

# Working with community tensions in the UK towards a new narrative

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# Working with community tensions in the UK:

# towards a new narrative

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# Certificate of Ethical Approval

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**ABSTRACT**

Working with community tensions in the United Kingdom: towards a new narrative

Linden Rowley

Working with community tensions in the UK has been characterised by tools and systems for monitoring tensions, predominantly police-led. Whilst the aim has been to predict and prevent the negative manifestations of tension and conflict, frequently responses are reactive and focus on short-term situational measures to calm things down. There are questions about whether working with tensions fits with national security, counter-terrorism and public order, or concerns individual and local community fears, anxieties and incidents. International and national incidents impact on local tensions but frequently there are long-term underlying issues which can be surfaced by events, potentially leading to disorder, crime and violence. Current approaches are primarily problem orientated on the presenting issues rather than opportunity focussed on the future possibilities. There has been a lack of learning from experience or from academic knowledge. This research answers the question of how tension and conflict can be a catalyst for positive change and the conditions which support and enable communities to realise their aspirations.

The research was primarily qualitative, with short quantitative pre-interview questionnaires of current perceptions. The approach looks beyond monitoring tensions to explore longer term methods that cultivate peaceful communities. The paradigm is to seek to learn from success. In addition to research into the legislative and policy context, eight Interviews were held at a high level with a police and government officials from the four nations of the UK - England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Twenty-three interviews for three case studies in Belfast, Leicester and Oldham, each with different community contexts to enable more in-depth local level exploration and analysis, were supplemented by local contextual research and observation.

Fourteen conceptual frameworks identified from the literature review are tested against the findings in these seven locations. The research outcomes indicate that guiding change requires attention to both proximate issues and underlying causes, combining both short-term responsive and long-term strategic approaches, grounded in a long term vision, shared values, a coherent framework and whole system approach. There is a correlation between those areas that had a clear future direction and transformational platform for change and the clarity of actors and roles. Visible political leadership creates the conditions through which middle and grass- roots leaders are empowered and supported. The presence of co-ordinators or connectors at the local level contributes significantly to enhancing capacity and resources. The need for equal attention to the dynamics of de-escalation of conflict as to the escalation process is a strong lesson from one of the case studies, but applicable overall. The paradigm of compassionate and cooperative communities, that place a higher value on trust and care rather than being safer or more integrated, shifts the focus to human relationships rather than policy constructs of how communities should be organised. Subjective measures of wellbeing and trust are emerging alongside objective measures of outcomes.

A widening of the current definition of community tension, to include the opportunity for tension to be a catalyst for change is put forward, and a new definition of working with tensions, encapsulating all of the conclusions and findings, is constructed. Locating the work in a wellbeing context is identified as a way of shifting the lens and language away from a community safety or counter-terrorism perspective to one of wellbeing and peaceful relations. Through applying concepts from different fields of knowledge in a new way, together with the lived experience of participants, the study makes a contribution to knowledge and advances a new conceptual framework and narrative.

**Acknowledgements**

This thesis owes its origins to many people I have worked with over the years, from different communities, voluntary and statutory agencies, locally and nationally, who have shared their experiences and stories in preventing violence and promoting peaceful relations. For many of them, the challenges of community tensions, difficult social relations and situations that may lead to hatred and violence are a daily experience, and their dedication and professionalism is an inspiration. The conversations and time spent working together have been a great privilege. I have undertaken this research to try to give something back to them in particular.

I would especially like to thank all of those who participated in the research as interviewees and for their generous time and thoughtful reflections. Their contributions are fundamental to the research and to the outcomes and conclusions. Their commitment to learning contributes to the overall body of knowledge and, whether they are pioneers or still working things out, they were all open to self-questioning and doing things better.

Thank you to my Director of Studies, Professor Mike Hardy, and colleagues at Coventry University who provided advice, guidance, challenge and feedback as the study progressed. They were genuinely interested in the research, believed in me and gave me space to develop my thinking.

