local authorities to deliver more for less, waste collection is an increasingly likely candidate for change in the coming decades – particularly when Britain’s expensive door-to-door waste collection is compared with the use of neighbourhood collection points in continental Europe.

The government has recently issued new planning guidance in an attempt to force developers to build-in storage space for bins.¹⁷ If implemented, this would have the potential to change housebuilding in the coming decades. However, in the longer term, the regularity of waste collection is likely to be cut back by councils. In the longer run, it is likely that more councils will save money by making regular waste collection a ‘top-up’ service, or possibly by creating neighbourhood collection zones, which are common in continental Europe. Again, this has major implications for the character of future neighbourhoods.

15 http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/climate-change/-/journal_content/56/10180/3511234/ARTICLE

16 http://www.vitalenergi.co.uk/Casestudy_nottingham.html

17 <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/10245414/Eric-Pickles-We-will-end-wheelie-bin-blight-on-pavements.html>

5.2.4 Digital communities

The rise of digital connectivity has often been identified as a cause of the decline of community and neighbourhood life. Yet social media and the internet have also been key channels for mobilising community activity.

'Hyperlocal' websites and other online forums have grown rapidly in recent years, with the estimates of the current number of these sites ranging from 700 (as mapped on the Openlylocal website¹⁸) to more than double that. Sites are normally run by local volunteers for the benefit of other local residents, and have a particular focus on sharing local news, building social capital and initiating community activity. They are often much more fleet of foot than more conventional forms of media and communications, providing real-time information shared between users through mobile technology with very few if any gatekeepers.

In the Levenshulme neighbourhood in Manchester, a number of attempts have been made by voluntary organisations and the local authority to establish an externally moderated website. In each case the schemes have tended to wither away, as they have struggled to persuade others to provide information or even to visit the site. Instead, a number of Facebook groups and blogsites have grown in popularity and now represent the go-to places for local residents and statutory organisations alike. The 'LevyMassive' Facebook group, which has nearly 1,000 followers, carries real-time information about all events and activities in the area, as well as information about local professional services. A 'Levy Community Campaigns' group carries information about local campaigns, and was central to mobilising demonstrations and a successful campaign to keep the local library and swimming pool open. Both of these online groups are effectively self-facilitating. The 'LoveLevy' blog carries positive stories, photographs and news about the neighbourhood.

Between them, these sites have not only provided a means for communication and debate among local residents, but more importantly they have become the primary means of mobilising community activity. A recent Levenshulme Food and Drink Festival, which involved more than 40 separate events, was organized almost exclusively through social media, and found very little need for planning meetings or non-digital means of communication.

Neighbourhood groups are also increasingly using online tools to fundraise for local initiatives. The advent of crowdsourcing websites such as Spacehive is making it increasingly possible to share a local initiative and seek investors from across the community and beyond. Peabody Housing Association and local tenants in the Pimlico area of London, for example, have managed to fund a cage cricket facility using this approach.¹⁹

18 http://openlylocal.com/hyperlocal_sites

19 <http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/tenancies/howzat/6527820.article>

5.3 Collective futures

This discussion on good neighbourhoods and future neighbourhoods moves the neighbourhoods debate beyond both old narratives about tackling neighbourhood deprivation and top-down prescriptions which seek to narrow the gap between rich and poor neighbourhoods against a set of centrally determined measures. Two particular themes stand out.

First, while tackling neighbourhood inequality must remain a central focus of public policy – and while the Index of Multiple Deprivation is a critical tool to facilitate this – it is important to recognise the wider significance of places to all people, and the importance shared goals and collective endeavours in every neighbourhood. Making sure that residents, service-providers and others have a clear vision for the kind of neighbourhood they want to live in and create is central to ensuring that neighbourhoods go beyond achieving some kind of ‘minimum standard’ and develop a sense of place that galvanises economic, social and cultural activity.

Second, in each of the examples of neighbourhood futures the transition being described is from an individual past to a collective future: from private cars to shared public transport systems; from individual shoppers to collective leisure opportunities on the high street; from single-function public services to joint service centres; from home boilers and bins to district heating systems and shared waste collection; from personal computing to social media. Neighbourhood futures are collective futures. While many global forces seem to be driving greater privatisation and fragmentation, it is at the neighbourhood level that new approaches to collectivism and our shared social life seem to be coming together. This is a theme we shall return to in the final chapter.

But what does this mean in practice? People in every neighbourhood should have opportunities to work together to define a collective vision for the future and clear priorities for action. This will vary from place to place, but neighbourhoods should consider:

- A greater focus within the neighbourhood planning process on establishing a wider vision for the neighbourhood in the future. This should be added to the list of minimum requirements for the formal approval of neighbourhood plans.
- Developing a neighbourhood charter or action plan with clearly identified and attributed actions for a wide range of players.
- Developing a neighbourhood ‘self-reporting’ framework to monitor neighbourhood progress over time.

6. NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY AND SOCIAL RENEWAL

The analysis in previous sections emphasises the importance of connecting neighbourhoods to areas of economic opportunity, the value of ameliorative interventions in preventing deprived neighbourhoods from falling into costly spirals of decline, and the importance of vision and planning in charting the neighbourhoods of the future. But throughout this discussion there have been glimpses of a compelling argument that a new approach to neighbourhood working is the missing piece of the puzzle that will enable progressive policymakers to effectively address some of society's most profound challenges.

This final chapter describes how four deep-seated public policy challenges, which are normally approached through a national policy framework, might be better addressed through action pursued at a number of levels but founded upon change at the neighbourhood-level.

6.1 Policymaking, democratic renewal and the role of the state

Neighbourhood-level working poses some significant challenges to the process of public policymaking, not least because the traditional mode of national or even local government policymaking tends to limit traction at the neighbourhood level. Dealing with the particular challenges of a troubled family, an improvement to local transport, or an energy efficiency scheme required on a particular street does not lend itself to a national policy prescription or a single agency- or state-led approach.

Complex social issues very often require complex solutions administered by interventions very close to the source of the problem. Successful developments in any one of the areas explored in chapter 5 may well be assisted by a permissive national framework, but also require collaboration between multiple actors at the neighbourhood level around locally-specific projects which are very often better characterised as 'social innovations' than as 'public policy'.

To be clear, this does not imply a weaker role for the state – on the contrary, the state may frequently be the central actor in or facilitator of such initiatives. However, the state's role is, or should be, characterised less by the implementation of policies determined elsewhere, but rather as contributing the institutional resources that are very often necessary to enable social innovation to bear fruit.

Such an approach represents a marked shift in the way we address social problems. Indeed, it marks a departure from the types of neighbourhood policy we have seen over the past two decades – putting far greater emphasis on the role of individuals and communities in driving change through the qualities and resources that they have, and that

exist within neighbourhoods, rather than what they lack and what to be provided to them from outside. It recognises the state as facilitative rather than interventionist, providing a policy framework, practical assistance and the ability to connect things up at different levels. And it places greater emphasis on social transformation and innovation – doing things differently – rather than relying on simple economic redistribution in the hope that more money will improve the situation.

