NEWHAM

NEEDS
AND
RESPONSES

The CIU Annual for 1994

CONTENTS

CIU's MISSION STATEMENT

The **Aston Community Involvement Unit** equips and informs the people of Newham, to enable them to work together to effectively tackle issues of poverty, deprivation, racism, disadvantage and powerlessness.

CIU was set up to act as a catalyst for positive change in Newham by helping in the development of community groups, and by initiating and informing debate on policies and practice

CIU's STAFF TEAM

Michael Mulquin	Team Co-ordinator
Angela Brivett	Community Development Officer
Donna Hibbert-Motaghedi	Community Development Officer
Genny McCarthy	Community Accountancy Project Co-Ordinator
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Vicky Hackett	Administrator

Some of CIU'S Staff Team

INTRODUCTION

The Aston Community Involvement Unit has now been in exis-
tence for three years. It is about time we gave the public some
account of what we have been doing, and some of the lessons
we have learned.

Some of our activities have been chronicled in our newsletter
Involve which has appeared two or three times each year. Other
reports and papers based on our research and community work
practice have also been made available or published. However, this
Annual - which we hope will become a regular publication - is an
attempt to gather together the strands of our work and thinking in
one place. It is not a conventional annual report, and it does not
cover everything that the CIU does. We are fortunate in having no
need to bore our readers with financial accounts or make inflated
claims about our impact and effectiveness in pursuit of funding.
(For those who are interested in such matters the ground is
covered in the annual report of Aston Charities).

Instead this book contains a mixture of stories and reflections.
We describe some aspects of our work with community groups in
Newham in a series of case studies. But we also report and try to
analyse some of the social, economic and political trends which
affect the life of the community in Newham, and the impact they
are having on the policy and practice of the voluntary sector. We
consider, for example, the census findings for the borough, the
changes in government urban policy, and the changing ethos in the
voluntary sector as care in the community, business planning and the
contract culture come in. We examine the growth of poverty and
some responses, the importance of information and networking and
the nature of community development.

The CIU is a team of individuals and our values and starting points
are by no means identical. The reader may detect some of our
debates, dialogues and disagreements in the text. If we raise
questions they are for you to think about and answer for yourselves.
We hope this book will be informative, thought provoking and a
good read. We would be delighted to receive your comments
and feedback.

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community involvement unit

part of

ac

Aston Charities Trust Ltd
Working for the people
in Newham

Unit Co-ordinator: Michael Mulquin

Newham in the 1991 Census - Implications for Community Work

A national census of the U.K. was carried out in April 1991 and by the end of 1992 findings were being made available by the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS). CIU's research officer **Greg Smith**, in association with the Sociology Department of the University of East London, has spent much of 1993 using his computer to analyse the census data, and to interpret the information to community groups in Newham. This article summarises the important findings for Newham and discusses their implications for community work.

The 1991 Census contains a treasury of data, not only about Newham, but about every neighbourhood in the country. Using the census we can discover most of the things you could ever want to know about the people, the households and the housing conditions within the borough. We can also see how our area compares with the national or London picture or (at least in general terms) to how things were 10, 20, 50 or even 100 years ago. For the first time in 1991 the census includes an ethnic question, and information on limiting long term illness. The 'small area statistics' are the best source of information there is about your local neighbourhood. They cover not only the 24 wards of the borough but about 460 Enumeration Districts, each of which includes two or three streets and a few hundred households.

HOW MANY PEOPLE?

One thing the census cannot tell us for certain is how many people actually live in Newham today. In fact we cannot even be sure how many people were living here in April 1991. 196,569 people were entered on the census forms as present in Newham on Census night. In addition just over 5,000 were recorded as normally resident but absent from home. A follow up survey suggested that there had been undercounting of 10,500 and as a result of this the total published figure for residents in Newham was put at 212,170 in 80,000 households. This is the total population from which we have to work. However, there has been some further research suggesting that the true resident population of Newham in April 1991 was around 217,000. OPCS has admitted that the 1991 Census was the first to meet serious resistance and non-cooperation among a minority of the population, due to issues such as the Poll Tax, and that it was extremely difficult for their workers to make contact with the growing number of people who live alone. These problems were more intense in inner city areas such as Newham. The London Research Centre has suggested that under-counting in the Census across London was a particular problem among the very elderly population and among Black Caribbean males in the 20-29 years age group.

CHANGES OVER TIME

Although changes in definitions and boundaries make it difficult to make exact comparisons the general trends are clear enough. Newham's population grew from a few hundred at the beginning of the 19th Century to peak at over 400,000 in 1931. The bulk of migration inwards in those times was from Essex and the other Eastern Counties, although people from all over the British Isles, Jews from Eastern Europe, black people from Africa, Asia and the Caribbean were also present in

significant numbers by the end of the First World War.
Since the 1930's the population has halved, as large
numbers of those who had the choice decided to move
out to suburbs and New Towns in Essex and beyond.
However, according to the census in the 10 years
between 1981 and 1991 the decline in Newham's
population slowed down to less than 5% in the decade.
This was one of the lowest rates of decline among the
inner London boroughs; only our neighbour Tower
Hamlets had an increased population. Newham still had
a nett 13.3% out migration rate over the decade; only
four boroughs (Brent, Lambeth, Hackney and Haringey)
lost more residents by migration. However the natural
increase between 1981 and 1991 of births over deaths
was 8.6% (the highest in London). LBN's planning
department (using estimates based on figures outside
the census) suggest that since 1987 the decline has
stopped and the resident population has increased
from 206,000 to 217,000 by mid 1991. It is also likely there has been a
continuing small rise in population since 1991 as the booming birthrate
and the building of new homes in Docklands is probably outstripping
the numbers of those dying or moving out of the borough. Forecasts
for the next decade, unless very cautious assumptions are used, suggest
continued growth to as much as 228,000 by 2001.
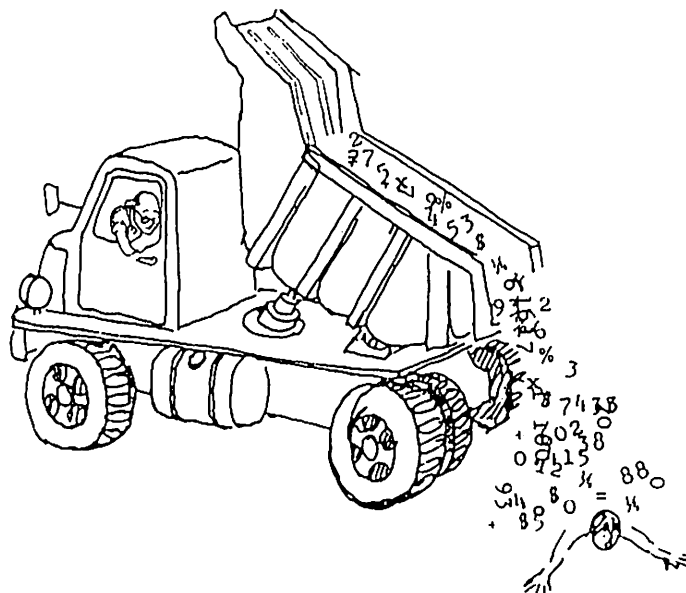
DEPRIVATION

Newham, according to the Department of Environment's latest index
of urban deprivation, is now officially the most deprived local authority
area in England. An index created by the School of Advanced Urban
Studies in Bristol puts us top (bottom?) on an index of *material deprivation*
based on overcrowding, car ownership, and lack of amenities and
central heating; and 10th on an index of *social deprivation* based on
unemployment, lone parenthood, youth unemployment, single
pensioners, limiting long term illness and dependents in the house-
hold. Many types of poverty are indicated by these figures.
Newham scores particularly badly on:

    households with no car (ranked 12th at 53.5%)
    unemployment (19.6% ranking 5th in the national table)
    overcrowding (7.6 of households at more than 1 person
    per room, ranking 2nd in London)
    households lacking or sharing a bath and/or indoor WC
    (worst of all London boroughs at 4.8%).

AGE GROUPS

Newham is young, with 17.7% of households
containing children under 5, (19,000 such chil-
dren, equalling 9% of the population) putting
us well at the top of this national league table.
8.1% of households have 3 or more children
under 16 (only exceeded by Tower Hamlets).
However we must remember that there are
still many people of pensioner age (29,323 in
all, 10,803 of whom live alone) and that they
face high levels of deprivation. 74% of pension-
er households have no car, 33% no central
heating and 9% no bath and/or inside WC of
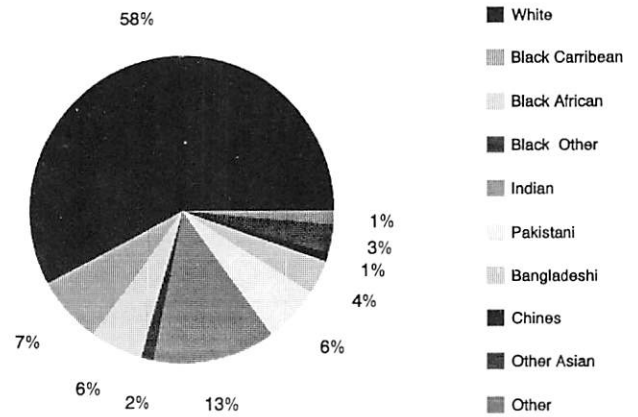their own.

LBN AGE/SEX PROFILE

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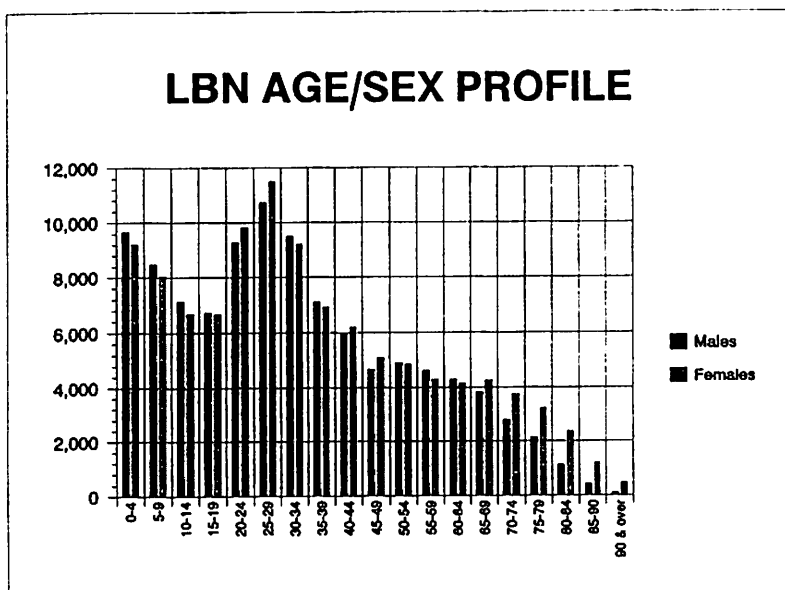
ETHNICITY

Newham has the second highest level of ethnic minority residents of all Local Authorities in Britain (after Brent) with 42% non-whites.

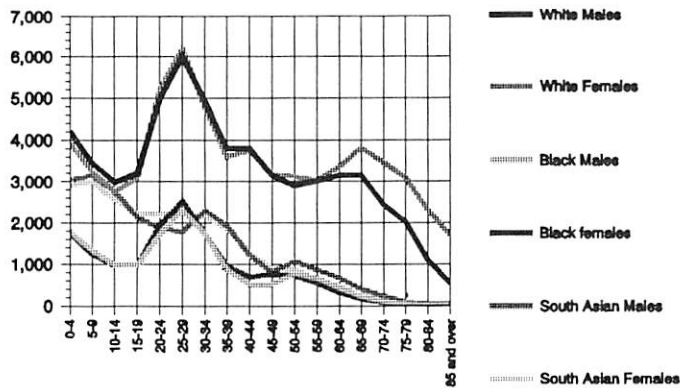Moreover the borough is ethnically diverse as the pie chart on the right shows.

LBN ETHNICITY 1991 CENSUS

58%

1%
3%
1%
4%

7%

6%

6% 2% 13%

- ■ White
- ▦ Black Carribean
- ▨ Black African
- ■ Black Other
- ▩ Indian
- ░ Pakistani
- ▨ Bangladeshi
- ■ Chines
- ■ Other Asian
- ▩ Other

Interesting details of the smaller groupings do not show up on this diagram; for example there are over 1500 residents who were born in the Phillipines, and large and growing numbers of refugees from Sri Lanka, Kurdistan, Somalia, Zaire and other African countries.

The age/sex profiles for the various ethnic groups show that on the whole the minority ethnic groups are much younger than the whites and have clear generational peaks corresponding to the main time of arrival of young adult immigrants, and the subsequent birth of their children and grandchildren.

AGE/SEX BY RACE

- White Males
- White Females
- Black Males
- Black females
- South Asian Males
- South Asian Females

In this graph one notes the extra numbers of white elderly people, especially women and the small peak of black people in their fifties (immigrants in early 1960's).

AGE/SEX SOUTH ASIAN GROUPS

- Indian Males
- Indian females
- Pakistani Males
- Pakistani Females
- Bangladeshi Males
- Bangladeshi Females
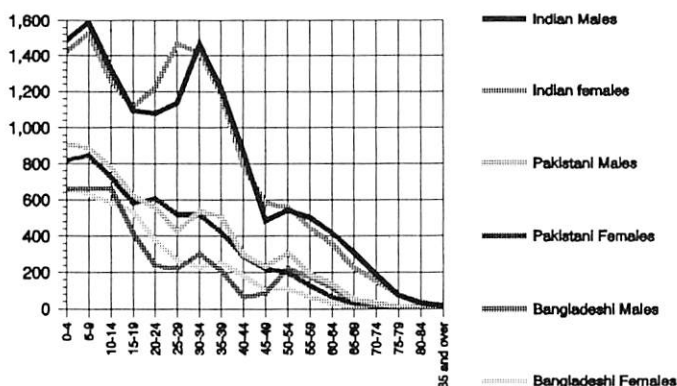
In this diagram the high proportion of children in the South Asian Communities is evident. There are some interesting gender imbalances in particular groups which probably reflect the tendency for older men to marry younger women. The Indian ethnic group appears to have a somewhat more balanced age profile than the Bangladeshi or Pakistani groups.

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In this diagram Africans are seen to be almost entirely young adults and their children, a pattern typical of recent migrants. The Caribbean group in contrast has large numbers of middle aged people, and even larger proportions of young adults. The shortfall of young Caribbean males is best explained by the LRC's theory of undercounting/ non-coperation with the census. The 'Black Other' category is almost entirely children and young people and will include those calling them- selves 'Black British' as well as the children of mixed race partnerships.

