Neighbourhoods that work
A study of the Bournville estate, Birmingham

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Contents

| Acknowledgements                          | v    |
| Summary                                  | vi   |

1 Introduction 1

2 The estate 4
   Introduction 4
   The neighbourhoods 4
   Conclusion 7

3 Does the neighbourhood work? 8
   Introduction 8
   Bournville in its national and local context 8
   Satisfaction with landlords 8
   Perceptions of the estate 9
   Social relations on the estate 10
   Satisfaction with local services and facilities 10
   Crime and security 10
   Conclusion 11

4 Residents and residence 12

5 Social capital 14
   Perceptions of location and community 15
   Bonding social capital 16
   Bridging social capital 18
   Linking social capital 19
   Conclusion 20

6 Resident satisfaction 23
   The estate and its environment 23
   Satisfaction with Bournville 23
   Change in Bournville over time 24
   Problems in the area 24
   Housing standards 24
   Satisfaction with public services and facilities 25
   General satisfaction with local services and facilities 25
   Conclusion 26

7 Crime and disorderly behaviour 27
   Introduction 27
   The incidence of street crime 27
   The incidence of street crime by neighbourhoods 29
   The incidence of disorderly behaviour by neighbourhood 31
   Perceptions of safety and security 33
   Conclusion 34
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Finally, our thanks are due to all of those who participated in the focus groups and interviews and assisted with the social survey, which has been a crucial part of the present study.
There is a renewed interest in Britain and elsewhere in problems associated with neighbourhoods. The increasing concentration of deprived households in particular parts of cities and growing social polarisation and segregation within cities have triggered a series of debates about why these patterns of difference exist and about what policies can be pursued to ameliorate or change such patterns.

In Britain there has been a plethora of studies about neighbourhoods but they are principally studies of neighbourhoods that do not work. Unfortunately, it is not clear that we can understand better how to develop policies to address neighbourhood problems by continually studying neighbourhoods that do not work. What we need are studies about neighbourhoods that do work, do house a mix of households and, in the British context, do include a significant proportion of social rented dwellings.

It could be argued that we know that affluent, owner-occupied neighbourhoods work and that they work because they are affluent. We know, in turn, that this is directly linked to the problems associated with neighbourhoods of mixed tenure and with a higher proportion of lower income households – less affluent areas work less well. The challenge is to find neighbourhoods that have a mix of tenures and include a significant proportion of social rented housing, and are not only neighbourhoods of choice, but are also neighbourhoods in which more affluent owner-occupiers live alongside households that are being allocated housing on the basis of need.

This study is designed to contribute to filling this gap in the literature. It is based on a substantial research project facilitated by the Bournville Village Trust to celebrate its centenary and funded by the Bournville Village Trust and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. It is a study of a neighbourhood that is not uniform and that includes a significant proportion of social rented housing as well as attractive, and sometimes expensive, owner-occupied housing.

It is a neighbourhood in Birmingham that works as evidenced by comparisons with other parts of the city: evidence about resident satisfaction and evidence about residential mobility. At the same time it is not a uniform neighbourhood or a neighbourhood without problems. It provides us with an important opportunity to assess what contributes to the relative success of this neighbourhood in dealing with different needs and providing satisfactory housing of choice for different groups.

The aim of the study has been to identify how Bournville Village Trust could do things better to ensure that Bournville remains an attractive and sustainable community. The study has also been designed to contribute to the broader debate and understanding about how neighbourhoods work.

A longer report from this study is being published separately summarises the evidence generated through the research project. The focus of this report, rather than reproducing the evidence, is on the conclusions and implications of the research for neighbourhoods elsewhere and on contributing to a constructive debate about neighbourhoods that work.

The conclusions of the study raise important issues for urban and housing policy in Britain.

- The study demonstrates that neighbourhoods with a high proportion of social rented housing and neighbourhoods with mixed

Summary
tenure can be successful and can provide areas of choice.

- Successful neighbourhoods have problems nonetheless and face challenges associated with absorbing change, for example related to demographic change and conflict.
- Tenure mix is an important element in what makes neighbourhoods work but integrated forms of tenure mix are the most effective and, at the same time, tenure mix does not ensure successful neighbourhoods.
- The popularity and sustainability of Bournville has been predicated on the successful application of a number of key principles: a high quality natural environment, an imaginative and coherent overall planning framework, the high architectural quality of the built environment, a socially mixed community, a sustained estate management capacity and the positive involvement of the community in the management of the neighbourhood.
- Social capital is an important dimension of neighbourhoods and their resources but is related to both housing dynamics and economic well-being rather than being wholly independent of these. This has implications for strategies to strengthen and build social capital.
- Neighbourhoods are always undergoing change but the experience of change and the tensions it creates differ for people of different ages and length of residence, and impact unevenly across a neighbourhood that has developed in a number of stages.
- There are tensions between ideas of cohesion and exclusion, indeed, cohesion may appear to be strengthened through exclusion.

The implications of this study for policy at a national and local level are discussed under seven headings:

- Tailored and integrated responses
- Neighbourhoods that are attractive to live in
- Plan, monitor and manage
- New communities
- Existing viable neighbourhoods
- Dysfunctional markets
- Clearance and rebuilding

How neighbourhood problems are explained and understood has an important impact on which policy approaches appear to be relevant. If the policy community signs up (implicitly or explicitly) to explanations and policy solutions that privilege particular factors that affect the functioning of neighbourhoods (the local economy, housing tenure, crime, housing design), this is unlikely to generate effective policy responses. It is the combination of a number of key factors that are layered in time, and interact over time and in particular locations that determine how neighbourhoods work. The challenge is to adopt policies that increase the likelihood that people want to stay in an area and because they do stay, build the links and bonds that reinforce their desire to stay.
In recent years a number of separate debates have focused on the deprived neighbourhoods of British cities. There has been a renewed interest in area-based and neighbourhood-based policy interventions. Perhaps the most striking example of this is a series of government initiatives concerned with social exclusion, neighbourhood renewal and neighbourhood regeneration. The revival of urban policy through the Single Regeneration Budget has been succeeded by a range of other initiatives including the New Deal for Communities Programme and the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal.

Alongside this there is a long-running concern with trends affecting social housing and with large housing estates. When data that links deprivation and dissatisfaction with housing variables is considered, a variety of different types of neighbourhood emerge. One of the most significant types of neighbourhood is that of large housing estates built for rent. These areas have increasingly been seen as dysfunctional and as contributing to the problems experienced by households and individuals.

While it is evident that there are dysfunctional areas that have other housing characteristics (with mixed tenure or even predominantly private ownership of housing), it is nevertheless important to address issues about the functioning of large council and rented estates. Some contributions suggest that there is an inevitable spiral of decline associated with these neighbourhoods (Power and Tunstall, 1995; Taylor, 1995). Allocations policies or, alternatively, the unpopularity of dwellings and the tenure, lead to a concentration of disadvantaged households in these neighbourhoods, which, in turn, creates a series of pressures and outcomes in poor quality local public and private facilities, low self-esteem, increased risk of crime and other factors associated with disordered communities. Some of the research on these topics adopts a methodology and focus that makes it unlikely that other characteristics will be identified. The tendency is to focus down on deprived and failing neighbourhoods and to adopt frameworks that focus on deprivation and failures of management.

Some of the reasons for the focus on failing housing estates can be linked to the long-established evidence about residualisation within rented housing in Britain (Forrest and Murie, 1983; Lee and Murie, 1999). Various factors have contributed to a funnelling of lower income households and households that are dependent on benefits towards council estates and other rented housing. The national and local data show a narrowing of the social base of council and housing association accommodation. It has always been acknowledged, however, both that parts of the private sector have also become residualised and that there are differences within the social rented sector. Differentiation within the tenure used to be referred to by distinguishing between the affluent or respectable estates and the rough (or ‘sink’) estates, which have been evident within the council housing sector. There has always been a hierarchy of quality and reputation within the tenure and, while the tenure as a whole has been affected by residualisation, it is not apparent that this has removed differentiation.

For this reason we should not become wholly preoccupied with looking at failed estates. It is easy to get the wrong impression of what
happens elsewhere. If we are to seek policy-relevant information it may be more appropriate to focus on the ‘better’ estates. Why do some estates work better than others? What are the attributes that make them more popular and successful?

These questions can be linked to a further set of policy-related questions that emerge out of the debate about estates in decline (see for example, Page, 1993, 1994; Cole et al, no date). The literature, which is generally built up from studies of failing estates, variously emphasises certain kinds of policy solutions (local housing management, allocations policy, neighbourhood management, community development). Other contributions emphasise tenure mix and social mix, or the restructuring of the housing stock to change the mix of properties and the layout of estates. Again, the weakness of studies that focus on failing estates is that it is possible to suggest that almost anything that does not occur on those estates could solve the problems. It may be more insightful to look at successful estates and to identify the factors that can be linked to their success.

The more recent debate about neighbourhoods has been influenced by the emergence of a neighbourhood renewal strategy as part of the wider approach to social exclusion adopted by government since 1997. This agenda has considerably influenced the project reported here. The debate has also been stimulated by the concept of social capital. Discussions of social capital have particularly referred to work by Robert Putnam (1995) which has influenced the current debate about social exclusion. Social capital is defined by Putnam as “… features of social organisation, such as networks, norms and social trust that facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit” (1995). The literature identifies different types of capital operating within regions, cities and neighbourhoods: productive capital, institutional capital, human capital, social capital, physical capital. While these capitals are interrelated, the identification of each of them emphasises that what makes neighbourhoods work is not just the availability of employment, or the operation of the local economy, or the quality of the built environment and the infrastructure available, or the nature of local institutional arrangements, accountability and control. Rather, it involves a range of different processes which combine to provide the glue that makes neighbourhoods work.

These are the issues underlying the present study. It is a study of Bournville in the City of Birmingham. The neighbourhood as a whole is one that works – as the evidence about satisfaction and demand presented in this report demonstrates. However, it is also a neighbourhood that includes a series of different areas that work in different ways and to different extents. By looking both at the neighbourhood as a whole and at its component parts, we are able to explore the different factors contributing to the ways that neighbourhoods operate.

As is demonstrated throughout this report, the area, as a whole, scores well in terms of resident satisfaction and participation. It has relatively high levels of social and infrastructural capital. However, it is also a highly mixed neighbourhood with areas that are predominantly owner-occupied, areas that are predominantly council rented, and areas that are predominantly managed by a major, successful housing association – the Bournville Village Trust. This provides us with a framework to consider questions about neighbourhoods that work in a more reflective way.

Why does the neighbourhood work?

- Is it because of its history?
- Because of its mixed tenure?
- Because of patterns of management?
- Because of the diversity of population?
- Is it because it is more exclusive or less exclusive?
- Does it work for different groups of people, older people, families with children, more affluent people, better than it does for other groups?
- Is it one neighbourhood or many? Is it one community or many?
- Are there parts of the neighbourhood where problems are sufficiently large to suggest major changes and what kind of changes would then make a difference?
- What is the evidence from the successful parts that could be used to inform policy responses in the less successful parts?

These are the questions which are addressed in this study and which are the subject of this report.
The research programme carried out for this study involved a mixed methodology including analysis of administrative and performance data, interviews with key officers and professionals involved in the local housing market and the provision of local services, focus groups and in-depth interviews carried out with residents, and a major social survey of residents.

The remainder of this report presents a summary of the research findings and a fuller discussion of the policy lessons arising from the study:

Chapter 2 describes the estate and the different developments within it.

Chapter 3 summarises the evidence that justifies presenting this estate as a neighbourhood that works – referring to local and national comparisons.

Chapter 4 provides evidence about residential mobility on the estate. Much of the debate about neighbourhoods at present refers to the dynamics of neighbourhoods – networks and communities. Neighbourhoods with high turnover of population and short periods of stay are much less likely to develop strong links between neighbours and the process of forming and maintaining a community is arguably more difficult. At the same time, neighbourhoods work effectively with different levels and types of mobility and with different demographic structures. A strong element in the debate is about choice and there is a general assumption that neighbourhoods that people choose to move to and choose to stay in will have a greater chance of functioning effectively and coping with different rates of mobility.

Chapter 5 presents data (largely from the social survey) related to social capital (the strength of local ties and links between individuals and families living within the area) and refers to different dimensions of social capital (bonding, bridging and linking).

Chapter 6 presents data on resident satisfaction with the home, area and local service delivery.

Chapter 7 presents a summary of data on crime and local security.

The final three chapters draw conclusions from these data. Chapter 8 focuses on questions about the importance of tenure mix and different forms of tenure mix. Chapters 9 and 10 refer to a wider range of considerations about how neighbourhoods work and how policies to improve neighbourhoods can be informed by this.
The estate

Introduction

Originally conceived as a model village by George Cadbury in the late 19th century, the Bournville Village Trust (BVT) estate is now a ‘large garden suburb’ located approximately four miles to the south-west of Birmingham city centre. The estate now spreads over about 1,000 acres of land, split almost in half by the major trunk road, the A38 (the Bristol Road) (Harrison, 1999). According to the 1991 Census, the total population of the estate was around 18,700 people – the City of Birmingham having a population of around one million. There are approximately 7,800 properties on the BVT estate, with an ‘island’ of about 500 largely council owned properties located in the centre, amounting to about 8,300 dwellings in total. Approximately 40% of these properties are on the northern side of the Bristol Road and the remainder are to the south. Disregarding the council properties, around 40% of properties on the estate are socially rented (mostly from BVT) and the remainder are privately owned, originally on a leasehold, but now increasingly on a freehold basis (1991 Census data).

The Bournville estate is associated with the development of Cadbury’s Bournville factory. The factory is still open, is still successful and still employs local people. There has therefore not been the dramatic elimination of local employment associated with some other neighbourhoods. However, the Bournville estate is not so closely associated with people working in the Bournville factory as was the case years ago. There are other substantial employers nearby – the Longbridge motor works is located on the same side of the city of Birmingham and is another major employer, although it has declined in size since the early 1980s. Accessibility to the centre of the city of Birmingham is also good. Furthermore, it is not an area that is poorly connected to job opportunities and, as emerges from subsequent discussion, because it is still regarded as an attractive neighbourhood it houses people who have choices and opportunities in the labour market beyond those that are on their immediate doorstep.

The estate covers most but not all of the Bournville ward of the City of Birmingham, as well as parts of the neighbouring wards of Selly Oak, Weoley Castle and Northfield. It has no formal physical boundary that separates it from surrounding areas, but the estate is an entity in itself with its own particular rules, policies and practices which have ensured a distinctive identity, particularly in the older parts of the estate. In addition to BVT, a number of statutory and other voluntary agencies have responsibilities for various functions on the estate (such as rubbish collection, street lighting, street cleaning and so on).

The neighbourhoods

The Bournville estate referred to in this study is not just the model village built 100 years ago but comprises a series of adjacent developments reflecting different phases in the growth of the neighbourhood. In this research we have divided the Bournville estate into six distinct ‘neighbourhoods’, which are briefly described below. Plans of the areas may be seen in Appendix A.
Neighbourhoods that work

Bournville Village

Bournville Village was the initial development of a model village. Most of the development was managed by the BVT (established in 1900). The Village was completed by 1911 and included both rented and owner-occupied properties.

Weoley Hill

Weoley Hill was developed through a Public Utility Society formed under the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts and able to raise funds from a variety of sources, including the Public Works Loans Board. In changing political and economic circumstances a range of house types and sizes was built for sale only. High standards of landscaping and environmental quality were maintained and when Weoley Hill Ltd was eventually wound up in the early 1950s, responsibility for the environmental management of the neighbourhood transferred to BVT. Owners have had the opportunity to acquire their freeholds under the 1967 Leasehold Reform Act and most (78%) have done so.

Central Bournville

Central Bournville is the largest and most diverse of the six neighbourhoods and contains developments from every decade during the 20th century with the exception of the 1940s. As a result, this area includes various types of dwellings, tenures and styles of development constructed under the requirements of different funding regimes. It includes a series of developments around three pre-war Public Utility Societies (Bournville Tenants, Bournville Works and The Woodlands) and a large number of post-war developments.

Shenley

Shenley was the development most affected by the changes in the political and economic environment at the end of the Second World War, which affected housing designs and standards. During the pre-war period BVT staff had expressed reservations about the standard of houses qualifying for Exchequer subsidy and preferred to seek alternative forms of finance to maintain their own, higher standards. The Shenley development was intended for households on the City Council’s waiting list and the City Council was providing the loan finance and claiming Exchequer subsidy. Consequently Shenley has higher density flats and maisonettes.

The first tenants began to move into the new Shenley development in 1954. At that time the development was likened to a ‘frontier town’ – an estate with unmade roads, few social facilities and dominated by young households with young children (Harrison, 1999). This was in strong contrast to the pre-war tradition of BVT in providing cultivated gardens and a high quality environment.

Throughout the late 1950s the City Council continued to press BVT to increase residential densities on the estate even further by interspersing flats within the next stage of the Shenley development. The Shenley area also includes some 300 houses completed in self-build schemes.

Hole Farm and the Priory

Hole Farm and the Priory is one of the smallest neighbourhoods, comprising three 1970s developments. The first of these was of 243 flats and houses for rent constructed by BVT under the new Housing Association Grant (HAG) funding regime of The Housing Corporation, introduced by the 1974 Housing Act. Rosefields – a sheltered home for older people – was built as part of this development in 1979 and shortly afterwards a leasehold scheme for the elderly (LSE) of 22 flats was constructed at Laurence Court.