Thank you so much to my family for supporting my endeavour, my husband Chris for enduring my many hours in the study, my son Samuel for practical and moral support throughout, and my daughter Holly, whose unstinting encouragement has been positive, affirming and kept me going. If I said I was making very slow progress she would reply, 'well, that's wonderful, very slow progress is still progress'.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Figures and Tables**

Figures



Tables

## Preface

### Two stories

***A cold grey Monday in February 2007***

I had been invited to develop a partnership approach to community tensions for the Metropolitan Police Service. Their premise was that knowledge about tensions existed from a wider sphere than the police and that the responses and interventions also had a wider scope. A basic police system was in place. It was suggested that I go to the London Borough of Southwark, a place that was working quite well in this agenda, to explore with them what needed to be done and what the scope of my assignment might involve.

I was fortunate to have worked in the neighbouring borough, Lambeth, and knew the Southwark Borough Commander of Police from working with him there previously, the Head of Community Safety, who had previously worked for me, and some community leaders with whom we had collaborated on several issues that had affected both our boroughs. So I was looking forward to some good discussions with a range of old colleagues and new contacts.

After an early start and a bit of a journey, I arrived at 9 am to be told that they were very sorry but the schedule of meetings arranged for me was off. There had been two murders over the weekend so all the people I was due to meet were tied up with Gold Group meetings, murder enquiries and community liaison. I asked if I could just hang around for a bit and chat to people in the canteen when they were available and attend any of the meetings as appropriate. As I knew some of the people and they knew me, they were kind enough to trust me to be involved in some of the less confidential sessions.

At 4 pm that day there was a meeting at the police station between about 20 people from agencies and community representatives. The Borough Commander set out the facts as they were known: there had been two murders, they seemed to be unrelated and they were not gang related. Two murder investigations were underway. Community leaders agreed with the analysis from their information, reported that the community was shocked but calm and that the community would like to hold a vigil in respect and support for the two

deceased and their families later in the week. The Council Deputy Leader said he would assign officers to ensure that was enabled. Key communication messages were agreed. There was a quiet but impressive atmosphere of compassion, respect, professionalism and unity.

The next morning the 'Today' programme on Radio 4 interviewed the (then) Mayor of London's former advisor on gangs. Whilst he no longer worked for the Mayor and had no knowledge of the particular circumstances or events, he discussed the issue of gangs in London. Later that day the BBC news interviewed an Assistant Commissioner of Police outside Scotland Yard in relation to the murders but focussing on the issue of gangs.

The cameras moved to the streets of Southwark. People were upset and angry, holding up their hands to block the camera lenses: 'Why are you here? Why don't you come and report the good things we do here?'

By Friday of that week there were armed police on the streets of Southwark.

***A cold wet Wednesday in Nairobi July 2012***

Coventry University, in collaboration with the Universities of Nairobi and Makerere, organised an international conference of academics, policy makers and community leaders to explore a matters in relation to election violence. I was invited to run a workshop in relation to the UK Tension Monitoring approach. Having lived and worked in Kenya for two years in the 1970s I had an interest in the history, a great fondness for the people and the place, and a smattering of the Swahili language.

I decided to use a practical approach and use the Community Impact Assessment tool on a matter of the choosing of the participants. The idea was to use the tool but also explore their issues.

There was a largish group of Swahili people from the Kenya coast who came to my workshop and the group chose the issue of tensions arising from land scarcity in their area, due to a combination of drought, war with Somalia and absentee landowners, be they hotels or political dynasties, fencing off tracts of land. This was resulting in competition between local people for grazing land for their animals and for water. The greatest risk was identified as people turning on each other.

What should have been two workshops became one as the participants engaged in the analysis of the issues, and more joined us.  It was both animated and focused.

A simple tool transferred across cultures.

These two stories represent two way markers.  The first was the start of my policy and practice journey and the second triggered the need to reflect on the many experiences for critical assessment and to draw on academic literature for further exploration and learning.

They also highlight that community tensions exist within a very broad context and that those most affected and live with the consequences may not have triggered the circumstances.

