Community conflict
Causes and action

Gerard Lemos

Supported by the Housing Corporation in partnership with the Home Office’s Community Cohesion Unit, and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister’s Housing Directorate and the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit.
Contents

Acknowledgements vii

Summary viii
  Part 1: Influences on Conflict viii
  Part 2: Action on specific types of conflict ix
  Part 3: Action to prevent, manage and resolve conflict x
  Part 4: Toolkit xii

INTRODUCTION 1
  Background to the research 1
  What is community conflict? 1
  Structure of the report 3

PART 1: INFLUENCES ON CONFLICT 5

1 Young People 7
  Summary 7
  Anti-social behaviour by young people 7
  Under-aged purchase and consumption of alcohol 7
  Groups of young people, gangs and posses 8
  Young people, anti-social behaviour and neighbourhood decline 8
  Intergenerational tensions and conflicts 9
  Lack of parental influence and control or parents becoming involved in conflicts started by children 9
  Who are the perpetrators? 9
  Contributing factors 10

2 Racial Conflicts 11
  Summary 11
  Black people and white people 11
  Conflicts between minority ethnic groups 12
  Established communities and refugees and asylum seekers 12
  Negative impact of the media 13
  Influence of far right political parties 13
  Microcosms of historical and international conflicts 14
  Travellers 14
  Divisions between young people from different racial groups 15
  Tension within minority ethnic communities 15

3 Drugs and the Associated Behaviour 16
  Summary 16
  Drug dealing 16
  Drug-related crime and prostitution 17
PART 2: ACTION ON SPECIFIC CONFLICTS: YOUNG PEOPLE, RACE, DRUGS

4 Action on Conflicts Involving Young People
   Summary 21
   Safe venues for young people 21
   Diversionary activities 21
   Positive Futures 22
   Youth Inclusion Programme 22
   Community cohesion and young people 22
   Education and development programmes 22
   Citizenship education 22
   Informal education in the voluntary and community sector 23
   Youth participatory democratic bodies 23
   Mentoring and working with young people at risk 24
   Conflict resolution 24
   Gangs 25
   Combating under-aged alcohol consumption 26
   Programmes bringing together older and younger people 26
   Parenting courses and support 27

5 Action on Racial Conflicts
   Summary 29
   Addressing racist behaviour in individuals 29
   Challenging and changing racist behaviour in offenders 29
   Bringing communities together 30
   Conflict resolution 31
   Mediation 31
   Community cohesion 31
   Building coalitions 32
   Addressing racist attitudes as part of citizenship education 33

6 Action on Conflicts Associated with Drugs
   Summary 34
   Action against dealers: reducing supplies of drugs on the street 34
   Closing down crack houses 34
   Reducing drug-related crime 35
   Drug dealing and housing management 35
   Drugs and prostitution 36
   Drugs, road safety and vehicle crime 36
   Treatment and support: reducing drug misuse 36
   Prevention and education about drug misuse for young people 37
   Community involvement in reducing drug dealing and misuse 38
PART 3: GENERAL ACTION TO PREVENT, MANAGE, AND RESOLVE CONFLICT

7 Prevention and Reassurance
   Summary 43
   Social and economic factors 43
   Target hardening to improve security 44
   Using lettings policies to create more balanced communities 44
   Community and neighbourhood wardens 45
   Police Community Support Officers 45

8 Managing Conflicts
   Summary 47
   Early warning 47
   Bringing local residents together in public meetings 47
   Conflict resolution 47
   Mediation 49
   Training local people in conflict resolution 50
   Working with the media 50

9 Remedies Against Individuals
   Summary 52
   Acceptable behaviour contracts/agreements 52
   Anti-social behaviour orders 52
   Interim ASBOs 53
   Action plan orders 53
   Parenting contracts and orders 54
   Injunctions 55
   Possession orders 55
   Criminal remedies against individuals 56
   Restorative justice 56

10 Building coalitions
    Summary 57
    Strengthening the ties between local residents 57
    Tenants’ and Residents’ Associations, and voluntary/community groups 57
    Building community capacity 57
    Faith communities 58
    Estate agreements 58
    Building co-operation between local residents and institutions 59
    Consultation and engagement between agencies and the community 59
    Positive police engagement with young people and minority communities 59
    Formal community forums 60
    Information sharing between local residents and institutions 60
    Strengthening partnership working within and between local institutions 60
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LSPs, CDRPs and DATs</th>
<th>60</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information sharing and partnering agreements between agencies</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotspot mapping</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coalition building</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11 **Conclusions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>63</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some general concerns</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law enforcement is not the only effective response</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-initiative, multi-agency working</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaps in provision</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of monitoring and evaluation and long term funding</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too much done too late – are current approaches cost effective?</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For the future</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PART 4: ACTION PLANNING TOOLKIT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>78</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Appendix**

| Appendix | 82 |
Much of the research for this report was conducted by Lemos&Crane staff Dani Serlin and Matt Gitsham; Gayle Munro undertook the literature review for the report. I want to thank them all very much for their persistence and hard work. The project was funded by the Housing Corporation with additional support from the Community Cohesion Unit of the Home Office, the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit and the Housing Directorate of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. I very much appreciate their support. Arvinda Gohil, then at the Housing Corporation, was the principal advocate and enthusiast for the project, so we owe her a special debt of gratitude. Berwyn Kinsey of the Housing Corporation managed the project for the funders and gave consistently knowledgeable and insightful feedback, as well as much encouragement. His was a most valued contribution and I want to thank him particularly. Fiona McGregor and Angela Ayton, both also of the Housing Corporation, also made valuable inputs at critical moments. Shehla Hussain and Maureen Adams of the Home Office played a vital role in setting the project up and giving extremely useful feedback on our findings. Asma Shaikh of the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit also played a useful role. I want to thank all these people for their knowledge, insight, encouragement and support.

Finally, and most importantly, I want to extend the largest debt of gratitude to the practitioners and local residents who returned surveys, gave interviews on the telephone, attended discussion groups, showed us round their neighbourhoods and introduced us to other local residents. Without them, of course, the research would have been impossible.

Despite these many contributions, responsibility for the contents of this report and any mistakes therein, lies entirely with me. The views expressed here are mine and may not fully, or at all, reflect the views of the funders and sponsors of the project.

Gerard Lemos
Lemos&Crane
October 2004
Part 1: Influences on conflict

According to the respondents to the survey and participants in the discussions in Birmingham, Leeds, London and Manchester (see Appendix), the conflicts in communities and neighbourhoods that they had to deal with were most commonly influenced by three factors: young people’s involvement in anti-social behaviour, gangs and inter-generational conflict; racial differences; drug dealing and drug abuse. Once conflicts have taken hold, however they started they often become conflicts about power and control over territory, with the original cause of the conflict receding. Some conflicts can go on for years, in some cases generations. In other neighbourhoods conflict arrives like a lightning flash followed by a flash flood. Most commonly there are underlying issues of poverty and disadvantage over which a crack in community relationships appears. Over time the crack becomes a fracture and, if no action is taken, a full-blown conflict. As well as the disruption to quiet life and the fears that can be associated with community conflict, informal power structures and hierarchies can develop and take hold if the public authorities, such as the police and housing managers, allow their grip to slip. Taking remedial action once things have reached this level is likely to be complex, slow and expensive. Early intervention to enforce the law against ring leaders and to bring divided sections of the community together in lasting coalitions of common interest are more likely to produce sustained success.

1.1 Young people and intergenerational tensions

Conflicts can occur between groups of young people. Sometimes these conflicts can turn into disputes between gangs, where young people have formed themselves into well-defined gangs with identified leaders, clearly demarcated territory, a common dress code and perhaps a name for the gang. Even without forming gangs, anti-social behaviour by young people (sometimes drawing in their families) can contribute to neighbourhood decline. Intergenerational tensions and conflicts can develop because the behaviour of young people is thought unacceptable or because adults have become ‘grumpy grown-ups’ unwilling to accept the lifestyles of young people – or both. Parents sometimes do not have sufficient influence and control over their children’s behaviour and, on occasions, parents themselves also become involved in the conflicts. The core group of young people involved in these incidents and conflicts are between 10 and 16 years old, with boys more likely than girls to be involved in the more serious incidents, particularly those involving violence or weapons. In terms of causes, many residents and practitioners reported that young people, particularly those under 18, still had nothing to do and nowhere they regarded as suitable to go. Social housing allocations and lettings policies have also produced neighbourhoods with disproportionately and disruptively high densities of children and adolescents.

1.2 Racial conflicts

Racial conflicts can be between white people and black people. These conflicts can be escalations from patterns of racial harassment and racist attacks and can take place in many towns, cities and not just on estates in the urban metropolises. Conflicts can also arise between minority ethnic groups living in the same neighbourhood. The line of division is often between long-established minority communities, generally originating from places with strong historical, cultural and linguistic ties to Britain going back to the empire, and communities which have arrived in Britain more recently, perhaps during the 1990s, with few of the historical evocations of empire and colonialism. However, controversial and contested divisions arise between young people from different minority ethnic communities, as well as between groups of young people from the same minority ethnic background. Refugees and asylum
Summary

seekers can often find themselves at the sharp end of conflict. Their opponents and tormentors are not always exclusively white, but can also include residents from long-established minority communities. Microcosmic echoes of complex international conflicts in Somalia or Kashmir are sometimes replayed in small towns and cities. On the other hand, many communities that are at war in another country live perfectly harmoniously in the UK. The national and local media are sometimes responsible for peddling myths and exaggerations and fuelling fear and tension, particularly about refugees and asylum seekers, which can contribute to conflict. These misrepresentations can destroy trust and worsen relationships generally in communities beyond refugees and asylum seekers. The activities of far right political parties can also sow mistrust and fear between longstanding residents and newcomers, particularly when local leadership has become fractured, divisive or ineffectual. Local residents also find themselves in conflict with travellers, either settled or on the move. Their lifestyle is deemed incompatible with local norms and standards.

1.3 Drugs and the associated behaviour
Conflicts can occur between local residents and drug dealers operating in ‘open drug markets’ – mainly selling heroin and crack cocaine – on the street or in other public places. The presence of an open drug market can lead to anti-social behaviour, drug-related crime and violence, intimidation, and road safety hazards. Drug dealing in ‘closed markets’ in private accommodation can also lead to conflict with neighbours and other local residents, because these flats or houses can become busy, noisy and violent. Private homes can also become ‘crack dens / crack houses’ in which a drug dealer has in effect moved their business into the home of (usually a vulnerable) local resident. Conflicts can arise between local residents and drug users as a result of drug-related crimes – such as robbery, burglary and prostitution – that are committed to resource their addiction. Practitioners and residents also reported concerns about under-age purchase and consumption of alcohol that fuels anti-social behaviour and conflict on housing estates and in town centres. Violence as a result of alcohol consumption – ‘binge drinking’ – is also perceived to be a wider problem beyond young people under the legal age for purchasing and consuming alcohol.

Part 2. Action on specific types of conflict

2.1 Action on conflicts involving young people
Young people need safe venues in which to meet. Diversionary activities are also important ways of reducing anti-social behaviour, crime and the likelihood of conflict. Informal education activities in community settings are also an important diversionary activity, as well as being a positive educational experience. Young people seem increasingly disengaged from political and social participation, so involving them in youth participatory democratic bodies may reduce alienation. Mentoring projects can also help young people to build confidence, strengthen identity and ease the transition to adulthood, as well as deterring young people from bad behaviour and crime. Conflict resolution, sometimes by developing peer mediation skills in young people, is also being developed in schools and community settings, though it is not yet sufficiently widespread. Activities building trust between younger and older people are also important, though again insufficiently common currently, at least in the UK. If parents have lost, or never had, influence and control over their children’s behaviour, parenting courses and support can help and should be tried before the more draconian measures of parenting contracts and orders are deployed. Citizenship education is also an important plank for the longer term in helping young people to understand their responsibilities as well as their rights.
2.2 Action on racial conflicts
Racist hate crime perpetrated by individuals can be addressed through prosecution for racially aggravated offences. For some convicted offenders there may be the opportunity to participate in programmes designed to change their racist attitudes and behaviour. Community development activities can seek to bring communities together and reduce mistrust. Sport and cultural activities are often seen as beneficially non-controversial. Conflict resolution methodologies can also be used in racial conflicts. Community cohesion pathfinders and shadow pathfinders are in the early stages of developing a range of techniques to build community cohesion. In the long run coalitions of common interest can be built across racial and other divisions. Racist attitudes in young people can be addressed as part of citizenship education and physical, health and social education (PHSE).

2.3 Action on conflicts associated with drugs
Action can be taken by law enforcement agencies to disrupt open drugs markets and reduce the supply of drugs. Action can also be taken using powers under the anti-social behaviour legislation to close down crack houses. Drug-related crime can also be tackled through the criminal justice intervention programme including testing and treatment regimes. Housing managers also have a range of tools at their disposal, including the new powers to introduce demotable tenancies. Outreach and follow up work can be done with prostitutes using drugs to get them into treatment. A combination of visible policing and environmental improvements can reduce road safety hazards created by drugs markets. The most important priority is reducing the use of drugs. This relies on increasing access to and take up and sustainability of drugs treatment. Education is an important tool in discouraging drug use amongst young people for the longer term. Educational activities can be formal in schools or in informal community settings. Community involvement is also likely to make action against dealers and support for users quicker and more effective. Similarly a combination of enforcement measures against individuals (such as those set out above) and education about the dangers of alcohol for the longer term can be deployed for the underage purchase and consumption of alcohol.

Part 3. Action to prevent, manage and resolve conflict

3.1 Prevention and reassurance
Action can be taken to address underlying factors that may allow conflict to breed such as environmental degradation and high levels of worklessness, as well as weak community bonds and ties. Physical and environmental improvements, including target hardening, can also be made. Lettings policies can be altered to produce more balanced and sustainable communities in terms of demography, racial mix, social networks of friends and families and mixed incomes. Community and neighbourhood wardens and police community support officers are both relatively recent innovations which, from the early evaluations, appear to be offering reassurance to local residents who fear anti-social behaviour, crime and intimidation.

3.2 Managing conflicts
Early warning signals of potential conflict such as transient populations, increases in racist incidents and other crimes, and drug and alcohol consumption should not be ignored. Local residents can be brought together in public meetings to share concerns and begin the process of coalition building across differences and tensions. Conflict resolution and mediation approaches can be deployed to reduce tension and find common ground, though they are still relatively uncommon in the UK. Local people can be trained as mediators and to work on conflict resolution. Proactive work with the local media can counter or remove the negative effects of inflammatory reporting.
3.3 Remedies against individuals
Once conflict has taken hold the softer approaches to preventing and managing conflicts mentioned above may need strengthening through law enforcement, particularly against ringleaders and the principal troublemakers. They may be enough of a problem in themselves; law enforcement will counter their capacity to influence and draw in others. The police can use the range of criminal powers that are available to them. Restorative justice can also be a way of promoting good behaviour and giving recompense to the victims of crime. In addition, a wider range of civil powers has been introduced available to local authorities and housing associations as well as the police, including acceptable behaviour contracts, anti-social behaviour orders, action plan orders and parenting contracts and orders. These remedies seek to encourage good behaviour as well as prohibit bad behaviour. Landlords also have their traditional powers to seek injunctions and possession.

3.4 Building coalitions
Representative and inclusive tenants’ and residents’ associations are important arenas for strengthening community ties and building trust and social capital. Estate agreements can be explicit expressions of shared interests and common aspirations. Community consultation and engagement are important, particularly for law enforcement agencies who will be more effective if they operate with local consent. A range of local partnership structures has been established which can be structures for discussing and taking action on community conflicts, including local strategic partnerships, crime and disorder reduction partnerships and drugs action teams. Information sharing in these and other forums involving local residents is a particularly important priority, as an essential precursor to building coalitions to tackle agreed local priorities.

3.5 Conclusions
The distinguishing feature of community conflict is that it occurs between groups, not individuals and it is highly localised and more common than is generally understood, not just in multi-racial urban areas, but also on estates and in town centres of small towns, between groups of white people as well as between white and black and minority ethnic people and within and between minority ethnic communities. Community conflict is not the same as anti-social behaviour, racial harassment or crime. The dynamics of conflict are complex and sometimes obscure. Conflict can be a cause in neighbourhood abandonment.

Poor and deprived neighbourhoods are at greater risks of community conflict but poverty and deprivation do not necessarily lead to conflict. Conflict often arises when a new division or dispute – such as drug dealing or the arrival of new migrants – is overlaid on an already disadvantaged community. Conflict can in some instances blow up in fast and unexpected ways. On the other hand, some conflicts have deep roots, some extending back generations.

Interpreting all conflicts as simply crimes which need to be dealt with through law enforcement by the police and the criminal justice system is oversimplistic. Effective responses to community conflict are almost always multi-agency and multi-initiative. The first stage in resolving conflict is sharing information. Law enforcement against ringleaders is often an essential building block in restoring harmony, but is not likely to be the end of the story. Follow up work is needed to resolve difficulties and bring communities together once the troublemakers are out of the picture. Inter-group mediation is growing, though probably not fast or far enough. Conflict resolution methodologies developed in places like Northern Ireland have rarely been applied or implemented in other parts of the United Kingdom. There are few diagnostic tools available to practitioners to help
them form a complete understanding of the conflict dynamics of the neighbourhood in which they work. Few practitioners have received training in or acquired highly developed conflict resolution skills. Few specialist conflict resolution resources are available.

Much is being introduced to encourage public authorities to stamp on bad behaviour through law enforcement. Relatively less is happening to encourage bridge building, trust and long-term ties of mutuality in fragmented and divided communities. The challenge going forward is to develop innovative methods and to disseminate existing good practice on building trust and coalitions to win people over to a shared sense of their united futures.

**Part 4. Action Planning Toolkit**

The toolkit draws together the themes and suggestions of good practice set out in the report. It is designed to help residents and practitioners working for social landlords, local authorities and the police to:

1. understand clearly the dynamics of conflict in their neighbourhoods and communities through a structured analysis of risk factors and early warning signs;
2. identify specific action they can take to tackle conflicts influenced by young people’s anti-social behaviour, racial tensions or drugs;
3. identify more general action that can be taken to prevent and manage conflict;
4. identify action that can be taken against individuals who may be instigating or exacerbating conflict;
5. build long-term coalitions in neighbourhoods that fundamentally alter the negative dynamics of conflict by bringing residents of all backgrounds closer to local institutions and by strengthening partnerships between local institutions.
The ideology of intergroup struggle ignites a nasty feature of human social psychology: the tendency to divide people into in-groups and out-groups and to treat the out-groups as less than human. It doesn’t matter whether the groups are thought to be defined by their biology or by their history. Psychologists have found that they can create instant inter-group hostility by sorting people on just about any pretext, including the flip of a coin.¹

Background to the research

Lemos&Crane was commissioned by the Housing Corporation, in partnership with the Home Office’s Community Cohesion Unit, and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister’s Housing Directorate and Neighbourhood Renewal Unit to work with local residents and practitioners from different types of agencies across England to investigate the forms of community conflict, to identify emerging good practice and to develop innovative new approaches to preventing, managing and tackling community conflict. This report draws on an extensive literature review, an e-survey, in-depth telephone interviews and a series of discussions with residents and practitioners in Birmingham, Leeds, London and Manchester between July 2003 and April 2004.

What is community conflict?