The area is well planned and continues the tradition of a high quality natural environment but a high proportion of the accommodation in Hole Farm is either terraced property (40%) or purpose-built flats (33%). The outcome, according to Harrison, is that this is the “most densely developed part of the estate” (1999). Approximately three quarters of households rent their accommodation from BVT (or other housing associations), and most of the remainder are owner-occupiers. Despite the two bespoke developments for older people, the area has the smallest proportion of pensioner households on the estate.
Middle Park Farm

Slum clearance in inner Birmingham during the late 1950s and early 1960s increased the need for new, low-cost rented housing in the city. At the height of this pressure in 1960 BVT agreed to lease land to a private developer to build small, one- and two-bedroom flats for private letting. Breaking with tradition, BVT allowed the developer to build to his own design, and a small estate consisting of around 360 flats in low- and medium-rise blocks, plus a neighbourhood shopping centre was constructed.

During the rising market of the early 1970s the estate changed hands several times and was eventually acquired by a company that went into liquidation in 1974. The company sold their leasehold interest to the City Council and the Housing Department has managed the properties ever since. Although the estate is located on BVT land, it is not an integral part of BVT’s housing stock.

The Middle Park Farm neighbourhood was originally designed as part of the Bournville estate and continued to adopt a generally high quality of provision of public open space, adjacent to very pleasant parkland. It is located centrally within the Bournville estate and is conveniently located relative to transportation routes. Although the flats were built to reasonable internal space standards, heating and insulation standards are poor and the architectural quality of the buildings is low-key. The flats are homogeneous as there is virtually no variation in design and the overall ‘finish’ of the properties is very basic.

Conclusion

Historical factors play an important role in determining the quality of housing and in contributing to the sustainability of residential neighbourhoods. Despite changing economic and political factors the popularity and sustainability of Bournville has been predicated on the application of a number of key principles:

- a high quality natural environment;
- an imaginative and coherent overall planning framework;
- the high architectural quality of the built environment;
- a socially mixed community;
- a sustained estate management capacity;
- the positive involvement of the community in the management of the neighbourhood.
Neighbourhoods that work

3

Does the neighbourhood work?

Introduction

Before exploring the strengths and weaknesses of the neighbourhood, what is the evidence to justify the view that Bournville is a neighbourhood that works? Much of this will emerge throughout the report, but initially we have referred to research evidence drawn from national and local sources about the attitudes of residents to the neighbourhoods in which they live and to the management of their estates. We have used comparative data from three different sources.

First, comparisons have been made with the views expressed by other tenants of registered social landlords (RSLs) in the national survey of housing association tenants carried out by MORI (2000). In designing our own social survey we consciously chose to use some questions identical to those in the national survey in order to make these comparisons.

Second, we have made comparisons with the Ingoldsby Estate, which is a peripheral council-owned estate located adjacent to Bournville.

Third, we have used information about the Highgate Estate, which is an inner city council-owned estate located adjacent to the central business district of Birmingham.

The surveys of the council-owned estates, in which a number of the same questions were used, were carried out in the mid-1990s, when national circumstances with respect to employment and unemployment were different. These estates have also benefited from investment since then, to improve their physical fabric. Local circumstances may therefore have changed since the surveys were carried out. Nevertheless, the data from these surveys provide reasonable comparators and enable us to assess whether residents in Bournville have the same broad attitudes towards the estate and their landlord as tenants elsewhere in the city, or whether there are important differences. Bournville Village Trust is also officially an RSL, offering social rented housing to those in housing need. This allows us to compare BVT with other areas of RSL housing across the country.

Bournville in its national and local context

When discussing the attributes of Bournville and comparing the estate with others, we need to remember that those who live there are, on average, more affluent and more likely to be in employment than people in the city of Birmingham as a whole. The average unemployment rate in the 1991 Census, for example, was 3.2% compared with a rate for the city as a whole of 7.8%.

Satisfaction with landlords

Our survey shows that BVT is rated very highly by its tenants compared with other RSLs:

- BVT tenants are much more likely to be ‘very satisfied’ with their landlord than respondents to the national RSL survey (58.3% against 38.0%).
Only 11% of council tenants in Bournville said they were ‘very satisfied’ with the council as a landlord.

When asked whether their rent represented value for money, BVT tenants were twice as likely as RSL tenants nationally to say it was ‘very good’ value and more than four times as likely as council tenants in Bournville to say this.

Satisfaction with the standard of workmanship of repairs carried out by BVT is also much higher than in the council estates and satisfaction with the time taken to get repairs done is almost twice that in the council estates.

BVT tenants were far less likely than council tenants to complain of problems with keeping the home warm, draughts, condensation and dampness, mould growth, hot water, external decorations, the security of doors and windows, fittings in kitchens and bathrooms, and soundproofing.

Tenants living on the BVT estate, including council tenants, are three times as likely as tenants of RSLs nationally to have been a tenant of their current landlord for 11 years or more.

Taking BVT and council tenants together, those in Bournville are twice as likely as RSL tenants nationally to have been with their current landlords for more than six years.

The overall stability of the population in Bournville gives the impression of a community that is largely comfortable with itself. The environment of the estate also contributes to this.

**Perceptions of the estate**

When asked which words best describe the area in which they live, the top four words selected by residents are the same on the BVT estate and in the RSL national survey: ‘pleasant’, ‘friendly’, ‘well-maintained’ and ‘quiet’.

- ‘Pleasant’ is used much more in Bournville than in the national survey (64% against 30%) and this was the most common response from BVT residents.
- ‘Friendly’ is used to the same extent as in the RSL national survey, but nationally this was the highest response.

- Residents in Bournville are much more likely to use the word ‘well-maintained’ than RSL tenants nationally.
- Bournville residents are also more inclined to say the estate is ‘quiet’.

The positive perception of their estate is much stronger among BVT residents than RSL tenants nationally. This is not just because the BVT residents include homeowners, for the above is also true if we restrict the comparison to one between BVT tenants and RSL tenants.

The positive perception of their estate is much stronger among BVT residents than RSL tenants nationally. This is not just because the BVT residents include homeowners, for the above is also true if we restrict the comparison to one between BVT tenants and RSL tenants.

The fifth most common word to describe the area given by BVT residents was ‘attractive’, and they were more than three times as likely to say this than the RSL tenants (35% against 11%). The fifth response from the RSL tenants elsewhere was that their area was safe: 22% said their area was safe, compared to 14% of BVT residents. This does not mean that the BVT estate is not safe, but only that this was not a response that defined what living on the estate meant for BVT residents. Bournville residents were more likely to say ‘spacious’ before ‘safe’. The BVT tenants were only twice as likely to say that the area was ‘attractive’, but this is also significant.

Council tenants living in the Bournville area were less likely than RSL tenants nationally to say that the area was ‘friendly’, but they were much more likely to say that the environment around them was ‘pleasant’, ‘well-maintained’, ‘quiet’ and ‘attractive’.

A total of 70% of all residents and of BVT tenants said they were ‘very satisfied’ with the area, compared with 45% in the national RSL survey. The BVT tenants’ level of satisfaction was the same as the freehold owner-occupiers of Bournville.

Compared to other council estates in Birmingham, the difference is much more pronounced:

- Across the estate, BVT residents were four times as likely as Highgate residents to say that they were ‘very satisfied’ with Bournville as a place to live.
- The council tenants in the BVT area were almost three times as likely to give this response as those in the inner city council estate.
Residents of RSLs across the country are five times more likely to want to move than are residents in Bournville. BVT tenants are only slightly more likely to have tried to move in the past year than owner-occupiers (8.7% against 6.7%), and council tenants in Bournville are much less likely to want to move than council and RSL tenants elsewhere (10.4% against 34% and 37% respectively).

Social relations on the estate

The residents of the BVT estate are much less likely to have ‘serious problems’ with neighbours than respondents in the national RSL survey, and noisy neighbours are much less of a problem in Bournville than elsewhere:

- In Bournville only 3% of respondents say they have serious problems with their neighbours and less than 5% report problems of noise (compared with 8% and 9% respectively in RSL estates across the country).
- The residents of Ingoldsby are five times as likely to report problems with young people as a serious problem than residents in Bournville; residents in Highgate are three times as likely to report this as a serious problem.
- Serious problems with drug dealing are four times greater in RSL areas nationally than in the BVT estate.
- No one who rents from the council in Bournville reported graffiti as a serious problem, compared with 11% in Highgate and 23% in Ingoldsby.
- Problems with neighbours’ dogs are more than twice as likely to be reported as a serious problem in other RSL areas than in Bournville.

Satisfaction with local services and facilities

On almost all indicators, the residents of Bournville are more satisfied with their estate than the residents of Ingoldsby and Highgate. Examples include the following:

- Satisfaction with local services and with the availability of facilities (with a small number of exceptions) is higher in Bournville than in other council-owned estates in Birmingham.
- With respect to street lighting, a higher proportion of Bournville residents were either ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ than was the case in Ingoldsby or Highgate (80%, 73% and 66% respectively).
- On all other indicators the satisfaction levels in Bournville were at least 18% higher than in Highgate. These indicators included: landscape maintenance; rubbish collection; the general appearance of the area; cleanliness and tidiness of the area; street cleaning; the amount of trees and green space; and the condition of the pavements and roads.
- The residents of Bournville are more than four times as likely as the residents of Ingoldsby to say that they are ‘very’ or ‘fairly satisfied’ with the general appearance of the area in which they live (85% against 20%). They are also much more likely to be satisfied with the amount of trees and green areas (98% against 55%).
- The residents of the BVT estate are 10 times as likely as those in Ingoldsby and more than four times as likely as the residents of Highgate to express satisfaction with provision for older people.
- Bournville residents are much more likely to be ‘very’ or ‘fairly satisfied’ with local social facilities than residents of Ingoldsby and Highgate (71%, 42% and 41% respectively).
- The BVT estate is seen as vastly superior to Ingoldsby and Highgate as a place to bring up children (69%, 18% and 29% respectively).
- Only with respect to bus services and routes for people on foot or on bicycles does Bournville fare slightly worse than the other estates.

There is also a relatively high level of participation in local groups in Bournville. Almost 30% of Bournville’s residents were members of residents’ or tenants’ associations, compared with 13% in the RSL survey and only 4% in Highgate.

Crime and security

Crime and the fear of crime are major issues in estates across the country and, once again, the situation of the residents of the Bournville estate is considerably better than elsewhere. When
asked their views of the levels of crime in their area compared to other areas, Bournville residents are around three times more likely than the residents of Highgate to say there is less crime in their area than elsewhere.

Conclusion

When comparing neighbourhoods, indicators that manifest themselves and can be analysed at the level of the locality may depend on factors that are not area-based. Levels of unemployment, income, wealth and educational attainment, for example, are not mainly derived from neighbourhood-based experiences. While they may be important for residents’ experience of their home and environment, they derive from forces in society that are not easily changed through intervention at the neighbourhood level. Where poverty and deprivation is compounded by poor housing and public services, however, the impact on a community can be considerable.

The residents of Bournville enjoy housing of a physical quality that is of a higher standard than is available in social housing neighbourhoods generally. It is perceived to be better value for money, and there are relatively high levels of satisfaction with BVT as a landlord. This positive view of the estate is shared by tenants and owner-occupiers alike, as is the high level of satisfaction with the area as a place to live. In comparison with the perceptions of other RSL tenants and other local authority tenants in Birmingham, the Bournville estate is a relatively ‘successful’ residential area.

This report focuses on ‘neighbourhoods that work’ as opposed to failing neighbourhoods. Nevertheless, questions remain over whether the positive aspects of living in Bournville are experienced uniformly across the estate. Different neighbourhoods within Bournville have distinctive historical antecedents, mixtures of tenure, property types, household structures, patterns of mobility, relationships with BVT management, access to services and environmental qualities. These aspects are discussed further in the rest of this report.
Residents and residence

George Cadbury intended Bournville as a model village for “the labouring population in and around Birmingham, and elsewhere in Great Britain” (BVT, 1900). One hundred years later almost one third of residents surveyed on the estate had moved at least once within Bournville and almost 90% had come from within the City of Birmingham (88.8%).

Why do people want to come to and stay in Bournville? Broadly, the positive features of the residential environment as perceived by the residents in a series of focus groups may be summarised as a very high quality physical environment including both ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ landscaping; the village environment and traditions associated with BVT; supportive communities to be found in most of the neighbourhoods; good estate management practice and a satisfactory range of local facilities. The negative features include concerns over crime and security, antisocial behaviour, and deteriorating environmental standards including increased traffic, vandalism, graffiti and litter.

During the four-year period from 1998 to 2001, the percentage of households moving onto or within the estate was less than 7% per year. The amount of movement in the rented sector was low, with households moving, on average, once every 14 years or so. Given the relatively high age profile of tenants this figure is extraordinarily low. Of the total of 836 moves between 1998 and 2001, the majority (64%) was from households coming from outside the estate. Just over 12% were ‘newly forming households’ among those already living on the estate; 7% were ‘mutual exchanges’ and the remaining 17% were ‘internal transfers’. Turnover in the rented stock is higher in Hole Farm and Shenley than in Central Bournville and Bournville Village.

Turning attention to the characteristics of households, the first and most striking issue is the relatively modest proportion of black and minority ethnic (BME) households accommodated in the rented sector on the estate. It can be seen from the data over recent years that white households clearly dominate property allocations: 82% of the new allocations between 1998 and 2001 were to white households, 15% were to BME households and in 3% of cases the ethnicity of the household was unspecified. While data is not available for mutual exchanges, the proportion of internal transfers involving BME households is, as one would expect, a marginally lower figure at 13%. According to the 1991 Census, 21.5% of the City’s total population were from BME groups. The reasons for the relatively modest proportion of allocations would appear to be fourfold:

1. Bournville did not make much privately rented housing accessible to immigrants at the time of large-scale post-war immigration during the 1950s and 1960s, so it did not become a reception area for immigrants.
2. The ‘natural’ catchment areas for the rented stock of Bournville have included neighbouring wards as well as areas outside the City, which, again, do not include high proportions of BME groups.
3. The attractiveness of the various neighbourhoods on the estate has meant that the turnover of households has been relatively low.
4. It is only comparatively recently (1993) that the Trust extended city-wide nomination rights to the City Council across the estate as a whole.
The outcome of these factors is that the Trust does not attract as many applicants from BME households as one might expect. In 2000, for example, around 11% of all applicants to BVT were from BME households and almost all these households were offered accommodation. These circumstances suggest the need for further work to ascertain why there are not more BME applicants to BVT.

Most newly allocated tenants to the estate are initially accommodated in Central Bournville but, in relation to the amount of local rented stock, the numbers accommodated in Hole Farm and Shenley are more significant. Bournville Village not only receives the least number of movers but also the highest proportion of internal transfers and exchanges. There also appears to be no movement between Middle Park Farm (the area administered by Birmingham City Council) and other parts of the Bournville estate.

In the private sector, Shenley and Central Bournville appear to be the reception areas for those purchasing property on the estate for the first time. Approximately a third of households in the sector then move again within the estate and seek to trade up to better appointed properties in Central Bournville, Weoley Hill and, to a lesser extent, Bournville Village. The areas to which most private purchasers aspire, however, but are accessible only to the relatively affluent, are Bournville Village, Weoley Hill and parts of Central Bournville.

Tenants tend to remain on the estate for relatively long periods, particularly in the areas of inter-war provision. Turnover is more rapid in Middle Park Farm, Hole Farm and the Priory and Central Bournville, but is low in comparison with other areas of rented stock. The highest turnover takes place in the areas of high-density developments, including blocks of flats and maisonettes in Middle Park Farm, Hole Farm and the Priory and Shenley. Although based on a very small sample size, movers in the private sector appear to stay for shorter periods than do tenants. Most of those moving in the private sector were doing so for reasons of preference rather than necessity, while a significant proportion of moves within the rented sector were precipitated by deaths, defaults and exigencies.

One of the most striking conclusions to be drawn from this analysis of residential mobility on the estate, however, is the diversity of the residential roles performed by the private and social rented sectors. There can be few residential areas in which there is such a social mix of residents, ranging from some of the poorest households in receipt of benefits to those living in properties worth £350,000-£400,000, and a diversity of social groups from ex-offenders to frail older people. One of the reasons for this is that BVT has been able, in view of its charitable status, to retain ownership of its social rented stock rather than having to sell it as a result of Right-to-Buy obligations.

The analysis has also highlighted the very slow rates of turnover in both the rented and owner-occupied stock. What this means, however, is that there is an increasingly ageing profile of residents on the estate. This is a process which cannot continue indefinitely and there will come a point at which the rate of turnover begins to increase quite rapidly, indeed, there is some indication that this is already happening. In view of the pattern of moves on the estate it has been argued that low turnover is often an indication of popularity, but it is also apparent that the rate of change in an area also influences resident satisfaction. Those having lived in the same area for a long time may find it difficult to accept changes when they occur, such as the arrival of new households with young children. What this implies is that local communities differ in terms of their capacity to accommodate change.
One of the aims of the study was ‘to explore the concept of social capital in relation to different neighbourhoods and to develop data on social relationships within neighbourhoods’.

The concept is one that has become increasingly important in recent years. In the 1990s it was used to describe attributes of nation states, regions within countries, cities and local communities. It is a concept, however, about which there is little agreement. Putnam’s work (1995) on the relationship between democracy and regional development in Italy was important for introducing the concept into public policy analysis and he refers to it as “features of social organisation, such as trust, norms and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating co-ordinated actions” (Putnam, 1995). Putnam, however, is not clear about how these elements are defined, relate to each other or can be measured.

