# Public value and local communities

## A literature review

Ricardo Blaug
Louise Horner
Amy Kenyon
Rohit Lekhi

the work foundation

# Contents

**List of Boxes and Tables**

# Aims of The Work Foundation project

Building on existing academic and policy work around public value, The Work Foundation's project aims to help policymakers, public managers and institutions understand the concept of public value and see how it can be applied in practice.

Public value addresses many of the contemporary concerns facing public managers. These include problems of securing legitimacy for decision making, resource allocation and measuring service outcomes. This research project draws together different strands of the current debate around public value, clarifies its elements and seeks to further understanding of this topical and important conceptual innovation in public service delivery.

The project's objectives are to:
- provide a clear definition of public value
- provide public managers with a set of guiding principles that orient institutions to the creation of public value
- use sector and case studies to illustrate how organisations might understand where gaps occur in achieving public value
- clarify the components and processes of public value in order to facilitate its future capture and measurement.

**Sponsors**
The project is sponsored by the following organisations:
- BBC
- The Capita Group plc
- Department for Culture, Media and Sport
- Home Office
- London Borough of Lewisham
- Metropolitan Police
- OfCOM
- Quality and Improvement Agency (formerly the Learning and Skills Development Agency)
- Royal Opera House.
- The NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement (formerly the NHS Modernisation Agency)

**About this paper**
This paper is one of several background reports being prepared for the public value sponsor group. The research outputs include:
- *Public Value, Politics and Public Management: A literature review*
- *Public Value, Citizen Expectations and User Commitment: A literature review*
- Sector papers, seminars and presentations on how public value applies to different sectors like local government, policing, skills, broadcasting, arts and culture, and health

## Public value and local communities

- Case studies examining how public value applies to different institutions, ranging from Lancashire Constabulary to the V&A Museum, and as a way of understanding particular local policy issues, such as recycling in Lewisham
- Papers on measurement exploring how social scientists have operationalised the concept of public value and applied it in a variety of diverse settings. These also examine how public managers are currently measuring public value, the gaps in information, difficulties around decision making, and how a public value framework can resolve these issues.

Please note that the views expressed in this report represent those of the authors and may not necessarily represent those of the project's sponsors.

# Executive summary

**Section 1: Community and public policy**

- A lack of trust, voter apathy and a perceived lack of responsiveness among public services have contributed to a rising interest in the notion of community among policymakers and public service managers. The underlying assumption is that strong, vibrant local communities can help reconnect public services with the public they aim to serve.

- There is a tendency for research into communities to focus on local services, structures and physical space. A public value approach, with its emphasis on the 'authorising environment' – the public, politicians, stakeholders such as trade unions and other organisations on which delivery depends – reorients the current debate towards issues of legitimacy and governance, as well as holding on to the fact that the provision of most services happens locally.

- The term community is also contested. Is it about geographical location or communities of interest; shared values or level of attachment, eg to one's workplace or place of learning? Are these communities made up of individuals who have a choice about when, why and how they participate in those communities? How is the notion of community used? Is it about defending the rights and privileges of the few, eg those wanting to protest the right to go fox hunting, or is it about understanding multi-culturalism, ethnicity and social inclusion? Finally, when and why do communities become visible and when do they remain invisible – and does this matter? Here, wealth can be a determining factor, but it should not be confused with being a criterion for either a strong, or even weak, community.

- All of us are part of multiple communities in terms of our interests, where we live and work, and our socio-demographic status. Understanding communities and how they are formed, operate and change has become a significant focus of research and policy intervention. But the government also needs to prioritise its resources. This tends to result in a focus on those who are most disadvantaged in society; where communities may be either strong or weak, but often remain hidden and poorly understood. This tends to bring the attention of policymakers back to the importance of place, for example looking at local areas of multiple deprivation, the development of employment zones, the New Deal for Communities, SureStart and Best Value – a regime led and implemented by local government.

- Increased public participation has been a strong theme in many of these initiatives. The aim is to improve service providers' responsiveness to their local community. The very success of such initiatives depends on the levels of engagement of disparate local communities in improved service delivery.

- However, improved service delivery is not the only goal. Civic renewal has been a persistent theme of New Labour's policies in its attempt to address not only the decline in representative democracy, but also to give individuals and communities confidence in the public realm, thereby improving their sense

of community. Communities are thus seen as a means to an end (improved service delivery) and a good thing in and of themselves, whose cohesion can prevent civil unrest as well as prevent exclusion and the perpetuation of a cycle of poor services for poor people.

- The term 'new localism' is now widely used as shorthand for devolution of power from central to local government, and for the need for increased power and involvement of local people in service delivery. However, there is a danger in conflating the two and confusing devolution with responsiveness. The government is reluctant to hand greater power to local government or to reduce requirements to achieve national standards that could lead to further inequity or postcode lotteries in health and education. The debates about devolution have therefore tended to dwell more on the power relationship between central and local government and their respective politicians than on the healing power of communities or communities that need healing. It is perhaps the community, in both of these capacities, that many policy initiatives have already focused on and which should really be at the heart of new localism. Yet difficulties arise when moral judgements are made about different types of 'communities' – should government seek to eradicate the 'wrong' sort of communities and how does it know? – and the issues this raises about legitimacy and governance. If this is the case, then it suggests that some people are participating in the wrong way. There is a clear danger that in promoting 'participation', one is promoting the civic activities of the wealthy and the white – such as voting, becoming a councillor or school governor, or participating in formal voluntary work.

**Section 2: Authorisation, governance and community**
- The report finds that the equation of active participation (in its broadest sense) by empowered citizens in a vibrant public sphere, as put forward by Habermas in 1970, is more conducive to a public value approach. It looks at how local communities are truly empowered to authorise what should be provided through the public purse, rather than how they simply interact with the existing structures of local government and accountability. A public value approach argues for real accountability that balances central and local priorities for all providers of services (the police, local authorities, schools and so on) to a particular locality. Minimum standards are then maintained while local providers can be responsive to the needs of their own communities.
- Multi-agency and partnership working in existing vertical lines of accountability, for example with SureStart and youth offending teams, is not without its tensions. These are principally around co-ordination, vision and leadership – roles that should position the local authority to demonstrate community leadership that operates across institutional boundaries. Community leadership is more than service administration, and focuses on the

ability of the local authority to listen to and shape what the local public and stakeholders want.

### Section 3: Community practices

- Where does this leave the public or communities of either place or interest? This report finds that participation is seen primarily as instrumental to the goals of community strength and cohesion. Democratic theory has, in turn, focused on how individual views are collected and that those procedures are fair and open. There is therefore a renewed emphasis on the need for public services to pay greater attention to the processes of citizen engagement, through which they can then understand the complexity and heterogeneity of the public. Here, public value is not just about more participation, and even less about institutional reform, but rather it advocates more effective participation, institutional support for communities and rounded accountability rather than simply upward accountability to a minister. In Section 3 we list numerous examples of community practice oriented to community cohesion, strengthening communities, active citizenship and institutional reform. Importantly, these examples illustrate innovation with local services as well as the public's desire to be involved.

### Section 4: Measurement in the community

- The community approach has sought to measure communities in terms of their 'strength', but what constitutes strength in this context is far from clear. Strength can mean the capacity to act, or to maintain and enhance outcomes, to withstand shocks and support community members, but can also refer to values such as collaboration and participation, trust and responsibility. In policy making, social capital has become a shorthand for community strength, even though it is more about associations and their density. This too had been hard to measure. However, the government has attempted to ensure that there is some consistency towards the subject by outlining five key dimensions each with specific indicators – social participation, civic participation, social networks and support, reciprocity and trust, and the views of people in the local area – in its UK Social Capital Measurement Framework. Other approaches look at measuring community cohesion and community participation, such as that used by the Home Office Citizenship Survey.
- Innovations in community measurement are occuring around three areas: community-based research, community involvement as a collective entity and community readiness. All three processes are indicative of public value in action, involving community groups in setting research questions and getting people and researchers to collaborate during the process of the research project.

**Conclusion**

- In conclusion, the report finds that the discourse of community in public policy, particularly around strength and civic renewal, can help illuminate some public value issues relating to public engagement, accountability and the difficulties with measuring what is often intangible, such as community cohesion. Civic renewal is clearly a key end, and locality a key site of collective action and delivery of public services, but with a discourse so heavily oriented towards locality, it is failing to provide a narrative for new forms of community that are not geographically distinct. Renewal is therefore trying to recreate post-war 'decent towns', with an empowered public that can ensure public services are responsive to their needs. New approaches are needed, not to understanding communities, but helping to re-envision how the whole range of types of community may be best brought into decision-making processes to determine what they value and what is no longer relevant to them as a community.

# Introduction

The community discourse around public service reform is both complex and wide ranging. Community and locality feature prominently across the full spectrum of policy and dominate large areas of most of the social science disciplines. Of particular interest is the recent shift in policy development towards the 'redemptive power' of community, locality and active citizenship. There are a number of reasons for this move, not least the fact that services are, for the most part, directed towards particular places where people live and work – in other words, communities. But the move towards community is also driven by a series of core beliefs on the part of government in regard to public service reform. These are that:

- public services remain stubbornly tied to the needs of producers rather than users, and therefore lack responsiveness to local and individual needs
- there is a growing crisis of trust in government and the providers of public services, and this makes their work more difficult. In particular, it means that real improvements in services are often unappreciated by the public
- public apathy and lack of interest in mainstream politics now means the public participates less and cannot be mobilised easily to help improve public services
- apathy and mistrust now threaten a 'legitimation deficit' in democratic governance institutions, which means civic life is decaying.

At the same time in the community discourse there is a fundamental assumption repeatedly operationalised in policy that is directed towards the local community. The assumption is that a community with active groups, organisations and individuals will be a community with high standards of governance, business vitality and public service provision. A 'strong community' is thus one in which civic life is renewed, trust in government restored and difference celebrated. As a result, an extraordinary range of policy and service reforms is now on offer. This review is an analysis of these developments. It tracks the way problems have been conceived of and reacted to, and how policy has evolved. Throughout, our concern has been to investigate matters close to the concerns of the public value approach. Of particular relevance is the way in which the community discourse has sought to increase interaction between providers and users, and to work closely and creatively with their authorisation environments. However, as we shall see, much community discourse remains confused conceptually. The upshot is that it is excessively focused on the notion of community not so much as a group of people, but as a physical space. Policy reforms have, for the most part, therefore remained constrained to existing local governance structures.

Although public value shares with the community approach an orientation to deliver what the public values and so can draw insights and best practice knowledge from that approach, public value has a far more sophisticated

understanding of the authorisation environment than does the present approach to community. Moreover, public value is not subject to the same tendency to territorialise notions of collectivity.

This review analyses research on community-oriented public policy and the current reform agenda. It then considers issues around authorisation and governance in the community, and reviews a range of community practices. Finally, it examines the measurement issues arising from this discourse.

# 1. Community and public policy

'Community' is a term used often, but seldom defined adequately. This section reviews debates over the nature of community, and examines ways in which those debates have affected public policy and the current public service reform agenda. The orientation to community is of particular interest to the public value approach because community is both an important site of service intervention in people's lives and a crucial element in the authorisation environment. We therefore seek to define community and its policy context, examine its role in public services and its increasing localisation.

## 1.1 The nature of community

As a term with multiple and even contradictory meanings, community may refer to geographical locations and configurations, or to shared identities and values.[1] In what remains the most comprehensive survey of social scientific research on community, Hillery lists 94 definitions of the term and can find only a single common element, this being a shared reference to 'people'.[2]

Fixing boundaries in relation to both the meaning and content of community is particularly problematic because such boundaries are often contested by those who consider themselves participants in communities and those who are commenting from outside. Indeed, Savage et al confirm that sociologists cannot agree on a definition of the boundaries of community[3], while Pereira surveys the even greater variation in the use of the term in ordinary language[4].

Moreover, the meaning of community is 'essentially contested' because its range of definitions is underpinned by substantive ideological differences.[5] Indeed, the term has been regularly appropriated by proponents on the left and right of the political spectrum. The Left has employed the language of community to identify marginalised groups with the intention of endorsing difference and multi-culturalism. However, this usage frequently masks and homogenises the very diversity it seeks to recognise as, for example, in discussions of the reaction of the 'black community' to the MacPherson report. Similarly, the conservative Right has used notions of community to defend traditional privileges like the right to hunt. The notion of the countryside as a community that cannot be understood by outsiders has proved a powerful tool for campaigners.[6] And, the idea of a 'community under threat' has been regularly invoked to orchestrate opposition to immigration.[7]

---

[1] Smith G, 'Community and Communitarianism: Concepts and contexts', *UK Communities Online* available at www.communities.org.uk, 1996

[2] Hillery G A Jr, 'Definitions of Community: Areas of agreement', *Rural Sociology*, Vol 20 No 4, p111, 1955

[3] Savage M et al, *Urban Sociology, Capitalism and Modernity*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2002

[4] Pereira C, 'Anthology: The breadth of community' in Bornat J, Pereira C, Pilgrim D and Williams F (eds), *Community Care: A reader*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1993

[5] Gallie W B, 'Essentially Contested Concepts', *Proceedings of the Aristotlean Society*, No 56, pp167-188, 1956

[6] Agyeman J and Spooner P, 'Ethnicity and the Rural Environment' in Cloke P and Little J (eds), *Contested Countryside Cultures*, London, Routledge, 1997

[7] Gilroy P, *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack*, London, Hutchinson, 1987

Practical applications of the term are equally diverse. Janowitz suggests that the meanings of community may be plotted along a spectrum.[8] At one end, a community is intentional, with participants freely joining and agreeing common aims and values. At the other end of the spectrum, there are communities of limited liability, in which levels of participation are lower and notions of community less influential.

The most commonly recognised community is the residential neighbourhood. It is into such local communities that end-user services are delivered and in which social relationships are formed and maintained. Wilmott describes these as 'communities of attachment' and underlines the importance of their localism.[9] Communities of attachment may also be non-residential, such as those of a school or workplace. Smith calls these 'institutional' or 'organisational' communities.[10] Finally, there are communities of 'interest' negotiated around shared activities such as youth or sports clubs, or shared identities relating to, for example, gender, religion or ethnicity. Occasionally, a hidden community of interest may become manifest as a result of some external threat, eg neighbourhood groups against airport expansion. Here the community of interest is a defensive one, typically with a specific set of aims and life cycle. It is worth noting that some groups remain hidden either because there is no clear external threat or motivating factor, or because spaces and opportunities to come together are lacking. For example, single mothers or carers in a particular neighbourhood might benefit from a community of interest, but there is nothing triggering and supporting the formation of such a community.

Most project work in community development is focused on low-income, urban neighbourhoods.[11] There is some debate over the validity and effectiveness of this direction. One argument is that in poorer areas there is already a history of mutual aid and a strong sense of community, while in more affluent settings these traditions are in decline.[12] Indeed, it has been argued that wealthier people now simply buy many services that once would have been exchanged as a part of community life. However, as Smith states: 'There is another hypothesis that the poor are less able to maintain support networks than the affluent, that poverty or social exclusion is the denial of the possibility of social participation and that a compounding factor in deprivation is the absence of community.'[13]

[8] Janowitz M, *The Community Press in an Urban Setting*, Glencoe, Il, Free Press, 1967

[9] Wilmott P, *Community Initiatives: Patterns and prospects*, London, Policy Studies Institute, 1989

[10] Smith G, 'Community and Communitarianism: Concepts and contexts', *UK Communities Online* available at www.communities.org.uk, 1996

[11] Halsey A H, 'Social Polarization, the Inner City and the Community' in Bulmer M, Lewis J and Piachaud D (eds), *The Goals of Social Policy*, London, Unwin Hyman, 1989

[12] See Smith S and Easterlow D, 'The Strange Geography of Health Inequalities', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, No 30, pp173-190, 2004 and Williams C and Windebank J, 'Alternative Employment Spaces' in Leyshon A, Lee R and Williams C (eds), *Alternative Economic Spaces*, London, Sage, 2003

[13] Smith G, 'Community and Communitarianism: Concepts and contexts', *UK Communities Online* available at www.communities.org.uk, 1996

There is a significant body of work further delineating types of community. Black and Hughes usefully distinguish between communities of location and communities of interest.[14] Communities of location are defined by physical or geographical boundaries. Yet many of us belong to several communities of location, with overlapping and moveable boundaries. Working from home, attending school or university, residence in a care facility all illustrate the importance of recognising changing borders in the delineation of community. The increasing complexity of these overlaps has a direct bearing on the difficulty in identifying, locating and consulting community groups. Moreover, where community life is not centred primarily on location, but rather on a shared function or shared identity, it is better referred to as a 'community of interest'. And in an age of globalisation and ever more effective information and communication technologies, communities of interest increasingly diverge from communities of location and place. Black and Hughes suggest that in a community of interest 'one's community is the group with which one identifies and which provides one with a particular sense of identity.'[15]

However, Ife cautions against an overemphasis on emerging communities of interest, suggesting that it may add to the isolation of communities of location, fail to integrate diverse populations and tend towards homogeneity.[16] Many problems require local solutions, face-to-face interaction and communication outside one's perceived interest group. Disadvantaged people are, he suggests, often unable to extend their activities beyond their particular locale. In other words, communities of interest, although important, also require attention to the enduring importance of place.

