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Centre for Ethnicity & Racism Studies
School of Sociology and Social Policy
University of Leeds

Situating Racist Hostility and Understanding the Impact of Racist Victimisation in Leeds

Lou Hemmerman, Ian Law, Jenny Simms and Ala Sirriyeh

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Acknowledgements

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Executive Summary

This study arose from a set of local agency concerns about increasing racist hostility and violence in two social housing estates in Leeds, together with a strong sense that what is needed is firstly, a better understanding of how racist hostility works and, secondly, more effective action to respond to this issue based on these findings. It has been carried out by a team of four researchers from the Centre for Ethnicity and Racism Studies at the University of Leeds. It began in January 2007, and was funded by Leeds South East Homes.

Chapter 1 examines the increasing ethnic diversity of social housing in the local area, the impact of choice based lettings in reducing racial segregation and the racist victimisation of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) households. It also provides a theoretical and conceptual framework for developing explanations of racist violence and a typology of race hate motives.

Chapter 2 deals with methodological issues including research design, access, sampling, confidentiality and ethics. The fieldwork team used a combination of qualitative data collection techniques to document and explore the experiences and views of residents, victims of racial harassment and key informants. 103 interviews have been completed, comprising key informants (27), victims of racist violence (11) and estate residents (65) together with additional data collection by the fieldwork team.

Chapter 3 gives evidence from victims and identifies the immediate and escalating levels of racist violence they experienced. It identifies a variety of strategies employed in response including avoidance and changes to daily routines, negotiation, trying to keep neighbours onside and late reporting of cases. The impact on families included deterioration in physical and mental health, markedly so for children. Significant difficulties were experienced in obtaining re-housing following racist harassment. Victims felt there to be widespread hostility on the estate combining overt aggressive racism particularly from children and young people with more covert everyday racist talk from older people. There was also some recognition of positive interaction with neighbours and other residents. They identified a serious lack of awareness and exposure to cultural diversity/mix in the local community. They were also intimidated due to BNP activities in the area. Victims expressed some positive comments about the support from individuals from agencies including Housing, Police, Victim Support and Leeds Racial Harassment Project, but were critical of the ability of agencies to respond effectively given the scale of widespread racist hostility and the weakness of enforcement processes. There is room for significant improvement in many aspects of work with victim's including information and advice, casework support, victim support, re-housing, enforcement and prevention.

Chapter 4 provides an analysis of four key themes that emerged from fieldwork with residents about racism and exclusionary practices. Firstly, racist hostility is expressed through intense resentment and debate on the estates around who should be entitled to access to resources. Prominent myths about unfair resource allocation are highlighted. The second theme considers local practices and cultures of criminality, violence and reputation and how these interlock in complex ways with violent attacks. Perceptions of persistent criminality on the estate and the influence of several powerful local families were central here. The linkages between criminality and racial harassment are examined in this section. The third theme looks at understandings of belonging, family and community. Several tensions on the estate are linked to very narrow and specific social and geographic boundaries of trust and safety. Racisms on the estate are linked to fear of the 'other' and fierce allegiance to those who are close to oneself, often for protection. Finally, theme four reflects on poverty, abandonment and disempowerment. Mistrust of authority and feelings of disengagement can lead to community self regulation practices that are exclusionary and defensive. Narratives of neglect and lack of care were strongly expressed together with some strong sense of community pride and affection for the area.

Chapter 5 explores in greater detail how racism is expressed and understood with particular attention to racist denial and differential forms of racism. Racism on the estate takes a

number of forms, is expressed in a variety of ways and also intersects with a multiplicity of other bitter resentments and emotions that are to do with class, poverty and gendered identity. It is often hard for both residents and researchers to separate issues of racism out from other common practices of resentment, exclusion and suspicion within estate life. People on the estate are not always explicitly racist in terms of skin colour but draw upon spectrums of belonging and entitlement that factor in class, family affiliation, heritage and level of contribution to estate life. Race difference was often used as a channel for rage, anger and disaffection, as an expressive tool but not always the motivation. This helps to account for the high level of denial, distancing and justification expressed in relation to racism. Some of the more severe racist incidents on the estate were precipitated or triggered by noise nuisance, alcohol, adjunctive traffic incidents/accidents and unsociable hours. A range of different forms of racism were identified. There was a strong impression given that Asian groups were the most unwelcome and hated on the estates and we heard accounts of how Asian families had been hounded off the estate before they could even get their possessions out of the removal van. Black African families were highly visible key targets of racist hostility. During the research a Sudanese family had received threatening letters, Nigerian families had experienced a battery of harassment and abuse and a Zimbabwean family had golf balls routinely aimed at their windows and their car set alight. Catch-all terms such as 'Kosovan' and asylum-seeker were also used in labelling households as problematic and for targeting hostilities. There were wider levels of harassment aimed at people with Southern accents, working lifestyles and Eastern Europeans. The racism experienced by mixed race families and their hostile views about other groups are also identified. Lastly, the significant role of the BNP is examined showing how their message of representation of the excluded working classes ties in with local understandings and denials of racism, while undeniably racialising pre-existing resentments.

Chapter 6 explores the ways in which racist views are reproduced in young people and how racist values are being passed on across generations, both within families on the estate and through other informal contact between children, young people and adults. It also examines wider anxieties about the disruptive presence of young people. Large groups of young people congregating in one area were often labelled as gangs and subsequently many accounts of racist hostility were linked to their presence. But, interventions aimed primarily at young people are not adequate due to the role of parents and other adults in inciting racist behaviour and the wider community being complicit in its inaction and protection of perpetrators.

This study has sought to open up the debate about how racist attitudes and racist behaviour operate in order to develop more soundly based strategies for action and intervention. The need for an improvement in agency responses was recognised by many representatives from these agencies. Poorly implemented policy, poor levels of service, poor perceptions of service and a strong desire for more effective work with local communities were powerfully stressed by agency representatives. The need to address the fundamental and central role that race plays in hostility and violence through such work is imperative. The parallel report argues for action on this basis and provides a comprehensive account of policy and practice examples that need to be considered in conjunction with the findings of this report in the pursuit of a 'Racism Reduction Agenda'.

Racist Hostility in the area and Hate Crime Strategy
In reviewing the Strategic Vision for Tackling Hate Incidents in the area in relation to this report the following points emerge for consideration, in addition to the good practice suggestions made in the Racism Reduction report:

Issues arising from fieldwork with key informants
Need to develop systematic programme of community engagement and community work around racism reduction
Need to improve reporting and enforcement
Need to improve level and adequacy of support for victims and their families

Issues arising from fieldwork with victims
Need to improve information and advice on racist risks when bidding for housing
Need to improve enforcement action against perpetrators

Need to improve information and feedback for victims, explanations as to why certain evidence is not being used as many are being very pro-active in collecting this, and keeping victims up to date on their cases even when they have moved outside the area.

Victim support has been minimal for this group. No counselling/therapy etc for children at all seems to have been offered. Some children are severely affected by the racist nature of these experiences, and parents are very much on their own here as well as dealing with the affects the harassment has had on themselves.

Enforcement and education alone appear to be limited solutions. It could, however, be argued that increased law enforcement and education are not failing as such but that the focus should be on the *route* these approaches take. Education through schools and youth groups in a form which targets young people alone may not be the only or best means particular if the problem is in the wider community also. Furthermore, in communities already experiencing social problems and resentment of authority, top down approaches are likely to be met with resistance.

Programmes that emanate from, and are embedded in, the community, enabling local community members to take the lead and develop common interests at the grassroots may be more successful. Community members may be more likely to become involved if the target of such projects is based on common interests. While anti-racism needs to be incorporated here, this needs to be done in a more subtle and negotiated manner. Having this as the primary and sole objective may alienate those who feel attacked and do not see benefits to them. Due to the complex interplay of factors involved in harassment, including the social deprivation in the local community, objectives need to be interlinked so that all members of the community are seen to benefit.

While perpetrators of racist harassment have been identified as predominantly young people, a focus on positive activities for young people may only touch the most visible part of the problem. As this report has identified, all victims of harassment noted the involvement of parents and families in inciting racist behaviour and the wider community being complicit in its inaction and protection of perpetrators.

It may be helpful to focus even more locally on small-scale activities around the streets where harassment has been at its height.

Issues arising from fieldwork with residents

Tackling prominent myths about unfair resource allocation, particularly housing allocation and repairs and the constant drip feed of negative stories

Building community based support and understanding for fairness in service provision

Tackling poverty and long term unemployment and associated resentment of others

Tackling local practices and cultures of criminality, intimidation, violence and reputation, the influence of several powerful local families and the normality of using violent methods in conflicts

Reducing fear of crime and violence and improving sense of safety and security

Improving positive and inclusive perceptions of belonging, family and community

Tackling local feelings of abandonment, disempowerment, mistrust of authority and feelings of disengagement, engaging with local narratives of neglect and lack of care and building on the sense of community pride and affection for the area i.e. serious and sustained community development work and building capacity of existing local groups

Tackling denial, distancing and justifications for racist violence and hostility

Reducing likelihood of 'trigger factors' including noise nuisance, alcohol, traffic incidents/accidents, BBQs etc, leading to violent confrontations.

Addressing wide variety of forms that racism and related hostility takes

Tackling the influence of the extreme right

Improving parenting skills

Supporting and extending 'racism reduction' and aspirational initiatives with children and young people

Chapter 1   Introduction

This project has been carried out by a team of four researchers from the University of Leeds. It began in January 2007, and was funded by Leeds South East Homes. Approximately 103 interviews have been completed, comprising key informants (27), victims of racist violence (11) and estate residents (65) together with additional data collection by the fieldwork team. Fieldwork was carried out from January to June 2007. An interim report was produced in April 2007 and presented to the local Hate Incidents Partnership Group, an initiative led by Safer Leeds. This is the final report from this local fieldwork project. A second parallel project, *The Racism Reduction Agenda*, has also been completed, this involves an examination of good practice in dealing with violent racism which considers global, European and UK evidence (Law 2007). This second project has been funded by Safer Leeds, and it arises from the same set of local concerns set out below. The aims of this project are:

- To examine the perceptions and experiences of residents and relevant organisations on the social housing estates in relation to community, change, crime and conflict,
- To examine the experiences of individuals and households subject to racially motivated hate crime,
- To examine the perceptions and motivations of those involved in racially motivated hate crime,
- To make recommendations for action to improve social relations and reduce conflict in this area in conjunction with the parallel report reviewing good practice (Law 2007).

Local housing concerns

This project arose from concerns expressed by local area housing management staff, about increasing racial harassment and a number of recent serious cases. Race hate in parts of this area of Leeds was also identified as a key concern in a city wide report on hate crime in November 2006. This report concluded that,

> 'Empirical evidence has clearly identified that on certain estates on specific streets there effectively exist 'no-go areas' for black and minority ethnic families due to the level of intimidation and harassment families have received. All monitoring systems have identified this trend.' (LCC 2006a: 5)

116 racist incidents were recorded by Leeds City Council, and a similar high number were recorded by the Police and Leeds Racial Harassment Project in 2005/06 in the local area (LCC 2006b). These incidents have included firebombing, racist graffiti, racist abuse, property and vehicle damage, smashed windows, throwing bricks, assault, setting fires, threats and intimidation, and repeated racist victimisation by gangs of local youth. This was recognised by the Council as an increasing trend of both organised and spontaneous racist victimisation of black, Asian and minority ethnic families. A case for consideration of these issues was made to the Area District Partnership in December 2006 (Swift, 2006). Understanding the drivers of local hostility and antagonism in the area, and understanding the problems newcomers, and in particular black and minority ethnic households, experience on the estate is seen as a key objective for this project. This area is dominated by social housing (mainly council owned) where unemployment and benefit dependency have increased since the loss of manufacturing jobs in the 1970s and 1980s. It contains a cluster of sub-local areas, or super output areas, which fall within 3% of the most deprived on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (2004) in Leeds (LCC 2006c). A sustained programme of intensive neighbourhood management has also been in operation in this locality which has highlighted wider problems of racist hostility and racist victimisation.

The historical and continued formation of predominantly white council estates in this area, due to a specific range of processes, has recently been subject to change due to increasing lettings to black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) tenants. This has been facilitated by the introduction of more 'customer-focused' housing lettings systems and lettings to refugees.

Historical patterns of housing allocation, racial discrimination, segregation of 'problem' families and self-segregation/avoidance choices by both BAME and white households have led to the production of an area which is almost exclusively white. The impact of housing renewal and allocation policy involved initial re-housing of households from slum clearance into the area when it was built who were predominantly white households (Duke 1971). Long-standing reticence to offer housing to non-white households in areas outside the main areas of black and minority ethnic settlement in the city, combined with the 'dumping' of white households with multiple problems in the area produced a context which reinforced ethnic and racial divisions in housing choices (Law 1985, Law et al 1996). Long-standing perception and experience of high levels of racial hostility in many this area and other parts of Leeds has been a significant constraint on the housing choices of many BAME households (Comrie 2007). The introduction of choice-based lettings (CBL) systems together with improving agency responses to racist violence have in recent years changed this environment and improved opportunities for housing choice. CBL allows housing applicants to view details on, choose between, and apply (or 'bid') for currently available-to-let properties. This contrasts with traditional housing allocation systems where applicants are normally faced with only the stark choice of whether to accept or reject a property deemed 'suitable' by a social landlord. In this way, CBL aims to transform the letting of social housing from a producer-driven function to a consumer-led service. Originating in the Netherlands, the application of CBL in Britain was given substantial impetus by the English Housing Green Paper of 2000. This backed CBL as empowering housing applicants by enabling them to play a direct role in selecting their future home. Ministers also saw the CBL approach as potentially beneficial in:

- facilitating greater 'ownership' of letting decisions by housing applicants themselves;
- thereby enhancing tenants' commitment to their home and neighbourhood;
- promoting greater mobility for those moving into – or within – social housing;
- making better use of the social housing stock (properties owned by local authorities – LAs – and housing associations – HAs) (Pawson et al, 2006)

Government targets aim to extend CBL to all LAs in England by 2010, following the introduction of such schemes in twenty-seven LA areas during 2001-2003. A recent evaluation of the impact of these programmes found that in Leeds, perhaps even more than in towns like Bolton and Bradford, minority ethnic social renters were spatially concentrated in 2001, with 52% living in three of the council's twenty-nine housing management administrative areas (Pawson et al, 2006). Reducing racial and ethnic concentration of black and ethnic minority lettings is a direct consequence of the introduction of CBL in Leeds, with the proportion of these lettings in 'areas of concentration' falling from 47% pre-CBL to only 27% post-CBL. Similarly lettings to non-white households in areas of low black and ethnic minority concentration, including this area, have doubled overall. Other factors which may have played a role in this process of 'de-segregation' include demand from asylum seekers and refugees. In some cases this has involved offering and letting properties to households who are immediately at high risk of racist violence as this study has shown. In response amending CBL to give back some additional scope for managerial action including risk assessment procedures has been pursued, which means housing staff making a judgement about whether it is safe for a non-white family to move into a particular property. It is clear that many such families are prepared to face such risks because of the insecurity and quality of their previous housing circumstances. So, overall increasing ethnic diversity of households is certain to continue despite the risk of violence due to pressing housing needs, reduction in racial discrimination by housing institutions and greater opportunity for household choice. In this dynamic context effective and fair management of the needs and concerns of all households is needed.

There has been a reduction in levels of reported racist incidents so far in 2007, compared to figures for 2005/6, although it is unclear as to why this is, despite little change in underlying patterns of hostility. Relevant agencies have been working more closely together in recent months and Safer Leeds now provide leadership for a dedicated zero tolerance hate crime strategy for this area, following repeated calls from local agencies for such an initiative and concern over the lack of a long term plan to deal with hate crime. Current actions in this field are the latest in a series on initiatives taken by local agencies in Leeds since the mid-1980's when racial harassment emerged onto the agenda of local government (Leeds CRC 1986) and central government (Home Office 1981).

Building a model of explanation

In order to develop appropriate, effective and durable interventions in racist violence it is necessary to develop a response that reflects both immediate/surface causes and underlying contextual explanations. Firstly, it is necessary to identify the key elements of the concept of racism which may be universally applicable across different forms of discourse and different social and national contexts. This has been elaborated in depth elsewhere (Law 1996, 2002). Key elements include,

- the signification of race characteristics to identify a collectivity,
- the attribution of such a group with negative biological or cultural characteristics
- the designation of boundaries to specify inclusion and exclusion'
- variation in form in that it may be a relatively coherent theory or a loose assembly of images and explanations'
- its practical adequacy; in that it successfully 'makes sense' of the world for those who articulate it,
- its pleasures; an unearned easy feeling of superiority and the facile cementing of group identity on the fragile basis of arbitrary antipathy.

The everyday practical adequacy and emotional appeal of racism for many people indicate that such attitudes and behaviour may be highly resistant to intervention. Racism takes many forms and includes mass societal aggression and genocide, structures of exclusion and discrimination and derogatory and abusive forms of behaviour, representation and language. A recent review of contemporary evidence of racist violence across 15 EU member states by Goodey examined explanations of race hate and proposed a framework for understanding this process, (2005:187-193):

(1) meta explanations, which draw on dominant theoretical explanations, such as competition theory, for offending, and adopt these theories to explain violent racist offending;
(2) meso explanations, which can be read as local, situated, contextual readings of why racist violence occurs among certain groups and in certain settings; and
(3) micro explanations, which are explanations for violent racist offending that rest with the individual.

Recent research on racist violence has primarily drawn on local case study material. Gadd et al (2005), Ray and Smith (2004), Webster (1998), Bowling (1998) and Hesse *et al* (1992) have all carried out intensive locally based research, in the UK, and have sought to examine the relevance of these different types of explanation in North Staffordshire, Manchester, Keighley, Newham and Waltham Forest respectively. Drawing on this and the wider literature in the field it is possible to identify a complex set of factors which need to be considered in explaining racist violence.

International economic, political and social processes provide a set of factors which are broadly outside the control of local agencies, but these may be highly significant in determining patterns of local racist violence. International hostilities including 9/11, 7/7 and the War on Terror, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and other conflicts which may be driving the movement of asylum-seekers and refugees may all be relevant here in increasing local tensions and perceptions of insecurity, threat and risk (Goodey 2005). International economic restructuring reflected in local patterns of economic decline and loss of jobs may heighten local economic insecurities and associated conflict. But, there appears to be no direct correlation between patterns of unemployment and economic activity and patterns of racist violence. Perceptions of competition over local access to employment, housing and education may often bear little or no relation to actual market opportunities and outcomes.

'the explanatory value of theories that are embedded in the idea of competition falls somewhat short when we consider that racist violence emerges in times of economic

prosperity and political stability, and when immigrant populations are not increasing or changing their profiles' (Goodey 2005: 188)

The increasing international links between extreme right groups and the expansion of internet newsgroups and other forms of web based networks as a vehicle to mobilise and disseminate racist ideology may also have immediate local effects. International media communications also play two conflicting roles here as recently acknowledged by the International Federation of Journalists (2005). Firstly, they may often be seen as responsible for shaping racism and intolerance, promoting ethnic, racial and religious hatred and inciting associated violence. Secondly, they have also contributed to the fight against racism, covering the struggle against Apartheid and the Palestinian Intifada, exposing racism, discrimination and human rights abuses and advocating for equality and justice. The importance of media reporting of international, national and local news and events as one key factor in shaping the racist attitudes of 11 to 21 year olds in the UK has been confirmed in recent research (Lemos and Crane 2005).

Nationally, the historical cultural reservoir of British/English racism is highly significant providing a persisting repertoire of hostile images, perceptions of superiority and legitimation for brutality and violence against many different groups. The narratives of neglect and decline elaborated in local communities, and the output of the extreme right may all adopt a 'backward-looking' frame of reference to this and related sets of key memories. The significance of national political debate and government policies may be paramount in focussing and amplifying local tensions, and there is evidence of a direct connection here. Political advocacy and implementation of controls on immigration and the targeting of debate on specific groups has in many national contexts led to significant increases in racist violence, for example Germany, Sweden and the UK (Bowling and Phillips 2005:116). The extent to which racist hostility is permitted in both public debate and through the failure of government responses, may parallel the sanctioning and failure to condemn amongst local communities. Equally it may be argued that condemnation of racist hostility and cultural racism across public arenas, together with effective agency responses to race hate, may all promote wider community condemnation of such behaviour. But this is not the whole story, and there are many other intervening factors which need to be considered in order to explain differing levels of racist violence across different neighbourhoods and local areas within the same national context.

Local patterns are highly difficult to explain. Leeds City Council first adopted a Racial Harassment Policy in 1986. Evidence from the early years of that policy showed a sporadic pattern of racist violence, being reported across most inner and outer estates and areas, which did not lend itself to easy explanation in terms of competition, territorialism, newness of household movements or activities of extreme right groups. Twenty years later, current levels of reported incidents of race hate in Leeds at between 4,000 to 5,000 across the city continue to indicate the durability, geographical spread and significance of such violence. Reported incidents have hugely increased during this period which confirms significant improvements in public reporting, staff awareness and agency recording practices. However, reported incidents are acknowledged to be a fraction of the total number, with real levels of race hate incidents likely to be upwards of 10,000 per year (LCC 2006a, 2006b). There is increasing evidence of racist violence in rural and prosperous settings and per capita rates of victimisation show that this behaviour is not confined to poor inner city estates. Local disputes, identities and informal norms and networks may all be relevant in accounting for different rates of racist victimisation between different areas. Factors which strengthen the bonds between families, including changing economic opportunities and isolation from social networks outside the local area, can strengthen mobilisation to respond to external threats and dangers. Strong communities may often be highly exclusionary. A key to understanding how this process works is to examine local norms, values and sanctions to conform operating across a range of networks including families, friends/peer groups and other informal forms of association. Within these social contexts individuals act in different ways and micro forms of explanation focussing on individuals will also be necessary to explain race hate.

Examination of individual life stories, biographies, emotions and intimate relations may all highlight key patterns across the large group of people in society responsible for acts of race hate. Gadd et al in examining a sample of 15 perpetrators' life stories identify that they reveal,

'patterns of severe, occasionally extreme, material and emotional deprivation combined with, or compounded by, histories of other kinds of offending behaviour, criminalisation, domestic violence, mental illness, and the abuse of drugs and alcohol' (2005: 9)

This group are described as the 'usual suspects', a normal cross section of those frequently arrested by the police, and as being young, poor, severely damaged, vulnerable, socially marginal and prone to violent behaviour. Whether such an account would be applicable to all those responsible for the thousands of race hate incidents across Leeds is highly questionable. Gadd and other researchers (Sibbitt 1997) have confirmed that racist attitudes held by perpetrators are very similar to the attitudes held by 'ordinary people of all ages' across the locality. The scale of racist violence, acts of racial discrimination and racist attitudes across British society indicates that many ordinary people placed in specific contexts are likely to be responsible for race hate, in addition to the marginal group identified above.

Typology of race hate motives

Changing justifications for persisting racist attitudes and shifting target groups make racism highly dynamic. Motivations may change and develop as patterns of violence progress. Race hate may be the product of a mix of motives which are hard to disentangle in real situations. However, for the purposes of analysis it is possible to construct a typology. This section seeks to operationalise Michael Mann's (2005) historical and global evidence on perpetrators motives in relation to racial and ethnic violence and examine their application to the local context of this part of Leeds. Seven common groups of motivating factors can be derived from Mann, which if applied to contemporary race hate would render a typology of motives as follows:

- *Ideological*

This category covers people willing to risk or inflict death or serous harm in pursuit of their values, with the perpetrator often protesting that he is the victim acting in some form of self-defence. This has been termed value-rational action by Weber (1978, I, 25). A recent UK review of research on perpetrators motives by Isal (2005) strongly challenges popular assumptions that see most race hate incidents as being carried out by 'mission offenders', and instead suggests a continuum of motives ranging from political extreme right activity to neighbour disputes. Gadd et al (2005) confirm that, for their sample of perpetrators, racism was rarely, if ever, the sole factor motivating their offending behaviour. In certain localities such 'mission offenders' may, however, be key players as Hewitt describes in his study of some council estates in London which contain,

'a core of violent racist adolescents and their adult mentors, plus a small supporting cast of racial bigots located within a wider pool of people who were at odds with the local political order in which, to them, minority concerns were given precedence'
(Hewitt, 2005: 55).

