



Community Cohesion and Neighbourhood Management

A Theme Report from the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders National Evaluation



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SQW Consulting

Department for Communities and Local Government

The findings and recommendations in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Department for Communities and Local Government.

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Summary

This theme report explores **community cohesion** and the role that neighbourhood management can play in promoting it. In particular it looks at issues of race, ethnicity and culture as they relate to community cohesion.

Neighbourhood management is an approach to service improvement and community engagement in area renewal. It brings together the local community and service providers at a neighbourhood level to tackle problems through influencing mainstream service provision. Thirty five Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders were established by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now Communities and Local Government) in two rounds in 2001–02 and 2003–04 in deprived areas across England.

For this theme report five Pathfinders were chosen from around England as case studies to explore issues of race, ethnicity and culture and how these issues affect community cohesion. The case study neighbourhoods are based in Westminster, Southwark, Gloucester, Rotherham and Stockton on Tees. They were selected to cover a range of geographical and social contexts and a range of issues in respect of cohesion and also where the Pathfinder had been engaged in some relevant activity.

Community cohesion is something that is being sought for all communities, so that different groups of people, whether new or existing residents of an area, and people from different backgrounds, can integrate and get on well with each other. It requires people from different backgrounds to have similar life opportunities, to know their rights and responsibilities and to be able to trust one another and trust that local institutions will act fairly. The community cohesion agenda is not the same as that of race equality or tackling extremism although the three sets of issues are related.

The five Pathfinders examined:

- are inner city in location
- have a minority ethnic population of around 25%–30% alongside a majority White population
- have a varied minority ethnic population, comprising:
 - Asian – mainly settled and conservative communities
 - Black-Caribbean
 - Black-African
 - Asylum Seekers and Refugees
 - Central and Eastern European
- are characterised by significant housing problems
- demonstrate few overt signs of racial tension but with a perception by the Pathfinders and their partners that it lies not far beneath the surface.

Four of the five Pathfinders have identified community cohesion as a priority area in their Delivery Plans. They have all been active in promoting projects which have been focused on race, ethnicity and cultural issues over the last few years. Altogether, about 30 individual projects have been implemented including work with particular minority ethnic groups (and particularly women within those groups), language and citizenship support for new in-migrants, small-scale project funding and events.

Several have, however, taken the view that the more important cohesion issues relate to age, gender and territory rather than to race and ethnicity with one explicitly stating that specific action to support minority ethnic communities could in itself be divisive. Thus, some Pathfinders have not pursued many activities directly targeting issues around race and ethnicity, preferring a different approach. The view among some is that if general service provision and community engagement can be improved – such that all communities are benefiting from good services, and feel that they are being listened to – then community cohesion will follow. Some of the Household Surveys conducted for the national evaluation suggest that racial harassment is relatively low on the list of issues to address in the five Pathfinder areas; although more detailed analysis shows that minority ethnic groups can experience significantly higher harassment than the population as a whole.

Although some Pathfinders have chosen not to focus community cohesion activity on race, ethnicity and cultural issues, important and apparently effective interventions have been put in place, including:

- developing Pathfinder structures and fostering and organising events that should help to break down barriers and bring together diverse communities which otherwise might lead ‘parallel lives’
- actions to defuse specific situations which might increase tension between communities: BNP marches in Bermondsey, issues relating to the location of mosques in Westminster and Stockton-on-Tees
- gathering and collecting information and intelligence about what is going on and where potential flashpoints might need to be anticipated; creation of structures and mechanisms that have defused potential triggers for discord
- providing opportunities for an ethnically diverse cross section of the community to advise mainstream service providers.

Most of the case study Pathfinders accept that they are still learning in what is a complex and difficult area, partly as they have only been operating for a few years. They do not yet know the full range of cohesion issues that may be present in their areas. In some Pathfinders it is recognised that race, ethnicity and cultural issues need to be addressed directly through targeted projects as well as through general approaches to community engagement which are part and parcel of neighbourhood management. It is encouraging that in these areas, Pathfinder action has stimulated recognition of these issues at a much wider level locally.

However, this report suggests that there needs to be greater understanding of, and more priority attached to, the community cohesion agenda, no matter how challenging this can be. Part of the core definition of community cohesion calls for those from different backgrounds to “*have similar life opportunities*” and be

able to “*trust local institutions to act fairly*”. This relates directly to the work of neighbourhood managers in improving services in their areas for all. Yet, our research suggests, that the extent of information about both the quality of services at a local level, and who is accessing them, is highly variable and many cohesion projects do not directly address this. Neighbourhood Managers and their public service partners must not shy away from the difficult issues around allocating public resources and improving fair access to public services, in addition to more direct activities that can promote cohesion.

1 Introduction

This report has been prepared as part of the long-term national evaluation of the Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders. Thirty five Pathfinders were established by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now Communities and Local Government) in two rounds in 2001–02 and 2003–04. The Pathfinders were set up to test a new model of neighbourhood management, exploring how bringing service providers and the local community together might lead to improved outcomes.

The purpose of this theme report is to explore the challenge of community cohesion and the role that Neighbourhood Management (NM) can play in promoting it. It draws on a set of case studies conducted in five NM Pathfinders in autumn 2007 as well as a review of national policy documentation. The aim of the report is to:

- understand the nature of the community cohesion challenges facing Pathfinders in their neighbourhoods
- understand what activities the Pathfinders have promoted to address these issues
- identify any lessons or good practice on community cohesion and neighbourhood working.

In this report, the focus is on matters of ***race, ethnicity and culture*** as they relate to community cohesion.

Preparing this report

Five Pathfinders were chosen to be case studies for this subject:

- **Church Street:** City of Westminster
- **Community Counts:** Barton, Tredworth and White City, Gloucester
- **Eastwood and Springwell Gardens:** Rotherham
- **Parkfield/Mill Lane:** Stockton-on-Tees
- **South Bermondsey Partnership:** London Borough of Southwark.

Together with a review of national policy on community cohesion at the time, these five case studies have been the main source of evidence for this Theme Report, supplemented with some data from the household surveys conducted for the national evaluation. The five case study areas were selected to cover a range of geographical and social contexts and a range of issues in respect of cohesion and also where the Pathfinder had been engaged in some relevant activity over the last 2–3 years. The case studies draw on actual ‘on-the-ground experience’ in the Pathfinder areas concerned, with fieldwork conducted in the autumn of 2007, involving semi-structured interviews with residents, service providers and staff from the Pathfinders. Further contextual information was also provided in each Pathfinder area from the annual evaluations that have been conducted in each area by the national evaluation team over the last few years.