**1.2 Current policy context**
Community involvement has been an integral part of the public service reform agenda since New Labour came to power. In their analysis of the initial period in government, Foley and Martin claim that:

> 'The rhetoric of the "New Labour" government suggest[ed] that it want[ed] to create conditions in which communities have a far stronger role in developing regeneration strategies and monitoring local services in a wide range of areas including employment, housing, health, crime prevention and education.'[17]

Community-based approaches were evident in a raft of New Labour policies and programmes. Initiatives such as devolution, regional development agencies and a strategic authority for London were put into play, along with a concern to address

---

[14] Black A and Hughes P, 'The Identification and Analysis of Indicators of Community Strength and Outcomes', report to the Department of Family and Community Services, Commonwealth of Australia, 2001
[15] Ibid
[16] Ife J, *Community Development: Creating community alternatives – vision, analysis and practice*, Melbourne, Addison Wesley Longman, 1995
[17] Foley P and Martin S, 'A New Deal for the Community? Public participation in regeneration and local service delivery', *Policy and Politics*, Vol 28 No 4, pp479–491, 2000

social exclusion and issues that crossed over departmental portfolios. Other measures such as Employment Zones, Action Zones, Best Value, New Deal for Communities, and crime and disorder audits illustrated the policy turn towards community.[18] Clarence and Painter also note New Labour's use of 'joined up', 'cross-cutting' and 'citizen-centred' services, describing this changing policy ethos as a 'collaborative discourse'.[19]

Foley and Martin see the development of the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) as central to this new orientation.[20] They note that: 'The SEU has been critical of top-down, provider-led approaches, and its national strategy for neighbourhood renewal advocates much greater community involvement in and neighbourhood management of public services.' A national compact between central government and the voluntary and community sector emphasised the need for greater involvement by the community.[21]

The notion of community also featured particularly strongly in government policies on regeneration and local government service provision, as can be seen in the New Deal for Communities (NDC) and Best Value programmes. The Best Value regime aimed to make user participation integral to the modernisation of local government services while both Best Value and NDC sought to increase the responsiveness of local services to those needs identified as important by the local community. Empowering local people and requiring service providers to consult them were key methods by which service effectiveness was to be increased.[22]

There was evidence that ministerial calls for increased public participation belied a concern about the breakdown in communication between elected officials and voters. The loss of confidence and trust was to be addressed by improved service quality and an enhanced relationship between local people and the structures of local governance. Both the Best Value regime and the *Modernising Government* white paper[23] aspired to the vision of the service user as an empowered consumer, leading to greater responsiveness to local need and the recovery of services from the control of producer interests. Thus the then DETR saw the community as a carrier of local knowledge, a provider of legitimacy and final judge of successful service delivery.[24] Moreover, the government understood the potential for community involvement to improve decision making and service responsiveness

---

[18] Duffy K and Hutchinson J, 'Urban Policy and the Turn to Community', *Town Planning Review,* Vol 68 No 3, pp347-362, 1997

[19] Clarence E and Painter C, 'Public Service Under New Labour: Collaborative discourses and local networking', *Public Policy and Administration*, Vol 13 No 1, pp8-22, 1998

[20] Foley P and Martin S, 'A New Deal for the Community? Public participation in regeneration and local service delivery', *Policy and Politics*, Vol 28 No 4, pp479–491, 2000

[21] Craig G, Taylor M, Szanto C and Wilkinson M, *Developing Local Compacts: Relationships between local public sector bodies and the voluntary and community sectors*, York, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 1999

[22] See the Local Government Act, Chapter 27, HMSO, 1999

[23] Cabinet Office, *Modernising Government*, Cm 4310, HMSO, London, 1999

[24] Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions, *Local Leadership, Local Choice*, London, DETR, 1999

in initiatives (such as the New Deal for Communities) where intervention was conceived of in terms of enhancing 'social capital' (see Box 1), thus allowing local people 'to develop and express their capacity for self-help and mutual aid.'[25]

---

**Box 1: What is social capital?**

Social capital is not a new concept, although it has come to the fore in public and social policy discussions over the last five years. Its meaning is contested and differs depending on who is using it and for what purpose.

A government Performance and Innovation Unit discussion paper on social capital from 2002 defined social capital as 'the networks, norms, relationships, values and informal sanctions that shape the quantity and co-operative quality of a society's social interactions.'[26] The Office for National Statistics' (ONS) view is that '[d]efinitions of social capital vary, but the main aspects include citizenship, "neighbourliness", social networks and civic participation.'[27]

Robert Putnam, who popularised the concept of social capital in the 1990s, defined it as 'networks, norms and trust that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives.'[28] The World Bank was more expansive and suggested that: 'Social capital refers to the institutions, relationships and norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society's social interactions. Social capital is not just the sum of the institutions which underpin a society; it is the glue that holds them together.'[29]

The Australian Bureau of Statistics adopted the following definition: 'Social relations of mutual benefits characterised by norms of trust and reciprocity.'[30] Statistics New Zealand considered social capital to be 'relationships among actors (individuals, groups, and/or organisations) that create a capacity for mutual benefit or a common purpose.'[31] Further to this, they suggested that: 'Social capital is the social resource that is embodied in the relations between people. It resides in and stems from contact, communication, sharing, co-operation and trust that are inherent in ongoing relationships.'

However, despite the variety of views as to its precise nature, there is clearly convergence towards a definition that emphasises social networks and civil norms. Social capital is considered to involve social networks and support structures, community participation, civic and political involvement, trust in people and social institutions, and norms of reciprocity. In other words, social capital is a means of attempting to quantify a sense of 'community spirit', or perhaps what sociologists might term altruism or indeed 'the conscience collective'. From this perspective, social capital is a means by which policymakers seek to increase economic gains and to foster improvement in the quality of life. It is a 'public good'.

---

[25] Aldridge S and Halpern D with Fitzpatrick S, *Social Capital: A discussion paper*, Performance and Innovation Unit, Cabinet Office, April 2002

[26] Performance and Innovation Unit, *Social Capital: A discussion paper*, London, Cabinet Office, 2002

[27] Harper R and Kelly M, *Measuring Social Capital in the United Kingdom*, London, ONS, 2003

[28] Putnam R, *Bowling Alone*, London, Simon & Schuster, 2000

[29] The World Bank, 'What is Social Capital?', 1999. PovertyNet available at http://povlibrary.worldbank.org/library/topic/4294/

[30] Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Measuring Social Capital: Current collections and future direction*, Canberra, November 2000

[31] Spellerberg A, *Framework for the Measurement of Social Capital in New Zealand*, Auckland, Statistics New Zealand, 2001

Contd…

In the UK, the Office for National Statistics defines social capital as 'networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups.'[32] It provides a useful breakdown of the component elements of this definition, stating that formal and informal networks – defined as the personal relationships accumulated when people interact with each other in families, workplaces, neighbourhoods, local associations and informal and formal meeting places – are central to the concept of social capital.

Different types of social capital can be described in terms of different types of networks:

- **Bonding social capital** describes closer connections between people and is characterised by strong bonds, eg among family members or close friends – it is good for 'getting by' in life
- **Bridging social capital** describes more distant connections between people and is characterised by weaker but more cross-cutting ties, eg with business associates, acquaintances, friends of friends – it is good for 'getting ahead' in life
- **Linking social capital** describes connections with people in positions of power and is characterised by relations between those in a hierarchy where there are differing levels of power – it is good for accessing support from formal institutions. It is different from bonding and bridging in that it is concerned with relations between people who are not on an equal footing. An example would be a social services agency dealing with an individual, eg job searching at the Benefits Agency.[33]

The distinction between bonding and bridging social capital is important because the impact of social capital depends on the form it takes in different circumstances. For instance, in childhood and old age, bonding social capital is more important to health. However, as people seek employment, bridging social capital is more important.[34] It should also be noted that strong bonding social capital may serve to exclude – often considered a downside of social capital. Linking social capital grew out of a World Bank agenda looking at sustainable development in developing societies. It is important in the development context where those working in agencies and institutions play a major role in trying to engage local communities to facilitate access to information and resources.

Shared norms, values and understandings relate to shared attitudes about behaviour that are common in society and accepted by most individuals and groups as a 'good thing' to do. For example, calling the emergency services at the scene of an accident or not parking in a disabled parking space at a supermarket. These norms of behaviour are understood by most members of society. The role of sanctions in underpinning shared norms is important in that fear of disapproval might compel individuals to comply with the shared values/norms and behave in an accepted way.

Groups in this context are very broadly defined and can refer to: geographical groups (eg people living in a specific neighbourhood), professional groups (eg people in the same occupation, members of a local association or voluntary organisation), social groups (eg families, church-based groups, groups of friends) and virtual groups (eg the networks generated over the internet in chat rooms through common-interest groups).

---

[32] Harper R and Kelly M, *Measuring Social Capital in the United Kingdom*, London, ONS, 2003
[33] Putnam R, *Bowling Alone*, London, Simon & Schuster, 2000
[34] Performance and Innovation Unit, *Social Capital: A discussion paper*, London, Cabinet Office, 2002

The other recent impetus for the growing focus on community is the agenda for civil renewal led by the Home Office. The development of the civil renewal agenda begins with the assumption that the public is losing its former engagement with public life. This is part of a growing concern that legitimacy in democratic institutions is declining. Central to the civil renewal agenda is the desire to re-engage citizens in community decision making, thereby promoting cohesive and inclusive communities. Jochum et al suggest that this is an attempt to move individuals 'away from being passive, self-centred consumers to become more active, community-spirited citizens who contribute to the "common good" through engagement.'[35] In such a project of repair, the government would take a facilitating role: '…not doing things for them but by doing things with them.'[36]

Following Blunkett[37], Jochum et al set out three basic principles behind the civil renewal agenda: active citizenship; strengthened communities; and partnership in meeting public needs.[38] In the case of the latter, there are a further two dimensions, namely:

- **User involvement:** 'Citizens need to be able to express their views and engage in local decision making. Consultation, used to inform service and policy development, has now become a key feature of increasing user involvement. Involving citizens in governance structures is equally encouraged.'
- **Co-delivery:** 'Government is increasingly interested in contracting with voluntary and community organisations to deliver specific services. It involves the transfer of delivery of public services to voluntary or community organisations and the provision of non-statutory services by voluntary or community organisations.'

Civic renewal approached in this way will inevitably cross established boundaries between government departments. Thus, while the Home Office has taken the conceptual and political lead in respect of the civil renewal agenda, the orientation to policy has been much more comprehensive. Noting the inevitable lack of comprehensiveness in such a task, Jochum et al nevertheless set out a very useful overview of the many different initiatives developed as part the civil renewal agenda and government departments with which they are associated (see Table 1 on the next page).

---

[35] Jochum V, Pratten B and Wilding K, 'Civil Renewal and Active Citizenship: A guide to the debate', http://www.ncvovol.org.uk/asp/uploads/uploadedfiles/1/637/civilrenewalactivecitizenship.pdf, 2005

[36] Blunkett D, 'Renewing Democracy: Why government should invest in civil renewal', speech delivered to the Ash Institute, 2004

[37] Blunkett D, 'Active Citizens, Strong Communities: Progressing civil renewal', Scarman lecture delivered on 11 December 2003

[38] Jochum V, Pratten B and Wilding K, 'Civil Renewal and Active Citizenship: A guide to the debate', http://www.ncvovol.org.uk/asp/uploads/uploadedfiles/1/637/civilrenewalactivecitizenship.pdf, 2005

**Table 1: The civil renewal agenda – an overview**

| | Active citizenship | Strengthened communities | Partnership in meeting public needs |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Home Office** | • Active citizens active learning regional hubs<br>• Civic Pioneers<br>• Year of the Volunteer Citizenship day | • Adventure Capital fund<br>• Community Cohesion Pathfinders<br>• Connection Communities scheme | • ChangeUp<br>• Futurebuilders<br>• Safer and Stronger Communities Fund |
| **Office of the Deputy Prime Minister** | | • National Community Forum<br>• Neighbourhood Renewal Fund<br>• Single Community programme (Community Chest, Community Learning Chest, Community Empowerment Fund)<br>• New Deal for Communities programme<br>• Safer and Stronger Communities Fund | • Beacon Council Scheme<br>• Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders<br>• Local Development Framework (statement of community involvement)<br>• Local Area Agreements<br>• Local Strategic Partnerships |
| **Department of Health** | • Opportunities for Volunteering scheme<br>• Patient and Public Involvement Forums<br>• Foundation Trusts | • Health Action Zones<br>• Healthy Living Centres | • Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health<br>• Strategic Agreement 'Making Partnership Work'<br>• National Strategic Partnership Forum<br>• Section 64 general scheme of grants |
| **Department for Education and Skills** | • Citizenship curriculum<br>• Millennium Volunteers<br>• Young Volunteers Challenge<br>• Active Citizens in School (pilot programme)<br>• Higher Education<br>• Active Community fund<br>• Foundation schools | • Community Champions<br>• Pathfinder Young Community Champions<br>• Local Network Fund | • On Track programme<br>• Y Speak Consultation fund |

*Source: Jochum et al, 2005*

While subsumed in the notion of strengthened communities in the above table, it is important to note that, after the urban unrest in northern English towns in 2001, the need for greater community cohesion became an increasingly pressing (and specific) concern in the civil renewal agenda. Dixon suggests that the focus on community cohesion was a direct result of the increasing complexities in engaging with a complex and diverse group of communities and interests – as played out through these disturbances.[39] In particular, the focus on community cohesion sought to direct policy towards ensuring 'a state of wellbeing that affects the harmony and stability of a given geographical community.'[40] In practice, the

---

[39] Dixon R, *Advancing Community Cohesion (parts 1-3)*, Improvement and Development Agency, 2005 available at www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk
[40] Denham J, *Building Cohesive Communities: A report of the ministerial group on public order and community cohesion*, London, Home Office, 2002

19

policy orientation of the community cohesion agenda has been directed to the pursuit of definable successes in four areas:
- a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities
- the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and valued positively
- those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities
- strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and in neighbourhoods.[41]

Inevitably perhaps, much of the focus of the civil renewal agenda (including that related to community cohesion) relates to activity at a local government level and therefore to the work of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), as Jochum et al attest:

'Community engagement has been, and continues to be, a central underpinning of the ODPM agenda, which seeks to modernise and strengthen local government and local governance, with an emphasis on the role of councillors (as elected representatives) as leaders of their communities.'[42]

The ODPM now requires local authorities to consult service users extensively. At the same time, it has given new powers to local authorities to 'promote and improve the wellbeing of their area and to work in partnership with other bodies.'[43] The ODPM has also developed the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal and this is now required of all councils. Here, neighbourhood renewal and civil renewal come together. There are incentives for local authorities to establish local strategic partnerships, a choice over how councils are constituted (eg by elected mayors, executive cabinets), encouragement of referenda and a strengthening of 'the role of councils as champions of local people and councillors as community leaders.'[44]

---

[41] Home Office, *Building a Picture of Community Cohesion: A guide for local authorities and their partners*, London, Home Office, 2003
[42] Jochum V, Pratten B and Wilding K, 'Civil Renewal and Active Citizenship: A guide to the debate', http://www.ncvovol.org.uk/asp/uploads/uploadedfiles/1/637/civilrenewalactivecitizenship.pdf, 2005
[43] Ibid
[44] Ibid

**Box 2: Local government partnership structures**

The most important elements of local authority partnership working as it pertains to communities include:

**Community strategies:** Local councils are under a duty to prepare long-term community strategies for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of their areas, and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in the UK. They do this by identifying local priorities and challenges, and setting a long-term vision for the area that aims to improve the quality of life for local people. They include an action plan identifying shorter-term priorities and activities that will contribute to the achievement of the vision. Although local authorities have a duty to prepare a community strategy for their areas, other members of the local strategic partnership will work with them to prepare and implement the community strategy. So, community strategies co-ordinate the actions of the council and of the public, private, voluntary and community organisations that operate locally. They aim to focus and shape existing and future activity of those organisations so that they effectively meet community needs and aspirations. Strategies are usually reviewed every three years and some councils produce detailed action plans each year.