Part of the problem of defining social capital and agreeing an analytical concept that can be used across societies is that contradictions in relation to trust and to reciprocity in Putnam’s writing have continued to cloud the discussion of the concept in the subsequent literature. The consistent feature of subsequent definitions is that social relations and networks are important for social capital. Putnam points out that there are horizontal networks and vertical networks. Horizontal networks bring together agents of equivalent status and power, while vertical networks link unequal agents in relations of hierarchy and dependence. Networks of civic engagement “represent intense horizontal interaction” (Putnam, 1995). These are an essential form of social capital according to Putnam. He argues that the most economically advanced regions of Italy have more successful regional governments because there is more civic interaction:

the more civic a region, the more effective its government [and] membership in social clubs, cultural and recreational groups, community and social action organisations, educational and youth groups, and so on is roughly twice as common in the most civic regions as in the least civic regions. (Putnam, 1995)

Extending this analysis to the neighbourhood level, we might expect that there would be more successful neighbourhood management where there is more civic interaction.

For the World Bank, social capital is defined as: “The ability of individuals to secure benefits as a result of membership in social networks or other social structures” (World Bank, 2000, p 128). In the analysis of the World Bank, therefore, social capital is reduced to the much more manageable formulation of social networks and structures. The World Bank categorises these networks of people into three kinds of social capital: ‘bonding’, ‘bridging’ and ‘linking’ (World Bank, 2000):

- The strong ties connecting family members, neighbours, close friends and business associates can be called ‘bonding’ social capital. These ties connect people who share similar demographic characteristics.
- The weak ties connecting individuals from different ethnic and occupational backgrounds can be referred to as ‘bridging’ social capital. Bridging social capital implies horizontal connections to people with broadly comparable economic status and political power. A theory of social capital that focuses
only on relations within and between communities, however, opens itself to the criticism that it ignores power.

- ‘Linking’ social capital consists of the vertical ties between poor people and people in positions of influence in formal organisations (for example, banks and the police). This dimension captures a vitally important additional feature of life in poor communities: that their members are usually excluded – by overt discrimination or lack of resources – from the places in which major decisions relating to their welfare are made.

The poor are seen to be rich in bonding social capital, modestly endowed with bridging social capital and with almost no linking social capital. They are therefore seen as being vulnerable to crises. The World Bank assumes that such networks have a relationship to economic standing and well-being and that social capital influences the welfare of households, communities and nations. That is, that there is a causal relationship implying that by increasing social networks the welfare of communities will be improved. This theme has also been taken up by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2001), which argues that social capital can contribute to a wide range of positive outcomes, including higher income, life satisfaction and social cohesion. Similarly, Glaeser (2001) argues that social capital increases the welfare of communities. Over the 1990s, therefore, a link between levels of association and good governance has developed into a proposal that increases in social networks will effect increases in well-being. There is, however, little evidence to suggest that this type of causal relationship exists, particularly at the neighbourhood level.

The social survey carried out in this study included a series of questions that can be linked to the concept of social capital. In the Bournville Estate and its constituent neighbourhoods we have considered to what extent each of the types of social capital identified by the World Bank is important.

**Perceptions of location and community**

A key issue for the discussion of social capital is the extent to which the residents of any area perceive themselves to be part of the same community. If the residents of the same neighbourhood do not think they are part of the same physical space, they may be less likely to act as a coherent community.

The concept of ‘Bournville’ is not one that all people in the estate share. The residents of the various neighbourhoods have different levels of attachment to it. In the social survey, respondents were asked ‘If you meet someone from another part of Birmingham and they ask you where you live, what do you say?’ A total of 61% responded that they would say Bournville; 21% said Selly Oak; 11% replied Northfield; 3% said Weoley or Weoley Hill; 1% replied Kings Norton and a further 1% answered Bournville Village Trust. Across the estate, therefore, there is a reasonably strong commitment to the concept of ‘Bournville’, although about 40% do not immediately respond that this is the name of the place where they live. Those most likely to identify with Bournville are tenants of BVT and the managed societies throughout the estate: 72% compared to 55% of owner-occupiers. It is, however, only in Bournville Village and Central Bournville that the majority of people identify with the Bournville estate. The proportions in the different neighbourhoods are as follows:

- Bournville Village: 97%;
- Central Bournville: 89%;
- Hole Farm and the Priory: 48%;
- Shenley: 37%;
- Middle Park Farm: 25%;
- Weoley Hill: 24%.

Respondents were also asked ‘If you meet someone from Bournville and they ask where you live, what do you say?’ The aim of this question was to identify whether there were attachments to communities based on the six neighbourhoods we had identified in the Bournville estate. In the case of Bournville, the pattern of responses to this second question did not change dramatically from the first. The only difference was that respondents gave their street names or a local landmark, as also happens elsewhere. There was no evidence of a psychological commitment to any of the neighbourhoods within the Bournville estate. Outside of Bournville Village and the large area we have designated as Central Bournville, people do not appear to have a strong sense of a
common place that may be related to a concept of community.

**Bonding social capital**

Bonding social capital exists at the local level and refers to networks of family, friends and neighbours. It is thought that this is what gives neighbourhoods social cohesiveness. The social survey provided us with four types of evidence relating to bonding social capital. The first refers to family networks, the second to relationships with neighbours, the third to the levels of support that neighbours give to each other, and the fourth to feelings of isolation and loneliness.

**Family ties**

With respect to family linkages, there are two different signals from the evidence of the survey. One of these points to a relative lack of importance of these relationships when people decide where they want to live and the other to potentially strong cohesive forces once they are settled in an area. When residents were asked why they moved to the area over 80% gave reasons relating to the property or the area but only 15% said they moved to be close to family and friends. This compares with 31% of people who move away from Bournville for reasons relating to the house and 18% who move out to be closer to family and friends. The attachment to family and friends when moving into Bournville does not appear to vary with age or tenure, and in every neighbourhood except Central Bournville less than 20% gave this as a reason for moving to Bournville. In Weoley Hill and Middle Park Farm only 7% and 8% respectively said they moved to be near family and friends. That is, the wealthiest and the poorest neighbourhoods on the estate gave the same response.

Despite the fact that being close to relatives is a relatively low priority when considering moving to Bournville, the percentage of people who had family living in the area was relatively high. Around 37% of respondents had relatives living in Bournville; in all of the neighbourhoods more than 30% had relatives living elsewhere on the estate. There are no differences in these results by age or tenure.

The theory on social capital suggests that the ties of bonding social capital connect people of the same social class, that strong ties connecting family members are an important aspect of this type of social capital and that the poor are particularly rich in this attribute. In Bournville, the variation across the neighbourhoods is significant, but there is no evidence that the less wealthy on the estate are more likely to possess this type of family-based social capital. Owner-occupiers are as likely to have relatives living nearby as BVT tenants. But council tenants, who are the least likely to be able to choose to live in Middle Park Farm and most likely to have moved there because there was no other choice, are only slightly behind (38% against 35%). If they did have more choice, perhaps the situation would be different but, at present, if we accept that tenure is a proxy for social class, all social classes appear to have the same levels of this type of bonding social capital.

**Contact between neighbours**

Relationships between neighbours is the second aspect of bonding social capital. When we asked how many neighbours respondents ‘know well enough to have a chat with’, only 3% responded ‘none’ to this question and 18% said ‘one or two’. The link between neighbourhood and the extent to which respondents knew neighbours is highly significant.

More than half of those responding ‘none’ lived in the council-owned Middle Park Farm area, in which 11% said ‘none’ and a further 33% said ‘one or two’. The proportion that stated that they knew almost all of their neighbours well enough to have a chat with was highest in Bournville Village (25%) and lowest in Middle Park Farm (8%). The neighbourhood with the least bonding social capital on this measure is the wealthiest one – Weoley Hill.

The theory would suggest that these lower-income areas would exhibit greater social cohesion among neighbours. However, contrary to what the theory would predict, those neighbourhoods in which neighbours interact most are not those with the highest levels of social renting. The friendliest and most diverse area is Central Bournville, which is characterised by a mixture of tenure types and house types. This is followed by Shenley, which is also highly
diversified in terms of tenure, Bournville Village which has a mixture of tenure types but more BVT renting than the previous two, and then Hole Farm and the Priory where 75% of respondents were BVT tenants.

Comparing the council neighbourhood with BVT-owned Hole Farm and the Priory, levels of contact between neighbours were highly divergent. The difference between Middle Park Farm and Hole Farm and the Priory was highly significant: the BVT tenants were much more likely to know their neighbours well than the council tenants.

Studies of public sector housing neighbourhoods in crisis show that people’s contact with their neighbours depends heavily on dwelling type, with people living in flats (particularly high-rise flats) being much less likely to chat to a large number of neighbours. Those living in flats in Highgate, for example, were twice as likely to report little contact with their neighbours as those living in houses. In the Bournville estate as a whole, this relationship does not hold. The tenants on the Middle Park Farm, made up entirely of flats, know their neighbours better than those living in the detached and semi-detached houses in Weoley Hill. The replies were related to tenure but, again, not as the theory would predict. Leasehold owner-occupiers were much more likely than freehold owner-occupiers to know almost all their neighbours, and, while BVT tenants were less likely than leaseholders to give this reply, they were more likely than freeholders (20% for tenants, 26% for leaseholders and 14% for freeholders).

The responses were also related to age. Across the estate only 1% of those under 30 said they knew almost all their neighbours compared to 20% of those between 45 and 64 and 23% of those aged 65 or more. This contradicts an economic model of social capital, which suggests that as people get older they are less likely to invest in social capital. The model is based on the idea that the longer one expects to be in a community, the more likely a person is to invest in the well-being of that community.

**Cooperation between neighbours**

The third set of evidence from the survey about bonding social capital deals with the extent to which neighbours cooperate with each other. Residents were asked whether they lived in an area in which people mostly help each other or where people mostly ‘go their own way’. In Bournville as a whole, 35% of respondents felt it was an area in which people help each other and 23% where people ‘go their own way’. The remainder responded that they did not know or that there was a mixture of these two. Overall, there was a mixture of the two types of people. The highest proportion of respondents who felt that it was an area in which people help each other was found in Bournville Village (45%) – the same neighbourhood in which people were most likely to know almost all of their neighbours. The lowest was in Middle Park Farm (20%) – the area least likely to report contact with neighbours.

The responses were also related to age, with the young least likely to say that people help each other (17%). This increased through the age bands, and those over 65 were most likely to report positive experiences in this respect (42%). This would also appear to conflict with the model, which proposes that as people get older they are less likely to invest time in their community.

The responses were also related to tenure. Owner-occupiers were much more likely to say that people mainly help each other than those in rented accommodation and, again, the leaseholders were more positive about their relationships with neighbours than freeholders. We tested to see if this relationship between tenure and relationships with neighbours was due to the age differences in different tenure. As noted above, older residents were much more likely to report that they lived in an area in which people mostly helped each other. There was also a highly significant relationship between tenure and age, with tenants being younger than owner-occupiers. This implies that part of the reason for the owner-occupiers being more positive about their neighbours may be due to factors related to their age, rather than tenure per se. In these tests we cannot attribute causality, only correlation. Nevertheless, there may be lifecycle reasons why young parents focus their time and energies on their children, while older
residents whose children no longer live at home may build relationships in the neighbourhood outside the home. Within the rented sector, BVT tenants were much more likely to report that people help each other than council tenants (32% against 18%). The BVT tenants were older than the council tenants, so, again, there may be an age effect that is partially contributing to these results, but there may also be a ‘house type’ effect given that the council tenants live exclusively in one- and two-bedroom flats.

This is once again contrary to what the theory of social capital would predict. Poorer communities are said to be rich in bonding social capital, but there is little evidence of this here. These findings are consistent with the model of social capital that predicts it will be directly related to home ownership. There are, however, two issues worth considering here. First, this implies that social capital may be the result of well-being, rather than a cause of it. Second, as far as bonding social capital is concerned, the model ignores social and physical attributes that are associated with tenure, such as the impact of age, lifecycle needs and property types.

**Feelings of loneliness and isolation**

Only 9% of the people living in Bournville feel lonely or isolated. Respondents in Hole Farm and the Priory were most likely to feel lonely or isolated and those in Weoley Hill were least likely. Despite the fact that residents of the wealthy Weoley Hill neighbourhood were slightly less likely to know all of their neighbours than those living in the area dominated by BVT tenants, they were much less likely to feel lonely or isolated. Once again, these feelings were directly related to dwelling type, with those living in flats being much more likely to report loneliness and isolation. However, as we shall see, the residents of Weoley Hill are also much more likely to be connected to their area and to their neighbours through membership of local organisations.

**Bridging social capital**

The relationships formed through bridging social capital are thought to be weaker than those of bonding social capital (World Bank, 2000). They refer to horizontal ties to people with similar economic power and social status – the most common links being through civic organisations, religious groups and work. In Bournville, we tried to find out the extent to which residents were members of different types of organisations. The social survey provides three types of evidence that allow us to analyse the extent of bridging social capital in each of the neighbourhoods: the extent of participation in residents’ and tenants’ associations in Bournville, the level of activity in other types of organisations on the estate, and membership of organisations outside Bournville.

**Residents’ and tenants’ associations**

First, we focused on residents’ and tenants’ associations and asked respondents if they had ‘heard of any residents’ or tenants’ groups for this area’: 39% of residents answered ‘yes’ to this question. We then asked if they were members of tenants’ or residents’ associations: 28% of people across the estate answered ‘yes’ to this question.

The residents of Weoley Hill are far more likely to be members of these types of organisations than people living in other neighbourhoods. Although they do not particularly feel that they live in an area in which people help each other, those living in the most wealthy part of Bournville nevertheless come together to sustain a very active local residents’ association. Residents of the second most wealthy neighbourhood of the Bournville Estate are also the second most likely to be members of tenants’ or residents’ associations. When we tested the answers to this question against tenure, we found that the owner-occupiers were almost four times as likely as BVT tenants to come together in these organisations and three times as likely as council tenants. This is consistent with the findings of DiPasquale and Glaeser (1999) in the US concerning the relationship between homeowners and membership of civic organisations, and it reinforces the argument that social capital is a product of well-being rather than a cause of economic improvement. It is a measure of economic well-being, but economic well-being will not necessarily be enhanced by increasing this type of social capital.
The responses to this question were also directly related to the age of respondents. No one under the age of 30 was a member of these associations and there was an increase in membership from 13% of those aged between 30 and 44, through 32% between the ages of 45 and 64, to 34% of those aged 65 or over. The relationship to age is highly significant and is again at odds with the economic model that suggests that membership of these groups will fall off with age.

Membership of other organisations in Bournville

When we asked whether residents were members of any other organisations that meet in Bournville, 15% responded ‘yes’ to this question. These organisations were, in most cases, religious, sports or social clubs that met within Bournville – 73% of people who said they were members of other organisations mentioned these types. These organisations were slightly less important in Weoley Hill than in Bournville Village but, once again, membership was lowest in Middle Park Farm, followed by Hole Farm and the Priory. Religious organisations were most important in Bournville Village, Central Bournville, Hole Farm and the Priory (although the numbers were in single figures) and in Weoley Hill and Shenley sports groups were most important (the numbers in Shenley also being in single figures).

Membership of these ‘other’ organisations was related to age (with, not surprisingly, membership of religious organisations increasing with age and membership of sports organisations decreasing). The extent of membership was related to tenure, with owner-occupiers being much more likely to participate than were tenants. Owner-occupiers on the estate were 50% more likely to join other organisations than were BVT tenants. There is some controversy over whether membership of religious organisations is evidence of social capital and, if we remove religious organisations from the picture in Bournville, membership of other organisations would be closer to 10% and the differences between the neighbourhoods becomes even greater.

Membership of organisations outside Bournville

The levels of membership of organisations outside of Bournville followed the same pattern: 23% of residents were members of these organisations. Religious organisations were again the top of the list (31%), followed by social clubs (26%) and sports clubs (19%). Membership was again dominated by people aged over 45 and owner-occupiers.

Linking social capital

Linking social capital is concerned with vertical ties between communities and those with power. In considering residents’ and tenants’ associations in the previous section, we have taken the defining aspect of their social relations to be the horizontal linkages between members. However, these organisations are also the means by which communities forge links with those who have power over their daily lives. For the residents of a council housing neighbourhood, those with immediate power over them are the officers of the local council, normally in the housing department. For many of the services provided in Bournville, the BVT is the first point of contact in the hierarchical relationships that constitute linking social capital. We should remind ourselves that the wealthiest neighbourhoods in Bournville made the greatest investment in this type of social capital and that the existence of these types of social relations was strongly related to age and tenure. To the extent that membership of residents’ and tenants’ associations constitutes linking social capital, older owner-occupiers benefit most.

The government’s new neighbourhood renewal and neighbourhood management programmes are designed precisely to increase linking social capital, by giving communities a greater say in the management of their neighbourhoods and in the delivery of services. However, important questions relating to this aim are:

- the extent to which residents think they already have influence over the delivery and management of services in their area;
- whether or not they would like to have more influence.
In Bournville, respondents were asked the following question: ‘Do you think residents have sufficient influence over running/management of services in the area?’ A total of 37% responded ‘yes’ to this question and 26% ‘no’, with the remaining 37% saying that they did not know. The differences between the neighbourhoods were highly significant but the proportion of respondents saying ‘don’t know’ to this question is important. In Weoley Hill, for example, 58% gave this response, indicating that this is not a question that is highly salient for residents of the area. Having influence over the management of the neighbourhood is not something that they care passionately about, perhaps reflecting their satisfaction with the area they live in. Similarly, 44% of the residents of Shenley said ‘don’t know’.