AGE/SEX BLACK GROUPS

Legend:
- Caribbean Males
- Caribbean Females
- African Males
- African Females
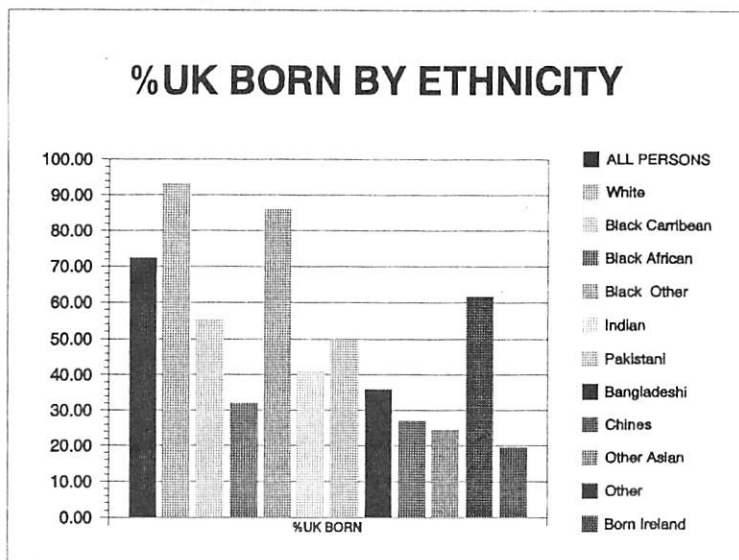- Other Black Males
- Other Black Females
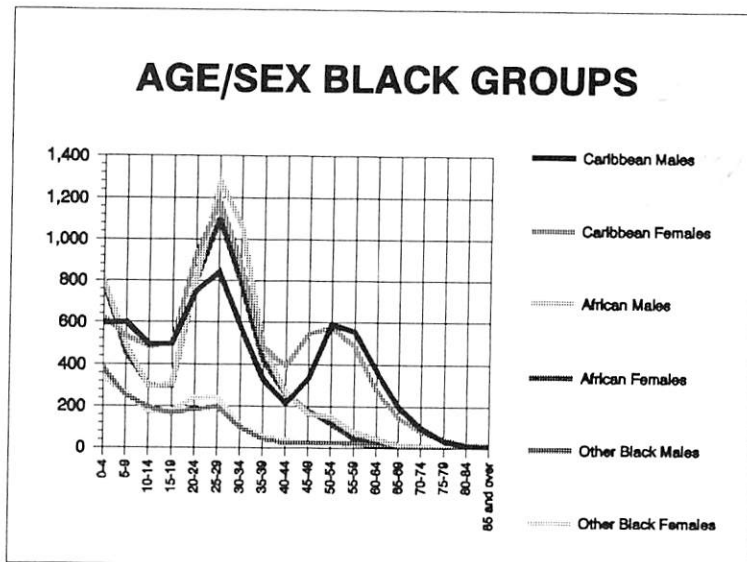
This diagram shows the proportion of each ethnic group born in the U.K. The proportion is 70% overall and highest in the white and 'black other' groups.

%UK BORN BY ETHNICITY

Legend:
- ALL PERSONS
- White
- Black Carribean
- Black African
- Black Other
- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chines
- Other Asian
- Other
- Born Ireland

RECENT MIGRATION/POPULATION TURNOVER

22,464 Newham residents said they had lived at a different address 12 months previous to the 1991 Census. This figure of 10% is not untypical in large urban areas. Just under a quarter (22%) of the moves had been very local (within the ward); nearly a third (32%) had moved between wards but within the borough; 13% from elsewhere in inner London; 14% from elsewhere in the SE Region; 4.5% from other regions of Britain and 14% (1746 males and 1391 females) from outside Great Britain. Turnover rates were greatest in Park and Canning Town and Grange Wards (about 14%) where multiple occupation/students are more common, and lowest in Beckton, West Ham and Greatfield Wards, at around 8%. 56.4% of those moving in the last 12 months were aged between 18 and 34 compared with only 19% of the 35+ age group.

TYPES OF HOUSEHOLD

Newham follows the national trend in having a growing number of people living alone. Single person households accounted for 29% (23,362 or about 11% of the people). This puts Newham in the top fifth among local authorities in England. Just under half of the borough's single person house- holds are pensioners. There are almost the same number (22,963) of cou- ples without children.

For pensioner households Newham is ranked in the bottom tenth of local authorities with only 28.4%. (Compare this with over 50% in some South Coast Districts; nobody moves here to retire!) However we are in the top tenth of the rankings for pensioners living without central heating and in seventh place for pensioners without access to a car. This gives somes indication of the h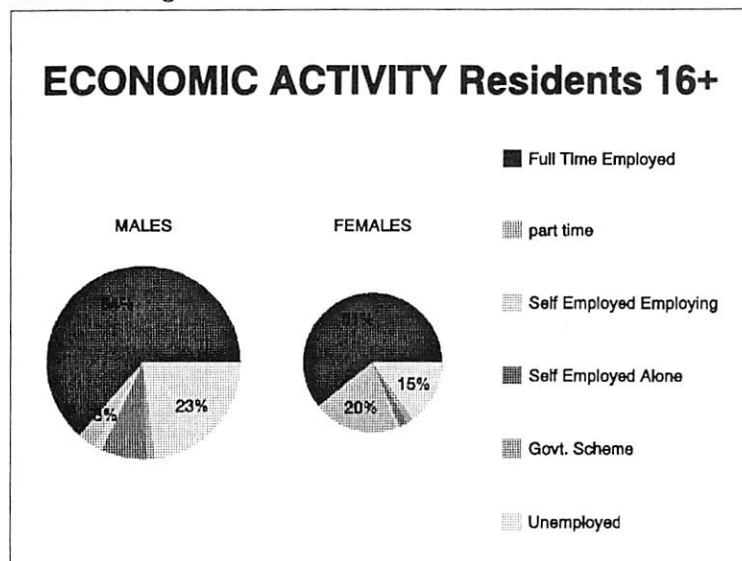igh levels of deprivation suffered by the elderly. Newham has followed the national trend in the growth of lone parent households reaching 5,522 by 1991. This is 6.9% of all households, placing Newham 10th in the national tables. In some wards such as Beckton the figure was as high as 17% while in Central Ward it was only 3.3% (only fractionally below the national average). Since over two thirds of female lone parents are classified as economically inactive, and most probably relying on benefits the problem of poverty for these households is immense. Newham has the largest proportion of any London borough of large households (with five or more persons present) and 6,400 households (8%) are overcrowded (more than one person per room). The over-crowding is concentrated (up to 15% of households) in the central wards of Newham (Upton, Monega, Kensington, St. Stephens) where large proportions of the residents are of Asian background.

EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Only 71.5% of Newhams's adult population were classified as economically active (this category includes everyone who is working or seeking work), putting the borough seventh from bottom of the local authority rankings. On unemployment (according to the census definition) Newham was the 5th worst district overall with 19.5% unemployment (12,476 men and 5,781 women) in April 1991.

Self employment at less than 8% is uncommon and Newham is in the bottom 50 districts. Part-time work for women is also well below the national average and Newham ranks in the bottom 20 districts.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY Residents 16+

MALES FEMALES

- Full Time Employed
- part time
- Self Employed Employing
- Self Employed Alone
- Govt. Scheme
- Unemployed

The pie chart shows the proportions in work by gender.

The employment which is available to Newham residents is mainly concentrated in manual (for men) and clerical (for women) occupations rather than in the professional or managerial ones. Much of the work is located outside Newham and involves inconvenient commuting. There is growing evidence that Newham residents who do get work are concentrated in low pay and insecure employment in service industries and catering, retail and distribution trades.

Many Newham residents face additional difficulties in finding work and in getting employment commensurate with their skills because of the direct and indirect discrimination against Black, Asian and other ethnic minority people.

These pie charts show how the economically inactive population of Newham is broken down into the categories of student, retired, sick and other inactive (includes homemakers and carers).

ECONOMIC INACTIVE Residents 16+

MALES   FEMALES

- ■ Students
- ▥ Sick
- ▤ Retired
- ▦ Other inactive

MALES: 23%, 7%, 52%

FEMALES: 39%, 9%, 44%
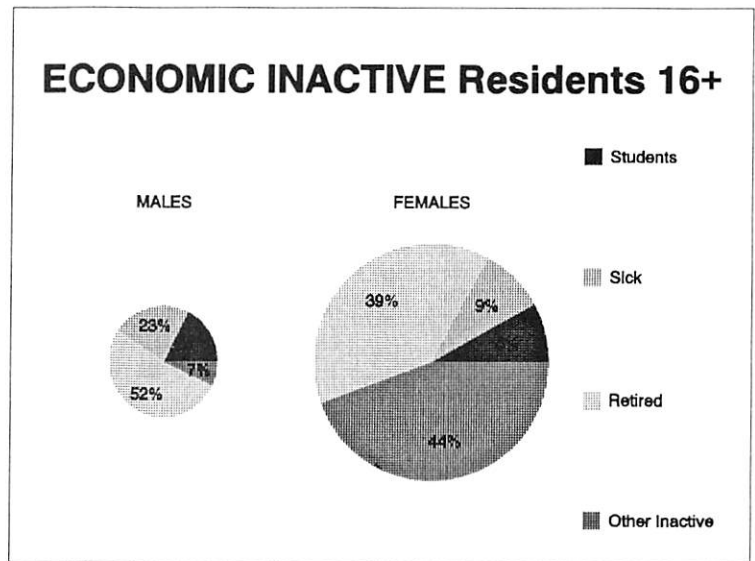
HOUSING TENURE AND AMENITIES

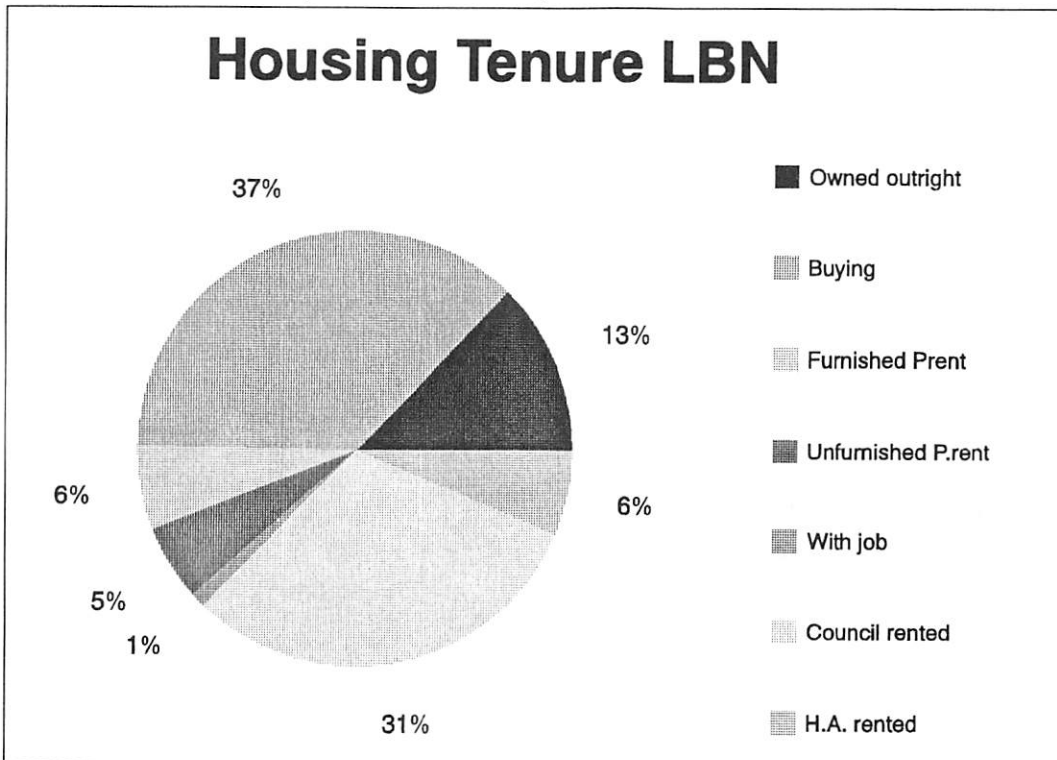With 31% of homes being rented from the Council Newham is 32nd in the national league table and well above average. With a further 19% of homes rented either privately or from a Housing Association the owner occupation rate of 50% is pushed down to 16 from bottom of the table. However this does indicate a growth of home ownership of around 8% since 1981, thanks to the 'right to buy' and the general growth of the sector. These figures do not show the true extent of housing deprivation unless linked with the fact that 57% of houses are terraced homes, mostly small, and often in bad repair, lacking
amenities and over (or under!) crowded. And we still have the largest number of tower blocks anywhere in the country.

Housing Tenure LBN

37%

13%

6%

6%

5%

1%

31%

- ■ Owned outright
- ▥ Buying
- ▦ Furnished P.rent
- ▦ Unfurnished P.rent
- ▦ With job
- ▤ Council rented
- ▥ H.A. rented

Newham has the highest proportion of households in Greater London that lack central heating and exclusive use of bath/shower and/or inside WC. Lack of amenities especially affects the elderly with 33% living without central heating and 9% without their own bathroom and/or inside toilet. The census says nothing about homelessness but in 1991/92, applications totalled 3,117. 1,572 households were accepted as homeless and in priority need. In April 1992 2,605 households were living in temporary accomodation.

GEOGRAPHICAL DIFFERENCES WITHIN BOROUGH

Unlike many other local authority areas, high levels of poverty and deprivation are found almost throughout our borough. Only about 50 of Newham's 450 Enumeration Districts (EDs) can be described as economically comfortable. The area of East Ham South and West of Central Park, parts of Beckton, the Aldersbrook estate (which is soon to be transferred out of the borough), and a small area on the edge of West Ham Park have relatively high levels of car ownership, full time employment and owner occupation. Other neighbourhoods all have some evidence of deprivation. The central belt of Newham through East Ham, Manor Park, Upton Park and South Forest Gate, with its streets of mainly owner occupied terraces is the focal area for residents of South Asian background. The population is extremely young, there are many overcrowded households, many homes with poor amenities, low levels of car ownership and unemployment but relatively low proportions of pensioners and lone parents. 153 EDs are in this category, which can be further subdivided according to differing proportions of the various ethnic groups.

The Council estates, which are concentrated to a great extent in the Western and Southern parts of the borough, seem to divide into two general types. Older, more settled estates (mainly houses and low rise flats; about 120 of the EDs) have high proportions of white residents and pensioners and show low rates of car ownership, with average levels of unemployment and lone parents. Other Council estates (approx 30 EDs), especially those in E15 and E16 with tower blocks and maisonettes, have a younger population, more rapidly changing, with high proportions of· people from African and Caribbean backgrounds. There are extremely high levels of unemployment, well above average rates of lone parents and low levels of car ownership.