**Local strategic partnerships:** Local strategic partnerships (LSPs) are key mechanisms for supporting effective, community-based, joined-up planning for service delivery. A local strategic partnership is a single, non-statutory, multi-agency body that matches local authority boundaries and aims to bring together at a local level different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors. LSPs are key to tackling deep-seated, multi-faceted problems such as health inequalities, which require a range of responses from different bodies. Local partners working through an LSP will be expected to take many of the decisions about priorities and funding for their local area. LSPs are being set up across England, but in the 88 most deprived local authority areas they are receiving additional resources through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF).

**Local area agreements:** Local area agreements (LAAs) are a new development and being piloted in one council in each region during 2005-06. Pilot authorities will work with partners to negotiate targets and outcomes with central government. In return they will be given the freedom to pool budget streams and to achieve the agreed outcomes in a way that best meets local needs and circumstances. The LAA pilots are intended to build on local public service agreements and community strategies. Pilot local authorities have been given greater freedom over how they spend their money to support children and young people; safer, stronger communities; health and older people. This is designed to simplify funding streams from central government coming in to an area, helping to join up public services and allow local authorities and their partners greater flexibility for local solutions for local circumstances.

**Local public service agreements:** A local public service agreement (LPSA) is a voluntary agreement negotiated between a council and central government about the priorities for improvement in public services locally. The overall aim of LPSAs is to improve the delivery of local public services above and beyond what would normally be expected

Contd...

in return for extra resources from central government. LPSAs were first introduced in 2000 and over 100 county and unitary authorities participated. In December 2003 a second round of LPSAs was launched. Unlike the first round, these second-round LPSAs are entirely based on priorities determined locally, eg via community strategies, neighbourhood renewal strategies, improvement plans arising from Comprehensive Performance Assessment and ongoing performance reviews in relation to a wide range of other indicators. Voluntary and community organisations can play an important role in both the development and delivery of local PSAs. There are examples from the first round where the sector has been involved in the negotiation and delivery of LPSA targets and where the reward grant has also been shared.

*Source: Futurebuilders England, 2005*

## 1.3 Communities and public services

Across these very broad areas of policy, the present government has maintained its commitment to local community as perhaps the central actor in its attempt to deliver on an agenda of public service reform. The ODPM has five- and ten-year plans to increase citizen engagement in public services and now boasts a range of initiatives, which it sees as 'nurseries for democratic participation'. These include the New Deal for Communities, SureStart, tenant participation, local strategic partnerships and youth referral panels.[45]

The ODPM is also concerned to manage rising public expectations in the context of rapid economic, demographic and technological change. It hopes to achieve this by empowering local communities and by expressing its support for civic renewal alongside a strengthening of the legitimacy of government institutions.[46]

Having noted declining levels of interest in mainstream politics, the ODPM is also keen to show that people remain committed to the improvement of public services and to their own participation in the planning and delivery of those services. In ODPM opinion surveys, for example, more than a third of respondents report that they would 'like to get involved in helping their council undertake detailed work on planning and delivering services'. Fifty-five per cent express interest in being 'more involved in the decisions their local council makes'. Although 82 per cent of respondents support greater community involvement and 26 per cent desire greater participation, only 2 per cent are actually involved. Potential participants are more likely to be interested where an issue comes close to home. Issues like safe local streets and good local schools are thus more likely to attract participation than national issues. That 1.5million more people than in 2001 are now involved in formal or informal voluntary activity suggests that there

---

[45] Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Home Office, *Citizen Engagement and Public Services: Why neighbourhoods matter*, London, HMSO, 2005
[46] Ibid

remains significant capacity among the public to participate in service reform and improvement.[47]

In the five- and ten-year plans, the orientation towards community is strongly focused on communities of location and frequently on specific neighbourhoods. The ODPM claims that at this level there are greater opportunities for service responsiveness, for involvement by the community and for multiple partnerships with public service providers, voluntary and community groups. It suggests that it is here that social capital can be built, isolation reduced and community cohesion enhanced.[48]

**1.4 Localisms, 'old' and 'new'**
Although the term 'new localism' is widely used, there is little agreement over its meaning. In the UK policy context, the term is perhaps most closely associated with a series of publications from the New Local Government Network. For example, Filkin et al argue for a 'new localism' to reinvigorate local government and make it the guardian of the public good. They claim:

> '…"new localism" is "new" in four ways: a celebration of local people involved in governance (not simply councillors); high-quality vertical as well as horizontal linkages; community leaders rather than primarily service producers; and a fundamental change in local government working.'[49]

New localism belongs to the devolution agenda. It aims to shift power and resources away from the centre and towards local government structures and communities. However, this is to be achieved in the context of national policy.[50] Thus, new localism works at the interface of the local and the national, putting large-scale service priorities under the scrutiny of service recipients. State provision and agreed standards are required, yet these must be responsive to local variations of place and people. Such responsiveness can only be achieved by tapping into the knowledge and experience of service users in any given community setting.

Stoker identifies three principle arguments used in favour of new localism:

> 'First, it is a realistic response to the complexity of modern governance. Second, it meets the need for a more engaging form of democracy appropriate to the 21st century. Third, new localism enables the dimensions

---

[47] Ibid
[48] Ibid
[49] Filkin G, Stoker G, Wilkinson G and Williams J, *Towards a New Localism*, London, New Local Government Network, 2000
[50] See Corry D and Stoker G, *New Localism: Refashioning the central-local relationship*, London, New Local Government Network, 2002 and Corry D, Hatter W, Parker I, Randle A and Stoker G, *Joining-Up Local Democracy: Governance systems for new localism*, London, New Local Government Network, 2004

of trust, empathy and social capital to be fostered and as such encourages civic renewal.'[51]

Proponents of new localism seek to include a concrete recognition of diversity both in and between communities. Thus new localism should raise the profile of local decision making within the larger field of governance, funding and service delivery. At the same time, a commitment to equity should ensure not that all people and communities are treated the same, but that differences are acknowledged and solutions tailored accordingly. This, it is regularly argued, is what puts the 'new' in 'new' localism.[52]

Corry and Stoker suggest that while government sees the merits of localism, a genuine transition to devolved and decentralised governance is yet to be achieved.[53] Certainly, government has shown ambivalence with regard to greater community engagement. This ambivalence can be interpreted as a ministerial mistrust of civic activism or as stemming from the lack of a practical framework in which to pursue declared aims. More generously, government hesitancy may be described as a gradual and responsible handover of decision making power. Thus, Mulgan and Perri 6 refer to 'earned autonomy' and 'decentralisation by degrees'[54], while more recently Balls has referred to 'constrained discretion'[55]. Corry and Stoker suggest the term 'steering localism', but they express concern that 'the centre still has a large hand hovering above the tiller.'[56]

The balance of central and local responsiveness is tilted, in theory, towards the latter by new localism. But in practical terms, it seems that the New Labour project is to be pursued without any significant relaxation of central control. Tony Wright MP, chair of PASC, summarised this view when he suggested that: '"Earned autonomy" is a phrase that would only be understood in a system where the centre calls the shots.' Stoker argues that the idea of earned autonomy is a 'distinctive feature of New Labour's managerial style' and cites government support for national standards in health and social services where 'postcode lotteries' were once tolerated.[57]

---

[51] Stoker G, *New Localism*, *Participation and Networked Community Governance*, IPEG, University of Manchester, 2004

[52] Powell M, 'In Search of New and Old Localism', paper presented at ESPAnet conference, Oxford, 9-11 September 2004

[53] Corry D and Stoker G, *New Localism: Refashioning the central-local relationship*, London, New Local Government Network, 2002

[54] Mulgan G and 6 P, 'The Local's Coming Home: Decentralisation by degrees', *DEMOS Quarterly*, No 9, pp3-7, 1996

[55] Balls E, 'Devolution and Localism in Public Policy – a view from the Treasury', speech to the CIPFA annual conference, Brighton, 2002

[56] Corry D and Stoker G, *New Localism: Refashioning the central-local relationship*, London, New Local Government Network, 2002

[57] Stoker G, *New Localism, Participation and Networked Community Governance,* IPEG, University of Manchester, 2004

## Public value and local communities

Numerous speeches by ministers and advisers[58] in their advocacy of new localism have lamented the loss of community and mutualism[59]. For his part, Milburn seeks a 'real localism' rather than a 'one-size-fits-all' approach. Such diversity, he states:

'Can bolster the pursuit of equality rather than undermine it. We must decentralise from the nation to the region; from Whitehall to the town hall, from local councils to local schools and to local housing estates. And in the NHS we must give communities more voice as well as giving patients more choice. These are the building blocks of real localism.'[60]

Milburn develops the notion of localism further, concentrating particularly on our relatively centralised finance system.[61] He praises moves to give people greater input into their own services, suggesting that this will lead to a 'correct balance' between local and national considerations. At the same time he argues that for some provision, such as fire services or housing benefit, there is no need for local variation, but rather a more important requirement for specialised skills applied equally everywhere. In addition, Milburn notes that: 'There is precious little evidence that the simple devolution of powers from one tier of government to another…produces services that are more responsive.'

Yet Milburn still advocates a genuine turn towards the local. 'In the end,' he points out, 'devolution depends on power being relinquished.'[62] This account of new localism is unusual in that it pushes beyond discussions of local institutional reform. 'Devolution cannot stop at the town hall door,' he states. 'Instead, it has to reach down into local communities and empower individual users. Active citizenship will not be forged by a local elite running a managerialist state (ie an elected local authority) any more than a national elite running one.'[63]

In Stoker, new localism is integrated with the changed nature of local governance itself.[64] Here, Stoker analyses network community governance and describes its historical development since the post-war period. The characteristics of networked community governance detailed in Table 2 below show its close alliance with calls for a new localism.

---

[58] See Reid J, 'Equity, Choice, Capacity and Culture', speech at the New Local Government Network, London, 7 November 2003; Milburn A, 'Localism: From rhetoric to reality', lecture to NLGN and the New Health Network, London, 5 February 2003; Milburn A, 'Localism: The need for a new settlement', DEMOS seminar, London, 21 January 2004; Blunkett D, speech delivered to the New Local Government Network, 22 January 2004; Raynsford N, 'New Localism: Making a reality of the myth', speech, 2004

[59] White J, 'From Herbert Morrison to Command and Control: The decline of local democracy', www.historyandpolicy.org, 2004

[60] Milburn A, 'Localism: From rhetoric to reality', lecture to NLGN and the New Health Network, London, 5 February 2003

[61] Milburn A, 'Localism: The need for a new settlement', DEMOS seminar, London, 21 January 2004

[62] Ibid

[63] Ibid

[64] Stoker G, *New Localism, Participation and Networked Community Governance,* IPEG, University of Manchester, 2004

**Table 2: The development of networked community governance**

| | Elected local government in post-war setting | Local government under new public management | Networked community governance |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Governance system's key objectives** | Managing inputs, delivering services in the context of a national welfare state | Managing inputs and outputs in a way that ensures economy and responsiveness to consumers | The overarching goal is greater effectiveness in tackling the problems that the public most cares about |
| **Dominant ideologies** | Professionalism and party partisanship | Managerialism and consumerism | Managerialism and localism |
| **Definition of public interest** | By politicians/experts. Little in the way of public input | Aggregation of individual preferences, demonstrated by customer choice | Individual and public preferences produced through a complex process of interaction |
| **Dominant model of accountability** | Overhead democracy: voting in elections, mandated party politicians, tasks achieved through control over the bureaucracy | Separation of politics and management: politics to give direction but not hands-on control; managers to manage; additional loop of consumer assessment built into the system | Elected leaders, managers and key stakeholders involved in search for solutions to community problems and effective delivery mechanisms. System in turn subject to challenge through elections, referendums, deliberative forums, scrutiny functions and shifts in public opinion |
| **Preferred service delivery system** | Hierarchical department or self-regulating profession | Private sector or tightly defined arm's-length public agency | Menu of alternatives selected pragmatically |
| **Approach to public service ethos** | Public sector has monopoly on service ethos and all public bodies have it | Sceptical of public sector ethos (leads to inefficiency and empire building) – favours customer service | No single sector has a monopoly on public service ethos. Maintaining relationships through shared values is seen as essential |
| **Relationship with 'higher' tiers of government** | Partnership relationship with central government over delivery | Upwards through performance contracts and key performance indicators | Complex and multiple: regional, national, European. Negotiated and flexible |

*Source: Stoker, 2004*

Stoker suggests that the emergence of networked community governance is part of a general trend towards accentuating in service provision the meeting of community needs. This is seen as a turn away from new public management orientations to efficiency, towards notions of public value where the orientation is not only to efficiency, but also to the creation and measurement of what the public values.[65] In this paper, Stoker is clear on two other points. First, notions of networked community governance and public value determine no particular place for the public sector work ethos. Second, that neither can dictate (nor remove from political contestation) whether a service should be delivered by a particular sector.

---

[65] See Moore M H, *Creating Public Value: Strategic management in government*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard UP, 1995 and Goss S, *Making Local Governance Work*, London, Macmillan, 2001

# Public value and local communities

Networked community governance features complex systems of accountability and a rather more open conception of the local political process than can be contained in the old institutions of local government. Reaching beyond efficiency, the model seeks to refocus the purpose of services and to re-engage communities, both of location and of interest. There is, therefore, an attention here to outcomes that enhance community. The model thus requires strong management 'in order to join up and steer a complex set of processes'.[66]

A number of critiques of new localism have been suggested. Pratchett, for one, derides its claim to any coherence.[67] He argues that its declared interest in both national standards and the primacy of local governance institutions belongs to 'the "cake and eat it" school of social analysis'. Nor is there any agreement as to the precise meaning of either the term 'new' or that of 'localism', with different researchers featuring very different characteristics of each. Perhaps more importantly there is a lack of consensus about the optimal balance of central control and local autonomy. Thus, for example, while Jenkin's 'real decentralisation' is willing to trade off equalisation for diversity[68], Mulgan and Perri 6 rule out local self-government as an unrealistic aspiration[69].

In an important recent paper, Amin suggests a series of particular critiques that warrant closer inspection.[70] Amin's charge is that the discourse of community is effectively one of simplification, localisation and abandonment. The simplification comes from a redefinition of the complexity of the social world, reducing it to merely a local community. As community becomes both cause of and solution to social problems, the effect is to present people with what amounts to community from above. Moreover, unrealistic assumptions about community cohesion[71], about the transformative power of social capital[72] and finally, about participation itself, have resulted in a gradual loss of any critical bite to local community governance.