2 National Policy Context

This section of the report summarises current central Government policy and available evidence on community cohesion and provides the context for this report.

Origins of the community cohesion policy agenda

The present community cohesion policy agenda was developed following the disturbances in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham in the summer of 2001. The most influential idea at the time was that people from different communities were leading 'parallel lives' with little interaction at home, school or work, and that this was contributing to divisions between people from different backgrounds. This view was set out in the report by the Independent Review Team¹. Detailed guidelines were subsequently issued to local authorities on how to take forward community cohesion in all policy areas. Since then there has been considerable debate about different approaches to community cohesion.

Much of the focus has continued to be on minority ethnic communities, in particular, the extent to which residential segregation of different ethnic communities has been seen as a barrier to cohesion. This association between residential segregation, cultural identity, and a lack of community cohesion has been challenged by some policy analysts, however, on the grounds that ethnic communities may be internally cohesive, and that the roots of conflict between communities cannot be explained by segregation per se.

The events of 9/11 in 2001 and 7/7 in 2005 are seen as having influenced the community cohesion agenda to have a greater focus on integration and also strengthened the related agenda to combat extremism. Within both of these agendas, but particularly the cohesion agenda, the issues of *race, ethnicity and migration* are significant, although, as discussed below, the cohesion agenda is broader than this.

The meaning of 'community cohesion'

The original definition of community cohesion adopted by the Home Office had four elements²:

- a common vision and sense of belonging for all communities
- the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued
- people from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities

¹ *Community Cohesion, a report of the Independent Review Team* (Home Office, December 2001)

² (Home Office, December 2001)

- strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

The 2007 report by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion (CIC) set up by Communities and Local Government, *Our Shared Future*, widened this definition to include:

- an individual's rights and responsibilities when living in a particular place – people know what everyone expects of them, and what they can expect in return
- trust in institutions to act fairly in arbitrating between different interests and for their role and justifications to be subject to public scrutiny – this includes a recognition of the need for the fair allocation of public resources between people, and for this to be seen to be fair
- the contribution of both those who have newly arrived and those who already have deep attachments to a particular place, with a focus on what they have in common.

In February 2008³, following the fieldwork for this research, the Government responded to the CIC outlining its definition of community cohesion as follows:

Community Cohesion is what must happen in all communities to enable different groups of people to get on well together. A key contributor to community cohesion is integration which is what must happen to enable new residents and existing residents to adjust to one another.

*Our vision of an integrated and cohesive community is based on **three foundations**:*

- *People from different backgrounds having similar life opportunities*
- *People knowing their rights and responsibilities*
- *People trusting one another and trusting local institutions to act fairly*

*And **three key ways of living together**:*

- *A shared future vision and sense of belonging*
- *A focus on what new and existing communities have in common, alongside a recognition of the value of diversity*
- *Strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds.*

It is important to note that the community cohesion agenda is not the same as that of race equality or tackling extremism although the three sets of issues are related in some respects.

³ *The Government's Response to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion* (Communities and Local Government, 2008)

The key issues in community cohesion

Race, ethnicity and culture

The definition of community cohesion as set out in national policy documents makes clear that it refers to cohesion between groups from a variety of different backgrounds. In practice the concept has been particularly associated with issues relating to ethnic minority communities. According to the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), minority ethnic is an umbrella term covering all the characteristics of a 'racial group' as well as groups who share religious and cultural bonds.

The picture has been complicated by immigration from Eastern and Central Europe. The scale of migration since 2004 has had an impact in parts of the country which had not previously experienced major in-migration, such as East Anglia. The growth of new communities, such as Polish neighbourhoods, with a strong cultural identity has highlighted issues of community cohesion arising from the relationships between recent migrants and established communities in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods.

Recent research undertaken for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation⁴ has explored the impact of immigration on community cohesion. One of these studies found that neighbourhood tensions often took a racial form and were mostly driven by conflicts over resources such as access to housing and jobs. The lack of contact between new migrants and other residents tended to increase negative perceptions of migrants. The authors found examples of successful projects at a local level that were tackling social divisions by facilitating connections between different groups. Some involved bringing together people from different backgrounds to participate in sport, music, childcare, residents' associations, and activities led by faith organisations. The report argues that effective action to promote community cohesion at a local and neighbourhood level needed to engage *both* established and new communities.

Other issues

National level policy discussions regarding the scope of the agenda have stressed the importance of addressing issues affecting other groups. These include:

- age and intergenerational issues. The focus has been on the perceived disaffection and lack of engagement of young people in some communities, while in others it is the tensions between old and young members of the same communities.
- gender issues. These include the barriers experienced by women in participating in employment, as well as in the community and public life.

It is the breadth of the concept of cohesion, and the wide range of issues that it encompasses that led the CIC report to stress the need for a local perspective:

We strongly believe in tailored and bespoke local activity to build integration and cohesion. That is why integration and cohesion are crucial at a local level. It is at the local level that leaders can understand in detail the profile of the

⁴ Hudson M., Phillips J., Ray K. & Barnes H., *Social cohesion in diverse communities* (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2007). Available as free download from www.jrf.org.uk

population, the changes that are taking place, the impact of these changes in the local economy and services. And most importantly it is only at this level that specific initiatives can be crafted and delivered to build better integration and cohesion.

Approaches being taken at a local level to promote community cohesion

At the time of the research conducted for this report (in 2007) local strategic frameworks for promoting community cohesion were generally set by local authorities, following central government guidance⁵. Priorities and approaches varied greatly between individual authorities. This was demonstrated by the findings of the Home Office/(then) Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) Neighbourhood Renewal Unit National Community Cohesion Pathfinders Programme. Fourteen Pathfinders were set up in April 2003 and ran for 18 months to encourage local authorities and other stakeholders to develop a range of initiatives to integrate community cohesion into mainstream services. The experience was drawn together in 2005 to produce a toolkit of best practice for local government and its partners⁶ which set out steps for achieving community cohesion including:

- Leadership and commitment
- Engaging communities
- Challenging and changing perceptions
- Community cohesion and specialist programmes.