As this report will demonstrate, conflict between groups of people, not just individuals, leading to disorder and sometimes violence, is a phenomenon in many communities across the UK, not just in Northern Ireland and the northern towns where unrest occurred in the summer of 2001. The term community conflict is used to describe conflicts that occur between groups of people within localities and neighbourhoods, or between groups of people from different neighbourhoods or localities. The reasons for the conflict are varied. The principal sources of conflict reported by practitioners and discussed here are the result of differences between or about race and racial identity; conflicts that arise between dealers and users of drugs and other members of the community and conflicts that arise between groups of young people or between young people and older people. These issues have been highlighted on the basis of the responses to an e-survey, which are set out in the appendix.

Conflict is generally understood as negative and distressing. However, avoiding or suppressing differences or conflicts is no solution. The challenge is therefore to understand different or opposing views and, if possible, find ways of allowing difference to continue and thrive without it turning into hostility, aggression or oppression. That is the goal of conflict resolution.

The definition of community conflict given above is: conflict between groups of individuals either within a neighbourhood or locality or from another neighbourhood or locality. Taking this as a starting point and having noted the most common causes of community conflict (which will be fully discussed later in the report), some underlying themes are worth noting by way of introduction.

Conflict about territory and the use of public space

A common aspect of many of these conflicts, regardless of the starting point, is that they become conflicts about territory – the right of one group or another to access and use a particular space, usually public.

Formal and informal power in public spaces

If public spaces are not properly regulated by public authorities to ensure access for all, informal power structures may develop which, in effect, institutionalise the conflict, giving control to one set of interests over another. The principle of equity in the use of public space is therefore lost. So the first principle of dealing with community conflict is that public space should remain useable by the public.
Community conflict

Conflicts can be longstanding – or very recent
As will be described in this report, some conflicts have been going on for years, even generations, with the original roots of the conflict long since obscured. In other situations conflicts can arise suddenly, like a storm followed by a flash flood, usually as a result of the tension that arises from the arrival of a group of newcomers into the community or area or some other sudden change in local circumstances. With hindsight, local residents and practitioners sometimes feel they could and should have seen conflict coming. Things may have been changing fast. Early warning signs were either not discerned or not acted upon. Preventative action was not taken. Groups were not brought together at the time when their differences and grievances may have been resolved in ways to allow people to live different lives, at least in safety, and even possibly in harmony.

Poverty and disadvantage are the conditions in which conflict breed
Conflict is more likely in deprived and poor neighbourhoods, particularly where both private and public spaces are limited. So addressing the underlying problems of worklessness, poor housing and weak community ties significantly reduces the likelihood of conflict.

Conflict and neighbourhood decline
Since the late 1990s the problems of low demand for social housing and abandonment of entire neighbourhoods has been recognised. In some areas decline and abandonment can be interlinked in a vicious circle with youth anti-social behaviour, racial harassment and conflicts and possibly also the use and dealing of drugs. These have been described as ‘neighbourhood effects’ that can be seen as the superficial symptoms of “observed family characteristics” such as parents’ income, socio-economic status and educational attainment. This ‘lack of participation in mainstream economic and social life’ gives rise to an ‘oppositional culture’ in which ‘bad becomes good and good becomes bad.’ Since these groups of people feel rejected by the wider society, they in their turn ‘reject the values and aspirations of that society by developing an “oppositional identity”’. In this world view marriage and family, education, work and obedience to the law are spurned even though they are ‘protecting factors’ against anti-social behaviour and community conflict.

Alcohol-affected anti-social behaviour and crime is a contributory factor
In town centres on weekend evenings alcohol-affected anti-social behaviour is a serious problem in the eyes of local residents. Other studies have also found that the public sees alcohol-related violence, street drinking and drink driving as major problems. A quarter of all adults say they have been victims of alcohol-related violence. Alcohol is associated with 70 per cent of all stabbings and beatings and is a factor in 40 per cent of violent crime, 78 per cent of assaults and 88 per cent of criminal damage cases. Around 125,000 people suffer facial injuries as a result of violent assault and in a majority of cases either the assailant or the victim has been drinking. There are also about 5,000 “glassings” each year, where a smashed beer glass is used as a weapon. Whilst not all these events will be contributory factors in conflicts, in the examples and case studies discussed in this report, behaviour such as that above is often circumstantial to the conflict.

Managing conflict is not only about law enforcement, though that may be necessary as a first step
If not enough is done to either prevent or intervene early, conflicts can lead to crime and lawlessness. The response is then perceived to be law enforcement. That may, by this stage, be the only viable option. In any event, if things have got bad, law enforcement may be a necessary precursor to some more lasting activity to rebuild trust and
relationships in the community. But those follow up activities are necessary. Simply dealing with ring leaders and perpetrators through criminal or civil legal action is unlikely to bring a permanent resolution.

Structure of the report

Part One of the report deals with the most common causes and expressions of community conflicts. Chapter 1 sets out the range of conflicts involving young people including intergenerational tensions. Chapter 2 describes the types of conflict with elements of racial tensions and divisions taking many different forms. Chapter 3 deals with conflicts caused by dealing and using drugs and the associated behaviour.

The second part of the report considers action to deal with the specific types of conflict identified in Part One: conflicts involving young people (chapter 4), racial conflicts (chapter 5) and conflicts associated with drugs (chapter 6). Part Three sets out more general action to prevent, manage and resolve conflict. Chapter 7 sets out methods of prevention and reassurance. Techniques for managing conflicts are set out in chapter 8. Chapter 9 describes the remedies that can be used against individual ring leaders or troublemakers. Chapter 10 deals with building coalitions between local residents and agencies. Conclusions and concerns for the future are set out in chapter 11.
Part 1
Influences on conflict
1 Young people

Summary

Responses in this research confirmed the widespread perception that young people behaving badly is a serious problem in many neighbourhoods and some town centres which may be getting worse. Reported problems included underage drinking and alcohol-induced anti-social behaviour; groups of young people hanging around in a threatening way in town centres, particularly on weekend evenings; vandalism of buildings, cars and buses; illegal use of motorcycles and cars. In some areas there are also intergenerational tensions and conflicts. Some local residents perceive the problem to be a lack of parental influence and control.

Anti-social behaviour by young people

A fairly typical scenario of anti-social behaviour by young people arose on the White City estate in Gloucester. This new estate is sandwiched between a council estate and a communal play area used by 10 to 15 year olds. Building the new estate cut off the route that young people used to take to the play area. The new, officially designated route involves a circuitous 15-minute walk. Unsurprisingly, young people have established a shorter, alternative route by running through the White City estate and, in the view of local residents and housing managers, they “get into vandalism”. Residents complain that young people jump over fences into gardens, damage cars, run noisily through the estate and play football in undesignated areas. In addition they are said to be abusive and disrespectful to residents.

The lives of vulnerable local people can be made particularly miserable. In Teignmouth, South Devon 79 incidents of anti-social behaviour by young people were recorded. These incidents included nuisance behaviour, hoax telephone calls (almost all directed at a transgender resident), a small number of arson attempts and burglaries and a small number of drug-related incidents. A significant proportion of the incidents involved a single 13 year old boy known to the Youth offending team and who attended a residential school elsewhere. On the same theme of the disruptive effects of a small number of people, a police officer from Greater Manchester told the researchers that in some areas

One particular family, or two families within a neighbourhood, can be the cause of the conflict. They cause racist abuse, general nuisance, play loud music, have their dogs out without leads, let their children play out and bother others.

This phenomenon of a small number of individuals or families causing a majority of the problems has been noted in other studies and was commented on by many practitioners.

Under-aged purchase and consumption of alcohol

Participants noted that some conflicts were fuelled by the alcohol consumption of the protagonists. This could be the source of trouble in town centres and between groups of young people. Some of these are likely to be under the age for buying and consuming alcohol. Other studies have also pointed to the growth of under-age drinking and the potential for anti-social behaviour. The 1998/1999 Youth Lifestyles Survey revealed that 84 per cent of 12 year olds had drunk alcohol at some time in their lives. 63 per cent of 16 to 17 year olds who had drunk alcohol in the last year said they had bought the alcohol themselves, illegally, from pubs, bars or nightclubs.

In an area of Leeds a “culture of under-age drinking” was reported by a practitioner as being fuelled by a local supermarket that would sell alcohol to under age young people or to older people on the younger people’s behalf. There are
Community conflict

also groups of people buying alcohol to be re-sold to underage drinkers. In another example, in several neighbourhoods in the Cleator Moor SRB area (characterised by long term structural unemployment and the accompanying disadvantages) youth anti-social behaviour had led to more than 1200 complaints of nuisance, vandalism and under age drinking in 2003, with 70 to 80 per cent taking place during the summer. Street drinking is felt to be a problem by seven out of ten people surveyed with the majority (57 percent) seeing teenagers as the worst offenders.3

Groups of young people, gangs and posses

As well as young people being a nuisance to others, in some instances incidents of anti-social behaviour coalesce and escalate into full-blown conflicts between groups of young people. These groups sometimes form themselves into posses or gangs and defend territories. Posses tended to be less structured than gangs. Gangs are characterised by having a name, a leader, possibly a dress code and being associated with a particular ‘territory’. The most serious conflicts between well-organised gangs can involve the use of objects as weapons, such as broken bottles or, worse still, knives and, in the worst cases, guns.

Problems between young people are also not the preserve of urban areas. According to a participant in this research two villages near Newton Abbot in Devon witnessed a conflict between well-organised gangs of young people (based on multi-generational extended family links). The problem is believed to have started with a fight between two 14-year-old boys. This led to assaults, bullying, the involvement of local gangs and arrests.

In another example reported by a participant in this research, in the Anfield area of Liverpool the effects of gangs of young people have been encountered by the local housing manager. A young woman used to go out with one of the gang members and used to visit the gang’s area. When the relationship ended, she and her family were targeted for attack, including having a petrol bomb dropped through their letterbox. As in Devon in the example described above, the gangs go “far back into the history of the area” and “it can be hard to pinpoint a cause for them”.

Young people, anti-social behaviour and neighbourhood decline

In many areas there is now a surplus of housing of all tenures. In these areas residents can readily find alternative housing if they want to move following a spate of anti-social behaviour. The neighbourhood can then be stigmatised and other people are reluctant to move in. In one neighbourhood in Leeds one family’s intimidating behaviour includes filling gardens full of rubbish, and violent and aggressive behaviour. A participant described the situation: “One young man had been burgled and reported it, [but] his house was [subsequently] targeted.” The cause of the conflict was “really difficult” to identify. The council and other agencies have been working on the problem “for at least 18 months”. However, they

“Never managed to make much progress, because the behaviour made it difficult to encourage people to make statements and be witnesses. Young people in the area are very reluctant to come forward. [There is a] lack of community spirit [and a] lack of people wanting to take ownership of their area. People move in and out very quickly also. The family were living in a registered social landlord’s property when they were evicted for rent arrears, [but] then moved into a property further down the road with a private landlord.”

In another example, a suburban estate in the Eccles area of Salford of about a thousand mixed tenure properties was highly sought after until the late 1990s. According to a participant, since then it has become characterised by “criminal activity, the
intimidation of local shopkeepers, the closing down of shops” and anti-social and criminal activity perpetrated by gangs of about 40 young people “night after night”. The Council and the police were apparently complacent, believing that the estate “was not an area that was going to deteriorate” because it was in “a nice part of Salford.” The arrival of asylum seekers caused local resentment. It was said they were “queue-jumping to the best properties” and were receiving “decoration and furniture allowances”. In those areas where many of the asylum seekers live, many incidents of anti-social behaviour have occurred. The neighbourhood has rapidly become unpopular and depopulated.

Intergenerational tensions and conflicts

A further dimension in anti-social behaviour and conflicts involving young people is tensions between the generations. Some commentators argue that this is equally the responsibility of ‘grumpy grown ups’4 as it is the fault of disorderly young people. Arguably, the tolerance of older people for younger people’s lifestyles has diminished at the same time as the propensity of some young people to behave badly appears to have increased. In the London Borough of Hammersmith three Somali families moved into a tower block within a few months of each other. The other residents of the block were mainly older white people. They complained about the loud conversation and behaviour between members of Somali families and the fact that they gathered in the communal spaces. The more long-established residents organised a petition to Hammersmith Council about this behaviour. This led to the involvement of a mediation service. Work to improve relations across generations is common in the USA but rare in the UK. The impetus for intergenerational work in the UK has, it must be said, come from organisations working with older people. Youth organisations have manifested little or no interest.

Lack of parental influence and control or parents becoming involved in conflicts started by children

Concern persists and grows that some parents do not exert sufficient influence and control over the behaviour of their children or, on the other hand, represent good role models and promote positive sociable behaviour to their children. In some instances, conflicts escalate beyond the involvement of only young people to include their parents. In one example described by a participant in this research a close of 12 houses of both social housing and owner occupation in Winchester in Hampshire had a persistent problem of nuisance. A council officer commented, “Initially the nuisance started as teenagers teasing each other. This escalated into abuse, threats and egg throwing, at which point the teenagers’ parents became involved and a tit-for-tat situation between the adults ensued, resulting in criminal damage and arrests.”

In another example, the residents of an estate in Slade Green in south east London feel threatened by groups of eight to 18 year olds hanging around in groups of eight to 15 people in the common areas, lifts and outside entrances of the estate. This has caused friction. However, the parents of these young people do not see their behaviour as problematic. At public meetings parents have defended their children, arguing that they were hanging around without getting into mischief or doing any harm. In any event, their parents claimed they had nowhere else to go. Other residents reminded the parents that they had homes to go to.

Who are the perpetrators?

A large survey of young people by Communities that Care reported that half of their sample of 14 to 15 year olds reported being involved in vandalism and shoplifting, both boys and girls. Violence and
more serious crime tended to principally involve boys. One in ten boys in year 7 and about a quarter in year 11 had carried a weapon. One in five boys in year 11 admitted to attacks intending to hurt. Being excluded from school significantly increased the risks.5

The young people involved in conflicts described by participants in this research extend beyond the traditional stereotype of rebellious teenagers. Young people from the age of ten upwards were involved at one end of the scale and including those in their early 20s at the other end, with a core group between 10 -16 years old. While some perpetrators are in school, others do not attend or have been excluded, but it is not only detached youth – those outside of the education and social services system – who are causing problems. Young people involved in conflict can also be the victims of their peers, particularly in the form of bullying.

Contributing factors

Unintended consequences of lettings policies for social housing
An age cohort is formed if newer estates of family housing are fully let to families with young children when they are first let. A few years later young children become teenagers together. Because housing associations and local authorities dislike the “under-occupation” that would be common in the home ownership sector the density of young people living on social housing estates is often out of kilter with surrounding neighbourhoods. The perception, and in some instances the reality, is created of groups of young people living in overcrowded homes with nothing to do and nowhere to go except to gather noisily at street corners, in cafes and outside fish and chip shops and late night supermarkets.

Nothing to do, nowhere to go
Constructive and attractive activities for young people in their spare time in some areas are few and far between. Some youth clubs and centres are not seen as ‘cool’ enough or may be seen as a soft form of adult authoritarianism. Young people may not feel a sense of ownership or choice. Some activities or places, such as going to the pub, have minimum age requirements. Other activities are prohibitively expensive, particularly during school holidays when there is much free time to fill. These problems have led to the growth of street-based youth work. According to a 2004 study for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation these projects do not seek to work with all young people in a particular neighbourhood. Instead they target smaller groups of young people at the greatest risk of exclusion. Their goal is often to seek to re-engage young people with training or employment, as the young people are often not in contact with any agencies.6

Seen but not heard
Young people are significantly underrepresented on decision making bodies, depriving them of a voice, which may not conform to practitioners’ presumptions, or to defend themselves against assumptions and false allegations.
2 Racial conflicts

Summary

Racial conflicts can result from tension between white and black people, between minority ethnic communities and between established (sometimes multi-racial) communities and newcomers, particularly asylum seekers and refugees. Some of these tensions can be exacerbated by inflammatory media reporting and the activities of far right political parties. In some areas ethnic-based conflicts from other parts of the world can be ‘imported’. Travellers can also be at the centre of community conflict in some areas. Relationships between young people from different communities may also be tense and conflictive. Tensions can also arise within particular minority ethnic communities.

Black people and white people

At regular though infrequent intervals since the 1950s racial tensions have been amplified into violent conflict. Official reports such as the Scarman report into the 1981 disorders in south London suggested that wider social disadvantages faced by black and minority ethnic communities as well as poor relations with the police have contributed to the conditions for conflict. The Cantle report published in 2001 following the disorders in Burnley, Bradford and Oldham in the summer of 2001 noted lower than average incomes, racial, generational and religious social fractures and mistrust leading to tension and racially motivated violence mainly involving young men, perhaps exacerbated by far right political activity.

Many examples of conflicts between white and black and minority ethnic communities were reported in this research. Some featured well-documented tensions between white and minority ethnic communities in urban settings. For example, the area on the borders of Old Trafford, Moss Side and Hulme in Manchester is a mix of tower blocks and low-rise housing estates. According to a local practitioner “Many race hate crimes go unreported” by the substantial local Asian community,

Because, despite external reporting centres ... people didn’t know they could report, didn’t know how, didn’t know what the point was, or what the police could be doing ... people are bigoted against colour and women feel particularly vulnerable ... the police aren’t fully aware of what the community wants ... it is an area where there’s a significant amount of dealing which is happening on the Asian community’s doorstep.

But not all racial conflicts take place in the multicultural metropolises and fit the stereotype of fractious urban neighbourhoods. In Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire for example, trouble flared on an estate called Coriander Drive. The naming of the estate for a spice often used in Indian cooking was no comfort to the two Asian families who moved into neighbouring flats on an estate of about 160 flats and houses. According to the Council’s Director of Community Services, the arrival of these new tenants sparked off “a long hot summer”. In July 2001 a group of residents gathered outside the homes of the Asian families and told them to leave the estate. Later one of the flats was broken into and vandalised. Conflict flared, apparently, because an eight year old Asian child had “said something sexual” to one of the white children. This conflict could be interpreted as being the result of an insular community repelling newcomers, as much a straightforward conflict between racial groups. Other studies have also commented on the exclusionary consequences of tight emotional and physical boundaries around the idea of a community. A study for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in 2002 noted that “residents often refer to a strong sense of community within tightly knit kinship groups or long-standing
friendship networks, but see this as being threatened by elements in the wider community. These dynamics of threatened insularity, when the newcomers are of a different racial group to the current residents, can take on a racial overtone.

Conflicts between minority ethnic groups

As well as tensions between the white majority and black and Asian ethnic minorities such as those described above, conflict sometimes occurs between different minority ethnic groups. This has been something of a taboo subject in the past. Participants reported conflicts between, for example, Asian and Somali communities in West London, between people in Birmingham who trace their heritage to Jamaica and Gambia and between Asian and Portuguese people in Peterborough and East Anglia. A practitioner working on racial harassment in Southampton reported conflict between young people of established communities, principally Sikh, and young people from more recently arrived communities such as Somalis. In Worthing, the council has had to calm tensions between Muslim and Sikh communities. These conflicts attract less attention and are much smaller scale than “riots”, but practitioners suggest that conflict between minority communities is increasing. While there may always have been tensions between minority groups, they rarely emerged as full-blown conflicts. The context has now changed however. More recent immigrants who arrived during the 1990s are from a far more diverse range of backgrounds than the former colonies in the West Indies, the South Asian subcontinent and parts of anglophone Africa. Recent migrants are as likely to come from the accession countries of central and eastern Europe or from war torn areas of Iraq, Afghanistan or the middle east. These changes in patterns of immigration mean that in some neighbourhoods well-established ideas of multicultural communities are being superseded by communities with far greater cultural, linguistic and religious diversity, where historical ties scarcely exist and the bonds and ties of community organisations in civil society have yet to fully form. Without official support and help they may never form. Commentators such as David Goodhart, the editor of Prospect magazine, have also noted this phenomenon: “As Britain becomes more diverse [common values and assumptions] are being eroded”. In the context of fraying social capital amongst strangers from an ever-increasing range of racial, religious and cultural backgrounds, conflict can be the consequence.