Here, Hewitt seeks to delineated differences between groups involved in race hate. Some of the 'adult mentors' may be ideologically driven individuals who may be responsible for inciting race hate by other, younger people. A distinction is drawn by Mann and Hewitt between this group and bigots.

- *Bigots*

Rather than pursuing higher political or ideological goals, bigots are obstinate, intolerant adherents of more populist, mundane or casual prejudices drawn from their immediate social context and social encounters. In their recent study of 15 race hate perpetrators in North Staffordshire, Gadd et al (2005) found that the overwhelming majority were not 'hardened race-haters'. They had similar views to the wider community in which they lived and many felt justified, if not compelled, to project their misfortunes in dangerous and intimidating ways onto

minority groups. Here a white backlash may be identified with perceptions and widespread talk of unfairness.

'Widespread talk about unfairness creates a substantial obstacle to tackling racism. It has created a screen which filters out the possibility of some whites fully understanding the meaning of racial harassment, and generates an almost impermeable defensiveness. (Hewitt, 1996: 57)

These views may also be evident in hostile local reactions to antiracist and multicultural policies and practices developed by local schools and other agencies. Race hate rage may also be incited by national and local media reporting of migration, racism and ethnic diversity e.g. 'get tough' migration policies, or local media reporting of racist attacks by Asians in Oldham which incited racist violence by white youths. This wider context may draw ordinary people into an escalating process of dispute, conflict and violence.

- *Emotional Violence*

As stated above, expressing racism may bring an unearned easy feeling of superiority. Pleasure, joy and triumphant emotions may for some drive the process of race hate rage, particularly when preceded by a sense of personal humiliation or emotional anxiety. The shame, envy and disgust experienced by living in vulnerable, insecure economic and social settings, together with both a sense of personal failure and a sense that others are receiving more favourable opportunities may all facilitate race hate (Ray, Smith and Wastell 2004). Such violence may provide a temporary release from such anxieties. As Gadd et al (2005:1) argue migrant and minority ethnic households may provide,

'an uncomfortable reminder of local white people's inability to secure decent lives for themselves and their families'.

The role of alcohol, drugs or other methods of reducing inhibitions in the expression of emotional racism has been identified by a number of studies as a significant contributory factor (Bowling and Phillips 2002: 117).

- *Criminal-Materialist*

Some race hatred may be motivated by direct gain or benefit from such actions including stealing personal property or protecting ongoing criminal activities from outside scrutiny. . The significance of informal local networks may be central in determining community capacities for informal justice, informal crime control and informal security. Defensive protection from outsiders and

'protecting criminal activity through oppressive enforcement of local rules of trustworthiness and non-cooperation with state authorities' (Karn 2007:33)

may provide a rationale for pre-emptive and pro-active strikes against incoming households who may be seen to be un-amenable to local control. Here race hate is highly instrumental, and race hate may be used as an aggravating factor in criminal activity.

- *Territorial-Political*

Strong attachment/loyalty to streets, estates, localities or indeed national territory and their associated social and political identities may provide a further instrumental motive for defending space from potential 'invaders'. Lack of engagement in any form of shared activities with a common goal and lack of personal relationships between groups may exacerbate such forms of race hate. National and local political leaderships may also play a key role in either shaping racial hostility or reducing political legitimacy for such conflict. Lack of success in managing conflicting concerns between established residents over competition e.g. for housing, and migrants and minorities over safety and security may provide durable conditions for the perpetuation of racial hostility.

- *Social Group Norms*

Here, an informal (peer group, gang, family network) or more formal grouping may expect conformity with race hate behaviour and threaten withdrawal of protection/support or other

sanctions if this expectation is not met. Recent research by Dench, Gavron and Young (2006) has highlighted key linkages between white residents' hostility and resentment of new migrants in the East End of London and the strength of family and localist loyalties, identifying the 'East End granny' as being the social type which expresses highest levels of racial hostility, precisely because it 'makes sense' in their world of social meanings. Hewitt has identified that socialisation by families into racist behaviour was less important than peer group culture and behaviour,

'Young people have their own culture of racist talk and actions, and this culture should be tackled directly' (1996: 57).

- *Bureaucratic/Disciplined/Military power*

Legitimate organisational authorities may require routine compliance with race hate, ethnic cleansing and genocide in modern societies where such action becomes habitual, mechanised and impersonal. Armies, police forces and paramilitaries are the main agencies here and their role has often been decisive in the worst examples of mass racial and ethnic cleansing (Mann 2005).

Such typologies tend to be static, 'freezing' motives at the point of violent action (Mann 2005:29), but they also play a useful conceptual role in disentangling some of the complex drivers and forms of racist violence. Such an account is also more likely to be able to point to the range of different interventions that may be needed to challenge such hostility and violence in particular local contexts.

The concern to unravel the complex reality of racist hostility is a central focus for this study. The urgent and serious nature of local concerns expressed by representatives from local public agencies has shaped the direction this project has taken, together with more sociological concerns brought to this project by the research team in addressing questions of explanation, theorisation and conceptualisation. To understand race hate we need to be sensitive to the interplay of key explanatory factors, the different articulation given to contexts and motives in individual biographies and local communities and key pressure points and triggers to events and incidents. Listening and giving voice to victims and perpetrators perceptions together with contextual analysis and interpretation will we hope provide some insight into the process of race hate in this area of Leeds given the limited scope of this study. The methodological approach used in this study to achieve the objectives of this project is set out in the next chapter.

Chapter 2   Methodology

Methods

The fieldwork team used a combination of qualitative data collection techniques to document and explore the experiences and views of residents, victims of racial harassment and key informants. The data set collected includes material from 103 individuals who were interviewed using varying methodological approaches together with additional field notes and observations. The fieldwork was located in and around the two estates. The research was precipitated by concerns raised by local service providers and enforcement agencies about the persistent and escalating incidence of racial violence and harassment in the locality.

In the first phase of data collection (late December 2006 to Jan 2007) Ian Law interviewed 'key informants', comprising voluntary and public sector workers with responsibility for the area. These interviews were frequently located in an office or place of work. These people were not necessarily resident in the area under discussion. 20 interviews were completed in this phase. Through this initial work the researchers aimed to build up an informed picture of both the history and context of racial tension in the area and agency perspectives. This was in order to situate the incidence of racial harassment and victimisation through accessing 'expert narratives'. This data is representative of the perspectives of people working to tackle and explain racism within the community. These interviews were semi-structured and took around one hour. In addition a further set of key informants were interviewed by other members of the team at later stages of the project.

From January to March 2007 Ala Sirriyeh conducted fieldwork with members of families who had been identified as victims of racial harassment on the estate. These interviews did not always take place on the estate, as several of these people had moved away from the estate and been re-housed. At the time of writing five families had moved out of the area and were living elsewhere (two of these in temporary accommodation). Three were still living in the area but had applied to move, and three were living in the area and planning to stay. 11 semi structured interviews were conducted in local One Stop Shops and in the interviewee's homes. The interviews lasted between thirty minutes and one hour and were tape recorded.

Between March and June 2007 Lou Hemmerman and Jenny Simms undertook fieldwork gathering the accounts and experiences of current residents on the estates. Semi-structured, tape-recorded interviews were the main method of data collection. Some residents did not agree to be taped and their interviews were recorded in note form. The majority of interviews took place in resident's homes, although two chose to be interviewed at the one stop shop. The interviews varied in length between 45 minutes and two hours. This interview based approach was complemented by the writing of extensive field-notes. These documented meetings, contacts and conversations in the field. They also recorded discussions between the researchers. In total 45 residents were interviewed, together with 20 young people in four focus groups which were also organised in order to seek out their particular views and experiences of life on the estate.

Residents' Semi Structured Interviews

The aim of the research was to strike a balance between answering key research questions, while allowing space for residents to autonomously express their views. The key research tasks were to access experiences of racial relations on the estate, as well as to seek lay theories and explanations of racist behaviour and harassment. For this reason a decision was made to design a flexible interview schedule that touched on all areas of interest, but allowed for expansion of key points. Such a technique makes space for following the lead of an interviewee where necessary. The aim of such methods is to access the meanings and

understandings of the research participant in context, in order to gain insights into how they experience and construct their world.

The resident's interview schedule was designed to cover five main areas. The first section addressed questions around the resident's *history and social networks* on the estate. This included probes around how people 'ended up there', aimed at relatively new residents. We asked about whether the resident had family and friends on the estate and sought to instigate discussions about how the estate had changed over time. This was weighted to seek insight on whether change was felt to be positive or negative.

The second section was an *evaluative* section discussing how the resident described the estate and how they felt as a resident. We asked about how they experienced living in their location. This led into a discussion about what they felt were the most positive and negative aspects of life on the estate. The third section explicitly dealt with issues of *belonging and acceptance.* We sought opinions on the arrival of new residents and how they were treated. We asked the resident if they felt accepted as part of the community and how safe and secure they felt living on the estate. We also asked whether they took part in community activities. We tackled the question of whether the race or nationality of newcomers affected their view and asked why such things might influence them.

The fourth section further addressed specific *influences* on racialisation processes. We tackled the issue of competition for scarce resources, the activism of the BNP in the area and recent national and international events such as the Iraq War and 7/7. If the resident did not feel they were influenced by these things we asked them if they felt other estate residents were, and how they were. Finally in the fifth section we asked about *improvements and solutions.* We split this into questions around how everyday life on the estate could be improved and how social relationships on the estate could be improved. We included a specific question about activities for young people.

Quantifiable Data and Literature Review

The research team also conducted a focused review of relevant literature and policy. This included a perusal of local statistics and the searching out local policy documents and discussions of best practice. Biographical information was gathered on each resident interviewed, which could facilitate some small scale comparative mapping work on the demography of racist behaviour in the area.

Access and Sampling

The research began with interviews with key informants accessed through the introductions and recommendations of local area housing management staff. Throughout the research this organisation acted as host and 'gatekeeper' for the research team. Key informants were chosen to represent a range of perspectives and viewpoints from relevant agencies which included the police, housing management, churches, community centre staff, staff with responsibility for enforcement and the tackling of anti social behaviour and hate crime and tenants organisations. Some informants were prominent and well known local people who were active upon the estate.

The people who had experienced racial harassment were accessed through Leeds Racial Harassment Project and local housing management staff. The source for these contact details were official reports of victimisation they had received plus access to families through support work. Throughout the research it was more difficult to access unreported harassment cases. Fortuitously some residents who had experienced harassment were accessed in the third phase of the research and their interviews were passed on.

The third phase of work with residents was facilitated by Leeds South East Homes. They provided a randomised list of names and addresses for local residents. Further to this we were given information on any households where it was felt there may have been particular

biases with respect to the research objectives. The researchers initially sent out introductory letters to these addresses, which they followed up with a telephone call where the number was available.

However, the majority of successful contact with residents was ensured through spending extended periods of time visiting the estate, walking around the streets of the estates. The research team knocked on doors and introduced ourselves and the research, or left an information leaflet. Sometimes we gained direct access, or made an appointment to return at a more convenient time. We found that such efforts to make face to face contact were more rewarding, possibly because they were less reliant on literacy and officialdom. We made it very clear that our research was independent research located at the University of Leeds. This was requested by Leeds South East homes due to local mistrust of the housing authority. By this method we interviewed 45 residents. All those interviewed were between the ages of 19 and 86. We interviewed 22 individual women, 5 men and 9 couples. When asked to describe their ethnic background the participants were not prompted by a classification schedule given by the researchers. 40 residents stated that they were White British, 1 White European, 1 Mixed White and Black Caribbean, 1 Black British and 1 'Yorkshireman'!

We also consulted with the local women's group by attending their events and listening to their concerns. Later in the project we set up four focus groups with young people through a local youth inclusion project. Each focus group consisted of 4 to 6 young people of both sexes aged between 10 and 17, and lasted for approximately half an hour to 45 minutes. 20 young people were interviewed in total. This method was purposive sampling. It was initiated in response to early findings that suggested that young people and their behaviours and needs were central to several lay accounts of the incidence of racial harassment on the estate

Analysis and Data Management

The fieldwork with residents was recorded in a series of research diaries. Alongside this the progression of the research was tracked along a project timeline. This enabled a detailed record to be kept of the development of analysis and sampling. After the completion of the fieldwork all of the taped interviews were transcribed extensively and verbatim. This produced a full textual record of the interview data.

Data from key informants and victims was analysed manually through the development of coding frames. These were used to inform the writing up of the research and to plan and structure analysis. Residents' interviews were then imported into a qualitative data analysis package called NVIVO 7. At this stage the researchers worked together to agree a coding frame. The aim was that this frame represented the key themes within the data as fully as possible, from the perspective of residents and informants. Our sociological perspective was that the findings of the research should be embedded in the lay perspectives of our interviewees about what explained racial harassment. We designed our coding frame using their language and expressions and based upon their key concerns. Each interview was then coded using NVIVO in order to produce lengthy textual reports on what residents had said about particular themes and issues relevant to the research. These reports where then used to plan and design the structure of the data based sections of this report. Illustrative quotes and stories were selected to support key arguments.

Confidentiality and Research Ethics

When negotiating with victims and residents and seeking consent for research access we emphasised that the un-anonymised tapes would only be accessed by one of the research team. We agreed that they would be processed to remove personal information. We emphasised verbal rather than written consent due to concerns about literacy. Residents and victims received no formal incentive to participate in the research.

Residents' fieldwork was presented as a community study seeking views about local issues and concerns. We did not emphasise the racism aspect as this was found to lead to a high

refusal rate; residents that refused to take part did so because they felt that they were unable to offer any insight or that they insufficient knowledge of the subject area. This presented the dilemma of a level of concealment, although we were willing to answer direct questions about the interest in racism. We did not want to assume racist views or stigmatise our research subjects. After discussion we felt that a degree of indirectness was ethically permissible, as long as we did not lie if challenged. Another ethical difficulty was that we offered the incentive of consultation on improvements and changes in order to try and offer something back to our research participants. The outcome of this was something which we could not personally guarantee. This presents a dilemma of trust when researchers act as mediators and intermediaries between authorities and those consulted, without any direct redress.

There were also cases in our study were we interviewed people who had relationships of regulation and conflict with the local authority and could be identified easily by them through the details of their narratives. It is hard to anonymise these cases, but the research team did make a decision not to discuss them directly with key workers for fear of compromising their case.

Residents' Fieldwork Issues

Discussing Racism: The Election Period

We also struggled methodologically and ethically about how to bring up the issue of racism and racist behaviour as it was so sensitive and potentially stigmatising. We were aided greatly in this by the fact that a local election took place within the period we were doing the research. The BNP were actively and visibly campaigning in the area .Commenting on this often gave us a route into tackling the subject of racism. As such the research can be situated within a particular temporal context within which the politics of race had some prominence and salience for *some* people. It was notable that many people did not hold racist views, contested racism or were unaware of the problem. We will try and capture the complexity and micro-geography of who appeared to be concerned about race and why in later sections of the report.

It must also be noted that participants often brought up the topic themselves in relation to housing allocation policy and repairs. We found it productive to find how people themselves introduced the topic offering them prompts around areas that we learned were 'catalysts' for such a discussion such as the local election, housing, newcomers experiences, dominant families on the estate and crime and anti social behaviour. It was not productive asking directly if people felt there was racism on the estate until the ice had been broken by gentler introductory topics.

Access Difficulties

Access to interviewees in the residential period of the research was difficult and protracted due to inaccurate information about residents, resident absence and suspicion and resistance. We had some concerns as a team that we were only accessing the most 'accessible' residents such as women with children, local activists and older people (Emmel et al: 2007). Clearly more work needs to be done on researcher access and trust in disadvantaged communities. Particularly on methods of accessing young people, members of powerful and influential families and male residents. Our primary concern regarding young male participants was that we were only able to speak with those who were already involved in constructive community activities or those who had been successfully engaged by local youth agencies. Several residents made it clear that there were people on the estate who would not speak with us and we had to take account of our access limitations in analysis.

Anonymisation

Chapter 3   Victims of Racist Harassment

Introduction

The aim of this section of the study was to explore the experiences of victims of racist harassment on the estates and their perceptions of; the behaviour that occurred, the effects of this on their lives and the responses made by key agencies working in the neighbourhoods. Interviewees were also asked for recommendations as to how their harassment might have been limited or prevented and how agencies could respond to these problems in the future. It was found that most respondents had experienced repeat or continuous racist harassment while living on the estates, often with similar patterns of escalation until they were forced to move away. Few respondents felt able to continue living in the area after these incidents and many had to compromise on the quality of their accommodation when relocating to safer housing. Harassment has had considerable effect on victims' emotional well-being and mental health, particularly in the case of children. While respondents were able to identify that there were a minority of frontline perpetrators, they sensed a widespread hostility in the community beyond, and felt that this needed to be addressed to bring about an effective solution to the problem.

This report will highlight the lack of homogeneity in the experiences of BAME groups noting the 'hierarchies of difference' in the way victims are targeted and consequently the variations in their experiences and strategies of dealing with harassment. When researching Bangladeshi victims of racist harassment in London Sampson and Phillips (1992) noted that "interviews with families revealed few discernable differences between the least victimised and the more heavily victimised families" and therefore argued that they were targeted due to their race alone. However, it will be argued here that while BAME groups appear to have been targeted with, at least partly, racist motivations, there is not only some differentiation between BAME groups but also within these groups there was some variation in experiences and responses. Patterns did become evident in the strategies employed by victims in response to harassment generally following a route of ignoring behaviour initially, avoiding situations were they felt vulnerable to attack and changing routines as a result, challenging perpetrators, reporting behaviour and eventually leaving the area. However, these responses also varied between households and between individual members in each household, particularly depending on age and gender. Most respondents praised individual workers within agencies supporting them in the area but felt that the problem was so widespread, stretching beyond a few front line perpetrators that they felt that these agencies were overwhelmed. However, they did make some suggestions in terms of practices which they felt could be implemented to improve the situation.

Respondents were also asked to reflect on their perception of causes of harassment as in previous studies victims of harassment have not been consulted on this aspect and have been excluded from this part of the debate, despite having lived and witnessed this behaviour on a day-to-day basis. Meanwhile, Chahal and Julienne note (1999) that victims who perceive a racist motivation in harassment are the most severely impacted emotionally and take longer to recover. Furthermore, in the current study it was found that having an insight into the respondents' perceptions of the causes helped to understand not only the impact of the harassment on their lives but also the responses they chose to make to it and felt should be implemented by agencies and the extent to which they believed it could be resolved.

Moving on to the estate

Motivations for moving to the neighbourhood

Most respondents did not know the neighbourhood before moving in. Eight families had moved to the area from outside Leeds and many were only recently arrived in the UK. Two had relocated to Leeds from London due to the difficulty of acquiring council housing in

London. One respondent, Ms. I (p.4), said, "*In London I was trying to get somewhere but …they have this out of London scheme that is why I put in for it and I thought for a change and it might be good for the kids*". Some had visited Leeds before to see friends but did not know about the area. Mr. B (p.1) said; "*I came from Birmingham..when I came here my friend was already here..so automatically I came here in order to be near hi*". He and another respondent had friends living in the area who were happy and as the respondents did not know Leeds they chose to move to the area their friends lived in. It later became apparent to them that the problems were very localised and that these friends were living in streets where harassment was not apparent.

Some respondents had moved to the neighbourhood from hostels or insecure housing. For example, while Ms. D was pregnant she moved from her ex-partner's mother's house to a friend's house, which was in disrepair, and then to a hostel before she was allocated housing when her child was a new born. Two respondents had large families (four children or more) and were struggling with the cost of private accommodation and, therefore, moved into council housing to save money. Ms. K (p.1) said; "*We were living in a private landlord house so it was a bit expensive for us..so we got on the council waiting list and we were given this house*".

In the very close-knit community on this estate many of those from other parts of Leeds have found it particularly difficult to integrate, therefore it can be argued that those from London or outside the UK may find it even harder to know, understand and interact successfully within the culture of the estate. They are less likely to know local 'rules' and how problems or disputes are dealt with in the neighbourhood and therefore lack cultural capital in this aspect. Furthermore, many of Black-African families on the estate were from a different socio-economic group to many local residents. For example, some had university education and/or had backgrounds in 'professional' occupations. This in combination with, what they felt were, different cultural attitudes towards state welfare meant that they lacked this form of unity with local residents. In contrast some (not all) respondents from Black-Caribbean or Black-British backgrounds, who identified themselves as working-class and had lived in UK council housing for a number of years seemed to manage to integrate more into a community which generally seemed to share these values. In contrast some, who experienced greater harassment, differentiated themselves as aspiring to improve their financial position and educational attainment. Moving into housing on the estate was part of a plan of upward mobility and often focussed on achieving stability and saving money as a basis for this progression.

Information given to tenants about the area

There was variation as to whether, or when, tenants were informed of problems on the estate. Some were told when they visited the property, others when they moved in and some were not informed at any point. Mr. F (p.2) stated; *'On visitation they didn't tell us but when we moved in'*. Most were informed that there were problems with racist incidents but that the housing office and police were working to overcome this, while some were told about regeneration work in the area. Ms. I (p.1) was told there had been problems with violence but racism was not mentioned. She commented; *'they said there was a lot of violence and that got sorted cause they got rid of a lot of people.'* Some respondents felt obliged to accept the tenancy despite having doubts, as they felt they would not receive another opportunity.

> "*I wanted to say I don't like it but I went to Citizen's Advice and the woman told me if they give me a house and I reject it I won't get another so I shouldn't reject anything*" (Ms. J p. 9).

> "*When I heard this I just felt look we are living in a white country. Even here next door someone can feel well I don't like you. We felt it was not wise to give away the chance of getting a house…and even there is a council rule that if they offer you accommodation and you give it up then they won't give you another*" (Mr. G p.2).

Other respondents commented on their insecure circumstances at the time and the desperation they felt. Ms. C (p.4) said;

> "At the end of the day I moved to [this area] out of desperation…if it had been pleasanter at home and I had time to think and going on what people said at the time…that it was being regenerated…regenerated that was the biggest joke…the house was lovely if I could have picked it up and moved it out…"

Most respondents thought that even if there were problems on the estate they could deal with it by maintaining a low profile or ignoring incidents. Ms. A (p. 2) said; "I *was thinking because we keep on ourself..we don't mix with other people…I was thinking we will be ok".* Therefore without personal or common knowledge some groups were more reliant on agency advice and knowledge which they did not feel was given at early enough stages to give them an effective and meaningful choice.

The nature of harassment

The nature of the harassment experienced varied from case to case. Four of the five families who were no longer living in the area had been relocated in emergency circumstances due to violent attacks on their property in combination with other incidents. One of these families had to be escorted from the property by the police to ensure their safety as a large group of people had gathered outside their house.

A number of the families had moved from overcrowded housing or accommodation that was in poor condition. All families commented on the fact that houses were spacious and in good condition. Mr. G (p. 2) stated;

> "It was a nice house…very good house…we can't compare it with this one [their current house]. The [local] office in terms of doing maintenance they were very good…they have good houses, good servicing…very fast…if you tell them your problem 2-3 days they do the repairs".

Most families described harassment beginning as soon as they moved in. They felt that this was due to being new to the neighbourhood and that it would decline. In fact it only declined for two of the respondents. One of these, Mr. E (p.2), commented that although his family had a few problems at the start with youths he felt, at the same time, the community had been very welcoming. He said;

> "The first day I came to view the property some of the people were quite nice so I started to make friends. The guy next door..he is not there now he went back to London..but he showed me around and how to meet people and everyone was cool and you know. So is like the welcome was great."

All respondents reported experiencing verbal abuse. Many had eggs thrown at their windows, windows smashed with stones and excrement smeared on door handles and steps. Those with cars reported their cars being scratched, excrement smeared on the doors, air let out of the tyres and an attempt was made to burn out one family's car. Mr. B was violently assaulted twice by the same gang of youths, the second time being hit by pieces of concrete and threatened with a knife as he walked his wife back from the bus stop.

Children appear to have been at the front line of attacks. When attacks were against the person rather than on the property alone it was often the children who were the first targets and parents were drawn into confrontations through this. Mr. E commented that a lot of fights between neighbours started out with, and were centred around, children. Children were often the main targets of attacks especially if they were playing outside. A gang of four boys physically attacked one boy, aged 14, when he went to the shop; while most children had been verbally abused and at times physically attacked when playing outside.