If we remove the ‘don’t knows’ from the analysis, the differences between the neighbourhoods is significant, but the strength of the relationship is greatly reduced. The highest proportion who said they thought residents do have influence was in Weoley Hill (65% compared with 42% in Hole Farm and the Priory). Even the council tenants in Middle Park Farm were more likely than BVT tenants in Hole Farm and the Priory to say that they had influence in the management of their neighbourhood. However, comparing renters with owner-occupiers in all six neighbourhoods, there was no difference related to tenure. Nor were there any differences in responses related to age. It would appear that the only area markedly different from the others is Hole Farm and the Priory. However, the view of these tenants that they had relatively little influence over the management of their neighbourhood could not be generalised to all BVT tenants on the estate.

The residents of Bournville were then asked if they would like to have more say in the running of the estate: 25% said that they would like to have a bigger say in how neighbourhood services in their area are managed. The neighbourhood with the least interest in having more say in how the area was managed was Middle Park Farm (15%). There was no significant difference between the other neighbourhoods in this regard. Between 22% (Weoley Hill) and 29% (Shenley) of the other neighbourhoods said they would like more say.

The relationship between tenure and wanting a bigger say on the estate as a whole was highly significant – the owner-occupiers wanted a bigger say than the tenants. There was also a highly significant relationship between age and wanting more say, but this did not have the same characteristics as membership of organisations, where participation increased with age. In responding to the question about wanting more influence, those over 65 were least likely to want more say (18%) and those between 30 and 44 were most inclined to want more say (with 25% of those under 30 years old and 30% of those between 45 and 60 wanting more say).

Of those who said they would like to have a bigger say, more than 50% in each of the areas expressed a willingness to join or give their views to residents'/tenants' associations. This was the most popular method in contributing to the area, followed by involvement in the local neighbourhood forum.

Conclusion

In order to carry out an analysis that brings together the findings on bonding, bridging and linking social capital, we ranked the responses to each of the questions that were asked and allocated points to the rankings from one to six. We then added up the number of points obtained by each neighbourhood to give an overall ranking under each type of social capital. No weighting was given to any question or to the responses received. Although the method of ranking is relatively crude, it does provide aggregated information that allows us to compare the different neighbourhoods within the three dimensions of social capital and facilitates a discussion about the relationship between these dimensions in Bournville.

Middle Park Farm comes bottom of all rankings of bonding and bridging social capital, but performed better than Hole Farm and the Priory and equal to Shenley in the key indicator for linking social capital (the extent to which they thought they had sufficient influence over the management of their neighbourhood). It was also the area least interested in enhancing its linking social capital through residents having more say in neighbourhood management.
With respect to bonding social capital, Shenley emerges as the area with the greatest levels of social cohesion involving family and neighbours. However, it is also an area with pockets of social problems, including crime, antisocial behaviour and severe breakdown in relations between neighbours. Bournville Village, Central Bournville and Weoley Hill are indistinguishable from each other in this regard and rank between Shenley and Hole Farm and the Priory, which is considerably worse off than the other neighbourhoods. It is likely that demand and housing allocations and the type of accommodation that is available affect the situation in Hole Farm and the Priory, which is the area with the highest levels of social rented housing and flats. If the flats are replaced by houses over time the situation may improve and the neighbourly relationships that constitute a key dimension of bonding social capital may increase. It might also be possible to change allocation policies to improve social cohesion but there are dangers in improving this through increasing the homogeneity of the population.

In the US it has been shown that the highest levels of social cohesion occur where there is ethnic homogeneity. Groups and networks can be isolated and parochial, and there is a danger that, in focusing on social cohesion, discriminatory practices associated with race, ethnicity, religion and social status can become justified and may lead to social exclusion. If this were to happen it would not only bring BVT into conflict with government policy but it would also be contrary to the ethos that has driven BVT over the past century. The challenge for BVT is to encourage an increase in social cohesion at the level of family, friends and neighbours, while at the same time promoting the heterogeneity of its tenants and other residents. It is possible to increase bonding social capital on the basis of social exclusion, but to do so would constitute failure on a greater scale.

With respect to bridging social capital in Bournville, the levels of membership of tenants’ and residents’ associations were strongly related to tenure. The extent of these horizontal networks may be an indicator of economic well-being rather than a causal factor in its creation as the theory suggests. This would imply that membership of these organisations ought to be welcomed, but it would also imply that there is little point in trying to increase membership in these organisations, as examples of horizontal social relations, for their own sake. The extent to which membership is evidence of linking capital is another matter, for these organisations may also be vehicles for empowerment.

If we combine membership of residents’ and tenants’ associations with membership of other groups, Weoley Hill has the greatest investment in this type of social capital. However, its position is almost indistinguishable from that of Bournville Village, and Central Bournville closely follows these two areas. In contrast, Shenley and Hole Farm and the Priory, which are also virtually indistinguishable from one another, are substantially worse off than the other neighbourhoods. If, as Putnam suggests, membership of these organisations is an indicator of good governance, BVT should wish to see a marked improvement in these levels of association in the future. However, to the extent that they depend on economic well-being, this may not be achievable without pursuing allocation policies that would be undesirable for the reasons suggested above.

To the extent that membership of residents’ and tenants’ associations is also evidence of linking capital (since it can be a method for exerting influence on those with power and can lead to community empowerment), it is not surprising that the wealthiest neighbourhood in Bournville is the best resourced. In the context of a responsive management system, increasing membership of these organisations could enhance community ownership of the running of the estate and empower the residents and tenants of the neighbourhoods. However, these organisations often arise in response to problems of management. In low-income communities, they tend to emerge when management is not performing as it should. The low levels of membership among BVT tenants may be an indicator of tenants’ satisfaction with BVT – an issue discussed in the next chapter.

If we remove membership of the residents’ and tenants’ organisations from the discussion and focus on the extent to which people believe they have influence on the management of their neighbourhood, we find that the two areas with the most linking capital are Weoley Hill and Bournville Village. These are the same two areas with the highest levels of bridging capital. There would therefore appear to be a relationship
between bridging and linking social capital, such that those areas endowed with bridging social capital (as measured by membership of social, sports and other types of organisations) are the areas in which people feel they have sufficient influence over the running and management of the services in their area. As an overall measure of well-being that can be attributed to the neighbourhood, therefore, the extent to which residents are satisfied with the level of influence they have is a better indicator than levels of membership of organisations.

Shenley and Hole Farm and the Priory are the two areas in which residents are least likely to feel they have sufficient influence over the delivery of services; they are also the two areas that have the least bridging social capital, no matter how it is measured. Shenley is also the neighbourhood with the most bonding social capital but it is the area in which the residents are most likely to want a bigger say in how the area is managed. Bonding capital is not an indicator for good area management, but it may offer a platform to enhance community ownership and participation in neighbourhood management in Bournville.

Finally, in relation to indicators of social capital for the future, the basic elements are contained in this chapter. Bonding social capital, as an expression of social cohesion and trust, can be measured by the extent of family ties, contact and cooperation between neighbours, and levels of loneliness and isolation. Bridging social capital is measured by membership of groups, including residents’ and tenants’ associations and other organisations inside and outside Bournville. This is related to the well-being of the residents. However, it is the concept of linking social capital that is most relevant for tying BVT’s activities into the government’s policy agenda for neighbourhoods and cities. Providing and developing means for residents to contribute to policy making and influencing the management of the estate would allow residents to identify problems and enable BVT to make rapid responses to key issues, thereby maintaining the high levels of satisfaction we outline in the next chapter.
Resident satisfaction

The social survey that formed a key element of this research study collected responses from Bournville residents to questions about their satisfaction with the estate and its environment, the quality of the dwellings, housing management and local services and facilities.

The estate and its environment

In the social survey, residents in Bournville were asked whether they thought the area had a good or bad reputation among people that live elsewhere: 82% thought that it had a good reputation and only 5% a bad reputation. The percentages of people in each neighbourhood who felt that the area had a good reputation were as follows: Central Bournville – 96%, Bournville Village – 91%, Weoley Hill – 89%, Middle Park Farm – 72%, Shenley – 69% and Hole Farm and the Priory – 55%.

The two areas in which residents most closely identified with Bournville (Central Bournville and Bournville Village) were those who were most likely to think the area had a good reputation.

Words used to describe the local area and environment in which residents live can also be used as an indirect measure of satisfaction. Respondents were offered a number of different words and were asked to identify three that they felt best described the area in which they live.

As noted in Chapter 1, BVT residents’ perceptions of their area were much more positive than those of other RSLs – the social survey showed, for example, that 64% of BVT households (nearly twice as many as the RSL survey) described their local area as ‘pleasant’. The results for the Bournville area as a whole are shown in Table 6.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-maintained</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractive</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spacious</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tidy</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlled</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shabby</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run-down</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This evidence suggests that the majority of BVT residents are generally very satisfied with their locality. There were, however, some significant differences between the different neighbourhoods. Negative perceptions of ‘shabby’ and ‘run-down’ are almost wholly concentrated in Shenley and the council-owned Middle Park Farm.

Satisfaction with Bournville

Across the area as a whole, 70% of all respondents said that they were ‘very satisfied’ with the area as a place to live, and a further 24% said that they were ‘fairly satisfied’. Only 5% said that they were either ‘fairly dissatisfied’ or ‘very dissatisfied’. In Bournville, there was no relationship between age and satisfaction and no significant difference between BVT tenants and owner-occupiers who live on the estate. Council tenants were much less likely to be ‘very satisfied’ than the other groups, however. That is, the difference was not related simply to tenure but was dependent on who the landlord was, on location and on property type.
Despite the high levels of satisfaction, Bournville is not without its problems and residents have views about change over time which are not entirely positive. Nevertheless, in considering the way the estate is perceived to have changed and the problems of the different neighbourhoods, it should be remembered that the issues raised are expressed in the context of high levels of satisfaction.

Change in Bournville over time

Respondents were asked: ‘Has your area changed over the time you have lived here?’ Just over half (51%) answered ‘yes’. When those who said the area had changed were asked what had got better, 72% said ‘nothing’. The others identified a long list of attributes that they thought had improved, but no one thing stood out. None of the positive changes were mentioned by more than 8% of those who thought things had changed (representing only 4% of the total sample).

The percentages of respondents in the different neighbourhoods who thought there had been no improvements are shown in Table 6.2.

All of the respondents who thought that the estate had changed thought that it had got worse in some respects. Those features that have got worse that were reported most are shown in Table 6.3.

Problems in the area

Respondents were asked to indicate whether a number of identified problems were a serious or slight problem, or not a problem. The only two issues that were identified as problems by more than 10% of respondents were burglary (10.8%) and car crime (10.2%).

Housing standards

When the residents of Bournville were asked about their satisfaction with their flat or house, 61% said they were ‘very satisfied’ and a further 27% said they were ‘fairly satisfied’. However, only 16% of those living in Middle Park Farm and 47% of residents in Hole Farm and the Priory said they were very satisfied.

In contrast to the findings that satisfaction with the neighbourhood is not related to the age of the respondent, satisfaction with property is. The percentage of people who said they were very satisfied with their house or flat increases from 44% of those under 30 to 77% of those who are 65 or over. This is not surprising, since it confirms that as people get older they are more able to realise their household aspirations. In Bournville, however, this is true in the BVT rented accommodation as well as in the private sector. What is perhaps more surprising is that the owner-occupiers who are leaseholders were more likely to say they are very satisfied with their houses than were the freeholders (86% compared to 75%). This may reflect the higher overall quality of the leasehold housing or may be related to the level of service that is obtained.
from BVT, as suggested by freeholders in the focus groups. With 68% very satisfied, BVT tenants are not far behind the freeholders. Once again, the main difference is not between tenants and owner-occupiers, but between landlords, with only 14% of city council tenants saying they are very satisfied. It should be recognised, however, that this difference may be in part due to the mix of property types that are managed by the different landlords: Middle Park Farm, for example, is almost 100% flats. Returning to age of respondents and relating this to satisfaction and house type, the BVT-owned housing is of sufficient variety to meet lifecycle housing needs and aspirations as their tenants get older.

None of these services are the responsibility of BVT but, in the context of the government’s new neighbourhood renewal agenda and the pressure for more local participation in service delivery, some of them could be in the future. It seems unlikely that satisfaction with home helps, schools, street lighting and rubbish collection could be improved through locally organised services but there is scope for improvement elsewhere.

General satisfaction with local services and facilities

Residents were asked if they were generally satisfied or dissatisfied with different aspects of living on the Bournville Estate. The proportions that were ‘very satisfied’ and ‘fairly satisfied’ are shown in Table 6.5. A 98% satisfaction rating for the amount of trees and green areas confirms earlier findings, but the other responses are far higher than would normally be achieved in areas of social housing. However, if we look at

### Table 6.4: Respondents reporting satisfaction with use of public services (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obtaining a home help</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing a school</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street lighting</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubbish collection</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pest control</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacting a social worker</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holes in pavements/road</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

None of these services are the responsibility of BVT but, in the context of the government’s new neighbourhood renewal agenda and the pressure for more local participation in service delivery, some of them could be in the future. It seems unlikely that satisfaction with home helps, schools, street lighting and rubbish collection could be improved through locally organised services but there is scope for improvement elsewhere.

### Table 6.5: Levels of satisfaction with local services and facilities (% average for all ‘neighbourhoods’)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Very satisfied or fairly satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amount of trees and green areas</td>
<td>98.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of getting to local places of worship</td>
<td>98.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>97.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health services</td>
<td>97.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access for service and emergency vehicles</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubbish collection</td>
<td>93.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of getting to local shops</td>
<td>91.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local routes for people on foot/cycles</td>
<td>90.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fencing</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local bus services</td>
<td>89.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General appearance of the area</td>
<td>85.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of getting to pubs</td>
<td>85.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social facilities for meeting others</td>
<td>84.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape maintenance</td>
<td>83.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleanliness and tidiness</td>
<td>83.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local rail services</td>
<td>82.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local shops</td>
<td>82.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street cleaning</td>
<td>81.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street lighting etc</td>
<td>80.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition of pavements and roads</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Weighted mean average of all areas; those responding ‘don’t know’ or for whom the question was not applicable are excluded.
patterns of dissatisfaction across the estate, there are still some matters of concern.

In addition to these questions about aspects of living in the area, residents were asked whether the area was a good place for young children, teenagers and older people. Removing those who said they 'did not know' from the analysis, we found that:

- 82% thought the area was very satisfactory or fairly satisfactory as a place to bring up younger children;
- 30% thought the area was very satisfactory or fairly satisfactory for teenagers, in terms of leisure and recreation;
- 73% thought there were ‘definitely’ or ‘possibly’ enough opportunities for older people to meet socially.

As with the main pattern of satisfaction, the BVT estate far surpasses other social housing estates on virtually all issues concerned with local facilities and services. Compared with the relatively high levels of satisfaction recorded above, however, there is evidently a problem in terms of the provision of facilities for teenagers.

Conclusion

This chapter has dealt mainly with direct indicators of satisfaction that relate to the area and its environment, the quality of houses and flats, housing management, and local services and facilities. The discussion of these key indicators is complemented by analyses of related but indirect indicators in other chapters – length of tenancy and turnover, the desire to move, fear and experience of crime, and so on. In addition, we have looked at the words residents use to describe where they live. All of these can be used as direct and indirect indicators of resident satisfaction with the Bournville estate.

Despite the high levels of satisfaction on key indicators, the estate is not without its problems and those that do exist are not uniformly experienced across the estate. On the direct indicators of satisfaction, with the exception of those relating to council-provided and other non-BVT services, the BVT neighbourhoods came out better than the council-owned neighbourhood, and BVT tenants were more satisfied than those in council properties. Satisfaction with the landlord was much higher for BVT tenants than for council tenants and, for most of the indicators on the quality of the properties, the council tenants were three or four times more likely to identify ‘big problems’. Some of these differences will be attributable to differences in the type of property – flatted property in social housing almost invariably attracts lower satisfaction ratings than houses and generates far higher levels of problems than houses of the same age. There also appears to be a virtuous circle related to quality of the property, the commitment of tenants and management of the property. Since much of the BVT property is of a higher quality, it attracts a higher level of commitment from tenants to its maintenance and upkeep, which, in turn, ensures that it will be easier to manage and further ensures the high quality.

This virtuous circle also has a spin-off for public finances. It suggests that when residents have high levels of satisfaction with the neighbourhood, their neighbours and their properties, they will have a commitment to the future of the area, in turn leading to individual and community energies being put into the estate. If this is correct, even the relatively problematic public sector housing in Bournville will cost less to maintain than estates of a comparable physical nature elsewhere in the city.

There is one indicator, however, that is of concern. Lack of facilities for teenagers is a particular problem, especially if it leads to groups of young people hanging around public places with nothing to do. This can lead to a perception that they are threatening and is related to the levels of residents' fear of crime, which are discussed in the next chapter.
Crime and disorderly behaviour

Introduction

The high profile given to crime and disorder in the media means that it is an issue of serious public concern and, as a consequence, a major determinant of residential satisfaction. Data for recorded crime is now more easily available and it is therefore possible to consider the implications of this data. At the outset, however, it is important to acknowledge difficulties that remain in interpreting the data. It continues partly to reflect policing practice, in terms of data recording, and by perceptions of where problems are, thus where policing efforts are concentrated. Despite the fact that there is a relatively low incidence of crime and antisocial behaviour in Bournville, compared with neighbouring estates and other residential areas in the city, concerns over safety and security remain of major significance to the residents. Indeed, as we saw in the preceding chapter, the perception of increasing levels of crime and antisocial behaviour were the most frequently cited concerns insofar as changes in the neighbourhood were concerned, according to our social survey. Accordingly, it is as much the fear of crime as the actual incidence of crime which tends to influence public opinion. But, real or imagined, an increase in the perception of crime and antisocial behaviour can undermine the confidence of residents in the security of their neighbourhood and influence patterns of mobility.