A study conducted by Ipsos MORI⁷, for Communities and Local Government and the CIC, to identify 'what works' in community cohesion projects, was based on research in six local authority districts. While all six had well developed cohesion policies and projects, the focus varied according to the profile of the local disadvantaged groups, including that of new migrants and established ethnic minority groups. A wide variety of the local authority approaches to improving community cohesion included the following:

- Supporting new arrivals
- Developing English language skills
- Developing a sense of the commonality between groups from different backgrounds through neighbourhood forums and local groups seeking to improve the local area and services
- Maximising the role of the voluntary and community organisations and faith groups which were seen as best placed to understand local issues, and more likely to be trusted by people and to engage with hard-to-reach groups.

⁵ *Community cohesion – an action guide* (Local Government Association, 2004); *Community cohesion, a guide for local authority leaders and chief executives* (Local Government Association and IDeA, 2006)

⁶ Home Office, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, March 2005, *Community cohesion: seven steps – A practitioner's toolkit*

⁷ Communities and Local Government, 2007, *'What works' in community cohesion*, based on research in Birmingham, Blackburn, Bradford, Hull, Peterborough and Tower Hamlets

The research found that it was not a priority to take action to avoid separation between groups from different ethnic backgrounds in either residential location, or schooling. Although residential segregation might make interaction between different groups more difficult, it was acknowledged that there could be benefits arising from the internal cohesion within local communities. The Ipsos MORI study also analysed evidence from individual projects and put them into the following categories:

- Encouraging interaction between young people from diverse backgrounds
- Myth busting
- Supporting the social and economic well-being of different groups
- Language
- Engagement and participation
- Avoiding tensions over specific events
- Social inclusion projects for young people involved in gang culture

At present Communities and Local Government is putting in place a new national delivery framework and new funding for local authorities and their partners, to guide and support the promotion of community cohesion. As a result, some of the guidance described here (although relevant at the time of research) may be superseded.

Conclusions

From the perspective of this report, some broad conclusions can be taken from the contextual research:

- Coherent definitions of community cohesion have developed which include a particular focus on the importance of integration of people of different backgrounds, highlighting the importance of race, ethnicity and cultural issues
- National policy recognises that the perception that local institutions (including public service providers) act fairly in arbitrating between different interests and ensure fair access to services is important to integration and cohesion.
- It is important to ensure that local thinking is engaged in the identification of which community cohesion issues to address in an area, and how to do it
- A range of approaches have been tried with some apparent success. Some have been very specific (eg de-fusing potentially disruptive events) whilst others have been incremental and longer term (eg building a commonality of interests through a neighbourhood forum).

3 The Pathfinder Neighbourhoods and Cohesion Issues

This section summarises the nature of the case study Pathfinder neighbourhoods and the cohesion issues in each of them.

Neighbourhood Management

Neighbourhood Management (NM) is an evolving approach to improving public services, building community capacity and promoting renewal in deprived areas. The suggestion for the identification of Pathfinder areas that could test the new approach emerged from the Social Exclusion Unit's fourth Policy Action Team (PAT4) report⁸. The Pathfinder programme was established in 2001.

NM brings the local community and local service providers together, at a neighbourhood level, to tackle local problems and improve local services. The process is run by a manager who is responsible for viewing the neighbourhood in its totality as a 'place' rather than simply being concerned with individual services, and who seeks to develop a systematic, planned approach to improving the quality of life in that neighbourhood. The approach is based on influencing mainstream service providers in how they deliver services and make resource allocation decisions, rather than through the provision of additional special resources. The manager is primarily accountable to the local community through a multi-sector board.

The purpose of the Pathfinder Programme has been designed to test the role for Neighbourhood Management in neighbourhood renewal set out in the PAT4 report, namely to *"enable deprived communities and local services to improve local outcomes, by improving and joining up local services, and making them more responsive to local needs"*. It has specifically been targeted at deprived areas to test the potential contribution of NM in 'narrowing the gap' between them and the rest.

The twenty Round 1 Pathfinders have been operating for six years, set up in 2001–02. A second round of fifteen Pathfinders with a somewhat different mix of characteristics (eg including some rural neighbourhoods) was launched in 2003–04. Their areas range in population from 5,000 to 25,000.

Each Pathfinder has a seven year programme. Round 1 Pathfinders were each awarded £500,000 per annum over the period 2002–03 to 2008–09 to cover the costs of creating and supporting a local NM team and a project fund. Round 2 Pathfinders were offered £350,000 per annum over the period 2005–06 to 2011–

⁸ *National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal: Neighbourhood Management: Report of Policy Action Team 4* (Social Exclusion Unit, April 2000)

12, the smaller sum a recognition of the desire to test the approach with a smaller 'project' fund.

Pathfinder funding is now rolled into Local Area Agreements (LAAs), overseen by Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs). All funding decisions are now taken locally. The Pathfinders have been subject to continuous evaluation, undertaken by SQW Consulting together with partner organisations. This Theme Report draws in part on the conclusions from the annual evaluations undertaken in each Pathfinder area during the period of the national evaluation.

It is also apparent that the Pathfinders, set up to address local issues within particularly deprived areas, have approached this in different ways. This becomes clear in the discussion of how they have looked at community cohesion, described below.

The case study areas

Case studies have been undertaken in five Pathfinder areas, three from Round 1 and two from Round 2. The five were selected because we were aware that there had been relevant activity in the Pathfinder, or because there appeared to be different or interesting contexts. We have sought to explore a variety of areas and issues. Their main characteristics are described next, including their ethnic mix and other factors which relate to community cohesion. (Estimates of minority ethnic populations are taken from the household surveys conducted for the national evaluation by Ipsos MORI and GfK NOP, unless stated otherwise.)

Church Street: City of Westminster

Church Street is an inner city area in London. It has a population of about 10,000. The housing stock is 90% rented (public and private sector) and consists largely of tenement blocks. The population is 59% White (although only half of these are White British, the other half being from outside the UK), 18% Asian and 11% Black, with the rest from a wide range of other backgrounds. The minority ethnic population tends to have a younger age structure than the White population. The area clearly experiences constant change with waves of immigrants from new sources superseding one another. An estimated 30 languages are in use. However, the view from the Pathfinder is that although there might be some tension in the area, it is not often directly related to race and ethnicity. Poor housing is the main source of social problems though there are some local perceptions about preferential treatment for minority ethnic groups in relation to housing allocation.