There are a number of other clear differences between neighbourhood approaches of the past and those that will be needed in the future, which are summarised in the following table.

Table 6.1
Old versus new
neighbourhoods
approaches

	Old neighbourhoods policy (see chapter 3)	New neighbourhoods approaches
<i>Main outcomes</i>	Absolute reductions in worklessness and narrowing the gap between rich and poor neighbourhoods.	Achieving self-determined goals and changing power relations between social forces – for example, community ownership of a local library.
<i>Primary focus</i>	Physical renewal/amelioration – housing and the ‘clean, green, safe’ agenda. For example, building a school.	Social innovation and transformation – a focus on jobs, service provision and how to improve power relationships. Using a school as a ‘communitarity’ outside hours for apprenticeship training, for example.
<i>Theory of change</i>	Needs-based analysis based on Index of Multiple Deprivation and targeted intervention in deprived neighbourhoods.	Asset-based analysis based on opportunity, collaboration and interventions at different scales and in different types of neighbourhood – for example, establishing a community vision and working with anyone to achieve it.
<i>Resources</i>	Large-scale, targeted national grant programmes.	Pooled, mainstream budgets, ‘community budgets’, third sector commissioning and small-scale grants, donations, and voluntary/volunteer contributions.
<i>Definition of neighbourhood/scale</i>	Clearly defined, tightly demarcated and targeted ‘neighbourhoods’.	Porous and dynamic ‘natural’ boundaries based on perceptions, and recognition that change will come through collaboration inside and outside its limits.
<i>Main actors</i>	Led by councils and other state actors, driven by national policymaking.	Stimulated by community ‘catalysts’ in response to local opportunities and concerns – these can sometimes be councillors or frontline public servants.
<i>Decision-making processes and ‘institutions’</i>	Formal and semi-formal partnerships, boards and accountable bodies, long-term meeting patterns with performance-driven, delivery-based approaches.	Informal collaboration often galvanised through social media and time-limited activities. For example, community interest companies and co-ops established where necessary with more issue-based, values-driven approaches.

	Old neighbourhoods policy (see chapter 3)	New neighbourhoods approaches
<i>Role of state/public sector</i>	Co-ordinated policy-led interventions, driven from centre and implemented primarily by councils and other statutory institutions according to national 'guidance'.	The state as a key protagonist, facilitator and commissioner, but taking a more collaborative, local approach which recognises the limitations of policy and guidance as frameworks rather than levers.
<i>Nature of politics</i>	Characterised by tensions between representative elected party members and participatory processes which resist party co-option.	Recognising different forms of power with representative politicians working alongside community activists with 'delegated' responsibilities and political parties open to non-party influence.

In many respects, this new approach to neighbourhoods represents a form of democratic renewal from the bottom up. It reflects and develops recent ideas about a more 'relational state' (Cooke and Muir 2012, Muir 2013 forthcoming), and suggests that these might find their most clear expression and fulfilment at the neighbourhood level. This is made all the more clear when we consider the implications that this might have for neighbourhood governance, for community development, and for political parties.

6.1.1 Neighbourhood governance

Neighbourhoods continue to be formally represented by ward councillors, but their role has been significantly undermined by changes in the way local authorities operate and by the emergence of a wide range of other decision-making bodies at the neighbourhood level. As demonstrated above, these developments open up a range of opportunities for social innovation and a transformation of power relations between different social and economic actors, which can be seized to great effect. These will opportunities will continue to proliferate, and this should be welcomed and encouraged.

However, this opening up of the local democratic system also risks co-option by private interests, whether in the form of commercial companies with no local roots or by small groups of residents with specific or partial concerns. That being the case, there is still a role for some kind of formal neighbourhood governance.

Again, the role of national policy should not be to determine the best form of neighbourhood governance, but rather to offer a facilitative framework in which it can develop. The emergent neighbourhood planning process is a solid foundation upon which to build, and some places will have town or parish councils, or neighbourhood councils or forums, for this very purpose. Nevertheless, the process can be enhanced.

Parish councils

England has a long tradition of neighbourhood governance in the form of parish, town, community and neighbourhood councils. It is estimated that there are around 9,000 of these local councils in England, made up of around 80,000 elected councillors, and that an additional 200 local councils have been formed since 2000 (NALC 2010)

These councils have an array of powers, including the ability to finance their own budgets (or 'precepts') through varying local council tax rates, and leading the neighbourhood planning process. Their duties include the provision of public spaces such as parks and community centres, along with responsibility for the general upkeep of the local area. They form an important base from which new and diverse forms of neighbourhood governance can grow.

Recommendation: enhanced neighbourhood planning

National and local government – led by political parties working at the grassroots level – should do much more to promote and enhance existing neighbourhood planning opportunities through more widespread promotion of its importance and potential. The neighbourhood planning process itself could be improved by:

- Placing more emphasis on developing neighbourhood visions for the future to galvanise a wider variety of interests.
- Addressing not only physical improvements to areas but also economic and social challenges, linking in with 'community budget' processes and other local public service improvements.
- Drawing down the powers of wellbeing currently held by principal authorities to allow them to set precepts, control significant devolved budgets and other funds gained through service improvements, community infrastructure levies and so on.
- Carrying out 'neighbourhood inquiries', led by councillors, to probe issues of local concern and hold public and private service providers to account.
- Considering measures to ensure that such processes are accessible to the widest possible range of local residents, with particular support given to those normally excluded from local decision-making.
- Ensuring that neighbourhood governance processes are supported by named individuals with particular responsibilities for community organising, outreach and development (see below).

However, it must be recognised that many – indeed most – neighbourhood groups will choose not to formally identify with a neighbourhood planning process. Some neighbourhoods will have a dynamic community forum; others will coalesce around tenants’ and residents’ associations or ward service co-ordination groups; many others will use online discussion forums, ‘micro-sites’ and social media groups to gather and gauge public opinion and stimulate collaborative action (see chapter 5). These must be recognised as vital elements of a healthy twenty-first century democracy, and be actively supported by state actors when invited and where appropriate.

6.1.2 Community development

One of the most lasting and largely unreported legacies of the neighbourhood renewal era has been the transformation of community development practice. The transition in thinking among public bodies – from community involvement to community engagement to community empowerment – has been significant, and has led to very different approaches being taken by frontline workers in different neighbourhoods. In more recent times, the principles of community organising and grassroots mobilisation, while echoing some of the more radical approaches to community development adopted in the 1970s, have again introduced fresh perspectives to community development practice. These can be summarised as follows:

Community development as a core skill for frontline

workers: while there remains a significant cohort of professional community development workers who are driving policy and practice, it is increasingly recognised that frontline workers from councils and other statutory agencies, housing associations and the formal voluntary sector also benefit from good community development skills.