This chapter seeks to outline the extent to which crime and antisocial behaviour are seen as problems on the estate, to identify whether there are differences in the pattern of crime and disorderly behaviour between the various neighbourhoods, and to draw comparisons between the perceptions and the actual incidence of crime on the estate. It will also identify appropriate criteria for identifying and monitoring the incidence of crime and antisocial behaviour at neighbourhood level.

The incidence of street crime

The most robust data series regarding the incidence of local crime is maintained by the West Midlands Police Authority (WMPA); computerised data has been obtained on a street by street basis since April 1998. The data contains information on the incidence of burglaries, robberies (such as attacks on the person) and vehicle crime by location. While the data was originally collected according to 'beat districts', it has been modified to accord with the neighbourhoods of the current study. Table 7.1 illustrates the incidence of street crime as a whole throughout the Bournville estate, between April 1998 and October 2001.

It is evident that there was some under-enumeration during 1998 – the first year in which the statistics were collected in their current (computerised) form. Nonetheless, over the last two or three years the statistics clearly show:

- a preponderance of vehicle crime in the area;
- a significant amount of burglaries;
- a relatively modest, but increasing incidence of robberies.
Neighbourhoods that work

Since the first full year of available data (1999) there has been a significant fall in recorded criminal activity and this is consistent with trends across the WMPA Operational Command Unit (OCU) in south-west Birmingham. If the 2001 figures were to be enhanced on a proportionate basis to accommodate a full year, they would still confirm a falling overall trend in the incidence of street crime. While there has been a significant overall reduction in crime figures from 1999-2001, a closer look reveals that burglaries and vehicle crime reduced significantly to approximately 60% of their earlier figures, but robberies almost doubled.

Figure 7.1 shows the incidence of crime on a monthly basis over the period April 1998 to October 2001 for ‘beat districts’ 17 and 18 (these two beat districts cover a slightly larger area than the Bournville estate). There does not appear to be any obvious pattern to the statistics, ‘seasonal’ or otherwise, although there is an overall reduction. The statistics increase steadily from April 1998, peaking in March 1999 at around 130 incidents before falling to approximately 60-80 incidents per month during the autumn of 2001 (although the figures fluctuate over this time).

Officers at the WMPA commented that overall crime statistics can be somewhat opaque and may fluctuate considerably from one month to the next depending on the local pattern of criminal behaviour – the activities of one particular burglar, for example, may temporarily increase the number of incidents, or a crime prevention initiative may displace criminal activity to a different area and have a perceptible effect on local statistics. There are also seasonal effects involving particular types of crime in specific localities (for example, those involving students during academic terms), but these effects may not be visible from the overall figures.

Table 7.1: The incidence of burglaries, robberies and vehicle crime on the Bournville estate (1998-2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Burglaries</th>
<th>Robberies</th>
<th>Vehicle crime</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>(49.1)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>(3.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>(39.7)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>(3.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>(38.5)</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>(6.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>(41.6)</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>(10.7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Nine months’ figures; † Ten months’ figures.
Source: WMPA

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Figure 7.1: Monthly incidence of burglaries, robberies and vehicle crime in beats 17 and 18 (1998-2001)
The fall in vehicle crime since 1999 is consistent with figures across the OCU, as indeed is the rise in robberies. Approximately three quarters of robberies are personal (as distinct from robberies from commercial premises). In the Bournville area, robberies tend to be opportunistic incidents involving the stealing of mobile phones, handbags and so on. The theft of mobile phones is usually from schoolchildren between the ages of 11 and 16 years, whereas handbag thefts are invariably from older females. The number of burglaries on the Bournville estate is modest in comparison with neighbouring areas such as Weoley Castle, Northfield, Selly Oak (especially during the academic terms) and Frankley, all of which are in the same OCU. According to officers within the WMPA, as much as 80% of this local crime is drug related and involves local youths. Apparently, the majority of crimes are committed on 'familiar territory', where the means of escape is known and within a mile of the perpetrator’s home.

The incidence of street crime by neighbourhoods

Table 7.2 illustrates the distribution of street crime within the various neighbourhoods in Bournville during the last full year for which statistics were available (2000) and compares the incidence of crime with the distribution of population in each area.

Since time series data are not available, Table 7.2 provides only a ‘snapshot’ picture of the incidence of crime. The table indicates a reasonable correlation between the incidence of street crime and the relative population size of the neighbourhoods. It also suggests a higher level of crime in Shenley and in Weoley Hill than would be expected given the size of the population, and a lower incidence in the other areas. A closer examination of the distribution of street crime in Shenley and Weoley Hill reveals that, while vehicle crime accounts for the largest proportion of incidents (53.2%) in Shenley, burglary appears to be more frequent compared with other areas (44.7%). In Weoley Hill it is the proportion of robberies which is most striking, with an incidence two and a half times the neighbourhood with the next highest frequency (Bournville Village with 11.0% compared 27.7% in Weoley Hill).

Recently the WMPA has adopted a series of performance indicators for assessing its performance against the incidence of crime. Within the south-west Birmingham OCU, some of the main performance indicators for street crime are as follows:

- burglary 32.2 per 1,000 households
- vehicle crime 27.5 per 1,000 population
- robbery 3.4 per 1,000 population.

Although these performance indicators are for the OCU as a whole, when measured against these criteria in terms of burglaries, Shenley, Hole Farm and Weoley Hill emerge as the neighbourhoods with the biggest problems. As far as vehicle crime is concerned, all of the neighbourhoods record rates well above the indicators, but the areas with significant problems are Shenley, Bournville Village and Weoley Hill. Five neighbourhoods also have rates of robberies higher than the performance indicator, but the most significant problems are in Weoley Hill and Bournville Village.

### Table 7.2: The incidence of crime by neighbourhoods on the Bournville estate (2000)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Burglaries n</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Robberies n</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Vehicle crime n</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total n</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>% of total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>35 (29.7)</td>
<td></td>
<td>13 (11.0)</td>
<td></td>
<td>70 (59.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>118 (12.6)</td>
<td></td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weoley</td>
<td>27 (32.5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>23 (27.7)</td>
<td></td>
<td>33 (39.8)</td>
<td></td>
<td>83 (8.9)</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>116 (37.1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>13 (4.2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>184 (58.8)</td>
<td></td>
<td>313 (33.4)</td>
<td></td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shenley</td>
<td>153 (44.7)</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 (2.0)</td>
<td></td>
<td>182 (53.2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>342 (36.5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hole Farm</td>
<td>19 (44.2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 (7.0)</td>
<td></td>
<td>21 (48.8)</td>
<td></td>
<td>43 (4.6)</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Park</td>
<td>11 (28.9)</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 (10.5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>23 (60.5)</td>
<td></td>
<td>38 (4.1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>361 (38.5)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>63 (6.7)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>513 (54.7)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>937 (100.0)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** WMPA
Map 7.1: The incidence of reported street crime (burglaries, robberies and vehicle crime) on the Bournville estate (2000)

Source: WMPIA
The geographical distribution of recorded street crime, which took place in Bournville during the year 2000 is shown in Map 7.1. This demonstrates that all residential areas within the Bournville estate were susceptible to crime in 2000 but that there were three ‘hot spots’ in or adjacent to the estate. The largest area of concentrated crime was in the Shenley area (to the north-east of Shenley Lane and south of Green Meadow Road), which includes areas of both rented and owner-occupied houses. The second, much smaller area, was in the Middle Park Farm neighbourhood (south of Bryony Road), where the housing is mostly rented from the local authority. The third area was adjacent to the eastern boundary of the estate and included pre-1919 terraced and largely owner-occupied houses (in Mary Vale and Beaumont Roads, bounded on the eastern side by Franklin Road, but extended over Linden Road to the west). Each of these areas experienced an average of between 0.5 and 1.0 recorded criminal incidents each week which was a rate about twice that for much of the remainder of the Bournville estate.

In contrast to the street crime figures, which show a steady reduction since 1999, the incidence of disorderly behaviour on the estate appears to be rising. If the 2001 figures are adjusted on a pro rata basis, the overall figure for the year would be very similar to that for the year 2000 and a 23% increase on the 1999 figures.

As far as an analysis by neighbourhoods is concerned, the incidence of disorderly behaviour appears to be reducing in proportionate terms in Bournville Village and in Central Bournville. In Shenley and Weoley Hill it appears to be increasing, whereas in Hole Farm and the Priory and Middle Park Farm the figures are fluctuating. Compared with the total population of the neighbourhoods, however, it is clear that there is a disproportionate problem in Hole Farm and the Priory, Middle Park Farm and Shenley. In Hole Farm and the Priory the incidence of disorderly behaviour in 2001, on a proportionate basis, was twice the equivalent proportion of the population, and the figure for Middle Park Farm was similarly high (173%). In terms of actual numbers, however, the most serious problem is in Shenley where the number of incidents of disorderly behaviour has grown the most consistently. In the last year for which full statistics were available (2000), there were over 550 incidents in this area: more than double the number in Central Bournville despite the fact that the latter has a much larger population.

### Table 7.3: The incidence of disorderly behaviour by neighbourhoods on the Bournville estate (1998-2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1998*</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001*</th>
<th>% of total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>(15.0)</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>(15.2)</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weoley Hill</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>(4.9)</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>(5.3)</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>(25.8)</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>(22.5)</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shenley</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>(36.0)</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>(37.3)</td>
<td>557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hole Farm</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>(10.6)</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>(11.8)</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Park</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>(7.7)</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>(7.9)</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>(100.0)</td>
<td>1,091</td>
<td>(100.0)</td>
<td>1,340</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Nine months’ figures; " Ten months’ figures.

Source: WMPA

Source: WMPA

Neighbourhoods that work
The monthly incidence of disorderly behaviour (Figure 7.2) tends to vary considerably, but there has been a steady increase across the estate between 1999 and 2000.

The geographical distribution of disorderly behaviour (Map 7.2) confirms the observations made above on a neighbourhood basis and highlights three areas of concentration on the estate during 2000. The largest area of concentration was in Shenley in the south of the area, where an average of 1.75-3.5 incidents of disorderly behaviour were recorded each week. This was a rate about eight times that for much of the remainder of the Bournville estate. The second area of concentration was centred on Middle Park Farm (around Abdon Avenue and Tugford and Holdgate Roads) where a similarly high level of disorderly behaviour was recorded. As with Shenley, however, quite a large geographical area surrounding this nucleus was affected (along Swarthmore Road to the west as well as across Middle Park Road into Weoley Hill towards the east). The third area of concentration was in Hole Farm (around Jervoise Drive, The Leys and Windmill Hill). Here, the frequency of disorderly behaviour recorded was slightly lower than in the other two areas.

Perceptions of safety and security

This data on antisocial behaviour was confirmed by the BVT’s own survey of tenants conducted in February 2001 (BVT, 2001). BVT’s survey found that 38% of tenants on the Bournville estate had experienced antisocial behaviour over the preceding 12 months and about a third of these had experienced difficulties on a daily basis. The three most prevalent problems included nuisance caused by local children, noise nuisance by neighbours and vandalism/graffiti, damage to property and litter. Almost all the perpetrators (90%) were thought to be tenants of BVT, and the geographical distribution of concentrations of incidents involved exactly the same areas as the WMPA statistics.

How do people’s perceptions from our social survey compare with the WMPA statistics? The survey explored respondents’ views about their actual experience of crime and about their concerns. According to the survey 29% of respondents claimed to have been a victim of crime of some sort during the preceding 12 months: the highest proportions were in Shenley (38%) and Middle Park Farm (35%) and the lowest were in Weoley Hill (21%) and Central Bournville (24%). The most frequently experienced criminal activity was car crime, with 27% of respondents having had their cars broken into or being subject to an attempted break-in. Residents in Central Bournville appeared to be particularly vulnerable to this type of activity (36%), while this was a relatively modest problem in Middle Park Farm (4%). The next most frequent crime was burglary – 24% of residents had experienced a burglary or attempted break-in to their homes during the previous 12 months. Again, the residents of Central Bournville appeared the most vulnerable,
with 31% of respondents reporting incidents of this kind. Bournville Village (30%) and Weoley Hill (26%) were also badly affected, and the residents of Middle Park Farm the least (9%).

In reporting attacks on the person in the survey, 6% of residents had been mugged or robbed and 3% physically or sexually attacked during the preceding 12 months. Residents in Hole Farm and the Priory (10%) were most at risk from the former, with Bournville Village (9%) and Central Bournville (8%) not far behind. Most of the areas experienced a similar incidence of physical or sexual attacks, with the exception of Shenley where there were no recorded incidents.

Comparing the findings of the survey with the ‘snapshot’ of the WMPA statistics for street crime during the year 2000 affords only a degree of correlation. The two sources provide similar information on the frequency of the different types of street crime, but the information about the incidence of crime within the different neighbourhoods differs, except that both sources agree that the highest incidence of crime is in Shenley. Some explanation for these variations is noted above, that is, that crime statistics do not tend to follow a consistent pattern over time from area to area.

With regard to the fear of crime, the survey asked respondents whether they thought there was more or less crime, or about the same amount as in other areas. Very few thought that there was more crime (4%) and 49% that there was less. Only respondents from Hole Farm and the Priory differed radically from this view, where 12% of respondents felt that there was a higher level of crime locally.

Respondents were then asked about the extent to which they were worried about certain aspects of crime, safety and security. The proportions of all respondents saying that they were ‘very worried’ or ‘fairly worried’ about these aspects, or who felt ‘very unsafe’ are shown in Table 7.4.

Variations in levels of concern between the neighbourhoods were considerable. Differences in aspects for which a high proportion stated they were ‘very worried’ are shown in Table 7.5.

In relation to feeling ‘very unsafe’, the variation between neighbourhoods was from 30% in Hole Farm and the Priory to 12% in Weoley Hill.

The implications of these views are that the greatest concerns about safety and security were in Bournville Village followed by Hole Farm and the Priory. The lowest levels of concern were in Weoley Hill followed by the neighbourhoods of Middle Park Farm, Central Bournville and Shenley. What is striking about these findings, however, is that the areas in which there is the greatest fear of crime are not necessarily those areas in which one finds the greatest incidence of crime.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the evidence related to recorded crime in the Bournville area. Bearing in mind problems associated with such data, it has outlined the incidence of street crime and antisocial behaviour on the estate as a whole and in each of the neighbourhoods. The actual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7.4: Percentage of respondents worried about aspects of crime and safety</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having their home broken into and something stolen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being mugged or robbed in their area of residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being physically attacked in their area of residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coming to or from their home after dark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent or sexual attack in the home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being sexually assaulted in their area of residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial harassment in their area of residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being alone at home at night</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7.5: Variations in levels of concern between neighbourhoods (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having their home broken into and something stolen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bournville Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being mugged or robbed in their area of residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being physically attacked in their area of residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
incidence of street crime on much of the Bournville estate is relatively modest compared with neighbouring areas and trends on the estate are similar to those throughout the OCU of the WMPA, indicating that over the period studied street crime in particular was decreasing. The incidence of antisocial behaviour, in contrast, has been on the increase and this is perhaps of greater significance to a local management agency such as the BVT. What the two datasets together show is that there are two or three areas on and adjacent to the estate where the combination of street crime and antisocial behaviour constitute serious problems for the community, undermining social cohesion and reducing the attractiveness of those areas as residential localities. These areas are outlined in Maps 7.1 and 7.2 and should be priority areas for remedial action.

The BVT and the WMPA have already established a close working relationship. The two parties signed a Safer Estates Protocol in 1999 (which permits the exchange of sensitive data) and have collaborated on a number of joint initiatives to counter criminal and antisocial behaviour on the estate. This collaboration now needs to move into a new phase by involving the local communities much more actively in concerted action to improve security and reduce the incidence of crime in these neighbourhoods.

One of the more intriguing findings of this part of the research is that the neighbourhoods in which there is the greatest fear of crime are not necessarily those areas in which there is the greatest incidence of crime. A partial explanation may be the distribution of households of older people on the estate who, perhaps, feel more vulnerable towards crime and antisocial behaviour. It is clear, however, that there are some complex factors at work that are not fully understood, and further research to contribute to more appropriate policy responses would be beneficial.

The research confirms beyond doubt that the incidence of crime and antisocial behaviour are key factors contributing to the satisfaction of residents and the relative success of a residential neighbourhood. Hence, data series similar to those presented above, which show the incidence and distribution of street crime and antisocial behaviour, will be important to enable BVT to monitor the situation and to inform its local housing policy decisions appropriately.
The initial data presented in this report suggests that Bournville is a neighbourhood that works better than do many others. The data generally shows higher levels of satisfaction among residents, but when the views of residents in different parts of the estate are considered there is much variation in the responses to a range of different measures of what works. The same areas do not work best or worst on every variable and the rank ordering of the identified neighbourhoods does not remain the same throughout. In this respect, the question of what works is immediately more complex than it appears at the outset. If certain neighbourhoods were consistently less functional we could identify which inputs this was associated with – whether it be housing tenure or tenure mix, social characteristics or social mix, or some aspect of management of the neighbourhood. Once it is recognised that the pattern is more complex and qualified, we have to accept that the implications are more complex.

Tenure mix messages

The account of differences between the component areas that form the Bournville estate enables us to contribute to the debate about housing tenure mix. This mix was seen by the BVT as very important during the early developments on the estate and it continues to be a key theme in policy debates today.

The BVT’s approach embodied the simple assumption that the geographical integration of the social classes was necessary in order to achieve greater social cohesion within the community. Tenure mix has been important in overcoming the problems of affordability associated with decent standards of owner occupation. In targeting model housing towards “the working class and labouring population in and around Birmingham, and elsewhere in Great Britain” (BVT, 1900) it was recognised that many low-income groups would simply be unable to afford owner occupation. Hence, rented and owner-occupied accommodation was developed side by side. The same is true today, although accessibility to home ownership has broadened in recent years.