Most families stated that harassment started as soon as they moved in. Some felt that it was minor at first but then began to escalate. One respondent noted that problems his family experienced began to escalate as soon as another black family had been moved out. He felt that the perpetrators involved in the harassment of that family had moved on to his family to force them to also move out. He predicted that they would be moving on to target another black family after his family left and had heard that this had indeed happened.

The rate of reported incidents appears to have decreased recently. All respondents noted that harassment was at its worst in the summer months and school holidays. Leeds Racial Harassment Project (LRHP) received approximately forty referrals from the area between August 2006 and November 2006 but only three between November 2006 and February 2007. LRHP and the Police Hate Crime Co-ordinator for the area feel that this is because incidents tend to be more frequent in the summer and also that key offenders are in prison for other offences.

Case Study 1

Mr. G's family experienced harassment as soon as they moved into their house in the area. This included verbal harassment, windows being smashed and stones thrown through windows aimed at a member of the family sitting at the window. A gang of four boys beat up the eldest son when he was sent to the shop and the children were attacked if they tried to play outside. This escalated until there was an attempt made to burn out their car. In light of another family being petrol bombed a few doors away they were moved out of the house the following morning.

Prior to the attack on the car, the family had been sent, the same day, by the local housing office to Housing Advice who had been contacted by local staff regarding re-housing the family. However, Housing Advice returned them to their house in the area. They were moved the following morning on the advice of the police

The family is now living in another part of the city and are happy here. However, the children are still affected. The oldest son is reluctant to spend time outside and is afraid when he sees groups of white boys. His parents feel that he has become agrophobic. The younger children have said they want to be white because black people are attacked.

Response to harassment

Ignoring harassment

Most respondents had tried to ignore harassment at first and to keep a low profile. This reflects findings from Chahal and Julienne (1999) in *'We can't all be White!'* who also found that the majority of their interviewees initially ignored racist harassment. It was felt by respondents that this would help avoid further confrontation and that local people would get used to them. It was also part of their process of working out the nature of the harassment and monitoring how it developed.

Ms. A (p. 6) said; "*First I was thinking when you are new every place some bad things can happen but when you settle down..people when they know that you are living in that house they will get to know you*".

Some African families felt uncertain what the rules are in the UK regarding harassment and how they might legitimately respond and, therefore, chose to ignore the harassment.

> *"Initially she [his wife] ignored it…a number of times because..we sat down and discussed about this..we didn't know the rules..so we felt that we should ignore it and walk off..that is what we used to do until one time they started throwing stones at her. I came out and confronted these guys". (Mr. B p. 3)*

Changes to routine and avoidance

Many respondents had changed their routines to avoid encountering harassment. Ms. D (p. 6) commented;

> *"I look out of the window before I go to the shop. If I see her friends…the other day I missed two buses because they were all out playing football…I thought if they see me leave they know the house is empty".*

Mr. B also started to accompany his wife to the bus stop in case she encountered youths who had verbally abused her on previous occasions on this route. Only one respondent continued to allow her children to play outside, although this was also restricted at times. All other families said that their children played indoors or in their back garden. Mr. G took his children to a park outside the neighbourhood to play while Mr. B's son would visit friends from school who lived in another part of the estate if he wanted to play outside. Before he informed his parents of the attacks his friends used to hide him in their houses if they saw the gang who had attacked him. Respondents changed their routines in order to decrease their visibility and therefore the chance of experiencing such encounters. It appeared to have become a survival mode where those who spent a lot of time in the home were most affected by this as they had to alter their routines the most. They felt they were trapped and had a lack of freedom.

Challenging behaviour

A couple of respondents tried to negotiate for harassing behaviour to stop. Ms. J spoke to the parents of some children while Mr. G and his wife asked their neighbour to talk to his friends who were throwing stones at their window. These attempts didn't work. However, when Mr. E (p.1) spoke to children he felt it was resolved. He said;

> *"We had one or two problems with the kids but it is how you deal with them…. I deal with them on their level and they respect me for that….I get myself involved with them you know like sometime they playing ball and I might play."*

Female respondents appeared to challenge harassment directly if it was by young children or talked to their parents. Even if they recognised the behaviour as racist they appealed to parents of the perpetrators as parents disciplining bad behaviour, stating that they would discipline their children if they were behaving in this way. Although they might mention racism, the emphasis was that this fell under bad behaviour. They did not challenge older perpetrators unlike two male respondents who challenged older youths directly and were targeted by them as a result. One man stated that he was prepared to remain but was worried for his children's safety and wanted to move for them. The 19-year-old son of the other man left because he felt he might be provoked into reacting violently. Respondents who had lived in the UK for a number of years, and had experience of living in social housing, in particular, appeared to be in a stronger position when negotiating or challenging behaviour. They discussed what they felt were social 'rules' on how conflict should be managed. Two of these respondents were critical of victims of harassment who they felt contacted the police or the housing office too quickly. In contrast these respondents preferred to talk and negotiate with perpetrators themselves while emphasising the importance of being sociable and becoming friends with neighbours when moving into the estate.

Case Study 2

Mr. B: "There were two ladies who were in the same street..two African ladies..they were from Zimbabwe but I did not know them from there, just here. One afternoon..some youths tried to grab her mobile phone and bag so she screamed. I was in the house. I didn't hear her screams but I could see quite a lot of people rushing to this side so I came out of the house just to check then I saw this lady crying and she told me what they tried to do. She was crying. I took her to her house and called the police. I was with her for an hour until the

police came. When they came it was really late so I went to my house. My wife and kids were in the house so I was led to believe when I was busy with this lady they went back to my house and then they smeared dog poo on the door steps so when I got back I went back to my house and that is when I come across this mess. I called the neighbours around to show them..initially I thought it was human and then I realised it was dog. In the morning my wife went to the housing office and told this story to them and then immediately they moved us from us from the area…the day after." (p.6)

Keeping the neighbours onside

Ms. C, a white mother with children of mixed ethnicity, stated that her children experienced verbal harassment from other children although these were children who were also their 'friends'. They seemed to have been accepted to some extent by families engaging in racist harassment by, for example, being invited to BBQs and older siblings apologising for the racist behaviour of younger siblings. Ms. C (p.7) felt that they were accepted to a certain degree because she was white. She stated;

> *"It was good to have them on side…but then back end of summer when I started to ignore them that's when things got messier..my car got scratched..as long as you played at their game you were ok but I was ignoring them by then."*

Mr. F (p.4) felt that it was important for families moving into the area to be sociable and that some were targeted because they did not interact with the local population. He said; *"s all about being sociable. Some people come in and they are not very sociable…look like people here are trash or rubbish"*. However, not all attempts at being sociable were successful. For example, Mr. G and his wife attempted to make friends and engage in conversation with neighbours yet were still targeted.

Those people who were able, or allowed to, have resources to make some kind of connection were less severely targeted or were targeted in a more subtle or contradictory form. All seem to have had to prove themselves to get a niche. While some respondents felt that remaining less visible and keeping quiet helps this seemed to have actually had the opposite effect to that intended.

Reporting to agencies

A caseworker from Leeds Racial Harassment Project (LRHP) stated that on average people report harassment after three months. She had not had any cases of people who have reported harassment and wished to continue living on the estate. Some people reported most harassment they experienced. For example, Mr. H wrote a detailed report to the housing and police detailing all incidents. Other people only reported what they regarded as 'serious' incidents, for example, cars being damaged but mentioned verbal abuse when they went to report these incidents. Ms. A (p.4) said; "*When I go say about big issues like the car I mention it"*. Most people did not report what they perceived as minor incidents such as verbal abuse as they felt it would not be taken seriously. Mr. G (p.3) commented;

> *"You can imagine lads are sitting on your fence and drinking beer and then you are saying I want to call the police…by the time they see the police coming they walk away..you make yourself a fool. It is a difficult situation if you are in it but if you tell someone they might say what is the problem?"*

Some respondents felt there was no point reporting incidents to the police as they felt nothing was done about it.

> *Interviewer (p.4): 'So if anything else happened would you tell them?*
>
> *Ms. D: 'No there is no point unless I get attacked in the street and it's on camera'.*

Others expressed frustration that they were asked by police if the perpetrators were still at the scene because if they were not the police did not respond immediately. This frustrated the respondents as they felt the perpetrators would still be nearby as they are local to their streets. Most still continued to report these incidents to the police but had limited expectations of their response.

Impact of harassment

Chahal and Julienne (1999: 5) note that the British Crime Survey found that, 'the impact on minority ethnic victims and their households of crimes which they perceived to be 'racially motivated' was higher than for other crimes'. Ms. A (p.1) stated; "*Oh I would say it is like a jail. It is like you are living in jail*". Meanwhile, Ms. C (p.7) said; "*you're constantly on edge and I never remember feeling relaxed*".

<u>Children</u>

Children appeared to be on the front line of attacks, often being targeted by other children and young people when they were playing outside. Ms. A and Mr. B both commented that their children asked to go back to their countries of origin and wished they had not come to England. Ms. A (p.5) stated; "*They were miserable because they were all the time inside. They were begging me to take them back to *** [country of origin]*".

Children often had to go outside the neighbourhood to play outside. One respondent's son would go to his friends' houses a few streets away to play outside. These friends also hid him in their houses when they come across older youths who were threatening him. Another man sent his children abroad in the summer to get them away from the harassment they were experiencing. Men felt able to deal with it if it was just them but not once their families were here with them. Two men interviewed said they moved in first and did not experience any problems until their families moved in.

A number of children were very disturbed as a result of the harassment they had experienced. Mr. G (p.8) said; "*Children just think being black is something bad. They say 'Why am I black? I want to be white". The first born is afraid of crowds and does not want to move outside'*. Meanwhile, Mrs. I's children were still having difficulty sleeping and her 8 year old was unable to sleep alone. Ms. J (p.9) also commented; "*my boy last but one he would be always shivering like he is afraid…so when we came here…he was better*".

<u>Mental Health</u>

None of the male respondents reported feeling depressed, although two stated that they felt anxious when they were away from home as they were worried about the safety of their family there. One man also felt responsible for bringing his family into this situation. Some of the women who spent time at home caring for children reported feeling depressed as they spent most of their time in the site where harassment was taking place. Ms. I had been on anti-depressants since she was burgled and, at the time of the interview, was receiving counselling. However, other women did not report being offered such support. Ms. J felt that her neighbour, who was also experiencing harassment, coped better as she had a partner to support her. Those who were in relationships did appear to discuss the situation frequently with their partners, while Ms. D, who was single, confided in a friend who lived nearby. Other single women were more isolated as people they relied on for emotional support did not live in the local area and, as the only adults in the house, they had to manage the experience of harassment on their own.

<u>Difficulties in re-housing</u>

Chahal and Julienne (1999) write, 'The consequence of racist victimisation in and around the home is that the choice of residential living becomes limited for minority ethnic people and

they are forced to refuse better quality accommodation in more desirable areas'. This seemed to be apparent for some of the respondents interviewed in this research.

A number of the families noted the difficulties they encountered in being suitably re-housed. Most of those who had left the area had to be housed in poor quality emergency accommodation or were re-housed in housing that was of a lower quality to their accommodation. While they found this preferable to being in the local area, they nevertheless had to choose between good quality accommodation with harassment or poorer quality accommodation but living in a safer area. Ms. D (p.4) noted; "*I'll only bid for places I know now because if I bid for somewhere that I think 'Oh that looks nice' I'll get there and it will be like this*". Ms. I was in the 'General Needs' category for Choice Based Lettings and was finding this, combined with the limited areas which were suitable for her in terms of safety from racist harassment, meant that she was struggling to be re-housed. She felt she could be waiting years to get out of the area. Many respondents also suffered financial loss as they had spent money decorating their homes before they had to move. They then did not have this money to spend in their new homes.

Causes of harassment

It is important to explore what victims of harassment regard to be the causes of harassment in order to better understand how they respond to the experience, how they assess agency responses and they extent to which they feel the problems can be resolved.

Preparation for arrival of BAME families

Robinson and Reeve (2006: 29) write, 'Problems appear to be particularly acute for households settling in towns and neighbourhoods with little history of accommodating new immigrants, where appropriate local service provision is typically limited.. The poverty and existing social problems in the area were also noted by respondents as creating additional difficulties for integrating new arrivals.

Mr. B felt that if the council was aware of problems of racism in the area they should have addressed this issue before allocating housing to BAME families. Respondents had varying responses to what they perceived as the grouping together of people with backgrounds in common together. Mr. E felt that as many of the families in his part of the street were from London it helped create a supportive community. Some African families spoke positively of having their friends (other African families) in the same or nearby streets who they socialised with. However, Mrs. J felt that attacks on her intensified if her neighbours saw here socialising with her African neighbours and she felt this was because they didn't want them to be united.

How widespread is the problem?

Some agencies have tended to identify particular 'problem families' as the cause while noting that there are also a number of 'good people' in the area. However, most respondents, while noting that particular people targeted them, felt that there was a more widespread hostility in the area towards them. They felt that while only a minority engaged in racist harassment and violence there is collaboration on the part of the wider community who may not actively harass them but keep silent and do not help the police. Mr. K and Ms. G felt that there were racist attitudes among those who did not necessarily express it as overtly. Ms. G (p.4) commented; "*People [in the local area]are very united. They are racist. They come as a group because the youths they come together in an area…even the elders there support the youths*".

At the same time some of these respondents did note that there were some people living in the area who reacted positively to their presence. For example, Mr. B described his neighbours as 'super' and felt that they were supportive towards him. He felt that there were a number of nice elderly people living in the area. Mr. E and Mr. F had made a number of friends in the area and were happy to stay in this area. However, Mr. G felt that even if people were friendly on the surface it was often not a real friendship. His neighbour moved his car

away from his normal parking slot when he was aware that Mr. G's car would be burned. Mr. G (p.7) said;

> "*As people moving into an area we want to make friends. This guy who moved his car…we were washing our cars together and talking in the sun…we are talking then all of a sudden. We are trying to create friendship. Why did he not say to me these people are coming tonight to burn your car?*"

Racism or other factors?

There appeared to be a complicated interplay between racism and other factors. While some respondents felt convinced that racism was the motivation for attacks, others were unsure to what extent behaviour was racist as they were aware of white neighbours (particularly those who had moved in from outside Leeds) who were also being attacked. However, they felt that while this occurs, black families, particularly Black-African families, are the most severely targeted.

All respondents agreed that there was a clear racist element when verbal racist abuse was directed at victims. However, at other times this was less clear and respondents' assessment of motivation varied. Ms. C (p.7) stated; "*There were always things happening you knew it was to do with who you were but it didn't always come with a clear message its because you have black people in the house*". Attacks on property and burglaries in particular were sometimes seen as being racist. Mr. G (p.7) said; "*Two doors down the line…black family there..white guy living here…they burn this house and the car…why are they not targeted him?…why they jump*". Ms. D also reported that burglars who stole her mobile phone amongst other items from her home made calls on it to her friends shouting 'black bastard!' She felt that this racist verbal abuse indicated the racist motivation for the burglary. Some respondents also interpreted burglaries in the context of earlier experiences of verbal abuse in the neighbourhood and, therefore, saw a racist motivation in the burglaries. Other respondents, meanwhile, felt unsure but thought that it was general criminal behaviour or possibly racism mixed with general criminal behaviour. Commenting on the motivations behind the burglary Ms. A did not think it was racist. She said (p.1); "*No, I think just cause there is a lot of crime*".

The LRHP Community Development Worker felt that BAME groups were used by some people on the estate as an easy scapegoat rather than blaming complex social policies which have led to long term deprivation in the area. This view is reflected in the report *Preventing Racist Violence* where Isal (2005) notes, 'Factors of deprivation and youth inactivity can encourage racist responses in those who are frustrated or insecure in their physical and social settings'.

Crime

Some respondents recognised links with wider criminal behaviour. Three respondents remarked that some members of the local community want to keep their criminal activities hidden so do not like outsiders moving in. Ms. A (p.7) said;

> "*I think they just want to live on their own. If they are living in the area for so many years so they don't want other people to move in that area they think people can move and see what they are doing.*"

Police Hate Crime Officers also mentioned this stating; "*Problems start with the BME families if they say I don't want to buy your stuff. The next day their windows are smashed in. It depends on how they fit in with their lifestyle*". Meanwhile, some respondents commented on the level of crime in the area and, as noted above, felt that harassment was a combination of a number of factors including general criminal motivations.

Education

Respondents felt that there is a lack of awareness and education around BAME cultures. One woman stated that a local primary school did not celebrate Eid or other religious festivals and noticed this difference compared with other schools in Leeds. However, all other respondents were happy with the local schools stating that the standard of education there was good and that children did not experience harassment in schools even when perpetrators attended the same schools. When they were asked about the causes of racist harassment all respondents cited ignorance and lack of education, awareness and exposure to other cultures in the community generally and they stated that children learned and replicated their parents' attitudes.

<u>Differing lifestyles</u>

Ms. C commented on the different lifestyles of BAME families moving into the area and local residents. She noted that the BAME families in her street were working while many of the local white residents were long term unemployed. Ms. G (p.6) also stated; "*I think the people living in HM depending on benefits not working people*". The disparity in life-styles seemed to be particularly the case for Black-African families, many of whom were highly educated or from 'professional' backgrounds.

<u>British National Party</u>

Some victims of harassment were aware of British National Party (BNP) activity in the area and had received leaflets in their homes while others were unaware. The LRHP community development worker had also encountered BNP activists when he spoke at tenants meeting. He stated that one of their tactics is to get involved in tenants groups and try to represent themselves as community groups for the white working class just as, for example, some BAME communities have community groups. He noted that this made it quite difficult to negotiate, especially if they were elected on to groups that he was supposed to work with.

Ms D had received BNP flyers through her letter box. She stated (p.5); "*I got one and said to my friend it's going to get bad….as soon as they get this they will get all hyped up and as soon as that happened it all started*".

<u>Perpetrators of harassment</u>

All respondents identified children and young people as the main perpetrators, some as young as five years old. Ms. K said (p.4) ; "*they are from 15, 17, 19 ..this age group where they just spend all day in the street doing that kind of stuff..you feel more intimidated…or scared when you see 4 or 5 of them*". However, particularly in the case of younger children, it was felt that parents were behind this behaviour. Most respondents felt that parents actively encouraged or instructed their children to engage in racist behaviour. Mr. G said (p.2); "*What they do is, they bring the children in front*". Meanwhile, Ms. J (p.7) commented, "*they use the children to manipulate…if they come alone like me or you I wont spare…but they are just children so I can't beat them*". In the Runnymede Trust report *Preventing Racist Violence* Isal (2005) has also noted that, 'While those committing the violence tend to be young and male, with perhaps half between the ages of 16 and 25, females, the young and the old may be involved in creating a supportive context of prejudice and delinquency'.

Assessment of agencies responses

Respondents varied in their assessment of agencies' responses. Most mentioned individuals in agencies who they felt had made a particular effort to support them but were critical of policies and also felt that the housing offices and the police were overwhelmed by the nature of the problem and limited in the ways they could respond. This was because a) hostility in the community was general and not limited to a small number of perpetrators b) laws and enforcement powers were weak.

<u>Police</u>

Two respondents said that the police were quite slow to turn up and felt this was because they were short staffed. Another said they are slow but did turn up and they felt satisfied with their response. Some felt that the police did not act on the information they gave to them. Ms. C said (p.6); "*They can't manage it and they say that they will …they can't…and I had information and they didn't use it*"*.* Mr. and Mrs. K stated (p.1);

> "*The police came and the police they are advising us not to do anything about it because you will be the target of more …but actually we know the little boys…I told the police I knew the person who burned his car. He say no just ignore about it*".

Ms. D also gave the police information as to the whereabouts of the perpetrators and felt that they did not use this. She felt deterred from reporting future incidents stating (p.3):

> "*They don't do anything…at that point you get sick of telling them…because they*
>
> *write it down and they go away to their office and laugh about it…because I got*
>
> *burgled and they didn't do anything about it! Proof there!*"

The former and current Police Hate Crime Co-ordinators for the area noted the difficulty of convicting for racist violence. They stated that it is similar to rape crimes in that it is hard to evidence and they gave an example of one case which the scrutiny panel was appealing. Here the defendant was not convicted despite five people being present who witnessed the incident. The Hate Crime Co-ordinator felt that the actions of the Crown Prosecution Service are a problem here as they are under pressure to get convictions and therefore will accept defendants admitting to assault but denying a racist element. Victims also felt that it was difficult to convict people as laws in the UK are too weak. Mr. B was aware of the perpetrators of the attack on him being convicted but noted that this conviction was for other crimes and not the attack on himself.

Another woman did not seem to be aware of what was being done about the perpetrators. She thought that the housing officer was talking to and warning them. She agreed to be a witness in court but had not heard anything since then and did not know what had happened to the woman who led an attack on her. Those respondents who were still living in the area seemed to be more informed by housing officers on the actions taken, while those who had left the area were less aware and some did not know what action had been taken against perpetrators or what the outcomes of court cases were. Race Action Net guidelines recommend that victims should be kept informed at all stages of proceedings (see Law 2007 for further information).

CCTV

Some felt that the estate had become more peaceful during the time they had lived there due to security measure that had been implemented. Mr. E noted;

> "*PCSOs also walking around keeping an eye…then we have a lot of CCTV cameras now…things have been quiet since more security activities have been about. And flyers about house security too.* "

However, others were unsure how effective CCTV was. Ms. K said (p.8);

> "*We rang them these kids are throwing golf balls..there is a camera I even told*
>
> *them there is the evidence you want..you can't ask me what they are wearing.*
>
> *There is a camera there you can see…they say oh no we can't use that.*"

Ms. A was surprised when she moved in to her house to see a camera on her roof and she felt that this made her a target. The camera was later removed and one was installed inside her house, which she preferred. This captured evidence of the final attack she experienced which led to her fleeing the property.

Housing Office

Many respondents spoke very positively about particular individuals in the local housing office but felt that as an agency it was overwhelmed by the problems it faced. Some were informed about the nature of the estate by the housing officer who showed them the property but some were not and felt angry about this. As noted earlier, respondents felt that being notified after they had been offered the property restricted their choice as they felt they would not get another opportunity for housing if they refused it. There did not seem to be standard practice of what tenants should be informed of.

Housing Advice sent Mr. G's family back to their house despite being sent to them by the local housing office to be relocated. That evening an attempt was made to burn out their car and they were moved the following morning on the recommendation of the police. Mr. G (p.1) commented;

> "They sent us to the housing and they had made contacts…I don't remember the name of the person…we had to go through an interview and later on they say well it is [the local office] who have to make us safe. It was not them who were supposed to make us safe. Then I went to say to them being the council is supposed to make us safe…if another department is saying these people are not safe so they should at least listen to them and they said they can't help you."

Victim Support and Leeds Racial Harassment Project (LRHP)

There were mixed reactions to Victim Support. Ms. A spoke positively about the organisation but noted that they did not contact her until she had already left the area. Ms. I had been informed by her housing officer that Victim Support would contact her after her house was burgled in October 2006 but had still not been contacted in April 2007. She had not heard of LRHP.

LRHP helped Mr. B by giving his wife and himself advice on which areas to bid for when relocating which he was very happy about. An LRHP case worker commented on the shortage of staff and noted that the waiting time at the time of writing was down to three weeks after it had recently been at six weeks.

There appears to have been a lack of counselling services offered to victims of harassment during and after the event and only one respondent was accessing such services after being referred by her GP. Respondents continued to experience mental health needs after the events that occurred and the mental health needs of children, in particular, seem to have been overlooked after they were relocated. Victim Support (2006) has recommended that victims are provided with in-depth emotional support through counselling or self-help groups and specifies that children, in particular need to be provided with support. This does not seem to have taken place for most of the victims in this Leeds case study.

Respondents' Recommendations

Respondents were asked for suggestions about how improvements could be made in services provided to them.

Housing allocation

> "The way that area is structured and the way it is set out…you can spit on each other…they made these estates and everyone moved on and was related and

happy but society isn't like that any more and you have all these different people from different cultures" (Ms. C p.8).

Some respondents felt that BAME families should not be housed in this area as they could not be safe there. Ms. J stated (p.9);

"The housing have to stop this because if they kill someone is the housing who are to blame."