Community Counts: Barton, Tredworth and White City, Gloucester

This Pathfinder is also located next to a City Centre and also has a population of around 10,000. Barton and Tredworth are narrow streets of private terraced houses while White City and the Parry Estate are predominantly ex-Council houses with a white working class population. The area is 70% White, 18% Asian and 7% Black Caribbean. There are some asylum seekers and refugees (ASRs), mainly African in origin, as well as newcomers from central and eastern Europe, including Czech

Roma. The area is characterised by low incomes and relatively high crime levels. It is the most ethnically mixed area in Gloucester and in Gloucestershire. The Asian community is traditional, conservative and coherent but the African-Caribbean group is more fragmented. Here too there is relatively little overt tension in the area, but the view of the Pathfinder is that the various communities lead 'parallel lives', with little interaction. There is an element of gangsterism and inter-racial conflict. The July 2007 flooding uncovered underlying tensions when there was the claim that the Asian community received support from other Asian communities outside Gloucester, suggesting some form of preferential intra-community support. This was negatively portrayed in the press though swift action by the local police to distribute water supplies defused the situation and had a positive effect in building trust with the Asian community.

Although community cohesion is not seen locally as a problem there are still some issues.

- low educational attainment and high unemployment for some young African-Caribbean males, the consequent low self-esteem spilling over into other aspects of their lives
- Asian residents not accessing mainstream services (eg youth services)
- newly arrived migrants experiencing exploitation at work and sometimes poor quality housing linked to employment.

Eastwood and Springwell Gardens: Rotherham

This consists of three communities close to Rotherham Town Centre – Eastwood Village, Eastwood Middle and Springwell Gardens. The population is just over 5,000. It is characterised by rented accommodation, some of which is multiple occupancy. The population is 25% minority ethnic, most of whom are in a well-established Asian community. There are about 150 asylum seekers. Within this relatively small minority ethnic community, 17 languages are spoken. As in Church Street, poor housing is a problem. The main tension which exists is between the more established Asian community and the more recent asylum seekers and refugees.

Parkfield/Mill Lane: Stockton-on-Tees

Parkfield/Mill Lane is located next to Stockton Town Centre. It is characterised by privately owned and rented housing with a substantial number in multiple occupancy. Housing conditions are poor and the area is about to be subject to substantial rehabilitation through Housing Market Renewal work. The population is just over 7,000, about 20% minority ethnic; this constitutes a large proportion of the Stockton minority ethnic population. The minority ethnic community in the Pathfinder is mainly Pakistani (originating largely from one particular town in Pakistan). It is a longstanding, settled and traditional community. There are currently also about 300 asylum seekers and refugees, mainly Middle Eastern in origin. There was some conflict between the two minority ethnic communities at one time but this has receded. There are some specific problems within these minority ethnic communities, mainly to do with unemployment and lack of things to do among young Asian men, as well as some health problems. The view from the Pathfinder is that there are few open racial tensions in Parkfield/Mill Lane, but that they may lie beneath the surface.

These emerged when the question of the opening of a new mosque was raised. This is returned to later.

South Bermondsey Partnership: London Borough of Southwark

This is the largest of the Pathfinder case study areas with a population of 16,000. As with some of the other case study areas, there is a high proportion of rented housing in the area (around 70%, most of which is rented from the local authority or an RSL). Minority ethnic groups make up about 30% of the community, about half of whom are Black African, mainly Nigerian Muslim. There is also a large traditional working class white community. There are apparently few overt racial tensions in the area. The British National Party (BNP) is active but has made few inroads. Cohesion issues are considered to be mainly generational or territorial. That said, race and ethnicity issues are thought by the Pathfinder to be just below the surface and sometimes can emerge over a specific issue, such as the apparent inconvenience caused by parking at a major mosque. There is a declining number of racial incidents in the area but also a suspicion by the Pathfinder that many go unreported to the Police with the minority ethnic community coming to tolerate a certain degree of harassment. Nearly 30% of the minority ethnic population see racial harassment as a serious problem.

Common threads

It is helpful to pull out some of the common features of these areas. They tend to:

- be inner city in location
- have a minority ethnic population of around 25%–30% alongside a majority white population
- have a varied minority ethnic population with many diverse elements the main ones being:
 - Asian – mainly settled, relatively long-standing and conservative communities
 - Black-Caribbean
 - Black-African
 - Asylum seekers and refugees
 - Central and Eastern European.
- be characterised by significant housing problems in some areas
- demonstrate few overt signs of racial tension but with a perception from the Pathfinder and local partners that it lies not far beneath the surface.

4 Pathfinder Approaches

This section summarises the approaches that the case study Pathfinders have taken to addressing cohesion issues in their areas. The Round 1 Pathfinders have been operating since 2001–02 and the Round 2 Pathfinders have been operating since 2003–04.

Church Street: City of Westminster

Community cohesion is one of seven themes in the Pathfinder Delivery Plan. The Pathfinder has taken the view however, that community cohesion should run 'alongside' the main body of renewal work rather than being a separate theme of activity on its own. Other items, such as dealing with crime, physical environment and economic development, are considered to be more important as single issue subjects. Part of the 'workplan' for 2007–09 is focused on addressing community cohesion and identifies four key outcomes:

- a community tolerant of diversity
- increased levels of neighbourliness and belonging
- a well informed community
- well skilled and trained community leaders, activities and volunteers.

To achieve these outcomes the plan sets out three types of interventions:

- community events and activities to promote neighbourliness and belonging and tackle the 'age divide'
- deliver a communications strategy which engages residents
- support local peoples' involvement in neighbourhood management and in their neighbourhood generally.

Many of the 'cohesion' projects suggested by the Pathfinder are general in nature, and are aimed at improving neighbourliness and contact in the area, including across the generations. These include a 'day out to Margate' and 'Reminiscence Evening'. Undoubtedly, these bring people from diverse groups together. There are also a smaller number of actions which are directed specifically at race, ethnicity and cultural issues. These are as set out in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Pathfinder projects in Church Street	
Project	Description
What's on Your Plate	Involves 25 residents from five different communities. When they meet one nationality leads the session by cooking national dishes and explaining the cultural significance of the food. Members of the public are invited to try the food at an event hosted in their community which also includes music and dancing.
International Women's Day	Brought together over 200 women from a range of ethnic backgrounds for activities linked to food, music and dance.
Church Street Summer Festival	Annual festival of 50 stalls and entertainment – live performances, a talent show, fairground rides etc. Some of the local organisations that run stalls and provide information about their services included Vital Regeneration, City of Westminster College, St Paul's Church, the local NHS Primary Care Trust and the Fire Service.