Established communities and refugees and asylum seekers

Tensions between established communities and newcomers seeking asylum have also arisen, sometimes involving members of long-established minority communities. Sometimes resentment simmers over housing and jobs. For example, a local resident living in a two bed property with her husband and four children and facing a long wait for a housing transfer told Home Office researchers she felt ‘cheated – there’s people coming down our road, just moving in.’ She went on to say:

“At the top of the road there’s some [thought to be Kosovans]. They keep to their own, they don’t really mix. There’s a lot of things, they have interpreters, they’ve got a lot of help, but charity starts at home – sometimes they forget the people that’s been here and give too much.”

But these feelings can boil over, perhaps caught in a confluence with wider trends of anti-social behaviour and disorder. In Wakefield, for example, the police reported growing tensions between young Asian men and predominantly male asylum seekers who appear to represent a threat to the Asian young men. In another example a housing manager from Liverpool reporting on a conflict between Somali refugees and the local black British and African-Caribbean communities, commented:
“It doesn’t matter if you’re both black. [It’s] just a different culture … [There is] no sense of black people’s community or cultural identity being connected to the Somali identity.” She added that much of the conflict appears to be about “boundaries; people coming onto our patch.”

In Barnsley approximately 500 asylum seekers from numerous backgrounds and speaking more than 40 languages have moved into the area. The Belmont Refugee Centre accommodates asylum seekers before they are dispersed by the National Asylum Seekers Support Scheme. A local crime reduction practitioner reported that The Refugee Centre has been attacked more than once. The centre’s van has been targeted. Individual asylum seekers and refugees have also been abused and attacked, leading to broken windows, vandalised cars and some individuals being racially abused and attacked. Nearly half of the reported racist incidents in the area have been against asylum seekers.

In an area of Salford groups of young people have targeted asylum seekers and have succeeded by fear and discomfort in forcing them to leave their homes. Threats were made to kill an 18-month old baby and to commit arson. The involvement of five gangs has been identified, some made up of young people from the area; others involving young people from outside the area. They move between streets and estates, often not the ones on which they live. There is also evidence of underage drinking and drug taking, including the use of heroin and crack cocaine by some gang members.

These problems are perhaps unsurprising considering the scale of some of the communities arriving in short order. The Chief Executive of Leicester City Council, Rodney Green, highlighted this problem to the ODPM select committee:

“There is no provision at the moment when large influxes of population move to a certain area to provide any kind of up-front financial support. Leicester has accommodated 10,000 Somalis in less than two years without any additional funding. That means teachers having ten, twenty, thirty children appearing at their school door who do not speak English with no additional resources until the following year. We need a new and more proactive and creative policy for funding large movements of population exceptionally. Otherwise the tensions that will produce, particularly for the indigenous community, will be very severe.”

**Negative impact of the media**

The national and local media can also misrepresent relations between longstanding and newer communities. Exaggerated reports appear to have led people to greatly over-estimate the number of asylum seekers and refugees. These misrepresentations can easily spill over into inaccurate perceptions of long-established minority communities. Local press can also inflame local tension. The cumulative effect is that nearly half the population believes that “other people get unfair priority when it comes to public services and state benefits.” That prejudice used to attach to single parents. It is now applied to asylum seekers and refugees.

**Influence of far right political parties**

Far right political groups appear to be fomenting or exacerbating tension in some areas. For example, a practitioner reported in this research that members of a far right political grouping have been attending tenants and residents groups’ meetings in Stoke-on-Trent in areas adjacent to estates where asylum seekers have been hused. Their message is “if you don’t act now, you’ll be next”.

Eltham in South East London, according to a local resident participating in this research, is an area where the British National Party (BNP) and the National Front are active, distributing leaflets and putting up candidates in local elections. BNP activities tend to focus on the black and Asian
Community conflict

communities although “their stock in trade remains anti-Semitic.” These activities may be intertwined in a vicious cycle with a series of serious racially motivated incidents, including, notoriously, the murder of Stephen Lawrence in 1993 in the area. Despite the hectic official activity since then the problems have not entirely disappeared. The memorial at the place where Stephen Lawrence was murdered has been defaced and vandalised. Other serious incidents have also taken place. On New Year’s Eve 2002 a bus was attacked by 60 youths. The bus driver was stabbed and the money was stolen.

By contrast with the highly targeted and often well-organised efforts of the British National Party, existing local community leadership in some neighbourhoods and local authorities can often seem weak, out of touch, ineffectual and stuck in the past. Cantle pointed out that they often lacked “an agreed vision, could not broker relationships between key interests and agree solutions in housing, regeneration, employment and education problems. The result is a lack of organisational capacity and know-how to deliver or implement solutions”. Nature abhors a vacuum in leadership as elsewhere. The BNP and other fringe groups may well enjoy success in these conditions.

Microcosms of historical and international conflicts

Some conflicts involve causes that originate in other parts of the world, such as conflicts between Tamil and Sinhalese migrants from Sri Lanka, or Sunni and Shi’ite Muslims. Violence has flared between Turkish and Kurdish communities in north London in June 2002 following a Turkish football match. One research participant suggested that conflict between African-Caribbean people and Gambians was due in part to resentment on the part of black people with a Caribbean heritage towards Africans whose ancestors had sold their ancestors into slavery. Insensitive housing policies can mean that members of factions at war in another country can be living cheek by jowl on housing estates in the UK. Participants noted this phenomenon amongst Somalis in Tower Hamlets and Kashmiris from either side of the India-Pakistan border now living in Sheffield. On the other hand some communities, which are at war in other countries, live in reasonable harmony in the UK, at least superficially, such as the two sides of the Cypriot community.

Travellers

Conflicts involving travellers still sometimes arise. In Tewkesbury, for examples, local residents persistently complain about the behaviour of travellers, including bonfires, noisy generators and the dumping of rubbish. Face-to-face confrontations between local residents and travellers who have settled on open land nearby have also taken place. Tensions can stem from settled travellers living in social housing who nevertheless want to continue their traveller lifestyle. According to the Council’s Director of Community Services, “lots of decent white folks get abusive against Gypsies.” Conflicts can also arise between groups within the traveller communities.

Karen Buck, MP for Regent’s Park and Kensington North, commenting on the risks of conflict between traveller communities and others, wrote in July 2004:

So long as there is a shortage of pitches and confused lines of responsibility for handling the needs of gypsy and traveller communities, there will be conflict. So long as there is an institutional scope for conflict, discrimination will be rife and the kind of discrimination that burns effigies can so easily, at another time and place, spill over into something worse.
Divisions between young people from different racial groups

Commenting on divisions amongst young people in Community Pride Not Prejudice (2001) Lord Ouseley, as part of his investigations into the 2001 disturbances in Bradford, points to segregation along racial lines in schools, in part by parental choice. “Virtual apartheid” prevails in secondary schools. Interaction between schools with very different ethnic make-ups is limited. Facilities for inter-faith and intercultural studies are under-used in schools. Open racial conflict and harassment take place in and around schools; action is inconsistent and inadequate. This is part of a wider pattern of poor discipline in schools and a failure to deal effectively with persistent offenders. The curriculum also fails to “enable understanding of cultures and religions.”

Some less extreme examples were reported in this research. In the multi-racial neighbourhood of South Leeds, practitioners reported that the streets were “territorially divided” between young white people and young Pakistani and young Bangladeshi people. The young people from minority communities were said “not to mix”. Conflict started in the playground and spilled on to the streets. A member of a community group told a researcher:

“They blame each other for the drugs-related problems in the area, such as burglaries and other crimes related to drug addicts feeding their habit. Whites blame blacks for their lack of jobs and the blacks say they are discriminated against. But there is not enough housing stock and jobs available to either of them.”

Demographic factors may also have an impact here. Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities still on average have larger families with lower average ages. Many families in these communities are poor and may be living in social housing. They live in overcrowded and inadequate housing conditions with few opportunities to move to larger homes. As a result they may spend more time on the street with the usual negative consequences as far as the rest of the community is concerned.

Tension within minority ethnic communities

Sometimes conflicts occur between rival factions or gangs within the same minority ethnic community. In the Kings Cross and Somers Town area of Camden in north London racial tensions between white and Bangladeshi young people have, according to local youth workers, been superseded by tensions within the Bangladeshi community as the proportion of young Bangladeshi people has grown. Tensions in the past have reached such a peak that Richard Everitt, a young white boy, was murdered in 1994, apparently caught in the crossfire between multi-racial gangs. These conflicts have metamorphosed and now involve the use and dealing of drugs. Other forms of organised crime, such as counterfeiting credit cards, are also reported. Conflicts such as these are often invisible to the general public. Euston Road is one of London’s main arterial links down which millions of people travel every year. Almost all of them are unaware that the road is also the site of a longstanding community conflict which means that some young local residents cannot walk down it without fearing for their safety.

Intergenerational tension can also grow in ethnic minority communities. Some socially conservative parents and community leaders may fear that decadent Western values might influence the behaviour of their young people, leading to an increase in problems such as drug use and teenage pregnancies. The young people, on the other hand, may chafe at what they regard as insensitive and unnecessary constraints.
3 Drugs and the associated behaviour

Summary

One participant in this research commented: “Drugs issues affect everyone in a community, whereas these other issues only ever affect a part of that community.” Conflicts can be between dealers in open markets, or between dealers and local residents upset at the anti-social behaviour of the drug dealers and their customers while also fearing that their own family and friends may become involved. As well as dealers, users of drugs can also be in conflict with local residents, either because of their unacceptable behaviour when under the influence of drugs or because of the crime they may have to resort to for money to feed their habit. Other illegal markets such as the sex trade, the unlicensed weapons trade and the illegal selling of alcohol to under age young people also have the capacity to cause anti-social behaviour and conflict. These latter illegal markets do not generate conflicts in communities on anything like the widespread scale that the drugs trade does, at least at present.

Drug dealing

Local residents and practitioners who participated in this research described the distinction between ‘open drugs markets’ and ‘closed drugs markets’. Closed markets occur where dealers sell, usually in a private space, to known consumers with whom they develop a relationship. Closed markets can draw in new customers but generally only by prior arrangement. Open markets occur where dealers sell to anyone who wants to buy. They may be on a street, in a park at a bus or railway station or in another public place. Familial connections can also be involved in wholesale and open retail markets. These open networks are less stable and generate conflicts between rival gangs of dealers who compete to sell to the same market or in the same territory.1 The presence of a drug market can lead to drug-related crime, anti-social behaviour, intimidation, violence and road safety hazards. Other problems include disturbances from people visiting dealing sites.2 Police efforts to deal with these illegal markets may lead to the trading sites moving around and putting dealers in conflict with one another as a result of the displaced dealer seeking a pitch on an already occupied territory. Neighbourhood problems are mainly associated with markets for heroin and crack cocaine, not softer drugs. The use of these harder drugs is also perceived to be increasing in poorer neighbourhoods.3 On one estate in Stoke-on-Trent described by a participant in this research the only access road into the estate carried a great deal of drug-related traffic. People were driving on the pavement and drug dealing was taking place openly in front of children. Children on bicycles were “runners” delivering drugs. Intimidation was a serious problem. Noise nuisance went on into the early hours of the morning. Local residents perceived Asian youth (40 per cent of the estate’s residents are from an ethnic minority background) to be the problem, although the police and other agencies knew they were not the major players in drug dealing. They were, however, involved in fairly serious anti-social behaviour: setting fire to cars, lamp posts and flats and houses. Police officers patrolled in pairs.

A similar mix of drugs, youth anti-social behaviour and racial tension was contributing to the decline of an area of Leeds close to the city centre. Residents were moving out of some streets because of intimidation and abuse and others refused to move in. The neighbourhood is mainly back-to-back terraced houses, many of which are divided into flats. There were problems with drugs and noise. Users and dealers included young people and children some as young as nine-years-old. The neighbourhood of mixed private and social housing properties has high unemployment.
The neighbourhood lacked facilities for young people and had experienced racist conflicts between white and black and Asian people.

Drug dealing in private houses as part of closed markets can also lead to conflict. Often dealers deal not from their own flats (to avoid threat of eviction) but by moving in (often forcibly) to the flat of a vulnerable tenant, perhaps a dependent drug user, which can generate tensions with other members of the community. This can result in the vulnerable tenants being evicted. In Caldmore near Walsall, a small housing association estate was beset by problems of drug dealing almost immediately after it was built and first let. Many male tenants appeared to be involved in dealing. Frequent and numerous visitors caused a nuisance to other residents. Guns were also in evidence. On one occasion someone came into the local housing office with a gun and threatened to kill everyone. There were over 70 break-ins on the estate, 500 responsive repairs and a rapid turnover of more than 500 residents as the estate gained local notoriety and became stigmatised. Control of territory can give a dealer network a monopoly of access to a certain market, which they often defend violently against rival dealer gangs. A participant in the research reported how, on several other estates in Walsall, “Drug dealers localise and then turf wars take place. Guns and knives are involved in the violence that follows. Users and dealers intimidate housing staff. Prostitution is also an issue.”

Law enforcement against drug dealing may also lead to conflict. Having a drug market in the neighbourhood is enough of a problem. Removing the market from the neighbourhood may, in the short term at least, create even greater disturbance for local residents. They may not know what is going on or fear the consequences of becoming inadvertently embroiled – either in turf wars between rival dealers or in the police’s efforts to remove drug dealers.

Drug-related crime and prostitution

Drug users might engage in aggressive begging or petty robbery if they cannot afford their habit. Robberies and muggings inevitably make people feel unsafe, intimidated and antagonistic towards the users. Abandoned used needles and the other detritus of drug use can exacerbate anxieties and tensions. Local people are also concerned that young people among their family and friends may become involved as users or dealers.4 Some drug users turn to prostitution to resource their habit. This is likely to upset other local residents.
Part 2
Action on specific conflicts: young people, race, drugs
## 4 Action on conflicts involving young people

### Summary

Strategies to deal with young people involved in conflicts need to address anti-social behaviour and nuisance being caused to other local residents, engage young people in positive not destructive activity, break down barriers between groups of young people and between young people and older people. There is a vast and varied range of activities with young people designed to create positive engagement with the community and other young people. A few of these are described below. Some of them are activities designed to divert young people away from anti-social behaviour and towards positive activities. Others are designed to link young people to positive role models through mentoring schemes. There is also a range of formal and informal educational activities. Some of these initiatives seek specifically to address the needs of young people at risk of offending, such as the Youth Justice Board’s Youth Inclusion Programme. By comparison with this range of activity, there is relatively less conflict resolution work being done with young people, though there are some emerging examples of good practice, such as LEAP, which is described below. There are also fewer examples of activities designed to bring younger and older people together. The major ‘protective factors’ that play a role in preventing youth anti-social behaviour identified by the Communities that Care survey in conjunction with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation are:

- strong bonds with family, friends and teachers;
- healthy standards set by parents, teachers and community leaders;
- opportunities for involvement in families, schools and the community;
- social and learning skills to enable participation;
- Recognition and praise for positive behaviour.

### Safe venues for young people

Young people, particularly those under 16, often have few places to meet that they regard as interesting and adults regard as safe. In Epsom the council has negotiated using the premises of the local Starbucks out of normal business hours as a night youth café with discounted prices. This should provide a drug and alcohol free environment, an exclusive space for young people to hang out and will be run by responsible and committed young people from the local youth club. It is hoped that a wide spectrum of young people will be attracted.

### Diversionary activities

Diversionary activities are generally most successful if they are sustained and structured, not one off and ill conceived. Practitioners believed that diversionary activities could reduce crime and conflict. Richmond Housing Partnership, for example, has initiated an incentive scheme working in the community, where young offenders responsible for graffiti and vandalism help to clear this up and make supervised physical improvements to the area in return for shop vouchers. In another example in the Cleator Moor area of Cumbria, the local regeneration company established with SRB funding initiated a ‘Rewards for Action’ scheme which encourages young people to contribute to their community, family or their

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1. For more information on the Communities that Care survey, see [Joseph Rowntree Foundation](https://www.jrf.org.uk/).
own personal development and receive rewards when the completion of their task has been verified and score cards marked by youth leaders, parents, teachers or tenants’ representatives. Tasks can include homework or other school related tasks, improving behaviour, estate litter picks, cleaning up youth centres, shopping for a relative, walking a dog or taking part in social sports activities. They must be safe for young people to undertake and can have a healthy living focus, such as bike rides, or working on community arts schemes. The Kings Cross and Brunswick Neighbourhood Centre in north London runs conflict resolution residential programmes with young people away from their neighbourhood. It has also organised international visits for young people. There is a range of Government-funded programmes to develop diversionary activities.

Positive Futures
Funded by the Home Office, the Football Foundation and Sport England, the Positive Futures programme is a national sports-based social inclusion programme targeted at marginalised young people, aged between 10 and 19. A combination of outreach work and sports as a tool of engagement offer young people opportunities for plugging into employment, education and training, creating an alternative future to drug misuse and exclusion.

Youth Inclusion Programme
The Youth Inclusion Programme, under the auspices of the Youth Justice Board, has established 70 projects providing targeted assistance and support to 13 to 16 year olds at most risk of offending, truancy or exclusion. The projects are locally supported by Youth Offending Teams and engagement with other voluntary organisations such as NACRO. Projects are aimed at constructively occupying these young people, for example, in sport rather than anti-social behaviour, including environmental work such as clean-up projects in the community and development of recreational areas. Mentoring projects and skills centres assisting excluded young people to gain training and qualifications and improve their future employment prospects have also been set up. There are also some family link centres in schools to help parents and volunteers help these young people.

Community cohesion and young people
Peterborough City Council’s Unity Youth Team and Peterborough Racial Equality Council, as part of the city’s pathfinder partnership, have initiated several activities that have encouraged young people to contribute to the development and appreciation of cultural diversity in Peterborough. The ‘Unity Youth Crew’ consists of ten young people aged between 16 and 19 who have been recruited and trained in accredited youth work skills. The training enabled the young people to support various summer projects. In ‘Unity Challenge Week’ up to 20 young people from different areas and different racial backgrounds participated in a variety of activities in teams, which were physically and mentally challenging. The activities took place at a variety of locations in and around Peterborough. On a ‘Unity Residential’ 30 young people were brought together from different geographical and racial backgrounds and took part in challenging activities on the Isle of Wight. The aim of the residential was for young people to build better relations with each other by gaining a greater mutual respect and understanding of each other’s cultures.

Education and development programmes
Citizenship education
Citizenship education intends to:

‘... give young people the knowledge, skills and understanding to play an effective role in the community and be aware of their rights and
responsible. It aims to make young people more self-confident and responsible in and beyond the classroom and encourages them to play a helpful part in their schools, communities and the wider world.3

The 1998 Crick Report – Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools – identifies three inter-related components that should run through all education for Citizenship, which are:

- **Social and moral responsibility:** Pupils learning – from the very beginning – self-confidence and socially and morally responsible behaviour both in and beyond the classroom, towards those in authority and towards each other.

- **Community involvement:** Pupils learning about becoming helpfully involved in the life and concerns of their neighbourhood and communities, including learning through community involvement and service to the community.

- **Political literacy:** Pupils learning about the institutions, problems and practices of our democracy and how to make themselves effective in the life of the nation, locally, regionally and nationally through skills and values as well as knowledge – a concept wider than political knowledge alone.