There are three different patterns of tenure mix associated with different areas of the estate and with different phases of development. Areas with different patterns of tenure mix can be contrasted with areas that have a predominance of one tenure form, or ‘monolithic’ areas. The different approaches to tenure mix are:

- an integrated approach
- a segmented approach
- a segregated approach, plus
- a monolithic (single tenure) approach.

The integrated approach

The integrated approach to tenure mix is most readily apparent in the development of Bournville Village, where rented and owned properties are indistinguishable in terms of their appearance and exist side by side. While the proportion of rented and owned properties varies from street to street, the overall tenure split in the Village is now about 40:60 between owned and rented dwellings, although not all the rented dwellings are managed by BVT. The rented stock has conventional designs and similar specifications to the privately owned properties, and house prices appear largely unaffected by
tenure mix. Important caveats to this, however, are sensitive tenant selection criteria which seek to ensure that tenants broadly conform to the behavioural norms of other residents in the area, and decisive management action by BVT in the event of disorderly or antisocial behaviour that may disrupt the ‘quiet enjoyment’ of residents, regardless of whether the perpetrators are owners or tenants.

There is also a mix in the various types and sizes of properties available. The conscious efforts of BVT to keep costs down during the construction of the Village and to exercise effective planning controls since then means that house sizes are generally relatively small – 70% of BVT properties within Bournville Village are either one- or two-bedroom properties. Most properties are terraced or semi-detached; there are some bungalows for older people; but there are very few detached houses and very few flats. Within the rented sector the BVT stock is also varied, with a mix of semi-detached and terraced houses, sheltered accommodation, bungalows and flats.

The range of private properties in the Village is indicated by price and the average asking price of properties in the area during the year 2000 was marginally higher than the average for the estate as a whole (£144,000 compared to £139,000). These price levels reflect two factors: first, that most privately owned properties in the Village are still relatively modest in size and, second, for that reason, they are not so attractive to higher income groups. Prices for properties in the area ranged from about £110,000 to about £180,000.

The operation of market forces on the one hand and the conscious interventions of the BVT on the other have sustained a community with important elements of social mix. The social composition reflects a largely white population in which a fifth of the population is retired, over a third of households contain someone of pensionable age, just under a third of households have dependent children and the proportion of lone parent households and single households under pensionable age is almost exactly the average for the estate as a whole. The socioeconomic distribution is similarly close to the average for the estate as a whole. Over a third of those in employment (37%) are in professional/managerial categories, just over 40% are in skilled employment and around 20% are partly skilled, unskilled or on various government programmes.

Evidence that the Village works well as a residential neighbourhood is derived from the focus group interview with a cross-section of residents from the area, and from the social survey. The observations of the focus group were that Bournville Village did constitute a “supportive community”, and that this was the result of “established networks” and “a sense of shared values”. It was also acknowledged that there is a mix of households in the area, which is advantageous. The social survey confirmed these views in a number of ways:

- the highest proportion of residents (45%) felt that Bournville Village was an area in which people were willing to help each other;
- 58% of respondents in the Village felt that they lived in a socially mixed community;
- 25% of respondents, once again the highest proportion, felt that they knew “almost all” their neighbours well enough “to have a chat with”.

The segmented approach

The segmented model of housing tenure mix describes those areas on the estate in which the rented and owned stock are combined together within a neighbourhood but are divided into small blocks of properties. The area that best exemplifies this is within Central Bournville and includes part of Bournville Works Housing Society properties as well as owner-occupied and other BVT rented stock.

As in Bournville Village, the area enjoys an approximately even split of rented and owned accommodation. The layout is very different from the Village, however, and is characterised by short cul-de-sacs opening off the main roads. There is also little variation in the types of property, most being either semi-detached houses or short terraces built in conventional style. The densities are higher, the properties are smaller (up to 400 square feet) and have smaller kitchens. The increased densities mean that some properties are overlooked, thereby reducing the privacy of the residents, and it is often not possible to accommodate garages alongside the houses.
Neighbourhoods that work

These and other factors affect the average asking prices for properties in the area and during 2000 these were much lower than in Bournville Village. Average prices in this particular part of Central Bournville range from £115,000 to £130,000.

Again, there is evidence from the two focus groups carried out in this area that this part of Bournville is considered to be an attractive residential neighbourhood. In the first focus group all participants were tenants and most were from this particular area (including Bournville Works Housing Society). The shared values of long-standing tenants had contributed a strong sense of local community, but it was felt that this was becoming diluted because of the introduction into the area of households which had no former connection with Bournville. It was also argued that the incidence and fear of crime had increased.

The segregated approach

The segregated model of tenure mix characterises most of the Shenley development and Hole Farm. In both these areas there are significant concentrations of rented property, which are geographically segregated from the areas of home-ownership. In Shenley there are about 1,000 rented properties compared with about 350 on the Hole Farm estate. There is a clear differentiation between the owned and rented stock in the Shenley area and greater socioeconomic differentiation between tenures.

Despite the fact that the privately owned houses in Shenley are more modern and are often larger dwellings than those in the older areas of the estate, average asking prices were low in 2000 (£106,000 compared with £139,000 for the Bournville estate as a whole). Within Shenley, asking prices in 2000 ranged from £68,000 to £82,500 in the central part, rising to around £195,000 in Ramsden Close to the south.

The rented stock in Shenley appears to perform a similar role to the private sector stock in that it receives newcomers to the estate as well as those moving into the area from other parts of the estate. Two thirds of those accommodated in Shenley are incoming households. The remaining one third of households are approximately equally divided between those moving from other parts of the estate and those moving within Shenley itself. The area has the largest share of three-bedroom rented accommodation, which means that it is popular with families from other parts of the estate seeking slightly larger properties.

The focus group interviews and the findings of the social survey highlight the contrasting attitudes to the local community held by the various groups in Shenley. This part of the estate was considered to have both desirable and undesirable areas, so respondents’ perceptions of the estate depended on where they lived. ‘Neighbourliness’ characterised the area rather than a broader notion of ‘community’, hence Shenley fell in the middle of the range of areas when considering whether it was an area in which people helped each other. There was little doubt about its social mix, but it was second in the ranking of areas on whether respondents knew their neighbours well enough to “have a chat with”. However, it could not be concluded that, overall, Shenley is a socially cohesive community comparable with Bournville Village, although parts of the area appear to be more cohesive than do others.

Hole Farm and the Priory estate is similarly characterised as a segregated model of tenure mix. The number of tenanted properties is much smaller than in Shenley, but there is a higher proportion of rented stock as opposed to owned property (an approximate ratio of 3:1). The area also contains the highest proportions of terraced houses and flats. It has a higher level of turnover than any of the other areas (with the exception of Middle Park Farm), a high proportion of single person households (41%) and the highest proportion of households with children.

With the exception of a small number of Right-to-Buy properties, the rented property on Hole Farm and the Priory estate is more segregated from the owner-occupied stock than in Shenley. The private properties are terraced dwellings with modest gardens or leasehold schemes for older people, and there is little turnover. Nonetheless, a clear distinction in prices is discernible between the Right-to-Buy properties and the remaining dwellings. The asking price for Right-to-Buy properties in 2000 ranged from £48,000 to £86,000. These prices were very low when compared with the average (£139,000) for the...
estate as a whole. They were comparable to prices at the lower end of the market in Shenley.

In the rented sector, more than half of all the moves to properties in the area are by households coming into the estate. Around 25 households per year (on average) move in from outside the estate (a relatively high level of turnover) and, given that the total number of rented properties is about a third of that in Shenley, the impact on the area is likely to be greater. Hole Farm and the Priory also has the highest proportion of council nominations (50%) but, despite this, only 7% of all incoming households during the four years 1998-2001 were from BME groups – the lowest representation on the estate. Over 75% of incoming households moved into one- or two-bedroom flats, while the remainder was largely families occupying three-bedroom accommodation. Thus, it appears that smaller households dominate, but a sizeable minority are families.

Views obtained from the focus groups in the area and the social survey suggest some problems regarding the relative cohesion of the community on the Hole Farm and the Priory estate. There was a widespread view that the community spirit in the area was “not like it used to be”. Only 27% of respondents felt that this area was one in which people tended to help each other out; 18% of households felt lonely and isolated; only 14% of households felt that they knew their neighbours well enough “to have a chat with them”. Focus group responses were that “people kept themselves to themselves”, and that organisations within the area, such as the local residents’ association and the Neighbourhood Watch scheme, had collapsed for want of support. The social survey also confirmed consistently lower than average responses for memberships of organisations either within or outside the locality. The main problems in the area were perceived to be the behaviour of young people, increasing crime and antisocial behaviour.

The 'monolithic' or single tenure approach

None of the areas on the estate contained only properties of a single tenure. The two areas that come closest to this model and were planned on a single-tenure basis are the Weoley Hill estate, originally developed entirely for leasehold ownership, and the Middle Park Farm estate, which was planned and developed as privately rented accommodation during the 1960s. The latter has since been acquired by the city council and administered as ‘council housing’ since 1974. The Weoley Hill area now has a tenure split of about 90:10 owned and rented accommodation and all of the BVT rented provision has been provided since 1945. The Middle Park Farm estate has a similar tenure split but in exactly the opposite way, the small proportion of owned properties being leasehold flats bought under the Right-to-Buy provisions.

While these areas are both dominated by one tenure form (albeit different tenures), the characteristics of the two areas are very different. The socioeconomic profile of Weoley Hill reveals the lowest level of unemployment (1.7%) compared with the average for Bournville Ward of 4.6% and a level of professional/managerial employment almost twice the average for the estate. The incidence of recorded street crime and disorderly behaviour is also among the lowest levels on the entire estate. Reflecting these major advantages, average house prices in 2000 were £158,000 (the highest on the estate as a whole) and some properties were among the most expensive. While there is a mix of properties, including one or two institutional structures, the vast majority of dwellings take the form of conventional detached or semi-detached properties and there are no flats or maisonettes. In 2000, asking prices varied from £120,000 to £220,000. These figures suggest that the Weoley Hill estate is still viewed as a highly desirable residential environment. One consequence of this is that once residents have acquired property in the area they tend to stay, and the age profile of the residents is therefore more skewed towards older people than any other part of the estate. Almost half of all households in Weoley Hill (48%) include one or more persons of pensionable age and 38% of residents are retired; almost half of all homeowners also own their properties outright.

One might therefore expect residents to report a close-knit and supportive local community, and this was cautiously confirmed by the focus group. The findings of the social survey, however, were more circumspect. While Weoley Hill residents were the first to acknowledge that a broad social mix of residents was important (34%), only 22% of respondents felt that Weoley
Neighbourhoods that work

Hill was an area in which people were prepared to help each other (the lowest proportion with the exception only of Middle Park Farm). Similarly, the area recorded the lowest proportion of respondents claiming that they felt “lonely or isolated” (4%), but also one of the lowest proportions of residents who felt they knew their neighbours “well enough to have a chat with” (11%). Along with their counterparts in Bournville Village, the residents of Wesley Hill consistently recorded high levels of membership of tenants’ and residents’ organisations and indeed other organisations either meeting in Bournville or elsewhere.

The residential profile of Middle Park Farm could scarcely be more different from that in Wesley Hill. Middle Park Farm has the highest level of unemployment on the estate (13% compared with an estate average of just 4%); 73% of households in the area are single people; 11% childless couples; and 10% lone parent households. The majority of are also below pensionable age with the result that the proportion of retired people is second lowest at 17%. Middle Park Farm also has a relatively high exposure to crime: the incidence of both street crime and disorderly behaviour is among the highest on the estate.

House types are also very different. With the exception of a few bungalows, Middle Park Farm is comprised entirely of purpose-built one- or two-bedroom flats. The flats sold under the Right-to-Buy have only marginally increased in price over the past five years and the asking price in 2000 for a one-bedroom flat averaged about £35,000, and for a two-bedroom flat around £45,000. These prices are the lowest averages on the entire estate.

In view of the nature of the development, the relatively high crime levels and the sharp contrasts in the social mix of the population, one might have assumed that Middle Park Farm was characterised by very little community cohesion. This hypothesis was confirmed by the focus group – the area was seen as one in which there was no sense of community identity. There was no residents’ association serving the area, there were no communal activities that might interest local people and some residents lived in fear of others. The findings of the social survey also confirmed that this was not a cohesive local community. Only 20% of respondents (the lowest score for any area) felt that this was an area in which people helped each other. Only 8% of respondents felt they knew their neighbours well enough for a chat (again the lowest score) but, in contrast, only 13% of households felt “lonely or isolated”. On all the questions relating to organisational membership, the responses from the estate, without exception, indicated the lowest levels of community involvement.

Conclusion

The way in which this research was designed and conducted has enabled us to consider the importance of housing tenure mix in a more systematic way than in earlier research. Previous research has tended to aggregate data for different neighbourhoods and present respondents’ views of the importance of tenure mix (for example Cole et al, no date). While this approach does highlight some issues, it does not enable the discussion of different approaches to tenure mix that has been possible here.

The analysis of the different neighbourhoods in Bournville demonstrates that tenure mix is important in achieving a mixed community, but, in itself, does not ensure an integrated or socially cohesive community. The analysis of social change associated with the samples of tenanted properties in Shenley and Hole Farm and the Priory highlights the significance of dynamic social processes when seeking to achieve socially cohesive neighbourhoods. The acknowledgement of the importance of the social dynamics to the relative ‘success’ of a neighbourhood carries with it a number of implications for trying to understand why some neighbourhoods work and others are less successful.

Neighbourhoods also change over time. The process of social change and its impact are greater in some areas of the estate than in others. High residential turnover often carries a negative connotation, however. Those areas experiencing the most rapid rates of change are also likely to be the areas in which people least want to live. A widening social polarisation between new tenants and existing residents on various parts of the estate – most notably in Shenley, Middle Park Farm and Hole Farm is leading to greater social
friction and management problems in these areas.

The picture from this research is that:

- When a conscious attempt at tenure mix has been undertaken (for example in Bournville Village, Central Bournville, Shenley and Hole Farm and the Priory) there is a broader socioeconomic base than where this was not attempted (for example in Weoley Hill and Middle Park Farm).
- The integrated form of tenure mix applied in Bournville Village has been more successful in achieving a socially cohesive neighbourhood than the other approaches.
- The limitations of tenure mix are clear in Shenley and Hole Farm and the Priory.
- The two areas that appear to be most widely regarded as socially cohesive are Bournville Village and Weoley Hill, that is, one ‘mixed’ neighbourhood and one in which no conscious attempt to integrate tenure mix was made.

In conclusion, what we have learned from Bournville is that there is no one simple formula for producing ‘successful’ residential neighbourhoods. The application of a series of tangible criteria such as tenure mix, social composition and high environmental quality may make a positive contribution, but successful residential neighbourhoods also need to work socially. The careful attempts to plan and manage neighbourhoods contribute to this and affect residents’ perceptions of satisfaction and the relative merits of different residential neighbourhoods. What works in some neighbourhoods may not work so well in others, and it is easier to analyse what is effective within existing neighbourhoods than it is to prescribe what is necessary to achieve ‘successful’ neighbourhoods that have different histories or legacies or operate in different markets and contexts.
Conclusions: making neighbourhoods work

What would someone coming from a different city, knowing nothing about Bournville, expect if they had not visited the area? If they were presented with a profile of the housing tenure composition of the area and were convinced by the association between social rented housing and problems, they might expect a neighbourhood beset with crises. An area which has 40% of its housing in the social rented sector might conjure up images of poor environment, a downward spiral of low incomes, poor management, over-stretched public services, poor quality private amenities, low self-esteem, high levels of crime and high rates of turnover and disorder. Those who believe that the success of a neighbourhood is affected by its tenure composition would not have high expectations of Bournville.

What this report has shown is that this starting point is highly misleading. Anyone visiting the area is immediately aware of high standards in much of the individual properties and in the design and maintenance of the estate as a whole. Anyone looking at the housing market would be aware of the evidence of high demand associated with house prices and the affluence of many residents. The visitor might then imagine an estate that is highly polarised between enclaves of wealthy households and areas of social rented housing which have very different qualities and involve different satisfactions. This view acknowledges differences within the neighbourhood and questions what we mean by a neighbourhood or a community that works, but even this perspective is open to challenge. There are differences within the estate, and some areas have more problems than others, but no area is ranked the most problematic on all measures and most of the social rented sector is highly rated and often indistinguishable from the owner-occupied sector. The evidence presented in this report suggests that the social rented sector in Bournville is twice as highly rated as it is nationally. The sector is more stable and the community is largely comfortable with itself. Tenants regard the area as quiet, well maintained, attractive and spacious: the image is of a community that is very satisfied and of a tenant population very satisfied with its landlord and the services delivered. The pressures on public services in the area are manageable and the levels of satisfaction with these services are high. BVT tenants, and residents in Bournville more generally, are much less likely to want to move than are council and RSL tenants elsewhere.

Neighbourhood problems

This is not to say that the area is without problems. It is important to avoid an artificial dualism that divides neighbourhoods into those with problems and those without. Bournville is a popular neighbourhood in high demand that works and achieves high levels of satisfaction but also has a range of problems. It has problems associated with crime and the fear of crime, problems with young people, antisocial behaviour, vandalism, traffic, litter and tidiness. Longer-term residents are inclined to develop a narrative of decline that is not so different from that adopted by residents of other estates. At present, none of these problems is sufficient to upset the balance of advantage associated with the area.