Community Counts: Barton, Tredworth and White City, Gloucester

Community cohesion is not an explicit aim for Community Counts. As in Church Street, the focus is on community engagement for all communities in the area with an emphasis on improving relationships with service providers. The most important 'cohesion' issue in the area is territorialism, so much activity is targeted in this direction. However, cohesion generally has been tackled by:

- promoting minority ethnic representation on the Pathfinder Board and Neighbourhood Panels advising some of the major service providers (including Police and Street Care)
- specifically trying to bring young people from different backgrounds together, and
- the individual projects referred to in Figure 4.2 below.

Figure 4.2: Pathfinder projects in the Community Counts area

Project	Description
Community Awards Ceremony	An annual event which highlights and celebrates the contribution made by volunteers. The community nominate individuals and winners are presented their awards in a high profile ceremony. An Asian-led community project felt that it gave them an opportunity to publicly thank their volunteers. The ethnic mix of the winners and the participants promotes a cohesive image.
Work with minority ethnic elder groups	Initiatives to counter a high rate of diabetes and heart disease among older Asian and African–Caribbean women. Issues to be tackled included a low level of English among many older women, GP dietary advice that did not relate to Asian diet and lack of clarity about diagnosis and use of medication. The Pathfinder developed a team of peer educators and transformed the way the service was presented by local GP surgeries. This has been mainstreamed by the Primary Care Trust.
Survey of new communities in the Pathfinder area	This was undertaken by a consortium led by the mainly White English White City Community Project, but included a Polish group, an African Caribbean Association and a Portuguese group. The research became an effective cohesion process in itself as the groups established good links between each other.
Citizenship course	This aimed to address the immediate needs of the migrants. Each session focuses on a topic of interest – housing, employment rights and so on – presented by relevant professionals. The Pathfinder also funded a welcome pack for asylum seekers.
Defusing tension over specific events	A fear of crime survey had shown a hotspot. A group of Czech Roma young men spent their evenings talking, drinking and playing music in a local park, which some local people found intimidating. The Pathfinder organised a barbeque and got the East European families and the local residents to attend which broke down fear and mistrust.

Eastwood and Springwell Gardens: Rotherham

Community cohesion is a major plank in the Delivery Plan for this Pathfinder. There is a specific Community Cohesion Sub-Group of the board and a Community Cohesion Action Plan. The specific terms of reference for the sub group are to:

- provide opportunities for different groups to form positive relationships.
- facilitate activities that celebrate and value diversity
- link with a range of community cohesion activities in the area
- facilitate debates on the needs/aspirations of local people within a safe environment
- support community participation.

There is a strong representation from minority ethnic groups on the board and the sub-group. More generally, on behalf of the Borough Council as a whole, the Pathfinder is taking forward a review of neighbourhood governance policy with the expected output being a neighbourhood governance model. There are strong links to the LSP which is now also highly orientated towards community cohesion activity and has its own Community Cohesion Group and Community Cohesion Action Plan. Emerging from this has been an effective series of events.

The Pathfinder Community Cohesion Sub Group works with a number of community-based groups which actively support community cohesion within their activities. Figure 4.3 sets out the activities which have specifically addressed race, ethnicity and culture which have been undertaken in this area.

Figure 4.3: Pathfinder projects in Eastwood and Springwell Gardens

Project	Description
Home from Home	A series of groups run by RMBC library staff aimed at increasing confidence in the use of spoken and written English, familiarisation with official organisations and citizenship.
GROW	Development of women from the asylum seeker and refugee community supporting their integration, including craft sessions. Some of these groups are marginalised by the more established minority ethnic communities.
Street soccer – diversionary football	Provides sports coaches to deliver weekly football sessions for young people, bringing people from all backgrounds together.
Multi Agency Approach to Racist Incidents	A multi-agency approach (RMBC, South Yorkshire Police, Probation Service, PCT) to dealing with racial incidents. Provides advice and support to individuals and local schools. Works with young people and vulnerable groups, holds mobile events and produces materials to promote greater understanding.
Immigration and nationality project	Provides assistance and advice around the issues of citizenship, passports and visas.
Women’s Forum	Development of a Women’s Forum as an independent community organisation to create a platform for the promotion and celebration of women and cohesion among women from all cultural backgrounds.
English as an additional language	Appointment of a Community Learning Manager and Family Learning Manager. Aims to raise attainment at Key Stage 1 with a particular focus on reducing the gap for children for whom English is not the first language.

Parkfield/Mill Lane: Stockton-on-Tees

Community cohesion has been a consistent element in the Delivery Plans in this Pathfinder (although the balance of action is now weighted more towards the Borough than the neighbourhood level – see below). Although overt racial tension is not seen as a problem in Parkfield/Mill Lane, the Pathfinder took the view early on that the presence of a significant minority ethnic community in the area required a specific response. This took shape in two ways:

- positive effort to secure minority ethnic representation on the Pathfinder board; this has borne fruit in that there are now five representatives from minority ethnic groups (including ‘Buddies’)
- appointment of a Community Cohesion Officer (from the minority ethnic community) specifically to promote good community relations.

The Community Cohesion Officer was mainstreamed into Stockton Borough Council in 2006 and has proceeded to work on Borough-wide projects (including a diversity road show for all Council staff) and a community cohesion strategy. The Pathfinder continues to be involved in individual cohesion projects and activities, but general higher level activity, including the servicing of a minority ethnic Forum as part of the LSP, Stockton Renaissance, now takes place at the Borough wide level. The Pathfinder's own attempts to create a minority ethnic forum for the Parkfield/Mill Lane were not a success. This seems to have been because the community itself was not at that time ready to come together in such a way and was more interested in responding to specific issues (eg for housing renewal). Possibly because of this experience, the Stockton-wide initiative which has followed, so far seems to be more productive. Wider effort in Stockton is also supported by the Stockton International Family Centre (SIFC) which exists to promote good community relations. SIFC was instrumental in setting up the Pathfinder originally and has worked closely with the Pathfinder over the years by providing guidance on community cohesion issues.

The Pathfinder currently seeks to facilitate change directly with communities by providing support for individual (mainly small scale) projects as well as influencing/supporting mainstream service providers to respond to minority ethnic community needs. There are regular consultations with local minority ethnic community leaders (including the ward Councillor) about how emerging issues (especially as they relate to young people) should be addressed. Specific Pathfinder activities which relate directly to the minority ethnic community and have been aimed at promoting community cohesion are set out in Figure 4.4.