The remaining Enumeration Districts do not fall so easily into distinct categories. About 25 EDS (most of them in Forest Gate and Stratford Newtown) have a mixture of housing types and ethnicity but have above average levels of multi-occupied, private rented homes with poor amenties. Most of the remaining EDs have mixed housing tenure (with Council housing in the majority), above average numbers of white residents, and high numbers of young families. A handful of EDs have formed small pockets of atypical residence patterns: for example the Clays Lane estate in Stratford is almost entirely for young singles; a pocket of EDs in Plaistow is mainly private rented homes for white pensioners, and other individual EDs are almost entirely new Housing Association developments for families in housing need.

Implications for Community Work

What then is the point, for community groups and voluntary sector organisations, of examining these census statistics in such detail? CIU sees the work as useful for attracting resources, planning and management at three different levels:

borough wide policy and campaigning
identifying and quantifying the needs of particular groups
understanding and meeting the needs of neighbourhoods

On the borough wide policy and campaigning front, the Census shows very clearly that Newham is the most deprived local authority area in the country and that the types of deprivation we encounter are extremely wide ranging. Underlying this is a terrifying weakness of the economic base of East London, and the long history of Newham in providing cheap low quality housing for Londoners who cannot afford homes elsewhere. The census should give ammunition to all of us who see the need to campaign for economic regeneration of the area, and for a just distribution of any resources that are forthcoming. More immediately the Census points out the extreme levels of current need and can be used in evidence when demanding more adequate funding for both statutory and voluntary sector services who are struggling to alleviate poverty and deprivation. Unfortunately the track record of the present government or of the market system under which our society operates suggest that such claims for basic social justice for the people of Newham will continue to remain unheard.

KEY ISSUES

The 1991 Census also enables us to identify some key issues which present problems for the life of the borough and to which the voluntary sector could be in a position to make a significant contribution. (Un)employment is a major economic and social issue and, although it seems likely to continue at a high rate for the foreseeable future, there is much that could be done. By using the census statistics to identify groups and neighbourhoods which are particularly hard hit, the voluntary sector could do more to offer appropriate social support, advice work, job training and employment opportunities for unemployed people. Leisure provision is also important and we need to avoid the ironic situation where only the people who have no time to spare can afford to pay for it!

The extreme youth of Newham's population also suggests some key areas for voluntary groups to concentrate their efforts. Parents of babies and toddlers are almost by definition under social and economic stress, and the first years of childhood are known to be crucial for educational and social development. Parent and toddler groups, play-groups and nurseries need to remain and grow as a feature of local community life. Children and young people are locally rooted, have little economic or political clout, but do have a lot of time on their hands, which the older generation are only too ready to assume will be used for making mischief! Traditionally children's and youth work has been a key part of voluntary sector activity; in the 1990's we should be pressing for it to grow rather than to be cut back.

OPPORTUNITES AND CHALLENGE

The ethnic diversity of Newham's population is at the same time a challenge and an opportunity for the voluntary sector and for community work. The Census clearly shows that people from black and ethnic minority groups at the national level face severe economic disadvantage. Within Newham the picture is more complex but it is clear that the minority communities are particularly hard hit by unemployment, child poverty, overcrowded living conditions and homelessness. Traditional 'white led' groups within the voluntary sector in Newham need to redouble their efforts to ensure equal opportunities for participating and receiving their services are available to all. But even more important is the need to develop a stronger, well resourced, 'black led' voluntary sector, which will empower the minority to have more control over their own lives and to deliver services which are linguistically and culturally more appropriate to the people they serve. There are some great opportunities here, but also a challenge to avoid fragmentation and the emergence of ghettos in the voluntary sector. There are bound to be conflicts over the allocation of scarce resources between ethnic groups. However, these could be minimised and more easily resolved by the growth of networks of goodwill, based around a common struggle for social justice for Newham as a whole.

SERVICES TAILORED TO NEEDS

Although Newham's population is young the census also shows us that there are still large numbers of elderly people, and that they face particular types and high levels of deprivation. Most Newham pensioners have only the basic state pension plus means tested benefits, so active welfare rights work is essential. The homes they live in are more likely to be in poor repair, badly heated and lacking other amenities. This underlines the continuing need for projects such as Care and Repair, and home insulation schemes. Long term limiting illness and disability is more likely to occur among older people, highlighting the need for more adequate support of carers and better care in the community programmes. With the emerging 'contract culture' there are a range of opporunties for voluntary groups. Also, increasing numbers of pensioners live alone. The voluntary sector is in a unique position for organising social activities, visiting schemes and emergency alarms to tackle the effects of loneliness. At the moment the majority of elderly are white, but future years will see increasing numbers of first Afro-Caribbean then South Asian elders who will need services tailored to their needs and cultures.

"...even more important is the need to develop a stronger, well resourced, 'black led' voluntary sector, which will empower the minority to have more control over their own lives and to deliver services which are linguistically and culturally more appropriate to the people they serve"

A Changing Community

In addition to these "hard facts" and figures, the census gives us some hints about the changing nature of 'community' life, which community development workers ignore at their peril. First there is a high degree of mobility in at least a substantial proportion of Newham's population. There are many families whose younger generations no longer live locally, and many young families whose have moved away from their kin to live in Newham. Large numbers of Newham adults do not work locally, but use the place only as a dormitory, and a place for privatised consumption. Increasing numbers of people - old and young - live alone. Surveys show that people have limited contact with neighbours and have great fears of strangers and of crime. The rising number of lone parents is a reflection of changing attitudes to marriage and the family. The myths of East End wartime community when everyone left their front door open may be more nostalgia than reality, and the doomsday scenarios of urban social disintegration may be overplayed. However, no one can deny that these facts added together present a considerable challenge to those of us who are committed to community development, to good neighbourly relations and to participation in public life. There can be little hope for the future of Newham unless community work is successful at bringing people together in a mutual effort to tackle the problems which affect us all.

"There can be little hope for the future of Newham unless community work is successful at bringing people together in a mutual effort to tackle the problems which affect us all."

Planning from the Facts

Finally we need to consider how the census findings can help in the planning of community work at the neighbourhood level. This is of course particularly relevant to groups working out of a community centre, or on a patch defined by parish or other administrative boundaries, or to those offering services to the people of a particular catchment area (e.g. City Challenge). Local small area statistics would help answer questions such as, "Are our services in the right place?" or, "Does our work cater for the real and priority needs of people in our neighbourhood?" or, "Why does no-one from the Gasworks Street area come to our meetings?". For example there would seem to be little point in offering a service to the Asian elders of a neighbourhood if the census showed that there were less than ten Asians aged over 60 in the ward! More plausible is the situation where (for example) a church is lamenting the numerical decline of its Sunday School, and people are saying, "But there are no children these days" The census would show that almost everywhere in Newham there are lots of children; it may be of course (as in this case) that the service on offer no longer meets the needs of a changed population (e.g. most of the children may be Muslim). In cases like this the census can show that it is the organisation that needs to change to become more relevant to the local people.

Catalyst for Change

Most of the local groups that ask CIU for Census based information are keen to use it as evidence for funding applications. Of course this is legitimate and necessary. However, in CIU we are keen that more people become aware of the social conditions of their locality, and believe that looking at the census data for your neighbourhood in some detail can be a catalyst in organisational and community change. The Census of course cannot tell you everything, and in many cases you will need to do your own research. CIU has already worked with a number of groups, in particular churches, to help them carry out surveys of residents, and of key people in their area. We have lots of experience and resources for neighbourhood profiling and are always ready to talk with groups who want to find out more.

This article was based on original research on the Census files made available to University of East London through Manchester University Computer Centre. The Census data itself remains Crown Copyright. Other sources of information include publications of London Borough of Newham Planning and Social Services department, the London Research Centre, and *People and Places; a 1991 Census Atlas of England*, by Ray Forest and Dave Gordon, published by the School of Advanced Urban Studies, Bristol University.

Government Urban Policy

Colin Marchant

If you live or work in an inner city area like Newham you experience the pressures, confusion and opportunities of urban life. You ask the questions. Is there anyone in control? Who makes the decisions? What is really happening? What shapes our lives? The feelings and the questions are not new.

Back in 1859 the Noxious Industries Bill compelled unpleasant industries (oil, bonemeal, perfume, etc.) to move eastwards across the River Lea and base themselves in West Ham. London - as it then was - benefited from Government policy; West Ham (as so often) suffered. But policies do respond to realities. The traditional English Poor Law provision for the unemployed and poor within the confines of a parish structure broke down under the weight of population movement and consequent distress in areas like West Ham and East Ham. The Local Government Bill of 1929 grew out of the recognition that local concerns were also national responsibilities - and was to lead, eventually, to the Welfare State.

THREE-FOLD AGENDA

Urban policies as we now know them address a three-fold agenda - **the environment, economic resources** and the **quality of life**. **Environmental renewal** is the visible consequence of policies that initiate, stimulate and support the rebuilding and reshaping of the physical aspects of our lives - whether that be housing, roads, factories or the use of the docks. **Financial investment** from both public and private funding fuels the process of regeneration - leading to the creation of new jobs or the tackling of community problems. **Quality of life** is lifted or lowered by the nature of the environment and the availability of resources - whether the area is education or leisure, home or transport. At the receiving end we are all involved. But that involvement is wider. Many of us also share in the creation or the carrying out of urban policies that directly affect lives and environment in Newham - especially those reading this article!

LOCAL INVOLVEMENT

Urban policies are not the monopoly of central government. Local authorities, with support from central government and in partnership with the private sector, are active - the Economic Development Unit of Newham is one example. Private firms, individually or linked with others through Business in the Community, have encouraged enterprise or stimulated economic regeneration - the East London Partnership is the local flag-carrier. The voluntary sector, usually with
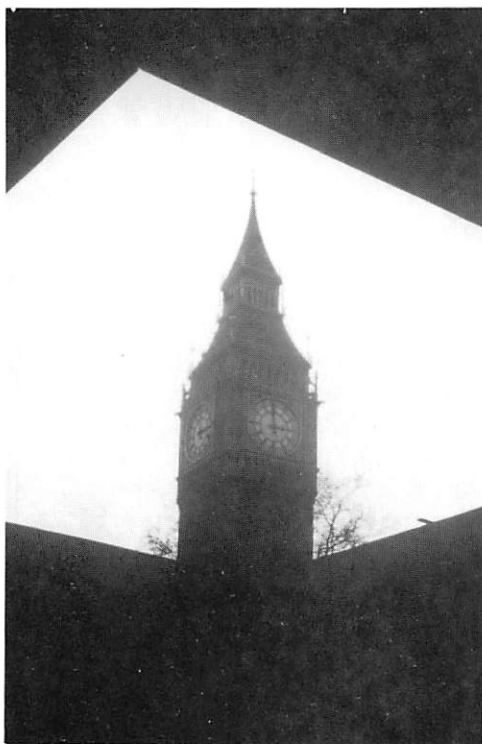
support from the local authority, business or trust funds, is responsible for scores of local schemes right across Newham. The Churches are increasingly involved in both the politics and practice of urban policy - the Church Urban Fund is a national response with local application in a variety of projects.

IMPROVEMENT OR DETERIORATION?

But many of these policies are linked with massive national Government initiatives. The box summary of these initiatives comes from *Urban Trends 1*, a report on Britain's deprived urban areas, an independent publication by the Policy Studies Institute (1992), which looked at the impact of 15 years of government policies upon conditions in the inner cities and other deprived urban areas of Great Britain.

Government Initiatives for Inner Cities

1968	Urban Programme launched
1977	White paper, 'Policy for the inner Cities
1978	Inner Urban Areas Act; first urban programme authorities designated.
1979	Priority Estates Policy launched by Department of the Environment (DOE)
1981	First two Urban Development Corporations created in Merseyside and London Docklands
1982	Derelict Land Act; Urban Development Grant initiated
1985	First City Action Teams set up (DOE)
1986	First Task Forces set up (Department of Trade and Industry
1987	Estate Action launched by DOE
1988	Action for Cities launched (March)
1988	Training and Enterprise Councils announced (Employment Department)
1991	City Challenge launched (DOE)
1992	Urban Regeneration Agency launched
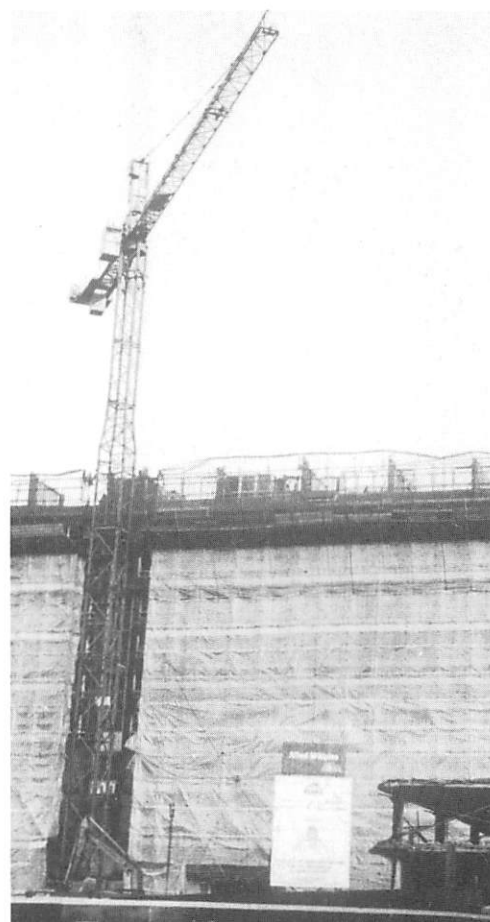
"The gap between conditions and opportunities in deprived areas... remains as wide as it was a decade and a half ago. In some respects the gap has widened."

The report examined how far economic, physical and social conditions are improving or deteriorating in areas like Newham. The agenda covered:

> Employment and Unemployment
> Education and Training
> Poverty and Welfare
> Housing
> Central Government money to local authorities

The conclusions were bleak... "The gap between conditions and opportunities in deprived areas... ...remains as wide as it was a decade and a half ago. In some respects the gap has widened". There have been some advances. Infrastructure has been improved, economic gains have been made, projects and the programmes have been launched. But 15 years of piecemeal Government legislation and action based on the free market, capitalism and individualism has not moved us on. For many people life is worse, not better.