In regard to social capital, Amin makes the point that what Putnam called 'bonding social capital' in which local networks are inward looking and do not lend vitality

---

[66] Sullivan H and Skelcher C, *Working Across Boundaries*, London, Palgrave, 2002; see also 6 P, Leat D, Seltzer K and Stoker G, *Towards Holistic Governance*, Basingstoke, Macmillan Palgrave, 2002

[67] Pratchett L, 'Local Autonomy, Local Democracy and the "New Localism"', *Political Studies*, Vol 52, pp358-375, 2004

[68] Jenkin B, 'Real Decentralisation: The denationalisation of local government', NLGN lecture, London, 19 April 2004

[69] Mulgan G and 6 P, 'The Local's Coming Home: Decentralisation by degrees', *DEMOS Quarterly*, No 9, pp3-7, 1996

[70] Amin A, 'Local Community on Trial,' *Economy and Society,* Vol 34 No 4, pp 612-633, 2005

[71] See Kearns A and Turok I, *Sustainable Communities*, ESRC/ODPM report, Department of Urban Studies, University of Glasgow, 2003; Ilcan S and Basok T, 'Community Government: Voluntary agencies, social justice, and the responsibilization of citizens', *Citizenship Studies*, Vol 8 No 2, pp129-144, 2004; and White D, 'Social Policy and Solidarity: Orphans of the new model of social cohesion', *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, Vol 28 No 1, pp51-76, 2003

[72] Putnam R, *Bowling Alone*, London, Simon & Schuster, 2000

to political and economic activities, is increasingly rejected in the literature in favour of bridging social capital, which reaches for wider commitments and is more open to change.

Finally, Amin suggests that the resulting 'society of commitments' is 'spatially circumscribed' so that complex interactions, actors and organisations are confined to 'designated spaces such as regional assemblies.'[73] The local is then: '…imagined as a jurisdiction beyond which the actors have no real business or influence, and as a political community that…knows what is best for the locality and can deliver solutions that work for the common good.'[74] In fact, Amin argues, the discourse of community governance:

> '…fails to both tackle the root causes of spatial inequality and deliver the expected local returns. Third Way localism suffers from a romance of local community that in practice will be assailed from all directions and will be modest in its economic and political returns, especially in the areas in which it is most expected to deliver. At the root of this deficiency lies a problem of spatial ontology in Third Way thinking.'[75]

Moreover, this spatial ontology is in marked contradiction to the developing geographies of globalisation.[76]

Amin's critique is thus that: '"Failed" places become a problem of eliminating bad community and replacing it with good community.'[77] Yet in fact Amin cites 'growing evidence to show that reciprocity and mutual aid is common' in impoverished communities[78], and asks whether, according to Putnam's distinction, this is simply 'the wrong sort of community': creating bonding rather than bridging social capital.

Policies informed by discourses of community seek to build local participation, which is conceived of as a 'ladder' of involvement reaching up to community leadership. However, as Williams shows, this ladder encompasses very different forms of participation and it is by no means clear that the largely informal and one-to-one forms of participation engaged in by poorer communities when they are eventually mobilised is not the regular voting and civic activities of the richer ones.[79] As Amin puts it: 'One form of community participation does not lead to the other form without changes in the economic and institutional context of

---

[73] Amin A, 'Local Community on Trial,' *Economy and Society*, Vol 34 No 4, pp 612-633, 2005
[74] Ibid
[75] Ibid
[76] See Urry J, 'Connections,' *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, No 22, pp27-37, 2004 and Urry J, *Global Complexity*, Cambridge, Polity, 2003
[77] Amin A, 'Local Community on Trial,' *Economy and Society*, Vol 34 No 4, pp 612-633, 2005
[78] Williams C and Windebank J, 'Alternative Employment Spaces' in Leyshon A, Lee R and Williams C (eds), *Alternative Economic Spaces*, London, Sage, pp128-50, 2003
[79] Williams C, 'Developing Community Participation in Deprived Neighbourhoods: A critical evaluation of the third-sector approach', *Space and Polity*, Vol 7 No 1, pp65-73, 2003

the neighbourhood.'[80] Surveys of the actual impact of community participation suggest a 'story of "usual suspects" routinely wheeled out to represent an apathetic or disinterested community,' of tokenism and mere consultation, and of a chronic absence of the excluded.[81]

An alternative, and one more conducive to the creation of public value, would be more about active participation by empowered citizens in a vibrant public sphere.[82] Such empowerment can certainly be a driver of improvement for public services, and it is to the encompassing issues of authorisation and governance in the community discourse that we now turn.

---

[80] Amin A, 'Local Community on Trial,' *Economy and Society*, Vol 34 No 4, pp 612-633, 2005
[81] Goodlad R, Burton P and Croft J, 'Effectiveness at What? The process and impact of community involvement in area-based initiatives', mimeo, Department of Urban Studies, University of Glasgow, 2004
[82] Habermas J, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An inquiry into a category of Bourgeois Society*, MIT, 1970, 1991

# 2. Authorisation, governance and community

A central issue for public value is the problem of interacting with complex and changing authorisation environments. The dynamic nature of public value suggests that this should involve a two-way street of information and engagement between the provider and public. In current approaches to community, discussions around the authorisation environment focus on community engagement through networks of local governance. Public value can, therefore, draw insights from research into community governance and the problems of representation examined therein. As we shall see, the territorialisation of the community in recent conceptions of public service reform here leads to the pursuit of largely institutional reforms centring on existing structures for elected local government. The public value approach thus finds greater affinity with developments in the area of participatory governance. Ultimately, the orientation to community becomes an orientation to community governance. Therefore, this section reviews research on community representation and accountability, notions of community leadership and issues around participation.

## 2.1 Community representation and accountability

Raco and Flint reiterate New Labour's commitment to the democratic reform of local governance and to participative mechanisms for active citizens.[83] They cite a series of motivations for this commitment, including concerns over the yawning gap between local authorities and the public they serve, the lack of transparency of decision-making structures, a chronically unresponsive bureaucracy and a growing loss of legitimacy for democratic institutions.

As New Labour moved to address these issues, policy developed in two ways, emphasising the:
1. institutional reform of local representative systems to enhance representativeness, transparency and/or accountability, eg Best Value
2. role of active citizens and the widening of community participation, mobilising citizens and communities to engage in their own governance.

Raco and Flint go on to suggest that in this way 'reciprocal relations can be established between service recipients and providers, thereby increasing the efficiency and accountability of the latter and fostering a culture of civic activism and political engagement in the former.'[84]

They also note recurrent problems encountered by attempts to reform local democratic institutions. 'Enhancing representative and participatory forms of local democracy,' they report, 'may create local tensions between elected councillors and unelected local activists – both with claims of legitimate community

---

[83] Raco M and Flint J, 'Communities, Places and Institutional Relations: Assessing the role of area-based community representation in local governance', *Political Geography,* Vol 20 No 5, pp585-612, 2001
[84] Ibid

representation.'[85] Perhaps more seriously still they also raise the issue of types of community, which they rather unhelpfully refer to as a problem of 'scale.' However, the point gains clarity as they develop this critique:

'Should emphasis be placed on establishing closer relations with local place-based communities, corresponding to patterns of service delivery (such as education and health), or should state institutions foster links with communities of interest, those such as the disabled or elderly, for whom particular services are provided?'[86]

Policy development has focused increasingly on community as a physical space, a place and an institutional location. Yet as we have seen the discourse of community is not particularly good at defining community as merely a geographical space. Nevertheless, government would seem to prefer these problems of definition to the ones threatened by communities of interest. The localisation, or territorialisation, of community at least identifies specific institutions that can then be reformed and concentrates on easily visible groups who can then be consulted and mobilised. The focus on communities of location rather than of interest is thus in some ways a pragmatic orientation. The assumption that community is best interpreted as a location is an important claim, but it is also as we see throughout this review a contentious one and one with extensive political implications.

One recurrent difficulty with the localisation of community is that it empowers a particular area over which more general issues also pertain – issues, indeed, that are not confined to a locale or held in common by a number of locations. Government then appears as the advocate of cross-locational issues, such as minimum standards and statutory requirements. The attempt by local government to deepen its accountability down to the communities they represent requires them carefully to balance such initiatives with the upward accountability they already owe central government.

According to Woodhouse it is here that a conflict necessarily emerges between bottom-up accountability and 'the centralising force of ministerial responsibility'.[87] The departmental structure of government, each with its own minister accountable to Parliament, she suggests:

'…does not sit comfortably with dual or co-accountability, particularly if this is to a competing political institution and particularly at a time when central government is intent, through joined-up government, on increasing its control over what happens on the ground.'[88]

---

[85] Ibid
[86] Ibid
[87] Woodhouse D, 'Changing Patterns of Accountability in Westminster Systems: A UK perspective', *Political Science Program*, Australian National University, 2004
[88] Ibid

## Public value and local communities

For this reason, Woodhouse asserts: 'Local accountability structures which have been developed tend to marginalise the role of local government.'[89] One example is the police authority restructuring in the mid 1990s where police gained independence from local authorities and accountability to the Home Secretary. Woodhouse suggests that this allowed both Conservative and Labour governments to 'more openly impose [their] own political priorities'. What Woodhouse terms 'real accountability' would be characterised not only by consultation, but also by the 'ability to impose a sanction when things go wrong'. Nor can it merely set priorities and targets 'within the parameters set by the government'. Once again, governance must involve a balance between central control and local diversity that is adequately institutionalised in the mechanisms of accountability. In recognition of this requirement, the present government's white paper on police reform, *Building Communities, Beating Crime: A better police service for the 21st century,* demands a significant clarification of lines of accountability.[90]

The Local Government Act 2000 requires that local authorities have community strategies and that they work in partnership with other agencies. Examples are crime and disorder reduction partnerships, youth offenders teams (YOTs), drug action teams and resettlement policy committees. Such partnerships and multi-agency structures have encountered recurrent difficulties getting all the parties together (this can include: local authorities, police, social services, health, education, the courts and the probation service). Once again, however, many of these agencies are under central control, so that the political rhetoric given in support of community involvement is not borne out in structures of accountability. Where such structures remain predominantly vertical, they do not incentivise community involvement and ownership, and may in fact conflict with it. As Woodhouse puts it:

> 'Where vertical accountability of individual services to central government runs counter to their horizontal responsibilities to work with other agencies, the former is likely to take priority. Thus while responsibility for delivery has been given to local agencies, the controlling mechanisms are with the minister.'[91]

Once again, the correct balance turns out to be very difficult to achieve, and the danger is that accountability degenerates into a mechanism of central control. At the same time, however, the growth of charters, performance reports and ombudsmen throughout local government, parliament, the health and prison services do evince improvements in accountability to the individual.

---

[89] Ibid
[90] Home Office, *Building Communities, Beating Crime: A better police service for the 21st century*, Cm 6360, HMSO, London, 2004
[91] Woodhouse D, 'Changing Patterns of Accountability in Westminster Systems: A UK perspective', *Political Science Program*, Australian National University, 2004

## 2.2 Community leadership

Where a community relies on so varied a range of institutions and relationships, a co-ordination function is an important requirement of governance. Certainly, organisations need a shared vision of how a community is to be developed, its needs and aims. For shared commitment to service provision to be a reality, changes in local governance must be translated into changes in the behaviour and function of local government, specifically towards the role of community leader. The debate over the nature of community leadership and its provision by local government is important for public value, for it details and confirms the nature of leadership when service provision is more fully authorised and co-produced.

WLGA argues that: 'People are…not interested in the divisions within or between the local authority, health authority, development agency, housing association, voluntary organisation, or business contractor. They expect a seamless service and a co-ordinated approach.'[92] Yet, it is also the case that: 'Many of the key priorities of local people are by their nature only met by action across institutional boundaries: good quality jobs; good health; support for children, older people and those in need of care; community safety; social inclusion; urban regeneration; sustainable development.'[93] The local council must here operate as a community leader and must somehow 'organise the means by which individuals, groups and organisations can add value to each other's contribution by sharing an agreed direction and programmes for action, acting in response to identified and agreed local needs.'

What makes the councils particularly suited to their emerging role as co-ordinators of local services is their 'uniquely representative base'.[94] In other words, their legitimacy to adjudicate between competing interests and pursue ends seen to benefit the community as a whole. However, the council must somehow co-ordinate services in the absence of the power actually to direct services. Often, they must support families, neighbours and groups without having the power or the jurisdiction to direct their activities. So, councils must honour their accountabilities to businesses and public agencies. However, again, they cannot direct the activities of either. This, then, is what we might refer to as 'leadership without control'.[95] Importantly, for the public value approach, this is an example of leadership from the front using vision, support and persuasion rather than force, co-ordinating and challenging rather than directing and constraining. Ultimately, such community leadership must fulfil the role of increasing service responsiveness and guiding them towards the common good. As such, the territorialisation and institutional focus of the community approach requires

---

[92] WLGA, *Community Leadership and Community Planning*, Cardiff, Welsh Local Government Association, 1999
[93] Ibid
[94] Ibid
[95] Sullivan H and Sweeting D, 'Institutionalising Leadership: Community leadership in English local government', paper to the panel on local political leadership at the Political Studies Association annual conference, Leeds, 4–7 April 2005

that local authorities up their game in how they interact with and respond to an increasingly fluid authorisation environment.

Sullivan and Sweeting, drawing on an ODPM-commissioned review of the local government modernisation agenda (and mirroring the work of Leach and Wilson[96]), chart the development of the debate over community leadership.[97] They point out that as early as 1993, the Department of Environment (DoE) publication *Community Leadership and Representation: Unlocking the potential*[98] argues for a community leadership role and suggests that it would be 'enhanced by some degree of devolution of powers to area and neighbourhood'.[99] They then track changes in the interpretation of community leadership through the eras of community government, local governance and now to what they call 'citizen governance'.

Although Sullivan and Sweeting argue that New Labour's conception of community leadership evinces a certain 'elasticity', they do emphasise the emergence of partnerships and active participation in later conceptions.[100] They applaud, for example, the increasing 'opportunities for local people to determine their own priorities…councillors to become community champions monitoring and reviewing not only the services provided by other authorities but by other people and private agencies.'[101]

The emphasis on partnership is seen to emerge in what Leach and Wilson call the 'collaborative phase' (1997 to the present).[102] This is characterised by 'a further move away from direct service provision and a new emphasis on inter-agency working or partnerships.'[103] Changes in the authorisation environment, in governance and in the nature of democracy 'requires local authorities to be both proactive, yet sensitive community leaders, to engage in continuous dialogue with a wide variety of stakeholders and to orchestrate action that wouldn't otherwise have occurred, through the exercise of influence.'[104] This is supported by the

---

[96] Leach S and Wilson D, 'Rethinking Local Political Leadership', *Public Administration*, Vol 80 No 4, pp665-689, 2002

[97] Sullivan H and Sweeting D, 'Meta-Evaluation of the Local Government Modernisation Agenda', *Research report: Progress on Community Leadership*, London, ODPM, 2005

[98] Department of Environment, *Community Leadership and Representation: Unlocking the potential*, report of the working party on the internal management of local authorities in England, London, HMSO, 1993

[99] Sullivan H and Sweeting D, 'Meta-Evaluation of the Local Government Modernisation Agenda', *Research report: Progress on Community Leadership*, London, ODPM, 2005

[100] Sullivan H and Sweeting D, 'Institutionalising Leadership: Community leadership in English local government', paper to the panel on local political leadership at the Political Studies Association annual conference, Leeds, 4–7 April 2005

[101] Ibid; see also Sullivan H and Skelcher C, *Working Across Boundaries*, London, Palgrave, 2002

[102] Leach S and Wilson D, 'Rethinking Local Political Leadership', *Public Administration*, Vol 80 No 4, pp665-689, 2002

[103] Ibid

[104] Ibid

## Public value and local communities

Local Government Association's (LGA) commitment to 'providing civic leadership by working with and speaking for our communities and together with central government and the private and community sectors to promote local wellbeing, social justice and social inclusion.'[105]

Stewart and Stoker[106] argue that the traditional role of local government as service provider effectively depoliticises it, making it more of a locus of administration.[107] Clarke and Stewart suggest that community leadership is expected of local government because it has the 'scope and scale' to effect change, it can orient diverse actors to the good of the community and because of its unique democratic legitimacy.[108] In an important clarification, they list four characteristics of good local government: that it be inclusive, representative, transparent and accountable. Stoker's view of community leadership sees it as 'emanating more directly from citizens/communities themselves.'[109]

According to Sullivan and Sweeting, community leadership entails that specific functions are devolved to the elected local government, to its partners and to citizens.