However, most families while not wishing to live in the area themselves stated that they just wanted to live somewhere safe. Ms. I said she did not mind if she was the only black person in the neighbourhood as long as she wasn't harassed. Mr. B and Mr. H said they were for integration not segregation, while Mr. G stated (p.6); "*If we are now saying people must be living according to say white area, black area I don't think it is alright…with the fact that this country is a multiracial thing…then something has to be done".*

Most victims of harassment felt that perpetrators should be moved out of the area. Some families who continued to live in the area noticed that there had been some improvement as some perpetrators had been moved. However, there was a perception amongst most that this would be too big a task as hostility was perceived to be so widespread. There was a feeling that the onus should not just be on BAME families to move in to create diversity in an area but that local white population should also be doing some of the moving. For example, it was felt that when they apply for housing children of large established families from the estate should be offered housing outside the area to open up the community to newcomers. It was also felt that people, particularly children, would benefit from exposure to other areas of the city and other communities and ways of living. Integration and adaptation should be two way process.

Most respondents felt that they should have been given advice on the area when they *initially* bid for property there and not simply once it had been offered to them or when they were bidding to relocate.

Education

All respondents explained racist behaviour as emanating from ignorance and lack of education about, and exposure to, other cultures. Many commented on the fact that many families have lived on the estate for generations.

Respondents with children attending local schools felt happy with their performance and had not experienced harassment here even though some children who were attacking them also attended these schools. They felt that this was because potential perpetrators were put off by the disciplinary procedures in schools. Respondents felt that anti-racism education needs to be extended to target the community as a whole rather than simply focussing on young people, who are perceived to be the main perpetrators yet are often simply the front line of racist attitudes. It was felt that young people learned racist attitudes from their parents and were encouraged by them to engage in hostile behaviour. Some respondents suggested that people needed to travel outside of the estate to increase their awareness and understanding of other cultures.

Law Enforcement

Some respondents were aware that perpetrators of racist crimes against them had been arrested. However, two noted that while their attackers were currently in detention, it was for other criminal activity and not these racist crimes. Other respondents were disillusioned with the criminal justice system. They felt that despite their own pro-active attempts to gather evidence on attacks, this evidence was ignored and their perpetrators had been allowed to get away with committing these crimes.

There was a mixed reaction to CCTV cameras. Some respondents felt they had helped to reduce crime in the area and in Ms. A and Mr. B's cases CCTV images were used as evidence of the attacks they experienced. However, other respondents felt that evidence from

the CCTV cameras was not being used by the police and that CCTV had not deterred people from harassing them. If CCTV cameras continue to be placed in the neighbourhood respondents would like to see that evidence collected here is fully utilised or clearer explanations given as to why it cannot be.

For a number of families there appears to have been a pattern of escalation of harassment until they have to be moved for their safety. There appeared to be a conflict between some respondents wanting firmer enforcement early on and a fear by others that such enforcement may provoke further harassment.

Victim support services

As noted earlier, respondents praised individuals within the various agencies working on the estates for their support. However, only two had accessed Victim Support and the Leeds Racial Harassment Project. One respondent, experiencing depression, had been waiting six months to access help from Victim Support. All respondents with children were concerned about their mental health while none had been offered any support for this.

Community interaction

Some respondents commented on the number of teenagers in the street with nothing to do and the lack of use of outside spaces for positive activities for children and young people. Mr. E commented (p.4); *"I come from London and kids are kids. Kids do things to occupy their time if they are bored"*. He felt that there needs to be regularly occurring community events, particularly for children, such as football matches and more use could be made of outside spaces in the area. These could be youth led but with a focus on the wider community. As Mr. E stated (p.6); "*it would help bring families together because everything is through the kids. They are what unites families"*.

Conclusion

It was found that most respondents had experienced repeat or continuous racist harassment while living on the estates, often with similar patterns of escalation until they were forced to move away. Few respondents felt able to continue living in the area after these incidents and many had to compromise on the quality of their accommodation when relocating to safer housing. Harassment experienced by the respondents interviewed does not appear to be purely racist in motivation but that there was a strong racist element to this. Causes identified by the respondents included existing deprivation and social problems in the area, resentment of the relative economic success of some BAME families and lack of exposure to, and education about, other cultures and communities.

Experiences of harassment had severely restricted the ability of victims in going about their daily lives. Many felt trapped inside their homes and had to change their routines. It caused extreme stress and upheaval for those who have had to leave their tenancies, many of whom had already come to the area from insecure housing. Only three of those experiencing low-level harassment still intend to stay in the neighbourhood. There has been an impact on the mental health of some respondents and children were among the most severely affected, as they were unable to play outside and were often on the front line of attacks. A 'hierarchy of difference' was also noted in that Black-African families appear to have been most severely targeted.

There were some examples of good practice. Some individuals in the local housing offices have been informing prospective tenants about the area. However, as this takes place when tenants have already been offered the property many felt this was too late and that they might not get another house if they rejected this offer. This practice of informing people about the area needs to be standardised and to occur at the beginning of the housing allocation process. Respondents mentioned they would have liked help when they were bidding in the first place, the same kind of support some received when they were bidding for new housing after leaving the area.

While efforts have been made to overcome problems of harassment, the response of key agencies in the area appears to have been quite reactive often lacking anticipation and pre-emption of problems. There appears to have been a lack of preparation when moving BAME families in. Furthermore, many were only moved out when police have felt that they are in an emergency situation. There appears to be a period of time where harassment is allowed to escalate. Most respondents felt that this was very risky as there was a fear that people could be seriously injured in future, especially in light of petrol bombing incidents in the area.

While general racist hostility appears to be more widespread, violent harassment appears to be relatively contained to a few streets. Therefore it is recommended that attempts at introducing activities that enable positive community interaction are particularly targeted both at a local street level and to the whole community, not just young people, and are developed through 'grassroots' community development rather than provision which is a 'top down' approach.

Chapter 4   Racism and Exclusion: an overview of key themes and explanations

Introduction

In this chapter we introduce and outline our interpretation and analysis of key themes and explanations about racisms and exclusionary practices. These were provided to us by residents on the estate with when we talked about living there. These themes and narratives became central to our growing understanding of what might be happening when racist incidents occur on the estate. Our findings showed that some of the key challenges to integrating BAME families, (predominantly myths, mis-perceptions and mis-information about access to key services) were precisely the matters that were being brought up by residents as their own primary concerns. These explanations are grounded in the local 'rules' of estate living and are situated in lay explanations of how life is regulated and understood there. We encountered many complex sets of circumstances and messages which influenced individual's views.   As such, many of our explanations emphasise the importance of understanding local culture and ethical approaches. We have done this in order to be able to suggest approaches that tackle racism in a constructive and sensitive manner that works with the positive dimensions of such practices and diminishes the negative aspects.

We have divided these into four primary themes. The first theme discusses *resources* on the estate, particularly housing. We examine the intensity of resentment and debate on the estates around who should be entitled to access to such resources, and highlight prominent myths about unfair resource allocation. The second theme considers local practices and cultures of *criminality, violence and reputation* and how these interlock in complex ways with attacks on new families. Our third theme looks at understandings of *belonging, family and community*. We explore how the tight drawing of community boundaries can help us to understand aggressive responses to outsiders. Finally we conclude with theme four that reflects on *poverty, abandonment and disempowerment*. We attempt to draw together explanations that focus on how mistrust of authority and feelings of disengagement can lead to community self regulation practices that are exclusionary and defensive.

Within each theme we will provide an account of how the ideas were expressed within the research and highlight how these interlink with other themes. From the data and sociological understandings we hope to provide two key conclusions. We discuss the question of how racism is expressed on the estate and providing examples we documented. The second discussion is how this knowledge can feed into a greater understanding of resident's hostility and can aid us in making suggestions on how racism on the estate may be confronted more effectively.

Theme One: Key Issues around Local Resources

The first argument of this chapter is to suggest that we cannot understand racist attacks without also taking account of struggles and resentments around class, lifestyle and poverty. We need to grapple with people's claiming of *ownership* and *entitlement* within certain geographical and social boundaries. We can then explore how this is played out in resident's ethical understandings of what is *fair*. Later we will explore how there are other aspects to these understandings associated with ideas around who *belongs*. We also finally touch upon other more deep-rooted and less tangible resentments about access to resources. Here we look at what it means in terms of personal and community empowerment to be reliant on government and authority for meeting ones resource needs.

In these sections we will speak about the main contested resource in the area, which is housing stock and support with housing maintenance. Housing was explicitly mentioned over and above any other public resource and often dominated discussions of resource access. When questioned about their attitudes towards immigration and resource competition most residents did not even mention employment, benefits and public facilities, if they did such discussions were subsidiary to housing needs.

"On this estate I would say that no white will go up and speak to a black adult. If you ask me it's probably to do with the housing. If you have people on a housing list, then they want houses that is the way it works. It's the same up and down the country if you have 30 000 people and they're all chasing so many houses what do you expect? People are coming in and where are we putting them? They must be getting houses somewhere." (White Male Resident)

It was impossible to avoid the vehement emotions and opinions expressed around access to housing in this research. It was at the core of many accounts of why there was a high level of resentment towards newcomers on the estate. Problems seem to be connected to a common perception that families who have lived on the estate for generations, or who consider themselves to be well established, should have automatic priority for any houses that are available.

"*There are people that live round here have lived here for years, everyone knows everybody. Recently they started moving new people on which isn't a problem apart from the fact that you get people complaining that you can't get any jobs done and that your repairs don't get done. They have priority on houses and stuff like that.*" (White Female Resident)

It was clear that some residents had a sense of local *ownership and entitlement* that was thoroughly at odds with the strategic and impartial assessments of the ALMO as to who should get a house that was available. We will later consider how family history, a preference for proximity to family and length of residence underpin this local sense of entitlement. For now, it is sufficient to highlight the importance of this issue for many residents.

"My daughter has been on the housing list for nearly 4 years – and she had to go private. She's now in a one bed roomed flat and she was 7 months pregnant when she took it on, just so she had her own place. There was nothing available apparently but we know that's not true. Once it was just the bigger houses that were hard to get on here but now you can't get a 2 bed roomed. People are being forced to move away from their family" (White Female Resident)

The policy and political context to this situation has shifted and was described eloquently by our key informants from the ALMO. Firstly social housing stock has been dwindling for decades, accelerated since 'right to buy' was established. This makes social housing a scarce resource. Anxiety and resentment around this is intensified by the process by which housing is allocated. Key informants told us about how choice based letting had opened up the estate to housing bids from all over the city, and beyond.

"I was going to say there seems to be a lot more coming on the estate now, I mean I have nowt against them but obviously there just seem to be more and more. And like I mean I am in a two bedroomed house and it is just impossible to get a three bedroomed house but people are coming on the estate and just getting a three bedroomed houses and things like that" (White Female Resident)

Allocation is now based on a complex calculation system of assessing priority of need that was often opaque to residents we spoke to. Many residents were of the opinion that their needs were very great as their families were poor. Yet most were classified as only 'general need' and they could be waiting for housing near their families for a very long time with no prospect of success, particularly for larger houses. Key informants also told us that they now had less and less usable housing stock. This is particularly as things are starting to improve on the estate and people are more likely to consider it as a place to live. They can no longer hand keys to the first comer. There is a very high demand for each house available. It was this clash between public sector and local definitions of entitlement and rights to property that seems to be linked to massive resentment.

Interviewer: *Have you noticed a change in the sort of people who are moving into the area?*

Resident: *There are loads of Black and Asylum Seeker families moving in… everywhere you look.*

Interviewer*: Is this a recent thing?*

Resident: *Yeah it's getting more and more all the time, constantly*

Interviewer: *Do you think that is causing problems on the estate?*

Resident: *It will do yeah because they get everything don't they?… we get nothing and they get everything* (White Female Resident)

A key informant from LRHP project told us those asylum seekers who had lost their entitlement to NAS housing once they gained refugee status, gain high priority as homeless. This meant that some can potentially gain access to local properties *before* local residents, who may have been seeking a move within the area for a long time.

"I was reading in a magazine and it said that if you want to move, unless you're a top priority you have got no chance. The fact remains that more coloured people are getting ahead of people who have been here for years, so that obviously causes resentment which I think is fair enough."(White Female Resident)

This concern was echoed throughout the estate.

"There are a lot of families who cant get houses because they're moving these Asylum Seekers in and they're saying 'we have lived here all our lives, our children should have priority' Do you know what I'm saying?" (White Female Resident)

Repairs

An associated sub-theme within this issue was that of repairs and improvements to existing housing stock. Several residents gave us impassioned accounts of newcomers getting new kitchens, bathrooms and decorations while their own houses rotted away into disrepair. This seemed to be linked to confusion around the logic of the cycle of council repairs. Properties that changed hands were witnessed as receiving new fittings even when un-necessary, while nearby long term residents with rats, leaking roofs and broken fences were told that they would have to wait because no money was available.

"I can't have my repairs done because they don't have enough money to do it. Yet I sit here and I watch em. That coloured family moved out in September and by November they had ripped everything out and put everything in brand new. Now they only lived there six week, nobody could do that much damage to a house in six week. Before they moved in it was new everything, they spent months doing that house up. They put them in there, move them out, rip it all out and do it again for another family. I think they are a Polish family there now aren't they? But that is what they do, and yet we can't have our repairs done for the fact that they have no money". (White Female Resident)

Inconsistency of information and lack of understanding of procedures was prevalent. This perception and experience further fuelled myths that newcomers were receiving preferential treatment and the needs of long term residents were being disregarded in favour of them.

"Everyone round here is saying...' why are they getting their houses decorated before they move in and we're not getting it?' or 'they're getting this and they're getting that and we're not getting it'. I were annoyed when someone come and told me that they'd moved this family in and they'd decorated all the house and I thought well its only 2 or 3 year ago that I this house and it were the pits. I'm still working on it but I have had to fork it out of me own pocket but they're getting it... So you can understand why we get angry." (White Female Resident)

This account was not uncommon and was offered as the fundamental rationale for racial hostility.

We've had to wait years for re-modernising and for new kitchens and that. And all of a sudden they're all getting what we're not and we're just wondering why they get it and we don't. The ones that keep the community together don't seem to get anything in return. (White Female Resident)

The LAWN Scheme

Several accounts from both key informants and residents focused around their perceptions and experiences of the LAWN scheme in 2004. Here again the strategic aims of the authority contrast with the perceptions of local people about what is needed. In this scheme several void properties on the street were refurbished and people from London were invited to take a house in Leeds rather than wait indefinitely in the capital for a property to become available. In the view of the council this was making good use of void property that people 'did not want' anyway. Key informants and residents suggested that the presentation of this scheme and the handling of the outcomes were not well executed. There was a feeling that the housing should have been refurbished and given to local residents instead

"I don't know anybody who has moved in recently. I know we have got a lot of people. Most of the neighbours round here are from London or wherever so they obviously seem to get an house quicker up here than people do that live in Leeds. They come up on them scheme things don't they? Every one of them over there was from out of Leeds." (White Female Resident)

In this scheme several families came up from London and moved into newly refurbished houses on one of the most deprived and troubled streets of the estate. Some of these families were BAME. Several only lasted a short while before they were hounded out by local residents. Some remained, but are still a focus of local resentments about why people from London got 'their' houses.

Interviewer: *Obviously people have moved in after you, have you noticed people coming in from London having any bother?"*

Resident: *Yeah, actually pretty much everyone what've moved in, there's 2 families down the road from us they've both moved out through trouble, they're not necessarily being targeted its not like that it can be that but I don't think that's what's causing it – if there's a couple of kids outside an they're being a bit loud instead of saying "I've got some kids asleep upstairs" they go "get away from my door or I'll call the police" and that just winds them up even more. I just think its how you approach people really. (White Female Resident)*

This was one of the many suggestions made in local people's defence that new comers from London did not behave according to local 'rules', but either way a pattern of harassment and resentment in this area of the estate was instigated, that from the evidence of our research continues to resonate. It was suggested that it was at this point that an element of racial diversity was introduced to this part of the estate that had not previously been present, and the outcomes were explosive and enduring.

Discourses around Contested Resources

In this section we detail local people's moral narratives in response to these issues. Several of these involve extensive gossip, rumour mongering and hearsay. We found there to be a constant drip feed of negative stories surrounding BAME families. This situation is, of course, exacerbated by the fact that the residents believe many of them to confirm their prejudices.

"How it works round here is they'll get someone to go in and find out the Goss and go 'yeah they're alright or they're sound' but if they're not…. It's a gossip shop is [this estate]"

There was overwhelming evidence to suggest that even when individuals were skeptical of accounts, they felt empathy for those who did believe them. Gaps in people's knowledge were often found to be filled by rumours and myths about what unfair strategies were behind

resource allocation. These could range from accounts of needless frivolity of refurbishment "*Her bath had scratches in it. Brand new bathroom that she has got when she moved in but it had scratches in it so they came out and instead of like painting over them like they would do with anyone else, they rip it out and put her a new one in.*" *(White Female Resident)* to more preposterous accounts of segregated provision "*Someone said that they are changing the local school into a Romanian one or whoever it is moving in now. They're doing a school just for these kids and our kids get nowt. So the rumours are going anyway.*" *(White Female Resident)*

There were two main themes in our data. The first was a negative and conspiratorial series of narratives about the disenfranchisement of ordinary people by government in favour of asylum seekers and refugees*.*

" But it's annoying how the council goes about it I mean if they were a bit more sly an waited until they had moved in and then did the repairs like they do with us but they don't they make sure that the kitchens are all fitted and everything is clean before they move in. and you just think – why's this happening" *(White Female Resident)*

The second theme builds upon this and makes an assertive and positive claim for 'genuine' equal opportunities. The most pervasive theme was 'Foreign' people gaining access to local housing, thus creating a focal point for local resentments. A process of 'gossip and hearsay' combined with some opacity around how the process actually works fuels prominent myths about how asylum seekers and refugees are taking the resources that local people should have and more besides. We often heard accounts from people about how asylum seekers were being 'sneaked' in covertly to 'take' a house without proper process, or being given extra benefits, mobile phones and cars. This is in contrast to the reality that many were refugees who worked for a living. There was no awareness that asylum seekers live on reduced benefit and vouchers rather than enhanced provision*.*

"How come they've got a nice car like that, where do they get the money for that, how come there getting everything, look the builders in there house again" and that's what you hear all the time on this estate, if you're black you get everything, and that's what it boils down to *(White Female Resident)*

This was often placed within a broader narrative of asylum seekers taking advantage of the system, jumping housing queues and criminal behaviour. There is certainly a public disquiet and concern about immigration and asylum, yet very rarely was local anecdotal evidence placed within a national or 'media led' context. Residents only used this to confirm or amplify 'what they had seen'.

"You hear far too much of it on the news now a days. You even hear rumours that they're driving without licenses and insurance and that. The government let them do what they want." *(White Male Resident)*

Acts of violence and criminality intended to drive BAME newcomers from the estate were sometimes explained as a legitimate attempt to free up a house for a local person to have instead. Such acts were seen to demonstrate resistance to the passing of 'their' resources to people who did not come from the area. From such perspectives there was very little understanding of the situation of refugees and several accounts constructed them as grasping and greedy, strategically seeking out British wealth. Yet it is difficult to distinguish how many of these myths and narratives about local housing need are deemed as socially acceptable justifications and attempts to explain away racist views using a legitimate and common local grievance.

"The reason these people aren't being made to feel welcome is… there is a degree of racism there, there really is but again its more to do with they are getting all this stuff that locals have been promised for 10 years or more and they are not getting it. " *(White Female Resident)*

There were many residents who understood the climate of resentment and in many cases shared the same antipathy but did not condone the racist aspect, nor did they advocate actual attacks on people.

"Well,part of the problem that families are having is that they are seeing new people getting all the bits and pieces that they have been waiting for like kitchens and fences for their gardens. There are people who have been waiting 10 years for it. It's causing bad blood. I'm not suggesting it's a good idea to go burning people out and breaking their windows, I think that is disgusting behaviour but you can sort of half understand why they are not happy about it." (White Male Resident)

There is a complex relationship between a heartfelt local frustration around access to housing and a believed squandering of resources and the manifestation of this into frustration against specific families.

"Because they move people in they don't, they decide they don't like the estate. They spend god knows how much, every time anybody has moved out of these houses around here. If they are coming from another town they get everything brand new. Which is a total waste of money? And we sit and we watch it don t we? Every time! Someone needs to do something" (Female Resident)

The two need not come together, but where they do passions run high. Below we will discuss some of the other factors that interact with this local resentment.

'Genuine Equal Opportunities'

A common adjunct to discussions around local people's access to resources was avocation of what they described as *genuine* equal opportunity. This draws upon familiar ideas about equal opportunity but forcibly introduces the consideration of disaffected and poor white British people it delves further into notions of reciprocity. The argument within this is that BME people are receiving treatment that is preferential to that of white people largely because of middle class anxiety around racism and political correctness. We had many interesting discussions as to what constituted 'fair' treatment and some of these had an under current about new families either not contributing to estate life or taking from it. These attitudes can be explained by a level of relative deprivation. Especially as the prevalent negative opinions were displayed in areas of the estate where there had been a recent placement of BAME families.

"What I think they need to do is, no offence, is to start looking after their own as well as looking after any foreigner that moves on the estate really." (White Female Resident)

What was interesting was that several people tried to *diffuse* any apparent racist element to this advocacy and explain it as a justifiable response to the long term abandonment of white working class people in deprived localities.

"But it's also wrong that they should treat other people different. So I think a lot of it is down to the council – if you didn't give them special treatment then it wouldn't be a problem" (White Female Resident)

If the council saw everybody as individuals, and treated everyone the same then there would be no problems but they'll carry on and they'll moan and say you're racist and that it's wrong. But it's also wrong that they should treat other people different. (White Female Resident)

Many people claimed that they did not care about where people came from and what the colour of their skin was, what they cared about was whether it was right for local people to be constantly 'overlooked'.

Interviewer: *So you wouldn't say that your views are influenced upon their nationality or their colour it's just because …*

Resident: *Yeah, they're not. Its just because of what the council is doing, it's the council that causing the trouble on the estate.*

Interviewer: And do your friends and family round here agree?

Resident*: Yeah they all agree, you can ask anyone – the council will do anything for the coloured majority what's in here but they won't do nowt for us.*

Interviewer: *And you think that's what is causing so many problems?*

Resident*: Yeah I do, yeah. And everybody has said so.*
(White Female Resident)

A recurring theme in all our interviews was that there was a lack of procedural fairness and that the quality and capacity of local service and infrastructure were insufficient to meet even their existing demands. Many discussions about race were fuelled by these complex views on entitlement and equality.

"I work with a girl and she cannot get on the housing list and she was told that one of the reasons was that they had to put priority cases first. She asked what the priority case was and they said 'Asylum Seekers', I think that it's totally wrong. It should be equal across the board. There should be no priority cases; it should be based on equal." (White Male Resident)

"*I haven't got a problem with it as long as how they got on is fair and from my point of view and form what I hear form other people it isn't fair and it needs to be fairer."* (White Female Resident)

"But we don't care where they get all their stuff from as long as whatever the council does for them they do for us". (White Female Resident)

Inherent opposition was stemming from residents feeling that they were being placed at a disadvantage in order for others to be advantaged. Existing pressures of resentment and abandonment will be explored in later sections

Racism and Classed Resentments

When discussing racisms it was also notable that local people expressed several of their resentments in relation to the *lifestyle and property* of newcomers to the estate. As we have seen above there is a focus on the quality of their possessions and their right to have them. Some key informants and people who identified themselves as 'better' than other tenants suggested that a lot of racist behaviour could be linked to further jealousy of lifestyle and possessions, a critique of working behaviour and differing values.

"It's Jealousy. 9 times out of 10 they're scared. They're scared of change or a threat to how they live." (White Female Resident)

It was suggested that some attacks on property and cars were motivated by a spoiling gesture of 'not wanting anyone else to have what they haven't'. If new families, (BAME families included) had nice possessions they were likely to find that they would get stolen or damaged by local people.

"I felt so sorry for them, they got up one morning and their car had acid spilt all over it, and all the car was burnt and all the plastic was all burnt, and they hadn't done anything or said anything to anybody. They had been on the estate for 3 weeks. It was just jealousy, pure jealously". (White Female Resident)

It was also suggested that families who worked were resented and efforts would be made to 'bring them down to their level'.

"Well none of them want to work round here; they just get everything from the council. They blame it all on the coloureds and say that they're either lazy or taking their jobs, but it's some of the whites that are the worst and they cant stand to see black families doing well for themselves" (White Female Resident)

The overall theme was that resentments linked to poverty and long term unemployment could lead to a lashing out at those who had nice things and a job, particularly if they came from a different ethnic background and were seen to be un entitled.