## Chapter One: Introduction

### Aim, objectives and research questions

The intent of the research is to consider the purpose, conceptual frameworks, values and approaches to working with community tensions and the conditions for sustainable change. The aim is to identify a clearer narrative for working with community tensions in the United Kingdom, which will enable all actors to engage in multifaceted, multi-layered and multiagency change in an integrated and holistic framework, with the ultimate purpose of promoting peaceful relations and compassionate communities.

Through a review of the literature and identification of relevant academic concepts and theories, empirical research at a national level in England, Northern Ireland Scotland and Wales, and three case studies in Belfast, Leicester and Oldham, the objectives are:

To explore the conditions in which working with tensions can integrate short-term approaches with longer-term transformational change.

To explore the conditions which enable bottom-up and top-down approaches to work together and the role of the middle-range in this.

To explore the conditions for sustainable change at the community level.

To document success and identify what constitutes good practice through the evidence collected.

The central questions of the research are:

How can community tension be a catalyst for positive change and what are the conditions that are most likely to enable this in the UK context?

The sub-questions are:

How can positive outcomes to short-term events or crises be built upon to address longer term, underlying tensions?

What are the conditions and circumstances which enable different stakeholders involved in community tensions to achieve positive impact and sustainable change?

The aim, objectives and questions were derived from the literature and from my experience in working with tensions in many different contexts for over a decade, and considerable experience prior to that in community regeneration and development.

**Background and context**

The definition of community tension currently in daily use in the United Kingdom is drawn from work I undertook for Coventry University (2007, 2010), the Metropolitan Police - the police service for Greater London, National Community Tensions Team which sits in the Chief Police Officers Association and analyses and collates tensions information across the UK, and the then Department for Communities and Local Government, a central government department. This definition is, 'community tension is a state of community dynamics which may potentially lead to disorder, threaten the peace and stability of communities or raise the levels of fear and anxiety in the whole, or a part of the local community'. This definition has been useful in practice to identify which issues need to be identified and distinguished as community tensions and those which might be pursued through other avenues or for other reasons. The discourse has been led by policy and practice rather than academic discourse and the Coventry University manual (Coventry University 2007, 2011) and related training programmes have been the primary focus for learning.

Community tensions in the UK arise for multiple reasons and in multiple contexts. Tensions may relate to racial, religious, cultural, ideological or political differences, real or perceived. They may relate to local events or circumstances, from criminal activity to local political decisions about resources, physical developments or policies. International conflicts and events impact locally with the diaspora, influencing relationships within and between groups of people from different nations. Terrorist incidents elsewhere or in the UK impact on how communities react to groups they perceive to have some connection, often through race or faith identity. Demonstrations, marches and protests can lead to counter-protests

and heightened tensions. The contexts in which tensions exist may be in response to short term or longstanding issues and are frequently exacerbated by inequality, deprivation, prejudice, imbalance of power and feelings of disempowerment, lack of trust between communities and with institutions, segregation and a lack of social capital or common goals. The community dynamics are also affected by media reporting both in relation to specific incidents and in general terms. Not all tensions lead to violence but often tensions lead to people feeling fearful or isolated and excluded from the wider community.

The UK approach has been to implement a tension monitoring system which is used on a daily basis in all police services, some councils and local partnerships and some communities. The information is collated weekly by the National Community Tensions Team and shared to assess tension levels across the UK in a document known as 'Operation Element' (Restricted View), enabling all areas to understand the UK picture and potential areas of risk. The picture is supplemented by a digest of open source information from across the world and locally, which may impact on UK tensions. However, based on my experience over more than ten years of working with tensions and conflict in communities in the UK, locally and nationally, the approach currently suffers from a lack of shared clear purpose, a confusion of values, intents, different roles and expectations of those involved, and limited theoretical frameworks and capacities between agencies to understand the dynamics of tension and conflict and to address these in the short and long term. There has been an emphasis on tools and systems rather than outcomes and benefits.