The most problematic aspects are the lack of facilities for young people and the low turnover of the population in the area. First, young
people generally think Bournville is boring and have more negative views than other residents. Young people can be considered to be experiencing exclusion and are perceived as a threat by some older people. Second, the low turnover of the population arises because of the attractiveness of the area. Because of this, the neighbourhood is particularly at risk in the future as the demographic wave following death and household dissolution may generate a much higher rate of turnover and social change. This is likely to create more tensions than a steadier rate of change and absorption of younger households. This problem is already apparent in parts of the neighbourhood and rapid intergenerational change is a source of tension. However, this demographic dimension to change can be anticipated and managed, and is not a problem on the same scale as those facing disordered neighbourhoods elsewhere. Nevertheless, it demonstrates that neighbourhoods are dynamic, and that neighbourhoods that work have weaknesses and threats as well as strengths. Policy and practice therefore need to adapt constantly to change.

**Positive drivers**

Why is the Bournville area so popular and successful when some of the predictors would lead a visitor to expect something different? This report demonstrates that historical factors play an important role in contributing to the sustainability of the neighbourhood. The popularity and sustainability of Bournville has been predicated on the successful application of a number of key principles:

- a high quality natural environment;
- an imaginative and coherent overall planning framework;
- the high architectural quality of the built environment;
- a socially mixed community;
- a sustained estate management capacity;
- the positive involvement of the community in the management of the neighbourhood.

The last of these points reflects a long-established and responsive style of management towards residents, which is a general approach rather than involving particular organisational arrangements. At the same time, it is apparent that the richness of the legacy in different parts of the Bournville estate varies.

In emphasising the impact of a number of different estate attributes, it is essential that we do not overstate the importance of neighbourhood, housing tenure and the built environment rather than social and economic factors. Not everything is determined by the estate: levels of employment and wealth are associated with individuals’ skills and qualifications, and people with opportunities and resources have chosen to move to the area. The neighbourhood and its attributes are determined by who moves to the area, as well as influencing the choices of people to move into the area. Relatively wealthy and well-educated people move to Bournville because they perceive Bournville to be a place in which they would want to live. The quality of planning, building and the effective management and maintenance of the neighbourhood over a long period of time form part of the appeal and the equation that makes the neighbourhood work.

**Tenure mix and social mix**

The previous chapter considered the importance of tenure mix and suggested that the emphasis placed on tenure mix throughout the history of the Bournville estate had been important in making the neighbourhood work. However, some forms of tenure mix – the integrated approach in particular – are more effective than others, and decisive management and the quality and design of properties contributes to successful tenure mix. Housing tenure itself neither describes a property nor determines its popularity. There are attractive council and housing association dwellings and unattractive dwellings in different tenures within the private sector. Tenure mix works in Bournville because the dwellings in different tenures and the neighbourhoods make good homes. The most adverse response to any particular tenure in Bournville is to the council housing in the area. This response is to dwellings that do not just have different management regimes and ownership but which are different in size and design. They are more likely to be flats and one- or two-bedroom properties. There is no reason to believe that if these same properties were in a different tenure their attractiveness would be
transformed and that they would score the same as other properties in the same tenure.

Tenure mix is important, of course, but it will only contribute to making neighbourhoods work if it is part of a series of mutually supporting factors. It is important to acknowledge that, as a charitable organisation, BVT has not been obliged to sell properties under the Right-to-Buy, and this has insulated Bournville and its social rented sector from the changes that have affected social housing more generally. The extent to which the social rented sector remains intact in an attractive, high demand area is unusual when compared with other areas of the best social housing. It is salutary to note that, in the early years of Bournville, BVT repurchased properties that had been sold on the open market in order to maintain tenure and social mix.

Perhaps because our research has focused on neighbourhoods that work rather than failing neighbourhoods, this report provides a different emphasis than that found in much of the recent British literature on neighbourhood problems and policies. This literature has been preoccupied with debates about tenure mix and about various aspects of the management of social rented housing. The underlying assumptions have been stated clearly; for example, in the review of the future of social housing carried out by the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) Forum:

> It is very clear when a community or neighbourhood is not working, but there is no universal solution to what makes a community work. Different approaches work in different places. There are some key conditions which, through public policy intervention, we can try to replicate in all our communities. The Forum believes a key factor in successful communities is avoiding high concentrations of very poor people and we therefore advocate policies which create a mix of incomes within an area. Large estates fail because policies over time have led to high concentrations of economically inactive people, often accompanied by high child density and many vulnerable people. (IPPR, 2000, p 32)

This view then leads to a reliance on tenure mix as the way of achieving a good income mix:

> This represents a surprisingly contradictory approach to the problem. Although there is no universal solution to what makes a community work, a key factor in successful communities is avoiding high concentrations of very poor people and tenure mix is seen as the mechanism to achieve this. If we accept that there is no universal solution, and even if we accept that neighbourhoods with high concentrations of very poor people are less likely to work, there remains a questionable central assumption about the impact of tenure mix. The assumption is that tenure mix (rather than other changes that would make an area attractive for a wider range of social and income groups to live in) will result in income mix. This is not self-evident. There are two main challenges to the emphasis placed on tenure mix. First, social housing historically has not had such a narrow social base as it does today, and not all social housing is housing of last resort for low-income households. It is important to identify what makes social housing attractive and enhance it to achieve mix rather than to accept that it is a low-income tenure and seek to dilute its concentration. Second, homeownership (and the private sector in housing more generally) has a very wide social base and includes a high proportion of those with the lowest incomes, older people and those not in employment (Burrows, 2003). Parts of this market lack social mix and combining owner-occupied stock with social rented housing will not necessarily achieve a mix of incomes. Mixed tenure neighbourhoods, especially in the older parts of cities, and increasingly in some former council estates, do not always have a good mix of incomes or social groups. Some are among the most deprived and excluded neighbourhoods in England, and housing and other problems have emerged just as strongly as in some large council estates. Recent problems of low demand and civil disturbances in parts of the North of England are evidence of this.

> There is a displacement in the discussion that begins to see tenure mix as the crucial element rather than the attractiveness of a place to live. Tenure mix may contribute to the attractiveness of a neighbourhood, but it will not necessarily do so. The IPPR report makes limited reference
to the quality of the built environment and other factors identified in this report as fundamental to the attractiveness of Bournville. It states:

It is important that community housing is not identifiable by virtue of poor design and construction. We need excellence in community housing design and construction. (IPPR, 2000, p 27)

However, the emphasis in their debate is disproportionately about other matters and there is no discussion of the extent to which higher subsidies should be available to enable better homes to be built and let. The report proposes that the key components for future policies for neighbourhoods are tenure mix and the ownership and management of community housing rather than, for example, the dwelling and its environment.

Are there ways of ensuring that areas have a mix of incomes other than through mixed tenure and widening access to community housing? The Bournville example suggests that where housing is attractive irrespective of tenure, households will stay longer in the neighbourhood or will commit themselves more to the area, and there may be greater social cohesion. It is not tenure mix that is the crucial ingredient here, but the attractiveness of housing and the neighbourhood.

The IPPR report refers to Ben Jupp’s work, Living together: Community life on mixed tenure estates (Jupp, 1999). This research found that most residents on mixed-tenure estates do not have strong views about the advantages of mixed tenure. There is very little mixing between residents of different tenures, especially where different tenures are in separate streets or blocks, but more contact and social mixing develops as time goes on. This is consistent with the findings of this study in two ways. It suggests, first, that the integration of tenures is important and, second, that a precondition for successful tenure mix is stability of population, for which the quality of the built environment and the attractiveness of the housing is important. Commenting on Jupp’s work, the IPPR report states:

… we need to remember that our key aim in developing mixed tenure areas is not to create social networks or foster mutual support between economic groups (however desirable these may also be) but to avoid high levels of economically inactive people. Because people are not talking to each other should not be interpreted as a failure of mixed tenure areas. (IPPR, 2000, p 32)

The emphasis on mixed tenure appears to involve a number of assumptions. First, it assumes that mixed tenure will result in mixed economic activity or income. Despite the assertion of the IPPR report, this assumption is not sustained by the evidence about mixed tenure areas. Second, it treats tenure out of context. Our research in Bournville suggests that mixed tenure is only likely to be effective in generating neighbourhoods that work and which are stable, when the quality of the built environment and the long-standing reputation of neighbourhoods makes them an attractive place in which to live. We have argued that the extent and nature of integration of tenure also has some importance. This removes tenure from the focus of the debate but does not suggest that it is unimportant.

The longer-established literature on social housing in Britain has charted the process of the residualisation of council housing. Housing that was considered of high standard and met the aspirations of affluent working-class and some white-collar households has increasingly been considered second-best to the owner-occupied sector. As the social status of council housing and the social rented sector has changed and the sector has aged, it has experienced high levels of disrepair. More recently, as the best stock has been lost through the Right-to-Buy, its relative attractiveness has deteriorated further. At the same time, as lower-income households have found it more difficult to find housing in the private rented sector (as that sector has contracted), social housing has become increasingly viewed as a source of problems rather than a solution.

Much of this literature places the origins of the changing role of social housing in a much longer historical process, linking it to underlying demographic, economic and social changes (for example, Cole and Furbey, 1994; Malpass and Murie, 1999). However, other research has focused on particular problems associated with particular estates (for example, Page, 1993, 1994).
A criticism of some of these contributions is that, by failing to refer to underlying processes, they attribute the problems emerging on estates to much more immediate and local causes. In reality, the balance of explanation no doubt requires reference to both. Cole et al (no date), summarising Page’s analysis, identified different problems:

- **problems of scale**: large estates of a single tenure creating uniform and anonymous neighbourhoods;
- **problems with estate design** and layout often rendering the estate prone to crime and vandalism;
- **problems of development** with new schemes being purchased off-the-shelf for reasons of economy;
- **problems of estate infrastructure** in that the development of schemes was not accompanied by the development of other key services and amenities;
- **problems of management** due to insensitive practices resulting from pressure on staffing levels;
- **problems of allocation** associated with the extent to which applicants were drawn from marginalised social groups;
- **problems of social balance** arising from all of these processes;
- **lack of community cohesion** and resident involvement.

While this list does emphasise design and the environment, allocation and management have attracted more attention. The same applies in the study of new housing association developments in Yorkshire and Humberside carried out by Cole and his colleagues (no date). While the study identifies the importance of the quality of accommodation, its appearance and the maintenance of the estate, these factors are taken as given. The controversies highlighted relate to the negatives: to issues about choice, allocations procedures, management and participation. Cole et al state that ‘of more importance than any magical mix of balance among households was the degree of choice residents had in moving to the property on the estate’ (p 66). There is still a tendency to assume that choice is a product of allocation processes rather than relating ultimately to the attractiveness of estates. Estates that are widely seen as unattractive and have a poor reputation will be associated with households that have the least choice, irrespective of allocation policies. High quality estates with good reputations are much more likely to be the subject of competition between applicants and those who succeed will view themselves as having achieved choice.

**Social capital, identities and cohesion**

The differences identified between the areas in Bournville are important. Our visitor from another city, arriving in Bournville, could be confused by the fact that not all of the residents in what we have defined as Bournville would say that is where they lived. Almost two out of three people would say they lived in Bournville but the remainder identified different locations. Those who identify most with Bournville are those who live in Bournville Village and Central Bournville and those who are tenants of BVT and managed societies. This overall position, however, is one of strong association with the locality. The strong local identification survives despite changes in administrative boundaries and in the official names of areas.

If the positive attitudes to Bournville are an immediate challenge to some of the perceptions of neighbourhood problems, the patterns of variation and the lack of it between the different parts of the estate and between different groups also pose challenges. This report has referred to survey data that relates directly to different dimensions of social capital identified in the literature: bonding social capital, bridging social capital and linking social capital. For each of these dimensions, the responses to questions do not conform to the body of literature that exists. Much of the social capital literature is American in origin and it could be argued that it would be surprising if the same patterns did emerge in Birmingham. However, a more fundamental question is raised about the extent to which simple propositions about neighbourhood functioning and social capital remain strong influences on policy without them having been adequately tested at an empirical level.

For example, in this study family links were not found to be very important in residential choice decisions, although there are relatively high levels of family links within the area with some 37% of residents identifying such links. These links are not strongly related to age or tenure or
social class. It is both the wealthiest and the poorest sections of the community that are most likely to refer to family links and this form of bonding social capital. The pattern is different when reference is made to neighbours and trust in neighbours, when there is a relatively strong association between housing tenure, which could be argued to be linked to social class. There are problems with the connections made between social capital and tenure, however, because the part of the social rented sector in which social capital is weakest (the council housing sector) has a distinctive property size and type, with a high proportion of one-bedroom flats, a high rate of turnover and a young population. The associations between tenure and social capital may therefore be much more to do with parts of the housing market that play a role in meeting transitional or transient needs for housing. Households with low expectations of staying in the area are less likely to commit to the community.

This is also supported by evidence that the strongest link with this bonding dimension of social capital is age. The longer a person expects to be in a community, the more likely they are to invest in the well-being of that community, and the longer people have lived in the community, the more they know their neighbours and have an association which develops into trust. Again, this contradicts the American literature that suggests people begin to withdraw and have fewer contacts with neighbours as they get older.

The importance of dwelling type is also indicated. When residents were asked about loneliness, dwelling type emerges not just in terms of flats, where it could be attributed to short-term residences in the area and living alongside people with short time horizons. It is also apparent that people living in detached houses are more likely to refer to loneliness. Again, the explanation for this is much more about age, lifestyle and anticipated stay in the area than about social class or housing tenure. It confirms earlier studies that have identified a lack of social contact between people who live in larger properties, have high incomes and busy work lives, whose major means of transport is the car and who have little contact over the garden wall.

The discussion of bridging social capital shows a different dimension of this again. More wealthy residents and owner-occupiers appear to be more involved in residents’ and tenants’ associations. Residents in the social rented sector have virtually no participation in clubs and associations within the area, especially when religious organisations are removed from the analysis. But, again, all of this can be related to age and to lifestyle. Residents in council housing in the area are likely to have been in the area for a shorter time and are more likely to assume that they will move on as their circumstances change. The likelihood is that their social links and networks are with the area they move from and they will not actively build new networks in an area in which they do not expect to stay. In contrast, older and middle-aged households among owner-occupiers and BVT tenants were more likely to be involved in various ways in neighbourhood activities.

The evidence from American studies that social capital is weaker in older people is not supported by the evidence from this study. At the same time, the evidence in relation to income or social class or housing tenure is not as straightforward as might appear. Because of the important associations between dwelling type and size and housing tenure, some of those who are least embedded in the area are concentrated in the social rented sector. However, it is arguable that findings for people living in one-bedroom flats in the private sector would be the same. One-bedroom flats of whatever tenure attract households with shorter-term commitment to the neighbourhood, rather than those who plan to stay and establish strong networks. It is not clear that tenure is the crucial determining variable, although there is a strong association with tenure because of the typical characteristics of dwellings.

Rather than emphasise differences between tenures, it is perfectly plausible to emphasise the inconsistency of patterns of social capital. It is not the case that particular neighbourhoods, particular tenures or particular dwelling types are consistently associated with weak social capital. The view that council tenants have stronger family links, less trust in neighbours and more inward-looking social networks is not sustained. To the extent that council tenants can be stereotyped in terms of how embedded they are in the community, the explanation rests much more on age and the expectation of staying in the neighbourhood for a long period.
Neighbourhoods that work

In conclusion, while the concept of social capital has value in debates about cohesion and the resources associated with neighbourhoods and communities, it does not lead to a clear and unambiguous policy agenda. Social capital is associated with both housing dynamics (linked to dwelling type, size and attractiveness, not just to tenure) and economic well-being, and is not wholly independent of these. This has implications for strategies to strengthen and build social capital. It suggests that it is misleading to believe that social capital can be built equally effectively in different economic and housing environments by using the same devices for capacity building and community development to encourage participation.

Time and status

Throughout this study, differences within the Bournville area have been apparent. A striking element of the survey data was the differences in the views about whether things have improved or worsened. Although, as researchers, we propose that Bournville ‘works’, residents often commented that it was getting worse and did not refer to many improvements. These narratives of decline and of differing and changing perceptions of the neighbourhood draw attention to a number of different dimensions of neighbourhood change that relate to time.

There is a dimension of time that relates to the lifecycle of the estate itself. For example, it could be argued that an estate develops from being a new estate which houses newcomers, passing through phases of maturation, even to older age. In Bournville this picture is made more complicated by the patchwork of development and the fact that some new areas have been added at later stages and are going through a separate lifecycle. There are a number of cohorts of development within Bournville; there are different processes of maturation or even obsolescence taking place next to one another.

Time also relates to the length of residence of people in the area, and their perceptions of change because of the length of time that they have lived there. Longer-term residents are more likely to have narratives of change and perhaps of decline. New residents are more likely to make comparisons with the place in which they previously lived, and their narratives are less to do with what has happened within the Bournville area. Some of the evidence about perceptions and satisfaction indicates that people with different lengths of association with the neighbourhood read different behaviour in different ways. Some view the current situation as a major deterioration from what was there before while others see it as much less problematic than they have experienced elsewhere.

The third aspect of time relates to the age of the individuals living in the area. The experience, expectations and aspirations of older people are different to those of younger generations. What is viewed by some people as problematic may therefore appear much less problematic to others. These different dimensions of time are layered within the area, as are different aspects of status.

Status within the Bournville area relates to a number of different dimensions:

- where people live within the area and whether they own their properties;
- status associated with the quality and value of the properties in which people live;
- employment, occupational positions and income;
- social networks, family, kinship and friends.

All of these elements mean that households have different resources and different statuses, which affect their perceptions, expectations and aspirations. There are conflicts between groups with different attributes and there are differences in interpretation between groups.