Vision and collaboration: there is growing recognition that multiple actors are involved in nurturing social innovation and change, very often across different spatial scales and in different sectors and spheres. The role of community development is often to facilitate those interactions and mediate differences of opinion, but also to galvanise action behind a shared vision for the neighbourhood.

Asset-based community development (ABCD) and self-help:

this involves a focus on what the neighbourhood or community can do for itself, and what resources (in terms of time, money or other assets) it can deploy without the need for state assistance. At a more fundamental level, this perspective rejects needs-based approaches as patronising and disempowering.

Focusing on power relations: an explicit understanding of different forms of economic and social power, how these are held and used and how they can be used for transformative purposes, is invaluable. It is often emphasised that power relations are rarely a zero-sum game.

All agencies that work at the neighbourhood level should recognise the importance of the growing body of evidence on community development practice, and ensure that frontline workers are equipped with the key skills to support an asset-based approach to social transformation.

6.1.3 Political parties

Political parties could be at the vanguard of neighbourhood action. Their often well-organised systems of campaigning are focused on street-by-street door-knocking and targeted action on key neighbourhood issues. Yet a significant tension exists between political campaigning and new approaches to neighbourhood action, with local residents often ignoring local action by councillors when they vote in local elections, treating them rather as opportunities to exercise judgement on national political leaders. By the same token, residents express frustration when local councillors appear to put party loyalty ahead of ward issues in the council chamber or on their scrutiny committees.

At the grassroots level, political campaigning needs to become more sophisticated. The best local councillors are supporting local initiatives irrespective of any immediate political ends. They recognise the value of independent voluntary action among groups that may be unlikely to join their political party, and even among those unlikely to give them their vote. Door-knocking, voter ID and ludicrous photographs of smiling councillors pointing at patched up pot-holes must be balanced with a less partisan politics which recognises the common good at the neighbourhood level. Ward and constituency meetings also need to be opened up beyond the small band of party apparatchiks.

Alongside these local changes to party operations, a number of national political reforms could also contribute to a new approach to neighbourhood working. These could enhance the extent to which councillors are more reflective of and connected to their neighbourhoods, and widen the opportunities for many more people in local politics (Cox 2006, James and Cox 2007).

Recommendation: local democratic reform

Cross-party support should be given to a range of reforms to local democracy and local party processes that would enhance the role of ward councillors as key catalysts in their local neighbourhoods.

- Parties should open up selection processes for ward councillor candidates: affirmative action should be taken to identify and support candidates from the local neighbourhood with a wider range of interests, backgrounds, experiences, styles and skills.
- Local authorities should put in place a range of measures to enable people with more fixed time constraints (such as carers, young people, working people) can stand as local councillors and play a full part in local political life.
- There should be an increase in councillor allowances to enable more working people to stand as councillors. In return, local authorities should introduce job descriptions for councillors, and appraise their performance against some minimum criteria.
- Councils should be given powers to pilot other democratic reforms across their areas, including lowering the voting age to 16, and introducing new forms of voting, single-member wards and all-out elections where these are demanded.

6.2 Public service reform

New Labour's National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal recognised that one of the many factors that blighted deprived neighbourhoods was poor service provision, and so introduced alongside housing and environmental initiatives were a range of programmes to tackle health, education, crime and antisocial behaviour. Many of these achieved significant successes, but they were largely dependent upon targeted additional resources and top-down prescriptions, with agencies often not working together effectively, which sometimes had unintended consequences.

As with other aspects of 'neighbourhood policy', the Coalition government has largely abandoned targeted work of this nature, and instead focused its efforts on significant reductions in public expenditure through the outsourcing of key services such as welfare-to-work, the formation of Clinical Commissioning Groups and Free Schools, and granting greater powers to Local Police Commissioners.

This has meant that, in some areas, old problems have returned. Take antisocial behaviour (ASB), for example: despite significant falls in youth crime, still around one third of adults have experienced or witnessed an ASB incident in the last 12 months, and a significant minority feel that levels of ASB are high in their areas; noisy neighbours, drug-taking and drunkenness in public places are particular concerns.²⁰ These are not problems confined to the poorest neighbourhoods, but do appear to be worse in densely populated neighbourhoods.

²⁰ http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_306344.pdf

However, in one crucial area, current government policy has adopted a more locally-focused approach to public service reform which has achieved some immediate success: community budgets (LGA 2013). The community budget pilots have supported local authorities and other statutory and voluntary partners to pool and align their mainstream budgets and channel human resources to tackle so-called ‘troubled families’. This has involved agencies working together to reduce the number and frequency of state interventions into the lives of particular families by allowing one key worker to co-ordinate the actions of a range of public bodies. Very often these pilots have been organised at a neighbourhood level, with ‘neighbourhood teams’ created which combine public and voluntary agencies. These teams work collaboratively and achieve better results for troubled families, while at the same time as making significant reductions to public spending.²¹

Community budgets represent an important example of how a neighbourhood approach can facilitate public service reform in tackling complex social problems. Similar approaches are needed in relation to crime and antisocial behaviour, tackling worklessness and dealing with chronic health problems. In each case, deepening relationships between service users, public sector professionals and other voluntary actors is key, and very often these interconnections will be best facilitated at the neighbourhood level. It is also the case that ‘social innovation’ is more likely to solve complex problems and mobilise the capacity of the local community than top-down policy prescriptions.

Recommendation: ‘Community Budgets Plus’

Central government, local authorities and other statutory bodies should play a more enabling role, liberating professionals and voluntary organisations working at the neighbourhood level to adopt bespoke approaches to tackling complex and interconnected problems. In order to achieve this they need to:

- Allow greater pooling and aligning of budgets at the neighbourhood level, and allow local commissioners to recoup the savings made from new approaches and use them to make ongoing investments in the neighbourhood.
- Identify lead organisations at the neighbourhood level that can facilitate co-operation, drive prioritisation, and ensure ongoing relationship-building at the neighbourhood level.
- Develop more ‘relationally-based’ projects and programmes, such as neighbourhood justice panels, to tackle the challenges that particular neighbourhoods face.

21 http://www.local.gov.uk/community-budgets/-/journal_content/56/10180/3692233/ARTICLE

6.3 Housebuilding and the private rented sector

Labour's neighbourhood renewal policy was probably most effective in driving improvements to the physical environment – it made significant improvements to the quality of homes in poorer neighbourhoods, and had a more transformational effect in a small number of areas through Housing Market Renewal Initiatives. However, it did very little to address the structural problems that face housing markets in many neighbourhoods, or to engender the significant housebuilding programme that is needed across the nation (Hull and Cooke 2012).

Tackling the national housing crisis requires a complex response at many levels, but one of the most challenging problems which has restricted housebuilding in many places has been so-called 'nimbysism'. At present the planning system favours those who already own homes, and leaves wider community interests unable to have a voice in getting new schemes off the ground. Changes made by the Coalition government to 'liberate' the system have had the opposite effect: local residents are using neighbourhood planning powers to block development, and the removal of local housebuilding targets has reduced the pressure on local authorities give consent to new schemes.