Community leadership by local authorities requires that the:
- **Local authority** 'occupies an enabling role, providing means for citizen community leaders to establish and operate mechanisms of citizen governance, which will include neighbourhood-based mechanisms. [The] strategic framework for [the] local authority area is built up from arenas of "citizen governance" and is based on deliberation between "community leaders" at different levels.'
- **Partners** 'work in partnership with community leaders at all levels to deliver joined-up policies and services…Focus on devolution to "neighbourhood" level.'
- **Citizens:** '…multiple citizen community leaders operating within neighbourhoods (or equivalent) in relation to a variety of community interests. Citizen community leaders focus on empowerment and "self-help." Framework for engaging partners set by citizen community leaders and begins with "neighbourhood."'[110]

[105] Local Government Association, *Towards Self-Governing Communities*, London, LGA, 2004
[106] Stewart J and Stoker G, 'From Local Administration to Community Government', *Fabian Research Series* 351, London, Fabian Society, 1998
[107] Stoker G, *The Role and Purpose of Local Government*, CLD Research Report No 4, London, Commission for Local Democracy, 1994; Stoker G, 'New Localism, Participation and Networked Community Governance', IPEG, University of Manchester, 2004
[108] Clarke M and Stewart J, *Community Governance, Community Leadership and the New Local Government*, York, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 1998
[109] Stoker G, *The Role and Purpose of Local Government*, CLD Research Report No 4, London, Commission for Local Democracy, 1994; see also Atkinson D, *The Common Sense of Community*, London, DEMOS, 1994 and Box R C, Citizen Governance, London, Sage, 1998
[110] Sullivan H and Sweeting D, 'Institutionalising Leadership: Community leadership in English local government', paper to the panel on local political leadership at the Political Studies Association annual conference, Leeds, 4–7 April 2005

According to Sullivan and Sweeting, the tasks of community leadership in community governance include:

- **Setting a strategic direction:** 'Task for LA but drawing heavily on decentralised governance structures through which citizens look to key providers to assist in the interpretation of their demands.'
- **Representing community priorities:** 'Range of citizen bodies available to represent priorities. Local authority or other bodies may be called upon to act on their behalf.'
- **Galvanising local actors:** 'Occurs at neighbourhood level through joined-up action of service providers.'
- **Innovation:** 'Shaped by citizens' experiences of service and policy failure.'
- **Citizen involvement:** 'Very active and intensive.'[111]

It is to this 'active and intensive' citizen involvement that we now turn.

## 2.3 Participation and community

We have noted the distinction between reforms oriented to institutional adjustment and to the activation of citizens. This distinction was then used to reveal certain dangers of localising the community discourse. In fact, although the community approach states repeatedly its requirements that individuals be active, it conceives of that activity in terms of community. That is, in local institutional politics, in associations and community groups. Communitarianism thus treats individuals as members, and sees their participation as manifest in associational groupings, as well as in local political institutions. As we shall see, research can measure the density of such associations, as does social capital, and thus appraise a community's strength. Research can also measure the cohesiveness of a community. Here, however, we need to understand the role of active citizenship, or individual political participation, in the communitarian approach.

Communitarianism and indeed localisms old and new are premised on a political theory of associative democracy. Associative democracy, following the work of Paul Hirst, reaches beyond representative democracy located in the nation state in order to describe an associational realm of complex networks, groups and organisations.[112] Hirst sought to show how individual participation in associations enables democracy to have a strong local dimension, with central government enabling and resourcing associations. Associations also provide people with opportunities to participate and express their views, to request variety in local service provision and demand a more rounded accountability. Associational democracy is very close to communitarian debates around the importance of both communities of location and communities of interest, as well as their appropriate governance. In Hirst's account, associations can be both functional and territorial. One of his main concerns was how to articulate the teeming associational world

---

111 Ibid

112 Hirst P, *Associative Democracy: New forms of social and economic governance,* Cambridge, Polity, 1994; see also Rogers J et al, *Real Utopias Project: Associations and democracy*, London, Verso, 1995

with the institutional structures of the local authority, the nation state and the international political order.

Participation, so important a concern in the public value approach, is mediated through associations and communities in the community literature. These are collective actors seen to require help, guidance and resources. There is also a sense in which communitarianism views individual participation as instrumental to the broader policy goals of community strength and cohesion.

Whether there is anything intrinsically important about participation – perhaps as part of feeling that one is a full democratic citizen – or whether participation is best seen as a means to good outputs are well-worn debates in democratic theory.[113] Certainly, communitarianism carries elements of both[114], but the explicit and consequentialist assumption that an active, strong and cohesive community will address the deficits of legitimacy and responsiveness does suggest that individual participation is largely being valued for what it can deliver as an instrument. As Amin puts it: 'For communitarians, active citizens are desired for civic consensus and community cohesion.'[115]

Having taken a recent 'participatory turn'[116], democratic theory has focused increasingly on how individual views are collected and combined through participation[117] and on procedures that are open and fair[118]. In public service provision, this would similarly entail a greater attention to the processes of citizen engagement, now conceived of as an ongoing and iterative interaction taking place in multiple sites – indeed, as a democratic community politics.

Of course, as Parry and Moyser make clear, participation is an important element in democratic legitimacy, but it is not the only one.[119] Things have to work also. Services must be democratically legitimate, but they must also be efficient and constitute value for money. Public value can accommodate this balancing act rather more deftly than can communitarianism and thus offers clearer directions for the improvement of services. Public value avoids reducing individual participation to community activism and institutional politics. It has a richer understanding of both its authorisation environment and how that environment is best engaged. Yet public value struggles with similar problems and limitations

---

[113] Parry G and Moyser P, 'More Participation, More Democracy?' in Beetham D (ed), *Defining and Measuring Democracy*, Sage Press, 1994

[114] Sandel M, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1998

[115] Amin A, 'Local Community on Trial,' *Economy and Society,* Vol 34 No 4, pp 612-633, 2005

[116] See Barber B, *Strong Democracy: Participatory politics for a new age*, University of California Press, 2004 and Putnam R, *Bowling Alone*, London, Simon & Schuster, 2000

[117] Fishkin J S, *The Dialogue of Justice: Toward a self-reflective society,* Yale UP, 1993

[118] Habermas J, *The Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and the rationalization of society*, Vol 1, Cambridge, Polity, 1986

[119] Parry G and Moyser P, 'More Participation, More Democracy?' in Beetham D (ed), *Defining and Measuring Democracy*, Sage Press, 1994

when it comes to participation and active citizenship. Both face the challenge posed by Stoker. The problem, he states, is to:

> '…find ways of engaging people on their own terms. Voting can be made more meaningful and deliverable in a variety of forms. Participation beyond the ballot box can be obtained through various methods of public consultation and deliberation. New information and communication technologies may offer a range of further opportunities to get people's participation in a way that is flexible, attractive to them and not too time consuming. The barriers confronting the participation of particular groups also need to be addressed. We need to make sure that more participation means opportunity to influence for all rather than just the organised few.'[120]

This applies equally to communitarianism, to a growing number of current approaches to public service provision and also to public value.

In sum, we can identify in the community discourse a number of ways in which the first policy goal of 'activating citizens' has during the development of localism and the territorialisation of community been rather overshadowed by the second policy goal, that of making 'institutional reforms'. The undeniable importance of such reforms and their evidently greater practicality results in little being added by communitarianism to research into individual participation. However, the community approach is rather more successful when it comes to the policy aims of building a strong community and increasing community cohesion.

---

[120] Stoker G, *New Localism, Participation and Networked Community Governance,* IPEG, University of Manchester, 2004

# 3. Community practices

Policies oriented to, and practices taking place within, the community include the full range of local services. So they must include the great variety of new initiatives, as we have seen, to increase participatory engagement, strengthen communities and reform local institutions. This section displays selected initiatives and shows examples of their diverse types. Community practices certainly come in many shapes and sizes, and each researcher divides them into different categories. Here, however, we adopt the categories of practices oriented to community cohesion, strengthening communities, active citizenship and local institutional reform. The point of such categorisation is neither to shoehorn nor to deny overlap, but to set out the research material as it arises in the policy orientations of civic renewal and community practice.

This chapter describes a range of community practices and initiatives, and how they relate to community cohesion, community strength, active citizenship and institutional reform. The extraordinary quantity of such activity is in part to be explained by the localism of government priorities, here adopting policies of civic renewal that address the dual problems of declining legitimacy and the chronic lack of service responsiveness. Yet the sheer number of community initiatives would surely attest to a similar desire on the part of the public.

## 3.1 Working towards community cohesion
### 'Learning to Live Together'[121] (Salford and Manchester)
Salford-based RAPAR (Refugee and Asylum Seekers Participatory Action Research) is a local charity formed in 2002 by people seeking asylum, community organisations, and Salford and Manchester University researchers. RAPAR has succeeded in obtaining funding, including from SRB 5 and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF). The JRF project was called 'Learning to Live Together'. The research project is funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and anchored in involving all sections of the community in discussions and research about 'community cohesion'. In order to strengthen existing bonds in and between communities, a number of local people from different groups in Salford and Manchester were employed as paid community researchers. The community researchers, who included refugees, people born in Salford and people from other communities who had moved into Salford worked with RAPAR to develop a funding submission to the JRF. Having obtained funding, the community researchers worked alongside experienced researchers from Salford University to look at three sets of activities in the city: a footballers' group, a women's museum project, and the Salford and Manchester Community Networks funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit. The research explored the views of people involved in those activities, specifically how they felt the activities helped people in the area live together. Salford University provided capacity-building support for the community researchers on research methods, such as group interviews and

---

[121] Home Office, *Building Community Cohesion into Area Based Initiatives: A guide for residents and practitioners*, London, Home Office, 2004

analysing and interpreting data. The final report setting out the process and the conclusions that emerged from the research is forthcoming from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, and will be called *Learning to Live Together: Developing communities where there are dispersed refugee people seeking asylum*. The community researchers are joint authors of the report and will be provided with a certificate by JRF. Members of RAPAR, along with a number of voluntary and statutory agencies, also ran a series of seminars funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. This has resulted in the publication of a set of good practice research guidelines looking at the importance of involving refugees in research. The researchers from Salford University who steered the project and two members of RAPAR were invited to give a workshop presentation at the Home Office National Refugee Integration Conference in July 2004.

***Tewkesbury Travellers[122]***

Tewkesbury, like most prosperous rural areas, is often perceived as a homogenous community as there is no critical mass of minority groups. However, the Traveller community has been resident in the community for the last 400 years and forms the largest minority ethnic group in Tewkesbury. Tewkesbury Council has recently been awarded a Community Cohesion Beacon award and Shadow Pathfinder status for the work it has done in the field of community cohesion with Travellers. Tewkesbury Council has developed a three-year cross-cutting plan to address the needs of Travellers. The council has also established a number of planning groups, as well as a rural network for community cohesion, to share best practice and learning. Gloucester County Council owns four Traveller sites, three of which are in the borough and managed by Tewkesbury. These sites are generally distant from the host community due to planning regulations, land availability and the needs of Travellers on the sites. When friction does arise with the settled community, it tends to be fuelled by misinformation and negative stereotypes of Travellers. Travellers are often perceived as the cause of social problems (such as fly tipping), or as freeloaders living off state benefits, unwilling to pay tax and receiving more support than the settled community. This is particularly the case when 'travelling through' Gypsies occupy unauthorised spaces. In order to alleviate these concerns, the council has intensified the cleaning programme of areas surrounding Traveller sites to ensure that Travellers are not blamed for fly tipping. They are also addressing the lack of information on Travellers and identifying gaps in the ward/census data that renders their status invisible, even though they have been residents in the community for over 400 years. Travellers tend to prefer to remain a distant and self-contained community, with a strong sense of identity and co-dependence. The council recognises that the Travellers do not like anything externally imposed on them and therefore adopted a hands-on approach, building strong relationships with key opinion formers. The process of change has been slow and small steps have been taken to engage with both Traveller and host communities, such as sports activities and encouraging local shops to stock.

---

[122] Ibid

electricity cards used by Travellers. The council now wishes to develop more recognised routes to gaining a wider range of views and is introducing a careful mix of activities, including consultation and videos, local football matches and drama productions. Further work is planned to raise awareness of Travellers and their lifestyles. The next challenge is to address more Traveller needs, from site maintenance to site purchase options through introducing social enterprises and working with housing associations.

### Portland Road and Clarendon open space, Brighton[123]

Managing open space is a challenge to local authorities facing racial and inter-generational tensions between the settled community and new arrivals to the area. Portland Road and Clarendon is one of ten priority areas in Brighton and Hove's Neighbourhood Renewal Programme. It has one of the highest concentrations of ethnic minorities in Brighton, largely Asian Muslims. There was a perception by more established residents that Asian Muslims, as new entrants to the community, presented a threat to the area due to differences in culture and religion; tensions fuelled by the events of 11 September 2001. Although there were very few recorded racist incidents, there was a general lack of understanding of cultural and ethnic differences. A Talkshop based in Stoneham Park has been funded through Brighton and Hove's Neighbourhood Renewal Programme. It provides a range of services, including information and advice, meeting rooms, IT training, health care, a café/kiosk and public toilets. The Neighbourhood Renewal Programme has also funded a youth worker, who has used a range of resident involvement methods to turn a disused and mismanaged open space into a place where people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds mix and feel a sense of belonging. A range of forums and groups have been established involving local residents, each with their individual roles, such as the Portland Resident Action Group, the Poets' Corner Multi-Cultural Group and the Park User Group. Young people, who were perceived as a social problem, are now working as volunteers in charge of updating the graffiti wall and representing the views of other young people on steering groups and local boards. The youth worker has acted as a local champion and developed strong relationships with young people and community leaders from the Muslim faith. He has been able to encourage the YMCA, a Christian organisation, to provide space for Muslims to meet and socialise both with other Muslims and young people of other faiths. In addition, a youth-based multi-cultural event in the park helped to develop broader racial understanding. Local Asian and Bangladeshi businesses provided food reflecting the diverse ethnic groups in the area. The area now has its own quarterly newsletter, *West Hove News*, which is used to keep the community informed. The project has developed strong relationships with other agencies, for example the local police, who regularly patrol the park. The park now has a dedicated community police officer.

---

[123] Ibid

### 3.2 Strengthening communities

***Thurrock Council[124]***

Thurrock Council has developed a proactive approach towards neighbourhood engagement to take advantage of the Thames Gateway proposals. The council has successfully sought to develop the ability and opportunity for communities to be involved in influencing local services. Through an area committee structure with devolved budgets, area forums have been established and a programme of community training to develop people's capacity to be involved has been successfully implemented. By making local democracy more relevant to the people of Thurrock it has been revitalised; there has been an increase in turnout at local elections of 10 per cent with eight of the new councillors emerging from the area forums.

***Bournemouth Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder (NMP)[125]***

The Bournemouth NMP has helped to foster stronger connections between the community and service providers. The tenants' forum, the youth forum and the traders' forum have been consolidated and a 50-plus forum set up and provided with 'Voices' training by Age Concern. The tenants' forum has ensured that tenants contribute to the landlord accreditation scheme and other housing initiatives. It is planning to provide advice and advocacy for private tenants in the area as an independent organisation with its own resources. The Pathfinder has developed a street improvement co-ordinator's post, which was seen as an ideal opportunity to reconnect people with a whole range of service providers. The landlord accreditation scheme will undoubtedly be different because of tenant input and surgeries at the NMP office allow greater access. Service providers have underlined the importance of hearing issues directly from residents, because this has more impact.