UNFINISHED WORK

Newham has had its share of urban policies. But voluntary agencies funded by the Urban Programme, or ethnic minority needs met through Section 11 are now faltering as resources are cut or legislation changes. The London Docklands Development Corporation has left its mark on the skyline, transport system, industry and housing areas across South Newham - but the phasing down will leave a legacy of unfinished work and a loss of impetus. City Challenge has come to Stratford and drawn together a developing partnership of agencies, departments, industries and groups that are working together to change the face of one district - and this time all major players are on the field!
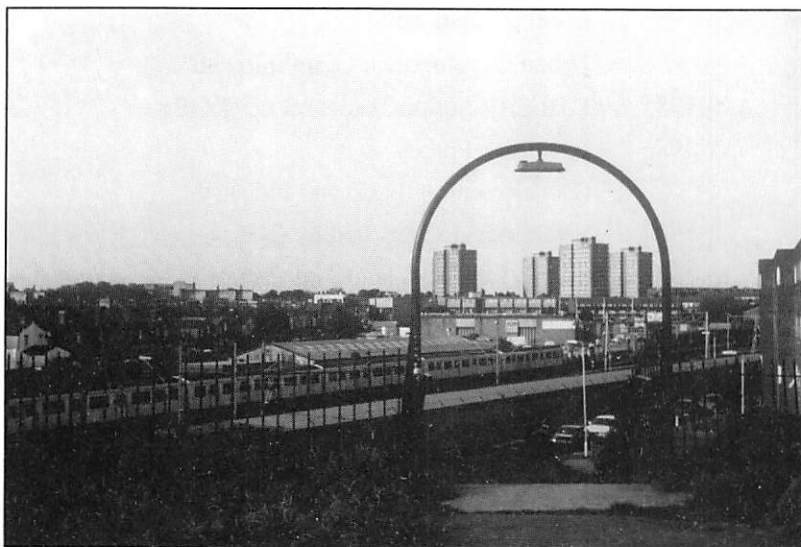
INTERLOCKING FACTORS

We are all affected by wider policies. Community Care and NHS re-organisation are but two areas where human lives and the structures of social care will be marked/scarred or developed/dismantled. None of us can be unaware of or insensitive to the emergence and consequence of national policies.

We all know the difficulties of urban policy making. They are growing, not diminishing. Analysis of, and response to, urban needs is made harder by a series of interlocking factors. They can be set out in shorthand.

Urban complexity - Newham is now a multi-everything! Race and faith. Generations and food. Interests and attitudes.

Ever-accelerating change - the waves of change are stronger, faster and higher. They carry hidden currents and surface weight.

Global interlocking - world agendas and peoples are with us; the European Community will reach into many parts of our living; the East Thames corridor is coming.

Lack of resources - the *Newham Needs* campaign is fighting for a fairer share of limited economic allocation; 'cuts' is a common word and a hurtful experience.

A RADICALLY DIFFERENT FUTURE

But there are signs of hope. Nationally, the debate about urban priorities is hotting up again and great forces are locked in argument - and are constantly reflected in the media. Issues of social justice, the quality of life and community well-being are back on the agenda. Locally, Newham Council's *Shaping the Future of Newham - into the 21st Century* begins with the political leaders telling us:-

"Newham is on the verge of a radically different future - with far better prospects for local people and businesses and on the basis of a common vision and a shared commitment to change in a spirit of partnership and co-operation."

and this is followed up with the listing of those factors that give ground for optimism:-

- the very high level of investment in the region's infrastructure.
- a real shift in the perception of a valid and different future for East London.
- a growing self-confidence in the area by the residents and businesses of Newham.
- the availability of highly accessible land for development.

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SHIFTS IN DIRECTION

Changes are also taking place within the approach of urban policies and there are now trends. These shifts include:-
- a move from 'property-led' to 'people-led' direction;
- progress from 'imposed upon' to 'partnership with' policies;
- recognition that the methods (as well as the amount) of resource allocation are significant;
- realisation that 'piecemeal' must become 'comprehensive'.

The future urban policies are being shaped now - and we should all be involved. It is much too important to leave to the experts - whether they be political or professional!

Research... reflect... respond. They go together.

RESEARCH

On one side informed knowledge and understanding depends upon research. We need to know what is really happening. That is why the Labour Party has launched *City 2020* - a fresh approach to urban policies based on analysis rooted in evidence. The Church of England *Faith in the City* report and the follow up Church Urban Fund had foundations in the statistics and factual evidence that came from dioceses and agencies right across the UK - including a hefty deposition from Newham! Locally, Aston's Community Involvement Unit has a key research section - mapping out the indices of disability, poverty, unemployment, etc. (see elsewhere in this Annual).

REFLECTION

Reflection follows. What is happening - and what does that mean? What resources are required to make an appropriate response? Who are the partners? Where does this fit in with national and global trends? Response will track down several paths.

Community development will mean the empowerment of the disadvantaged individuals and groups and the emergence of authentic models.

Political pressure will lead to lobbying, persuading and arguing for social justice.

Solidarity will be seen in the emergence of coalitions, consortiums and partnerships covering a greater variety of interests.

THE AIR THAT I BREATHE

Urban policies depend upon me. They affect me - the air that I breathe, the job I have (not) got, the education my children have, the roads I drive on, the way people live together (or die) in harmony. Urban policies strike at our values, commitments, way of life and our beliefs. There is a global significance in urban policies, since we know that the future of humanity lies in the urban cities and the qualities of urban living - and London is one small part of that.

FAIR SHARES!

Poverty and its alleviation

Its official. Newham is now the most deprived Local Authority in England, according to a Department of the Environment urban deprivation index, based on figures from the 1991 Census. Other statistics confirm the picture. It is estimated that a third of households in Newham rely on means tested benefits (*LBN Draft UDP* p68), and there are many who are equally poor but do not claim. The Borough Council is currently (December 1992) working on a poverty profile for Newham. CIU's research officer is actively involved in the working party undertaking this study.

A VICIOUS IMPACT

It is likely that the profile will show that the situation is even worse than the official statistics suggest and that poverty has a vicious impact on the most vulnerable people in our community: the old, the young, families with small children, the sick and disabled, the black and ethnic minority communities, and refugees. Low income and debt is bad enough in itself but research (including a survey of claimants - *(UN)wealth and (UN)health* - carried out by CIU in 1992 with help from medical students) has shown that poverty has a knock-on effect to stress, mental and physical illness, accidents in the home and on the street, early death, family breakdown and crime. Furthermore it is clear that inequality and poverty has substantially increased over the last twenty years. Unemployment at levels undreamed of in the 1960's has become a permanent feature; changes in tax and benefit policy have ensured that the rich grow richer and the poor receive a smaller slice of the cake; while cuts to the funding of local government mean that essential services are run down.

LOCAL STRATEGIES AND RESPONSES

This grim context has produced a range of local responses. Currently the **Newham Needs** campaign has brought together a broad based coalition demanding a fair share of government money for the borough. CIU has been pleased to play an active role in this. Secondly there has been a strong thrust for economic renewal fronted by the Council and focussed on the vision of a Channel Tunnel terminus and associated development for Stratford. The **City Challenge** programme is linked with this, as is the attempt to secure some funds from the **European Poverty 4 Programme**. CIU staff have been involved in both of these initiatives. Finally the Council

Greg Smith

Unemployment at levels undreamed of in the 1960's has become a permanent feature, changes in tax and benefit policy have ensured that the rich grow richer and the poor receive a smaller slice of the cake, while cuts to the funding of local government mean that essential services are run down.

"It is estimated that a third of households in Newham rely on means tested benefits, and there are many who are equally poor but do not claim."

has developed a corporate anti poverty strategy, majoring on the work of its Anti Poverty and Welfare Rights Unit. CIU has worked closely with the unit and has a place on the joint council/voluntary sector anti poverty working party.

ACTION RESEARCH

CIU has an ongoing action research programme on poverty alleviation, concentrating on evaluating the impact of small scale local projects, and documenting the experience of local people in poverty. Greg Smith has published a paper through Bradford University entitled *Poverty and its Alleviation, some community based strategies*. We have also undertaken surveys of unemployed people and the possibility of offering them a few hours casual work for which they could be paid a few pounds without breaching the benefit regulations; on the economic struggles and strategies of some Bangladeshi women; and on the experiences of claimants with the benefits agency and with regard to health issues. Reports on all these are available from CIU.

OTHER INITIATIVES

During the first three years of CIU's existence we have been involved in or associated with a number of poverty alleviation initiatives. In 1991 we worked to establish the **East London Churches Homelessness and Housing Alliance.** They are now an independent group and have successfully established a rent deposit scheme, which enables homeless people to move out of hostel accomodation into the private rented sector. In 1992 we worked to set up the **Newham Organisation for Stopping Hunger (NOSH)** which was a response to food poverty in the Plaistow area. In 1993 our networking helped the Froud Centre to put on and evaluate a basic **Welfare Rights Course** for volunteer advice workers. Our key poverty alleviation project for 1994 is a **Baby Equipment Bank.** The stories of three of these projects are written up in more detail in this section. We are also beginning to work in collaboration with Church Action on Poverty to introduce a Newham dimension to their **Local People National Voice** project. February 1994 sees the biggest public airing of these issues and strategies so far with a one day **Grass Roots Green Shoots** conference. Working with a consortium of local voluntary groups and supported by Newham Council we are seeking to bring together decision makers from the world of politics, industry and the charitable trusts, with practitioners from grass roots poverty alleviation projects in Newham.

"CIU has an ongoing action research programme on poverty alleviation, concentrating on evaluating the impact of small scale local projects, and documenting the experience of local people in poverty."

The Newham Equipment Baby Bank

THE NEWHAM Equipment BABY BANK
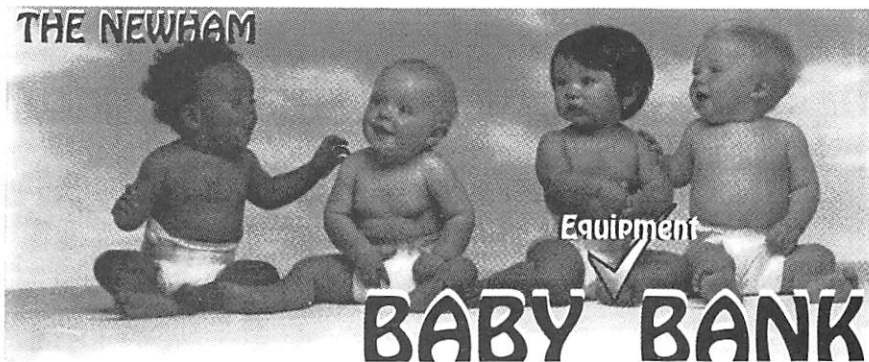
WHY? Newham is the most deprived district in the country. We also have the highest number of under 5's (17.7% of our households have a child/children under 5).

Parents on low income find the cost of babies and small children immense. They often cannot afford basic equipment such as buggies, cots, high chairs, and especially they are likely to go without safety equipment such as fire guards and stair gates. While there is much informal passing on of items in family and friendship networks, and some trade through second hand shops and jumble sales many parents do not benefit from this.

THE AIM: is to provide (at no more than half the second hand market price) supplies of such equipment gathered by charitable donation from people in affluent areas and/or large suppliers. Customers will be those parents who could show they were on income support, family credit or housing benefit.

THE ITEMS FOR SALE would include: buggies, prams, carrycots, high chairs, play pens, cots, stair gates, car seats, pouches & backpacks, sterilisers, bouncers, baby chairs, baths, bath mats, changing mats and bags, toiletstands, adaptor seats, cooker and kettle guards, plug covers, cupboard safety locks, intercom/alarms. Also children's books, but not toys or clothing.

THE SOURCE: Most of the equipment would be collected by suburban churches or similar groups and delivered in van loads to Newham. Local donations will also be welcome.

MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING: The baby bank will be run by volunteers and would be open for business two mornings a week for a pilot period from January 1994. It is a joint project sponsored by Aston Community Involvement Unit, Bedford Institute Association (Homestore) and Forest Gate Methodist Church.

LOCATION: For the first few months the project will operate alongside the regular nearly new clothing stall based in Forest Gate Methodist Church. If things go well we hope to expand to several sites around Newham or to run the enterprise from a mobile shop, with a large van visiting community centres across that work with pre school children on a weekly rota basis.

"17.7% of our households have a child/children under 5."

The Story of NOSH

An initiative to tackle food poverty in East London

The Newham Organisation for Stopping Hunger (NOSH) was set up towards the end of 1992. Its first project, a Sunday Lunch Club aimed at those on pensions and benefits, known as **DINS**, (Dine Inexpensively Next Sunday) opened for business at the beginning of January 1993. NOSH became a formally constituted voluntary organisation with its own management committee in March 1993.

The main aim of NOSH is to tackle the problem of food poverty in Newham. The project arose from a series of meetings convened during 1992 by Aston Charities Community Involvement Unit following a number of exploratory conversations conducted by their research officer.

All known voluntary organisations in the Plaistow area were invited to these discussions, although before long it became clear that the main participants were drawn from Christian churches and agencies in the area. The first discussions considered the possibilities of setting up a food co-operative and/or a food bank. These ideas were rejected because of their complexity to manage and lack of financial and human resources.

OVERCOMING PROBLEMS

The idea of a Sunday lunch club emerged, with members of Memorial Baptist Church making the running as they had suitable premises and a few volunteers keen to do something.

The main problems to be overcome were:

1 **Funding and Premises:** resolved by grants from the Wates Foundation and Aston Charities, together with gifts from local churches, individuals and some suburban Christian friends. This gave us around £1000 which enabled the kitchen at the Baptist church to be renovated and partially re-equipped. Several donors also provided kitchen equipment and skilled volunteers undertook much of the cleaning and installation work.

2 **Food Hygiene Regulations:** The local Environmental Health office was contacted and carried out an inspection. As a result of this we received (and try to follow) lots of valuable advice. Since we operate less than five days in a month we do not need at present to register formally as catering premises.

3 **Volunteers:** A large team of volunteers was recruited, mainly through our networks in local churches. People were asked to commit themselves for one Sunday a month, and to specify the kinds of help they could offer. Among them were a small number of people with professional experience in catering. Others who could not spare time on Sundays were invited to help by doing home cooking for the freezer, and other tasks such as laundry of tea towels. The volunteer list and rota was compiled and kept up to date by an energetic co-ordinator (a volunteer from the Baptist church), with help from their Time for God volunteer.

4 Obtaining Supplies of Food: The volunteers discovered that between them they had a number of good contacts with local traders. By arranging to pick up supplies late every Saturday afternoon we were able to obtain large quantities of bread and cakes at no cost, and fruit and vegetables at bargain prices. A deal with a local wholesale butcher brought in cheap meat. Harvest festivals and other charitable collections provided tinned foods, while stock items were bought in large quantities from a local Cash & Carry. NOSH has also obtained supplies of EC butter for distribution to claimants.

5 Ongoing management: In March 1993 a simple constitution was adopted by NOSH and management passed from Aston CIU (the development agency) to an elected committee who eventually opened their own bank account. With some ongoing support from the CIU the members (comprising everyone who has enough interest to turn up to general planning meetings) are in a position to continue and expand the work as they see fit.