Recommendation: housebuilding incentives scheme

Alongside the changes to the neighbourhood planning system proposed above, more incentives should be given to local residents to allow new housebuilding. This could be done by:

- Running local ballots on proposed developments. This would give a voice to those in need of housing, and make public involvement in the planning system more about a vote and a voice rather than a veto.
- Rolling-out the community land auction scheme, which captures for the community the uplift in land value that is bestowed by planning permission.
- Devolving the Community Infrastructure Levy and New Homes Bonus to the neighbourhood level, so that local residents directly benefit from new housebuilding.

One of the biggest problems facing deprived neighbourhoods is the poor quality and high cost of homes in the private rented sector (PRS). While some aspects of the PRS are valued for their flexibility and choice, there is a growing sub-sector of the PRS market which thrives upon rent subsidy through housing benefit and the growing numbers of people receiving local housing allowance. The insecurity and low quality of this sub-sector has profound implications for many neighbourhoods, not least in the way in which it attracts people with complex social needs

and tends to concentrate crime and antisocial behaviour. This can blight neighbourhoods and needs to be tackled head on.

Once again, there are numerous and complex ways of addressing these challenges at a variety of scales, but neighbourhood-level action is required as part of this mix.

Recommendation: neighbourhood housing agencies

Local authorities should establish 'neighbourhood housing agencies' in targeted areas to provide better management and regulation of PRS properties – particularly those whose residents are in receipt of housing benefits. The agencies should:

- Be responsible for the development and implementation of local landlord accreditation schemes.
- Act as a rent guarantor for LHA and future universal credit payments.
- Offer tenant matching and property management services on a competitive but not-for-profit basis.

6.4 Energy and decarbonisation

Another set of significant social and economic challenges which have implications at a variety of spatial scales are those of energy security and decarbonisation. Although never historically a key plank of neighbourhood policymaking, previous sections of this report concerning the future of neighbourhoods have demonstrated that it is an area of growing interest and activity.

The neighbourhood is often the locus for a wide variety of community-led 'green initiatives' ranging from local growing and allotment schemes to local energy production (Platt 2011). The role of neighbourhood or community 'catalysts' in developing and running such schemes is key, but very often these are supported by public funding and other institutional support.

There are two ways in which collaborative action between the state and non-governmental actors could further develop such activities at the neighbourhood level. First, it can help make sure that energy efficiency schemes are more efficient and effective. There are currently significant drawbacks to the way in which existing schemes are being rolled out – not least the fact that it is undertaken on a household-by-household basis, rather than targeting particular neighbourhoods or streets where there could be efficiencies in assessment and installation. Second, better collaborative action could drive the development of district heating systems. To carry out these schemes, Local Authorities need help from Ofgem, the energy markets regulator. Ofgem has introduced a regulation called License Lite, which is was intended to support the growth in district heating schemes, as well as

other forms of decentralised energy generation, by enabling generators to sell the energy they produce directly to consumers in their locality. However, four years after the introduction of the scheme it is clear it is not working as intended: not a single generator has taken advantage of License Lite. A key problem appears to be the requirement for generators to work with a third party – in essence, a major energy supplier – to cover the costs of balancing flows to the grid.²² Ofgem should look again at License Lite and consider whether its current design is fit for purpose and properly supporting the growth of district heating systems.

Recommendation: energy efficiency street-by-street

Government should adapt its existing approach to promoting energy efficiency, of obliging suppliers to deliver improvements on a household basis, in favour of a more neighbourhood-based approach. This would better address fuel poverty, lower energy bills, reduce carbon emissions and realise local job creation.

This new approach might involve:

- Introducing a new energy efficiency scheme centred on the provision of property efficiency assessments, provided for free on a street-by-street basis, in areas with high levels of fuel poverty.
- Developing more systematic approaches to delivering energy-saving improvements such as insulation and smart metering, working on a street-by-street basis rather than household-by-household, in order to reduce costs through economies of scale, and to enable innovative financing arrangements.
- Creating local social enterprises to recruit, train and manage energy efficiency ‘teams’ supported by local volunteers and neighbourhood representatives. This approach would maximise neighbourhood multiplier effects.
- Providing incentives for the development of wider energy initiatives where there is local appetite for involvement in other forms of green action.

Recommendation: district heating systems

Local authorities and other housing bodies should explore and develop district heating system proposals in targeted neighbourhoods, which could be supported through the Green Investment Bank. These schemes could make a particularly valuable contribution in low-income areas, where levels of fuel poverty are likely to be highest. To assist these initiatives, Ofgem should review its License Lite scheme with a view to removing existing barriers to take-up.

²² <http://www.cornwallenergy.com/cms/data/files/Downloads/Working-out-licence-lite-supply.pdf>

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ANNEX 1

CASE STUDY SYNOPSES

To explore the nature of neighbourhood change we identified those deprived neighbourhoods that changed most significantly between 2001 and 2008 according to their Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) score. From the bottom decile of Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) neighbourhoods we identified the top 25 ‘improvers’ and bottom 25 ‘decliners’. We then screened out those in which there had been obvious ‘shocks’, such as new housing developments or demolitions, which had caused their rapid change, and were left with five LSOA neighbourhoods whose transformations were less obviously explicable. These became the basis for further case study research aimed at understanding more about what had caused these neighbourhoods’ improvement or decline, and what the key lessons might be for neighbourhood policy in the future.

It is important to note that the chosen LSOAs represent administrative and not ‘natural’ neighbourhoods. Although we tried to confine our primary analysis to the specific area in which changes were ‘counted’ – and to the years 2001–2008 from which the IMD data is drawn – our qualitative research necessarily explored the relationships between the LSOAs and their wider natural neighbourhood.

Alongside initial data analysis, our methodology in each area included small community meetings, guided neighbourhood walkabouts, community questionnaires and stakeholder interviews.

Case study 1: Claremont Road area, Moss Side, Manchester (LSOA code: E01005242)

Description of the LSOA and its wider neighbourhood

The Claremont Road LSOA area lies to the west of Moss Side ward. It is not a ‘natural neighbourhood’, but Claremont Road represents an important thoroughfare through the centre of the area, with several shops and services that meet the needs of a diverse community.

The housing stock in the area is mixed, with many streets of classic terraced housing, some of which is in need of repair, abutting some newly-built, mixed-tenure housing. To the south of the area is the relatively new Footballers Estate – a mixed tenure new development on the site of the former Maine Road Football Stadium. Although this development was stalled for some time, work on the development has now resumed. Registered social landlords play an important role in the area, and seem to be active not only as housing providers but in wider partnership working with other agencies.