Frequently the issues are raised by high profile crises and extensive media discourses – riots, murders (Harding 2013), acts of terror, major marches or demonstrations which threaten public order ('*Million' march against Iraq war BBC News* 2003), and sparks caused by challenges, events or competition within or between local communities, territories, practices or ideologies, such as drugs and antisocial behaviour, or issues such as that investigated by Kershaw (2014) known as the Trojan Horse letter. Then there is a flurry of activity investigating specific events, seeking reasons or underlying causes. Too often the underlying causes are lost in the documentation and reaction is limited to the events themselves rather than the longer term issues and perspectives. Newburn, Lewis and Metcalf (2011) highlight the absence of any major official inquiries into major disturbances

since Lord Justice Scarman's Inquiry into the Brixton riot, (Scarman 1981), and that 'the riots in Moss Side, Handsworth, Toxteth, St Paul's and Broadwater Farm were all investigated in some detail, but while these inquiries were important in their local context, and one or two had larger reach, few really permeated national debates and general public consciousness' (Newburn et al 2011). The consequences of this are that responses are predominantly those of law and order and policing, as identified in the Metropolitan Police Service (2012) report on the 2011 riots, while lessons from the wider social context remain unlearned. The personal, social, economic and reputational costs of this lack of attention, both potentially and in reality, are significant. They cost lives and frequently label and stigmatise some communities for decades. They are calculated and reported both in policy reports and the media (*Mark White: Knife crime: Government's extra £100m funding is a short term fix.* Sky News *2019),* lamented and then often discarded, on an ad hoc basis, as another event or issue takes the headlines. Or they trigger knee-jerk responses within agencies based around setting up 'more robust' processes to stop, or be better prepared for, similar situations, rather than explorations of community aspirations, more nuanced approaches or examination of longer-term opportunities for development and change. They reinforce a culture of responding to failure rather than one of building on success.

Hate crime is an indicator of the level of tensions and reported hate crime has more than doubled since 2012/13 (Home Office 2018) with spikes after the EU referendum in 2016 and terrorist incidents in 2017. However, too frequently the issues raised by subtle behaviours and actions, including antisocial or intimidating behaviour, hate incidents and crimes, go unreported or unaddressed, and remain 'below the radar', though they impact on whether or not people are able to live their lives with mutual respect and freedom from fear. These situations are often endured by individuals or groups and tackled by small community organisations (Colette Hume: BBC News 2017), with little public acknowledgement or recognition. Again, too often the underlying issues are ignored or only addressed at the margins. From my experience, whilst many areas have strengthened their approaches to hate crime reporting, and addressing underreporting, analyst resources in police forces are frequently stretched and data not produced in a timely manner to enable focused responses to the situations.

Whilst the guide to tension monitoring recognises the benefits of conflict as a potential catalyst for change, this opportunity was not specifically reflected in the definition (Coventry University 2007, 2010). This definition places the emphasis on the potential for negative consequences rather than for creating constructive change processes for the longer term benefit of communities. This emphasis leads to a focus on stopping bad things from happening rather than enabling good things, and resultant approaches that address deficits in communities rather than build on positives and opportunities. Potentially, despite the intention, this focus leads to short-term activities that are crisis driven rather than longer term strategies to address injustices and work with community challenges, ideas and aspirations. The research intends to re-examine the current definition and constructs, challenge these, explore the evidence and rethink and reframe the approach.

The intention has been to promote interagency support for community led initiatives in areas where there are tensions, but current practice has exposed a number of challenges, concerns and contradictions which potentially undermine effectiveness. There is a question of purpose - why monitor tensions? What are the key drivers? Who is monitoring and for whose benefit? Both the language and policy development have thrown up inconsistencies and disconnects. Questions arise about whether it is about national security and counter-terrorism or feeling safe in local communities. The National Community Tensions Team sits within a 'Prevent' Directorate at the Chief Police Officers Association, Prevent being part of the UK counter-terrorism strategy, so suggesting a link to that agenda, and at government level responsibility for monitoring community tensions has moved out of the newly named Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government, which has a focus on communities, to the Home Office, which is responsible for safety and security. New processes in the police have put community tension monitoring with the local 'Force Command Team Leader for Public Order' and built it into the National Intelligence Model, the police intelligence management system to inform strategic and tactical policing and resource management, and National Crime Agency tasking arrangements, which lead the drive to cut serious and organised crime. Yet the local practice, at its best, is focused on engagement, building relationships, understanding community information and enabling communities to develop their own solutions to problems. It does involve delivering public agency interventions, managing risks and stopping violence but there has been less

emphasis on investing in resilient, sustainable and compassionate communities as part of the approach. All of these intents have been, or have been perceived to be, part of the lexicon and whilst they may all have legitimacy, there is too much scope for confusion and misunderstanding as to the precise intention and a need to articulate the different motivations in a way that makes the processes clear, transparent, accountable and purposeful at all levels.