It is difficult to say how long these activities will be sustainable, or indeed will need to be. Many may not survive the end of Pathfinder funding, though it may be that the prominence which the LSP now gives to the issue may help to keep them going should they be required.

Figure 4.4: Pathfinder projects in Parkfield/Mill Lane

Project	Description
Community engagement work in relation to a new mosque	This could have been a controversial or divisive proposal. However, this has not turned out to be the case at least in part down to the contribution of the Pathfinder. The Pathfinder Team worked with the Mosque Committee and the local community to draw out and resolve issues. Individual meetings included Stockton BC Planning and Engineering and other service providers. Local residents' representatives were involved. The Team led and chaired public meetings in the area and carried out house to house visits to listen to concerns and provide explanation if necessary. An information sheet presenting the facts about the proposal was also prepared and distributed. Community consultation consultants (Rewind) were employed through the Pathfinder to meet with individual local groups. The approach appears to have been effective (we understand that so far there have been no problems) because of its intensive nature over a relatively small area. Some changes were made to the proposal (eg in relation to parking) because of the concerns expressed during this consultation exercise.
Community engagement in relation to housing market renewal proposals	There is a large minority ethnic population in two areas subject to redevelopment under Housing Market Renewal. Community Reference Groups were set up by the Pathfinder which organised meetings, secured the co-operation of the Housing Department and chaired the Groups. The Team prepared explanatory leaflets and visited every house to explain what was being proposed. The Housing Department has acknowledged that through this process contact has been made with minority ethnic groups that it had been difficult to reach before.
Minority ethnic volunteer warden project	This ran during 2004. Some of the volunteers have gone on to be full time wardens.
Teesside African Health Community	This project supported a group of women refugees. Funding of £11,500 was secured by the Pathfinder in part to establish a social enterprise. This also involved an African celebration at the local arts centre and setting up a luncheon club in Parkfield Community Centre.
Asian Women's Forum	The Pathfinder funded a dedicated space for elderly residents to sew together, especially those who might otherwise be isolated. This was a small one-off project which involved capacity building as well as funding support. The group was given help with their accounts and accommodation.

South Bermondsey Partnership: London Borough of Southwark

Southwark was one of the Home Office/ODPM Community Cohesion Pathfinders referred to in section 2. The Cohesion Pathfinder covered the whole Borough of Southwark. It had a strong influence on the first South Bermondsey Pathfinder Delivery Plan which specifically identified community cohesion as one of its principal objectives. The Delivery Plan promoted a policy of making cohesion core business with ambitious targets that said that by 2011:

- 90% of residents will be satisfied or fairly satisfied with living in the neighbourhood
- there will be no significant difference in satisfaction levels between white and minority ethnic residents

- the percentage of residents who state that people of different backgrounds get on well with each other will have risen to 60%, and those who agree that ethnic differences are respected will have risen to 50%.

The view in this Pathfinder has been that cohesion in the South Bermondsey neighbourhood is as much to do with territorial insularity and age as ethnicity; thus, much if not most of the Pathfinder activities in the first couple of years either directly or indirectly addressed these issues. In its early stages the focus of the Pathfinder's approach was on:

- organising or facilitating events that brought different sections of the community together (with 'difference' defined by territory and age as much as ethnicity)
- promoting a sense of identity across the neighbourhood, and in particular by inviting those with long memories of Bermondsey to share their experience with more recent arrivals – helping build both inter-generational and inter-ethnic links
- developing the local community group structure, both through direct capacity building and a small grants scheme.

The operational priorities of the Pathfinder have been reviewed and revised by a new neighbourhood manager with the decision to focus on service influencing rather than small-scale funded projects; the Pathfinder does not plan to continue with the events as proposed in the original Delivery Plan. At the time of the research there were few actual projects specifically targeted at promoting community cohesion by addressing issues of race, ethnicity and culture but the following projects had previously taken place, as set out in Figure 4.5.

Figure 4.5: Pathfinder projects in South Bermondsey

Project	Description
Small grants programme	This addressed specific group well-being needs, for example supporting a Turkish Cypriot pensioners' outing, starting up a Somali Heritage Organisation, and supporting an Eid celebration event.
Fun-days, festivals and carnivals	The various events that the Pathfinder stimulated created opportunities for young people from different parts of the neighbourhood and different ethnic backgrounds to meet and take part in shared activities.
Dispelling 'urban myths'	A regular section in the Pathfinder newsletters tackles a different urban myth each edition. One example set out the actual entitlements of asylum seekers, refugees and economic migrants.
Defusing tension over specific events	Disputes about issues of a non-racial nature can acquire a racial dimension when the antagonists come from different racial groups. At service times and especially during Ramadan, there are large numbers of cars outside a Mosque in a predominantly non-Muslim area. The tension was defused through mediation by the Pathfinder between representatives of the Mosque and local residents.
St George's Day Festival	The first festival was held in 2006, funded by the Pathfinder, with the aims to Celebrate St. George's day, educate people about St. George, provide a fun event, bring people from diverse cultures and age groups together, recognise and celebrate the different local cultures that make up Bermondsey. The Pathfinder originally co-ordinated and funded the event. Around 30% of those attending were from minority ethnic groups.

Conclusions

The five Pathfinders considered in this section each have differing challenges in their areas and differing communities. Each has also understood and responded to the issue of community cohesion differently. Some have explicitly recognised cohesion as a priority and sought to develop and promote a range of specific activities to promote it. Some have sought to promote cohesion as part of their wider activities, sometimes more implicitly than explicitly.

Also worth noting is that although Pathfinders recognise that deprivation and access to public services may vary between ethnic groups in their communities, none of the Pathfinders in the study appear to have a clear and comprehensive view on the extent to which different ethnic groups in their areas access, or benefit from, public services, partly because information on this is not readily and widely available. Given that key features of the government's definition of community cohesion now include *"people from different backgrounds having similar life opportunities"* and *"people trusting local institutions to act fairly"*, working to ensure that different sections of the community have equal access to services, and are seen to have this, must be an important part of any approach to promoting cohesion. This means that better monitoring information must be made available on the extent to which this is the case in each area.

5 Results

This section describes how the case study Pathfinders' cohesion activity might have had some effect in their neighbourhoods. The nature of these issues makes it very difficult to assess their benefits and impact as they are not easily measured. Apart from some limited data taken from the National Evaluation's Household Surveys, the case study reports rely largely on qualitative information and local evidence.