DINS and its Customers

Before the Sunday Lunch Club opened in January we secured good publicity through *Newham News* (the monthly paper distributed by our Borough Council), and by putting up posters in shops, community centres and public buildings throughout the Plaistow area. The cost of a meal was set at £1 for adults on pensions or benefits, and £2 for those who were waged. Children could eat at half price with a maximum price of £2.50 for a family on benefit. To help people who cashed their giros or pension books early in the week we arranged for tickets to be available in advance, while in cases of genuine pennilessness we decided not to refuse anyone a meal. The takings each Sunday are usually enough to cover costs of any food that needs to be bought.

Within the first few weeks the word had spread and we soon developed a regular group of customers. Numbers of meals served peaked in March at over 40 a week including volunteers. More recently they have tailed off to an average of 20 or so. A good number of the customers are elderly people living alone, but most types of people have eaten with us, including single parent families, refugees, young unemployed singles, homeless people, those with learning difficulties and some with mental health problems.

A number of children have been involved as volunteers along with the rest of their families. Although

Customers and volunteers at DINS

NOSH is not an explicitly Christian organisation it is significant that in a number of cases it has been the starting point for other forms of Christian ministry.

One encouraging feature of DINS is that the barriers between customers and volunteers are relatively unimportant. Many of the volunteers enjoy dining there, and benefit from the concessionary rates. Several of the customers have become involved as fairly regular volunteers, helping with washing up, serving tea and attending planning meetings.

For further information about DINS, please contact Elsie Lewis on 071 476 5987

An Evaluation of the Froud Centre Introductory Welfare Rights Course

In May and June 1993 the Froud Centre, at the suggestion of CIU, put on a short introductory welfare rights course. The trainer was Iris Hendry of DISAT, a local welfare rights group specialising in benefits for disabled people. The course was 4 x 2.5 hour sessions spread over four weeks. It aimed to be a general introduction to welfare rights issues, covering what benefits were available to whom. Because of the tutor's expertise and recent changes in the system there was some emphasis on disability benefits.

MOTIVES AND HOPES

3 people came from Asian Elders Advice Desk, 2 from Children's Society team (one working as an adviser to students in Tower Hamlets) and one was a local woman, unemployed but a volunteer at the Froud Centre with interest and involvement with pensioners groups. Two were white, four Asian, 3 male and 3 female. Most had some experience of advice giving, at least informally, but none had previous formal welfare rights training. Motives and hopes were mainly to get a general grounding in benefits available. Participants generally realised the importance of access to information, and the complexity of the system.

A CLEAR BASIC OVERVIEW

Everyone we talked to was appreciative of the course, which had given them clear basic overview and at least left them with some idea of where to find out further details. Many felt the course was too short; more input plus more practice cases would have been helpful. There was just too much to take in. Advice workers need a huge range of general knowledge not just about benefits but also about housing, the NHS, schools etc etc.

The handouts and charts for calculating benefits were well received. Examples of cases were usually relevant to the caseload participants were dealing with. The most difficult things to understand included deductions which ensure claimants do not get the same money twice; and why it is better for one partner rather than the other to claim certain benefits.

The information which was new included:
    Income Support for owner occupiers re mortgages;
    The new Disability benefits;
    Mobility and Attendance allowances;
    Family Credit rules.

Varying Agendas

Because the course was so short some of the participants did not yet feel confident enough to 'fly solo' in giving advice. They needed more practice at filling in forms, perhaps a chance to observe experienced advice workers in action.

The Asian Elders group seemed to see advice giving as far wider than welfare rights work, almost in terms of general lifeskills education for their customers. Other participants had narrower agendas and realised they needed training on specific issues, perhaps to attend CPAG or CAB training before they dare advertise their services.

Need for basics

There was a feeling that if participants as potential advice givers had found coming to terms with the benefits system rather difficult, then claimants were likely to be already too stressed up to take much in, other than their own case. On the other hand there was a strong belief from the Asian Elders that people in their community needed every opportunity to find out the basics about social welfare in the widest sense, above all to discover where to go to for help and reliable information/ advice about their problems.

Recommendations

There does appear to be a market and a useful role for this type of taster welfare rights course and it could no doubt be replicated. However it seems clear that training for advice workers needs to be more detailed. The options seem to be that people go on longer 'professional' welfare rights training, or that a series of short courses concentrating on particular issues - e.g. benefits for OAPs, for single parents, disabled people, housing benefits, young unemployed, homeless - be put on.

As for a wider public/informing people of their entitlements, the taster course may be too advanced. Perhaps what is needed is more of an outreach strategy to groups which are already meeting, at the level of "Did you know that you might be entitled to...", or testimonies - "Mrs Bloggs went to the advice centre and since then she's been getting an extra £10 a week".

Where the poor pay more...

Food & household
✗ No access/transport to cheap supermarkets, or fresh food markets
✗ No bulk buying or stocking up
✗✗ Lack of freezer storage
✗✗ Limited cooking equipment, skills, time mean dear processed or takeaway food. Junk diet means poor health, no money for special diets

Clothes & Domestic Equipment
 Catalogue and HP shopping with interest
✗ Renting TV's/washing machines costs more long term
✗✗ Crippling repair bills
✗ Lower quality goods need replacing sooner
 Safety issues with second hand/old equipment

Transport
✗ Costs of bus or cab fares and inconvenience (no lease cars, rarely even bikes)
✗ Some housing estates badly located for transport links
✗✗ Travel to work - can't afford cheap rate season tickets

Housing
✗ No tax relief on mortgages if you are a tenant
✗ Council tax & water rates (may be above average especially in London)
✗ Huge deposits/key money for private renting disrepair but poor/slow repairs from landlords/Council overcrowding

Fuel costs:
✗ Depend on expensive electricity because of existing heating systems or lower cost equipment
✗ Standing charges are a higher proportion of bill.
✗ Standing charges are higher for key meters
✗ Poor insulation
✗✗ Connection/disconnection charges and deposits

Finance
✗ Bank charges more likely e.g. for stopped cheques, or because balances below a threshold
✗ Low usage of banks, building societies or other investments
✗ No reserve fund for emergencies
✗ Poor credit ratings
✗ High cost credit/loan sharks
✗ Social fund loans
✗ Higher premium or no insurance
✗ Greater risk of theft, burglary etc

Why the poor get less...

THE INCOME SIDE

Benefits
Low take up/poor knowledge of rights
Language difficulties (goobledegook and inadequate provision for minority languages)
Overworked inefficient, uncaring, offices (time and cost of complaining)
Refugees only get 90%
Racism
Fraud Squad
Unemployment trap
Housing benefit chaos/limited office opening hours

Low Pay
Low wages/low protection
Home working
Long unsocial hours
Part time/casual work
No extra pensions
Child care costs
Loss of benefit and entitlements to prescriptions etc.

SOCIAL WAGE

Education
Poor provision, poor schools, failure syndrome,
Teacher numbers/ratio & quality
Tiny fundraising base for extras in school
LMS makes finding competent governors difficult
Health
Worse health in general, because of lifestyle, and industrial related disease
Second class NHS provision, no BUPA option
Stress leads to more smoking, drinking, drugs, tranx
Politics
No motivation/participation
No organisation/fragmentation into small interest /ethnic groups
Disenfranchisement
The tabloid lies are believed

A single ✗ denotes a regular extra expense;
a double ✗✗ an expense of crisis proportions.

Information for voluntary and community groups

In the Research and Information Department at Aston Community Involvement Unit, we recently organised a seminar day on the subject of 'information'.

Kevin Harris of the Community Development Foundation kicked off the day by helping us to examine the objectives of our individual organisations. We discovered that even if we didn't have 'information' in our title, most of us were handling it - for our own use and on behalf of others. If we are to achieve the aims of our organisations we all need information of various kinds and at various levels. We do not deal with information as an isolated subject, but as part of our day-to-day procedures and problems, for our progress and development. We need it to respond successfully to a changing regulatory framework, to social policies, legislation and the difficult funding environment. So information is an important commodity to the voluntary sector. Do we accept this? Is it easy to get hold of? How do we use it?

Nicole King

RECOGNISING THE NEED?

Some recent research by NCVO[1] throws much light on a number of issues relating to the information and advice needs of voluntary groups. We might not be surprised to learn that, across the board, fundraising was considered the single most important information and advice need, confirming the findings of Deacon and Golding's survey of 1988-89[2] However, both studies suggest, surprisingly, that groups in most need of information and advice do not recognise or accept this need. Even if a group is aware of a need, it still requires staff with the skills and knowledge to locate it, present it in usable form and to exploit it to its full potential. As Kevin Harris[3] has noted, most voluntary groups lack the time, resources and skills to chase after a commodity which may not be readily available, which they might not perceive as having direct relevance to their objectives and where the possible benefits to be reaped might be hard to demonstrate.

RELEVANT INFORMATION SERVICES

Action from both voluntary groups and information providers is needed to overcome these difficulties. Groups who recognise that information seeking is not an extra, but integral part of their work are frequently members of forums, umbrella groups and networks. As members of a national and/or local body they are more likely to

receive access to advice, information and training and are more likely to be aware of their need for it. However, groups will only join a network which has something to offer them, and information providers need to identify the real needs of groups and offer relevant services. Services need to be published and monitored, noticing gaps in requests, stimulating demand from the widest range of groups and taking account of preferred methods of enquiring for and receiving information.

SOCIAL RESEARCH IN NEWHAM

So, what's happening in Newham? Greg Smith, the Research Officer at CIU can give you more information about the **Newham Research Forum.** Now in its third year of existence, it draws together people interested in social research from the Health Authority, Local Authority, University of East London, community workers, research students and others in voluntary sector organisations. Topics covered have included 1991 Census Data, the Public Health Report, housing and homelessness research, local surveys on disability and neighbourhood profiles. Presentations are informal and the ensuing discussions wide ranging - the main value seems to be for networking and information sharing.

A GROUP VOICE

Forums, umbrella organisations and newsletters form the subject of research carried out by June Comerford - a student on placement at CIU. The initial research led to the creation of a directory, a modified version of which will be included in the 1994 edition of LBN's directory of Community Groups. June's research has shown that Newham's voluntary sector networks provide an invaluable support system and are crucial for the exchange of information. Networking allows organisations to pool their experiences, share skills and solve common problems. A group voice gives the organisations greater recognition in both the voluntary and statutory sector, which is especially important when seeking funding.

"*Newham's voluntary sector networks provide an invaluable support system and are crucial for the exchange of information.*"

Newham Research Forum

ACCESS POINTS

Newham Council has recently established a **First Stop Shop** in the Town Hall at East Ham. This is to be the first source the community will consult for information on council meetings, departments, councillors' and MP's surgeries and for details of advice and help agencies. It will stock useful leaflets and put on displays and exhibitions. It will also be an access point for another council initiative, this time from the public library service.

NOISE (Newham Online Information Service) is in its infancy but has great potential for the voluntary sector. Groups can both publicise their own services and find out about others. It is an on-line database with up-to-date information on welfare rights and benefits, information on councillors and council services and the beginnings of a database for all the community groups in Newham. It also provides access to the public library catalogue and is available at all the public libraries in the borough.

Two other databases of particular relevance to community groups are available for use at CIU.
VOLNET is an online database of abstracts from newspapers, journals and recently published books, on issues relating to social and community work and the voluntary sector. The database is compiled from the libraries of the Community Development Foundations, the Volunteers Centre UK, Barnardos and the National Youth Agency.

FUNDERFINDER is a software product of value to agencies needing to make funding applications to charitable trusts. With a database of around 800 trusts, a simple menu system guides you through a series of questions, eliminating inappropriate Trusts and, hopefully, ending up with 30 or so which are most likely to look at your project.

The CIU library holds other 'book shaped' material on Trusts, fundraising and research. The library has a section on setting up, staffing and managing groups, as well as information on topics such as poverty, children, housing and homelessness. As well as directories, reports and a wide selection of journals, we have current awareness bulletins providing information on books and journals held elsewhere, and help in finding out how to obtain them. CIU is also in the business of producing information sources, its *Directory of Religious Organisations*, first published in 1992, is still available, although about to be updated. In addition, at the time of writing, a counselling directory is at the printers and will be launched in the near future.

"Getting together to plan some practical workshops could be our next step in making best use of the wealth of experience, skills and information sources available in Newham's voluntary and statutory sectors."

Not Many People Know That!!

In November, CIU held an 'information' day entitled *Not Many People Know That!!* It aimed to bring together representatives from voluntary and community groups and some of the information providers in the borough. The overall response was a favourable one. Participants welcomed the opportunity to consider the information strategies of their own organisations and to hear how the public library service, the Central Grants and Community Development Unit and Aston Community Involvement Unit can provide information and support. Many participants commented on the need for further opportunities for networking, and opportunities to exchange information on sources and services. Practical sessions were suggested on specific issues, for example, how to wade through the mass of information available on some subjects, and how to store it and disseminate it effectively - both inside and outside the organisations. Getting together to plan some practical workshops could be our next step in making best use of the wealth of experience, skills and information sources available in Newham's voluntary and statutory sectors.

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The CIU Librarian, Nicole King

THE BOTTOM LINE

Business Planning - the changing needs of the voluntary sector

Probably the largest change in the voluntary sector in recent years has been the decline in the levels of funding available, mainly due to the world-wide recession. Government policy has also played a part with the recent introduction of service level contracts, which pay organisations for implementing specific services, as opposed to the more broad grant system.

For both reasons, organisational evaluation has become of major importance. It is no longer good enough to describe a group or organisation without being very precise in identifying what service is actually being offered, who will be directly benefitting and exactly how much it will cost.

Mark Gerbaldi explains the background to his role as business development officer with the CIU.

CHANCE OF SUCCESS

Unless these criteria are met, the group will have less chance of being successful in gaining what funding is available within the grants budget or securing a contract which has been put to tender. These changes, however, might not be a bad thing! It is not unusual for a group that has been operating for some time to have moved away from its original terms of reference or to have formed what could best be described as 'diminished effectiveness'.

VALUE FOR MONEY

The first phase of a Business Plan has to examine how a group is currently operating and be clear as to what is actually being achieved, as opposed to what they perceive is being achieved. This evaluation will identify if they are fulfilling their aims and objectives, thus demonstrating effectiveness and 'value for money' as well as offering a base on which a future Action Plan can be formulated.

FUTURE PLANNING

Once the current situation has been evaluated, a short to medium term action plan will demonstrate how the services can be developed in line with predicted further changes within the community. These changes may include such factors as the population's size or ethnic breakdown, and the state of the economy. In general, it will mean adapting to continue to meet the needs that have been established.