Interviewer: *Do you think that there have been a lot of burglaries?*

Resident: *Oh it's been atrocious, every day. I've seen what they fetched in! I've seen everything.*

Interviewer: *Are they targeting new families?*

Resident: *Yeah, oh yeah. any coloured families as well.. There was a couple who moved into that corner house (points to house behind from window) they got burgled a few weeks ago.*

Interviewer: *Why do you think that they are being targeted?*

Resident: *Its lets go burgle them and then we've got some drug money.*

Interviewer 1: *So it's not necessarily the fact that they're black or Asian?*

Resident: *They think they're easy targets and they think that they have more than we have.*
(White Female Resident)

Theme Two: Criminality, Violence and Reputation

Another consistent thread within the research was that there was persistent criminality on the estate, and that several powerful local families were involved in criminal activity. This was another lay explanation that was used to highlight why new families might have a 'hard time'. In this section we look at how criminality and racial harassment may be linked in their methods and motivations.

General targeting of newcomers by those members of the estate who feel empowered to do so is an important context to the research on racism. We will look in detail at the complex understandings of who is seen to be part of the estate and who isn't and what that means. For now, understanding how and why 'new' families are targeted can give us clues to explain and situate the incidence of specifically racial harassment and violence on the estate. One argument is that racial violence and harassment are an intensification and acceleration of common practices that are already in existence.

These include the routine use of violence and intimidation to resolve conflicts, protection of turf and reputation, demands for lifestyle and value similarity and seeing outsiders as 'soft' targets for property crime.

"They suss out who to trouble and who they want to trouble and more often than not its new ones. That's who they target" (White Female Resident)

The following extract is taken from an interview with two white residents on one particular street. It offers an insight into the routine victimisation of new residents and illustrates that a willingness to accept the culture of violence on the estate is key in determining one's assimilation.

Male: *I don't think it's as bad as people are making out but I'm not on the receiving end of it so I can't say.*

Female: *Well if it were your windows that had got bricked in you wouldn't have moved out*

Male: *No I wouldn't, I would have picked up the brick and chucked it at his head.*

Female: *That may be part of the problem, people think... 'I have tested the water and it's no good'. But if they manage get one person out …they then do it again to the next one, they think 'look how powerful I am'.*

Interviewer: *We have had people tell us that there is almost an initiation, a way of trying to 'ride it out'.*

Female: *People shouldn't have to.*

Male: *That's what I'm saying it's not an ideal place or scenario for life but I wouldn't have moved out if they put through petrol bombs. I would have found their house and done it to them.*

Outsiders as 'Soft' Targets

For research participants whether or not your property was targeted for burglary or vandalism was seen to be a *marker* of insider or outsider status on the estate. One woman who was not an 'insider' commented that nobody else on her street needed extensive security measures because they all knew each other and would not victimise their known neighbours. If you are known and accepted in the community you are 'safe'. If you are new, and/or you refuse to engage in estate cultural practices you can expect victimisation.
"Anyone what come from outside they are not welcome at all. Anyone from inside you have to obey by the rules of the estate and all this lot or else you're going." (White Female Resident)

In a sense the first testing incident was often used as a test of mettle and commitment to the community.
"It must be worse for people that have grown up on the estate to see such an influx of new faces. Yeah that did not go down to well with born and bred [locals] I mean it doesn't bother me either way – but they're very territorial." (White Female Resident)

There was, however, an element of confusion amongst some residents as to whether' fitting in' was merely respecting the well established conventions of estate life or if it was demonstrating a willingness to absorb oneself in the routine practices of self policing and aggression.

"Just a little but after a week or so of us being here I started talking to all the lads out on the street and got to know em and that and after that we never got no bother, I think you know if you just go out and show you have time for 'em then they're ok but when we moved in we got some right bother didn't we?" (White Male Resident)

"We keep ourselves to ourselves, I mean if anyone were to move in you'd get to know them, as long as there all right with you, you're fine with them. If they did start any trouble… they'd get a warning and that would be it. People on the estate, they look after their own. They don't ring the police. They sort their own business out." (White Female Resident)

"Thing is on these estates it's not what you know but who you know. We don't cause trouble or problems and we don't complain and I think that is important. We have never once put a complaint in" (White Male Resident)

Some families could become accepted through vigorous self defence and aggression, or 'sticking it out'. Further victimisation could be expected if you acted in a weak manner, or sought the help of authorities. There is a distinct form of community justice as evident in this extract form an interview with a white couple.

Male: *"well when we first moved in people were wary of us, people tried to intimidate me for a weekend, "*

Female: *It was because one young girl had taken offence to my daughters accent and within 24 hours I had half a dozen people knocking on my door to tell me who it was, and they sort of hung around to see "are they gonna grass" but we dealt with it ourselves. I went to see her mum and things and they thought "oh right she's not going to phone the police – they're alright." But if you're a stranger say from another country and you're isolated in that situation you do what you do to protect your family so everybody reacts differently.*

Interviewer: *So the important thing to do is to deal with it yourselves?*

Male: *Yeah, just deal with it yourselves in the right way do you know what I mean?. They do take offence to bringing in the police.*

This can explain difficulties in reporting incidents, because retaliation and persistence of attacks was guaranteed. Practices of burglary, graffiti and window smashing were also used to make people feel unwelcome and to signal that a family is expected to leave.

"It's a case if your face don't fit then your gonna get targeted. New people especially. If they don't like the look of you you're gonna be ousted out. Cause trouble you're gonna get ousted out. That's just how it is." (White Female Resident)

These were part of tactics of 'persuasion' alongside routine targeting of new people we were informed of normative practices of regulating existing tenants. Further evidence of this was given across the two estates.

Resident: *That family have come down here because they were booted off the estate by the residents, not by the authorities The residents sent them on their way and hounded them out because they were trouble.*

Interviewer : *What sort of trouble were they causing on [the estate] for that to happen?*

Resident: *Getting in peoples business, nosying about people, calling the police about what other people were doing.*
(White Female Resident)

The worrying lessons to draw from this level of regulation is that it can lead to the repeat victimisation of certain families and in turn set a precedent for under reporting of crime or racially hostile behaviour.

"The lad next door put a brick though our car window – we saw him do it. And they called us grasses and all sorts. I was a grass because I reported him for smashing our car. (White Female Resident)

There was an unsurprising prevalence of 'not grassing' as a means of being considered trustworthy and abiding by the cultural norms of the estate.

Interviewer: *So you told us of an Asian family that got their windows broken through?*

Resident: *Yeah, I saw the boys do it and run away. The family were at the flat, they got the keys, and they got the shutters off then stayed one night without their stuff. When the van came the next day they just drove off. The thing that was bad was the lady that lived next door was outside, I went out because I saw them all congregating, she was talking on her phone, then she turned to me and said 'oh I better go because someone will think that I'm calling the police'* (White Female Resident)

The insular nature of this crime and harassment is impacting not only on the victims but on other vulnerable residents who are exposed to it.

<u>Protection of Turf and Reputation</u>

The link between reputation, power and criminality on the estate was something we became aware of within our research. This pointed us towards how attacks on newcomers may also be linked to the protection and perpetuation of criminal interests.

We look out for one another, I don't believe in vigilante antics, we've been down that road with some young lads when we had trouble to take care of and it nearly turned into gang warfare,(White Female Resident)

There was some suggestion that the tight, often family focused boundaries of belonging on the estate demanded absolute loyalty and allegiance. Newcomers can be a threat to a culture of silence and the turning of a blind eye to criminal activity. One family suggested that a refusal to take part in criminal activities led to their ostracisation and victimisation.

Interviewer: *So it hasn't been easy for your son to make friends in the area then*?

Resident: *Oh no it is easy, as long as he does what they want him to do. But he's really headstrong and won't do it. The reason they put that knife to my throat was because they wanted him to go out robbing with them but he wouldn't.*

Interviewer: *So if you fit into their lifestyle and culture they will accept you and your in with them?*

Resident: *Yeah if you go out robbing or if you take drugs or even if you sell drugs then they'll let you in. (White Residents)*

In complement to this, and with a link to questions around young people we began to gather accounts that suggested that 'reputation' and 'top dogging' were key motivations within the criminal and 'anti-social' behaviour of young men on the estate.

Interviewer: *We've just heard that there have been quite strong reactions to the increase of Asians in the area.*

Respondent: *Yeah. Definitely. The lads round here wouldn't want that would they? They're very dominant round here…. Then saying that the girls can be a lot worse in fact sometime it's the girls that incite the boys. They only have to say that someone from another estate looked at them funny and it all kicks off. Its large gangs of lads you see* (White Male Resident)

Violence and fearlessness were key dimensions of these young masculinities. Within such a context the perpetration of violent and outrageous acts against vulnerable newcomers could consolidate a 'reputation'.

Violence on the Estate

Another important point to note in relation to racist attacks is the routine frequency with which residents spoke of violence, intimidation and expulsion as ways of resolving social conflict. Within the research we spoke to several women who had experienced violence in the domestic domain. Other residents spoke about people resorting to extreme levels of violent behaviour after minor disputes. We were informed that gun crime might be a growing problem on the estate and that local loan sharks and drug dealers would use strong armed techniques to ensure payment.

"Oh we have got plenty of loan companies. The estate is rife with them. It's not the type of thing where you if don't pay you get your knees broke but they are, well… forceful" (White Female Resident),

Instead with reference to the culture of the estate we can suggest that the use of violent methods by some family members and powerful local people is not unusual. We spoke to some residents who lived in absolute fear of their neighbours and other local people. In several cases there genuinely seemed to be good reason for some of those fears.

My 7 year old hasn't played out since we moved. In fact he's played out twice. The first time he got a stone thrown at him and the second time he got a metal bar on the back of the head. (White Female Resident)

In such an atmosphere it can be argued that some of the tensions around race that we have explored could explode into violent confrontation should certain people and families be involved that had become accustomed to such behaviour.

Complexities of Racism: Race as a Resource

There was a sub theme within the data which is important in understanding some local suspicion of accusations of racial harassment and racism. Some of this suspicion in itself is explicitly racist in that it accuses black people of 'crying racism' in order to get off the estate and get a rung further on the housing ladder. However we were forced to accept the complexity of 'using' race as a resource and to address some cases where key informants felt that routine criminality had been interpreted as racial harassment, or race had been used to try and speed up the housing process.
"she doesn't live here any more, she had only lived there about three month but she didn't like the area so it was one way she could get off wasn't it?" (White Female Resident)

We came across a notable case, shown in the extract below, where a white family who had suffered from varying levels of harassment and hostility felt powerless to any official recourse as they could not use 'racial' harassment as a reason to be moved. This had led to council accusations that they were racist due to their public affront that if they were black they would get another house.

Resident: *I'd love to get out of here but I can't move because all they'll give me is a 3 bed-roomed and that's it. We applied about 3 months ago – and we still haven't got a letter to say what priority we are or what. And I wrote really heartfelt letters begging to get out. I ain't had a good night sleep since we moved in – I ain't had more that 4 hours sleep a night since we've been here.*

Interviewer*: And other families that have had problems what's happened to them?*

Resident: *They just move them out. There was a lass round here and they set a fire in the garden next door to her so she went out and started shouting at them, they ended up putting her window through. The next day they were boarding her house up and she'd moved. Yet I've had a knife to me throat, my son's been beat up 3 times and my daughter's been beat up in her own garden but they wont move us.*

Interviewer: *Do you think, because of the racial element that's why they got moved so fast?*

Resident: *I mean I've said that to the housing manager – but I don't think that's fair. It shouldn't matter what colour your skin you should be treated the same. There has been about 7 people that have been moved just like that (clicks fingers). And we're stuck here. I'm a nervous wreck - I don't go out. I won't let my kids play out.*

Interviewer: *Many of the black families get moved because of racial harassment but you feel you wouldn't be moved for the same level of violence because you're not?*

Resident: *We've had much more trouble than people who have been moved.*

The family's primary concern was that white families and newcomers who are victimised have no redress to charges of racism. This was an intriguing element of some discussions of racial harassment on the estate where some residents discussed whether 'the race card' was used as leverage. This was a suspicious and racist discourse, but does raise some important questions about how racist incidents need to be considered as part of an overall culture of harassment and victimisation of those who do not 'fit' on the estate and to probe the exact manner in which race figures in such harassment. Such care may bring on side more local people who themselves feel victimised and unsympathetic.

There appear to be many aspects of a local culture of harassment, intimidation and violence that need to be addressed alongside racism to tackle the full root of the problem.

Theme Three: Family Loyalties and Community Boundaries

In theme three we address the argument that several tensions on the estate are linked to very narrow and specific social and geographic boundaries of trust and safety. We suggest that racisms on the estate are linked to fear of the 'other' and fierce allegiance to those who are close to oneself, often for protection. Concerns about asylum seemed to be felt most acutely by the socially vulnerable. In particular, fears about the impacts of asylum seekers upon the local community were vividly expressed. Although these concerns are based upon perceptions rather than actual impacts, they are strongly held and reflect the reality of many residents. This level of resentment and hostility can not be blamed on a lack of accurate information about immigration or asylum but more a heightened level of insecurity and mistrust. To explore this further we examined ideas about family on the estate and how proximate and established family networks are viewed as 'insurance' and in turn 'security'. We became most interested in how this is expressed geographically on the estate. Next we look at issues of community identity and pride and how 'difference' is viewed and tackled on the estate in order to try and understand this suspicion of outsiders.

People's attitudes towards newcomers were presented to us within the vacuum of one or other of the two estates. We were informed, on occasion quite jovially, of the rivalry that existed between these two estates.

"Even when I was a kid it used to be us and then all the [the other estate]. There used to be gangs and that, I think because they come down from [that area] they look down on all of us." (Male Resident)

This was, in turn, offered as a justification and almost as a reassurance for hostile behaviour to new residents.

"There are lads on the estate that aren't happy about Asians moving on here, but that's what they're like they're just very territorial. Even with other estates not just newcomers to this one." (White Female Resident)

Family as Insurance

"It's a nightmare and I tell you something, everyone is related on this bloody estate, everyone" (White Male Resident)

We heard several lay theories of the importance of family allegiance in the area and how affiliation with particular families could be a source of power and influence. Who you knew and length of tenure were imperative in the 'network of belonging'.

"Oh yeah they're quite protective, like it's their area-they've been here longer and so it's them kind of families. If they know you they'll keep an eye on you. And course my dad knows a lot of them anyway so they know me from being little so it's like 'you're alright.' "(White Female Resident)

In counterpoint to that, *not* having family or friends on the estate made an individual or household very vulnerable.

Interviewer: *And that's why new people moving on are finding it harder to fit in?*
 .
Resident: *Yeah they don't have that network of people that live on the estate and that, no one to protect them. Yeah, so that's why they are at a disadvantage.*
(White Female Resident)

We heard anecdotal accounts of large families, with generations of life on the estate, who had colonised and established control over specific areas of the estate.

"It gets confusing because its so much of one family that live there, we actually call it their 'Road' because there's so many of a certain family there. So it's just what it's known as." (White Female Resident)

Getting entangled with well established families was presented to us as a risk because they could and would retaliate in concert if crossed or offended. The turn of phrase that was often used was 'that if you offend one you offend them all' and that such a mistake could lead to the ostracisation and victimisation of a household or individual. This was important in understanding how newcomers could struggle, simply because they did not know the right people and everybody else seemed to know everyone else. It also suggests that control over specific geographic areas of the estate by living in proximate properties was valued and could create difficulties if an outsider was to gain access to a coveted property.
.
Interviewer: "Do you think that the abuse was a deliberate attempt to get you out"?

Resident:: Oh yeah, it was so that her next door could get her sister in here.

Interviewer: Do they understand how the system works?

Resident: No I don't think they even realise that there is a system. They find a way to get around it when they do though. People like them run this estate, not the council. (White Male Resident)

There was also a suggestion that some of these families were involved in criminal behaviour. Some relatively new families to the estate seemed to have a reluctance to engage with such families as they saw them as potentially 'polluting' of their own families through their criminality or anti social behaviour. Many new families had come to treat the estate as a dormitory and to conduct their family and work lives off the estate, driving off the estate to attend school, go shopping and socialise. They claimed that they felt excluded from any sort of community and likened the estate to a '*holding pen'* (White Female Resident) or a '*gold fish bowl'* (White Female Resident) The estate was accused of being physically and socially dislocated from the relative prosperity of the city centre.

"You're isolated. I know when we got here I said it's like they've segregated 'the poor' away from the town." (White Female Resident)

For some this isolation coupled with the exclusionary practices of established residents insured mutual boundaries could be maintained, and were often linked with classed value distinctions about lifestyle and work ethic.

Interviewer: *Would you want to become more established in the area, make friends or feel part of a community?*

Resident: *I wouldn't want to round here. I'm not a snob I just wouldn't walk down the street screaming and effin and blinding at my children and that's what they're all like" (White Female Resident)*

Another resident commented that:

"They're all young mums and mostly single mums and they don't care what their kids are doing, they just let them all run wild. They don't give a damn. Apathetic. I have all my friends off the estate, people I know through work and stuff and we do any socialising we want to off the estate, there is nothing here anyway." (White Female Resident)

Generation and Family History: If Your Face Doesn't Fit

Long term residents who had been born and brought up on the estate explained to us how exclusionary residents could be of those who were not recognised and trusted.

"They're just quite set in their ways. Like I say if your face don't fit – they're going to get picked on. Basically." (White Female Resident)

Being trusted and 'belonging' to the estate involved taking account of place of birth, length of residency, family associations and schooling. People who could not be recognised through such routes would not be seen as 'local'. This was not presented in an altogether divisionary fashion and for many residents it was beneficial to their feelings of security and the essence of their 'community'.

"Yeah, I think its because I've been here for that long and everyone knows everyone else, you tend to feel a lot safer so if I was to move onto another estate and I didn't know anybody then I would feel quite vulnerable and quite intimidated by the kids on the street corner" (White Female Resident)

Paradoxically it is those very 'inclusive' virtues of community that can be considered 'exclusive'

"I would tell them not to come here. I'd tell them to not bother coming. Because if your face fits then your fine but if it don't then keep your door locked." (White Female Resident)

The challenge appears to be that many residents believe the resentment is already embedded. There was a scepticism to forms of targeted or intervention solutions that were suggested by the interviewers.

"Now I won't say don't keep putting them on coz that makes this a racist estate but the more families from outside that move on, the more trouble there is going to be. I don't know how they're going to solve this one. I really don't. " (White Female Resident)

Estate Geography and Localisation Practices: They are ok here but…

We have already suggested that living in particular areas and retaining some kind of ownership of them was important to some families on the estate and could explain the *'ousting'* of those who were not seen to belong in that area of the estate. Territoriality had complex expressions on the estate, but in this section we are going to focus on people's mental social geography of the estate and how they dealt with issues of safety and belonging.

"I'm a [local] now as far as I'm concerned. I mean this street alone you go past the centre– you cross over and its one estate and another – its invisible boundaries. Even just this street its' this end and the other end, and there's even little groups within the bigger group" (White Female Resident)

For many this offered an increased level of confidence in their own microcosm of the estate. There was a widely held belief that the estate had particular problem areas however very few attributed negative aspects of the 'other' areas to their own street or neighbours.

"No one really bothers on this street cause we're all sort of like our own little clique sort of thing. I can go out and leave my door and gate open... I can leave my car unlocked and I know no one will touch it." (White Female Resident)

The centre of the estate was seen to be the heart of the troubled area by many people, and more outlying and peripheral areas were seen to be pleasanter and safer.

"Oh yeah that end of the estate, near the woods. That's a no-go area for me I don't go there and I don't let my kids go there. Round here is fine though, and up the top end. We don't really have any problems" (White Female Resident)

And again:

"The further in you go the worse it gets, this section is pleasant, it's nice enough. The further in people get rougher." (White Male Resident)

It was clear from our notes and interviews and our own experiences that people built specific ideas about where was 'ok' which could be as narrow as street or even block level, this is something that is not uncommon when establishing social capital. The 'estate' as an entity became removed from their individual concept of neighbourhood and community network.

Resident: *we all look after one another type of thing.*

Interviewer: *Just in this bit of the square?*

Resident: *Oh yeah just this square yeah*
(White Female Resident)

Localisation practices were as extensive as one end of a street being seen as acceptable whereas the other end was seen as *'rough'.*

They call this the posh end, the neighbours do, the nice end; a lot of people have said that (Male Resident)

Some people claimed not to know their way around the estate or to know anything 'down the other end'. There seemed not to be much all inclusive estate wide 'belonging', only street by street alliances.

"Well these two houses here and then the two across from us, where in our little block you see…. We all look out for each other and socialise together in the summer and it's alright this little bit" (White Female Resident)

This could potentially be very isolating and hard shell to break into. There were types of fragmented allegiance that were specific to particular areas and known people. The cyclical nature of problems moving around the estate was often prevalent in narratives.

"I think it goes in phases round here you know they get a reputation one set of lads or one street and then it all gets moved down somewhere else. Other thing is they are moving a lot of asylum seekers and stuff on to the [group of streets] now and that I think is giving it a bad reputation, its causing a bit of trouble. We try to stay fairly quiet down here but up there you know it's a bit sort of cut off, stuff happens and it can kick off." (White Male Resident)

Such practices are crucial in understanding how difficult it is to be accepted and how much suspicion and limited trust there could be. There are strong divisionary practices that permeate further than family and kinship networks and allow for suspicions of new arrivals. In particular, it highlights that residents concerns and perceptions of areas are adversely affected by the arrival of new BAME families.

<u>Fear of Difference and Change</u>

"Well let me tell you, I'm used to it [the estate] and everybody knows everybody. We're like a big happy family. I keep going back to the same thing but they just don't want new blood. They want it to stay the same." (White Female Resident)

Several residents, particularly newcomers spoke with us about how they felt that the root of problems with racisms was people's intolerance for difference and change. It was expressed that any family or individual who tried to live differently, or who expressed their sexuality, educational ambitions or moral values in ways that were different from the established local norm would be expelled or ignored.

"We're seeing on here people with just no values and no want to do anything other than cause trouble and who is going to stop them?" (White Male Resident)

What we uncovered was a complex and often snobbish debate about how certain local families lacked conventional middle class values, sexual mores and work ethics but it does point to some issues around how jealousies and anxieties at an emotional or moral level could lead to victimisation of those who are obviously different in an effort to remove and repudiate the threat of the 'other' to the self.

"No way, there a lot of children out and around playing but I never let my son play out because first of all, I don't like the quality of people here" (White 'other' Female Resident)

More worryingly, the negativity towards any integration and tolerance was often being displayed by those who often had the most capacity for building positive social engagements.

"Council estates are being kept as trouble and problem areas because people with higher standards aren't on them so nothing is getting better is it? They throw on problem families, or they put asylum seekers on them and its like capping. It's that mix thrown in with people who have lived here for years so how does anything improve? If you haven't got people moving in to show a different way of living what do you get?" (White Male Resident)

Theme Four: Poverty, Abandonment and Disempowerment

Despite the negative tone of this theme we do not suggest that all people on the estate experience these things all of the time. Instead we wish to try and bring to the surface some underlying issues around some local people's relationship with authority, their political engagement and voice and their expressions of abandonment and lack of care. Our research findings highlight the importance of local authorities in influencing local attitudes. The lack of effective handling of resident's grievances or ineffective handling of conflicts was frequently identified. In some cases, specific agency staff were singled out and accused of pursuing their own agenda or for being deliberately obtrusive.

There is a distinct and complex power dynamic in existence between residents and the local authority. Most potent was the clash between those residents who felt that authorities dominated and aspired to hold social control over the estate and those who felt that they held to little control. In some cases these emotions were entangled within a narrative of residents desperately needing local authority support and becoming disenfranchised when they didn't receive a positive outcome.

"But they have too much power and it's not used right, why should one person say *whether or not I can be moved. They are meant to be impartial."* (White Female Resident)

This was linked in several ways with the actions of local government and issues around consultation and community self direction.

I blame the council I am sorry but I can't help it and I think the council have let Leeds down terribly really let them down because they don't take any notice of us (White Female Resident)

It was not unusual for residents to discuss the abandonment of the local authority in what they felt was a widespread need for increased regulation or social order. This was often recurrent in the views of long- term residents.