***Barnsley Youth Council[126]***

Barnsley Council invests over £300,000 to ensure that young people can participate in decision-making processes. The majority of this budget is devolved via the youth service budget and a large amount of this money is from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. Barnsley Youth Council is a democratically elected youth council consisting of 18 youth councillors first elected in 2003 on a 33 per cent turnout. In February 2004, the nine seats up for re-election attracted a 44 per cent turnout. This is a clear indication of its popularity. Barnsley Council has a cabinet and six scrutiny commissions. It has just been agreed that the youth council will be the seventh scrutiny commission. The first service they wish to scrutinise is the youth service. The youth council has held a series of youth summits across the borough using dance/drama, DJ, rap, graffiti and art workshops to address the issues in education, health, aspirations and re-making Barnsley. Overall, 1,000 young people attended the youth summits. The result is

---

[124] Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Home Office, *Citizen Engagement and Public Services: Why neighbourhoods matter*, London, HMSO, 2005

[125] Ibid

[126] Local Government Association, *Towards Self-Governing Communities*, London, LGA, 2004

that services are being shaped around the needs of young people via the action points that have been formulated by young people. Two further youth summits are planned: one for looked-after young people and the other for minority ethnic young people. The youth council has sponsored citizenship work in schools and has also played a key role in launching 'Re-making Education in Barnsley'. The main aim of the youth council is to be representative. It is in the process of co-opting young people from the minority ethnic community with processes put in place for feedback.

### Haringey Peace Alliance

Established in July 2001, the Peace Alliance is a well-known group among those involved in the community safety agenda for the excellent work it does in and between London's black and minority ethnic (BME) communities. In 2000 its chief executive, Reverend Nims Obunge, local pastor at Freedom Ark Church in Tottenham, and other church leaders approached the police and council regarding holding a peace week in 2001. The group developed from there, with seed funding and continual funding and guidance from the council. Although the Peace Alliance focused originally on tackling the borough's problem of rising gun crime, its remit has widened. Its aims now are to reduce crime and the fear of crime in local communities by:

- promoting peace and good citizenship
- restoring a sense of community and involving all communities in a concerted effort towards community safety
- engaging and working with young people.

Membership of the group includes the council and the police borough commander, but it is chaired, managed and attended mainly by community groups. The Peace Alliance brings the opportunity for local people and groups to participate in developing the agenda for crime reduction and peace in their local areas. The annual week of peace celebration engages thousands of residents, including young people. The Peace Alliance encourages partnerships between community groups, schools, businesses, the statutory sector, faith groups, voluntary groups and the police, as well as other crime reduction agencies, to seek lasting solutions to the issues of social deprivation, drugs and poverty, and low educational attainment. The Peace Alliance has forged partnerships with over 200 local statutory and community organisations to achieve its goals. For instance, its Active Faiths, Safer Communities initiative works with community organisations and statutory agencies in five London boroughs to empower groups to plan and deliver community safety initiatives using a strategic and partnership approach. The key has been fostering collective responsibility towards problems and solutions in community safety. The Peace Alliance is a valuable member of Haringey's Safer Communities Partnership Executive board and the

borough's local strategic partnership. It is recognised as a successful model and is currently working across London and the United Kingdom with several other key organisations.

***Bellenden Road regeneration area in London Borough of Southwark[127]***
In 1997, Southwark Council discovered that one in every three homeowners in the area was on means-tested benefit, and duly declared that the run-down streets between Peckham Rye and East Dulwich railway stations should henceforth be known as the Bellenden Renewal Area (the main parade of shops stands on Bellenden Road). As part of the regeneration of this area, house fronts were cleaned up and private owners received up to 75 per cent of the cost of any renovation work. Improvements were also made to social housing, public spaces and local business premises. Southwark Council, in partnership with private sector developers, used community consultation and participation during the process. Local artists offered to design street furniture. Cast-iron bollards were designed by Antony Gormley, who created the Angel of the North statue. The tastefully curved blue lampposts were designed by Tom Phillips RA, and Zandra Rhodes designed a patch of terracotta pavement and a luminous pink bus stop and matching bollards. Since this has happened, the area has seen new shops and restaurants open and the whole atmosphere of the area has improved. The renewal of the physical environment has encouraged community spirit and civic pride. Residents, including ex-offenders and those in community care, look after the area and share the credit for its appearance.

### 3.3 Promoting active citizenship
***South Norfolk District Council's community plan[128]***
One of the objectives of South Norfolk District Council's community plan is to be able to include the whole community in consultations at a stage where people can still influence decisions. This requires improving communication between the district council, parish councils and local communities. Many of the parishes are very small, with the smallest serving a population of 100. Often, parish clerks themselves have felt uninvolved and unconnected. With the help of the district council and a private sector partner, funds were raised from the Invest to Save budget to progress this aspiration. The project has provided equipment, software and training, and is enabling parish clerks to maintain contact with the district council and other local public services to manage local affairs more effectively. Information on local issues can now be produced and disseminated more quickly and efficiently to aid public awareness and communication. Different parishes involve citizens in their own way and relationships between the electorate and local governance through e-participation is still evolving. However, it is a step in the right direction to widen participation and restore public trust in local democracy.

---

[127] Ibid
[128] Ibid

# Public value and local communities

***Lancashire County Council e-participation initiative[129]***
Lancashire County Council has embarked on an innovative e-participation initiative using the medium of SMS (short-message service) text messaging. This offers mobile phone users, in particular young people, greater opportunity to feed in their opinion on key issues facing the local authority. Citizens register through the council's website, ticking the areas that they wish to be involved in consultation. Each month, one question is sent to their phone, with results published on the website. Over 300 people have registered and response rates are high. All the responses are fed back into the council's policymaking processes. The council believes that there is a future for text messaging as another channel for councils and communities to have dialogue through and are taking suggestions on what other council services people would like to receive in this way.

***Wandsworth Community Empowerment Network[130]***
Wandsworth Community Empowerment Network and Wandsworth Borough Council organised a one-day conference for youth groups and organisations such as Connexions. The event followed the network team's presentation to the council on research it had commissioned from Young@Now, an organisation specialising in young people's issues. The conference sessions provided an opportunity to explore in more detail the issues raised by the research. Consultation with the under-16 age group involved ten representatives from 12 schools together with young people nominated by the probation services. For the over-16 age group there was an evening event. Activities included workshops, focus groups, quizzes and interactive voting sessions that allowed representatives to indicate their preferences anonymously. At the request of the chairman of Wandsworth Local Strategic Partnership, views expressed at the workshops were presented to key partners including the police and the primary care trust to supplement and complement their own work. A conference report summarised the findings of the day together with the responses of council directors.

***Barnsley Community and Voluntary Network[131]***
Barnsley Community and Voluntary Network used its participation in a community festival to help local people in Cudworth identify the main issues facing their village and to help promote the work of Cudworth and West Green Community Partnership (a village-based network supported by Barnsley Community and Voluntary Network). The purpose of 'Tea in the Park' was to raise the profile of the voluntary and community work in the village of Cudworth. Representatives from around 40-50 different organisations including service providers and local businesses participated. Between 3,000 and 4,000 people attended. Barnsley Community and Voluntary Network obtained valuable feedback from the local community as a result of the festival. A 'youth ideas wall' generated suggestions on what people wanted to see in the area. Residents completed an impact survey on

---

[129] Local Government Association, *Casting the Net Wider*, London, IDeA/SOCITM, 2003
[130] National Audit Office, *Neighbourhood Renewal: Case examples in getting communities involved*, London, NAO, 2004
[131] Ibid

the work of the Cudworth and West Green Community Partnership to inform future plans. Single Community Programme small grants will be distributed in line with local priorities identified on the day.

**Community Network Ambassadors[132]**
Community Network Ambassadors are local people from ethnic minority groups and other minority groups recruited to identify the needs and priorities of their communities in Bolton. The eight ambassadors are employed part-time to promote the Bolton Community Network among their own communities and groups. They have attended a training course at Bolton Community College on participation and involvement, which covered the benefits of participation, the Bolton Community Network, local authority forums and barriers to participation. The community network ambassadors consulted 68 small and hard-to-reach ethnic minority groups about how the Bolton Community Network could help them. The ambassadors devised their own innovative and accessible means of communication using a visual tool called the 'fruit tree'. The consultation focused on the kind of support that groups need to develop their capacity to participate effectively in the future of Bolton. The ambassadors are helping to set up a training programme in response to an analysis of the training needs of Bolton's ethnic minority communities.

**3.4 Local institutional reform**
**Derby City Council area panels[133]**
Derby City Council area panels were established in December 2001 and they cover all the local authority area. There are five area panels that are made up of ward members and supported by a response team of link officers across Derby City Partnership, which is the local strategic partnership. The panels are constituted as formal council committees. Each panel covers three or four wards and the number of panel members varies between nine and 12. Meetings rotate between venues across the wards and each panel has a small budget of between £22,000 to £29,000 for local community and environmental projects. The population covered by each panel ranges from 38,000 to 54,000. Areas of responsibility include:

- a 30-minute question time at every area panel meeting in order to engage with residents in developing solutions to local issues
- petitions raised by residents about local issues are referred to area panels
- consideration of *Community Update* report, which contains responses to all issues raised at panel meetings
- the council constitution states that area panels have a responsibility to link with the neighbourhood renewal and community strategy.

The area panels are seen as very successful. There is a large turnout from local residents to meetings – often between 30–125 people. Other partners are

---

[132] Ibid
[133] Local Government Association, *Towards Self-Governing Communities*, London, LGA, 2004

considering using the panels and discontinuing their own separate consultation arrangements. Some partners are considering organisational structures to link with the area boundaries. The budget spend has empowered residents to work with service providers, as well as councillors to develop relevant services and access to them, and respond to needs. The council measures the views of local people about area committees through several methods. They circulate evaluation sheets at all meetings to consider the effectiveness of panels, and use the Pointer Panel (city-wide citizens' panel) to find out how many people are aware of area panels and assess their effectiveness. The council is also undertaking the first annual survey of all the residents and organisations on the area panel meeting database later this year. Members review panel effectiveness through annual review events. The council intends to develop area plans and integrated service development through area multi-agency networks, and these plans will underpin the community strategy and neighbourhood renewal strategy. This will help the panels to have a more strategic focus and help to inform responses to issues raised by local residents. The first stage of this development will be to produce area profiles with baseline data and statistics.

### Surrey County Council local area committees[134]

In 2002, Surrey County Council had 11 local area committees with between ten and 18 councillors serving on each committee and a dedicated local staff, including a local director and community support team. Each committee served a population of between 67,000 and 130,000 representing groups of wards, coterminous with borough and district council boundaries. Surrey's area committees were designed to reconcile the strategic and local roles of the county council by challenging service silos, joining up local services, monitoring and working to improve performance of all county council services. Delegated decision making took place on a number of issues, including transport (with a £3million budget per committee), and crime and disorder. Budgets delegated to the committees also included £12,500 revenue for each member to allocate to local projects, together with £170,000 per committee in capital budgets (with committee agreement). Members' budgets have been used imaginatively for practical purposes. For example, some have pooled their monies to fund larger projects, while others have focused on smaller community grants. By July 2003, members had spent nearly £1.4million on local improvement projects and used this money to lever in over £1million (75 per cent) from partners and other organisations. All county council services are now required to provide local committees with comparative performance data at district level, which strengthens local democracy and accountability. The committees have also helped to develop partnership working, with joint reports from the council and partners being presented at meetings. For example, at the January 2003 Guildford local committee, members received and debated a joint presentation on services for

---

134 Ibid

vulnerable people from community care staff, the borough council and health representatives. The committees have helped to join up the different tiers in local government. All borough and district councils have been invited to participate and to vote on transport issues, and most do. Although the committees have helped to enhance public engagement and facilitate a closer relationship between members and local service managers, a comprehensive review carried out in the summer of 2003 suggested ways further improvements could be made:

- Surrey will be working to increase access to the area committees, as well as using more publicity and promotion of their activities
- The council will also be working towards greater involvement of the borough and district councils, with joint working over a range of subjects
- In terms of enhancing the impact and effectiveness of the committees, the review suggested that benefits could be achieved by an increase in their delegated powers and influence.

**Kent County Council's use of targets[135]**
Kent County Council established a regeneration-focused target comprising 12 indicators. It measured these for two areas of east Kent and compared them with the county averages on the same measures. Its target was to close the gap between east Kent and the county average by a greater degree than would have been expected without the local PSA (public service agreement). It worked with all agencies including the VCS (voluntary community service) and identified common aspirations and agreed how each would contribute. Pump-priming money went to the crime reduction partnership, and the children and young people partnerships. Reward money was also directed to build community engagement and delivery. Kent County Council's advice is to be innovative, proactive and make your case.

**Hampshire County Council's umbrella group[136]**
Hampshire County Council has consulted and set up a compact with the VCS in the area. It has an umbrella group that is working on the local PSA in which the VCS networks are involved. It has to rely on the VCS networks to communicate with their membership and to be accountable; it is impractical to consult with every organisation through such a complex process of preparing the submission and then negotiating with ODPM and government departments. The responsibility has to be on the VCS networks to function effectively and democratically.

In the following section, we examine how strength, cohesion and participation have been measured in the community discourse.

---

[135] National Association of Councils for Voluntary Service, *Engaging the Public in Local Public Service Agreements*, London, NACVS, 2004
[136] Ibid

# 4. Measurement in the community

### 4.1 Measuring community 'strength'

The community approach has sought to measure communities in terms of their 'strength', but what constitutes 'strength' in this context is far from clear. There are now various terms used to describe goals for community life, all of which evoke notions of a 'strong' community. These include: sustainable communities, resilient communities, community capacity, engaged and active communities, community development and healthy communities.

Strength is conceived of variously as a capacity to act or to maintain and enhance outcomes, to withstand shocks and support community members. Black and Hughes also point to a 'moral dimension of community strength, suggesting that strength is found where there is equity, participation and collaboration.'[137] Indeed, a common understanding of community strength would include a high level of mutual trust and responsibility, of empathy, altruism and an orientation to activities that benefit the community as a whole. Shared norms and purposes are widely seen as sources of community strength, or what members frequently describe as their 'sense of community'. Meanwhile, civil society discourse and notions of active citizenship suggest that communities are strong when they pull together, when they are active and vital.

Social capital theory offers a more precise analysis of the elements that combine to generate such activity and vitality in and between individuals and communities. To that end, researchers increasingly have turned to notions of social capital in order to provide more complex assessments of community strength.[138] Indeed, so influential is this association of social capital with strong communities that policymakers use the former more and more simply as a shorthand for the latter.[139]

Social capital is actually about associations. It equates community strength with the number and density of associations, with levels of trust between individuals and groups, and with levels of participation. Much like community, however, it has proven hard to measure.[140]

Given the explosion of interest in social capital theory since the mid 1990s[141], its application across different policy areas has sometimes led to very different approaches to measurement from government. The perceived need to generate a level of consistency in respect of official measurement of social capital resulted in work by the Office for National Statistics that sought to develop a more coherent

[137] Black A and Hughes P, *The Identification and Analysis of Indicators of Community Strength and Outcomes,* report to the Department of Family and Community Services, Commonwealth of Australia, 2001
[138] Harper R and Kelly M, *Measuring Social Capital in the United Kingdom*, London, ONS, 2003
[139] Performance and Innovation Unit, *Social Capital: A discussion paper*, London, Cabinet Office, 2002
[140] Blaxter M, Poland F and Curran M, *Measuring Social Capital: Qualitative study of how older people relate social capital to health,* final report to the Health Development Agency, London, 2001
[141] Performance and Innovation Unit, *Social Capital: A discussion paper*, London, Cabinet Office, 2002

and holistic approach to the subject.[142] The resulting UK Social Capital Measurement Framework now has five principle indicators, as presented in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: UK Social Capital Measurement Framework**

| Dimension | Examples of indicators |
|---|---|
| **Social participation** | • Number of cultural, leisure, social groups belonged to, and frequency and intensity of involvement<br>• Volunteering frequency and intensity of involvement<br>• Religious activity |
| **Civic participation** | • Perceptions of ability to influence events<br>• How well informed about local/national affairs<br>• Contact with public officials or political representatives<br>• Involvement with local action groups<br>• Propensity to vote |
| **Social networks and social support** | • Frequency of seeing/speaking to relatives/friends/neighbours<br>• Extent of virtual networks and frequency of contact<br>• Number of close friends/relatives who live nearby<br>• Exchange of help<br>• Perceived control of and satisfaction with life |
| **Reciprocity and trust** | • Trust in other people who are like you<br>• Trust in other people who are not like you<br>• Confidence in institutions at different levels<br>• Doing favours and vice versa<br>• Perception of shared values |
| **Views of the local area** | • Views on physical environment<br>• Facilities in the area<br>• Enjoyment of living in the area<br>• Fear of crime |

There are a number of examples of how this measurement framework has been mapped to specific indicators of social capital in official surveys. Variously described as indicators, questions and criteria, they include:

***The Survey of English Housing***
- Would you say that there is a lot of community spirit in this area?
- Would you describe the people who live in this area as friendly or not?
- Do you get on with all or most/some/none/no contact with neighbours?
- Have you done any unpaid voluntary work (apart from political parties) in the last 12 months?
- Did the work aim to improve your local area or neighbourhood and the people who live there in any way?