Business planning →

Evaluation → Action plan

The Organisational Cycle

Implement

Monitor/review

Training & development

Implement ← Adapt/complement

> "*the bottom line is that there is no longer money available for services that are not delivered well, or are perhaps not seen as essential.*"

"Now, what did I do with that £1 million cheque?"
Genny - Community Accountancy worker

> "*If they are to maintain their sources of support, every organisation must adopt a policy of evaluation and planning, to assist in their development and continuously demonstrate their value*"

TRAINING

The Business Plan is an excellent tool for the identification of needs, both in the target group and within the actual organisation itself.
It offers a means of setting a future direction on which to focus, in order to implement the services as effectively as possible.
The Plan alone, however, is just a document that gives a breakdown of what action, if any, needs to be taken.

ASSISTING DEVELOPMENT

A very important trend of late is the introduction of professional support agencies specifically designed for the voluntary sector in order to assist in the development of a group. Such people offer help in the form of consultancy and a training resource, so that groups can address their own needs.
The Business Sector has been using Management Consultancies for years to give an outside perspective on themselves and assist in their development. Such agencies are adapting their services to accommodate the voluntary sector. However, a more appropriate and more cost effective solution has been the establishment and funding,within the voluntary sector, of projects to take on these tasks, which include, for example, Community Accountancy; Training & Human Resource Development; Business Planning etc. The Community Accountancy Project and the Business Planning Officer based at CIU are examples of this approach.

FUTURE CHALLENGES

The implications of using such services are that each group will be better equipped to meet future challenges by keeping abreast with changes within the target group that might affect services, and other developments that might directly affect them as an organisation. They will be able to adopt ongoing policies of staff and organisational development and form good operating practices that will ultimately enable the most effective delivery of services.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The changes that have been seen in some quarters as huge threats may invoke an increase in the effectiveness of operations within the voluntary sector which will be of benefit to the `consumer'. The groups who respond to these implications will still have the opportunity to prosper and grow by securing more than one or two sources of available funding, whilst those who do not react may face the possibility of funding withdrawals. It seems quite a cold prospect but the bottom line is that there is no longer money available for services that are not delivered well, or are perhaps not seen as essential.
If they are to maintain their sources of support, every organisation must adopt a policy of evaluation and planning, to assist in their development and continuously demonstrate their value in catering for the established needs of their target group. It is, of course, not an easy task to undertake, but it is one that will pay dividends in the returns from funders and service users - which is, after all, the reason for every group to exist in the first place!

BECOMING 'UNIGNORABLE'

Community Care in Newham

'Community Care' is the shorthand for a wide range of policy changes in Social and Health services which came into force in April 1993. It can be argued that the new format has brought a number of positive changes to Newham. For example:

individuals have more choice about the type of care they receive and the knowledge that they and their needs are central to any decision made about themselves;

there are effective, accessible complaints procedures for when the system breaks down;

there are advocacy schemes for those who otherwise would have been ignored;

the fact that the Voluntary Sector has raised its status and will have a more important role as a service provider, although in Newham it has taken some hard negotiations and even a 'boy-cott' to ensure that Social Services find us 'unignorable';

there is a large amount of money which is available for the Voluntary Sector to tap.

On the whole much energy has been put into these areas and even more into soliciting the involvement of minority ethnic communities. As a representative on the Black and Ethnic Community Care Forum I have attended a number of meetings for the Joint Planning Group and the Executive Group, and have become increasingly aware of the need to be involved at this level, mainly because I can influence policy decisions and direct funding towards the black voluntary sector

RECOGNITION AND FUNDING

As a consequence Community Care has been a positive experience for many organisations. Goups have gained funding; money is pouring into the child protection area; the needs of black elders are being recognised and are being funded: for example the Black and Ethnic Community Care Forum has had 16 of their recommendations accepted. Last year the Forum did not include sensory impairments in its recommendations but through the work of Sarla Meisuria the need for a worker in this field was recognised. For the African and Caribbean community Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia was the highlighted issue which received funding and recognition in this year's plan. These are a few of the needs which have achieved 'unignorable' status.

Angela Brivett shares her experience of being involved in the planning processes, and her thoughts on the role of community organisations.

WHO IS MISSING OUT?

Yet the question at the back of my mind is "Who is missing out on all this consultation?". The Community Care Roadshow has endeavoured to inform and empower the people and has visited various parts of the borough; I am sure Maghanbhai Patel - one of the organisers of the roadshow - would only have positive things to say. Yet the question is still there and needs answering. There are still many ignorable people, groups and needs. They are the community groups who are happily providing a service but who are not part of the networks known to and sought out by the authorities, and so are ignored.

DISEMPOWERED

This is the negative aspect of the way Community Care is delivered in Newham. The voice of the organised group in Newham has been heard and acknowledged at the expense of the newly founded, unregistered groups.

A whole host of individuals and groups are disempowered by the Voluntary Sector and the way it is responding to Community care changes. Examples include:

disorganised individuals with special needs who live in residential homes;

people who want to live in residential homes in Newham near their families;

those who are being discharged from mental institutions and who don't want to live in the community;

those who have sensory and physical impairments but who are not part of a voluntary organisation;

young people who are locked out of youth centres and who are not readily acknowledged in the plan;

youths who are able bodied but have drug addiction...

The list could be endless....

A SLICE OF THE CAKE

The organised Voluntary Sector has lobbied to be consulted and represented in all aspects of community care. It has seen the need to be part of the controlling structures. So does it follow that the newly founded community groups then need to lobby the 'unignorable' successful Voluntary Organisations for recognition and a slice of the funding cake when it is being carved? It would be a shame if this were so. In my opinion the relevant Forums and networks should be ensuring that all groups are sought out and given access to the same information as the more funded groups.

Let's Work Together

To a certain extent the post of Community Care Development Project Officer based at the Renewal Programme is enabling progress to be made, but the Voluntary Sector is a large and voracious animal and one post can't fill its appetite. The much awaited appointment of a Development Officer for the Black and Ethnic Community Care Forum will help towards ensuring that 'the unignorable' includes all Community and Voluntary Sector groups, regardless of how much experience, credibility and funding they have. In order to help this happen I see it as the duty of all voluntary groups to work together rather than to be in competition with each other and certainly not to be divided or played off against each other by legislation and current trends.

Choices

Development work with people with disabilities

CIU has undertaken a range of work with organisations run by peoplewith di sabilities, including a major survey of their views and needs, completed at the end of 1992. Community development work with groups described below has highlighted some of the issues.

Unrecognised

Able-bodied people who have had no contact with disabled people are not aware of the disadvantages they face on a day to day basis. For example a member of an organisation called **The Storymakers** takes up to two hours to dress herself and is constantly late because of this. She has lost the grip in her hand and finds it difficult to button up clothes and to comb her hair. The frustration she must feel and the sense of hopelessness must be overwhelming yet not recognised by people who take their health and bodies for granted.

Choices to make

The **Association of Disabled and Elderly People** is co-ordinated by a gentleman called Mr Seguya who is himself disabled. Mr Seguya provides African people who are isolated as well as disabled with volunteers who visit and prepare meals for them. These volunteers purchase the foods the person requires and prepare it under their instructions. Mr. Seguya makes it clear that people who have disability have choices to make, choices about the type of food they eat, where they live and their general quality of life. In order to help the people in the organisation Mr Seguya has made it a priority to highlight the need of individuals living with a disability.

Mr Seguya is an enthusiatic and articulate man who is working as a co-ordinator, development worker, outreach officer, fundraiser and dishwasher for ADEP. He is committed to the organisation and to promoting the needs of minority ethnic disabled people.

Only those who know it feel it?

Another unfunded organisation which works for disabled people is **Hopeline** run by Jesse Mutenga on a voluntary basis. This group exports equipment to Uganda to people who have mobility problems, difficulties with their sight (eg cataracts) and those who are housebound. Jesse is busy fundraising in order to enable the group to function efficiently. He too is committed because he has a disability. Is the conclusion then that only those who know it feel it and are committed to changes?

Commitment

The Unit's commitment to equal opportunities means that we are committed to enable and empower people who have a disability to access services on an equal basis to abled bodied people. We will seek to inform and challenge ignorance and apathy with and on behalf of people who live daily with a disability.

PROTEST OR PROMOTE?

Community Development through Campaigning

Satnam Singh

Campaigning conjures up images of protesting, being reactionary and anti-establishment or being negative or obstructive - sometimes promoting a particular issue. Usually it is perceived to be against - 'anti' - rather than *for* something.

While all of these are legitimate ways of seeing the task of campaigning I believe the process to be a very constructive if critical approach to developing community issues, movements, groups and services. It certainly is an effective method of involving people and making public issues of general concern.

TEMPTATION TO RETALIATE

The problem, however, is that by its nature campaigning has an element of attaching a blame or responsibility for the particular concern to be addressed. When this has implications for powers that be and they feel undermined or embarrassed in public there is a temptation to retaliate and persecute those behind the campaign. In fact, a stereotypical or negative label is attached - e.g. militant, extremist, etc. - to groups or individuals perceived to be responsible. I say perceived because often it is not apparent whom to attack or whom to point the finger at as often so many people are involved. Naturally, over time, provocateurs and activists become identified. Another tactic sometimes used is to buy the leaders off by solving their personal problems, or to co-opt them in to the world of the authorities, by example by awarding them a grant to run a community centre. It is rare that a campaign is seen as constructive or welcomed by those against whom it is directed.

AN EXAMPLE: SECTION 11

However, if one reflects into the recent past there is usually evidence of many constructive and positive pieces of work having come about as a result of a campaign that at the time would have been viewed as negative. In other words, it is only after the event that a successful campaign is truly appreciated for its original objectives. Let me give an illustration of such a campaign that many readers will be familiar with on a national and local level :

Section 11 is a section of the 1966 Local Government Act which allows local authorities to apply to central government for additional resources. It is a way of supplementing their provision of services to local people, but is only available if there is evidence of special or specific needs as a result of disproportionate presence of New

"by its nature campaigning has an element of attaching a blame or responsibility"

36

Commonwealth and Pakistani immigrants. Very few authorities were providing full and appropriate services to ethnic minorities without Section 11 monies. Several problems arose:

   a) some authorities were ignorant of such a facility/resource and were therefore unable to promote the services

   b) some became aware and started abusing/misusing Section 11 funds for inappropriate purposes.

   c) some started using it as a way of not having to provide special services from local funds.

Thirty Years On...

Indeed there were many specific reasons for their ignorance, abuse or lack of initiative in using Section 11 monies. The money is still not really being used appropriately in some authorities, even though it is only a question of time before the funds disappear. In the meantime, there have been many changes to the Section 11 guide-lines as a way of ensuring proper use or attempting to respond to concerns on a national basis.

However, all areas will have had local campaigns attempting to highlight their particular concerns on behalf of ethnic minority communities, many of which relate to Section 11 funding and similar issues. The crux of the matter is that over thirty years of community concerns have still not been addressed to the satisfaction of the ultimate beneficiaries of the Section 11 funds , i.e. black people.

Reasonable Concerns

I am sure many would agree with the concerns expressed by black workers (some of whom may have been disciplined), the black community groups (some of whom may have been penalised through the withdrawal of grant aid) and individuals who may have expended energies without full acknowledgement. Why have such campaigners suffered in this way? Simply because the political and bureaucratic system has personalised a legitimate campaign rather than responding to concerns which even the local authorities and central government officials would now accept were reasonable. Surely there is a limit to anyone's patience, if it takes a few decades for power structures to acknowledge their own wrongs? Such campaigns in Newham were common throughout the 1980's, including industrial action, lobbying, marches and controversial seminars. I wonder if Newham Council would see similarities between these campaigns and their own recent actions in terms of 'Newham Needs' campaign? Just as they now target central government, the local communities have been (and are likely to continue) targetting Newham Council.

"Surely there is a limit to anyone's patience, if it takes a few decades for power structures to acknowledge their own wrongs?"
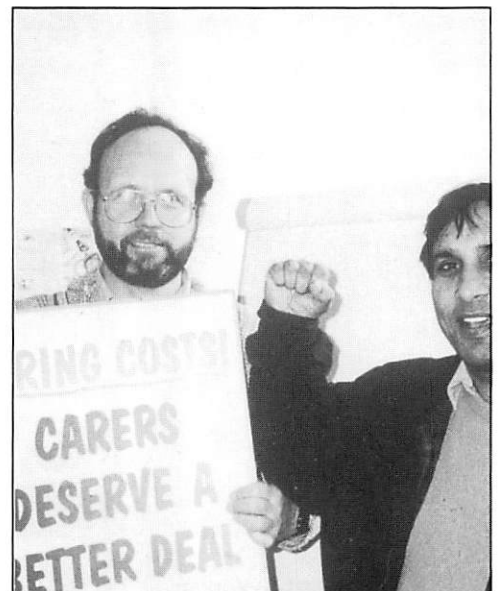
Biting the Hand that Feeds You

Difficulties can be experienced when local voluntary organisations criticise the policies and practices of the local authority from which it receives funding. Although circumstances of such situations vary widely, criticism from a voluntary organisation should not, in itself, be a good enough reason for review of its grant. Voluntary organisations often face a dilemma when they feel obliged to contest a question or proposal made by a local authority that makes a grant to them. On the one hand voluntary groups have an obligation to ensure that their own members are aware of their concern and vigilance, and are also aware of a wider need to inform and stimulate public awareness. On the other hand, they are also conscious that public criticism can be misunderstood by local authority members. It is important for both sides to recognise the different role and expectations of the other. Problems should be discussed in workshops and through consultation forums. There should be no question of simply silencing criticism by a withdrawal of funds, or cold shouldering groups and individuals because they are outspoken. Abuse of power only fuels negativity and causes unnecessary frustrations all round, thus wasting energy and resources that could be usefully deployed for positive action. The key to community development is empowerment of all sections of the community and equality of opportunity in all aspects of life. In this process organising grass roots campaigns can play a vital role.