"Its just I think the council could make their presence known like they used to like when they used to say "you cant have pigeons and you cant have this and you cant have that" people want to know that yeah they live here but that they're part of the whole thing. I think that this lack of rules lets people think they can just abuse everybody"

Interviewer: So is that what you think it is, people don't see the council enforcing any rules or dealing with any perpetrators?

Resident: I think there is no fear of the people above us – no one feels like anyone will do anything. (Male Resident)

Strikingly, we found this ambivalent relationship with authority a contributing factor to 'vigilante' actions taken against new people. These can be people who represent or symbolise issues that anger local people. This action can be partly attributed to attempts to take back power and have a voice or influence. It also contributes to the insidious appeal of the BNP to people who feel that mainstream political parties no longer listen to them or represent them.

There were numerous examples within the research of people who voiced strongly held views about the incompetence and lack of care of agencies who they dealt with on a daily basis. This can be captured in the idea that people on the estate have things done *to* them rather than *with* them and there were several local people who suggested that given the opportunity they could handle their own problems, but instead they were subject to the political whims of local councillors and a local government more concerned with the needs of middle class people in the city. For those who are less politically active such views may be expressed differently, in a manner that is often seen to be self sabotage. We heard examples of a youth centre being destroyed by young people because they had not been consulted properly and they felt no sense of ownership of the new place.

"They didn't want anything fancy they just wanted their old hall where they could do as they liked and they respected it. They respected it because it was theirs. This big fancy building had nothing, it didn't appeal." (White Female Resident)

Key agency staff expressed bemusement at the destruction of environmental improvements they thought were needed, but residents often gave detailed accounts of how service delivery was almost completely disconnected to any practice taking place on the ground.

"Up by the terminus apparently there used to be loads up there – why's that all gone? And then they wonder why people get uppity and react when they take something away that serves the community of course they're going to react, there's going to be trouble." (White Female Resident)

This suggests that there are several problems in the area to do with engaging with local people in a way that makes them feel genuinely consulted, given funding in a sustained manner, and acted with rather than acted upon. Another complex matter was dealing with the fact that people seemed to not want to engage and instead to have things done for them and this is the essence of issues around empowerment and responsibility. It can only be suggested that people will act on things if it feels effective and worth the effort, people's willingness to take an active role is determined by the effectiveness of the system. Therefore the system has to be responsive, inviting and supportive. Local authority informants told us that people did not want to join committees and talking shops and forums. Again, it appears to be the method and motivation of meaningful engagement and consultation that is the problem.

It was clear that people on the estate felt that in many respects they had been abandoned and left to deal with their own problems. There was a strong ethic expressed by some people that they were responsible for policing their own conflicts and developing organisational campaigns. This can provide positive examples of mothers building a network of watching other people's children or for tackling anti social behaviour. Yet as is evident in issues of racial attacks, attacks on gay couples or those 'suspected' of paedophilia such taking of matters into ones own hands can have exclusionary outcomes.

"I've been told that down here at the back of the………. And they've got a petition against anymore [BAME families] coming in or against the ones that have come in. That's what I heard from my next door neighbour." (White Male Resident)

Community Identity and Pride in the Area

People alluded to the negative identities that those external from estate had about the 'type' of people living on council estates. These could reinforce a 'retreat' inwards. On occasion residents were focusing upon narrow and exclusionary situations of belonging that cannot accommodate difference. Trust and distrust were found in equal measure, with the strongest ties often being found in the most inward-looking groups.

Lack of confidence in the area can result in a fear of participation and involvement. The predicament we found were new families were reticent to partake in community life for this very reason. For a few residents how they felt about the area was still strongly linked to how they felt the estate was judged by the imputations, reputation and labeling

"Yeah we had heard some pretty rough things about it, we were really apprehensive about moving here a lot of what we had been told made it sound like Beirut. I was really embarrassed to go for my job and say that this was where I was from; I don't want this to be my address" (White Female Resident)

"I had spoken to a few people beforehand and they told me it was a bit rough so I was expecting it to be the worst place in the world, I was expecting people to be walking around patting your pockets down and where you couldn't leave your car or anything" (White Male Resident)

One of the arguments of this research is that local history could have a strong role to play in building and restoring inclusive and empowering local identity. We found a markedly positive response towards the current quality of the environment and notably that the estates were much improved. Clearly there has been significant shift in resident's perception of local crime levels of anti social behaviour.

From an outsider they would come in and go "Oh that's bad and that's bad" but me, I just think that it's been 100 times worse so if you look at it now it seems perfect. You know, I'm sure more could be done but its much better than it has been. (White Female Resident)

Our research found that it was most often the older residents who were driven by the ideology of community. There were several who treasured memories of the local area when they were thriving working class communities housing tailoring workers and 'ordinary' families.

"I love the area too much and I love being here and I mean my roots are deep [on this estate]...in fact the genuine [local] people that are left are the salt of the earth..." (White Female Resident)

They spoke of how much they loved their community and with sadness about how they felt it had been abandoned and neglected by government and the council. Yet this discourse was quite removed from any form of over sentimentality or nostalgia. The implicit assumption would be that older residents would exclusively hold antiquated views on housing estates and recent social breakdown yet we found that there is a great deal of pride left among divergent members of the community.

"We have a good neighbour next door and the whole street is really, very polite and they always acknowledge you and talk to you and that." (White Male Resident)

Some younger yet similarly long- term residents claimed that they love where they live and would never live anywhere else.

 "Even *if I won the lottery tomorrow I'd still stay"* (White Female Resident)

Such sentiments were also mirrored in the views of relative new comers to the estate.

"I love [this estate]– it's a community on its own especially now because they're actually regenerating [other parts of the area]. It's like being in a village out here. Its like you're in Leeds but you're not. You're in a small village of your own. It's very similar to the place we

came from, because we came from a very close community to begin with so we have just fitted right in "(White Female Resident)

We also heard accounts of how social networks and elements of community made it a particularly good place to live.

Interviewer: *Did you make friends when you came to live here? Do you feel like it's quite a strong community?*

Resident: *It's brilliant. Yeah I mean I've lived in loads of places and this is best place I've lived in – even thought when I got here it don't look much, it's brilliant.*

Interviewer: *Why is that?*

Resident: *I dunno, it's like just one great big family and it is great. My kids are right happy and they feel its safe and everything it's a proper home.* (White Female Resident)

It is essential to influence community relations in a positive way, and one that avoids damaging existing informal community structures. It is clear from the above statements that for those who are new to the estate, once they feel accepted, it is possible to have close and binding support locally.

Recommendations

This chapter has sought to collect fresh evidence on the reception and integration of BAME families in these two estates. It represents a tentative exploration of how community complexities have and still are shaping this. Our recommendations have been developed from openly asking residents for their opinions on neighbourhood improvements. The significant levels of misinformation and misperceptions uncovered in our research serve as a breeding ground for prejudice. This highlights not only how local authorities should work to become more transparent in their decision-making procedures and public statements, but also, how little attempt has been made to define the responsibilities of established residents in the processes of the two-way effort of integration. There is an inherent distrust of 'authority'. The link between the community and the local authorities is inherently fractured. There needs to be a process of accountability of local services to the wider community. As suggested above some kind of bridge between local residents and authorities such as the residents network is vital and should be supported. These forums should be made more accessible and the strengths of less formal and meeting orientated approaches should be explored. Local residents need to feel like they are being listened to and be further encouraged to engage as it is clear that they are not currently doing so at the formal level. We also feel that there is a lack of understanding from key agencies on how to effectively facilitate true community engagement. We believe that this is a pivotal time to look at innovative methods of involvement and that crucially this does not merely generate another leaflet, poster or committee. There is a clear willingness to offer provision yet an overriding impression that current funding is misplaced. A concern is that particular agenda-driven residents are persistently accessing resources coupled with the failure to operationalise innovative methods of communication appear to have made agency workers despondent about wider engagement.

Our research shows that it is fundamental to build on the excellent work of local groups that are already in place. It is really important that these local networks e.g. the local Women's Group are linked to more formal organisations with resources and power. Expertise needs to be flowing back into the community and their local expertise and knowledge need to be seen to be acted upon.

The impact of security measures has been conspicuous and views on the instillation of CCTV remains ambivalent. Although few could argue against their effectiveness in acting as a deterrent,

"*Well since they put up those cameras up, all the joyriding and that sort of trouble seem to have stopped. I'm not saying it's stopped 100%- but it has quietened down. I feel the estate has been up graded*" (White Female Resident).

Conversely we heard that many found their presence to be intrusive:

"Those cameras it feels like you're being watched 24/7 it's like that film the Truman Show" (White Female Resident)

And invasive:

"Well its like Big Brother isn't it; you can hear them following you around the estate" (White Female Resident)

The CCTV seemed to provide a level of assurance and the perception of a safer area but this could, arguably, be achieved through increased police levels. Policing is still a controversial issue throughout the estate, but nearly all residents that we spoke to mentioned a desire for a heavier police presence. The demographic of our research participants is crucial in contextualising this.

"From what it was 10 year ago, it's like a different estate, 75- 80% better. More police on patrol and a few more cameras and this would be a gorgeous estate" (White Male Resident)

Overall people were generally positive about the attempt to establish Neighbourhood Wardens and PCSO's , even if they did not think that they could actually do very much if there was any trouble. They were referred to disparagingly as " Plastic Police" (White Female Resident) or "Pretend Police" (White Male Resident) yet their effect on local social relations was noted and a correlation was made between their presence and an improvement in estate life, particularly in developing local knowledge, trust and understanding.

"We do have them community support officers who walk around – they ain't real police officers though. But at one point, about 10 years ago if there had been police walking round they would have had to leave because you'd have all the young kids throwing bricks at them and that. But now all kids will walk up to them and chat to them – they all know their names. The other day I was walking with some kids up the street and they shouted to the community support officers across the road "Ya' alright PC Dave?" things do seem to have got better." (White Female Resident)

A broader approach to equality at a very local level needs to be pursued. It is crucial to address matters of uncertainty and ambiguity through a more effective means of communication. Improving interaction and community participation could build on common concerns across different communities. These common concerns could be fertile ground for initiatives aimed at bringing new and existing residents together and facilitating interaction between them. Although this will not provide a panacea it could aid in the development of a strategy for 'myth busting' particularly around housing allocation and repair schedules.

Chapter 5   Local Racism: accounting for diversity and denial

Introduction

In this chapter we will look in detail at the data about how racism is expressed and understood in this area. Within this we will seek to capture some of the complexity of how the people we spoke to tried to tackle the issue we posed to them of whether the 'estate' was racist. We also sought their opinions on what was going on within incidents that were viewed as racist by service providers and victims. It is important to note that the findings of this study uncovered no evidence of patterns of organised violence against immigrant communities. However, incidents of violent and aggressive behaviour that were exposed during the course of this study were overwhelmingly perceived as targeted and racially motivated by other residents.

One of the more difficult issues for us within the research was working with the level of *denial, distancing* and *justification* that was present in people's conversations, while being sensitive to the multilayered and conflicted nature of what they expressed they felt. Our principle argument is that racism on the estate takes a number of forms, is expressed in a variety of ways and also intersects with a multiplicity of other bitter resentments and emotions that are to do with class, poverty and gendered identity as well as race. For this reason it is often hard for both residents and researchers to separate issues of racism out from other common practices of resentment, exclusion and suspicion within estate life. Indeed it can be argued that these processes cannot be understood as separate issues, although we can be aware of how race 'difference' may crystallise and bring into focus more nebulous and unformed political and emotional responses to structural exclusion and poverty.

We do this in conjunction with an awareness of how people use and understand their intimate relationships with BAME people to ethically explain away any chance that they could be racist. Such careful drawing of boundaries as to who is 'other' and who belongs and why tie in with debates we raised in the previous section about family and community boundaries. It is not a simple case of BAME people are excluded and 'white' people are accepted. There are people who are BAME and yet are accepted at some level as members of the estate community. There are white people, particularly eastern European immigrants who are not accepted and highly resented. This distinction between skin colour and 'outsider' or immigrant status was used by people to explain why they could not be racist. This forces us to address lay accounts of *what it is to be racist*, often focused on direct response to colour or nationality. Many people said that they did not care if people were "*black, blue, pink or purple" (White Male Resident)*, what they cared about was *what they got and why.*

"No it's not racist. I think its because of jealousy, we have coloured people living here, friends and they've been fine, there's a coloured family that's been here nearly about 20 years and they never had any troubles, the back shops there coloured people they've never had no trouble, well they've had trouble but only normal trouble. I think it is because of jealousy, that's all it is I don't think its racist at all, people around here are thinking that they're getting more than everybody else is" (White Female Resident)

Here marginal cases (where race is only one factor among many) can give us clues as to how more complicated processes of boundary drawing and crossing can help us to account for diverse racisms and processes of 'othering' on the estate. Those may not be recognised as racist by estate residents. We can begin to understand how people on the estate are not always explicitly racist in terms of skin colour but draw upon spectrums of belonging and entitlement that factor in class, family affiliation, heritage and level of contribution to estate life.

"But the thing is it's not just because of the colour of their skin, I don't think it's a race thing. Lots of families are coming up here from London and moving on and its getting peoples back up" (Male Resident).

We will explore these issues using three sections. Firstly we will look at denial, through the lens of the number of accounts beginning 'I am not a racist, but'. We will then expand this data into two sections looking at different narratives that explain this complex denial and layering of resentment. Then we will look at the differential racisms on the estate, focusing on how different groups are defined and viewed. We will then explore the phenomenon of mixed race relationships and long term BAME families on the estate. Finally we will tackle the issue of BNP activism on the estate.

Denial and Hesitancy: I am not racist but…

We briefly outlined in the methodology how sensitive and difficult it was to bring up the topic of race in this research project. Within the data the preliminaries of people beginning to talk about this topic are peppered with hesitancy, denial and awkwardness.
"This won't sound very nice on tape but I'll say it..." (White Female Resident) We were also conscious of a prominent self awareness surrounding racial prejudices in many of our respondents. *"I don't want to appear racist here; this is not what I'm saying."* (White Male Resident). This illustrates both the stigma of being seen to be a racist by two white researchers from an academic institution, but also raises a deeper issue of how racism in and of itself may not be obvious or straightforward to the people experiencing it. Many times we heard the phrase 'I am not racist, but' before a launch into an account of how unfair certain policies and events were in relation to 'foreigners' and 'outsiders'.

"*I'm not racist or nothing because I've got coloured aunties and that, the trouble is the council will do anything for them. I mean you can go in my kitchen and look at my kitchen cupboards there is nowt left of them. I can't get nothing off the council but they go down and they say they need an oven and they get it straight away. That's what the problem is its not that they're coloured or anything like that its just that the council do everything for them and they wont do it for no one else."* (White Female Resident)

There are at least two possibilities here, which can occur simultaneously. One is that people are unable to face their own prejudices and wrap them up in other explanations and resentments, some of which may be supplied and underwritten by local media and political discourse, particularly with regards to the British National Party's recent election campaign.

Interviewer: *Do you think that there is support on the estate for the BNP?*

"There is now yeah. It's not because people are racist. It's because they keep moving foreigners in constantly. They can't look after their own here never mind anyone else. That is why they are getting more support than ever. (White Female Resident)

Another is that race becomes a 'marker' of outsider status and/ or a 'hook' on which to hang a whole range of disaffections and jealousies. Racial identifications may not in and of themselves capture all dimensions of what is being experienced and expressed. As explored below people used a range of justificatory and ethical narratives to explain why actions and languages were not only or necessarily racist, but expressed something 'more' than that. In such narratives race difference was the tool, or the weapon, but not always the motivation.

This can also be encapsulated in expressions that racist language and name-calling is *descriptive* and illustrative and is not *really meant*. For example names such as 'paki (name)' as is used to refer to the local shopkeeper are acceptable because they do not *really* imply any prejudicial meaning or hurt.

"My granddaughter goes 'I'm off to Paki (names)' - that's what she calls him but he doesn't see that as an insult. They think that's his name. So he's pretty alright. (White Female Resident)

What is clear is that the way in which race is used and understood on the estate is not as simplistic as a 'black and white' perspective but is expressed in a number of ways which cannot always be taken at face value as aggressive about race alone. We need to make an

analytical distinction between actions and languages which are intentionally hurtful and prejudicial, and perhaps ideologically driven and the casual use of racist language and victimisation as part of illustrative everyday discourse. The commonplace forms of explanation used by residents melt into one another by marking out 'otherness'.

This is not to deny the impact and undesirability of routine use of race and 'outsider status' as a marker and conduit of resentment. It is to make a case for digging deeper than political correctness to address the systematic and structural inequalities that bring race into focus as a channel for anger, rage and disaffection. We will try and illustrate some of these things in more detail below by looking at differential approaches to race.

<u>Character and Attitudes</u>

As we detailed to some extent in the previous chapter people on the estate used a variety of explanations as to 'what else was going on' within racist incidents including criminal motivations and jealousies around housing access, possessions and lifestyle.

A further explanation that attempted to diffuse any racist element was to focus on individual attitudes and character. Within this discourse the focus was on how the person had *behaved and conducted themselves* and their *general character* regardless of ethnicity and race. In reference to a BAME neighbour a White Female Resident informed us that he had "fetched it all on himself because of his bad attitude". This was not an uncommon finding and we found similarly barbed comments that were directly aimed at the proprietor of the local shop on the estate.

"*He's just as racist to us whites, he speaks Asian in his shop, and he's not allowed to do that. I tell him to speak English in front of me because you don't know if they're talking about you. He came on to the estate within attitude and that has stuck with him. That is why he gets trouble.*" (White Female Resident)

We heard accounts of how people's responses, 'punishment' or retaliation against a BAME family on the estate was due to the fact that this person or family had somehow behaved badly or disrespected the 'rules' of the estate.

We can speculate how the rules of the estate may be biased, but at this point it is useful to consider what people meant by this. We heard that a person may have been rude, refused to take part in community activities, or considered themselves 'better' than the people on their street. It was suggested that it was their 'attitude' that was the problem. When there was little meaningful contact between residents and new families some felt that this was a deliberate attempt at separation by BAME residents. They tended to distinguish between new comers who 'do not make the effort' and Black or Asian residents who were already well established on the estate. Feelings of resentment were often compounded when individuals or groups did not speak English or when differing cultural practices were evident. In some cases, this was interpreted as a deliberate refusal to integrate, or as a means of insulting someone

BBQ's and Parties: Noise Nuisance and Community Representation.

The researchers gathered anecdotal but important evidence that parties and BBQ's are a key flashpoint for racial and community tensions. In such cases a street or house gathering of some kind, usually in the summer, fuelled by alcohol, became problematic and tense and can develop into a stand-off.

"*In the summer its louts all around drinking, shouting, swearing. They all have BBQ's and sit out in the gardens drinking all day and it's just not safe round here in the summer*" (White Male Resident)

"*The only thing I'm worried about is at the summertime because that is when they it all starts off and they're outside causing trouble*" (White Male Resident)

Some of the more severe incidents on the estate were precipitated or triggered by noise nuisance, alcohol, adjunctive traffic incidents/accidents and unsociable hours.

"There was a black family that moved in here not too long ago and they liked to have big parties and that – big get togethers with their family. And they were having a big party and something had happened – I'm not too sure what but the dad came out with a garden fork and chased a kid down the street with it, now this kid was only 13. but this kid were a big lad and he looked much older but people obviously didn't agree with it so there was a big carry on and they ended up moving. But if I was to move onto a different estate and I didn't know anybody I wouldn't be having parties in the first couple of days, I'd want to try and fit in with everybody first. I'm not saying that Id have to be really quiet and that its just I would keep myself to myself for a while. (White Female Resident)

There are two key dimensions to this. One is that street gatherings and parties are representations of community. They are points at which the street or area gathers and demonstrates their affinity. Within this who is invited and who is not welcome could become a trigger, as lines are clear as to who is an 'outsider'. White residents often saw integration as the responsibility of the migrant family and did not recognise that they themselves might have a role in facilitating this process. These gatherings may be a microcosm of wider community processes of boundary drawing.

"She just from the start she seemed to not want to fit in with anybody. I mean we have barbecues in the street and round block you know it is a summer thing you have a barbecue and you invite whoever. It is either out in the square or we have it in my garden because mine is big enough. It is that sort of estate if people want to be included then …look if you want to make mates, you make mates." (White Female Resident)

Secondly we heard that occasions where BAME families had gathered to express their religious or personal celebrations were also a flash point for resentment and action. We heard about loud hymn singing, music at unsociable hours and irregular practices.

"I don't know but I know that they were very religious and they were constantly singing carols. They were from Zimbabwe so obviously they spoke their language but they also spoke English. Singing songs at four o clock in the morning at the top of their voices is not a good thing to do to the neighbours" (White Female Resident)

I woke up one morning at 5.30 "bang bang bang" steel drums (White Female Resident)

Such racially derogatory terms and crass stereotyping were quite commonplace. This was compounded when behaviour was seen as a cultural threat or unwillingness to 'integrate'. We would benefit from further understanding the ways in which the context of the estate constrain and redefine migrant groups and therefore affect their individual practices.

"There were this family and they had to get a camera put on their house, because they used to get all the abuse such as 'stop playing your bongo music' they torture them they proper torture them" (Mixed Race Resident)

From this we can argue that such events are showcases for community relations and can be flashpoints for harassment, fuelled by alcohol and group solidarity. They can create antagonism between those who feel themselves opposed.

Black Racisms

Within discussions we had about such flashpoint incidents it was not unusual to hear the refrain that black people could 'get away' with racism towards white people and not be punished. This is a dimension of the resentment about white people being punished for 'trying to protect their rights'.

"But racism works on both sides as well. It is not just white people that are racist. It is a two way thing isn't it? The thing is a white person can't shout racism whereas a coloured person can"... (White Female Resident)

This is a tense and very racist discourse that residents presented as an issue of 'political correctness'. It points to difficulties in arbitration for authorities and agencies. If insults have been hurled on all sides then it must be clear that all have been accounted for and suitably punished to avoid accusations of bias and adding to a sense of martyrdom and injustice. Such *martyrdoms* are important on the estate because they add to the idea that 'no-one listens or cares' and people who are punished on such grounds can become examples to people of how unfair it all is they could exacerbate resentment rather than dissipating it through being seen to be fair to all sides.

"So the police are here to back them up but not us - if you get what I mean. It's weird" (White Female Resident).

We also have data on a complex issue of how white residents perceive that BAME residents view them. For example we have narratives that state that a BAME person has called a white resident 'white-trash' or a 'white animal' in a conflict.

"She wasn't racist calling my kids animals or calling them white. Because that is how Leeds city council takes it around here" (White Female Resident)

We have no direct evidence of such expressions, but it is still interesting how this idea is used in retrospective accounts, perhaps to legitimate retaliation. 'White-trash' is a racial slur with a classist component. Reference to its use encapsulates anxieties and resentments about the better socio-economic and class position of BAME residents, and their preferential treatment by local authorities. It is also important to recognise that BAME residents did express negative views about the white families around them on the estate, which referred to class, education, work ethic and values. Racial tension on the estate goes in both directions and there is mutual othering and boundary construction using both race and class.

This is an extremely sensitive and controversial area but as qualitative researchers we believe that it is important to tackle the ways in which anxiety about race in local authority practices can mean that an oversimplified view of race relations predominates. It was clear from the data that the local authority dealt with incidents of harassment with a racial element by focusing on the speedy relocation of the family victimised if they request it. While this is understandable and deals with the immediate crisis, it does not begin to tackle the deep seated problem of the behaviour of multiple perpetrators, who may be linked to powerful local families who harass everyone.

" If you are finding people are moving off the estate really easy and really quickly I think they should be asked why they are moving off the estate not just, oh yeah lets move them, find out why they are moving. Obviously they want to settle down somewhere. Everybody has a right to settle somewhere." (White Female Resident)

It also exasperates white residents who are experiencing harassment and crime and feel powerless and victimised because they feel they have no recourse because they do not have the urgency of a 'racial' case.

Differential Racisms: Asians

One of our more interesting findings was the way in which different racial groups were viewed on the estate. There was a strong impression given that Asian groups were the most unwelcome and hated on the estate and we heard accounts of how Asian families had been hounded off the estate before they could even get their possessions out of the removal van.

"Whenever there is an Asian family who move on they never last long around here… don't know why but they don't like Asians." (White Male Resident)

This appeared to be linked to ideas and resentments about Muslims and bombings, 9/11 and 7/7, prevalent in current media and political discussions.