---

[142] Harper R and Kelly M, *Measuring Social Capital in the United Kingdom*, London, ONS, 2003

### British Household Panel Survey
- Active in a political party, trade union or environmental group
- Active in two or more of seven 'social' activities (parents' association, tenants' group, religious group, voluntary group, other community group, social group or sports club, women's institute)
- Active in two or more of five 'altruistic' social activities (tenants' group, religious group, voluntary group, other community group, women's institute)
- Feeling of belonging to neighbourhood
- Local friends are important
- Willing to work with others to improve neighbourhood
- Talk regularly to neighbours
- Frequently meets people locally
- Voted in last general election.

### Health Education Monitoring Survey
- Satisfaction with the amount of control over decisions affecting life
- Perceived ability to influence neighbourhood decisions
- Neighbourhood social capital score (summarising views and feelings about the neighbourhood such as feeling safe, neighbours looking after each other, good facilities for children, good public transport)
- Personal support group (the number of people who could be called on at a time of serious personal crisis)
- Community activity (participation in the last two weeks in adult education, voluntary or community groups or religious activities).

### Health Development Agency
- Voluntary activity
- Core volunteering
- Social activity
- Altruistic activity
- Political activity
- Voted in last election
- Local friends important
- Belong to local neighbourhood
- Work to improve local neighbourhood
- Talk to neighbours
- Frequently meets locals
- Feels local area is friendly
- Blood donation.

***Home Office Citizenship Survey***
- Concepts of rights and responsibilities
- People feeling they can influence political decisions made in Britain and their local area
- People trusting of local and national public institutions
- Perceptions about levels of racial prejudice
- Whether theirs is a neighbourhood in which they enjoy living
- How many people in their neighbourhood they know
- How many people in the neighbourhood can be trusted
- Whether their neighbourhood is a place where neighbours look out for each other
- How likely is it that a wallet or purse would be returned intact if you lost it in your neighbourhood
- What people did the last time they saw someone drop litter in the street
- How often people socialise informally
- Participation in voluntary and community activities at least once a month/ at least once in the last 12 months (categorised by civic participation, social participation, informal volunteering, formal volunteering, employer-supported volunteering).

**4.2 Measuring community cohesion**
Community cohesion can mean different things in different localities. However, as noted above, in the aftermath of the urban unrest of 2001, four broad themes around cohesion were adopted by the Home Office in conjunction with the Commission for Racial Equality and the Local Government Association as guidance for local authorities.[143] Here, a cohesive community is defined as one where:
- there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities
- the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and valued positively
- those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities
- strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and in neighbourhoods.

Under these broad themes, the Home Office has developed specific indicators to measure progress in respect of cohesion. The indicators are divided according to the four themes with the addition of a headline outcome that captures the essence of community cohesion.

There has been little further development of cohesion measures at the national level.[144] What limited work is being undertaken is carried out more locally. Some authorities and local strategic partnerships have started to pay specific attention

---

[143] Home Office, *Building a Picture of Community Cohesion: A guide for local authorities and their partners*, London, Home Office, 2003
[144] Dixon R, *Advancing Community Cohesion (parts 1-3)*, Improvement and Development Agency, available at www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk

to measuring cohesion, for example focusing on the reduction of hate crimes (mostly on the grounds of race or sexual orientation) and/or the number of people who perceive the area to be one that welcomes and values diversity. Some have these as cohesion measures in their community strategies.[145]

## 4.3 Measuring community participation

Another common assumption in the literature on communities is that more participation is good for a community. As we stated at the outset, a crucial component of communitarianism is the notion of an active citizenry. Participation, even on a small scale, builds networks of trust and mutual recognition, and this in turn is seen to feed into a broader civic involvement.[146] Participation is thus what John Stuart Mill called 'the school of public virtue'. The more participation people engage in, so the assumption goes, the better they get at it.[147] Participation is variously seen to bring 'physical and mental health, higher educational achievement, better employment outcomes, lower crime rates, decreases in maltreatment of children and an increased capacity for a community to respond to threats and interventions.'[148] Further perceived benefits include lower levels of imprisonment and a reduction in the numbers of early school-leavers.[149] As the former Home Secretary David Blunkett argued, participation and volunteering 'strengthens communities and helps people learn and care about the wider society and democracy of which they are a part.'[150] This was reiterated in Blunkett.[151] It is of little surprise, then, that there has been much interest in government in the development of measures of the various forms of participation enacted in and between communities.

The most comprehensive framework for the measurement of participation among individuals and communities is the biennial Home Office Citizenship Survey. This is a national survey that has, since 2001, sought responses on the following issues

---

[145] See for example Lancashire County Council, *Community Cohesion Policy*, Lancashire County Council, 2004

[146] See Perkins D D, Brown B B and Taylor R B, 'The Ecology of Empowerment', *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol 52 No 1, pp85, 1996 and Moen P, Dempster-McClain D and Erickson M A, 'Successful Ageing: A life-course perspective on women's multiple roles and health', *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol 97 No 6, pp1,612-1,638, 1992

[147] See Warren M, 'Democratic Theory and the Transformation Thesis', *American Political Science Review,* 1992; Perkins D D, Brown B B and Taylor R B, 'The Ecology of Empowerment', *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol 52 No 1, pp85, 1996; and Wollebaek D and Selle P, 'Does Participation in Voluntary Associations Contribute to Social Capital? The Impact of intensity, scope and type', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly,* Vol 31 No 1, pp32-61, 2002

[148] Department of Victorian Communities, *Indicators of Community Strength at the Local Government Area Level in Victoria*, Melbourne, Federal Government of Victoria, 2005

[149] Vinson T, *Community Adversity and Resilience: The distribution of social disadvantage in Victoria and New South Wales and the mediating role of social cohesion*, Jesuit Social Services, Melbourne, 2004

[150] Blunkett D, 'Civil Renewal: A new agenda for government', Edith Kahn Memorial Lecture delivered on 11 June 2003

[151] Blunkett D, 'Active Citizens, Strong Communities: Progressing civil renewal', Scarman lecture delivered on 11 December 2003

oriented to civil renewal of the community:

- **Neighbourhoods:** Whether people know, socialise with and trust their neighbours; how people feel about their neighbourhood; collective efficacy and social capital. This feeds into the Home Office's Active Community Unit and Community Cohesion Unit. New questions in 2005 covered fear of crime, taken from the British Crime Survey
- **Active communities:** Information on civic participation, informal and formal volunteering, including frequency, intensity, duration and barriers. This is central to the work of the Active Community Unit and Public Service Agreement 8. It also includes information on charitable giving
- **Racial prejudice and discrimination:** Information on perceptions of racial prejudice in Britain and perceptions of discrimination by public and private sector organisations. This provides core information for the Race Equality Unit. New questions in 2005 cover religious prejudice and discrimination, which provides information for the Faith Communities Unit
- **Good citizenship:** Information on perceptions of rights and responsibilities and whether people feel that they can influence decisions and trust institutions. This feeds into the Home Office's Civil Renewal Unit.

This information on participation in communities is intended to help monitor progress against a key Home Office Public Service Agreement (PSA 8), which states as an explicit policy aim: 'To increase voluntary and community sector activity, including increasing community participation, by five per cent by 2006.'

Other examples of indicators of participation at community level include the sets summarised below from two national-level projects.

***New Economics Foundation/Barclays Site Savers*** (National programme of urban regeneration run by Groundwork UK):

- 'Feel could help change attitudes and improve things around here'
- 'Have learned new skills on the project in the last months'
- Percentage of respondents saying in the last months they have enjoyed several conversations with new person of different age and/or background
- Percentage of respondents saying neighbours around here look out for each other
- Percentage of respondents saying they think the project/facility will survive
- How many new friends have people made through the project?
- Percentage of respondents saying they know who to contact to help change the locality
- Percentage of respondents saying they have benefited from being involved with Groundwork

- Number of people (previously unknown to Groundwork/the lead agency) involved in the project over the last months
- Number of agencies working with Groundwork (or working together) on the project.

***Rural Action for the Environment*** (National programme of community involvement in environmental projects):
- Total funding from the programme, compared to match funding from elsewhere, to show levels of leverage
- Types and numbers of projects funded to assess breadth of work undertaken
- Types of groups receiving support to assess 'reach' and inclusiveness of the scheme, and the extent to which the scheme reached new audiences for environmental work.

Capacity building, assessed by examining the:
- amount of training and advice provided, and learning achieved
- extent to which groups have developed from their initial projects
- number of new groups supported by the scheme.

Extent of participation among groups supported, calculated by assessing:
- number of groups involved in the scheme
- types of groups involved in the scheme
- numbers of people involved in those groups
- voluntary action person days
- extent and quality of participation for those involved
- personal testimony from those involved.

Extent of Rural Action's influence on others, assessed by examining examples of:
- how mechanisms pioneered by Rural Action were taken up by others
- how certain organisations and institutions (eg parish councils) had changed priorities over the time Rural Action had been running, with statements
- how local authorities had changed practices over the time the scheme had been running
- change to individuals who had been involved.

**4.4 Innovation in community measurement**
There have been significant innovations in the field of community measurement. Three will concern us here. These are in the areas of:
1. community-based research
2. measuring community involvement as a collective entity
3. measuring community readiness.

### 4.4.1 Community-based research

Hills and Mullet provide a working definition and set of guiding principles for community-based research:

'Community-based research is a collaboration between community groups and researchers for the purpose of creating new knowledge or understanding about a practical community issue in order to bring about change. The issue is generated by the community, and community members participate in all aspects of the research process. Community-based research therefore is collaborative, participatory, empowering, systematic and transformative.'[152]

They go on to provide a set of guiding principles for community-based research. It:

- is a 'planned systematic process' deriving its research question from a 'real issue facing the community'
- is 'relevant to the community', and seeks to solve problems and enhance community decision making by involving all affected players in the process
- 'requires community involvement' and, in particular, brings together members of the community and academic researchers on a collaborative basis
- 'has a problem-solving focus' and seeks to address a particular issue and bring about genuine change
- 'focuses on societal change' by 'empowering its participants'
- 'is about sustainability', making a permanent contribution in the form of programmatic change, educational materials and 'new skills and knowledge' gained in the process of participation.

They provide three examples of community-based research. In each case, participation, skills sharing, and individual and collective empowerment are all objects of research and outputs of that same research process. Community-based research may prove to have a particular capacity to involve people usually passed over both as citizens and as sources of local knowledge. For researchers, policymakers and service providers outside the community, it offers an opportunity for engagement with people on the ground that moves beyond the more usual methods employed for community consultation. Moreover, and as Hills and Mullett are keen to point out, community-based research is less about method and more about methodology, the latter here understood as 'a form of co-operative enquiry' that conducts research 'with people and not in, to or about them'.[153]

Israel et al show a similar set of principles underlying community-based research.[154] They underline further the innovative character of community-based

---

[152] Hills M and Mullett J, 'Community-Based Research: Creating evidence-based practice for health and social change', paper presented at the Qualitative Evidence-based Practice Conference, Coventry University, 15-17 May 2000

[153] Ibid

[154] Israel B, Schulz A J, Parker E A and Becker A B, 'Review of Community-Based Research: Assessing partnership approaches to improve public health', *Annual Review of Public Health*, No 19, pp173–202, 1998

research by pointing out that for the communities involved not only is their knowledge made useful to policymakers, but also that participants themselves gain greater control over the research process and the knowledge thereby created.

### 4.4.2 Measuring community involvement as a collective activity

A further innovation in the measurement of community is presented in a Joseph Rowntree Foundation report around community strength assessments.[155] Community strength assessments tend to focus on community groups rather than individuals. Here, research data is oriented to measuring:

- levels of community organisation
- levels of support on offer to a community group
- how community groups are themselves organised.

Research underpinning this approach is conducted through a series of local surveys and seeks to uncover 'gaps in both activity and infrastructure that can be acted on through new initiatives and planning.' Importantly, the approach 'incorporates a highly participative style of working, involving and working with local groups rather than imposing a plan drawn up by outside agencies.' It concentrates on good practice and the existing strengths of community groups, and not merely on problems. In addition, it is oriented to finding out and providing the optimal kind and level of support, as identified by participants. This approach, according to the researchers, is particularly effective with communities of interest and identity.

The research process described above was developed in Bradford by Bradford Council in conjunction with the University of Bradford and COGS, a community development consultancy.

### 4.4.3 Community readiness

The third innovation in the measurement of community is presented in Bovaird.[156] Community readiness is concerned with processes and mechanisms of governance, especially in terms of how successful they are in improving the quality of life of community members. Bovaird argues that 'unless communities are "ready" for the services which are proposed, those services are likely to be ineffective.'[157] The goal is thus to move communities into a state of 'readiness for services'.

Assessing community readiness for service involves the use of indicators to assess quality of life outcomes, community capacity building, service system enhancements and organisational excellence. The aim here is to add value to

---

[155] Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 'A New Approach to Assessing Community Strengths', *Research Report Findings*, York, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2002
[156] Bovaird T, 'Excellent Organisations, Effective Service Systems and Successful Communities: Towards the evaluation of governance mechanisms', *BBS Teaching and Research Review*, Issue 5, 2001
[157] Ibid

end users by meeting their needs, to add value to indirect beneficiaries (wider economic and environmental benefits and costs) and to add social value to the community, as in the promotion of cohesion and integration. In addition, political value is added where citizens gain greater voice and are empowered, while environmental value is added where the physical space of the community is enhanced.

Bovaird's attempt to stipulate the nature of political value is revealing, for he seeks to measure not only the strength and dynamism of democracy, but also of social institutions and civil society, including the degree of equality of opportunity and of openness and transparency in local agencies.

Bovaird provides the following table of these values, showing their domain of performance, benefits from governance initiatives and possible performance indicators (PIs):

**Table 4: Proposed performance indicators of community readiness**

| Domain of performance | Benefits from governance initiative | Possible PIs or areas for PIs |
|---|---|---|
| **Quality of life outcomes** | Value to end users – (meeting individual needs) | Average income<br>Health status – mortality and morbidity<br>Educational attainment<br>Housing standards<br>Level of mobility |
| | Value to indirect beneficiaries (meeting collective needs) | Economic growth<br>Level of industrial investment in area<br>Pollution<br>Environmental conservation |
| | Social value added<br>- Social integration<br><br>- Social exclusion | Community identity<br>Crime levels<br>Level of community interaction<br>Level of involvement in community groups<br>Level of involvement in voluntary activities<br>Proportion of community in poverty<br>Unemployment<br>Homelessness |
| | Political value added | Electoral turnout<br>Level of contact with local politicians<br>Involvement in decision making on important local issues (in public, voluntary and private sectors) |
| **Capacity building** | Level of investment in community facilities | Value of community-owned assets<br>Investment level in community-owned assets |
| | Level of support available from community | Level of local fundraising for local needs<br>Proportion of volunteers (in social care organisations) to clients with assessed needs<br>Perception of residents of 'readiness to help' of local people |

# Public value and local communities

| Domain of performance | Benefits from governance initiative | Possible PIs or areas for PIs |
|---|---|---|
| **Capacity building (continued)** | Level of policy differentiation for different communities with different values and norms | Level of service choice available to different communities |
| **Service system enhancements** | Level of assessed needs that are met | Proportion of service standards that are achieved<br>Proportion of clients with unmet needs |
| | Appropriateness of set of agencies commissioned to deliver services | Proportion of clients served by agencies deemed to be performing below 'contract norms'<br>Proportion of service delivered by agencies that is regarded as 'unsatisfactory' by service users |
| | Level of planned experimentation in services | Proportion of clients receiving 'new' or 'pilot' services |
| | Partnership working | Proportion of clients with integrated care packages<br>Proportion of service delivery agencies working to a co-ordinated plan |
| | Level of flexibility/adaptability of service system | Proportion of clients with 'non-standard' needs<br>Average time to arrange service for clients with non-standard needs |
| **Organisational excellence** | Accreditation | Proportion of users served by organisations with quality accreditation<br>Proportion of organisations that fail inspection processes |
| | Stakeholder perceptions | Proportion of users (and other stakeholders) who perceive organisation as meeting their expectations |
| | Business success | Proportion of organisations with healthy finances<br>Proportion of organisations experiencing growth |
| | Leadership | Proportion of organisations with clear strategies, business plans and appropriate structures |
| | Staffing | Proportion of organisations with staff trained to appropriate levels<br>Staff satisfaction, turnover and absenteeism |

*Source: Bovaird, 2001*

# Conclusion

This research review has examined the discourse of community in public policy, and the policy developments arising from that discourse. We have seen a series of assumptions operationalised in the roll-out of agendas that concern themselves with community strength and civil renewal. While the range of practical and institutional initiatives that arise from this discourse is impressive and often of direct relevance to issues around public value, there remain some significant problems. A general lack of clarity around issues and concepts bedevils this approach, and there is little evidence that, overall, the reform agenda around communities is having the desired impact.