The wider Moss Side area has historically been associated with issues of gang crime, after a number of notorious murders and a particular spate of problems in the mid-2000s. Some of these were focused on the Claremont Road area, which had a reputation as a hot-spot for drug-dealing. These problems galvanised the statutory services to intensify efforts to improve the area and foster collaboration with other regeneration partners and housing providers, and also spurred a wide range of community activity – a local ‘peace garden’ initiative, for example. Moss Side has also benefited from significant large-scale regeneration around the LSOA area, including a large retail park and major housing redevelopment on its border with Hulme. This has brought local jobs and a wider sense that the area is improving.

There has also been a relatively recent wave of Somali immigration to the area. While this has been the source of some local tensions with the longstanding African-Caribbean community, it has also maintained a sense of vibrancy and diversity in the neighbourhood, and rejuvenated some local shopping areas. More significantly, there are significant complaints on the part of local residents about a recent decline in environmental standards – the presence of rats, fly-tipping and general rubbish. Both residents and councillors put this down to a reduction in environmental services as a result of the cuts to council spending. This is clearly having an impact on perceptions of the neighbourhood.

Main changes since 2001

The LSOA witnessed remarkable improvement between 2001 and 2008, and according to IMD 2010 climbed out of the bottom decile of deprived neighbourhoods. Much of this can be accounted for by the inward movement of people with jobs, and the ability of the area to retain members of the population who found work during the 2000s. It is also notable that the success of the area has mirrored the relative success of the wider Manchester economy throughout this period. The area has always been well connected to the city centre and to jobs in the nearby university and hospital, and while many local residents have benefited from this, it does not account for why the particular LSOA area has made such significant steps forward.

The more localised success has been the result of housing policies which have sought to increase the tenure mix in the area and allow families to improve their housing situation within the area – by buying private housing or moving into the private rented sector – rather than simply move out. Some of this has been due to the development of mixed-tenure developments within the area, but it has also been assisted by developments nearby, not least the Footballers Estate, and by the growing popularity of the area among students.

The galvanising effect of the reaction to the crime wave in the mid-2000s has also been significant, both in terms of inter-agency co-operation involving registered social landlords, and in stimulating a

wide range of community activities. Local churches have been very active in promoting community activities, and the Powerhouse youth centre has acted as something of a community hub, particularly since it extended its services to the wider community and became the local library. The area has also benefited from the clear vision and strategic actions taken by councillors and officers working together around a strategic regeneration framework over a long period.

Key lessons for future policymaking

- Local housing market interventions to increase the proportion of owner-occupied properties and encourage a more mixed-tenure neighbourhood have helped to ensure a diverse population, prevent out-migration and residualisation, and enabled a small amount of gentrification.
- It is important to develop close partnership working between the council, housing associations and other locally-based organisations, focused on a clear vision or strategic plan – this can be triggered by something negative and a shared determination to rid the area of its stigma.
- The role of local councillors can galvanise inter-agency action both at the very local level and between the neighbourhood and wider spatial scales.

Case study 2: Lisson Green, Westminster, London (LSOA code: E01004670)

Description of the LSOA and its wider neighbourhood

The Lisson Green estate is an area of high density housing built in the 1960s to the north of the City of Westminster. The triangular LSOA area is bounded by Regent's Canal in the north west, Lisson Grove in the south and the railway line into Marylebone station in the north east, and represents a fairly natural neighbourhood (albeit some blocks of flats that most people consider part of the estate are excluded from it).

In 2004 it ranked 395 in the Index of Multiple Deprivation (out of a total of over 30,000 LSOAs) and, despite being located in an otherwise affluent area, it had become a pocket of deprivation characterised as a 'concrete jungle' with overhead walkways and resident gangs. Some older residents said it was a 'no-go area' for taxis and other service providers.

In the years since 2004 it has undergone significant changes. Now it is one of the most sought-after areas of social housing in London, with many of the flats remodelled and overhead walkways removed. These changes were part of a wider regeneration programme of the Church Street area according to a 'Futures Plan' focussed on community facilities, physical improvements, new home-building and employment and enterprise.

Lisson Green has a very diverse population of indigenous Londoners, Arabs, Spanish, Filipinos, Bangladeshis and other nationalities, and a good mix of old and young people. These various groups are brought together through the various activities facilitated at the Greenside Community Centre, which sits at the heart of the estate and is home to the local housing office, tenants' and residents' association, and a branch of the local regeneration agency.

Main changes since 2001

As in the other case study areas which have improved, the most significant improvements have been through rising levels of employment, but also through reductions in crime and disorder and improvements to housing and the physical environment.

The most obvious changes are those made to the housing stock, which took place following the formation of CityWest Homes – an arm's-length management organisation (ALMO) formed by the City of Westminster Council in 2002. This led to the investment in the area's housing, with significant improvements to the physical fabric of the area as well as the building of a number of new flat blocks.

While these physical improvements have been critical to improving the area and ensuring a good population mix, their effect has been maximised by significant investment in ensuring that a wider range of social and economic benefits were achieved at the same time. The regeneration has been supported by a Local Area Regeneration Partnership which has worked closely with the local tenants' and residents' association to make sure that local residents have been fully involved in the regeneration plans.

This continues to this day, with the regeneration agency VitalRegen leading a major programme of community engagement about forthcoming plans to build new homes and community facilities, including organising local ballots on different aspects of the plans and employing local residents to carry out action-based consultations. Many residents complimented the collaboration between CityWest Housing and the council, and the excellent 'village manager' who co-ordinates housing activity in the neighbourhood.

Improvements have also been supported by a community-led multi-agency service centre at the heart of the neighbourhood. This itself has undergone something of a transformation over time but now hosts a range of services as well as a large number of community groups serving different parts of the community. The co-location of so many local agencies brings significant benefits for collaborative working.

There was no direct evidence that local residents had benefited from the large number of jobs available in Westminster – indeed, some questioned whether local residents saw any benefits from the big employers on their doorstep such as BNP Paribas. Yet with excellent local transport links and carefully considered pedestrian crossings and other street improvements,

there is a strong sense of ‘permeability’ between the estate and the wider area, where there are many jobs.

Interviewees suggested that the local schools and hospitals further afield were a key source of employment. Indeed, the four local schools were all highlighted as having significantly improved over the past decade.

Key lessons for future policymaking

- The importance of designing-out crime by undertaking physical improvements to reduce the number of places and spaces where criminal activity can take place.
- Physical regeneration should be combined with high-quality community involvement, including holding local ballots on new housing developments.
- A dynamic approach to neighbourhood management, led by the local housing agency but involving wider partners and co-located with community and voluntary sector services centred on a local hub, is most effective.
- Improving the street scene encourages the ‘permeability’ of ward boundaries and encourages interactions between adjacent neighbourhoods. For example, pedestrian crossings and traffic-calming measures along main roads make it easier and safer for pedestrians to cross.
- Improvements should be made to local schools, encouragement given to local residents to take up employment opportunities with locally-based public agencies and voluntary organisations.