"I think a lot of this stigma is going to stick, it's not going to go away, and it's going to be there. With all this 9/11 and with London and all that. It's going to stick" (White Female Resident).

It hasn't helped that they were from Beeston, but then that could have happened anywhere but you get people thinking oh well is it cause of all the coloured coming on this estate you just don't know how peoples minds work (White Female Resident)

Furthermore, there was a localised element to this discriminatory behaviour, centered around concerns about the boundary of the estate with other areas which have a predominant Asian community. This appeared, from some accounts, to be a protectionist and territorial idea about protecting the estate from encroachment and 'swamping' from surrounding areas. 'We don't want to be another Bradford' or 'Moss Side' came up in some interviews. We also heard accounts of Asian gangs clashing against white gangs on the estate in an attempt to protect families and possible criminal interests.

Resident: *"An Asian family moved on just over there. They started causing trouble with a white family and it's now just blown all out of proportion. Now it's bricking their cars, putting their windows through. Fetching Asians over from wherever, Bradford or down at [an adjacent area], they're coming up with knives and everything. We don't need it. We don't need it. On the whole it is a good estate. At the moment they are going for Asians and asylum seekers and Africans"*

Interviewer: What is it; do you think that is causing this resentment?

Resident: I don't know what it is. The don't want them. They just don't want them that are the top and bottom of it. (White Female Resident)

Finally there was the possibility that local business practices might have some influence. We heard about how the exclusionary and protectionist practices of Asian taxi firms blew up into an explosive situation on a nearby estate.
"They bought the firm, and then said they couldn't afford to keep everyone on, so they laid off all the white drivers and then hired all their Asian mates." (White Male Resident). This resonated throughout the estate with tales of immigrants seizing labouring jobs because they will work for less money and asylum seekers obtaining agency cleaning work over local residents.

'Kosovans' / Asylum Seekers

The research team were struck by the frequency with which people referred to 'Kosovans' as a key problem group. We were unaware of any current large scale Kosovan community nearby or on the estate. For some people, asylum seekers are strongly associated with unwelcome social and demographic change. They are blamed for dominant social problems particularly crime and 'asylum seeker' has become a catch-all term for any white migrant person in the area. This was, in turn, linked to the particular situation of two other local areas, and it was evident that 'Kosovan' was used as a general term of reference and abuse of 'asylum seekers'. We heard spurious accounts of their behaviour and attitudes, and how they were taking resources and giving nothing back but trouble.

Female Resident: [That] lane is the worst though, we drove up it the other night didn't we and they were all sat on walls… what are they? Kosovans?

Male Resident: Yeah Kosovans, Albanians

Female Resident: you watch Crimewatch and it's mostly foreigners that are the rapists and all that. There all them Kosovans.

Male Resident: Its coz they come over here and some of them can't work or anything, so what are they going to do? There going to go into crime aren't they?

Local workers speculated that the term could be referring to Kurds, and suggested that this group had created resentments around women and honour as well as housing overcrowding in certain locations in Leeds. This phenomenon is illustrative of the mythology surrounding asylum seekers and refugees, much of it with little grounding in what the actual demography of immigration is in the area. Much of the hostility towards new migrants stemmed from the perception that new migrant communities were given preferential treatment. This underpinned strong feelings of economic injustice, and overlaid existing tensions.

"My husband got laid off, he goes to the Job Centre constantly, foreigners walk in, they get training courses, which we don't get on coz you have to be claiming dole for 6 month before you get on a training course. They get a mobile phone, they get transport. We get nowt, not a thing. You have to be foreign and an immigrant and you get everything, free NHS." (White Female Resident)

Such negative sentiments were disproportionately aimed at asylum seekers and were predominantly views about the levels of access migrants had to welfare housing and other benefit entitlements. It also became apparent that residents confused the differences between asylum seekers and other migrants, or settled black and minority ethnic communities within the area. However, as some of these quotes illustrate, when challenged, residents were able to express support for the principle of asylum and those they believed to be 'genuine' asylum seekers:

"Yeah but people don't always realise why they are here though, what they are running away from." (White Female Resident)

"My heart bleeds for some of them because think about what they have had to come from to get here " (White Female Resident)

Residents assumed that, while some people are in genuine fear of their lives when they leave their home country, the vast majority come to the UK to seek employment or benefits. The following conversation between a White couple on one street demonstrates the struggle many residents feel between the intolerance of media led images of asylum seekers and the reality of immigrant families on the estate.

Male Resident: You see my problem is, it's not the families that are causing the problems its male asylum seekers that are coming over. They are coming over to make money. I mean don't get me wrong, I think its appalling what is going on round here, I would never make anyone's life hell it wouldn't matter to me who lived next door as long ad they were respectful. It's all about being respectful.

Female Resident: That's the thing though isn't it? You have to show them respect too, it don't happen , they get hostility straight away, as soon as they move in and they expected to just take it, keep quiet and put up with it.

Male Resident But they're getting hostility, love, because we don't know who is coming in to this country anymore. Its all over the news isn't it, criminals and everything just coming in and we have no record of their offences, they could be anyone.

This resentment was exacerbated by a fairly widespread belief that Great Britain takes in more asylum seekers than other European countries, and that asylum seekers deliberately target this country as being a 'soft touch'.

"Naturally they are going to get all they can and I mean we are a generous country and I mean we have looked after them well, but it is giving the wrong impression because we are having to use these facilities too and we get frustrated because we really don't get anything" (White Female Resident)

Sadly, such negative attitudes towards BAME families on the estate were often imbued with the language of the tabloid press.

"They come here because we're a soft touch, that all love, you see it on the news all the time, they're here because its easier to get on to benefits than anywhere else, you don't see seem all flitting to France or wherever, they're here because they turn up and we give them whatever they want." (White Male Resident)

Black African Groups

Black African families who moved onto the estate had a very challenging time from the evidence of our study. We witnessed a Sudanese family who had received threatening letters, Nigerian families who had experienced a battery of harassment and abuse and a Zimbabwean family who had golf balls routinely aimed at their windows and their car set alight. These were the visible and targeted BAME families on the estate.

Resident: *A Black African gentleman over there he has been broken into about 4 times. He has done nothing wrong to anyone, I have seen him come up and down and he says 'hello'.*

Interviewer: *Is it people on the estate breaking in? Do you know why he may be a target?*

Resident*: I think it's them wanting him out because they seem to know exactly when he is in and exactly when he is out (White Female Resident)*

"there were a Somalia family in this house here on the end and they weren't even here a week and they got their windows all put through, there were graffiti things like' Go Home' outside their house, we saw that." (White Female Resident)
.
Further accounts often included a resigned acceptance of this harassment:

Respondent: *The coloured fella next door. He gets it because he's black.*

Interviewer: *Really? And how long has he been here for?*

Respondent : *Not long after us*

Interviewer: *But he has stayed?*

Respondent: *Yeah ,he moved in a month after us. He had his house burgled and everything but…*

Interviewer: *Do you think it is just because he is black?*

Respondent: *Think so, it will be there all racist like that round here (White Male Resident)*

Residents were more guarded in their language when recounting racially motivated violent attacks. Most placed a foundation of physical or verbal refutation between themselves and the perpetrators. *"Well I can't claim to know much, but this is what I have heard" (White Male)* or "*It happened down the other end though, not round here" (White Female Resident) what* we did acknowledge was that the frequency of violence and harassment to new arrivals was expected and implicit.

"There is a family that have moved in down there, I think they are African and they don't seem to have had any trouble, no bricks or anything... I suppose they could just have gotten lucky" (White female Resident)

White Newcomers and Eastern Europeans.

As detailed in the previous chapter white newcomers were subject to the various tests and suspicions directed at those not known on the estate. People with southern accents, working lifestyles or polish people were all identified as groups who may receive a cold reception on this 'territorial' estate. A family who had moved from Essex reported that they had been negatively received on the estate and subsequently felt excluded.

"But the kids get hassle for their accents and I think we probably… that is why they are funny with us coz we're not from here" (White Female Resident)

Such victimisation of new residents was customary and although the harassment varied in severity there were common characteristics that underpinned them all. Basically, all markers of difference were viewed with suspicion by 'long term' residents and such people may have a 'hard time' although it appeared that the more 'visible' black and Asian families were likely to experience a more intense and accelerating cycle of attacks and harassment. This held true even for cases of 'mistaken identity'.

"A woman moved in with five girls, all white family but they looked Asian because they had olive skin, they were Mediterranean. They were called 'Pakis' constantly, all the time it was shouted at them on the street" (White Female Resident)

Mixed Race Families and Black British Residents

Within such explorations we began to note with interest the responses and experiences of those families who had black or mixed race members to their own families. From very early in the research it became clear that this was not at all uncommon, and the presence of such people and relationships was used to negate any suggestion of capability for racism, as their own children or partners had experienced it. Yet in the data this could be hard to unravel, as at the same time as declaiming racism against their own families some residents expressed views that allied with those of other residents about Asian residents for example. Such selective and compartmentalised views was helpful for some as it showed how established relationships and length of time time on the estate could aid acceptance. '*I have got mixed race kids*' was a common refrain*.*

" There are a lot of people on this estate that have children of mixed race and a lot of the families aren't happy about it but at the end of the day these are their grandchildren and their nephews and nieces so they've got their opinions but I think they try to keep them quiet. " *(White Female Resident)*

This did not mean that prejudices would not be expressed against 'outsiders' and 'immigrants' illustrating the range of racisms that people had in their repertoire.

Mixed race families that we spoke with told us of the varying coping mechanisms that they used. For those parents of mixed race children they spoke of the trouble they had with understanding the abuse their children receive.

"I have brought my kids up to never fight about their colour. I used to say 'just tell them we don't use soap in our house' or that you 'forgot to wash your neck'. I used to get them to joke about it because I knew that they would be fighting forever if they thought about their colour. One day they said to me mum the abuse is racist, I told them no,no I have been on this estate for 40 years no one would…. But it was racist." (White Female Resident)

The reticence to acknowledge the explicitly racist language used towards mixed race children was replicated by residents who were relatively new to the estate.

"I want to say its racist, but I don't want to use that word, but I know they are not happy with foreigners. My son has been called names .This is from children as well, which basically I think it comes from the family, but at school they call him "blackie", the other day he told me, they call me "blackie". So what? you are black" (White 'Other' Female Resident)

Notably for mixed race families, particularly long term residents, they felt that their lack of acceptance from the community stemmed solely from their race and that it was pejoratively used as a marker.

"These are called names by people they have grown up with. As soon as they say something that is out of line or they step out of place they turn round and it's never 'oi you slag', its 'oi you nigger'. (White Female Resident)

It was also clear that people who did have mixed relationships and children from that relationship could experience very high levels of victimisation with little redress, particularly white mothers who had children to a black partner who had left the household and relationship. Such residents experienced racism against their children, and sexually motivated insults for 'going outside of their race'.

"They were calling me a 'nigger rider' and stuff and they're not the only people on this estate who call me that, that is like the local name for me that." (White Female Resident)

However there was some evidence that protective agencies and service providers gave such incidents a low priority, and could even add to the refrain that this person 'deserved' their position for choosing to have a relationship with a black man.

"I have had a policeman say to me that what the problem is that black people didn't choose to be black but you chose to make your kids this colour. You wouldn't believe the things that have been said to me, you wouldn't believe it. That is form a policeman and that was in the last 18 months, not a while back but in the last 18 months." (White Female Resident)

This returns us to the point about the white family who felt they had no redress with the council for victimisation on the estate and black families did. There is a case to be made that *all harassment* should be tackled with equal weight and responsibility, while making allowance that harassment motivated by race, sexuality or gender can be particularly hard to deal with emotionally. Racism should be tackled, but as we outlined in the previous chapter general harassment and violent conduct should also be more broadly taken into account.

'Well we've had racist comments – because my adopted dad is from Sierra Leone and he gets racist comments whenever he comes down every Christmas. And we get like "what's that nigger doing next door" and all that. And my kids are like "that's my granddad you're talking about." So we get called "nigger lovers" and stuff like that'. (White Female Resident)

In one moving account, the mother of mixed race children told us of her own difficulties in empathising with the hostility her children face and how this could, in turn, be why other residents or agencies fail to understand the extent of the problem.

" I can't talk for them, with white people, it doesn't affect them. If it's not happening everyday to them and part of their lives then they might have black friends or whatever but unless you're actually living it its like something bad happening on the news isn't it?" (White Female Resident)

The British National Party

We finally tackle the thorny issue of the BNP and approach how their message of representation of the excluded working classes ties in with local understandings and denials of racism, while undeniably racialising pre-existing resentments. A key area of concern is that voting for the BNP is seen to be a protest vote about the lack of voice for white working class people, regardless of, or in some cases because of their racist message.

"Yeah my daughter was thinking of voting for them. Because of the illegal immigrants that are coming in – the need to do something about it. She's 19 years old and she's going to really struggle to get a house. But all these immigrants coming in are getting houses straight away" (White Male Resident)

Interviewer: *Do you think the BNP represent your views?*

Respondent: *Yeah, I 've got gay friends and all that but I would vote for them me, I would vote for them now. Even though I'm not a racist and I've got gay friends, I've got half caste nieces I would vote them because they've let too many foreigners into this country. We've Polish coming in taking all the jobs because they are undercutting other people. There were a programme on a couple of week ago about cheap labor and all that and the other side of it and how its affecting people coming in and it was two different sides you know… I have gay friends who said they would vote for them as well, it's too much now. There is every race and I don't agree with these estates where they try and mix races like green pastures. They try and put too many races into one area and it just doesn't work.* (White Female Resident)

This is something that the BNP are building on and according to key informants it can only be tackled by the genuine engagement and campaigning of other political parties and independents in the area. We were provided with tangible evidence that residents had actively engaged with the BNP and their campaign material.

"A lot of the things I do but then other things I don't. I mean I have a problem with us not be able to get any jobs and of course I have a problem with what I just said but then I don't agree with the fact that they're against gays and lesbians I think they're just tried to put too much into one. People are not going to vote for them because you have people who are gay and that are also racist. So there's too much stuff banging off each other. I think people are confused when they speak to them because it's like we don't believe in this and we don't believe in that and people just don't really understand where they're coming from" (White Female Resident) .

Residents who were unsupportive of the BNP's motives pointed to their heightened and consistent presence on the estate.

Interviewer: *"So they're just playing on people's fears then really. So are there any people that you know of, that support the BNP?*

Respondent: *I know there are on [one street], I think there's even someone on our street that brings the paper. At one point they used to charge for the paper they brought round but now they don't - they just post it through your letter box.* (White Female Resident*).*

The BNP is picking up votes in working class areas and from former Labour supporters. Perhaps because of its persistent refrain of representing 'ordinary people' and concerning itself with 'grass root' politics. For a community with an inherent distrust of local authority this is a fundamental distinction and an affirmative identity.

"I'm a socialist, but I will listen to what other people are saying. The BNP, I haven't got a problem with them believe it or not. They are, on paper, saying lots of things that I come into contact with and most of them I agree with." (White Male Resident)

Whilst the BNP did not garner the complete support of local residents *'they're all smart suits but same dirty underwear'* (White Female Resident) Their campaign in the area was a successful one with many residents believing that they showed a true commitment to local concerns and opening the political system to a level of reflexivity.

Interviewer: *"Do you think that the BNP then represent people's views in the estate?"*

Respondent: *All the houses have been taken by the asylum seekers and stuff like that so…Well that is what they say on the leaflet in'it, no asylum seekers and stuff like that because they are coming over and getting everything handed on a plate that we're not and they are trying to stop all that. That is why they want people to vote for him.*

Interviewer: *And would you consider voting for them, from what you have heard?*

Respondent: *Yeah I would, coz its about housing and that and if you realise that there is more white people what are homeless because of it then…*

Interviewer: *Do you think that if the BNP were on your council then they would be able to help you more than any other candidate?*

Respondent: *I don't know but I would say probably…. Yeah it would from what they have said I think it would. (White Female Resident).*

Chapter 6   Children, Young People and Racist Harassment

Introduction

This chapter explores the ways in which racist views are reproduced in young people and how racist values are being passed on across generations, both within families on the estate and through other informal contact between children, young people and adults. It also examines the wider anxieties about the disruptive presence of young people in the community. Large groups of young people congregating in one area were often labelled as gangs and subsequently many accounts of racist hostility were linked to their presence. Their views and ideas of young people from the two estates were recorded through focus groups and conducted by the research team with the aid of the local Youth Services and Youth Inclusion Project. Focus Group A was a mixed sex group of 3 girls and 2 boys aged between 12 and 16. Group B contained 6 boys aged between 14- 17. Group C was made up of 4 girls between 10 and 12. Group D was 5 boys between 10 and 11. Consideration is also given to the provision of youth services in the area and the issue of parental responsibility.

Racial Harassment

The instinct of being established and belonging to the estate was found to be prevalent amongst young people from an early age. Family networks were identified as offering a feeling of safety on the estate. This was reflected in the way that they created allegiances, identified threats and developed their knowledge of the hierarchical rules of the area, as shown from this extract from Focus Group D.

Boy 1: *People, like two weeks ago were going round and slashing tyres. All the tyres on my street were all slashed except from mine.*
Interviewer: *And why weren't yours slashed?*
Boy 1: *Coz I'm well known.*
Interviewer: *So do you think that if you're well know on the estate then you tend not to get hassled, so new people that move onto the estate, do they get a lot of hassle?*
Boy 1: *Yeah*
Boy 2: *Yeah, and if black people move onto the estate they get moved off straight away.*
Interviewer: *Do they? And why is that?*
Boy 2: *Because they get graffiti on their windows and that.*
Interviewer: *Do they? What sort of graffiti?*
Boy 1: *Saying racist stuff.*
Interviewer: *What sort of things do they get called?*
Boy 1: *Like niggers and stuff.*

Within the general concern about young people, disaffection and criminality there were several residents who suggested that young people were most often the perpetrators of harassment and attacks on newcomers or 'unwelcome residents'. Pivotal to aspects of 'belonging' on this estate this included the perpetration of attacks on new BAME families.

Respondent: *I have heard of a few kids down there that when these Asian people moved on they put threw all there windows and that and they had moved out within a week.*

Interviewer: *Why is it that they do that?*

Respondent: *Well they don't want them here and sometimes, I don't know… maybe it's just summat to do.* (White Male Resident)

This was complex because of high levels of general 'testing' and 'targeting' of newcomers, particularly those with desirable property. We heard accounts of people new to the estate routinely getting their windows broken or their house sprayed with graffiti as a form of *initiation* to see what they would do and whether they would *grass* and these terms were commonly

used. Their response to this was seen as a test of acceptance and toughness. If they stuck it out they would be accepted. This victimisation and recognition was something that most new people, whatever their ethnicity could expect to endure. They could also expect an attempt at burglary. Residents spoke with us about the difficulty of distinguishing routine criminality and hassling of new people, from attacks that were directly racist.

Respondent: *The house over there – four people have been in there since we've moved in. Well he {boy next-door} broke in and sprayed 'Niggers' all over the wall. So they put a white family in there now after three coloured families had been in it. But everybody that moves in he terrorises them to see if they'll move out.*

Interviewer: *And how old is he?*

Respondent: *seventeen.* (White Female Resident)

It was clear though that young people between the ages of 9 and 15 were the key agents of this practice. This is not to suggest that there was no influence from others. We heard accounts of very young children indeed being involved in such behaviours and there was concern upon the estate about these children and their parents. Due to the complexities surrounding 'belonging', 'trust' and 'fitting in' we could not discern within this research whether the young people were being directly influenced by older residents and family members or through the pressure and guidance of peers. There was evidence to suggest that young people on the estate had been effectively socialised into conforming to community norms and values.

Girl: "*Yeah well I got into trouble with the police because I called her* {older neighbour} *a black monkey*"
Interviewer: *Why did you call her that?*
Girl: *Because she called me a white monkey*
Interviewer: *Why did she call you that?*
Girl: "*Well I said to her that white is better than black*
Interviewer:*" Why did you say to her that white is better than black*"
Girl: *"Because it is"* (Girl Age 11 Focus Group C)

The Youth Inclusion Project has made a significant move towards creating opportunities for social interaction, between different community groups and challenging social stereotypes and preconceptions amongst young people.

"It's always the blacks that cause all the riots because they walk around the streets thinking that they're hard." (Boy Age 16 Focus Group B)

Without such integration occurring in the local schools and accounting for present tensions on the estate it was felt that a valuable tool in preventing racist hostility would provide younger residents with exposure to a greater social mix. To this end they have established a regular link with their sister project in an adjacent ethnically diverse area giving young people from both areas the opportunity for structured interaction. Project workers often find that worryingly, the opportunity to promote integration and tolerance was a struggle as children often brought their parents' or peers negative views into their involvement with wider community activities as seen in Focus Group D.

Interviewer: *So you went to [that area]? And did you make any new friends?*
Boy 1: *I didn't go.*
Boy 2: *I did but I nearly got into a fight.*
Interviewer: *And why were you nearly in a fight?*
Boy 2: *Just because this black lad got really cheeky with me, so I was gonna batter him.*
Interviewer: *What sort of things was he saying to you?*
Boy 2: *Just getting cheeky with me.*
Interviewer: *And how did that situation get resolved?*
Boy 2: *Well this rock hard guy …started shouting in our face so I didn't do anything.*
Interviewer: *And was this because he was from [that area]?*

Boy: *Yeah, he was probably in a gang or something.*

Schools within the locality provide a homogeneous experience and therefore there is little positive interaction with children outside their narrow peer groups. Exposing young people to positive activities and the opportunity to cooperate with different faith groups seems to have fallen solely onto an organisation with limited resources. This is something that should be a priority not only at this localised level but as a necessary city wide initiative. Maintaining momentum in such work could have broader effects across the estate in teaching appropriate behaviour and tolerance. The evidence shows that young people in the area were quite intolerant of asylum seekers, and felt comfortable expressing a considerable degree of prejudice.

"People come into this country from Iran and stuff and they think they can just rule it and do whatever they want" (Girl Age 10 Focus Group C)

"There are more foreign people moving in now, you see 'em on every street and that will cause problems it will be like what happened [in other areas]. All these white and black people fighting because they're moving them all in." (Boy Aged 14 Focus Group B)

Residents often cited incidents in which they felt that young boys were being manipulated by older, more established residents into carrying out acts of harassment. Certain behaviours have been tolerated and legitimised in this community. If this pattern has held true over the last few years then it is essential that the manner in which racism is understood and mediated in the area is through the socialisation processes of young people and their engagement with the wider community.

Interviewer: *Why do you think people don't want them on the estate?*
Boy 1: *Dunno because we have too much in this country or something.*
Interviewer: *Why shouldn't they be in this country?*
Boy 1: *I don't know. This is just what I've heard.*
Interviewer: *And so when people want them moved off the estate what sort of things do they do?*
Boy 2: *Set their house on fire,*
Boy 1: *Put fireworks through their letterbox and stuff like that.*
Interviewer: *And do you know anyone that's done that.*
Both boys together: *Hmmmmmmmmmm, yeah*
Interviewer: *Do you? And do they, the people that are doing it, do they say why they do it?*
Boy 1: *No they just do it. They also throw petrol bombs and smash windows.*
Interviewer: *And just because they're black?*
Boy 1: *Yeah.*
Interviewer: *And is this a recent problem?*
Boy 1: *Well I don't know, because we don't have any black people living on the estate anymore because they've all be moved off.*
(Focus Group D

Worryingly, the ability and willingness of local residents to intervene in youth violence and acts that could be considered to be antisocial behaviour appear very limited. Indeed, we were told of how adults were complicit in acts of vandalism and harassment and how young people could use this behaviour to orientate themselves within the community.

Respondent: *There are a lot of kids going round out there with…….. they have this…hanging around with adults. There is a lot of that definitely, but at least its getting…..but I don't really know the…to be honest, or who is committing the crimes.*
Interviewer: *What sort of age are the children hanging around with adults? Mid-teens?*
Resident: *Yeah, I believe….. They was 40 or 50 years old. It doesn't seem right.*
Interviewer: *Does it seem to be that age group who are causing the trouble………..?*
Resident: *Well I don't think they are causing trouble, because yeah the young people are hanging round on corners but I used to do that when was young. But I don't know if it's for drugs or what that they hang around with older people but there is some reason. (White 'Other' Resident)*

This level of extensive peer pressure, prominent around young men on the estate, adds strength to patterns of racist hostility being replicated by a younger generation especially when left unchallenged.