As with issues related to time, questions of status or the resources on which people draw, mean that the interpretation of what works and for whom is not uniform: there is no common value system or common position from which these things can be evaluated. At the outset it is important to adopt an approach that is flexible and pluralistic. At one extreme the implications of this are that neighbourhoods in which the measures of satisfaction are positive could have dramatically different characteristics or inputs. Any attempt to identify a formula that could be applied to achieve positive outputs is a flawed one, as it implies a uniformity and linearity that
does not match the realities of how communities develop, evolve, mature and interact.

Cohesion and exclusion

The evidence presented about residential mobility demonstrates that Bournville is an attractive area that draws population from the rest of Birmingham and beyond. There are properties and parts of the estate that are essentially reception areas for people moving to Bournville for the first time, who may subsequently move to other parts of Bournville or indeed elsewhere. It is also an area that holds its population, and some people move within the area and for the majority, Bournville is a final destination area. People are attracted to move there because of its physical landscape, traditions, community and management. They may move within the area but there is a low turnover of population, especially considering the age structure of population. It is an area that works because people stay there, but also because people are able to move within it.

This situation arises because the mix of property types, tenures and values provides variety, opportunity and choice but does not create a polarised community in which these differences become a source of conflict and fragmentation. Arguably, this is a fine balance, which Bournville may not have right and which would be very difficult to engineer in any event. It does not imply that there is a wholly homogeneous community, or that there are there no problems in the area. There is variety and change in the area and there are problems, including those associated with crime and with the fear of crime. However, the levels of variety, change and disorder are absorbed without causing major fractures and continuing problems within the area and this capacity to absorb change is a fundamental issue in the sustainability of the community.

A wholly homogeneous community would age in place and ultimately be unsustainable. It would go through periodic catharsis. Neighbourhoods that do not work are often associated with a level of turnover and disorder that means that social norms and behaviour are difficult to establish and manage. A neighbourhood that works lies between these two extremes with sufficient variety and change to prevent the periodic catharsis but without the continuing disorder that undermines social cohesion and social capital.

Discussions of time, status, stability and cohesion raise some uncomfortable propositions. One of these would be that the degree of heterogeneity in neighbourhoods in which population change is slow and people stay rather than move on is less than in society as a whole and less than desirable. The consequence is that such neighbourhoods work but with a different population structure. Limited opportunities to move into an area in which people want to stay means that there will be a slower change in the resident population than in areas with a high turnover. Beyond this the research does not provide evidence establishing an exclusion of ethnic minority groups or of groups whose behaviour is a real challenge to the norms and standards of the existing community.

This study has had little to say about ethnicity or about culture, because the views expressed in the research have not drawn attention to these aspects. It may be that the lack of ethnic or cultural diversity is a weakness for the area; however, one interpretation of the evidence is that the neighbourhood is changing and, for example, the BME population is increasing. Such changes are slow because turnover in the area is slow and because of the pattern of applications. Around 15% of incoming households allocated a BVT tenancy for the first time (98 households) over the last four years have been from BME backgrounds, which would suggest that, over a period of 10 or 20 years, Bournville will begin to change its ethnic profile. Just as the occupational profile has changed over the past 30 years, so we would expect the ethnic mix of the area to change. The strength of the neighbourhood is in its ability to absorb change and maintain diversity without the pace of change being a threat. There is a possibility, however, that the pace of change is too slow and that, in the future, this may result in a more rapid phase of change because of a skewed demographic structure. This should be monitored and the pattern of change considered to assess whether or not this may become problematic.
The implications of this study for policy are organised under seven headings:

- Tailored and integrated responses
- Neighbourhoods that are attractive to live in
- Plan, monitor and manage
- New communities
- Existing viable neighbourhoods
- Dysfunctional markets
- Clearance and rebuilding

Tailored and integrated responses

How neighbourhood problems are explained and understood has an important impact on the policy approaches that are seen as relevant. If the policy community signs up (implicitly or explicitly) to explanations and policy solutions that emphasise particular factors that affect the functioning of neighbourhoods (the local economy, housing tenure, crime, housing design) and neglects others, this is unlikely to generate effective policy responses. This report suggests that:

- It is the combination of a number of key factors, which are layered in time and interact over time and in particular locations, that determine how neighbourhoods work.
- Rather than suggesting a dualism of neighbourhoods that work and those that do not, we should recognise that different neighbourhoods will have different combinations of factors that affect how they work and what their strengths and weaknesses are.
- The implication of this for policy is that what will improve the way that neighbourhoods function will involve different factors in different places and will be affected by how change in one domain is absorbed or responded to in other domains.

Neighbourhoods that are attractive to live in

- In discussing the merits of Bournville and why it works for people who live there, the variety and quality of the physical environment and its management and of the capacity to absorb change – however slowly – is critical.
- The parts of the Bournville area with the greatest concentration of problems (indicated by the highest turnover of population and the lowest commitment in terms of social capital) are those in which dwelling types are least likely to provide satisfactory long-term housing. With the exception of older people, people moving to flats are less likely to see the property as a long-term option.
- The challenge is to adopt policies that would increase the likelihood that people would want to stay in an area and, because they do stay, build the links and bonds that reinforce the wish to stay.
- A key element is providing pathways of housing choice that give people the opportunities to adjust their housing, without having to leave the neighbourhood. Irrespective of housing tenure or dwelling type, this would suggest that people could commit themselves to building networks and participating in activities.
- The attractiveness of areas emerges as a key to success. There is no magic recipe of particular designs or layouts, and the conclusions of this study do not put tenure at the centre of the policy debate. The fashionable, contemporary
emphasis on engineering tenure mix in the belief that it will create social class or income mix is insufficient to achieve neighbourhoods that work.

- The social mix that makes neighbourhoods work may be more associated with continuity, in terms of residential stability, expectations of long-term residence and behaviour and lifestyles.
- If these processes are not to engender social exclusion and communities that exclude difference, the issue may be about balance between stable and long-term groups and newcomers and residential turnover.
- Rather than convergence on an ideal type of neighbourhood, the notion of balance is consistent with continuing differences between neighbourhoods. Neither a static unchanging community nor a highly mobile transient community will be sustainable in the long term, but communities that include elements of both appear to be satisfactory places from the point of view of different social groups.
- Such communities are not engineered through political tenure strategies but are achieved through the interaction of a number of different elements that combine to make an area attractive.

### Plan, monitor and manage

If change and responding to change are features of successful neighbourhoods then the policy task must be monitoring change and responding in a considered way. This research has identified a range of indicators associated with both satisfaction and threats to continuing success. In some cases there are factors that underlie, but do not guarantee, success. These include:

- the quality of the original planning and design of the built and natural environment;
- the continuity and quality of estate management;
- the involvement of the community in management;
- the stability of the community and the associated social mix.

Monitoring or evaluating these attributes then links to a series of indicators of change:

- turnover and residential mobility;
- data on crime and antisocial behaviour;
- service delivery data.

Finally, monitoring should involve periodic or continuing measurement of residents’ views, satisfaction and social capital. The types of data involved here are listed in Appendix B.

### New communities

Neighbourhoods at different stages of development are likely to present different policy challenges:

- For new neighbourhoods, the importance of the quality of the dwelling and the physical environment and tenure mix are clear.
- New communities must establish themselves as places to which people want to move and in which they expect to be able to achieve their life plans.

The popularity and sustainability of Bournville has been predicated on the successful application of a number of key principles that could be a checklist for new neighbourhoods:

- a high quality natural environment;
- an imaginative and coherent overall planning framework;
- high architectural quality of the built environment;
- a socially mixed community;
- sustained estate management capacity and ability to respond to change;
- positive involvement of the community in the management of the neighbourhood.

### Existing viable neighbourhoods

The different policy challenges in existing neighbourhoods relate not just to evidence that they are failing:

- Neighbourhoods that are working are not without problems, and policy makers need to address sources of weakness within them.
- In Bournville itself, the problems in the areas with highest turnover suggest action is required to modify the housing stock, reduce...
the proportion of less attractive properties and therefore to further stabilise the area and make it more attractive.

- The consequence of this, however, would be to make the Bournville estate less accessible to newcomers.
- There is a case for restructuring and rebuilding those parts of the area that are least attractive and replacing the one-bedroom flat accommodation which typifies these areas with a better mix of properties. However, it is important that the variety of property in the area is retained and that there are pathways of choice within as well as between tenures.
- In order to retain access for households unable to buy properties it is important to secure the social rented housing in the area and retain it in that sector.
- In the parts of Bournville where there is no apparent need for remodelling, standards of management need to be sustained or improved, or capacity building needs to be improved and social cohesion strengthened.
- The level of dissatisfaction with public services is not sufficiently high to argue for a reorganisation of these services or for neighbourhood management to improve them, although changes of this type could be a way of increasing residents’ participation.
- Bournville illustrates in microcosm the extent to which it is inappropriate to develop a neighbourhood policy assuming that particular types of intervention, whether capacity building, clearance or neighbourhood management, will be successful across the neighbourhood.

**Clearance and rebuilding**

Where neighbourhoods are failing because the houses and physical infrastructure are unattractive and cannot reasonably be made attractive, the prerequisite for making neighbourhoods work is investment in the built environment. This involves clearance and rebuilding a different style and type and pattern of properties. It is important that this solution is used when the problem relates to the obsolescence or lack of variety and choice in the housing stock as it will not solve problems relating to failures in management support for tenants and communities.

When clearance and rebuilding are appropriate, what pattern of rebuilding is needed? The urban renaissance and the Urban Task Force propose...
the building of high-density, modern housing to renovate Britain’s cities. This agenda may be relevant in parts of cities, even in parts of Bournville where it could contribute to building variety and pathways of choice for different groups. However, in Bournville people generally want low-density, traditional housing and here, and possibly in other cities, this appears to work.

- High-density modern housing is attractive for some groups, especially when it is located in the city centre and forms part of city centre living, and the evidence elsewhere in Birmingham supports this (see Barber et al., 2002).
- For other groups low-density conventional housing is preferred and where there are pathways of choice that enable trading up and adjustment of housing to match changing needs and demands, neighbourhoods such as Bournville will be the most popular.
- Major regeneration involving clearance and rebuilding to provide housing and a broader physical infrastructure that is attractive for people to live in, is likely to change the function of the area. Development therefore needs to provide opportunities for reception and mobility as well as create more stable areas of long-term residence.

Conclusion

This report has identified a number of elements that make Bournville work. It has argued that the history of the neighbourhood and the variety of property types, sizes and tenures that have been built there from the outset underpin the confidence in the area and its attractiveness to different groups. Because the area is attractive it has not had the same concentrations of deprived and disadvantaged households that are associated with estates of last resort; it is much more a neighbourhood of choice. The significance of the social rented sector in the market means that households that, in many cases, are unable to purchase their own homes can still live in a neighbourhood of choice. Our research indicated that some people in the social rented sector could have bought their own homes within Bournville or elsewhere, but have chosen not to do so because of the quality and attractiveness of the home and the environment in which they live. This process has created a social mix, not just within the neighbourhood, but within the tenures. Rather than tenure mix achieving social mix, it is high quality housing and the neighbourhood that ensures confidence and continuity both within and between housing tenures.

It is important to note the extent to which Bournville is a special case. How far can we learn from it when its history and origins are so important to its success and so difficult to replicate elsewhere? It is true that Bournville, as with any neighbourhood, has unique factors that have determined how well it works. Its origins and the advantages of a large charitable endowment have been important. They are reflected in the particularly high quality of the housing and physical environment achieved before the Second World War – arguably to standards that have rarely been replicated on the estate in the post-war period. One lesson could be that successfully designed neighbourhoods need to be well funded and subsidised at the outset if they are to have underlying advantages that make it possible to sustain communities in the long term. This is not a new lesson but one that underpinned planned developments and much of council housing. Nevertheless, it is a lesson that should be taken on board in the development of new social rented housing in relation to quality, density and design. The way that finances are allocated should therefore encourage spacious high-quality housing rather than the minimisation of costs through a competitive bidding system. However, it is evident that Bournville’s attractiveness as a place to live is not just attributable to its charitable origins; the consistent quality of management, retention of mixed tenures and diversity of properties have enabled the area to grow and to have a positive impact on adjacent areas. There has been no continuing philanthropic subsidy but the quality and attractiveness of the estate has been sustained in a way that should be possible elsewhere.

In writing this report we have been conscious of a number of different ways of privileging what is important in explaining why Bournville works. We have tried to avoid the implication that everything flows from the quality of the physical built environment, but it is undoubtedly true that this is a crucial aspect of Bournville’s success. We have tried to avoid the implication that everything hinges on historically established
Neighbourhoods that work

traditions and practices but, again, this is clearly important. We have tried to avoid the suggestion that everything hinges on the strength of local employment and incomes. Again, the attractiveness of the area to people with middle and higher incomes is crucial, although this appears to flow from the housing and neighbourhood attributes rather than the strength of the local economy: people travel to work but choose to live in Bournville rather than adjacent areas because of its quality as a residential area. We have also tried to avoid the implication that the success of the neighbourhood is all down to the effectiveness of policing, good quality local management and public services or neighbourhood management.

If we try to avoid privileging any one of these contributory factors we are left with an account of the neighbourhood which indicates mutual and multi-causality rather than a sequential causal process. It is unwise to argue that the high quality of the physical environment attracts higher income people to live in the area, which provides strong role models, which leads to higher self-esteem and, in turn, to higher achievement in educational or employment or other contexts. The evidence that we have presented suggests a mutually reinforcing set of processes. The high quality of the physical environment does have positive impacts but is itself the result of the continuing demands and expectations of the local community and the management stance adopted in the area. All the elements that make up the neighbourhood are both causes and effects of other things. Social cohesion, or social capital, within the area is a crucial factor in maintaining the attractiveness of the area but also serves to sustain the quality of local services and to create an attractive dimension to the neighbourhood. Social capital itself is partly sustained by low rates of turnover and people’s expectations of living in the area for a long time: it is both a cause and a consequence of confidence in the area and the commitment that people make to it.
References and further reading


BVT (Bournville Village Trust) (1900) Deed of foundation, Birmingham: BVT.

BVT (1955) Bournville Village Trust 1900-1955, Birmingham: BVT.

BVT (1967) Self-build in Bournville, Birmingham: BVT.


Neighbourhoods that work


Appendix A:
Neighbourhood plans

Bournville Trust
Bournville Village
Neighbourhoods that work
Bournville Trust

Hole Farm & The Priory
Bournville Trust
Middle Park Farm
Appendix B: Social and environmental indicators for Bournville Village Trust

The following indicators are those that were used in the social survey of BVT residents. They measure social capital, housing, residential stability and mobility, perceptions of the area, crime and security and experience of local service delivery. In the report, selected indicators were analysed using the following identifiers: location, age, gender, employment status and household structure.

These indicators can be used in the future by BVT to measure perceptions of social and environmental change in Bournville. They are particularly useful for monitoring the impact of physical changes implemented by BVT or any management changes BVT may introduce following this report.

The questions that were used in the survey can be replicated to enable time series analyses to take place.

1. Community involvement and interaction
   (a) Where people say they live (psychological attachment to Bournville).
   (b) Whether people help each other or go their own way.
   (c) Importance of social mix.
   (d) Is the area socially mixed?
   (e) How well they know their neighbours.
   (f) Feelings of loneliness or isolation.
   (g) Whether they have relatives living in the area.
   (h) Knowledge of BVT.
   (i) Knowledge of other residents' and tenants' associations.
   (j) Membership of residents' or tenants' association.
   (k) Membership of other organisations in Bournville.
   (l) Membership of organisations outside Bournville.
   (m) Knowledge of BVT activities.

2. Housing indicators
   (a) Tenure.
   (b) Length of tenure.
   (c) Satisfaction with landlord.
   (d) Value for money of rent.
   (e) Value for money of management fee.
   (f) Is value of property enhanced by being in Bournville?
   (g) Satisfaction with flat/house.
   (h) Problems with flat/house (20 indicators).

3. Time in Bournville and desire to move
   (a) Last three places lived.
   (b) Reason for moving to Bournville.
   (c) Satisfaction with the area.
   (d) Aspects of Bournville that are liked the most (18 indicators).
   (e) Attempts to move out of Bournville in previous year.
   (f) Reasons for wanting to move (13 indicators).
   (g) What would make them want to stay (8 indicators)?

4. Satisfaction with the area
   (a) Whether the area changed.
   (b) How the area has changed (20 indicators).
   (c) Problems of the area (15 indicators).
   (d) Satisfaction with aspects of Bournville (22 indicators).
Neighbourhoods that work

(c) Words that describe the area (21 indicators).
(f) Satisfaction with area for teenagers.
(g) Satisfaction with area for younger children.
(h) Opportunities for older people to meet.
(i) What the BVT could do to improve the
   neighbourhood.
(j) The reputation of the area.

5. Crime and security
   (a) Less or more crime than other areas?
   (b) Level of worry about specific crimes (6
       indicators).
   (c) Feelings of insecurity (3 indicators).
   (d) How safety could be improved.
   (e) Personal experience of crime.

6. Contact with local services
   (a) Difficulty of contacting services.
   (b) Satisfaction with services.
   (c) Level of influence over management of
       services.
   (d) Whether they want a bigger say in running
       services.
   (e) What BVT does well.
   (f) What BVT does badly.
   (g) Health needs.
   (h) Anything about Bournville they would not
       like to see changed.

7. Identifiers
   (a) Neighbourhood in which the respondent
       lives.
   (b) Gender.
   (c) Age.
   (d) Marital status.
   (e) Employment.
   (f) Household size.
   (g) Household structure.