Case study 3: Yew Tree in Leasowe and Moreton East ward (LSOA code: E01007206)

Description of the LSOA and its wider neighbourhood

This case study centres on a neighbourhood known as Yew Tree, in the ward of Leasowe and Moreton East, in the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral on the north coast of the Wirral peninsula. This area has quite dramatically improved according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

The neighbourhood sits just south of Leasowe and just east of Moreton. Connectivity in the neighbourhood is quite good, and the growth of Liverpool as a city centre has brought some benefits to those able to take advantage of it. Three train stations are easily accessible by the Yew Tree community: Moreton, Leasowe and Bidston stations, each of which are 20 minutes from the city centre; the neighbourhood is also minutes away from the motorway. It is predominantly residential and has a community centre, the Sandbrook Community Centre, which hosts a Sure Start centre, a primary school and a specialist sports college.

Main changes since 2001

In this neighbourhood, on the Stavordale Road, stood two blocks of fourteen-storey flats built in approximately 1970, which were demolished in April 2013. For some years prior to their demolition, residents were moved out of the towers. Prior to this, the towers had high levels of deprivation and attracted a lot of fly-tipping and abandoned cars. It is likely that these blocks had contributed significantly to the neighbourhood's previously poor score in the Index of Multiple Deprivation. As one resident said: 'Before these blocks came down, everyone wanted to leave the area – everyone literally was scared to go by there'.

Clearly, then, housing regeneration played an important role during this period of relative improvement. A lot of investment went into the quality of the housing, with all homes brought up to the Decent Homes standard. Leasowe was one of the first stock transfers, and benefited from the Estate Renewal Challenge fund in 1998, both of which came with significant investment. This improved the stability of communities – people stopped moving out, and there is now a waiting list to move in.

A lot of investment went into the wider neighbourhood during this period; one resident described it as 'an embarrassing amount'. Another participant said there had been more resources in Leasowe per head than anywhere else in the country. There are three community centres serving the area – Yew Tree, Sandbrook, and Leasowe community centres. Excellent new facilities have been built, including a media centre hosting a local community radio station ('7 Waves Radio'), a leisure centre, and the Millennium Centre.

In August 1999 the Leasowe Regeneration Partnership Board approved the Millennium Centre Project, which was then known as the 'Leasowe Shed'. It opened in 2001, and was home to Leasowe Women's Centre, Leasowe Library, Wirral Metropolitan College and Action Team for Jobs, as well as a state-of-the-art kitchen and community café. The hall was also used for functions such as children's parties, weddings and christenings, and classes like belly dancing, yoga, aerobics and dancing. Other services developed at the time included an education and advice service and Wallasey Citizens Advice Bureau.

There has also been the development of the Lifelong Learning Centre, and the state-of-the-art, multi-million pound Learning Lighthouse (on Birket Avenue in our LSOA case-study area), 'to provide schools and the public with an opportunity to access emerging, innovative technology, enhancing [the] curriculum and enriching multi-media skills through interaction'.

However, when asked whether the investment programmes made a real difference, residents agreed that 'they did at the time – but they were of their time'. Worklessness fell between 2001 and 2005 which – along with the significant physical interventions – no doubt accounts for much of its improvement. However, since then the area has suffered many job losses

from the closures of major employers in the surrounding area. Typhoo Tea was bought by India's Apeejay Surrendra Group in 2005, and has made a loss over several years, with many jobs lost from the local factory. Burton's Foods' biscuit factory in Moreton closed in 2011, but had been losing jobs for some years prior to that – as had Premier Brands, which has been downscaling its workforce over the last six years.

Key lessons for future policymaking

- Physical improvement can work, but is hard to sustain. Yew Tree has had substantial physical investment and regeneration, and this has undoubtedly played a role in its improvement. However, this can be hard to sustain when funding dries up, and community groups are left to fend for themselves. Participants told us, 'when funding runs out these things become a liability not an asset – we can't afford to run things now,' and 'all these buildings are just going to be empty now.'
- Transport connectivity is important. Some of the area's improvement has been attributed to the growth and dynamism taking place in the city centre of Liverpool. The accessible train routes and motorway have given employment opportunities to those able to take them, as local options have diminished.
- Improvements are not sustainable without community engagement: 'The council just put it here and said "there you go".' This could be because for some, their key outcomes continued to decline despite the investment in the area, and they didn't personally feel they benefitted from the improvements or were engaged in the decision-making. 'Trust,' one participant told us, 'is totally broken down because they have been forced to put up with all this [development]. People have never had anything they actually wanted – they just wanted a decent shopping centre.'

Case study 4: Herbert Butler Estate, Mabley Green, Hackney (LSOA code: E01001847)

Description of the LSOA and its wider neighbourhood

The Herbert Butler Estate lies to the west of Mabley Green in Hackney Wick. It was chosen as a case study area as its IMD score fell significantly between IMD 2004 and IMD 2010, despite the fact that the Olympics were on its doorstep and that much of the surrounding area saw significant improvements, largely as a result of gentrification.

The LSOA itself is a mix of nineteen-sixties social housing and Victorian terraces, but is dominated by the Herbert Butler Estate. It is also home to a large block owned by Family Mosaic for residents with mental health needs. Many describe the area as 'quiet'. This is considered both a good thing insofar as it doesn't appear to have suffered the same stigmatisation that other parts of Hackney have in relation to crime, and also a problem

in that some feel that its physical environment and design discourage community interaction.

There was a wider perception that the estate was cut off from the wider area, hemmed in by the A12 to the south, the large green to the east and the rapidly gentrifying Holloway ward to the west and north. Access to the park has been closed off by two-metre-high fences, and, as one person said 'you would never go there [the estate] on the way to anywhere . . . it's a bit cut off from the Wick'.

There would appear to be little community activity on the estate. Community noticeboards carry posters dating back to 2011. The tenants' and residents' group ceased to operate in 2008 after the illness of a key protagonist (although there are now attempts to revive it) and wider organisations report that they struggle to engage with residents on the estate directly. We noted in the course of our research how difficult it was to book the local community hall and to engage with some of the people who had official responsibilities for the area.

The LSOA itself has few services. There is a small high street with two cafes and two newsagents to the north of the area, and Mabley Green park to the west. The park has a sports hall, though it was reported that this is largely used by people from outside the area, and it also has a two-metre-tall rock installed by the council to mark the 2012 Olympics.

Many local residents claim that the impact of the Olympics has been minimal – one participant said that 'it was right next door but it felt a thousand miles away'. Some complained that the train station was closed for the games, and that the benefits literally passed them by. 'There's no sports stuff, no wellbeing stuff – that's all gone. Just the rock!'

Main changes since 2001

The Olympic Games themselves fall outside the period of analysis, but the announcement of London's success and the subsequent benefits that would appear to have accrued to other parts of East London and to Hackney itself seem not to have benefited this area. Indeed, the area experienced a quite rapid decline.