There is a lack of join up between top down and bottom up approaches and across agencies which often have different priorities, purposes, political and policy agendas. At a national level there is a focus on public order and counter-terrorism. There is a lack of support and recognition for those experiencing or struggling with community tensions and conflict at the community level, whether this is apparently 'low level' hate crime or fear and anxiety in the neighbourhood which is often unseen, or more visible and prolonged hostility, violence or crime which grabs the headlines. There is a general failure to connect to wider agendas that support community development and wellbeing particularly at the top level and the new arrangements for local Wellbeing Boards and Wellbeing Strategies do not explicitly include community tensions or peaceful relations in their remit.

Although there are good examples of systematic, proactive, predictive and preventive approaches in practice, some cited in the research in Chapters Four and Five, for example in Scotland and Oldham, and others from personal experience such as the extensive community risk assessments in preparation for the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012, addressing tensions is still frequently triggered reactively, particularly in the wake of high profile events. As such, there is a danger that the current processes and practice respond to the immediate issues and, when 'successful' or when things cool down, create an illusion of making a difference, yet may be masking or papering over deeper issues which go unaddressed at the local level. The research seeks to challenge this and provide evidence to change this paradigm.

here has been relatively little documentation of good practice and there are many challenges of measuring effectiveness, including that much of the information is classified as 'Restricted' and that there are few mechanisms to recognise and build on successes or to

share learning between practitioners, policy makers and academics. Good practice remains local and theory and practice do not connect and inform each other. Further, interest in training and discussion of tension monitoring from agencies and also communities, has frequently focused on the systems, tools and processes rather than principles, goals, outcomes and benefits, or learning from academia or successful practice, especially at the community level. Cost benefit analysis has focused in on the costs of failure rather than investment in success.

There is a lack of shared theoretical frameworks or capacities between agencies working locally to understand the dynamics of conflict, limited longer term approaches to addressing conflict and tensions in local communities or to think transformatively about addressing tension as an opportunity for constructive change. The issues cross many disciplines, from social relations, peacebuilding and community development to health and wellbeing, regeneration and social inclusion, and there has yet to be an attempt to explore more fully the range of perspectives and test their application in the UK context.

Beyond the definition I developed for Coventry University (2007, 2010) there has been no further discussion of community tension in the academic sphere and no literature that defines it. Few studies refer to community tensions in the way that they are currently addressed in the UK. Even in international literature the specific term 'community tensions' is used infrequently, and where it is used, tends to relate to planned major projects or disasters in the natural environment (Coffey, Threadgold, Farrugia, Sherval, Hanley, Askew and Askland, 2018, Debrah, Mtegha and Cawood, 2018, and Krainz, 2012). This study seeks to investigate the transferability of concepts from a range of research literature from relevant disciplines to the UK context. It seeks to apply the scholarly work of others into a defined topic and geography in an original approach which has not been done previously in any comprehensive way in this specific field in the UK. As well as exploiting the theoretical concepts and frameworks from the literature, the research seeks to explore emerging thinking, policy and practice in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and through three local case studies to combine the scholarly literature with lived experience, and this provides an opportunity to develop a new paradigm for working with tensions. It seeks to

make a contribution to knowledge relevant to academic research, policy and practice at the national and local level.

The international studies in conflict transformation and peacebuilding are often based on violent conflicts and wars (for example, Ackerman 2003, Anderson and Olsen 2003, Galtung 1969 and 2007, Lederach 1997, Lund 2002) and the dynamics of conflicts (Mitchell 2011), but these offer significant potential for exploration of transferable learning.