**Informal education in the voluntary and community sector**

The Boyhood to Manhood Project in Southwark is working to prevent at risk young people from offending, particularly young black males who have been excluded from formal education or are likely to be and who are becoming socially excluded. Beginning in 1999, 12 to 15 year olds participated in a 12-week lifestyle management course five evenings a week and on Saturday, “equipping them with social skills, self awareness, employment skills and new ways of expressing themselves”, with the evening classes maintaining a 90 per cent attendance rate. The project is also now an AQA examination centre for GCSE, ‘A’ level, GNVQ and NVQ qualifications. It has also expanded its focus through piloting a project for boys aged 8 to 11 years “who were in danger of social exclusion in their final year of junior school or who might be more vulnerable through the transition stage from primary to junior school than other young boys”.4

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead’s HYPE programme mentioned in Chapter 6 uses peer education to raise awareness informally about the consequences of taking illegal drugs and can provide a less intimidating environment for young people to ask questions. Peer education or motivation can have a positive impact because these people may retain a credibility that adults, often seen as authoritarian or in opposition, may not have.

**Youth participatory democratic bodies**

More formally structured democratic and participatory bodies for young people, such as school councils, the UK Youth Parliament and the British Youth Council give young people an opportunity to have their say and encourage them to listen to others and have an impact on decisions that effect their lives. The UK Youth Parliament and the British Youth Council involve young people in youth led campaigns that affect them, such as support for a minimum wage for 16 and 17 year olds.

An example of a participatory structure for young people is the Youth Senate in North West Birmingham, set up partly in response to the disorders in northern England during 2001. Prime Focus Housing Group facilitated the establishment of the Youth Senate. The Youth Senate is an elected body based on a system of proportional representation covering five deprived inner city wards. The Senate is designed, led and managed by young people to enable them to highlight their
issues, concerns and potential solutions and seeks to build the capacity of young people to engage their peers, adults, agencies and other stakeholders. By coming together and sharing experiences, young people from different backgrounds, often with a history of distrust, realised that they ‘suffered from similar problems of poverty, drug abuse, homelessness, unemployment and low educational attainment.’ The Senate provides a mechanism for local service providers to consult young people. A number of regeneration programmes have offered the Senate seats on their management boards.

**Mentoring and working with young people at risk**

Mentoring is working one to one with young people to guide them towards a more positive future. Mentors can be peer mentors, other young people whose knowledge and experience can be a source of encouragement. Sometimes mentors are people who have had a problem from which they have moved on, such as being a drug user or going to prison. Sharing that experience with young people, particularly those at risk can convince young people of the need not to go down that road. Adults or older children can also be mentors, using their greater knowledge and experience to support and facilitate the young person’s development.

In Birmingham volunteers from the Young Disciples group mentor young people at risk of being excluded from school because of their behaviour, giving them the help they need to continue their education. An ex-gang member set up the group, so it has the credibility of speaking from experience and is also an example of the potential for achieving a more positive lifestyle.

Peer learning and mentoring in Oldham, initiated by three young men in the Asian community, has been active in reducing aggression amongst Asian young men following the disturbances there in 2001. With the help of a local youth worker involved in the community cohesion pathfinder project, these young men went on youth work and community training courses. Alongside running diversionary activities such as football, they have the advantage of understanding the community they work in and are aware of the problems faced or created by the community. They therefore effect a sharing of information and discussion of problems and as they live in the area are on hand to intervene in potential conflicts at an early stage.

Some mentoring initiatives are designed more specifically to work with young people at risk of anti-social behaviour or offending. Boyhood to Manhood works with young black men who are excluded, or at risk of being excluded, from mainstream education or who are at risk of offending. The programme aims to reduce the barriers to education, to prepare young men to deal with life’s challenges by equipping them with social skills, self-awareness, employment skills and new ways of expressing themselves.

Mentoring Plus, originally established by Crime Concern at the Dalston Youth Project in east London, is a community-based mentoring and education project for young offenders and young people at risk of offending from 15 to 19 years old. They seek to get young people back into education, training or employment. Similar projects are now being run in a number of London boroughs and in other cities including Manchester. An evaluation for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation by the London School of Economics found that ‘evidence of impact was most marked in relation to engagement in education, training and work.’ On the other hand, ‘there was no clear evidence of the programme having an impact in relation to offending, family relationships, substance use and self-esteem.’

**Conflict resolution**

Some conflict resolution activities have focused specifically on preventing and responding to
conflicts involving young people by, for example, developing educational activities which build up young people’s confidence in dealing with bullying or through training young people, sometimes through peer education, as mediators or in conflict resolution skills.

In Skerton, Lancashire problems of bullying led the council’s education department to develop a programme for primary school children aged between five and eight years old based on models of conflict prevention and resolution. It was rewritten specifically for primary school children in the locality. Principally concerned with prevention, although real incidents were introduced and dealt with as part of the prevention programme, the programme worked over two terms. Role-play, characters, and songs were used in the programme. The programme celebrated diversity and focused on making each individual child special. It aimed to help children to deal with violence as part of everyday life, and taught children key strategies to adopt when faced with a violent situation. They were taught, for example, about intervening if they witnessed someone else being called names or being bullied. The programme also taught children about reporting it to others if they were being teased or bullied. Other issues the programme taught concerned empathy and seeing the situation from the point of view of others – either the person being bullied or the bully. Children also learned how to reduce feelings of tension and anxiety by deep breathing and relaxation methods.

Youth organisation LEAP addresses the causes of conflict and provides young people with tools to overcome conflict in their communities through action research projects, support and skills training. Examples of youth projects include supporting both students and staff in confronting conflict in inner London schools and offering training in peer mediation and conflict resolution skills at the London-based ‘Quarrel Shop’. Specific courses in leadership skills are also targeted at young offenders on remand to consider the way they live their lives and how they can change their behaviour. Training is also given to prison officers to help facilitate these changes and to enable young offenders to resolve conflict in their units. More generally, LEAP offers training in conflict resolution skills to adults working professionally with young people. These vary from introductory courses to longer courses such as ‘Young Men and Anger’ and ‘Young Women and Self-Esteem’, and advanced courses.

The Bears Youth Challenge in the London Borough of Brent delivers a bespoke service to hard to reach young people who are at risk of falling into serious criminal activity that may ultimately lead to them carrying firearms. There is also a targeted preventative service to pupils in primary education at risk of school exclusion and who may find the street lifestyle of fast cars and guns glamorous and attractive. Youth officers meet one to one with at risk young people, as well as delivering a peer-led conflict resolution programme as part of schools’ anti-bullying policy.7

PeaceMaker in Oldham attempts to bring together children and young people in a positive environment where prejudices are overcome, friendships are developed and the collective issues that face children and young people are discussed and overcome. The three main types of programmes are citizenship and cultural diversity, overcoming fear and prejudice and developing inclusive services.8

Gangs

Gangs of young people, characterised by territorial boundaries and disputes, a ‘uniform’, a name and other kinds of aggressive group behaviour, are certainly in evidence in some areas, as already noted. Some efforts have been made to reduce youth conflict and gang clashes. The Tower Hamlets rapid response team in east London works one to one with young people on their own territory, often outside youth clubs and centre-
based activities. The youth workers suggest referral to learning and training opportunities in conflict resolution. They also aim to involve the young people in self-awareness activities, group work and confidence building activities. The rapid response team sees itself as ‘the glue between all the different local organisations’ and their overall aim is to create a detached and street youth work service across the borough.

In Southwark, the Youth Offending Team’s Gang Reduction Project works with young people aged between 11 and 17 who are on the periphery or at risk of being involved with gangs. Two workers deliver the ‘impact’ 12 week programme to schools, pupil referral units and youth clubs. Their aim is to demystify the appeal of gangs, by considering the underlying issues of ‘masculinity, violence, race and the effects of popular culture on identity.’ Through a variety of media, from art and drama to video, the programme focuses on issues of identity, group involvement, conflict resolution, reducing risk behaviour and promoting positive peer group associations.9

Combating under-aged alcohol consumption

The Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for England 2004 acknowledges that although there is a clear legal framework for preventing the sale of alcohol to under-18s or to purchasers on their behalf, “enforcement is very limited and has dropped sharply in the last 10 years”. Of the 130 prosecutions for selling alcohol to under-18s in 2000 less than half were found guilty. Since January 2004, it has been possible to issue young people with fixed penalty notices – in the first week of August 2004 alone nearly two thousand were issued by the police. Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) and Anti-social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) can also be used for tackling under-age drinking. Consultation for the Strategy suggests that the “low level of enforcement reflects both the higher priority given to other issues and the amount of effort involved compared to the likelihood of punishment”. The scale of the problem was indicated by the results of police sting operations during August 2004. Of the 646 raids, 51 per cent of on-licence premises and 29 per cent of off-licence premises were found to be selling alcohol to under-18s. Measures to make enforcement “swifter and easier” will be considered, such as including powers to tackle sales to minors as part of a government consultation on new powers for police community support officers. Emphasising their social responsibility, retailers will be encouraged to more uniformly ask young people for identification of proof of age. Although there is no universally accepted means of proof of age, the British Retail Consortium’s Proof of Age Standards Scheme (PASS) does establish a common standard for issuing various proof of age cards. Working with licensees to ensure better enforcement of existing rules on under-age drinking could also include better training for staff in their responsibilities. From March 2004 the Security Industry Authority (SIA) has also begun licensing door supervisors to bars and clubs, which could have a greater impact on excluding young people from alcoholic venues.

In partnership with enforcement, the government is focusing on informing young people about alcohol misuse through PHSE, but also through citizenship education emphasising responsible behaviour, legislation and consequences for breaching it. Providing alternative activities and facilities, particularly in sport, has been championed by the Positive Futures projects mentioned above.

Programmes bringing together older and younger people

These programmes aim to tackle the misunderstanding and lack of tolerance between the generations through bringing them into contact with each other, airing grievances or fears and
demonstrating their more positive interactive sides. This works well when they have an opportunity to engage with each other face to face in a non-confrontational environment, to learn about the other’s experiences, and when there is a mutual exchange such as older people sharing the oral history of their community and young people in return teaching them how to surf the Internet.

A participant in this reported the following example: South Leeds Elderly & Community Group were aware of young people hanging around contributing to elderly people’s fear of crime involving young people, whilst there was also a lack of understanding between the generations. They therefore set up intergenerational workshops to create a safe and constructive environment for elderly people to express their concerns to low-level young offenders identified by a local school. The young people were also given an opportunity to explain and demystify the causes of their behaviour, which in some cases included a lack of parental responsibility. SLECG also arranged for these young people to help out at local luncheon clubs once a month, to improve their image and to positively engage with older people.

Work to improve relations across generations is common in the USA but rare in the UK. Age Concern has tried, apparently with relatively little success, to raise the profile of projects to bridge intergenerational divisions.

*With the ageing of the population a much greater level of understanding is important if we are to be able to achieve harmony and balance within society.
For this reason more intergenerational programmes in education, work, volunteering and care must be developed as a matter of urgency.*

**Parenting courses and support**

Beinart and others found that,

*Helping parents to learn family management skills, including non-violent dispute techniques, can result in long-term benefits for their children. Fewer behaviour problems, improved parental confidence, better family relationships and a more positive attitude to learning and school are among the positive outcomes noted by the research.*

South Leeds Parent Action Group, a small support group, has been set up to empower parents in dealing with their children, gaining training from community and voluntary organisations on how to deal with teachers in relation to their child’s behaviour and to give parents a voice in the decision making process locally.

The Family Nurturing Network runs free parenting training courses for groups of up to ten families at a time with parents who have children between the ages of two and 12 with behaviour problems. Participants may be referred by a GP, a social worker or school, or may be self-referred if they need help with their parenting skills. All families are invited to attend 14 weekly sessions lasting for a half hours with concurrent programmes for their children or crèche facilities. Although this is an Oxford-based charity with local venues chosen to increase regular attendance, several training events are carried out around the UK.

The British government’s “Every Child Matters” Green Paper, published in September 2003, notes that similar training programmes have resulted in a large reduction in children’s anti-social behaviour, including “hitting, running away and fighting with siblings and has significantly reduced hyperactivity”. It further states that 51 out of 67 Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services now offer parent training programmes.

Some parents recognise their need of support and skills improvement to sufficiently care for their children with behaviour problems or will voluntarily attend training through referral. However, “compulsory action through Parenting Orders as a last resort where parents are condoning a child’s anti-social behaviour such as truancy or
offending” have been brought into effect through the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. Parenting orders and voluntary parenting contracts are explained in chapter nine.
5 Action on Racial Conflicts

Summary

Over the long term, conflicts between racial groups within communities can perhaps be prevented by educating children and young people in the values of tolerance and mutuality, and understanding and valuing other cultures and the rights and the responsibilities of citizenship. Barriers between communities can be reduced by social and cultural activities that bring communities together. Once conflicts have arisen, however, these preventative approaches – designed to influence underlying attitudes – are unlikely to have much impact. If there are ringleaders who are provoking others and behaving in an unacceptable and unlawful way civil or criminal law enforcement may be necessary. Once people have been convicted of racially or religiously aggravated offences, follow up work is needed to prevent re-offending. More proactive measures such as mediation and conflict resolution might be more effective. In the long run, multi-initiative strategies will be needed to bring communities together and encourage them to focus on their shared interests and aspirations, rather than their divisions.

Addressing racist behaviour in individuals

For a range of criminal offences – including harassment, violence and criminal damage – the courts can increase the offender’s sentence where racial or religious aggravation is proved by the prosecution. The police and other organisations have sought to encourage the public to report racist incidents. The Crown Prosecution Service also adopted and publicised a new policy on the prosecution of racially and religiously aggravated offences in 2003. Between 1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003 the CPS found that 4,192 defendants were involved in a racist incident between April 2002 and March 2003, a 12.5 per cent increase on the previous year. These included racially aggravated assaults and woundings, criminal damage, public order offences and racially aggravated harassment. They also prosecuted 18 religiously motivated offences.

Offenders aged 14 and upwards who have been convicted of racially aggravated or motivated offences. This 22-session Diversity Awareness programme developed material for working with racially motivated offenders to help them “examine the basis for their racist beliefs, raise their awareness of the victim’s perspective and develop skills likely to reduce their risk of further offending”. Case managers can “choose to work through the whole programme with offenders or select elements that best reflect the needs of particular individuals”.

Out of the 265 offenders referred to the Project, 64 were subject to assessment as part of the Diversity Awareness Programme intervention. In 46 cases, the offender completed the work that was deemed necessary by staff to either fully or substantially address their attitudes and behaviour around race. The rest of the offenders on the Diversity Awareness Programme received substantial interventions. Only four cases showed obvious signs that the offender was going to be resistant to any form of intervention aimed at changing their behaviour. The report notes that at that stage of the pilot project it was not yet possible to “demonstrate the impact of this work on the likelihood of offenders being reconvicted”.

Challenging and changing racist behaviour in offenders

Once offenders are convicted of racially motivated crimes action is needed to ensure that they do not re-offend. London Probation has piloted a Racially Motivated Offender Project in Greenwich using a seconded probation officer to work one to one with
Bringing communities together

Following the disturbances in Bradford and Oldham, commentators noted the ‘divisive “them and us” attitudes which characterise relations between the different sections of the communities’. Cantle also pointed out that, conversely, certain areas in Birmingham, Leicester and Southall have succeeded in uniting diverse groups by adopting ‘a positive approach to celebrating diversity [which] has undoubtedly been a key factor in enabling some communities to deal with the inevitable tensions between different groups more effectively than others’. Shared values are essential to give people a common sense of belonging regardless of their race, cultural traditions or faith.

According to Cantle ‘Ignorance of others is an obvious source of conflict. It feeds the territorial instincts of young men and makes it easier for myths and jealousies to flourish.’ With few opportunities for interaction outside their immediate group, many young people grow up, as Ouseley observes, ‘ignorant of other cultures and lifestyles’. He suggests that racial tensions in schools can be overcome by sharing experiences and acquiring knowledge about the different people and communities living in the area. He also stresses the importance of leadership among teachers, parents, governors and students. Early years education must ensure that positive attitudes are encouraged as a result of appropriate teaching about diversity, differences and cultures. Shared perspectives, best practices and role modelling/mentoring initiatives are necessary across the schools, colleges and universities.

Many agencies and voluntary groups have attempted to tackle conflicts about fear or intolerance of difference, or lack of familiarity with other groups, by organising projects that bring people from different communities together. Some are small scale; others are big events designed to attract large groups from a whole city. Some examples reported in this research are set out below: In Stoke-on-Trent, a voluntary group brought together a local pensioners group with an African-Caribbean group. Following the initial meeting members of the two groups came together on several occasions for social activities and meals. Eventually, the two groups organised a day trip to Llandudno. In another case, following what one practitioner described as a ‘mini race riot’ in Banbury, Oxfordshire, a voluntary group brought together white and Asian young people in a series of workshops where they would have a real role in deciding how local community budgets should be spent. The young people worked together to organise football activities and specify the design of a new youth centre, building stronger relations and trust between their two communities as a result. An asylum group has rented two properties in Hull from the City Council with the help of a community development officer. Local people are invited to the cafes to gain an understanding of Kurdish culture. They also got the chance to express anxieties that included their feeling intimidated by large groups of asylum seekers walking around and being noisy.

Sport and arts are both, in many ways, success stories for racial integration and community cohesion. This has led to the development of a number of sport and cultural activities to bring communities together in many towns and cities. In Barnsley, where tensions about the arrival of asylum seekers have already been described in Chapter 2, for the past two years an annual multicultural sports day has been organised in conjunction with the local Indian welfare organisation. In Sheffield, statutory agencies and community groups jointly plan a ‘fun day’, with many types of food, music and activities and games for young people. Participants noted that often, white people could perceive these events as ‘something for them, not us’, and therefore not attend, so special effort is needed to stress that these events are for everyone in the local community, regardless of background. In
Tewkesbury a cooking course has been organised which is aimed at teaching young people about foreign food and tackling perceptions that such food is strange. In Rochdale the local authority has conducted a public awareness campaign to promote diversity. Composite photographs are displayed around the city made up from much smaller photographs of many other individuals. The intended inference is that although people seem to have many differences, take a step back and you see the bigger picture, which is that they have much in common.

These projects and activities are small but important building blocks toward greater social and community cohesion. They should be seen as part of a wider strategy for bringing communities together. Bridge building activities such as these are necessary and important, but they are unlikely to be sufficient for a conflict resolution strategy.

**Conflict resolution**

One example of mediation reported in this research was in circumstances where race was an important division between groups in a small community. In Hammersmith west London, the conflict that followed from culturally different Somali families moving into a block of flats with many white older residents described earlier in chapter three was successfully addressed through mediation. CALM mediation undertook meetings between representatives of each group. The representative of the residents’ association which had complained to the Council by petition was, according to the mediator, a “reasonable woman and the other tenants felt she represented their views”. The mediation process as a whole involved “Separate interviews, lots of talking and lots of active listening, identifying underlying issues and cultural misinterpretation, validating or valuing people’s feelings and enabling people to live together.”

Conflict resolution in its many forms is discussed more fully in Chapter 8.

**Mediation**

There has been some debate about whether mediation is appropriate in cases of racial abuse or harassment. Those who feel it is not appropriate argue that successful mediation must be based on an assumption of equality between the parties. Racial discrimination and harassment assumes inequality. In chapter one the existence of inter-ethnic conflicts as distinct from racial harassment has already been discussed. In the light of the evidence brought to light in this research of inter-ethnic conflict, sometimes between groups from different minority ethnic communities and practitioners have reported that they regard this as a different phenomenon to racism, mediation does seem to be an appropriate possibility to explore. Mediators interviewed for this research thought that mediation could be successful where the conflict was not initially motivated by racism even if the aggravated situation had produced comments with racist overtones or other types of racist behaviour.