Much of this decline can be accounted for by a significant worsening of income and employment deprivation, with worklessness levels doubling between 2001 and 2010. It would appear that this has much to do with the relatively static nature of the population and the high levels of social housing in the area. Nearby neighbourhoods had a more diverse tenure mix, and the influx of higher-income households into private housing facilitated a degree of gentrification and service improvement. However, on the Herbert Butler Estate residents have become isolated and crowded out of local job opportunities. There is some evidence that this has been compounded by some of the most upwardly-mobile residents

moving out and being replaced by people who are further away from the labour market, or who only stay in the neighbourhood for a short time.

The sense of isolation and of being in a 'poverty trap' makes the 'neighbourhood effect' appear very real to those who live there – a fact exacerbated by the apparently low levels of community activity and aspiration.

While local councillors have worked hard to bring change to neighbouring areas, such as a new school for children with special educational needs to the south-west of the area, some of these measures would appear to have increased the area's sense of isolation, with developments happening around the estate rather than within it, and physical barriers such as fences and roads exacerbating the problem.

Key lessons for future policymaking

- Large stocks of social housing with little scope for residential mixing or gentrification can lead to a strong sense of isolation among residents, who can remain 'trapped' in a neighbourhood when others move away.
- Even with relatively good transport links, there is a risk that physical boundaries – high fences, roads, rivers – can act as real and perceived boundaries, and prevent interaction between neighbourhoods. This can be exacerbated by the sense that a neighbourhood is cut off from opportunities taking place nearby.
- The lack of community groups and wider community engagement activity would appear to inhibit the development of vision and aspiration for a particular neighbourhood, and diminish the resolve of those with responsibilities in the area to seek positive change and social innovation.

Case study 5: Talbot Ward, Blackpool (LSOA code E01012737)

Description of the LSOA and its wider neighbourhood

Blackpool is a seaside town and unitary authority area of Lancashire, in North West England. It has an estimated population of 142,100, and it has the fourth greatest population density in England and Wales outside Greater London.

Since the mid-eighteenth century, when it became a flourishing holiday destination, Blackpool has been popular with tourists. Despite the nationwide decline in the popularity of British seaside resorts, Blackpool continues to attract millions of visitors every year. However, the decline of the long-stay visitor, stiff competition for the conference trade that once made an important contribution to the local economy, the struggle to attract short-stay and day trip visitors, and the conflict between the needs of families and those seeking a vibrant pub-and-club scene have

proved to be a real challenge. Blackpool was recently found to have the highest level of deprivation among 31 seaside towns analysed by the ONS. As one person told us, 'tourism has been in decline for 30 years, and we have struggled to replace the industry'.

Blackpool was ranked as the tenth most deprived area out of 326 districts and unitary authorities in England in 2010. Figures for life expectancy at birth reveal that Blackpool has the lowest male rate in England and the second-lowest female rate. The infant mortality rate in the authority was also well above the county and national averages.²³

The LSOA is an area of commercial and residential property in the heart of Blackpool which is now mainly used for hotels and guest houses, suspected brothels and houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). It has a high number of pubs and clubs, and thrives on the night-time economy – particularly hen and stag parties. It has a high rate of alcohol-related crime.

Main changes since 2001

Much of the area's decline is related to a long-term trend in the demand for the type of tourist accommodation that has traditionally been at the heart of Blackpool's offer, and the lack of alternative economic drivers for the town.

Housing tenure has become the key cause of decline. Housing benefit underpins the private rented market across the Fylde Coast to a greater degree than other parts of the country – 58 per cent of private rented tenants receive housing benefit across the whole area, rising to 66 per cent in Blackpool and around 72 per cent in inner Blackpool, compared with around 20 per cent nationally.²⁴ Furthermore, the private rented sector is the predominant tenure in parts of inner Blackpool, accounting for over 50 per cent of all homes in some inner wards, meaning that yields derived from housing benefit payments determine property owners' housing investment decisions. In particular, yields from tenants paying housing benefit tend to be greater than yields from using buildings as holiday accommodation, creating a financial incentive for more and more guest houses to convert to residential use in the private rented sector. Many people move or have been placed in Blackpool by surrounding local authorities, or other state agencies such as probation officers, looking for inexpensive accommodation.

Alcohol-related crime has also been a key driver of decline in this LSOA. Bloomfield, Claremont and Talbot Wards (our LSOA area) have three times the number of crimes per 1,000 population than the Lancashire average, and double the Blackpool average. Both the high levels of violent crime and antisocial behaviour are an unfortunate consequence of the busy night-time economy enjoyed by the town. Police in 2009 sought to limit the number of off-licenses in four wards, including Talbot, to try to reduce the volume of alcohol-related crime.

23 <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/web/?siteid=6233&pageid=39644&e=e>

24 <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmselect/cmworpen/235/235.pdf>

A Home Office initiative called Reassurance was set up in 2004 to tackle community issues centred around crime and the perception of crime. This evolved into the Reassurance Plus scheme after consultation with residents showed other, related areas of concern such as environmental issues, litter, youth nuisance and lack of maintenance.

Blackpool Borough Council have undertaken a substantial amount of work to try and turn these neighbourhoods around. The council has bought individual properties to turn them into more suitable dwellings. They also brought in the Home Zone initiative in 2005, which focused on street-scene improvements. The Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy for Blackpool delivered the Talbot and Brunswick Community Village, which opened in 2007 with a Sure Start, GP centre and sports facility, which was aimed at early years and community wellbeing.

Despite these efforts it has not yet been possible to counter the significant decline caused by the wider changes to the housing market and its linkages with drug- and alcohol-related crime. However, this LSOA is now undergoing some major transformations. The Talbot Gateway is a major £285 million regeneration project in the area, which will provide for a new central business district and civic quarter comprising 1.1 million square feet of mixed-use development.

Key lessons for future policymaking

- It is difficult to compete against stronger, broader trends. Blackpool is a victim of the declining popularity of seaside tourism, as well as broader housing market failures, government policy on housing benefit, the historic accessibility of cheap accommodation, and the increasing profit margin for people turning former bed and breakfasts into HMOs for a constant flow of vulnerable people. This LSOA area is also a victim of licensing laws, alcohol policy and cultural approaches to nightlife in an area that is dominated by bed and breakfasts that cater for stag parties and supports the night-time economy. Neighbourhood policy can only try to ameliorate these challenges in those places where they converge.
- Place-based physical improvements can have a ripple effect. Buying up properties – while effective – can be slow, and is limited to individual homes; the resultant improvements are in any case only evident in their interiors. Greater success was achieved when focusing on the ‘street scene’ through initiatives like home zones, which caused ripple effects as people started to take more responsibility for the neighbourhood.
- Most of the interventions highlighted would not have shown any impact during the timescale we are looking at. Having opened in 2007, the Talbot and Brunswick Community Village will take some time to have an impact on the outcomes measured by the IMD.