> **n.b.** The CIU Community Development Team is developing a number of campaigns including an anti-caste/class campaign, *Youth + Violence in E.7*, and promotion of Equal Opportunities Issues. Contact us now on 081 519 2244 for further details.
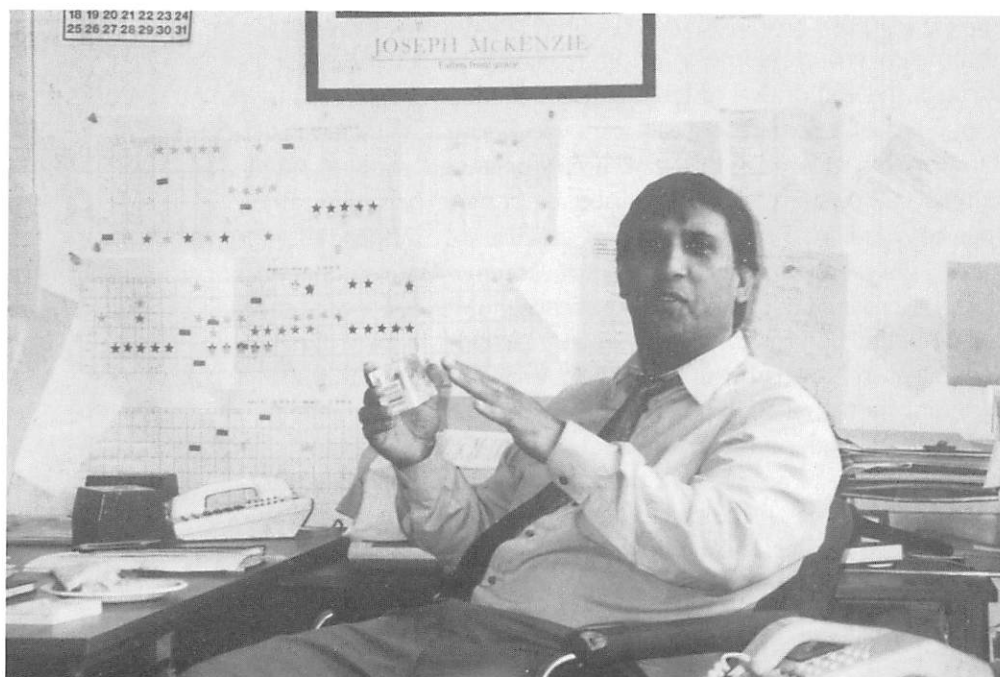
"Every Community Worker needs a daily dose of Vitamin C", says Satnam

POWER AND POWERLESSNESS

A Community Development Work Perspective

In this day and age everything is open to questions. We find it easy to talk about community work, but what is your personal understanding of the word 'community'? Do you mean the network of family/friends you operate in on an informal level?... the neighbourhood community on your individual street or block, where many people may not even know each other?... the black, white, Asian, minority ethnic, socio-economic, class, caste community? 'Community' is a pleasant word, but it has many changing meanings and can lead to confusion.

Angela Brivett,
Satnam Singh
and
Donna Hibbert-Motaghedi

DEPRIVED OF POWER

The philosophy of community development speaks above all of empowerment, enabling, co-operation, solidarity in resistance to oppression and injustice, and of the value, dignity and rights of every human being. For CIU the question at the heart of our Community Development is discovering which groups need encouragement to become involved in improving their own future. They may be people in any local neighbourhood any individual or collective, of any race, either gender, with or without disability. They might or might not share the same values or lifestyle but in Newham they tend to be in a low income bracket, and to be deprived in one way or another but especially of power (or the confidence that they might have the power) to change their circumstances.

TAKING CONTROL

The Community Development worker's brief is to tackle issues of powerlessness and disadvantage and to group people together in order to effect change. The worker can begin with the experience of the individual or group and build on this by imparting knowledge, positive experiences, practical organisational skills and encouraging sharing of power. The group is then better placed to challenge the people and systems which have power and to take more control over their own lives.

> **"'Community' is a pleasant word, but it has many changing meanings and can lead to confusion."**

PART AND PARCEL

There is little difficulty in attracting Development work in the Unit in general, mainly because there are always groups or issues which need highlighting, promoting or researching. But what is interesting is the way referrals have arrived at the Unit's door from statutory bodies and Council departments. We get a few requests from groups who just need information about gaining Charitable status and many others from those who need help with funding applications. All this we see as part and parcel of Development work but not the main object of it. However any group needing some degree of help with funding and Charitable status will eventually need assistance with setting up organisational structures, working on developing the programmme of the group and promoting its work in an effective way. In many cases this provides an opportunity for CIU to become more deeply involved.

EMPOWERING AND ENABLING

Community Development is an effective tool in influencing change for the better for those who are oppressed and overlooked. The question of definitions of the word 'Community' will go on unresolved but through the process of empowering and enabling deprived and underprivileged people, answers and change can come about. *For example...*

POWER AND POWERLESSNESS

for example...

Newham Asian Deaf Women's Group

Sarla - herself a partially deaf Asian woman, brought the lack of provision for deaf Asian women to the attention of Newham Community Education in March 1992.

By November 1992, thanks to her persistence and enthusiasm, funding had been obtained for her to work part time in this project and a group was meeting regularly.

At that time a development worker from the CIU began working with the group. The worker helped in clarifying the role of the management committee and assisted in organising the first AGM. She helped the group to plan an interesting and varied programme, using money that had already been granted, and advised them on where and how to get further funding. She also helped them develop effective evaluation and monitoring procedures. Office space has also been found for them.

As a result of all this work the programme of the group has expanded greatly and the women are finding increasing help and support from it.

The Somali Health Advocacy Project

This project provides interpretation, information and support to Somali People in Newham and Tower Hamlets in the area of primary health care (i.e. GPs, Dentists etc.) The committee came to the CIU because they were facing management difficulties in relation to their employees, which was greatly hindering the effectiveness of the work.

CIU helped the management committee clarify its membership, the roles of the honorary officers and the purpose and priorities of the organisation.

We then advised them on employment-related issues including disciplinary procedures and guided them through the difficult process of dismissing an employee. We also helped in evaluating the work of the other employees and giving them suitable contracts of employment. Our assistance continued with the setting of work plans and the introduction of suitable record keeping systems. Further funds then became available and we advised the group on the process of recruitment and appointment of new workers.

The Project is now operating smoothly with a greatly increased effectiveness.

"We helped the management committee clarify its membership, the roles of the honorary officers and the purpose and priorities of the organisation. "

Newham Refugee Consortium

During the late 1980's to the early 1990's many refugee groups in Newham became established funded organisations. They emerged because there was a great need for their communities to come together to give and get support from each other. As a result they have found a voice in the community which has helped them tackle issues around housing, homelesness, poverty education, language problems, mental health issue and many more.

Most refugees came to Britain because their country was part of the British empire or because the first plane they could get on stopped in Britain. The majority of refugees in Newham are asylum seekers, that is people who have requested asylum but are awaiting Home Office decisions. This can take up to four years, during which time they have no legal right to work or to study, and can only claim Income Support at 90% of the basic level. This of course creates massive problems which lead to severe hardship and suffering as many refugees who have fled war and torture escaped their countries with only the clothes they were wearing.

To help address many of these issues, many established and some non-established groups came together to form the **Newham Refugee Consortium.** CIU staff played a part in the Consortium from an early stage. Along with many other voluntary groups and statutory groups, the consortium dealt with issues such as social security, education, language training, unemployment etc. Many problems were solved by inviting the bodies concerned (eg the DSS) to the meetings, putting questions to them and getting straight answers; on the occasions where thing weren't so straight forward, working parties would be formed and solutions would then be found and implemented.

"The majority of refugees in Newham are people who have requested asylum but are awaiting Home Office decisions. This can take up to four years, during which time they have no legal right to work or to study, and can only claim Income Support at 90% of the basic level."
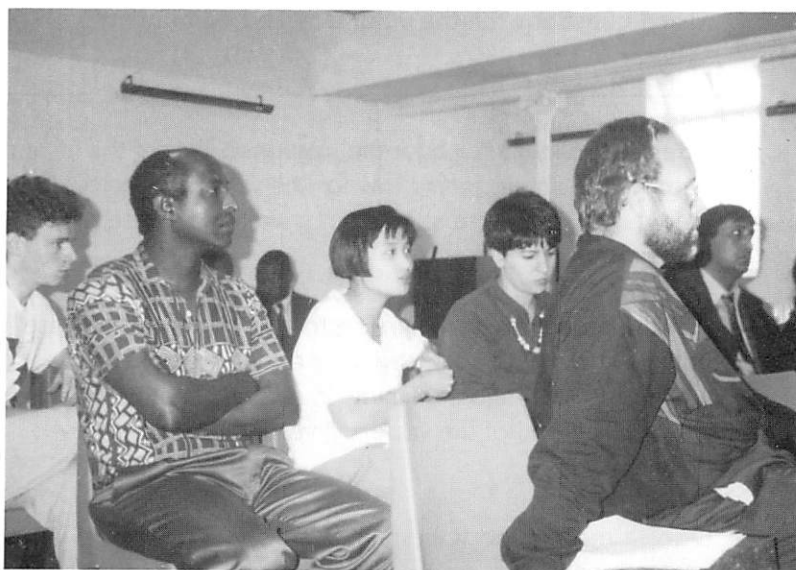
Unfortunately, attendance to the consortium started to dwindle, so in July 1993 the CIU called a one day conference to determine whether or not to continue. The result was a unanimous YES. Everyone who attended thought it worthwhile to continue and new aims and objectives were drawn up. The Refugee Consortium will start meeting again in 1994 with a new set of agendas and an even more powerful voice than in the past. This would not have been possible without the tenacity and selfless work that has been put in by the refugees themselves.

"...they have found a voice in the community which has helped them tackle issues around housing, homelessness, poverty, education, language problems, mental health issue and many more."

Newham Refugee Consortium

HARD QUESTIONS

that demand answers

> This book has documented some of the current social trends in Newham and fundamental changes in the role and ethos of the voluntary sector. It poses some hard questions for the voluntary and community sector in the 1990's.

1. Does the policy to roll back the responsibilities of the 'nanny' state lead to an expanding role for the voluntary sector? Or are we just doing the state's dirty work - pure service delivery?

2. Can the developing voluntary sector find room for the base values of community work which include empowerment, enabling, co-operation, solidarity in resistance to oppression and injustice, and of the value, dignity and rights of every human being?

3. Does a market led voluntary sector which is more professional and business-like in its outlook and more conscious of value for money allow any room for local grass roots community groups to get off the ground, or will all the funds go to the bigger established agencies?

4. Does a mad scramble after funding, in order to survive, actually help the voluntary sector to fulfill its main role of harnessing voluntary energy for social change? Might independence on a shoestring be a more effective strategy for empowering the people, and setting our own agendas?

5. The voluntary sector is becoming more professional and using computers more for processing information and improving management techniques. But this tends to frighten and exclude the poor, the old, women and ethnic minorities. Professional workers will acquire more power and demo cratic accountability could be lost. Is there going to be any sense of community ownership in the voluntary sector of the next decades?

6. The great growth industry of the 1990's is care of the elderly, the disabled and the mentally ill in the community. How big is the danger that workers and volunteers in the independent sector are likely to receive low or no pay as agencies do 'care on the cheap' or compete to provide value for money?

7 Will it be possible to find ordinary local people, with a real understanding and experience of the issues of caring, to sit on management committees with greater financial and legal responsibilities?

8 Who will employ a community worker in the traditional role of neighbourhood campaigning and give them freedom to empower local people in resistance actions to government, council and developers?

9 Under the influence of market forces, are Community Centres set to become another section in the 'leisure industry', with 'sports hall' provision, lettings to commercial nurseries or community care day centres, Sunday commuting churches, weight watchers and aerobics classes? Many such groups are simply too costly for the poor to afford and most do little to foster community spirit, or empower the powerless, let alone to examine and challenge underlying causes of deprivation. Can the community development ethos be preserved?

10 Is there a community - or communities - out there, or merely a set of privatised individual consumers? How can people be encouraged to participate more in collective action for the common good?

Q. Under the influence of market forces, are Community Centres set to become another section in the 'leisure industry', with 'sports hall' provision, lettings to commercial nurseries or community care day centres, Sunday commuting churches, weight watchers and aerobics classes?
A. *Not this one!*

AFTERWORD

Well done for reaching this far, and I hope you have found it as exciting and challenging a read as I have. In closing, let us review some of the main themes that have emerged and then briefly look at what the C.I.U. may have to offer you.

Michael Mulquin

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

The information from the census served to highlight for me the high deprivation that the people of Newham face. I was also struck again by the confirmation that Newham is a borough with a rich variety of cultures and communities and also that there are enormous numbers of children and young people here. It is clear that the census can provide us with a lot of detailed information to help us target our scarce resources in the most effective way. Just today I was talking to the staff of Job Reach, an organisation that supports local unemployed people in looking for jobs. They mentioned that they had been initially placed by Newham Council in an estate which had a very high percentage of pensioners. After a lot of door-knocking with very little result, they had to move their base to another estate. An enormous amount of wasted effort could easily have been avoided by a quick look at the census figures.

ENORMOUS IMPLICATIONS

The chapter on Urban Policies made it clear that urban policies, whether central or locally based, have enormous implications on everyone's lives. All of us need to make sure that we get involved in drafting and commenting on these policies. The need to take a wide and long term perspective was further illustrated by the chapter on poverty alleviation. The different initiatives outlined there showed the need to be involved both in practical schemes and also in thinking and planning; both in 'first aid' initiatives and in developing longer term strategies.

IN THE KNOW?

It was good to be reminded again about our need for information, both to ensure that we make our decisions based on hard facts (rather than simply on vague impressions of the situation)and also to help us make links with other organisations that perform a role complementary to our own - and so to find out about models of proven effectiveness which will help us tackle the issues we face.

"Empowering - enabling people to work together to achieve their own goals - not only ensures that the services provided are the ones that communities really need, but also builds self worth and mutual support within neighbourhoods and communities."

Time Well Spent

Business planning is all about the need to have a much better organisational framework to support the work we do. Many of us in the voluntary sector are so busy responding to urgent needs that we find it difficult to set time aside to look at these issues. However, we are all aware that time spent in planning, monitoring and evaluation and in identifying training needs is time well spent. It helps us to ensure that our resources are directed in the most effective way to achieve our objectives.

Empowering

I think it is also clear that the 'style' of our work needs to be very much a community development one. Empowering - enabling people to work together to achieve their own goals - not only ensures that the services provided are the ones that communities really need, but also builds self worth and mutual support within neighbourhoods and communities. This is true whether it is about setting up locally managed groups to provide particular needed services, or about people getting together to campaign against policies and practices which they believe are harmful or unjust.

No Easy Answers

Finally there are some important questions outlined which we in the voluntary sector to face. There are no easy answers, but I trust that will not stop us considering them carefully. You may want to discuss some of them in your management committee or staff meetings. Perhaps you are aware of other important questions that we need to be facing. We in the CIU. would be glad to hear from you so that we can encourage and challenge each other.

WHAT IS THE CIU?

As is indicated in our Mission statement at the beginning of the Annual, we are working to build an inclusive community in Newham. Our aim is that all people, whatever their age, gender, background, present situation (or any other way they choose to define themselves), will be equally able to participate in community life and will be equally valued and respected as human beings. Our role is not to try to do it all ourselves, but rather to make sure that the people of Newham have the information, training, and support they need to bring this about.

Our work has four main thrusts: **Community Development, Research and Information, Policy Development** and **Professional Support.**

Our **Community Development** work involves helping set up, resource, support, develop and empower community groups in Newham and working with communities in identifying and analysing issues of importance to them and facilitating their organising effective action towards seeing those issues addressed.

Our **Research and Information** work involves providing and promoting the use of a library and information resource for the voluntary sector and encouraging community organisations in Newham to identify more accurately the needs of the people they aim to serve by providing them with training, consultancy and access to appropriate information.