**Community cohesion**

As well as addressing the racist behaviour of individuals through prosecution and probation and working directly on conflicts that arise, a broader front of activity is needed to prevent tension and strengthen ‘community cohesion’. The Home Office regards a cohesive community as one where:

- there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;
- the diversity of people’s different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued;
those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and

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

A series of action measures is set out in the guidance for all local authorities on fifteen areas of concern including effective partnership working, community leadership, developing vision and values, getting the facts and taking action, making the best use of existing networks. These may include voluntary and community networks and faith communities. Work will also be needed with young people, asylum seekers, refugees and travelling communities. Sports, cultural activities and education can make a contribution, as can regeneration and neighbourhood renewal. Housing policy, housing management and planning procedures may also have an impact on community cohesion, as can reducing crime and unemployment. Finally, the role of the press in exacerbating tensions in divided communities has already been noted. Improving press and media relations and reporting is therefore a priority.

Fourteen local partnerships have been funded to pioneer community cohesion programmes. A further fourteen are designated ‘shadow pathfinders’. This programme was launched in April 2003 with funding until September 2004. They are working on particular problems, including reducing tensions between ethnic communities in urban areas and travelling communities in rural areas. The ‘programme outputs’ include increasing intergenerational understanding, reducing tensions between faith communities and addressing gender inequality. According to the Home Office, ‘what binds these apparently disparate programmes together is the common objective of breaking down barriers between and within communities.’

Building coalitions

As with many other types of conflict discussed in this report, inter-ethnic disputes are more likely in the context of declining neighbourhoods or where the residents are losing a sense of pride in the area. Social disadvantage and exclusion in any or all of the ethnic communities present is also likely to contribute to a climate of tension. Some commentators, particularly in the United States, have noted that an ‘ethnic invasion’ is likely to reduce pride and social capital amongst the already present residents of the neighbourhood. Wilson has also suggested that the speed at which the ethnic make up of the neighbourhood changes also influences the possibilities of conflict. Roughly speaking, a rapid increase in diversity can lead to an equal and opposite rapid decrease in bridging social capital, the sort that recognises and welcomes newcomers.

If these co-relations, which some would regard as controversial, are accurate, it would be logical to suggest that the ultimate way of resolving conflict is through building coalitions of interest which are not based on race or ethnic group amongst local residents of diverse backgrounds. Wilson lays great stress on this point and suggests that even at a national level, this is the way for the future:

“It is so important to create an atmosphere of coalition-building, an atmosphere that would bring together the leaders of these diverse communities to identify goals and concerns shared by the various groups … it is imperative that urban leaders work to fashion situations of interdependence whereby individual racial and ethnic groups come to realise that they cannot achieve desirable common goals without the help of other groups. Creating a sense of group interdependence in a divided city would clear the path for inter-group co-operation and greatly diminish the potential for racial and ethnic conflict.”

"
Addressing racist attitudes as part of citizenship education

Long-term changes in attitudes are likely to be brought about through education. The British Social Attitudes survey has noted the positive impact of education on levels of tolerance. The specifics of multiculturalism and anti-racism in education need to be set against the wider context of promoting citizenship, which can be defined as:

*Members of a community with shared traditions tied to each other by ties of mutual obligation and common purposes.*

Citizenship education is discussed more fully in Chapter 4, dealing with conflicts involving young people. In the context of mobile and diverse communities “ties of mutual obligation and common purposes” are less likely to have been built up over generations and therefore rooted in history. If diversity is to be a basis for mutuality, not division, it will need some official help to accelerate the development of what some call “bridging social capital” which, left to its own devices may take many generations. Citizenship education is one means of doing that.

Some programmes developed to meet the requirement for citizenship education in the national curriculum have specifically sought to combat racist attitudes and behaviour. Two examples are given below: ‘Show Racism the Red Card’, an anti-racist charity, seeks to combat racism by presenting professional footballers as anti-racist role models in education. Educational resources include videos, CD-ROMs, posters, magazines, pin badges and education packs suggesting thought provoking activities for facilitators. In the video footballers describe their experiences of being racially harassed.

In Stafford the ethnic minorities liaison officer from the local police division has used the video to work with Year 7s (11 and 12 year olds), using the video with subsequent discussion and role-play to raise awareness and stimulate critical thinking about racism, discrimination and prejudice and about the experiences of black and minority ethnic people. The project complements the students’ PSHE/Citizenship curriculum. According to a 2004 evaluation, the greatest impact of Show Racism the Red Card was to reinforce positive messages about not behaving in a prejudiced or discriminatory way. Young people also seemed to gain a better understanding of the different forms racism can take and that racism is experienced even by high profile, powerful black and minority ethnic people. Some young people said they gained greater understanding of racial differences. A number of young people said that they did not learn anything from the programme because they were not racist beforehand. A small number of people said that the programme would not stop them from racially abusing people. Only a small proportion (one percent) said they were now more likely to intervene and protect other people suffering from racial abuse.

‘You, Me and Us’ is run with Year 7 students (11 and 12 year olds) in all 13 high schools in Peterborough and is designed to complement the PSHE/Citizenship curriculum. The project is co-ordinated by the Youth Action Against Crime unit of the local authority and involves staff from many local agencies. In each school workshops are conducted with each year group for a whole school day where pupils are likely to attend four out of seven workshops using drama, poetry, storytelling, music and art. According to a 2004 evaluation, young people enjoyed the You, Me and Us programme and many of them learnt more about racism and racist bullying, both its impact and what they might do about it. The structured nature of the programme with clearly defined objectives, a range of activities and presenters and well-articulated messages are some of the factors that have made the programme a success.
6 Action on conflicts associated with drugs

Summary

Key priorities in combating drugs are reducing supply, law enforcement against dealers, improving access to and success of treatment and education to prevent young people becoming involved in drugs. The problems that drug markets bring also need to be addressed: drug-related crime, prostitution, road safety and vehicle crime. Combating the use and sale of drugs in neighbourhoods is more quickly and effectively achieved with high levels of community engagement.

Action against dealers: reducing supplies of drugs on the street

In tackling “middle market” dealing co-ordinated pre-planned raids seem to be the most effective method of disrupting this “critical supply link between the illegal importation of drugs into the UK and their sale at street level” and securing arrests. Effectively managing public spaces where the supply of drugs can be problematic could reduce that supply through effective licensing control at pubs, strict supervision of hostels and day centres for homeless people; and policing of cafes and shopping centres.

Closing down crack houses

Crack houses are often established where a vulnerable tenant, perhaps a current or ex-drug user, someone with mental health problems or who was previously homeless and has no support network of family or friends in the area, is exploited by a drug dealer, whom they might at one point have considered to be their ‘friend’. Other tenants in the same block of flats or street can be affected by unacceptable noise levels, public disturbances, smashed windows, drug users smoking crack in communal stairwells or even locked letterboxes being broken into and giros stolen.

In one reported example in south London, London & Quadrant Housing Trust, the police, the tenant’s neighbours and Thames Reach Bondway were responsible for providing support to the previously homeless tenants in the block. One tenant’s flat had been turned into a crack den and he had become extremely frightened. He contacted his support worker who put him in touch with the police. He was re-housed and his old ‘crack den’ flat was boarded up. The tenant of another crack den in the block had been beaten up and so police reassured tenants and residents in the area by frequent visits. Collecting evidence in this second case would have been difficult for a possession case or for a criminal prosecution as residents were afraid to act as witnesses after the violent assault. Eventually possession was sought for breach of tenancy on the grounds of excessive noise.

In an effort to encourage residents’ confidence and reporting, the police increased their presence in the area and met residents to reassure them that their concerns were being taken seriously. Social landlords and the police need to act quickly “before dealers get a stronghold over the tenant and become harder to dislodge”. Trust between agencies themselves and building residents’ trust in them are an essential aspect of enabling successful action against crack houses. Partnership workings between local institutions are discussed more fully in Chapter 10.

To overcome some of the practical difficulties of possession proceedings or criminal prosecution the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 gives the police power to close premises where they have a reasonable belief that the premises have been “used in connection with the unlawful use, production or supply of a Class A controlled drug, and that the use of the premises is associated with the occurrence of disorder or serious nuisance to
members of the public.” Before a closure notice is issued, which prohibits any entry to the premises (including by those who live there), the local authority must be consulted. Breach of a closure notice is a criminal offence. Acting as a “temporary remedy” while the premises are closed for up to six months, a closure notice gives the landlords time to seek a possession order, and “avoids the need for getting an ASBO or injunction on every visitor to a crack house”, which may be more difficult.

Reducing drug-related crime

The Criminal Justice Intervention Programme (CJIP) began in April 2003 and initially focused on 30 areas of the country with the highest levels of theft to finance drug habits. In April 2004 the programme was expanded to another 36 areas in an effort to reduce drug-related crime and “free communities of the blight of class A drugs”. The programme targets offenders committing crimes to fund their drug habit. They are identified through drug testing when charged by the police, referred to drug referral workers while in police custody and then guided into treatment. Once in treatment, whether that is in the community or in prison, a caseworker will manage their progress and provide help and advice when it comes to finding a job or a home to help them stay drug and crime free.

This programme aims to take advantage of opportunities within the criminal justice system for accessing offenders who misuse drugs – many of whom are difficult to keep in touch with by other approaches – and moving them into treatment, away from drug use and crime. An emphasis is being placed on providing a “beginning-to-end support system” for dealing with drug-misusing offenders.

Drug dealing and housing management

For social landlords there is a range of civil powers for tackling drug dealing taking place in their housing. As a preventative measure a landlord can refuse a tenancy on the grounds of a potential tenant’s recent conviction for supplying drugs. Landlords could also include clauses banning the use or supply of drugs in their tenancy agreements, breaches of which “have been supported by courts with eviction orders”. The government’s Drugs and Estate and Housing Management toolkit suggests, however, that “there should not be an automatic bar on housing to persons previously convicted for the simple possession of drugs” as they could be in recovery and denial of access to housing could cause “relapse and greater criminality”. Injunctions and Anti-social Behaviour Orders could also be used, see Chapter 9.

A demoted tenancy introduced in the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 could act as a deterrent or prompt a change in the behaviour of people dealing drugs from their own property. Demoted tenancies will work slightly differently depending on whether the landlord is a local authority or an RSL, and whether the tenant is a secure tenant or an assured tenant. In cases of conduct for which the new statutory injunction may be sought, a local authority or an RSL may apply for a demotion order against a secure or an assured tenant. In the case of a local authority secure tenancy, if the judge considers it reasonable to make the order, the tenancy will be demoted to what is in effect the equivalent of an introductory tenancy for 12 months. If possession is not sought within the 12-month period the tenancy will become secure again. If an RSL seeks possession against a secure or an assured tenant the tenancy may be demoted to an assured short-hold tenancy. The assured short-hold will last for 12 months and if no possession proceedings are taken the tenancy will become assured (even if originally secure) at the end of the 12-month period.
Community conflict

Landlords are unwilling to apply the powers they have at their disposal, local authorities can seek a compulsory purchase order to control drug related activity. This is a valuable but rarely used tool.8

Drugs and prostitution

The principal option open to police dealing with prostitutes who are also drug users is to refer them to support workers on arrest or, where possible, to ensure that they see a drugs worker while in custody.9 The threat of criminal sanctions could be an advantage in motivating prostitutes to engage with this referral process. To encourage drug-using prostitutes on the street to access treatment there need to be pro-active specialist outreach workers from sex worker services, street health or drug agencies. Again depending on the capacity of the treatment service, “assertive follow up” of those leaving treatment, possibly including “flexible prescribing” to hold onto difficult clients, keeps clients in touch with services and may prevent a relapse into selling sex because they have left treatment. As part of an exit strategy, assistance in entering supported housing could help remove prostitutes from the street and pimps or boyfriends who exploit them.10

An example of specialist outreach work is the Barnardo’s Young Women’s Project in Southampton. This is a jointly funded Barnardo’s and social services initiative set up in 2000 to help girls under the age of 18 to exit prostitution and drug use. Its two workers have “over time managed to gain access to many of the young women involved and through trust have found ways to work and maintain links with them, despite constant threats from dealers”.

Drugs, road safety and vehicle crime

Misuse of cars under the influence of drugs or alcohol can be a cause of particular concern to residents. Drug dealers or users can cause community conflict, disturbance and fear, through driving onto pavements or recreational areas, as well as increased levels of traffic and noise. One such example is an estate in Overtown. By 1994, because of nuisance and traffic associated with drug dealing and intimidation by dealers, local residents had been driven away and the estate had become a “no-go area for the police [who felt that the] balance of power had shifted to the criminals”. Apart from the intimidation, the five vehicle entry points, two leading onto major dual carriageways, made the estate difficult to police and buyers of drugs were gone before police could reach the scene. Changing the access was considered a “pre-requisite of an effective policing operation” so in 1995 one of the main entry points to the estate was closed to prevent through traffic and “high visibility policing” was implemented by moving vans onto the estate and parking them outside the main dealer’s house. Visitors to the close where the dealers were known to live were stopped and searched, with 43 arrests made in two weeks. This activity increased the confidence of residents who formed an action committee and began to work closely with police and housing, liaising over policing and estate improvements. The problem close was divided into two cul-de-sacs, which stopped through traffic, some empty properties were demolished and the remaining dealers were isolated in a short cul-de-sac. “The problem completely stopped”.11

Treatment and support: reducing drug misuse

Through treatment and support for drug users, practitioners and residents can try to reduce the demand for drugs and associated crime such as theft, which can generate conflicts between drug users and the local community. Users who want to kick the habit will need the motivation to enter and stay in treatment. For those addicted to heroin or cocaine, sustained professional help is required to facilitate a reduction, and in fewer cases a complete
withdrawal, of drug misuse and dependency. The two main purposes of drugs services are harm reduction – to the self and the wider community – and help with social problems. Treatment has a threefold focus on the physical, psychological and social. Firstly, in the case of heroin users there will either be advice on safe injecting, or the prescription of methadone.

Secondly, the psychological aspects of treatment will often involve motivational interviewing either individually or through group work. This is a directional client-centred counselling style aimed at changing behaviour through exploring and resolving ambivalence to change. Building skills and concentration, occupational therapy group work can involve creative activities, gardening, sport and so on. Drugs services can help with writing letters to housing associations or council housing departments about accommodation, or with referrals to social services. The Jobcentre Plus initiative “progress2work”, receiving its first participants in 2002, aims to help recovering drug users find and sustain jobs.

Treatment for reducing drug misuse is often unpopular with other members of the community who simply wish to see the dealers and users moved on rather than have a treatment centre or halfway house in their ‘back yard’. One compromise approach adopted in Middlesbrough involved the organisation of a mobile needle exchange, which meant that needles were not left lying around but also that residents did not feel there was a permanent centre attracting drug users.

Prevention and education about drug misuse for young people

Substance misuse education is now part of the national curriculum, but as the updated national drugs strategy comments,

*Providing substance misuse education is not enough. Information for young people needs to be accurate and credible and young people need the opportunity to talk about what they are being taught. To ensure that drug education is effective, schools need to tailor their approach to pupils’ needs.*

HYPE (Helping Young People through Peer Education) was set up by a police officer in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. In each of five schools, four students aged 15–16 years old (year 11) volunteered to become peer tutors and accompanied by a teacher from their school attended residential training sessions during the summer term. They received accredited training on drugs, health and how to be a peer tutor. The teachers do not take part in the peer tutoring but participate in the training in order to be able to support and supervise the peer tutors later on if they face any difficulties. They also acquire a good knowledge and understanding of the project, allowing them to imbed it in the school and talk about it to the other members of staff.

During the academic year following the training, the peer tutors deliver two one-hour sessions to year 8 or 9 students. These sessions take place in the classroom without the supervision of the teachers. The tutors give information on drugs, including on their different types, the medical and social consequences of their consumption and how to avoid people selling drugs. The pupils have the opportunity to ask their tutor any questions they want, without the adults listening to what they say.

According to this evaluation, knowledge has increased substantially for 80 per cent of the students. The ability to resist social pressure has been difficult to measure, however comments from young people have shown some increased ability to take appropriate actions, for instance some ‘don’t hang around with people doing drugs’.

The government’s national Positive Futures programme delivered locally by multi-agency partnerships in the country’s top 20 per cent of deprived wards aims to provide positive sporting opportunities for young people, particularly those
who have been marginalised or are vulnerable to drug misuse. Projects include youth outreach work, mentoring, volunteering and work experience, drugs awareness and education programmes, plus pathways to further education, training and employment. Figures reported in February 2004 show that in the previous twelve months 44 per cent had achieved personal development progress, 25 per cent had achieved social development and 10 per cent had improved their performance in education. Enjoyment and increased skills in sport have led to improved confidence and self worth amongst some ‘at risk’ young people.13

Drug Action Teams (DATs) can engage young people in activities to divert them from substance misuse, and help them develop skills and confidence. An example is the Green Hope Allotment Scheme, set up by the South Tyneside DAT, where children and young people have transformed a neglected allotment. They report that “A year on, well over 30 young people and children from south Tyneside turn up on a regular basis to build huts, chicken coops, paths and barbecue areas”. Clients from NECA (North East Council on Addictions), the Youth Inclusion Programme, and the Youth Offending Team also access the allotment as a diversion from substances and anti social behaviour. As a supplement to school drugs education, this DAT has arranged for accredited drug awareness courses appropriately tailored to young people and to parents.14

Community involvement in reducing drug dealing and misuse

Problems with drug dealing, drug misuse and associated crime and anti-social behaviour are far more evident in poor neighbourhoods that often have a range of other problems. Many of the initiatives that might improve the situation on drugs are likely to be more effective with wider community support. For example, disrupting a drugs market is likely to need local people to work closely with the police on collecting evidence. Similarly, preventing young people and other local residents being drawn into the drugs market requires strong parenting and community norms which actively reject drug dealing or use. Community development, perhaps as part of neighbourhood renewal or other regeneration efforts, is therefore an important plank in combating the disruption caused by drugs.

In West Middlesbrough, the neighbourhood drug co-ordinator (who was part of the New Deal for Communities team) encountered third generation heroin users. Funding their habit led to crime and open dealing took place on the streets. The neighbourhood is poor with high unemployment following industrial decline. The drug users, suspected of being responsible for all the crime in the area, were targeted and some received beatings from other local residents.

The co-ordinator implemented an intense outreach programme in order to listen to drug users and find out their needs, approaching them on street corners and making himself aware of their concerns, such as homelessness. To involve the wider community he met parents at schools, pensioners at post offices, spoke at youth clubs where youth workers had no training on how to deal with young people using drugs and when young men shut the door in his face he approached them in pubs. Through his persistence and explanation of myths surrounding drug misuse, youth workers now have relevant drugs training, seventeen heroin affected people attended employment training, and drop in centres for drug users have gained the backing of the local communities. Local residents, drug users, parents of drug users and pensioners sit on a drug issues committee, inviting a different professional to join them each week, and work on local solutions to drugs problems. A local resident is also involved in the NDC Steering Group and attends their monthly meetings. From a once resistant and inactive community, a Volunteer Drug Network has
emerged, where volunteers operate a telephone help line, hold drop ins several times a week and go out into the community so are able to identify hotspots where needles have been abandoned which can then be cleared away. The coordinator felt that there had been a ‘sea change’ in the attitude of the local community and that young people no longer looked up to drug dealers, but instead saw them as the ‘enemy’.15
Part 3
General action to prevent, manage and resolve conflict
7 Prevention and Reassurance

Summary

Community conflict is not a random phenomenon. It tends to occur in neighbourhoods of social and economic disadvantage – generally manifested in a poor quality environment, high levels of worklessness and persistent crime and anti-social behaviour. Combating these underlying problems is therefore a way of preventing community conflict and reassuring local residents. Current strategies include environmental improvements and target hardening measures; changing lettings policies to create more balanced communities; community and neighbourhood wardens and police community support officers.