Certainly, civil renewal is an important end and locality is an important site of collective action and service delivery. Yet in an age of globalisation, communities are increasingly breaking loose from their geographic moorings and there seems little chance that a discourse so heavily oriented to physical locality can accommodate such change. At the end, one is left with a sense that the notion of community being operationalised in current reforms remains that of a post-war, cohesive, industrious and decent English town. Renewal is then required in order to recreate this image of community in the hope that this will restore citizen pride in governance institutions and, through an empowered public, improve the responsiveness of public service provision.

# Bibliography

Agyeman J and Spooner P, 'Ethnicity and the Rural Environment' in Cloke P and Little J (eds), *Contested Countryside Cultures*, London, Routledge, 1997

Aldridge S and Halpern D with Fitzpatrick S, *Social Capital: A discussion paper*, Performance and Innovation Unit, Cabinet Office, April 2002

Amin A, 'Local Community on Trial,' *Economy and Society*, Vol 34 No 4, pp 612-633, 2005

Arnstein S R, 'A Ladder of Citizen Participation', *American Institute of Planners Journal*, Vol 35, pp216-224, 1969

Atkinson D, *The Common Sense of Community,* London, DEMOS, 1994

Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Measuring Social Capital: Current collections and future direction*, Canberra, November 2000

Balls E, 'Devolution and Localism in Public Policy – a view from the Treasury', speech to the CIPFA annual conference, Brighton, 2002

Barber B, *Strong Democracy: Participatory politics for a new age*, University of California Press, 2004

Bell C and Newby H, *The Sociology of Community*, Frank Cass, London, 1974

Bell C and Newby H, 'Theories of Community' in Bell C and Newby H (eds), *Community Studies*, pp21-53, New York, Praeger, 1971

Black A and Hughes P, 'The Identification and Analysis of Indicators of Community Strength and Outcomes', report to the Department of Family and Community Services, Commonwealth of Australia, 2001

Blaxter M, Poland F and Curran M, *Measuring Social Capital: Qualitative study of how older people relate social capital to health*, final report to the Health Development Agency, London, 2001

Blunkett D, 'Civil Renewal: A new agenda for government', Edith Kahn Memorial Lecture delivered on 11 June 2003

Blunkett D, 'Active Citizens, Strong Communities: Progressing civil renewal', Scarman lecture delivered on 11 December 2003

Blunkett D, speech delivered to the New Local Government Network, 22 January 2004

Blunkett D, 'Renewing Democracy: Why government should invest in civil renewal', speech delivered to the Ash Institute, 2004

Bovaird T, 'Excellent Organisations, Effective Service Systems and Successful Communities: Towards the evaluation of governance mechanisms', *BBS Teaching and Research Review*, Issue 5, 2001

Box R C, *Citizen Governance*, London, Sage, 1998

Cabinet Office, *Modernising Government*, Cm 4310, London, HMSO, 1999

Cantle T, *Community Cohesion: A report of the independent review team*, London, Home Office, 2001

Centre for Public Scrutiny, *Successful Scrutiny*, London, CfPS, 2004

Clarence E and Painter C, 'Public Service Under New Labour: Collaborative discourses and local networking', *Public Policy and Administration*, Vol 13 No 1, pp8-22, 1998

Clarke M and Stewart J, *Community Governance, Community Leadership and the New Local Government*, York, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 1998

Corry D, Hatter W, Parker I, Randle A and Stoker G, *Joining-Up Local Democracy: Governance systems for new localism*, London, New Local Government Network, 2004

Corry D and Stoker G, *New Localism: Refashioning the central-local relationship*, London, New Local Government Network, 2002

Craig G, Taylor M, Szanto C and Wilkinson M, *Developing Local Compacts: Relationships between local public sector bodies and the voluntary and community sectors*, York, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 1999

Denham J, *Building Cohesive Communities: A report of the ministerial group on public order and community cohesion*, London, Home Office, 2002

Department of Environment, *Community Leadership and Representation: Unlocking the potential,* report of the working party on the internal management of local authorities in England, London, HMSO, 1993

Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions, *Local Leadership*, Local Choice, London, DETR, 1999

Department of Victorian Communities, *Indicators of Community Strength at the Local Government Area Level in Victoria,* Melbourne, Federal Government of Victoria, 2005

Dixon R, *Advancing Community Cohesion (parts 1-3)*, Improvement and Development Agency, 2005 available at www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk

Duffy K and Hutchinson J, 'Urban Policy and the Turn to Community', *Town Planning Review*, Vol 68 No 3, pp347-362, 1997

Filkin G, Stoker G, Wilkinson G and Williams J, *Towards a New Localism*, London, New Local Government Network, 2000

Fishkin J S, *The Dialogue of Justice: Toward a self-reflective society*, Yale UP, 1993

Foley P and Martin S, 'A New Deal for the Community? Public participation in regeneration and local service delivery', *Policy and Politics*, Vol 28 No 4, pp479–491, 2000

Gallie W B, 'Essentially Contested Concepts', *Proceedings of the Aristotlean Society*, No 56, pp167-188, 1956

Gilroy P, *There Ain't No Black in the Union* Jack, London, Hutchinson, 1987

Goodlad R, Burton P and Croft J, 'Effectiveness at What? The process and impact of community involvement in area-based initiatives', mimeo, Department of Urban Studies, University of Glasgow, 2004

Goss S, *Making Local Governance Work*, London, Macmillan, 2001

Granovetter M, *Getting a Job*, Harvard UP, 1974

Habermas J, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An inquiry into a category of Bourgeois Society*, MIT, 1970, 1991

Habermas J, *The Theory of Communicative Action: Reason and the rationalization of society*, Vol 1, Cambridge, Polity, 1986

Halsey A H, 'Social Polarization, the Inner City and the Community' in Bulmer M, Lewis J and Piachaud D (eds), *The Goals of Social Policy*, London, Unwin Hyman, 1989

Harper R and Kelly M, *Measuring Social Capital in the United Kingdom*, London, ONS, 2003

Hillery G A Jr, 'Definitions of Community: Areas of agreement', *Rural Sociology*, Vol 20 No 4, p111, 1955

Hills M and Mullett J, 'Community-Based Research: Creating evidence-based practice for health and social change', paper presented at the Qualitative Evidence-based Practice Conference, Coventry University, 15-17 May 2000

Hirst P, *Associative Democracy: New forms of social and economic governance*, Cambridge, Polity, 1994

Home Office, *Building a Picture of Community Cohesion: A guide for local authorities and their partners*, London, Home Office, 2003

Home Office, *Building Communities, Beating Crime: A better police service for the 21st century*, Cm 6360, HMSO, London, 2004

Home Office, *Building Community Cohesion into Area Based Initiatives: A guide for residents and practitioners*, London, Home Office, 2004

Ife J, *Community Development: Creating community alternatives – vision, analysis and practice*, Melbourne, Addison Wesley Longman, 1995

Ilcan S and Basok T, 'Community Government: Voluntary agencies, social justice, and the responsibilization of citizens', *Citizenship Studies*, Vol 8 No 2, pp129-144, 2004

Israel B, Schulz A J, Parker E A and Becker A B, 'Review of Community-Based Research: Assessing partnership approaches to improve public health', *Annual Review of Public Health*, No 19, pp173–202, 1998

Janowitz M, *The Community Press in an Urban Setting*, Glencoe, Free Press, 1967

Jenkin B, 'Real Decentralisation: The denationalisation of local government', NLGN lecture, London, 19 April 2004

Jochum V, Pratten B and Wilding K, 'Civil Renewal and Active Citizenship: A guide to the debate', http://www.ncvovol.org.uk/asp/uploads/uploadedfiles/1/637/civilrenewalactivecitizenship.pdf, 2005

Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 'A New Approach to Assessing Community Strengths', *Research Report Findings*, York, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2002

Kearns A and Turok I, *Sustainable Communities*, ESRC/ODPM report, Department of Urban Studies, University of Glasgow, 2003

Lancashire County Council, *Community Cohesion Policy*, Lancashire County Council, 2004

Leach S and Wilson D, 'Rethinking Local Political Leadership', *Public Administration*, Vol 80 No 4, pp665-689, 2002

Local Government Association, *Casting the Net Wider*, London, IDeA/SOCITM, 2003

Local Government Association, *Towards Self-Governing Communities*, London, LGA, 2004

Milburn A, 'Localism: From rhetoric to reality', lecture to NLGN and the New Health Network, London, 5 February 2003

Milburn A, 'Localism: The need for a new settlement', DEMOS seminar, London, 21 January 2004

Moen P, Dempster-McClain D and Erickson M A, 'Successful Aging: A life-course perspective on women's multiple roles and health', *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol 97 No 6, pp1612-1638, 1992

Moore M H, *Creating Public Value: Strategic management in government*, Cambridge MA, Harvard UP, 1995

Mulgan G and 6 P, 'The Local's Coming Home: Decentralisation by degrees', *DEMOS Quarterly*, No 9, pp3-7, 1996

National Association of Councils for Voluntary Service, *Engaging the Public in Local Public Service Agreements*, London, NACVS, 2004

National Audit Office, *Neighbourhood Renewal: Case examples in getting communities involved*, London, NAO, 2004

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Home Office, *Citizen Engagement and Public Services: Why neighbourhoods matter*, London, HMSO, 2005

Parry G and Moyser P, 'More Participation, More Democracy?' in Beetham D (ed), *Defining and Measuring Democracy*, Sage Press, 1994

Pateman C, *Participation and Democratic Theory*, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1975

Pereira C, 'Anthology: The breadth of community' in Bornat J, Pereira C, Pilgrim D and Williams F (eds), *Community Care: A reader*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1993

Performance and Innovation Unit, *Social Capital: A discussion paper*, London, Cabinet Office, 2002

Perkins D D, Brown B B and Taylor R B, 'The Ecology of Empowerment', *Journal of Social Issues,* Vol 52 No 1, p85, 1996

Powell M, 'In Search of New and Old Localism', paper presented at ESPAnet conference, Oxford, 9-11 September 2004

Pratchett L, 'Local Autonomy, Local Democracy and the "New Localism"', *Political Studies*, Vol 52, pp358-375, 2004

Putnam R, *Bowling Alone*, London, Simon & Schuster, 2000

Raco M and Flint J, 'Communities, Places and Institutional Relations: Assessing the role of area-based community representation in local governance', *Political Geography*, Vol 20 No 5, pp585-612, 2001

Raynsford N, 'New Localism: Making a reality of the myth', speech, 2004

Reid J, 'Equity, Choice, Capacity and Culture', speech at the New Local Government Network, London, 7 November 2003

Rogers J et al, *Real Utopias Project: Associations and democracy*, London, Verso, 1995

Sandel M, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1998

Savage M et al, *Urban Sociology, Capitalism and Modernity*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2002

6 P, Leat D, Seltzer K and Stoker G, *Towards Holistic Governance*, Basingstoke, Macmillan Palgrave, 2002

Smith G, 'Community and Communitarianism: Concepts and contexts', *UK Communities Online* available at www.communities.org.uk, 1996

Smith S and Easterlow D, 'The Strange Geography of Health Inequalities', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, No 30, 2004

Social Exclusion Unit, *Bringing Britain Together: A national strategy for neighbourhood renewal*, Cm 4045, London, HMSO, 1998

Spellerberg A, *Framework for the Measurement of Social Capital in New Zealand*, Auckland, Statistics New Zealand, 2001

Stewart J and Stoker G, 'Fifteen Years of Local Government Restructuring 1979-1994: An evaluation' in Stewart J and Stoker G (eds), *Local Government in the 1990s*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1995

Stewart J and Stoker G, 'From Local Administration to Community Government', *Fabian Research Series* 351, London, Fabian Society, 1998

Stoker G, *New Localism, Participation and Networked Community Governance*, IPEG, University of Manchester, 2004

Stoker G, *New Localism: The argument for decentralisation gains ground in England*, IPEG, University of Manchester, 2004

Stoker G, 'Redefining Local Democracy' in Pratchett L and Wilson D, *Local Democracy and Local Government*, London, Macmillan, 1996

Stoker G, *The New Management of British Local Government*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1999

Stoker G, *The Role and Purpose of Local Government*, CLD Research Report No 4, London, Commission for Local Democracy, 1994

Sullivan H and Skelcher C, *Working Across Boundaries*, London, Palgrave, 2002

Sullivan H and Sweeting D, 'Institutionalising Leadership: Community leadership in English local government', paper to the panel on local political leadership at the Political Studies Association annual conference, Leeds, 4–7 April 2005

Sullivan H and Sweeting D, 'Meta-Evaluation of the Local Government Modernisation Agenda', *Research report: Progress on Community Leadership*, London, ODPM, 2005

The World Bank, 'What is Social Capital?', 1999. PovertyNet available at http://povlibrary.worldbank.org/library/topic/4294/

Urry J, 'Connections', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, No 22, pp27-37, 2004

Urry J, *Global Complexity*, Cambridge, Polity, 2003

Vinson T, *Community Adversity and Resilience: The distribution of social disadvantage in Victoria and New South Wales and the mediating role of social cohesion*, Jesuit Social Services, Melbourne, 2004

Warren M, 'Democratic Theory and the Transformation Thesis', *American Political Science Review,* 1992

White D, 'Social Policy and Solidarity: Orphans of the new model of social cohesion', *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, Vol 28 No 1, pp51-76, 2003

White J, 'From Herbert Morrison to Command and Control: The decline of local democracy', www.historyandpolicy.org, 2004

Wilcox D, *A Guide to Effective Participation*, York, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 1995

Williams C, 'Developing Community Participation in Deprived Neighbourhoods: A critical evaluation of the third-sector approach', *Space and Polity*, Vol 7 No 1, pp65-73, 2003

Williams C and Windebank J, *'Alternative Employment Spaces'* in Leyshon A, Lee R and Williams C (eds), *Alternative Economic Spaces*, London, Sage, pp128-50, 2003

Wilmott P, *Community Initiatives: Patterns and prospects*, London, Policy Studies Institute, 1989

WLGA, *Community Leadership and Community Planning*, Cardiff, Welsh Local Government Association, 1999

Wollebaek D and Selle P, 'Does Participation in Voluntary Associations Contribute to Social Capital? The Impact of intensity, scope and type', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, Vol 31 No 1, pp32-61, 2002

Woodhouse D, 'Changing Patterns of Accountability in Westminster Systems: A UK perspective', *Political Science Program*, Australian National University, 2004

Public value and local communities

**We provide:**
**Research**
**Consultancy**
**Leadership**
**Advocacy**
**Partnership**