Case study 6: Cliftonville West, Margate (LSOA code E01024657)

Description of the LSOA and its wider neighbourhood

A seaside town in the district of Thanet in East Kent, Margate has been a leading seaside resort for at least 250 years, and is a traditional holiday destination for Londoners drawn to its golden beaches. Yet, like many coastal towns, the last few decades had seen a period of relative decline for Margate, a victim of its housing tenure situation and wider social and economic policy. It was suffering from an historic dependency on declining tourism sector and a fragile economic base, hit hard by job losses at the local Hornby factory and the closure of its iconic theme park, Dreamland. It also had a profoundly unbalanced housing market, with high numbers of private-rented-sector housing in former bed and breakfasts that were closed down and run by private landlords as HMOs. It was receiving a high number of economic migrants, as well as looked-after children and other vulnerable groups placed there by other local authorities. Against this backdrop, it has proved challenging for the town to tackle entrenched and inter-linked cycles of deprivation, ill health and worklessness.

Yet Margate is visually transforming. The Margate Renewal Partnership was formed in 2006 to take forward an ambitious regeneration programme. The Turner Contemporary art gallery, opened in 2011, is a contemporary arts space which occupies a prominent position next to the harbour and was the impetus for the regeneration of the town. Dreamland has just been acquired by compulsory purchase by the council, and will be transformed into a new heritage theme park and community learning centre. Housing is being used as a tool to transform communities.

One particular neighbourhood epitomises this transformation. West Cliftonville LSOA is situated to the east of the main town. Historically, the area was host to many, largely small private hotels and guest houses which catered for the many visitors to the thriving holiday resort of Margate in the first half of the twentieth century. The area had since become less affluent, with the hotels converted to flats and bedsits. Thanet Council has recognised this and is undertaking a range of initiatives with other partners, including Orbit Housing, to turn the neighbourhood around, including a £23 million project to regenerate housing.

Main changes since 2001

Cliftonville West experienced significant decline during the early 2000s on account of the decline of its tourist industry and the associated attraction of converting its bed and breakfasts to low-quality private rented accommodation for housing benefit recipients. However, over the past decade Margate in general – and Cliftonville West in particular – have benefitted from a number of different regeneration schemes which appear to be turning the neighbourhood around.

The Townscape Heritage Initiative was a grant scheme jointly funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Thanet District Council to encourage the conservation, regeneration and enhancement of historic buildings and street schemes that make up the distinctive character of a particular conservation area. Margate Old Town received £1.2 million to transform previously neglected and run-down buildings into attractive and vibrant properties between 2003 and 2008. One resident said, 'this has been a huge catalyst to creating a different perception of Margate'.

The Cliftonville West Design Code was established to look at a holistic regeneration of the public realm in the neighbourhood. There are now set parameters for the delivery of high quality sustainable buildings and public spaces, and the engagement and empowerment of the community. Some small-scale issues such as planting trees and tackling waste have also helped change the area's look and feel.

The local authority has used a range of powers to transform the neighbourhood. It has closed down old hotels that had become rooming houses, and has sought to purchase properties, promote mixed tenures, and encourage more families to move in. The council took the important step of restricting planning permission for one-bedroom flats in 2007, and brought in selective licensing for private landlords. They have used the acquisition of properties, refurbishment, and improving management standards as means to drive up housing quality. There is an important role for the local state in showing leadership through this approach, as they are aware: 'It's about us taking a risk because we can as we are not for profit, and having a place shaping role. Our drivers are regeneration, not profit, that gives us more flexibility.'

Under the Safer and Stronger Communities Fund, £3.7 million was allocated in 2006 for a four-year programme to improve the quality of life for people living in Cliftonville West and Margate Central, through a multi-agency approach and working through voluntary and community sector organisations. The Margate Task Force team has brought together a range of agencies including the police, fire service, Border Agency and the health, child protection and social care services. The team is co-located in one office and is an 'on-the-ground' team. The Task-Force takes a proactive approach to tackling the complex needs of vulnerable people through the 'Your Home Your Health' initiative, which involves door-to-door visits to undertake a comprehensive analysis of the care and support needs of individuals and families living within Cliftonville West. One member of the team said, 'we've got shared outcomes, people are genuinely seeing the benefits and there's finally a feeling of hope that things can change.'

The regeneration approach in Cliftonville West also focuses on resident-led transformation. The emphasis is on ensuring that, while agencies and the local authority are stimulating the change, residents must be the driving force. One resident told us, 'trust was important. Up until

then [when visual signs of council-led regeneration became evident] it was words – once they saw us delivering, we have started to see more action’. The aim is to kick-start regeneration ‘so people start to have a belief in their local community’ and to make sure further regeneration is sustainable and community-led.

Most recently, in January 2013, the Cliftonville West Dalby Square Project was given the go-ahead. These Victorian properties are being explored as potential multi-generational properties, a concept which supports families, the elderly and students under the same roof to build a more cohesive community, to reduce individual living costs and combat loneliness. They are also being redesigned to be fit for future projected climate conditions in 2080, with greater thermal efficiency and ventilation.

Key lessons for future policymaking

- The impact of the regeneration of iconic buildings such as the Turner Contemporary gallery and the old town’s redevelopment have proved to be a ‘tipping point’ in changing perceptions, attracting new residents, and stimulating the local economy and small businesses.
- It is important to combine social regeneration with physical regeneration: ‘We can deal with the buildings, but that doesn’t tackle the problems people face. You’ve got to do both.’ Like an inverse ‘broken windows’ theory, positive intervention can have a trigger effect, and physical space matters in this. ‘Change needs to be visual, too. When people see the changes we are making it is encouraging them to take a bit more pride. People are doing their bit to bring the street up to scratch.’
- The importance of partnership in areas of complex, multiple deprivation – the success of the Margate Task Force is seen as being down to collective ambition. Each member of the team brings different skills and expertise, which is crucial to tackling the multiple complex and inter-related challenges that people face.

ANNEX 2

NEIGHBOURHOODS WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Elaine Applebee

Nicola Bacon, Social Life

Lucy Brill, Oxfam

Alex Brown, Bradford District Tenants and Residents Federation

Gabriel Chanan

Gary Copitch, People's Voice Media

Alison Gilchrist

Kevin Harris, Local Level

Carol Hayden, Shared Intelligence

Frances Hodgson, Institute for Transport Studies

John Houghton, Shared Intelligence

Afua Kudom, the Challenge Network

John Low, Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Ruth Lupton, Manchester University

Garry McCartney, Sefton Big Local

Lianne McGuinness, Clubmoor Big Local

Kerry Pavey, Sefton Big Local

Suzanne Quinney, Big Local

Alasdair Rae, University of Sheffield

Liz Richardson, University of Manchester

Rebecca Roberts-Hughes, Royal Institute of British Architects

Jess Steele, Locality

Erica Walsh, Connecting Collyhurst

Boris Worrall, Orbit

Jon Yates, the Challenge Network

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