Social and economic factors

Community conflict does not occur randomly or everywhere. The context may be a wider sense of disadvantage, lawlessness and chaotic neighbourhoods where anti-social behaviour goes unchallenged and there may be a rapid turnover of residents unknown to each other. Research by the University of Ulster in south-east England suggests some underlying factors that might indicate the potential for community conflict. Skewed demography, where there is a disproportionate number of young people as mentioned above (particularly young men) can increase the likelihood of conflict. Multiple deprivation and social exclusion are also indicators. Higher than average teenage pregnancy rates are also often a sign of wider social exclusion. School exclusions increase the likelihood of anti-social behaviour, crime and conflict between young people or with other members of the community.

Environmental degradation is one symptom of anti-social behaviour, wider disadvantage and possibly social collapse. The Government’s white paper Taking a Stand on Anti-social Behaviour points to ‘ruined public places, such as shopping precincts, parks, playgrounds, town centres or railway stations.’ The damage may be caused by a small number of individuals or families, but the persistence of vandalism and ugly destruction of physical spaces will lead other local residents to feel, to a greater or lesser degree, depressed and trapped. Beneath these physical and environmental signs are social and cultural patterns which point to exclusion and community breakdown: high levels of worklessness and low educational attainment. These economic problems can suggest a wider social malaise. Some researchers have pointed to ‘estate norms’ that differ from those of mainstream society and exert strong peer pressure particularly on young men creating ‘negative attitudes to work and low motivation’. Illegal activity or the informal cash in hand economy can then take over the space of legitimate paid work. These ways of earning money in the informal economy could include ‘labouring, driving or restaurant work, trading contraband goods, dealing in stolen cars or drug dealing.’

Preventative measures and addressing underlying causes are likely to include improving physical environments, improving opportunities for participation in the formal labour market and reducing crime and anti-social behaviour – as well as reducing the fear of it.

An example of a strategy to address these underlying causes was reported by a practitioner from Home Housing Group in Cumbria which established the Home to Work labour agency in the late 1990s. As well as addressing employment problems, it also satisfied the needs of other people for affordable painting, decorating and gardening services. They teamed up with the British Conservation Trust, which was managing the Government’s New Deal for Communities programme in the area. The work load quickly
increased to 250 gardens. In the first full year they had 86 placements of which 32 went on to get full-time jobs. Home Housing also wanted to find a way of helping those who were not successful in getting full-time jobs. The absence of sufficient and affordable childcare was a barrier to getting and keeping a job. In the area of Cumbria mentioned above, Home Housing Group has also established a day nursery. As well as providing childcare, the day nursery is itself an employment opportunity for local people.

Whilst these local labour initiatives are welcome and important for those who participate in them, a lasting solution to intractable local unemployment is likely to require investment by mainstream employers, training for local people and building a culture of work readiness amongst local people. This may be a longer-term proposition beyond the reach of agencies such as the police and social landlords who may have immediate responsibility to manage and seek to resolve community conflict.

**Target hardening to improve security**

Target hardening measures are designed to improve security, and make residents feel safer. Such measures often include CCTV, improved lighting, reinforced doors and door entry systems, removal of walls or trees and shrubs that obscure visibility and provide places to ambush residents or passers-by.

In the Eccles area of Salford, for example, following persistent problems of anti-social behaviour, conflict and consequential neighbourhood decline described in Chapter 2, the council began by looking at the environment in which the gangs were operating. They worked with the crime prevention team and city architects to restructure the environment, opening up areas by removing shrubs and putting in fences. They also cleaned up the rubbish. There were eight key hot spots. Two examples were a bridge, which was redesigned to prevent young people from hiding and then jumping out to attack people, and installing CCTV in a fish and chips shop that the gangs had targeted.

**Using lettings policies to create more balanced communities**

Whilst social housing is primarily allocated according to housing need, overly narrow rationing criteria can result in unsustainable, racially divided and inward-looking communities of poorer people, high unemployment, concentrated child densities, vandalism, crime and conflict. Reducing the likelihood of conflict on existing estates and neighbourhoods with unbalanced communities will require lettings policies that aim to reduce racial segregation, intergenerational tension, over-concentration of children and young people, create a mix of tenures and increase the proportion of local people with a job. Increasing choice in social housing is also desirable. People who live near family and friends tend also to feel a stronger sense of pride in the neighbourhood. Sensitive lettings policies can help to achieve this. Since many (though not all) of the neighbourhoods in which community conflict occurs are also areas of low demand, the challenge for social landlords is to market their housing as a desirable product, rather than ration a limited supply to an overwhelming need, as was the case in the past.

On the housing association estate in Walsall described by a research participant in Chapter 3 drugs dealing and vandalism had become entrenched and could not be uprooted. Eventually the housing association emptied and re-furbished the block. Since virtually all the tenants who had caused the trouble were young men, a local lettings initiative was agreed with the local authority along with a marketing approach. A show flat was renovated. Potential residents were given a choice of wall colours and carpets. The refurbished homes were marketed to local employers, including the local NHS trust. Introductory tenancies were also
introduced so that any problems of anti-social behaviour could be quickly dealt with before they took hold.

**Community and neighbourhood wardens**

Neighbourhood wardens are a uniformed, semi-official patrolling presence, which have been developed in a number of urban areas with problems of crime and anti-social behaviour. Whilst the approach varies to reflect local concerns, most have reduction of crime and the fear of it and environmental improvements as core objectives. The majority of schemes work alongside other neighbourhood renewal and crime reduction initiatives. Their primary purpose is more likely to be community reassurance and crime prevention rather than law enforcement. Community ‘ownership’ of neighbourhood wardens, not just assisting the police, is seen as an important factor in their success.

A participant in this research reported that a warden scheme has been operating in Barnsley since 2001 and eight wardens have been appointed by the council to work alongside community policemen. The wardens are based at the local police station and work from 5pm to 11pm. They engage with the local community, particularly local young people and gather information which is then passed on to the Tenancy Enforcement Team. In Darlington, there are approximately 8 to 12 wardens working in the area, working shifts from 6am to 10pm, Monday to Saturday. In September 2003 two motorcycles were added to the service, allowing wardens to patrol large areas and improve response times. According to the Darlington Residents Panel young people do not seem to respect the wardens, especially as they appear not to have much power but their presence does seem to have instilled greater confidence among the community at large.

Even small numbers of neighbourhood wardens can apparently make a positive difference. In Barton, Hele Street Wardens have been working in partnership with the local authority and police since June 2002. Two officers patrol on foot around the estate between 9am to 5pm from Monday to Friday. The officers have been accepted into the community and this has enabled them to gather a great deal of intelligence from residents themselves. There has been significant progress made by the initiative, it has reduced the number of anti-social behaviour incidents and led to a drop in the number of abandoned vehicles in the area.

An evaluation published in 2004 by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister concluded that in many of the areas where the schemes had been operating quality of life and resident satisfaction had increased, fear of crime had reduced, particularly in the minds of older people, there had been a ‘considerable decline’ in the overall rate of residents’ experiencing crime and there had been perceived improvements in environmental degradation such as graffiti, fly-tipping, litter and dog fouling. There had also been a small decline in residents’ perception of youth anti-social behaviour. By reducing crime neighbourhood wardens also, according to the ODPM, represent value for money. The success of wardens lies in their accessibility and their ability to link residents and agencies together locally.

**Police Community Support Officers**

Community support officers are support staff employed by police authorities who perform a high profile patrolling role in uniform to give the public greater reassurance. They complement the work of police officers by focusing on lower level crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour. They are less likely to be called away for court appearances, public order policing or case management than police officers. Their work is in some ways similar to that of neighbourhood wardens, though they are less likely to focus on environmental degradation and small-scale improvements. Their powers are
Community conflict
decided by the local Chief Constable, but can
develop fixed penalty notices for public nuisance,
dog fouling, litter and riding on footpaths. They
can also detain people for up to 30 minutes,
confiscate alcohol or stop drinking, seize vehicles
and remove abandoned vehicles and enter homes
to protect property or when life or limb are
threatened. In their support role they can tackle the
priorities of the local police agenda; for example, in
Stockport they have been giving yellow cards to
young people involved in anti-social behaviour,
noting their names and addresses, using their
limited capabilities to make these young people
aware that their behaviour is being monitored.
Practitioners reported that they could defuse
tension, promote confidence, reduce fear and
mediate in minor disputes before they escalate.
Practitioners also noted that the police seemed to
have more success recruiting CSOs from diverse
backgrounds than they have in the mainstream
police service. The Home Office has planned for
recruitment of up to 20,000 CSOs by 2008.
Managing conflicts

Summary

Managing conflicts that have arisen requires information sharing about early warning signs, efforts to bring local people together, the use of mediation and conflict resolution skills (sometimes developed by local people) and seeking to neutralise the impact of negative reporting in the local media.

Early warning

Aside from the local residents, community conflicts are likely to come first to the notice of police or social landlords. They are likely to be the recipients of reports of trouble and to make the links and discern the patterns to recognise that the incidents being reported to them are not one off examples of anti-social behaviour but may be the signs of a more deep-seated conflict.

According to research by the University of Ulster, early warning signs of potential community conflict might include:

- increases in reported racist incidents, racial harassment and racially motivated crime;
- transient populations, both resident and in public spaces;
- drug and alcohol activity in public places;
- lack of social capital: people don’t know or help their neighbours; don’t participate in local activities or organisations; resentment against newcomers particularly those from diverse backgrounds;
- increases in violent offences; and
- increases in criminal damage.1

Bringing local residents together in public meetings

If trust has not completely broken down and conflict has not yet got entirely out of hand, there is obvious merit in bringing local people together. Bringing as many local people together as possible from the widest range of interest groups is highly desirable. A good turnout is essential. Attendance only by those who regularly come to meetings discussing the usual complaints, however, is not likely to be a discussion that will lead to much in the way of conflict resolution.

In the first instance people will want to raise their concerns and may be initially reluctant to move too quickly to discuss what should be done to address them. There is some therapeutic value in airing differences, so long as the discussion is managed to prevent the temperature rising and tempers flaring. At the early stages the highest aspiration for meetings might be that people agree to meet and talk again. Local agencies can also share with local residents their current activities to deal with problems. This will help to combat the feeling that nothing is being done and nobody cares. Limitations should be acknowledged but insistent negativity or indifference from professionals who live elsewhere is not likely to be well received. Public meetings such as these should be seen as the beginning of a conflict resolution process, not an end in themselves.

Little progress is likely to be made in public meetings if local agencies are seeking to deal with longstanding or entrenched conflicts. The protagonists are unlikely to attend and even if they do, the conflict may well flare in the meeting. Intractable conflicts like these will have to be addressed, at least in the early stages, in separate meetings with the protagonists as discussed in the section on conflict resolution below.

Conflict resolution

There is a considerable body of international literature and practice on conflict resolution
Community conflict

methods. Closest to home, approaches to mediating between entrenched interests in the search for common ground and ultimately a peaceful resolution has found its most frequent and pressing expression in Northern Ireland. Other countries divided by conflict, in which some people at least want to move towards peace and eventually transformation such as South Africa, Colombia and the countries of the Middle East, have been the arenas for much discourse, innovation and developing practice on conflict resolution. Few neighbourhoods in mainland Great Britain are likely to have conflicts on the scale of some of these countries. On the other hand, assuming that the neighbourhoods, towns and cities of Great Britain are immune to conflict would be inaccurate and unsafe. Even though the scale or nature of the problem may not be so great, a good deal of learning from these more high profile settings about how to manage and resolve conflict is still relevant in mainland Great Britain.

Unfortunately, but perhaps inevitably, conflict resolution and the literature about it, have given rise to a bewildering array of terminology. The following terms are all, to varying degrees, in common currency: conflict prevention, conflict management, conflict resolution, crisis management, dispute resolution, peace building, preventive diplomacy, negotiation, mediation, conciliation, reconciliation, facilitation. Each term does not stand alone however. It will also embrace a range of sub-categories, for example ‘mediation’ can be ‘interest-based’, ‘rights-based’, ‘transformative’, ‘evaluative’, ‘narrative’, ‘determinative’, ‘integrative’; mediators can consider themselves to be ‘activists’, ‘advisers’ or ‘facilitators’. Each ‘expert’ in the field might also use the terms differently depending on the type of dispute they are dealing with as well as taking into account their personal perspectives.

Despite the vague terminology (which is sometimes deliberately used to satisfy competing or conflicting interests and occlude the true extent of entrenched disputes) some consensus has developed on the basis for resolving most disputes. The following fundamental principles have been suggested:

1 Conflict is not inherently destructive, but a normal aspect of any vibrant community. The danger of viewing conflict as inherently negative is that attempts to avoid or suppress it at all costs are justified and problems are left to fester, while resolution is postponed perhaps indefinitely or until the problem can no longer be ignored. Avoiding conflict may also lead to ignoring or suppressing legitimate differences in values and lifestyles, which, through negotiation, could be accommodated, accepted and perhaps even valued.

2 A thorough and comprehensive analysis of the causes, conditions and manifestations of the conflict taking all the different perceptions and perspectives seriously should inform conflict resolution activities. Superficial and one-sided assumptions invariably lead to counter-productive interventions.

3 Conflict resolution processes should be inclusive of all parties that are involved.

4 Conflict resolution activities should take place with the consent of and preferably at the invitation of the various protagonists.

5 The mediators or other third parties who intervene should be non-partisan and unbiased in their relationship with the disputing parties. The respective roles of conflict resolution and advocacy should be distinguished and preferably not be performed by the same bodies.²

Odendaal, from whose work on inter-ethnic conflict the above is adapted, also points out: ‘Conflict resolution interventions are in essence about empowering disputants to deal more creatively with their conflict.’ Organisations that
specialise in conflict resolution therefore have the following options available:

- the facilitation of communication between parties in conflict when levels of antagonism make normal communication difficult or impossible;
- the facilitation of an analysis of the causes of conflict, preferably as a joint effort involving all the relevant participants;
- the creation of a safe environment (politically and psychologically) in a workshop setting that will enable participants to test their own assumptions and explore different options;
- the broadening of the range of options available to participants by facilitating the exploration of approaches in other places and historical experience of the resolution of conflict;
- the provision of training in conflict resolution skills, including skills to deal with deeply ingrained perceptions;
- The facilitation of opportunities to reflect on participants’ experiences in the past and to draw lessons from that.

Conflict resolution approaches seek to identify common ground and, if differences persist, to encourage empathy about other perspectives. If one of the main tasks of conflict resolution is to create for each side a feeling of security the focus should then be on transforming group psychology, redefining group identities in ways that do not threaten other groups. Getting the sides to agree on anything, ‘even if it is just about the weather’ gives the sides a feeling for agreeing and finding mutually acceptable solutions, which may in fact be a completely new experience for them.3

In the context of mainland Great Britain little of this thinking has infused policy or practice, perhaps least of all in social housing where more traditional landlord remedies are still favoured – as this research tends to confirm. The policy areas where concepts such as alternative dispute resolution and mediation are most frequently heard are in the non-legal settlement of disputes between spouses who are on the point of, or have agreed to, separation. Nevertheless the principles of conflict resolution, often described as mediation, are gaining some purchase in the neighbourhood and community contexts.

**Mediation**

Mediation has been used with varying degrees of success in many different kinds of conflicts including interpersonal, family, peer mediation in schools, labour and industrial relations, community, environmental and international disputes. The secret of effective mediation is unsurprisingly the mediator. Many mediation processes break down because the mediator is neither sufficiently skilled nor credible, or both.

Mediation has been defined as:

> A process in which the parties to a dispute, with the assistance of a neutral third party (the mediator), identify the disputed issues, develop options, consider alternatives and endeavour to reach an agreement. The mediator has no advisory or determinative role in regard to the content of the dispute or the outcome of its resolution, but may advise on or determine the process of mediation whereby resolution is attempted.4

Traditionally mediation has been used in one-to-one neighbour disputes, but in recent years a small number of mediators have begun to work on a larger scale, intervening in community conflicts. Some mediation has taken place between different racial or ethnic minority groups or young people in opposing gangs.

Mediation involves interviewing all those affected individually in the first instance, including the agencies involved or those that may make a
Community conflict

A Liverpool housing association landlord has found that mediation is one of the most effective ways of addressing conflicts early. According to a housing manager who participated in this research: “Problems tend to be in the more deprived areas where some people can’t articulate their feelings in a logical way and negotiating their way out of a problem can be harder and so can flare up into abuse and violence.” Intervention by a mediator to try and carry the message between two parties is effective and helpful in bringing about a mutual understanding. Two parties can come together, facilitated by a mediator and can talk through their problems with each other. The scheme seems to be effective because it does not have someone who has a vested interest in the conflict negotiating between the two parties.

Training local people in conflict resolution

Residents can also be offered training in mediation and conflict management and resolution skills to allow them to manage conflicts constructively within their neighbourhoods without resort to agencies or other outside help. Interventions can be made at an earlier stage of the conflict; also the community itself is more empowered and sustainable. For example, the tenant participation officer at Herefordshire Housing has organised conflict resolution skills training for residents who are community leaders. The training involves a theatre company and role-playing activities.

Working with the media

The local press can exacerbate unfounded fears. On the other hand, if they are judiciously involved and thoroughly briefed they can also contribute to dismantling myths and concerns. They can, for example, highlight the real circumstances of asylum seekers and seek to dispel assumptions that they are receiving disproportionate local and central government funding or services. The media

contribution to improving the situation or resolving the problem. Once the initial meetings have been held a further series of meetings can either then be held between representatives of the opposing groups or a wider public meeting might be held bringing the groups together. All involved need to feel that they can have their say and express their fears and concerns without being judged or criticised straightaway. In addition they also need to accept that they have some responsibility in moving the situation forward and finding a resolution.

Community mediation was deployed in the conflict between rival gangs in two Devon villages (described in Chapter 1) through the mediation service attached to South Devon Youth Offending Team (a member of which participated in this research). A series of fourteen mediation meetings took place with the individuals involved, their families and the Teignbridge School headmaster. Initially these involved separate individuals and families, but by the end of the series of meetings, joint meetings were held with victims and offenders, as well as their families, allowing offenders to apologise to their victims and for offenders’ parents to give assurances to the victims’ parents that there would not be a repeat.

In Hammersmith, west London, the conflict that followed from Somali families moving into a block of flats with many older residents described earlier in Chapter 1 was successfully addressed through mediation. CALM mediation undertook meetings between representatives of each group. The representative of the residents’ association which had complained to the Council by petition was, according to the mediator, a “reasonable woman and the other tenants felt she represented their views”. The mediation process as a whole involved “Separate interviews, lots of talking and lots of active listening, identifying underlying issues and cultural misinterpretation, validating or valuing people’s feelings and enabling people to live together.”
Managing conflicts

can also be used for positive publicity to promote and gain support for effective measures an organisation or partnership might have taken, for example regarding community safety or regeneration. Nick Carter, the editor of the Leicester Mercury newspaper told a House of Commons select committee how the local media plays a role in community cohesion:

“It may be easy to sell newspapers in the wake of trouble within communities, but that is a very short-term benefit … Fragmented communities contain people who are less likely to want to get involved in what is happening in these communities, they are full of suspicion and apprehension … Fewer people are likely to be interested in what is going on around them and since we are the main provider of news and information about those communities we are less likely to have people turning to us for information. A cohesive community is a community which feels comfortable with itself, its people are involved in what is happening in those communities … they are more likely to turn to their local newspaper and to other sources of local information to find out what is happening… We work harder to look for the positives in our communities – particularly where they demonstrate that people from different communities are living and working together … We are more aware of those small groups of extremists who want to divide our communities and spread fear and suspicion … We have to spend more time thinking about the consequences of everything we do.”