Indicators of change

It is worth looking at what can be gleaned from the national evaluation's Household Surveys for each of the five case study areas. Data relevant to the issue of community cohesion is somewhat limited in these surveys but Tables 5.1 and 5.2 set out the main findings for one indicator which relates to perceptions of racial harassment as either a *"problem or significant problem"* for each area. We provide data for this indicator for each area, for each of the two waves of surveys. We have also provided (where data is available) a breakdown for 'White' and 'minority ethnic' sections of the population. Comparator data are also provided⁹.

From Table 5.1 we can see that, in all five areas over the three year survey period, there has been a trend showing a fall in the proportion of people who believe racial harassment to be a problem, although only in Eastwood/Springwell and Parkfield/Mill Lane are these changes statistically significant. In both of these areas, reductions have been greater than in the Pathfinder comparator. Although it is not possible to attribute the improvement in the Pathfinder areas to Pathfinder activity, as we cannot demonstrate a cause and effect relationship, there may have been some impact.

According to the Household Surveys, racial harassment is a much smaller problem in most Pathfinder areas in the eyes of all residents than, for example, drug dealing, car crime or *"teenagers hanging around"*. It is not identified by residents collectively as a priority, although it remains high in relation to the comparator. Perhaps as a consequence, some of the Pathfinders have taken limited direct action to address issues of race, ethnicity and culture but have set greater store on creating means through which residents can influence service providers more generally as a way of addressing a whole range of problems. Indeed several Pathfinders have suggested that this general approach is their main means of tackling community cohesion rather than through direct and targeted action to promote cohesion through particular attention to issues of race, ethnicity and culture.

However, a more detailed analysis of the household survey results by ethnicity reveals a more complex picture, as set out in Table 5.2. For three out of five of the case study Pathfinders no difference is identifiable between the White and minority ethnic populations in their perceptions of the extent of racial harassment. However, within Parkfield/Mill Lane and South Bermondsey minority ethnic groups there is a

⁹ A 'comparator' was created for each round of Pathfinders, comprising a sample of households from areas as deprived as the Pathfinder areas but without neighbourhood management partnership, to help the evaluation team identify the 'added value' of neighbourhood management.

greater perception of racial harassment than within the rest of the population. This indicates that the experiences of ethnic groups can vary greatly and that this should be carefully considered when framing policies and responses. This is discussed further in the final section of this report.

Figure 5.1: % of residents who believe that racial harassment is either a problem or a serious problem in their area

	Pathfinder			Comparator		
	Baseline	2 nd Wave	Change	Baseline	2 nd Wave	Change
	R1: 2003 R2: 2004	R1: 2006 R2: 2007		R1: 2003 R2: 2004	R1: 2006 R2: 2007	
Church Street, Westminster (R2)	19	14	-5	8	8	0
Community Counts, Gloucester (R1)	20	18	-2	9	8	0
Eastwood and Springwell, Rotherham (R1)	27	19	-8*	9	8	-1
Parkfield/Mill Lane, Stockton (R1)	27	17	-10*	9	8	-1
South Bermondsey, Southwark (R2)	23	20	-3	8	8	0

Note: R1 are Round 1 Pathfinders, and R2 are Round 2 Pathfinders established slightly later, with the dates of the household survey waves in each area shown in the table above.

Note: * denotes a statistically significant change between the baseline and 2nd wave at the 95% confidence level.

Figure 5.2: % of residents who believe that racial harassment is either a problem or a serious problem in their area, by ethnicity

	Baseline		2 nd Wave		Statistical differences
	R1: 2003 R2: 2004		R1: 2006 R2: 2007		
	White	Minority ethnic	White	Minority ethnic	
Church Street, Westminster (R2)	18%	19%	14%	13%	No statistical differences over time or between groups
Community Counts, Gloucester (R1)	20%	22%	17%	20%	No statistical differences over time or between groups
Eastwood and Springwell, Rotherham (R1)	Not available		18%	18%	No statistical difference between groups (time series data for groups not available)
Parkfield/Mill Lane, Stockton (R1)	Not available		13%	37%	Statistical difference exists between groups (time series data for groups not available)
South Bermondsey, Southwark (R2)	17%	39%	17%	26%	Statistical difference exists between groups (see note)

Note: In South Bermondsey the apparent reduction in perception of racial harassment among minority ethnic residents is only of borderline statistical significance. Due to the small sample sizes at the neighbourhood level it would be unwise to treat this as a reliable evidence of a decrease within this group.

Perceptions of change

Here, we consider qualitative evidence from the case studies about perceptions of change. Most of the case study Pathfinders report change which is related to general improvements in community influence or neighbourliness, that is, the broad Pathfinder activities, with little that is specific to race, ethnicity and culture or community cohesion.

There is anecdotal evidence from each of the case study areas that people feel slightly more able to influence decisions but less evidence about neighbourliness or changes to issues affecting such racial tension. Pathfinders all believe that broad based community engagement has improved in the areas concerned.

However, there are felt to have been some specific influences on race, ethnicity and cultural issues. There is a view in Parkfield/Mill Lane and Eastwood/Springwell that by championing issues of race, ethnicity and culture in relation to community cohesion, the Pathfinders have raised the profile of the issue and put it on the agendas of other, bigger organisations. The Parkfield/Mill Lane Pathfinder can certainly claim some success on this front, particularly in the influence that it has had on the LSP which is now wholehearted in its support of minority ethnic representation and activity. The same is true in Eastwood/Springwell where the Pathfinder Community Cohesion Sub Group paved the way for a Borough-wide community cohesion group. In both cases, the Pathfinder has influenced thinking about community cohesion and raised its profile at a much wider level.

Also in Parkfield/Mill Lane, the Pathfinder can point to significant change in proposals for housing renewal in the area specifically to reflect minority ethnic community concerns, recognised and channelled through the Pathfinders. In Eastwood/Springwell there has been influence on wider provision as the GROW asylum seeker/refugee initiative and the Women's Forum are feeding into the Rotherham Women's Strategy. In the Community Counts Pathfinder in Gloucester there has been beneficial influence on NHS GP provision in relation to the health needs of older women from the minority ethnic community, where health workers have developed new approaches to overcome language and cultural barriers to improve the take up of services. There is also some evidence from individual residents in the Gloucester Pathfinder that participating in Pathfinder-supported activities has changed their attitude to other ethnic groups for the better.