A great deal of literature in the UK relates to studies of disturbances in England in 2001, (Richie 2001, Cantle 2001, Ousely 2001, Denham 2001) and those in 2011 (Briggs, 2012). These led to a range of analyses, policy reports and initiatives around cohesion and later around integration but over the past fifteen years the narrative here has become confused, diluted and lacking in leadership and continuity. Local studies on specific aspects of tension such as Gypsy and Traveller site provision (Richardson 2007) and territorial behaviours amongst young people (Kintrea, Bannister, Reid and Suzuki 2008) enable greater understanding of specific problems and responses and studies of the impact of overseas conflict and global issues on UK communities (Collyer, Binsaisa, Qreshi, Oeppen, Vullnetari and Zeitly 2011 and Hanley 2011) provide valuable insights, but this knowledge is not routinely shared effectively to support local situations.

The most studied part of the UK geographically in this context is Northern Ireland where the roots of conflict and the transition from armed conflict to peace are examined from multiple perspectives. Jarman (2016:117) argues that whilst Northern Ireland 'is often highlighted as a positive example of peacebuilding, it is not without its limitations and overall the experience of the past 20 years emphasises the importance of ensuring a broadly inclusive process and the need for sustained commitment over a long period of time'. He describes it 'more of an example of conflict management or of conflict resolution rather than conflict transformation'. Morrow (2017: 113) similarly describes it as 'a work in progress'. The research considers the very different experiences in the four nations within the UK, the different legislative and policy approaches, and emerging strengths.

The hypothesis for the research topic is that the current narrative is unclear in purpose, that tension and conflict can be a catalyst or opportunity for change, and that there is a need to

look beyond monitoring to explore deeper underlying causes of tensions and develop longer term approaches to bring about beneficial sustainable change and cultivate peaceful communities.

There is a broad understanding that tension and conflict is integral to human interaction (Lederach 2003, Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall 2016) , a normal aspect of community dynamics and can be a catalyst for social change, so working with tensions should have the intention not only to prevent violence and destructive conflict in the short term but also lead to the development of creative approaches to change and longer term plans to address root causes and underlying issues in communities. In practice there has been a focus on the first of these intentions, that of prevention in the short term, and a lack of focus on the second as a key dimension and this needs to be addressed.

The study has adopted the starting point of 'working with' tensions, rather than 'monitoring' or 'managing' tensions in order to open up a broader range of possibilities and to challenge the notions of the monitors and the monitored, or the managers and the managed. Rather, the aspiration is for a more respectful and inclusive approach to communities as active participants and architects of their futures and relationships.

This paradigm also recognises the need to intervene on a broad front rather than a narrow focus on the presenting issues. Tensions arise from the social, economic, cultural, physical and political environment, locally, nationally and internationally. They also concern wider determinants of community wellbeing, such as education, skills, job prospects, housing, environmental quality, and access to good services, amenities and social networks. As such, working with tensions concerns longer-term timeframes and issues underlying the presenting problems.

Further, if working with tensions is to enable opportunities for positive change then it is not just problem orientated, but needs to explore ways of supporting communities to realise those changes and to meet their aspirations.

The hypothesis that the current narrative is unclear in purpose relates, in part, to the 'location' of working with tensions in the statutory sphere. As previously indicated, this has

been particularly significant in relation to Prevent as part of the counter-terrorism strategy, and whilst community tensions has not been regarded as part of this strategy, the location of the National Community Tensions Team in the Prevent directorate sends a different signal. Locating work with community tensions as part of crime and disorder or public order identifies it as a community safety issue. Some localities have located the work within the equalities function and others within a community planning context – setting a different agenda and direction. The issue of the location of working with tensions is an important consideration for the research.

Other narratives also play into the mix. Most significant of these is the role of the media which can have a major impact on tensions in the short and long term. In the short term, how an incident is reported can radically affect the escalation of a situation, and the presence of the media can result in raising tensions, as some people use this as a platform to express frustrations while others resent the media turning up when there is a problem and not when things are going well in the community. Anyone can present themselves as a 'spokesperson' who can express an opinion without reference to the facts of the situation. Such circumstances change the dynamic and frequently lead to increased police presence in an area, further affecting the situation, either positively or negatively. In the longer term, the media influences public perceptions of people from different backgrounds and of places where there may have been problems in the past and which are perpetuated in the present, often long after the event. These can create or exacerbate divisions and long-term reputational damage which require, amongst other things, a strong counter narrative to address.