Orbit Bexley Housing Association had obtained six ASBOs forbidding the perpetrators to abuse or harass anyone in the borough causing distress, to damage property or to drive a car without the owner’s consent. Nor are the six perpetrators permitted to congregate with each other in groups larger than three in a public place in Bexley. In working with the media to ensure positive publicity for the ASBOs, Bexley Council, Orbit Bexley Housing Association and partners sent a strong message that they “meant business whilst spelling out that ASBOs work”. Press offices of CSAZ (Community Safety Action Zone), the Council and the Housing Association provided lead reporters with supportive information. Local journalists wrote feature articles on the abandoned and burnt out cars seen at the relevant area and were keen to report on the action taken to deal with this in a follow up article. There had been national media interest in the 2002 local elections and Bexley Council communications team had kept in contact with the relevant journalists for follow up articles.
9 Remedies against individuals

Summary

Participants in this research repeatedly drew attention to the need to take action against ringleaders and other key individuals, even if the conflict involved groups. Individuals can become a focal point for anti-social behaviour and racial intolerance. It is hoped that taking action against them has some positive impact on their behaviour, but it will also be a positive message to those that have been at the wrong end of their behaviour that the authorities are committed to doing something about it. Other people who might have been tempted to become involved in the unacceptable behaviour or conflict may also be deterred from the behaviour that is fuelling the conflict. Enforcement measures against individuals, such as those discussed below – from ABCs/ABAs, parenting contracts and orders, restorative justice to ASBOs, injunctions, evictions and criminal and youth justice remedies – were by far the most popular measures taken to seek to resolve the conflict by participants in this research. Conflict resolution methods such as those described in Chapter 8 were far less common. That is not necessarily evidence however that measures to deal with individual behaviour resolve the conflict. Practitioners may just be apt to do what they know how to do and take those measures for which they receive official encouragement, virtually all of which currently emphasise the importance of enforcement action against individuals, rather than mediation or conflict resolution.

Acceptable behaviour contracts/agreements

Acceptable behaviour contracts or agreements (ABCs/ABAs) are voluntary agreements generally made between young people aged 10 to 18 years old involved in anti-social behaviour and the local police together with the council housing department, registered social landlord or the perpetrator’s school. A parent or guardian is also generally present as the young person may be a minor. The parent’s presence also makes them aware of their child’s behaviour and encourages them to exert some influence on their child. It can also highlight their responsibilities and possible consequences, such as a Parenting Order (see below) if the behaviour deteriorates. The contents of ABCs can be flexible and are a personalised agreement. They can therefore be used to deal with a variety of problems including verbal abuse or graffiti and other forms of vandalism. Their voluntary nature makes ABCs unsuitable for dealing with more serious incidents or criminal behaviour, but a breached ABC could be used as evidence in support of legal action in court, such as an ASBO.

The Home Office commissioned a study in 1999 to evaluate the impact on levels of anti-social behaviour of 95 Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) issued in the London Borough of Islington. The research shows that ABCs can reduce the number of young people committing acts of anti-social behaviour – 57 per cent of the research’s participants did not breach their contract at all.

Acceptable behaviour contracts have become a popular approach to tackling anti-social behaviour, particularly by young people, because they can be an effective means of early intervention and are rapidly implemented. They also encourage good behaviour, combined with a threat of penalising continuing or future bad behaviour.

Anti-social behaviour orders

Anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) are a civil remedy which can be obtained against a person aged at least 10 years whose behaviour has “caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress” to a person outside of their household. An ASBO will be granted on the basis of past action.
Future intentions of anti-social behaviour against people who may be residents of a particular estate, the general public in a local authority or a more widely defined area do not have to be proved. ASBOs can be brought by the police, local authorities or housing associations, although they must consult with each other prior to application.

The court can ban the perpetrator from entering a part of the local authority’s area such as the town centre either at all or during certain hours, alternatively they could prohibit them from meeting with other known perpetrators. ASBOs stand for a minimum of two years. Despite being a civil remedy, breaching an order “without reasonable excuse” is a criminal offence and so carries significant consequences, including a fine or a custodial sentence. Nonetheless, because criminal sanctions can be imposed, as with other criminal proceedings breaches of an ASBO must be proved “beyond reasonable doubt”. Once an ASBO has been granted, follow-up work is often needed to ensure that behaviour improves permanently. For example, a practitioner from Stockport reported arranging for young people with an ASBO to speak one-to-one with prisoners to discourage future anti-social behaviour by making them aware of the realities of prison life, which might be the end result of persistent anti-social behaviour.

Home Office research in 2002 found that ASBOs had been generally received positively. They had helped prevent or reduce anti-social behaviour. They are not, however, being used with the same frequency nationwide. Successful use of ASBOs was generally against a backdrop of effective partnership working, including sharing information and evidence and working together on preparing cases.3

In Yeovil, Somerset groups of young people gathering in the town centre have been seen as a problem, which was tackled by the use of ASBOs. Seven ASBOs have been issued, the majority on adults (only one ASBO was issued to someone under 18). Success is not universal or uniform. The orders have been breached in about half of the cases. ASBOs have been supported by follow up work – particularly important, as one practitioner noted:

“ASBOs make the community feel a bit better and [people] feel they are being listened to but for ASBOs to be really effective they need to be accompanied by support. Measures have to be put in place to moderate the behaviour of the perpetrator. Many have had serious problems with drugs and alcohol.”

**Interim ASBOs**

Interim ASBOs can speed up the process of getting an ASBO, especially if potential or actual victims are in immediate danger. An interim order is made at an initial hearing with the capacity to impose the same prohibitions and receive equally severe penalties for a breach as a full ASBO. Benefits of an interim ASBO are:

- immediately stopping the behaviour and offering faster protection to the public;
- reducing the scope for witness intimidation;
- removing any incentive for the perpetrator to delay the proceedings;
- sending out a clear message to the community that swift action against anti-social behaviour can and will be taken.

Interim ASBOs can sometimes be granted without notice, but if the notice order is not served on the perpetrator within seven days then it ceases to have effect. Courts have permitted this as a “temporary measure regulating behaviour until the determination of the parties’ rights at the substantive hearing”, necessary for the protection of others.4

**Action plan orders**

The Action Plan Order is a community sentence available for any juvenile (10 to 17-year-olds)
convicted of an offence that the court considers serious enough to merit a community sentence. It aims to provide a short, but intensive and individually tailored response to offending behaviour which will, by placing requirements on the young person, address the causes of their offending behaviour and nip it in the bud. Mostly used with young people, this is a court granted order effective immediately for three months, specifying a proactive programme of education and activities that are strictly supervised, rather than the prohibitive measures of an ASBO. The programme decided upon considers the circumstances contributing to the offender’s behaviour in order to address them. Youth offending teams are responsible for the operation of Action Plan Orders sometimes with the involvement of the probation service.

A participant in this research commented on a family in Bristol that was persistently involved in anti-social behaviour including frequent racial abuse in an area with many other problems, such as drug dealing and racial tension. Both parents were substance abusers and most of the problems caused to other local residents were the result of the behaviour of their children, aged between ten and 12 years old.

The oldest child had been served an ABC for verbal racial harassment, attacking people and throwing things at windows. After a brief improvement, matters deteriorated. Separate proceedings were taken against the eldest child for an assault and following conviction the probation service and youth offending team led in implementing the Action Plan Order that was granted. This measure was more proactive in addressing the child’s behaviour. The Action Plan Order made him come into the youth offending team; he was already excluded from school, so the Order gave him one to one tuition, rather than him going back to school. They then identified a residential school for him. He went there and loved it. This really improved the behaviour in the family, but now the younger brother is starting to behave in the same way.

Parenting contracts and orders
Home Office research found that “Inadequate parental supervision is strongly associated with offending.” Young people with low or medium levels of parental supervision were twice as likely to offend as those with high parental supervision. Parenting orders and contracts have been amended in the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and the Criminal Justice Act 2003 to be more flexible and enable their use for both criminal and anti-social behaviour more widely and at an earlier stage in their child’s behaviour as a preventative as well as reactive measure. The Criminal Justice Act 2003 has extended parenting orders to be “available when a referral order is made or when a Youth Offender Panel refers a parent back to court for failing to attend panel meetings.”

A parenting contract is a voluntary written agreement between a youth offending team worker and the parents or guardians of a child or young person who has engaged, or is likely to engage, in criminal or anti-social behaviour. The parents must comply with the agreement, and the youth offending teams must support the parents in this. Parenting orders are stricter than parenting contracts and can be made where there has been a failure to comply with the terms of the parenting contract. A youth offending team can apply to a magistrates’ court for a free standing parenting order. Parenting orders can also be made in circumstances where a child has been given an ASBO, or has been convicted of an offence. A family proceedings court, a magistrates court (using civil jurisdiction) or a criminal court can order them. Home Office guidance has highlighted that parenting contracts and orders can consist of two elements: firstly a parenting programme design to promote positive change and secondly...
requirements to control their child’s behaviour, for example ensuring that the child attends school or is at home between certain times.8

Injunctions

An injunction is a civil court order requiring an adult to do or – more usually – stop doing a particular act. Injunctions are most often used to deal with serious incidents, to protect victims or witnesses from violence or the threat of violence or to exclude perpetrators from an area. Tenants can also have an injunction brought against them making them responsible for the behaviour of others visiting or residing in their property, for example, if someone is dealing drugs in the tenant’s home. Their advantage is that they can be used when urgent action is required; they are obtainable within 48 hours, and for less serious cases still within two weeks. Because injunctions are a civil remedy, the evidential burden of proof is less onerous than required in criminal proceedings and the court needs to be persuaded ‘on the balance of probabilities’ only instead of ‘beyond reasonable doubt’. In social housing, the landlord will need to show a ‘cause for action’, for example a breach of tenancy conditions. The penalties for not complying with an injunction are a fine or imprisonment for up to two years.

Councils and RSLs can ask the court for a power of arrest to be attached to a breach of tenancy injunction if violence has been used or threatened (or a breach is expected), which enables the police to arrest the person who is found, or suspected, to be in breach. Injunctions can also be obtained against owner-occupiers.

Injunctions may only be used against perpetrators aged 18 years or more, as civil courts do not have the power to imprison minors and most are unable to pay a fine. Proceedings against perpetrators under 18 years of age may be served, however, on their parents or guardians, but they are difficult to enforce if breached, especially if it is the child and not the parent who is involved in anti-social behaviour. In this case an ASBO is often a more appropriate course of action.

New injunction powers under the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 (replacing the Housing Act 1996, ss.152 and 153) also permit landlords to seek an injunction to prevent the unlawful use of any of their properties. Either type of injunction – as well as a breach of tenancy injunction – may be combined with an exclusion order (preventing the person coming to a particular property or neighbourhood) and a power of arrest where there is threatened or actual violence or a significant risk of harm.

Possession orders

Participants expressed some reservations about proceedings for a possession order. These can be costly and slow, so the statement made in most social landlords’ policies that persistent anti-social behaviour may lead to eviction is sometimes an aspiration rather than a reality. Hunter and Nixon have found that sometimes the notice of seeking possession (NOSP) will in itself be enough to stop anti-social behaviour, and no further action will be needed. In contrast, however, their research showed evidence that some landlords served a notice of possession without considering whether they would be able to go through to a court hearing if the behaviour did not stop. If notices turn out to be an idle threat they are unlikely to have much deterrent impact for long.9

The evidence of the anti-social behaviour is often the reports of neighbours who, for fear of reprisals, may be reluctant to give evidence in court. This can be overcome by evidence being given by police officers, housing managers, security staff or professional witnesses. Eviction in neighbourhoods where there is plenty of privately rented housing available may simply displace the evicted family to another property nearby, not necessarily improving the situation for other local
residents. To combat the perception that judges are reluctant to grant possession particularly against families where young children may become homeless or have to enter the care of the social services, the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 mandates that judges take into account the effect on victims of the perpetrators’ behaviour and the effect should the behaviour continue.\(^\text{10}\)

On the Sowerby Estate in Eltham, south London there have been four evictions, in 2002 and 2003. There have also been evictions in other parts of the borough of Greenwich. The eviction rate, according to a local resident who participated in this research, tends to depend on the approach and ability of the tenancy service officers, “if they are hot on this issue then it goes ahead”. It is hoped that the establishment of a borough-wide team will achieve greater consistency of action.

**Criminal remedies against individuals**

Criminal legal remedies are available for assault, wounding and bodily harm, vandalism and other damage to property and harassment, dealing and using drugs, prostitution and many of the other behaviours that may lead to conflicts with local people. Many of these offences can also be racially aggravated. Many of these powers are longstanding. The perception has grown nevertheless that more civil powers are needed against individuals who commit acts such as those listed above. Dealing with criminal behaviour is also only one part, the reactive part, of giving local communities reassurance and thereby reducing the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour. In short, in recent years, the policy framework has extended beyond reactive criminal action to more preventative programmes and proactive civil remedies of the sort already described.

**Restorative justice**

Restorative justice emphasises the way in which crime damages the relationship between people living in a community. By bringing victims and offenders together in a ‘conference’, along with family, friends and advocates, restorative justice aims to make the offender more aware of the impact of their action and to make them accountable to the person that has been harmed. Restorative justice focuses on the harm that a crime causes, rather than the rules that have been broken. Supporters of restorative justice argue that the process and particularly the conference empowers the victim who is able to confront the offender with the results of their crime and encourage acceptance of responsibility by, and ‘re-integration’ of the offender, supporting them while encouraging them to understand, accept and carry out their obligations.

In its restorative justice strategy the government encourages this as a potential tool “both to increase [a] victim’s satisfaction and to reduce crime.” It is believed that restorative justice can also “allay fear of crime” if the victim receives an explanation from the offender and can be reassured that they will not be re-victimised by the offender.\(^\text{11}\) Supporting this strategy the Home Office has issued guidance on best practice policies for practitioners working in restorative justice, and has announced a new restorative justice pilot project that will research the impact of restorative justice on victims and re-offending figures.\(^\text{12}\)
10 Building coalitions

Summary
Legal remedies can be taken against individual troublemakers or ringleaders. Mediation and conflict resolution techniques can then be used to bridge divisions in communities. Specific measures can also be taken to deal with racial conflicts and conflicts involving drugs or young people. But a lasting and durable strategy to prevent or resolve community conflicts depends on strong local institutions and civil society. The key elements are likely to include strengthening the ties between local residents, between local residents and institutions such as the police or the local authority and partnership working between local agencies. Ultimately the goal must be building coalitions of shared interests and goals which reduce the emphasis on difference and conflict.

Strengthening the ties between local residents

Tenants’/Residents’ Associations and voluntary/community groups
Tenants’ and residents’ associations are important features of the community landscape in many estates and neighbourhoods. They can be important contributors to consulting with the community, creating participatory structures, and developing community-led services, such as nurseries and clubs for older people, and they can contribute a significant input into ideas for service improvement. Concerns have been raised, however, about whether some tenants’ associations are truly representative. They may be unwelcoming to anyone who is not a longstanding resident, and black and minority ethnic residents may find it particularly difficult to become involved. Social landlords will want to ensure that official recognition and resources are only given to associations that are genuinely open and representative. Unrepresentative or excluding residents’ or community groups can themselves become protagonists in conflict, providing meeting places and safe havens for people making trouble with other local residents.

Building community capacity
The importance of community leadership has been increasingly recognised in recent years. As well as representative and participatory structures, many thriving community centres and activities have flourished as a result of the committed and longstanding efforts of community entrepreneurs. But often those leaders have little support and few resources and they have often succeeded in the face of indifference and hostility. So the importance of supporting community entrepreneurs has been recognised by national and local officialdom. Under the neighbourhood renewal programme the Government has made resources available for supporting local initiatives led by local people. Many local authorities have supported individuals too, sometimes through their local Council for Voluntary Service.

Voluntary Action Stoke-on-Trent facilitates a community empowerment network. They have talked to local people to identify ‘sparkplugs’ – individuals who may not be involved in a particular organisation but are seen as leaders within their community. These sparkplugs are then brought together to come up with ideas – at the end of the meeting they can be offered up to £500 to take away to implement their idea with no bureaucracy to tie them down.

The Scarman Trust’s ‘Can Do’ programme also seeks to recognise and develop the potential of local residents to make a positive contribution to solving problems and increasing the health of their community. Through outreach work to identify ‘can-doers’, the trust typically awards £2,000 together with access to local and national practical,
personal and comprehensive support. Projects around the country range from setting up community nurseries and single parent support groups, to replanting derelict land and setting up Internet links in village halls.

They also run the ‘Can Do Exchange’ social market place which any individual, community organisation or statutory body can join to buy, sell or barter services and resources such as a mini-bus or swapping time to exchange professional expertise on funding bids or public planning rules.

**Faith communities**

Faith communities may already have established community meeting places, often drawing together people from different backgrounds who would otherwise not engage much with one another. The priests, imams, rabbis and other religious leaders can often be important links in inter-faith and ecumenical networks. Religious buildings and the activities that take place within them are also often important community resources. A church that may attract fewer than a hundred people on Sundays may nevertheless have thousands of people passing through its church hall every week attending community activities. Some of the most vulnerable people in the neighbourhood may also find a warmer welcome in a faith community than they do anywhere else. For those vulnerable people, who might be the targets of hostility or intolerance by the rest of the community, churches and other religious groups can be one of the few protective lines in their fragile defences. The possibility that drug users may become the target of local hostility has already been noted in Chapter 6. Other vulnerable people such as rough sleepers or people with mental health problems whose behaviour is perceived to be eccentric may also experience hostility and intolerance, at the same time as other local people feel that their behaviour is unacceptable and a blight on the neighbourhoods. Faith communities can be places of refuge and local religious leaders can be protectors and mediators. Faith networks and religious leaders can also build important bridges to official structures such as local strategic partnerships, crime and disorder reduction partnerships and drug action teams.

The interfaith network in Stockport has representatives on its local strategic partnership. In the wake of the ‘Secret Policeman’ television programme churches in Stockport met communities to allay their fears regarding racism in the police. The Home Office has published a report and recommendations on faith communities and the Government working together to identify key policy areas and develop national policy. Central Government also recognises that these communities often have a long tradition of fostering community development, and would like to tap into this experience and knowledge.¹

**Estate agreements**

Creating a sense of belonging is an important defence against community fragmentation and conflict. Even if physical improvements are made to deprived estates and neighbourhoods, the residue of old animosities and destructive behaviour may remain. An estate agreement is a way of establishing a common understanding amongst local residents of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. It could be the beginning of the wider coalition building that has been referred to elsewhere in this report, since it focuses on common aspirations for the future, rather than past differences.

After wide consultation a housing association in south Hackney brought in a Good Neighbour Declaration on its estates and encouraged residents to sign up. This declaration sets out what residents see as reasonable and what they will not tolerate in their estate. The overall aim is to help build a sense of community spirit, shared aims and a sense of pride about living on the estate. It sets out what residents should expect from their landlord and in turn what is expected of them and what the
consequences will be if its terms are not met. Residents who sign up are given a certificate and a window or door sticker proclaiming this, which also publicises the agreement to residents who have not yet joined. The housing association has reported that anti-social behaviour in the estates has since declined.