Several of the Pathfinders can point to success in taking specific actions to defuse potentially difficult situations, as described in the previous section, in one case (South Bermondsey) completely overshadowing an established demonstration by the BNP. It may well be that these actions have contributed to the reductions in racial harassment recorded in the Pathfinder areas.

Conclusions

Trying to measure the impacts of work to promote cohesion in these areas is very difficult, with limited relevant data available. However, in two areas at least, survey evidence points to a reduction in perceptions of racial harassment to which those

Pathfinders may have contributed. The case study research also highlighted many examples of practices and initiatives in all five areas that should be beneficial for community cohesion. More detailed analysis of survey evidence also highlights that minority ethnic groups can (although not always) have different perceptions than the population as a whole, highlighting the danger of relying upon 'average' data for a population that can obscure the views of minority groups within it.

6 Conclusions and Implications

This theme report has sought to draw together the case studies on cohesion from the five Pathfinders where it was believed that there was significant activity or interesting lessons to be learned. This report has focused in particular on issues of **race, ethnicity and culture** in relation to how they may influence community cohesion. The evidence from the Pathfinders examined suggests that they are not uniform in how they have addressed this issue. It is possible to identify three broad findings.

First, some Pathfinders (especially in Round 2) accept that they still do not know the full range of cohesion issues that might be present in their areas. They accept that they need to find out more about the experience of different minority ethnic communities whom ‘service provision and positive change might not yet be reaching’. With small teams and limited experience, it might be difficult for Pathfinders to do this, but policies relating to community cohesion in general and race, ethnicity and cultural issues in particular may still be in a process of developing. It is clear that perceptions of what community cohesion is, and what influences it, also vary significantly.

Second, the two Pathfinders, Parkfield/Mill Lane and Eastwood/Springwell, that have developed activity directly targeted at race, ethnicity and cultural issues also appear to have seen the greatest improvements according to available indicators. Our ability to measure change in this complex area is limited and it is not possible to generalise too far from such a small number of case studies, but the evidence gathered here suggest some association between the activities of the Pathfinders and some observable improvements. The Pathfinders have also specifically addressed these issues by introducing specific structures into their operations which are race, ethnicity and culture related.

Third, there is a view in some of the case study Pathfinders, that community cohesion is:

“not so much the “icing on the cake but the chocolate that runs through a marble cake.....the Pathfinder believes that a more cohesive community will be created by achieving more effective and efficient public services in the neighbourhood, combined with creating a sense of interest and momentum in the neighbourhood as place where residents want to live”. (Church Street representative)

In Church Street, the board has taken the view that *‘if specific actions to support BME communities were introduced, the targeted activities may create artificial divides within the neighbourhood and make certain communities stand out as being different’*.

The view among some of the Pathfinders reviewed is that if general public service provision and community engagement can be improved, community cohesion will follow – as all sections of the community will benefit from good services, and all will feel that they are being ‘listened to’. This is based on the understanding that a general approach such as this addresses the common concerns of different

communities. While there may be much to commend this approach, there remains a question about whether it is enough in all circumstances. Our analysis in the previous sections suggests that a more general approach may not be as effective as a more direct approach, and may not be sufficient to tackle the concerns of specific groups within the community, who may have greatly varying experiences.

Overall, there are some fairly strong views on this issue. Among those that prefer a more 'general' approach, there is a feeling that the main challenge to cohesion comes from other issues such as tension between age groups and territorialism rather than from race or ethnicity, and that the definition of 'community cohesion' priorities should be made locally by neighbourhoods themselves.

Reinforcing this attitude is the suggestion from the Household Surveys in all the Pathfinders examined that 'racial harassment' was lower down the list of concerns than several other problems. Whilst this may be the case, when a breakdown of the data is provided it sometimes shows (as in the case of two of the case study Pathfinders) that the proportion of those in the minority ethnic groups who have experienced harassment is much higher than in the population generally.

It is therefore quite possible that cohesion issues specifically relating to race, ethnicity and culture are more important than the aggregate statistics suggest and perhaps deserve to be addressed more directly than some Pathfinders have indicated.

However, it is also significant that although some Pathfinders have said that they do not wish to address race, ethnicity and cultural issues directly, important and apparently effective interventions *have* been put in place, including:

- developing Pathfinder structures and fostering and organising events that should help to break down barriers and bring together diverse communities which otherwise might lead 'parallel lives'. The opportunity for people simply to mix should not be underestimated. Thus although some Pathfinders have not focused on specific initiatives aimed at tackling race, ethnicity and cultural issues directly, this does not mean that nothing is being done or that the issue is being ignored
- actions to defuse specific situations which might increase tension between communities: BNP marches in Bermondsey, mosque-related issues in Westminster and Stockton
- gathering and collecting information and intelligence about what is going on and where potential flashpoints might need to be anticipated. There is some evidence that the Pathfinders have created structures and mechanisms that have defused potential triggers for discord
- providing opportunities for an ethnically diverse cross section of the community to advise mainstream service providers, who themselves sometimes lack the internal capacity to provide community development skills (especially where services are put out to tender to private companies).

This activity may be having some effect given the fall in incidences of racial harassment in Pathfinder areas.

Final word

The Pathfinders accept that they are still learning in what is an incredibly complex and difficult area. It may be that the route forward is that adopted in the longer running Pathfinders in Eastwood/Springhill and Parkfield/Mill Lane where it is recognised that race, ethnicity and culture is indeed an important and specific issue which needs to be addressed directly through projects *and* processes as well as through the general forms of approach to community engagement which are part and parcel of neighbourhood management. It should not be either/or and this may be the view that is emerging now in the Round 2 Pathfinders. It is certainly encouraging that in the Round 1 cases, Pathfinder action has stimulated recognition of issues relating to race, ethnicity and culture at a much wider level locally, for example in Eastwood/Springwell Gardens where their local cohesion group has helped to prompt similar working across the borough.

However, this report suggests that there needs to be greater understanding of, and more priority attached to, this agenda no matter how challenging this can be. Part of the core definition of community cohesion calls for those from different backgrounds to *"have similar life opportunities"* and access to *"local institutions that act fairly"*. This relates directly to the work of neighbourhood managers in improving services in their areas for all. Yet, as our case study work identified, the extent of information about both the quality of services at a local level, and who is accessing them, is highly variable and many cohesion projects do not directly address this. Neighbourhood Managers and their public service partners must not shy away from the difficult issues around allocating public resources and improving access to public services in ways that promote community cohesion.

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