Whilst the research seeks to bring new concepts and frameworks from academia into the domain, it also recognises the importance of people developing their own narratives and, particularly, the culture that they engender to support and empower communities. Pooling academic theory with some new learning from local practice provides an opportunity to work with community tensions more constructively, creatively, with a clearer purpose and ultimately greater effectiveness in cultivating peaceful relations.

**Research methodology**

The strategy for inquiry was first through a literature review (Chapter Two). The issues involved touch many disciplines and wider areas of study, so the review was focused in those areas which were deemed the most likely to produce models, concepts or frameworks most helpful to inform and address the problems identified with the UK approach and narrative. The three initial areas of focus were working with tensions for violence prevention and early warning, working with tensions for peace, conflict transformation and change, and working with tensions and community development. These were supplemented by examples of community based research and case studies of tensions in the UK as both risks and opportunities, and particularly those that highlight using tensions as a catalyst for change. The literature map in Chapter Two (*Figure 2*) illustrates the spheres of exploration. Fourteen concepts from the literature review were identified for analysis against the research findings.

From the literature review, the research questions were developed and some preliminary research undertaken explore the interview questions, case study choice and test a short quantitative pre-interview questionnaire which was subsequently amended and used with all participants (Chapter Three).

The four nations' studies explored the approaches to working with tensions through a review of the relevant legislation and policy drivers in the devolved governments, in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, and in England where there is no devolved government, and interviews with a senior government official and a senior police officer in each nation (Chapter Four). The reason for choice of interviewees was to collect a high level view from those with a strategic responsibility and policy overview, in contact with ministers, senior officials across governments and partnerships, and with considerable experience the multiple contexts, disciplines, stakeholders and complex systems involved in supporting and effecting community based change at the local level. The interviews included the nature of the tensions experienced, how these are faced, the actors involved and some exploration of how success is measured. The interviews sought to distil the essence of the approach in each nation and some of the challenges and opportunities in each place. Specifically this aspect of the research provided the opportunity to explore the

top down conditions, the approach to empowering communities, the nature of partnerships, the timeframes and the connections with other aspects of community policy, national and local concerns.

Three case studies were identified to explore different historical, social and political contexts, sources of tension, actors and capacities and offered different opportunities for discovery in relation to the research questions (Chapter Five). They aimed to give a community level perspective. They all demonstrated something that had worked or might be working that could be explored. Other potential case studies, considered but not subsequently pursued, were those where the locality had longstanding unresolved problems and had not identified a process for community based change, and two localities where there was an identifiable strand of good practice but the focus was relatively narrowly based in a specific tool or situation and where the potential for broader transferable learning may have been relatively limited. A further opportunity was considered and the research agreed in principle, but the timing of the study was inconvenient for them.

The case studies at the three sites involved research into the area profile and history of tensions, published reports, grey literature, visiting the localities and semi-structured interviews designed to address the questions of the research but in a way that elicited the views and opinions of the participants, and their own stories and experiences in their own way, unconstrained by closed questions.

The analysis and interpretation tested the four nations and three case studies against fourteen conceptual frameworks and approaches identified in the literature review and to address the research questions (Chapter Six). These were grouped into four sets of concepts: underlying premises to guide change; actors and roles; communities, community dynamics and working with communities; and measuring success. The analysis considered to what extent the concepts were present or absent in each place and the implications of this. All of the concepts were of relevance, as they were identified on the basis of considerable prior knowledge of the topic, though not of the concepts themselves, and provided significant learning to the research questions.

The conclusions added to the definition of community tensions to include that tensions can be a catalyst for change, and set out the conditions that enable change, the actors and roles to achieve this, aspects of community dynamics and community development, and how success is measured (Chapter Seven). All of these were pulled together in a new definition of working with community tensions. Finally the conclusions led to the proposition of a potential for a new context for working with community tensions – that of the wellbeing agenda, which takes community tensions out of community safety or counter-terror as the prevailing lens, into how people experience their lives and relate to each other. It brings wellbeing and peaceful relations together in a new paradigm that addresses the gaps and contradictions identified in the research problem.