**Building co-operation between local residents and institutions**

**Consultation and engagement between agencies and the community**

Community engagement has traditionally been seen as an important priority for the local authority, which derives its legitimacy (and future electoral success) from the commitment of local people to its aims. Since the 1980s the police have also recognised the importance of community engagement in ensuring local communities’ consent for their policing approach. Again, there are important requirements of legitimacy if law is to be enforced and order maintained. More recently organisations such as the Crown Prosecution Service, Fire Services and others have recognised the need to communicate with and understand better the communities in which they work. Since many communities are suffering from consultation fatigue and its close relative, initiative cynicism, institutions will need to think of new, interesting and effective ways to engage communities which overcome cynicism and give local residents a real sense of urgency, a feeling that participating in consultation will make a perceptible difference.

A few small examples mentioned by participants in this research of ways of engaging people are set out below. In Gateshead, Council Neighbourhood Relations Officers, paired with police officers, visit estates in the evenings until 10pm to speak with tenants with concerns who might have been at work during the day. In Rotherham, the council has held meetings with local communities in their mosques to offer them reassurances after an increase in racist attacks following 9/11 and the Iraq war. In Sheffield, the council housing department has distributed leaflets to local residents explaining the presence and circumstances of asylum seekers.

**Positive police engagement with young people and minority communities**

Many examples of police seeking to engage positively with younger people and with black and minority ethnic communities were reported in this research. Police in Wakefield have worked with community leaders amongst minority ethnic groups to facilitate different groups coming together to resolve disputes. They have also provided information and education to asylum seekers about the law and procedures, providing a drop-in service through a local Asian community centre. In Stoke-on-Trent police have worked with the local Race Equality Council to strengthen relations with minority communities and offer reassurance of police support against harassment from football supporters explained in chapter one. The police want to dissuade them from responding to the football hooligans themselves. Police officers in Middlesbrough have worked in schools running workshops to supplement citizenship education, and in Bradford police have taken young people away from their environment on day trips or evening bowling trips in order to combat negative perceptions of the police.

Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) guidance on hate crime encourages police officers to take pre-emptive preventative measures with young people, challenging and educating them about hate crimes in schools. In addition, police should work to “disrupt and neutralise the corrupting influences that play on the young”, for example, finding out whether a parent has passed on racist attitudes and addressing this or working with the Youth Offending Team to identify anti-hate crime education programmes.2 (See also Show Racism the Red Card, described in Chapter 5).
Formal community forums
Participants also highlighted a number of more formal mechanisms for consultation and engagement that brought together community members and practitioners in a structured context on a regular basis. One example was highlighted in Barnsley where a neighbourhood safety unit had been set up which brought together a multi-disciplinary team, including solicitors, housing officials and members of the community to work together to tackle anti-social behaviour and racial harassment. In west London, Ealing Family Housing Association is involved in the Windmill Park Partnership, which is a multi-agency weekly surgery for tenants, where perceptions such as the ‘dumping’ of asylum seekers and homeless people on their estates can be countered. In Worthing an equalities working group holds a monthly meeting attended by representatives from a broad spectrum of the community.

Information sharing between local residents and institutions
Formal information sharing mechanisms between local residents and institutions can enhance agencies’ effectiveness in managing conflicts. Many participants spoke of efforts made to encourage reporting of anti-social behaviour and racist incidents such as establishing third party reporting centres. Impact was however mixed. In some cases a great deal of time and resources had been invested setting up and training staff for third party reporting centres, only to receive few reports of incidents. It was suggested that an equally significant barrier to reporting and reticence in approaching the police was the extent to which the victim or witness felt their information would be acted upon: if the incident was ‘serious’ then they were more likely to report it, but if it were ‘low level’ and they did not expect their report to be acted upon, they were unlikely to ‘waste’ their time reporting it.

Strengthening partnership working within and between local institutions
LSPs, CDRPs and DATs
Local agencies pursuing their own objectives without regard and sometimes in direct contradiction to the work of other agencies and without much input from local residents has, in the Government’s view, blighted the improvement of public services as well as slowed progress on regeneration and renewal. The Government has placed an increasing emphasis on partnership working to achieve a more effective and efficient delivery of public services.

Local strategic partnerships (LSPs) were established to bring together the local authority and non-statutory service providers and community and voluntary representatives to develop ways to involve local people in shaping the future of their neighbourhood and how services are provided. LSPs have been set up across England, but the 88 most deprived local authority areas have received additional resources through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) bring together police, local authorities, businesses and other local organisations to develop and implement strategies for tackling crime and disorder on the local level. Nearly every local authority area in England and Wales has a CDRP or Community Safety Partnership which produces an audit and strategy for its local area.

Drug Action Teams (DATs) are local multi-agency coordinating groups set up under the Government’s strategy, ‘Tackling Drugs Together’. All teams are headed by a DAT chair and most DATs have a coordinator. There are also Drug Reference Groups (DRGs) made up of various local professionals who advise the DAT on policy and practice. Community development and a focus on young people are an important component of the DAT agenda. DATs are responsible for commissioning the drugs treatment services
required to meet the needs of the local community. (See also Chapter 6).

Whilst most practitioners accept the need for greater co-operation on the setting of goals and the means of achieving them, some participants felt that the partnership meetings have proliferated, along with the audits, strategies and initiatives. These new structures have created their own jargon, duplications and irrationalities, just as the former ‘silos’ of local authority departments and other statutory agencies did, with a frustrating lack of coordination and action. More work is needed to ensure that partnership structures are effective in cost and impact.

Many examples were given in this research. In Middlesbrough, monthly Community Oriented Policing (COPS) meetings are held, where a broad range of agencies discuss specific young people they have had complaints about and mutually agree which stage of the “perpetrator pyramid” they should be on – different stages refer to action to be taken, such as warnings, ABCs, ASBOs and so on. In Slade Green, a multi-agency partnership meets on a weekly basis where participants have the authority “to get things done!” In Stoke-on-Trent, the Burslem Grange Inter-agency Development Group was set up to produce an action plan to improve the quality of life on the estate – every agency committed itself to specific actions with stated targets and outcomes.

**Information sharing and partnering agreements between agencies**

As well as formal multi-agency working groups, individual agencies have been pursuing a range of approaches to work better on a one-to-one basis with other agencies and partners. Several examples were highlighted of information sharing protocols and partnering agreements. Some participants felt that sharing office space led to productive joint working. Several examples were cited of housing staff sharing offices with police, and at Bradford Community Housing Trust, the mediation team has moved into the same office space as tenancy enforcement.

**Hotspot mapping**

Hotspot mapping is occurring in more and more parts of Britain to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour. For the same reasons that it is an effective activity in these areas, it is also useful in targeting resources most effectively when tackling community conflict. In Middlesbrough, a high-level multi-agency meeting is held to identify trouble hotspots and target resources for the forthcoming week, including policing and wardens. When a multi-agency group in the London Borough of Barnet was receiving reports of racist incidents across the borough police carried out hotspot mapping which enable them to identify two estates and a library as prime locations for problems. They could then tackle the problems directly through local strategy groups involving the housing department, youth service, community safety team, the police and occasionally other organisations such as Victim Support. In the short term this meant the youth service putting in a detached youth worker whose role was to make contact with the perpetrators and get intelligence from them, identifying ringleaders, challenging their views and signposting them to more positive activities if appropriate.

**Coalition building**

Wilson emphasises the need for positive coalition building through focusing on interdependence and common goals, to achieve results regarding “bread and butter” concerns such as education and delivery of council services.

Social psychological research on interdependence reveals that when people believe that they need each other, they tend to relinquish their initial prejudices and stereotypes and join in programmes that foster mutual interaction and co-operation. The implication is that urban leaders, especially political leaders, should...
work to create situations that foster feelings of interdependence, situations that enhance cooperation, not competition. If ordinarily opposing groups can set aside their differences and focus on overcoming a problem that concerns them both, then there is also the potential for gaining some familiarity and understanding of the lives of the ‘other’ people. It also has the potential to build foundations of community links through their shared experience, as well as creating a louder and stronger voice if they work together towards a common goal.
11 Conclusions

Introduction

The distinguishing feature of community conflicts is that they occur between groups, not individuals, though in some instances it can be disputes between individuals that are the starting point. Community conflicts are not the same as anti-social behaviour, racial harassment or crime, though there are overlaps and some communities suffer some or all of them. There are more neighbourhoods experiencing conflict than is commonly assumed. It is often a highly localised phenomenon which is practically invisible except to those living in the middle of it. The dynamics of conflict are complex and sometimes obscure, hence the emphasis on mediation and conflict resolution methodologies in establishing common ground, however small, rather than seeking to resolve the headline conflict which may seem to be the cause of all the trouble.

Poor and deprived neighbourhoods are at greater risk of the types of conflict described in the report, but poverty and deprivation do not necessarily lead to conflict. Conflict often arises when a new division or dispute – such as drug dealing or the arrival of new migrants – is overlaid on an already disadvantaged community. The fracture takes places more easily because of the relative weakness of community bonds and ties. Conflict can in some instances blow up in fast and unexpected ways. On the other hand, some conflicts have deep roots, some extending back generations. Conflict is not confined to urban areas and can occur almost anywhere in the country on estates and in small towns, particularly town centres on weekend evenings. Conflict does not occur only in multi-racial neighbourhoods. Conflict can be a cause in neighbourhood abandonment.

Interpreting all conflicts as simply crimes which need to be dealt with through law enforcement by the police and the criminal justice system is oversimplistic. Effective responses to conflict are almost always multi-agency and multi-initiative. The first stage in resolving conflict is sharing information. Law enforcement against ringleaders is often an essential building block in restoring harmony, but is not likely to be the end of the story. Follow up work is needed to resolve difficulties and bring communities together once the troublemakers are removed or neutralised. Inter-group mediation is growing, though probably not fast or far enough. Conflict resolution methodologies developed in places like Northern Ireland have rarely been applied or implemented in mainland Great Britain. There are few diagnostic tools available to practitioners to help them form a complete understanding of the conflict dynamics of the neighbourhood in which they work. Few practitioners have received training in or acquired highly developed conflict resolution skills. Few specialist conflict resolution resources are available.

Once immediate conflicts have been brought under control and managed, even if not completely resolved, longer-term shared interests can be established and built up leading eventually to the establishment of coalitions of interests which will extend the previous conflict boundaries.

Some general concerns

Law enforcement is not the only effective response

Many of the responses to conflict are built on the law enforcement paradigm. The conflict, it is believed, is caused and sustained by the lawless behaviour of individuals and action therefore needs to be taken against them. For many of the situations discussed in this research, such as drug dealing, anti-social behaviour or racial harassment, swift and effective law enforcement may be a necessary, but not a sufficient response. Other approaches will be necessary. Agencies other than law enforcement agencies will need to be involved. Whilst this research was not based on a representative sample, there is nevertheless a detectable bias amongst participants towards law enforcement responses.
and a sense that alternative responses such as conflict resolution, mediation and restorative justice receive rather less attention and resources and are used less frequently. This may be because good practice in these still relatively uncommon approaches and skilled staff to deliver them have yet to make their presence felt.

**Multi-initiative, multi-agency working**

The case studies provided by participants demonstrate that most effective approaches to dealing with conflict have involved a number of agencies working together, often first having drawn up a joint action plan. Action plans have generally involved a number of initiatives as well as a number of agencies.

**Gaps in provision**

Not all of the resources needed are available everywhere. Two notable gaps that have been repeatedly referred to in this report is the relatively little capacity available for community mediation and conflict resolution and projects designed to build bridges and trust between the generations.

**Lack of monitoring and evaluation and long term funding**

A frequently raised concern was the monitoring and evaluation of approaches. The discussion of success or failure of innovative approaches is often characterised by hearsay, myth-making and urban folklore in the absence of rigorous and timely evaluation. Worse still, nobody gets to hear of successful new approaches at all, because of the absence of sharing good practice. Many participants also felt that short-term funding sources were a significant barrier to the sustained implementation of successful approaches.

**Too much done too late – are current approaches cost effective?**

As already noted, many of the problems in neighbourhoods are understood as problems of anti-social behaviour or crime. The full nature and extent of the conflict is not recognised until much later; sometimes the wider implications of the behaviour which has come to the notice of the authorities is not recognised at all. This may result in limited action to address symptoms with little action being taken to address underlying causes. If problems persist they will eventually have to be addressed and, once conflicts have become longstanding and intractable, more drastic and expensive solutions will be needed. So participants in this research reported, for example, that after a certain point their agency felt they had no alternative but to decant, refurbish and re-let entire estates as a way of permanently rooting out the problems and those causing them. Such root and branch approaches are unlikely to be possible in every case. Nor is it likely that every estate that wants them will be able to afford security guards or neighbourhood wardens. Funding for high intensity initiatives may also not be sustainable in the longer term. The only effective response to these concerns about cost effectiveness and long-term sustainability of some of the initiatives that have been taken in these case studies and elsewhere is that approaches to preventing, managing and tackling community conflict need to become part of the mainstream practice of existing agencies and their staff on the ground. This would certainly include police officers, housing managers and youth and community workers.

**For the future**

Taking a step back and considering the whole picture described by the research in this report, one sees communities beset by some longstanding and emerging problems often largely unnoticed by commentators and authorities. Much is being introduced to encourage public authorities to stamp on bad behaviour through law enforcement. Relatively less is happening to encourage bridge building, trust and long-term ties of mutuality in
fragmented and divided communities. The challenge going forward is to develop innovative methods and disseminate existing good practice on building trust and coalitions to win people over to a shared sense of their united futures.
Part 4
Action planning toolkit
This toolkit draws together the themes and the suggestions of good practice set out in the earlier part of this report. It is designed to help residents and practitioners working for social landlords, local authorities and the police to:

1. understand clearly the dynamics of conflict in their neighbourhoods and communities through a structured analysis of risk factors and early warning signs (diagram B);
2. identify specific action they can take to address conflicts influenced by anti-social behaviour by young people, racial tensions or drugs (diagram C);
3. identify more general action that can be taken to prevent and manage conflict (diagram D);
4. identify action which can be taken against individuals who may be instigating or exacerbating conflict (diagram D);
5. build long term coalitions in neighbourhoods which fundamentally alter the negative dynamics of conflict by bringing residents of all backgrounds closer together, by bringing residents closer to local institutions and by strengthening partnerships between local institutions (diagram E).

Each diagram is prefaced by a series of key questions that practitioners need to consider. Bringing together the answers to the questions will form an action plan to tackle community conflict.

**Diagram A  Overview**

- Risk factors and early warning (Diagram B)
- Specific action (Diagram C)
- General action (Diagram D)
- Building coalitions (Diagram C)
- Young people
- Prevention
- Between residents
- Racial conflicts
- Conflict management
- Between residents and institutions
- Drugs
- Action against individuals
- Partnerships between institutions
B. Risk factors and early warning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Which of these factors are at work in your neighbourhood or community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Have you got more than one type of problem?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Within each category, which of the factors are at work in your neighbourhood?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to use the toolkit

Diagram B

Risk factors and early warning

Young people
- Cohort of teenagers
- Youth ASB
- Poor parental control
- Groups, posses, gangs
- Weapons
- Intergenerational tensions
- Neighbourhood decline
- Underage drinking
- Lack of youth facilities

Drugs and illegal markets
- Open drugs market
- Crack houses
- Sex workers
- Drug-related crime
- Neighbourhood decline

Race
- Racial tensions
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Newcomers
- Tensions between minorities
- Inflammatory local media
- Far right activity
- Travellers
- Racial tensions between young people

Other
- Conflict over territory and public space
- Crime
- Poor community-institution
- High levels of worklessness
- Neighbourhood decline
- Poverty
- Informal power structures
- Alcohol-affected ASB
C. Specific Action

Key Questions
1 In each category – anti-social behaviour by young people, racial conflicts, drugs and associated behaviour – which of the possible measures listed are already taking place in your neighbourhood?
2 Of these measures, which are not currently taking place, bearing in mind the guidance earlier in this report; which measures might be beneficial?
3 Which agencies would need to be involved?
4 What resources would be needed?
5 What resources are available?
Specific action

Young people
- Outreach
- Mentoring
- Meeting places
- Diversionary activities
- At risk young people
- Parenting courses and support
- Conflict resolution
- Formal and informal education
- Participatory bodies
- Intergenerational work
- Parenting courses and support

Racial conflicts
- Bringing communities together
- Citizenship education
- Conflict resolution and mediation
- Working with racist offenders
- Legal remedies
- Community cohesion
- Building community coalitions

Drugs and associated behaviour
- Prevention and education for young people
- Reducing supply
- Closing crack houses
- Reducing drug-related crime
- Housing management responses
- Community involvement
- Reducing prostitution
- Improve road safety and vehicle crime
- Treatment and support
D. General Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 For long-term prevention, conflict management and action against individuals, what measures are currently taking place?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Which other measures are needed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 What resources are needed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 What resources are available?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 How would the resources be secured?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Diagram D

General action

LONG-TERM
- Community wardens
- Police community support officers
- Targeting hardening
- Lettings
- Physical and environmental improvements
- Employment and training

Conflict management
- Public construction and meeting
- Mediation
- Conflict resolution
- Working positively with local media

Action against individuals
- ABCs
- ASBOs and interim ASBOs
- Action plan orders
- Parenting contracts
- Injunctions
- Possession
- Criminal action
- Restorative justice
## Community conflict

### E. Building coalitions for lasting resolution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Questions</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How strong are the organisations and groups that bring local people together?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What could be done to strengthen local leadership and organisations?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How effective are relationships between residents and local institutions?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Which local institutions need to strengthen their engagement and consultation with local people?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. What does your organisation need to do to strengthen community engagement and consultation?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Which of the existing local partnerships are currently working on preventing, managing and resolving community conflict?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Which existing partnerships could do more?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. What specific measures could they take?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. What local issues could form the basis of lasting coalitions of interest amongst local residents and institutions?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Diagram E

Building coalitions

Between residents
- Tenants and residents groups
- Faith communities
- Estate agreements
- Local voluntary and community groups

Between residents and institutions
- Consultation participation and engagement
- Improve police/community relations
- Information sharing

Partnerships between institutions
- DATs
- LSPs
- CDRPs
- Staff development
- Hotspot mapping

Building coalitions
Notes

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8 Ibid.


**Chapter 10**


Appendix

Responses to the e-survey

In the e-survey, the 276 respondents described their experiences of community conflict in their local authority area and were given a list of possible options as shown in Table 1.

Table 1  Types of community conflict identified by respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Community Conflict</th>
<th>No. of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drug dealing</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent criminal behaviour</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tensions about the arrival of refugees and asylum seekers</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflicts between racial or religious groups</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor community/police relations</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Gang’ or ‘turf wars’</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting sports teams and their supporters</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are no problems of community conflict in my area</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Number of respondents for this option)</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>924</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The survey also gave respondents the opportunity to report other problems of community conflict not specified in the multiple-choice section. Half of those who replied responded to the open-ended question. These ‘Other’ conflicts are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2  ‘Other’ types of community conflict identified by respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘Other’ Community Conflict Problems</th>
<th>No. of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conflict problems associated with young people</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti social behaviour</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbour disputes/harassment</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intergenerational tension/conflict</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-level crime</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol and drug related conflict</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise nuisance</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor community/local authority relations</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political extremism/conflict</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travellers</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>299</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Many respondents reported more than one type of conflict in their neighbourhood.