Our **Policy Development** work involves facilitating the ability of the voluntary sector, and the community in general, to respond effectively and appropriately to the changing context for, and emerging issues in, community work. This can be achieved processes such as research, information gathering, the production of information material, the calling together of seminars, workshops and brainstorming sessions and the asking of provocative questions and the raising of issues with appropriate groups in Newham.

Our **Professional Support** work involves providing training and advice to voluntary organisations:
- on matters related to the accounting and management of their funds
- on drawing up Business Plans
- and on other matters relating to the management of their organisation.

If you think that we as a Unit might be able to work with you in any way, or if you simply wish to find out more about what we do, please phone us on **081 519 2244** or write to us at
Durning Hall, Earlham Grove, Forest Gate, London E7 9AB

Main Home Language of Primary School Pupils

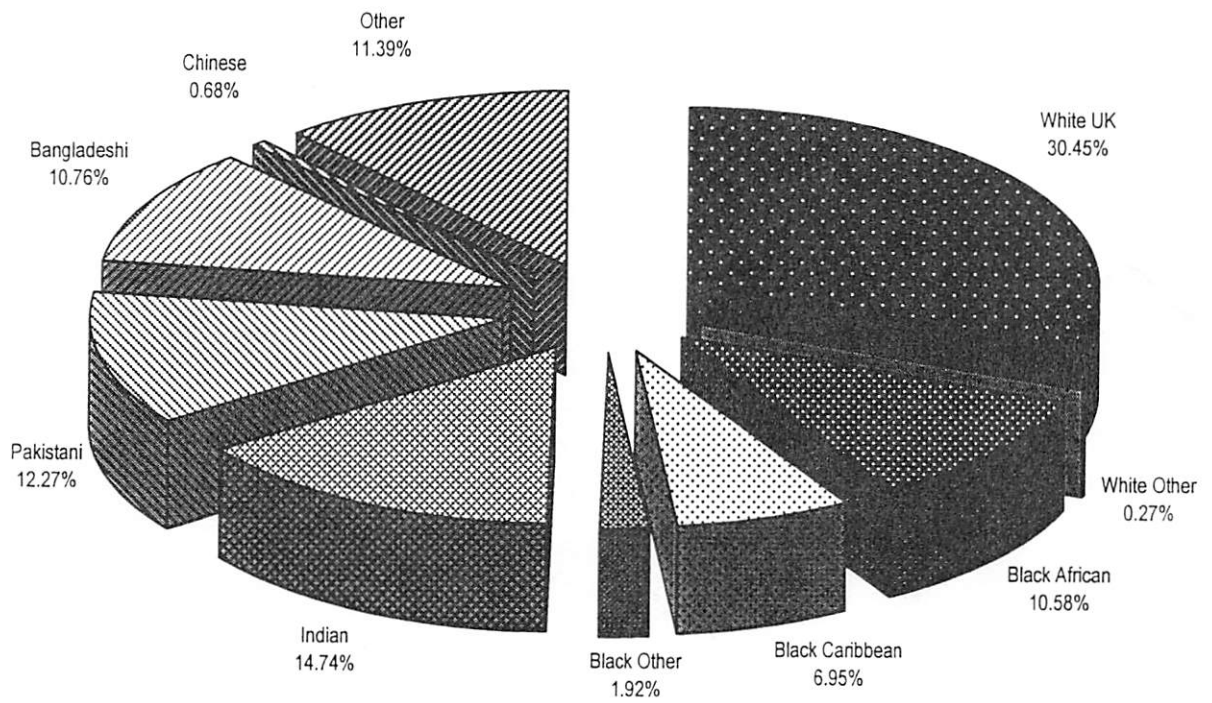|	1996	1998
English	42.60%	48.79%
Bengali/Sylheti	9.54%	11.33%
Urdu	7.83%	7.76%
Gujerati	7.33%	7.31%
Panjabi	7.68%	7.26%
African - Any	5.18%	7.22%
Asian - Other	1.51%	1.62%
Tamil	1.33%	1.60%
Other	1.01%	1.17%
Malayalam	0.71%	0.92%
European - Other	0.66%	0.88%
Portuguese	0.51%	0.80%
Arabic	0.00%	0.74%
Unknown	12.34%	0.59%
Cantonese	0.41%	0.51%
Turkish	0.54%	0.50%
Hindi	0.37%	0.37%
Spanish	0.12%	0.33%
Patois/Creole	0.20%	0.16%
Greek	0.07%	0.07%
Italian	0.05%	0.07%

The significant increase in the number of children whose home language is English may be accounted for by the fall in the 'unknown' category
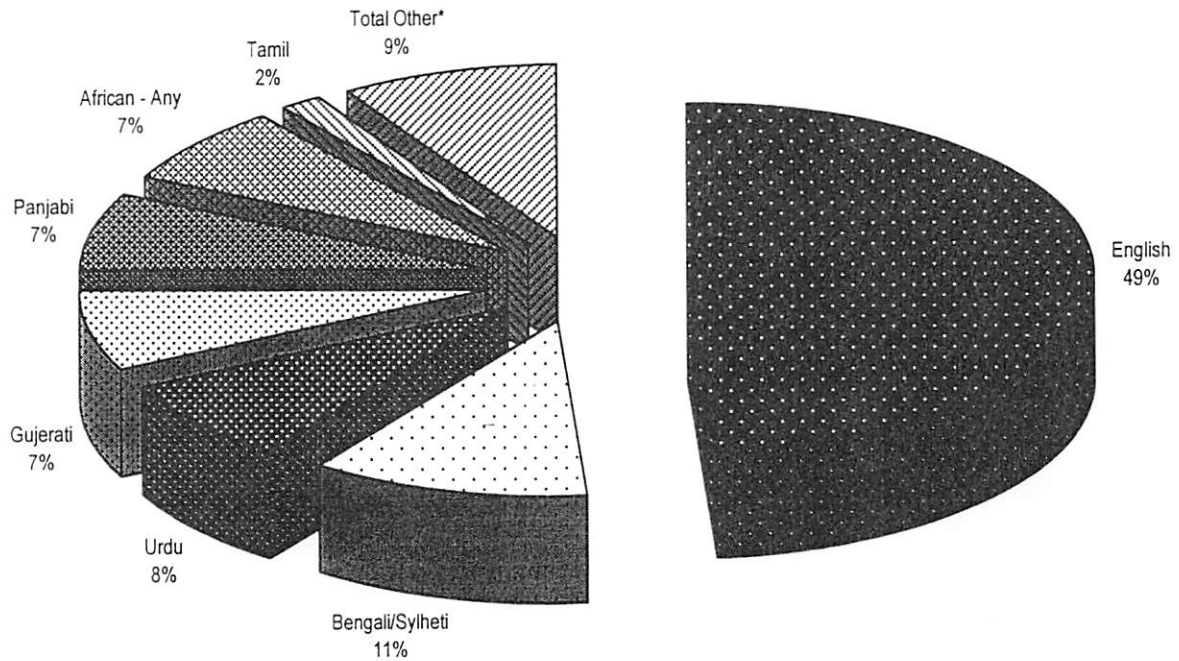
*Total Other = Malayalam; Portuguese; Arabic; Cantonese; Turkish; Hindi;
Spanish; Patois/Creole; Greek; Italian; Asian -Other; European - Other; Other

Ethnic Origin of Secondary Pupils

	1997	1998
White UK	29.58%	30.45%
White Other	3.22%	0.27%
Black African	9.01%	10.58%
Black Caribbean	6.18%	6.95%
Black Other	1.95%	1.92%
Indian	15.29%	14.74%
Pakistani	12.04%	12.27%
Bangladeshi	11.05%	10.76%
Chinese	0.60%	0.68%
Other	11.08%	11.39%

Other
11.39%

Chinese
0.68%

Bangladeshi
10.76%

White UK
30.45%

Pakistani
12.27%

White Other
0.27%

Indian
14.74%

Black Other
1.92%

Black Caribbean
6.95%

Black African
10.58%

Religion of Secondary School Pupils

	1996	1998
Christian	40.91%	43.84%
Muslim	30.44%	29.67%
Hindu	7.80%	6.93%
Unknown	8.31%	6.68%
Sikh	4.94%	5.73%
No Religion	4.75%	4.36%
Other	2.04%	2.00%
Buddhist/Taoist	0.72%	0.73%
Jewish	0.08%	0.06%

Sikh 5.73%
No Religion 4.36%
Total Other* 2.79%
Unknown 6.68%
Hindu 6.93%
Christian 43.84%
Muslim 29.67%
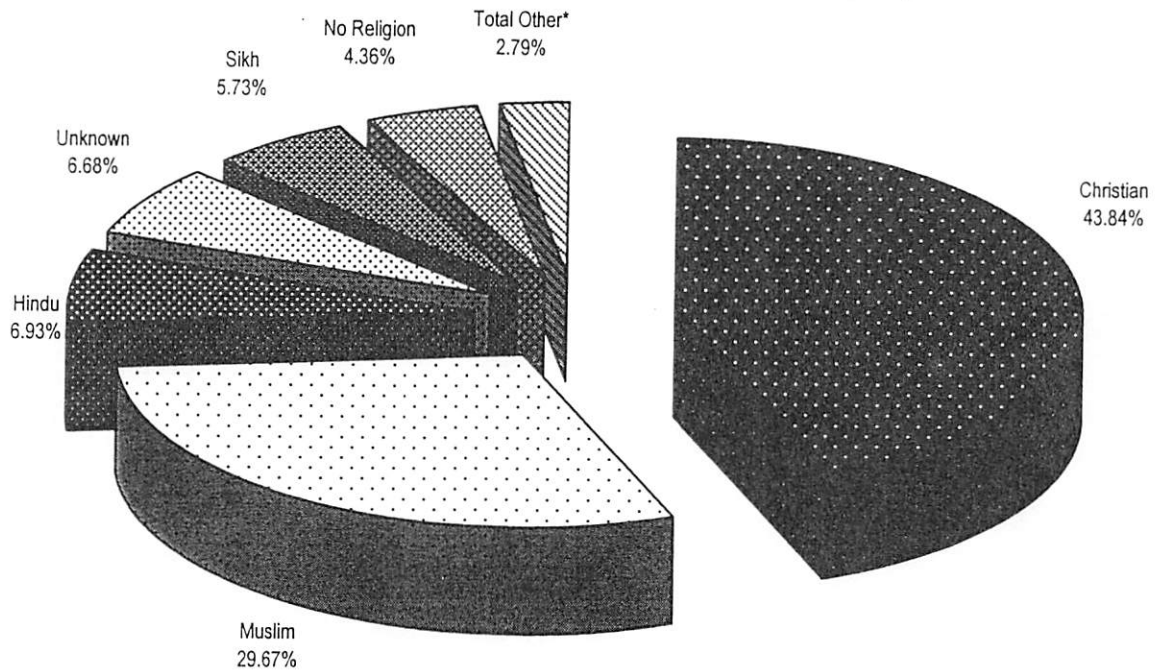
*Total Other = Buddhist/Taoist, Jewish & Other

Main Home Language of Secondary School Pupils

	1996	1998
English	47.74%	48.60%
Bengali/Sylheti	11.15%	10.40%
Panjabi	8.77%	9.45%
Urdu	9.19%	8.75%
Gujerati	8.97%	8.32%
Unknown	3.44%	4.17%
African - Any	3.04%	1.98%
Tamil	1.08%	1.52%
Other	1.50%	1.02%
European - Other	0.69%	0.95%
Greek	0.07%	0.95%
Hindi	0.43%	0.85%
Asian - Other	0.96%	0.71%
Italian	0.06%	0.60%
Malayalam	0.63%	0.48%
Cantonese	0.47%	0.40%
Turkish	0.66%	0.37%
Spanish	0.21%	0.32%
Portuguese	0.55%	0.07%
Patois/Creole	0.34%	0.06%
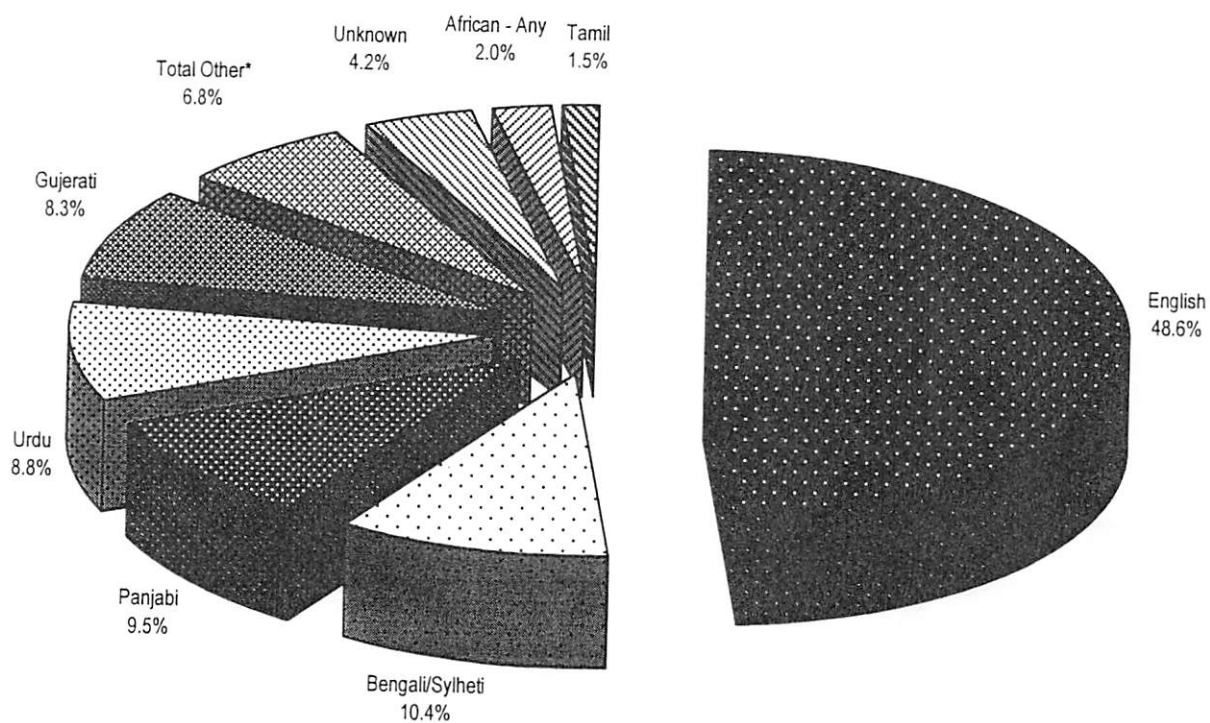
*Total Other = Malayalam, Portuguese, Arabic, Cantonese, Turkish, Hindi, Spanish, Patois/Creole, Greek, Italian, Asian - Other, European - Other, Other & Unkown