"Basically here what is the most important thing is that you fit in isn't it? You've got to be one of the crowd, you have to do what everyone else does, if he {our son} dressed any differently from how the rest of them dress he'd get aggro for it, so he started to dress how they dress like them if he says anything different from them he would get aggro so he behaves like they behave because you know what, its easier than fighting against it every day (White Male Resident)

The younger groups of participants tended to have fairly polarised views, with some split between those feeling perfectly well adjusted views towards BAME families,

*"Just because someone is a different colour to you doesn't mean they're different from you. They could have the same personality as you but just be a different colour it's not there fault is it?" (*Girl Age 10 Focus group C)

and those expressing considerable hostility. In particular, the older groups of teenagers expressed fears surrounding reduced employment opportunities and access to housing.

"It's because the council won't let any of the white people move in to houses because they're giving them to all the foreigners. My aunt waited three year for a house and they gave it to a pair of Kosovans" (Boy Age 16 Focus Group)

There is the perpetual dimension of' 'unfair' or 'unequal' treatment which carried through the narratives of the very young, particularly when recalling incidents of violence or harassment from the estate.

Girl: *"People think that it's just white people who are racist but I do know a lot of people of coloured who are racist to white people as well. But the police are always quick to sort the white people out but they always think twice about sorting out coloured people."*
Interviewer: "*What sorts of incidents have happened where you've seen the police favouring black people?"*
Girl: *Well I know on our estate that there was a big fight between two families and both the black family and the white family were shouting things and they said to the black people "go home, go home" but they just let the coloured family walk off.*
(Girl Age 12 Focus Group A)

There is obviously a context for this on the estate; residents appear caught within a cycle of tension and resentment.

Boy 1: *"You can't stand up for yourself because it gets thrown back at you for being racism. You never hear of it the other way round. Black people never get done for being racist to whites."*
Interviewer: *"Do you think they are racist to white people?"*
Boy 2: *"Oh yeah" (Boys Age 16 Focus Group B)*

Anxieties around Children and Young People

The perception of young people as a disruptive and negative element of the estate was pervasive.

"It's not an estate where people live. It's a playground where all the kids can just mess around and do whatever they want". (White Male Resident*)*

This prompted us to ask important questions about the role of facilities for young people, the relationships that are developed between children, teenagers and adults in the area and the

adequacy of existing support services. Emergent concerns were that young people were creating problems on the estate through 'hanging around'. This visible lack of structured activity was then attributing to narratives of anti-social or criminal behaviour and vandalism.

"How many times do we sit here just watching TV and outside one wed or thurs not even the weekend and its after ten at night and there are girls out there smoking and drinking. Its ten o'clock on Wednesday and they're thirteen. On the street smoking and drinking and shouting? The language from them is disgusting." (White Male Resident)

Both estates suffer from persistent levels of anti-social behaviour, even by the very young.

*"I mean your looking at kids four year olds who throw stones at old people's homes and you cant tell them anything because they'll give you a mouthful because they know the law from as young as four," (*Female Resident)

The damaging activities described ranged from bricks being thrown though windows to cars and bikes being stolen or vandalised to more extreme levels of aggression. New residents in particular were very critical of this.

"When we first moved here it were really rough and that and we noticed it was mainly young ones. There were all the kids smashing glass about the place and then when there was trouble, putting bins across so the police couldn't get on to the estate and stuff like that" (White Female Resident)

Notably we found that the residents and even agency workers were quick to assert that children from the estate were "*just animals, like wild animals.*" (White Female *Resident)* They claimed that they are *"feral, the children and dogs just run around this estate with no control"* (White Female Resident) Others suggested that there was just nothing for the kids to do locally, and even those just hanging around doing no harm tended to be seen as a threat

"I think all kids, but I think more your teenagers if there was something for them to do they'd probably go do that instead of just being a menace." (White Female Resident)

The Youth Services team are only able to engage those who are willing to be involved in organised leisure activities and unable to access the core group of harder to reach young people. Scores of young people are on the periphery of this provision and it was evident that drinking smoking and drug use was a perennial problem and entrenched amongst many young people on the estate.

"The main problems on this estate are there are a lot of underage kids drinking, and there's a real problem with underage drinking. I mean we're talking 12 and 13. and there were these two lads "will you go to the shops for us?" The drugs really isn't as bad as it used to be, over the last couple of years it has….they're even getting better at hiding it.
Interviewer: *and do you think it is hard drugs?*
Respondent: *Its more cocaine and some stuff I don't even know what it is.* (White Male Resident)

Interestingly, the young residents we spoke with were quick to note that they had little involvement with alcohol or drug abuse yet were aware of heightened use within the area.

Girl 1: *" I used to smoke, I have given up now"*
Girl 2: *"I saw you smoking the other day"*
Girl 1: *"Shut up!"* (Girls Age 10 Focus Group C)

"Well they're all into drugs and that round by us aren't they" (Boy Age 17 Focus Group B)

This could have as much to do with the type of research participants we were able to access and their willingness to involve themselves with organised community initiatives and those who were not. There is good evidence across both estates that there is a strong perception

that teenagers lack sufficient provision for activities outside the home and that this contributes to problems of anti-social behaviour and subsequently fear from other residents.

Girl: *Well we can get into trouble for nothing really, people come out and go "get away from my house" but there's no where else to go.*
Interviewer: *Does that happen a lot? People asking you to move onto other places?*
Girl: *Yeah they say you're disrupting them outside their houses and causing trouble. But just because some people do it doesn't mean we all do it.* (Girl Age 12 Focus Group A)

There was a general intolerance to young people using public spaces on the estate. Many of the young people we spoke with, quite rightly, objected to the impact that the behaviour of others had on the area and resented being 'tarred with the same brush' in their own dealings with the residents.

Interviewer: *Do you think that large groups of young people could be seen as intimidating to older residents?*
Girl: *Well yeah but the thing with older people and just adults in general is that they see us as being all the same. We're seen as 'teenagers' not individuals. That is why there is bad feeling.* (Girl Age 16 Focus Group A)

The need for young people to be positively engaged is seen by residents to be at the core of several difficulties on the estate. How young people are viewed by others ultimately impacts on how they view themselves. We focus on 'activity' because our position is that punitive measures against young people are limited in their capacity to build solutions and can only be short term in their impact. The most prominent area of concern for local people was the activities and behaviour of young people on the estate. They were worried about how boredom and disaffection may spiral into criminality.

"When there is ever any trouble round here you always see some little kid in tracky bottoms running away. There are plenty of 15 or 16 year old kids who have nothing to do all the time, other that torture people or chuck things at buses." (White Male Resident)

Some older people on the estate seemed to be actively afraid of young people and to avoid contact with them and the areas where they congregated to 'cause trouble'. This could be linked in some cases to concern about *poor parenting* and moral breakdown on the estate. Schools were also brought into focus, and youth services came in for heavy criticism.

The research team heard the refrain that there was 'nothing for young people to do' in almost all of their interviews. This was often allied with discontent about how young people may self sabotage anything that was provided for themselves or younger children, such as a park or a play area. There was an evident concern that young people were not being provided for in some sense, and that such lack of provision could explain their involvement in criminality.

"I mean of course they are just going to end up going wrong. If you haven't got owt to do, they are going to end up locked up. The estate is going to back to a place where people don't want to move on it because it has got a bad reputation". (White Female Resident)

Several participants expressed that they felt that young people were not being *genuinely consulted* about what they actually wanted, and if activities were provided that suited their interests then that would be a way forward.

"There is nothing for these kids, that is why they hang around in gangs. Kids want to feel that they are part of something." (White Female Resident)

From our work with key informants it was clear that there *were* extensive activities provided for young people on the estate and that a lot of work was actually going on there. The difficulty appeared to emerge around whether young people would engage with these activities, and whether the most innovative and popular projects could be sustained. Even certain residents were keen to point out that there was an infrastructure of provision but that it was often abused.

Interviewer: *There have been some people saying that most of the hassle comes from the young lads because there isn't anything for them to do.*

Respondent: *There's plenty for them to do if they looked for it. They come round here to play football and you can guarantee that they'll walk off with one of the footballs – they just don't appreciate anything at all. It seems like a laugh to them – it's only stealing a football what's a football - a couple of quid? But then when they take that football the next groups that come in don't have a football to play with. Because if every kid that comes in takes a football there's gonna be none left and it's just not fair.* (White Female Resident)

It is notable though that local people use the inactivity of young people as a key explanation for trouble of any kind on the estate, as well as a general expression of disaffection about how people on the estate lack a future and productive occupation.

*"Thing is and this is the problem, you see it here all the time, you can't make people participate can you? We're seeing on here people with just no values and no want to do anything other than cause trouble and who is going to stop them? No one is, kids don't want to better themselves, they don't know how to better themselves, and they don't see any of the other options. Round here we're on the point where this teenage mother has had a kid then they have a kid and it just goes on and on in a loop and they're all trapped and no one breaks out of it because they don't know how to. It's easy to hang out on the street; it's easy to take drugs." (*White Female Resident)

A consequence of young residents on the streets and in public places is that it is increasingly seen as threatening behaviour by other residents.

"My view is that there should be a zero tolerance there really should. Why should 6 or 7 lads stand at the end of the street? I'm told it's their right to do that and I don't think that is right, nobody should have the right to intimidate other people. No one should have the right to be standing in groups at most there are up to 30 of them. I mean what are 30 youths doing standing at the bottom of someone else street for hours on end drinking booze, doing what they're doing. It's the fact that they're there". (White Male Resident)

Some residents said that their perception of young people as threatening and as a source of anti-social behaviour was significant enough to stop them walking around the estate or using certain routes

"Well we avoid going down the ginnels, and walk the long way round because there are always kids smoking spliff and sniffing glue down there. You always see the bags where they've been sniffing glue" (White Female Resident)

In all the residents interviews and discussions with young people, the lack of organised, interesting and affordable leisure facilities emerged . A strong theme was that young people were criticised for occupying themselves in disruptive ways i.e. vandalism and petty crime when there were no alternatives on offer. Where facilities do exist, cost, location and limited places were cited as obstacles to participation.

"Round here they have…they have got a graffiti stand in that central terminus…come on it is a graffiti stand! We have got all that wasteland down there where they have built the new school and that. There is all that there and there is just nothing for them. (White Female Resident)

In the interests of supporting local residents it is vital to provide suitable facilities for young people. The current frameworks of provision for young people offered by the Youth Service and more targeted provision from the local Youth Inclusion Project are not necessarily well placed to rectify this situation alone. As residents pointed out, there is also a mismatch between the sorts of facilities provided for young people and the sorts of places they themselves want to use.

"Yeah but then if you do give them something to do they wont go to it, with youth clubs and things they end up getting a church or something to run them and the kids aren't interested, they're not bothered" (White Resident)

The Youth Service offers a predominance of sporting activities that are based around the local leisure centre and the Youth Inclusion Project which is based at the One Stop Centre. Neither of these are dedicated facilities, and their buildings and amenities reflect that. Problems of provision are further exasperated by young people showing unwillingness to take part in activities on either side of the estate. The young people themselves felt that they have few facilities for leisure and constructive engagement in local life. Although the young people involved in our focus groups were frequent users of the leisure centres and the youth service, many of them were dissatisfied and they too acknowledged that there were many on the estate that were disenfranchised.

Boy 1: *Well they go out stealing cars and smashing up windows and stuff?*
Interviewer: *And you've seen that on your street?*
Boy 1: *Yeah, it's teenagers innit.*
Interviewer: *And why do you think they do it?*
Boy 1: *I Dunno, probably because they're bored, because there is nothing else to do. I know people that do it.*
Boy 2: *Me too.* (Boys Aged 11 Focus Group D)

We believe that as part of wider community cohesion work there should be an increased emphasis on different age groups feeling that they can use all the public spaces on the estate. The rationale being that no resident should feel as though they are at risk from abuse or hostility from any other part of the community.

"You shouldn't be scared of four to ten year olds; I don't think you should anyway. You can't have people afraid to leave their houses or walk down a street because there are kids on it. That's ridiculous "(Female Resident)

A common thread throughout our discussions with young people was a feeling that they misunderstood by other residents and some local service providers. This was occasionally mirrored in the views of residents who also believed that children on the estate were being criminalised unfairly. There need to be an emphasis on creating spaces that young people feel they can use and have ownership of but that parents and other residents feel are safe and non threatening

"All they do is they stand and they congregate round whichever corner they want to stand at that particular time. I mean sometimes you can walk up and down the street you have got a kid on that…a set on that corner, a set on that corner and whichever end you go there is all different groups of them. It is not that they are causing trouble they are just stood there because they have got nowhere else to go. They're not trouble makers." (White Female Resident)

Some examples of more engagement with young people in developing better services were evident. For example, a number of young people had worked with the local youth services to develop fundraising activities in order to create a portable 'youth pod'. This is a portable youth bus that offers a neutral space for young people with access to 'Playstations' and DVD players but that is also monitored by a youth worker.

Boy: *I think most of the trouble is caused because kids don't have anything to do. Where as if the pod does work I think there'll be much less crime going on in the area?*
Interviewer: *What sort of crime goes on because kids have nothing to do?*
Boy: *Well I don't know if will do anything about the big crimes like burglary. But stuff like graffiti, and shooting people with BB guns and just shouting things to people on the estate, it will calm that down.* (Boy Age 12 Focus Group A)

This level of engagement, however, is the exception rather than the rule. They gave astute accounts of what was wrong with their area and particularly what they felt young people were

lacking. It is essential for young people to be involved in the design, development and management of these facilities to ensure that they meet real needs and are not seen as another instrument of authority. This came out in Focus Group A where a disheartening mistrust of the local authorities was strongly articulated.

''You go and talk to people and they'll say "oh we'll see what we can do." And then you go and ask them 'what have you done? It's spoken about and then it's just forgotten about. You'll say to councillors "we want a park" and they'll write it down and then you go back and ask them what they've done and they go "oh yeah we've spoken about it" but really, they haven't''.
(Boy Age 12 Focus Group A)

The feeling that young people's complaints or concerns would not be taken seriously is compounded by lack of confidence in the system and the perception that local authorities are unable to deliver desirable outcomes. What is lacking is any mainstream or cohesive response to the problem of inadequate local amenities for the young. There is room for improvement within the existing Youth provision, and there is an obvious fracture in the relationships between local organisations. Ostensibly some are providing opportunities and activities to engage and keep young people out of 'trouble' and others are there to ensure that the support needs of vulnerable young people are met.

A process of collaborative design and development and management between young people, the wider community and the local authorities has to be achieved. Children and teenagers must be more systematically involved in processes of decision-making. Spending could also be diverted to try and engage teenagers in less formal or site based facilities. There needs to be a way in which strategies for developing more appropriate leisure facilities for young people, with an emphasis on facilities that are more genuinely accessible to a wider range of young people. The benefits of this kind of initiative not only involve young people in decision-making and 'ownership' of their services but also bring young residents into constructive contact with the wider community and positive influences from outside of their peer group. This is imperative, particularly in the summer which, as noted previously, has become a key flash point for disturbances on the estate. The absence of regular, consistent provision on the estate could very well be to blame.

The young people, when consulted, all had their own ideas about what activities should be on offer and suggested that spaces provided should be as flexible and informal as possible to ensure their suitability for a variety of pursuits such as skateboarding, track biking or even a conventional play park. There is a, however, a certain credence that the practicality or indeed suitability of some of the suggestions would not be entirely beneficial.

Interviewer: *'What sort of things would you like to see in the area?*
Boy: *Motorbike places, because we like going on motorbikes and quads so something big like that where we can drive them''.* (Boy Age 11 Focus Group D)

Similar suggestions were made by other residents on the estate when asked what could be provided in terms of youth amenities. Paradoxically, adult residents confirmed the need for park areas and open congregational spaces for young people yet also 'more for young people to do' The research team believes that simply providing a skate or play park within the area may result in the ghettoisation of this space. The perception of teenagers hanging around, even if they are not behaving in a disruptive manner, as threatening behaviour will not be diminished by cattle- penning them into a specific geographic area. Young people and activity has to be more than a mere diversionary method of keeping young people 'off the streets'. This has to be valued as a step toward providing more positive opportunities. Allocating spaces for young people to go to and things for them to do is only the start of a serious commitment to addressing young people's needs and it is obvious that different young people in the estate require more acute attention.

Lack of Parental Responsibility

"Kids need to be taught right from wrong. Round here they just get taught wrong" (White Female Resident)

Early intervention and development work with children is clearly vital in tackling disadvantage and poor behavior. Throughout our interviews with residents the onus was placed solely on parents to create this secure environment and positively impact on their children.

"You've got to feel sorry for these kids because they don't know no different. And you just can' know. What's the difference if their parents are taking drugs and their parents don't do anything? How can they know any different? They don't do they?" (Female Resident)

Our findings suggest that the quality of parenting from families on the estate came under heavy criticism. Importantly, it was the lack of responsiveness shown to children's disruption that was cited as veritable encouragement.

"You get the parents who are all like "my kids don't do anything wrong, and it's not my child fault." But if the parents aren't going to punish them then they're just going to carry on doing it" (White Female Resident)

It has been identified that a greater level of assistance for parents is needed. The local Youth Inclusion Project provides parenting classes but is, again, considered to be having a limited reach focusing on those who have been referred to the project. 'Parenting' certainly remains a sensitive a stigmatised issue and there needs to be an increased awareness the across the whole estate of how to provided support networks for young people.

"I don't know whether it would be possible to do a youth club and someone else could try and influence them. If the parents aren't willing to do the parenting then could someone else do the parenting? Even if you only influenced a few of them it would still probably be worth it." (White Female Resident)

Respondent: *It's the young children, not the adults or teenagers; it's the young children who are causing more trouble on this estate than anything. This estate is run by kids.*
Interviewer: *But nobody controls them?*
Respondent: *No because the families that they've come from are those who have been in trouble with the police and not gone straight* (White Female Resident)

Many residents believe that the police have little are no control over young perpetrators because of their age. This implies that the young people take part in anti social behaviour because of a tacit acceptance from parents and other residents tied with a lack of accountability.

God you can't believe why they let them run wild like that? But the police can't do nothing, what can they do to them? To a ten year old? ", (Female Resident)

Such arguments tie in with and are strengthened by previous accounts about how 'no-one cares' and the abandonment of local people by the authorities. This rooted consensus of mistrust operating in parallel to a desire to be helped and guided is embedded within the culture of the two estates.

Conclusion

This report arose from a set of local agency concerns about increasing racist hostility and violence in an area of low-income social housing in Leeds, together with a strong sense that what is needed is firstly, a better understanding of how racist hostility works and, secondly, more effective action to respond to this issue based on these findings. The need for an improvement in agency responses was recognised by many representatives from these agencies. Poor levels of service, poorly implemented policy, poor perceptions of service and a strong desire for more effective work with local communities were powerfully stressed:

"Leeds has quite a grand Hate Crime Strategy..but on the ground it isn't delivering..
It is a statistic on a piece of paper there have been ten hate crimes, but what they [other agencies and parts of the Council] don't appreciate is that their are ten families with children that are getting beaten up, moved out and traumatised…'
What is lacking from the Council is enforcement work… and work changing people's perceptions…
There is none of that effective building of the community to provide an opportunity to counter some of that in-built hostility".
(Housing Manager)

"*The level and adequacy of support for victims and families suffering from racist victimisation is 'appalling' and services are 'very fragmented'.*"
(Customer Services Manager)

 "I think the [racial harassment policy] is fine and I think the rhetoric is wonderful but the actual operation, what happens on the ground' may not realise the policy….
There is a major issue of under-reporting…
People report it to the authorities and perceive that they have received an indifferent response…
How do you deal with a community who feel that they have so much anger that they have to attack somebody?....What is lacking is engagement with communities..getting them to change, support and befriend people"
(Hate Crime Officer, Neighbourhoods and Housing)

Our report strongly supports the general thrust of these views and seeks to show how greater understanding of both the impact of racist harassment on victims and the complex ways in which racist hostility works in local communities requires a re-thinking and a renewal of policy and practice in this field.

Evidence from victims and identifies the immediate and escalating levels of racist violence they experienced. They also understood that, although many individuals from agencies provided excellent services to them, public agencies were often also unable to deliver effective victim support, effective enforcement or effective prevention.

The drivers of racist hostility include white resentment of black and minority ethnic families' ability to access social housing, jealousy of lifestyle and possessions, and perceptions of unfair preferential treatment. Competition-based racist hostility in relation to housing and low paid work was strongly voiced. This is compounded by everyday racist talk/gossip/hearsay and related misinformation, and denial of racist intent. One centrally important contextual factor is community self-policing: power and mobilisation of local family/community networks to enforce hostility, hound families out, maintain an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, and instrumental promotion of racist hostility where it is seen to be useful to achieve family/community/criminal goals. Several tensions on the estate are linked to very narrow and specific social and geographic boundaries of trust and safety. Racisms on the estate are linked to fear of the 'other' and fierce allegiance to those who are close to oneself, often for protection. Poverty, abandonment and disempowerment were often articulated through racist hostility. Mistrust of authority and feelings of disengagement can lead to community self regulation practices that are exclusionary and defensive. Narratives of neglect and lack of care were strongly expressed together with some strong sense of community pride and affection for the area. Hostility to public agencies, and an embattled sense of political and

social abandonment and isolation with local values of 'toughing it out' and 'looking after your own' are frequently upheld. So, for many households on these estates racist hostility meets a test of practical adequacy, it makes sense and fits with core norms and values.

Racism on the estate takes a number of forms, is expressed in a variety of ways and also intersects with a multiplicity of other bitter resentments and emotions that are to do with class, poverty and gendered identity. It is often hard for both residents and researchers to separate issues of racism out from other common practices of resentment, exclusion and suspicion within estate life. People on the estate are not always explicitly racist in terms of skin colour but draw upon spectrums of belonging and entitlement that factor in class, family affiliation, heritage and level of contribution to estate life. Race difference was often used as a channel for rage, anger and disaffection, as an expressive tool but not always the motivation. This helps to account for the high level of denial, distancing and justification expressed in relation to racism. Some of the more severe racist incidents on the estate were precipitated or triggered by noise nuisance, alcohol, adjunctive traffic incidents/accidents and unsociable hours.

A range of different forms of racism were identified. There was a strong impression given that Asian groups were the most unwelcome and hated in the area and we heard accounts of how Asian families had been hounded off the estate before they could even get their possessions out of the removal van. Black African families were highly visible key targets of racist hostility. During the research a Sudanese family had received threatening letters, Nigerian families had experienced a battery of harassment and abuse and a Zimbabwean family had golf balls routinely aimed at their windows and their car set alight. Catch-all terms such as 'Kosovan' and asylum-seeker were also used in labelling households as problematic and for targeting hostilities. There were wider levels of harassment aimed at people with Southern accents, working lifestyles and Eastern Europeans. The racism experienced by mixed race families and their hostile views about other groups are also identified. Racist values are being passed on across generations, both within families on the estate and through other informal contact between children, young people and adults. It also examines wider anxieties about the disruptive presence of young people. Large groups of young people congregating in one area were often labelled as gangs and subsequently many accounts of racist hostility were linked to their presence. The significant role the BNP has played was identified showing how their message of representation of the excluded working classes ties in with local understandings and denials of racism, while undeniably racialising pre-existing resentments.

This study has sought to open up the debate about how racist attitudes and racist behaviour operate in order to develop more soundly based strategies for action and intervention. The need for an improvement in agency responses was recognised by many representatives from these agencies together with a strong desire for more effective work with local communities. The need to address the fundamental and central role that race plays in hostility and violence through such work is imperative. The parallel report argues for action on this basis and provides a comprehensive account of policy and practice examples that need to be considered in conjunction with the findings of this report in the pursuit of a 'Racism Reduction Agenda'. Building such a response involves developing community-based campaigning and preventative initiatives, improving reporting, intelligence gathering and surveillance, pursuing crime and conflict initiatives, improving agency practice, improving cross-sector learning/working, improving work with perpetrators and offenders and developing performance standards which remain very limited. Urgent action is needed to respond to the pressing issues raised in this report and although racism and related violence have been shown to be highly durable in Leeds it is clear that significant progress can be made to improve the quality of life of local communities if the issues raised here are given the serious and careful attention they deserve.

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