**Thesis structure**

Figure 1 sets out the thesis structure, summarising the aims and objectives, nature of enquiry, research questions and the structure of the chapters.

***Figure 1: Thesis structure***

| Research objectives | Nature of Inquiry | Structure of Chapters |
|---|---|---|
| To consider the purpose, conceptual frameworks, values and approaches to working with community tensions and the conditions for sustainable change. To identify a clearer narrative for working with community tensions in the United Kingdom, which will enable all actors to engage in multifaceted, multi-layered and multiagency change in an integrated and holistic framework, with the ultimate purpose of promoting peaceful relations and compassionate communities.<br><br>To explore the conditions in which working with tensions can integrate short-term approaches with longer-term transferable change<br><br>To consider the conditions which enable bottom- up and top-down approaches to work together and the role of the middle range in this.<br><br>To explore the conditions for sustainable change at the community level.<br><br>To document success and identify what constitutes good practice through the evidence collected. | Identification of research problem and hypothesis.<br><br>Literature review.<br><br>Research design.<br><br>Contextual research and semi-structured interviews in four nations and three local case studies, based on the **research questions:**<br><br>How can community tension and conflict be a catalyst for positive change and what are the conditions that are most likely to enable success in the UK context?<br><br>How can positive outcomes to short-term events or crises be built upon to address longer term underlying tensions?<br><br>What are the conditions and circumstances that enable different stakeholders involved in community tensions to achieve positive impact and sustainable change? | Chapter One: Introduction<br><br>Chapter Two: Literature review<br><br>Chapter Three: Methodology<br><br>Chapter Four: Four nations - findings<br><br>Chapter Five: Three case studies - findings<br><br>Chapter Six: Analysis and interpretation – against the 14 concepts<br><br>Chapter Seven: Conclusions |

## Chapter Two: Community tensions: Literature review

### Introduction

Where the term community tensions is used in international literature, it tends to relate to planned major projects or disasters in the natural environment. For example, in relation to a proposed coal seam gas project in New South Wales, Australia, (Coffey, Threadgold, Farrugia, Sherval, Hanley, Askew and Askland, 2018), the tensions related to different perceptions of youth and the future. Those in favour of the development considered it signified a hope of economic invigoration, whereas those who opposed the project were concerned with the loss of landscape for future generations as a result of potential irreversible environmental impacts. Debrah, Mtegha and Cawood (2018), explore the effects on communities from the granting of mineral rights in sub-Saharan Africa, with the separation of mineral rights and land rights, and the different expectations of stakeholders heightening tensions and widening trust deficits in these communities. In relation to natural environmental disasters, Krainz (2012) gives a detailed historical account and perspective of the impact of the 1910 forest fires along the northern Idaho and Montana borders in which 85 people were killed. He provides an analysis of the complexity of community tensions between different class groups, firefighters and supervisors with ideological differences regarding unionisation, hostility towards 'transients', accusations of arson and deeply ingrained distrust between the many communities and interests in a sparsely populated region. These are very useful studies in terms of analysis of the problems and issues, and these problems are very relatable to the United Kingdom context. However they are less useful in terms of offering future directions or transferable conceptual frameworks. There is a gap in the academic literature that directly addresses working with community tensions in the UK. Even in the international literature the specific term 'community tensions' is used infrequently.

The literature review, therefore, explores sources that are relevant and appropriate to the context of the research, bring a broader perspective from different disciplines and which offer concepts and frameworks to test against the empirical evidence and policy contexts in the research. The reasons for the choice of spheres of inquiry are explained below.

The first part of the literature review relates to working with tensions for violence prevention and early warning. This was selected as the current premise in the UK is on being 'early and upstream' and identifying tensions before they become violent or have further negative manifestations. So the rationale for this section of the literature review was to identify academic sources relating to early warning and violence prevention, both quantitative and qualitative, and the related learning to bring to bear on this aspect of the UK approach.

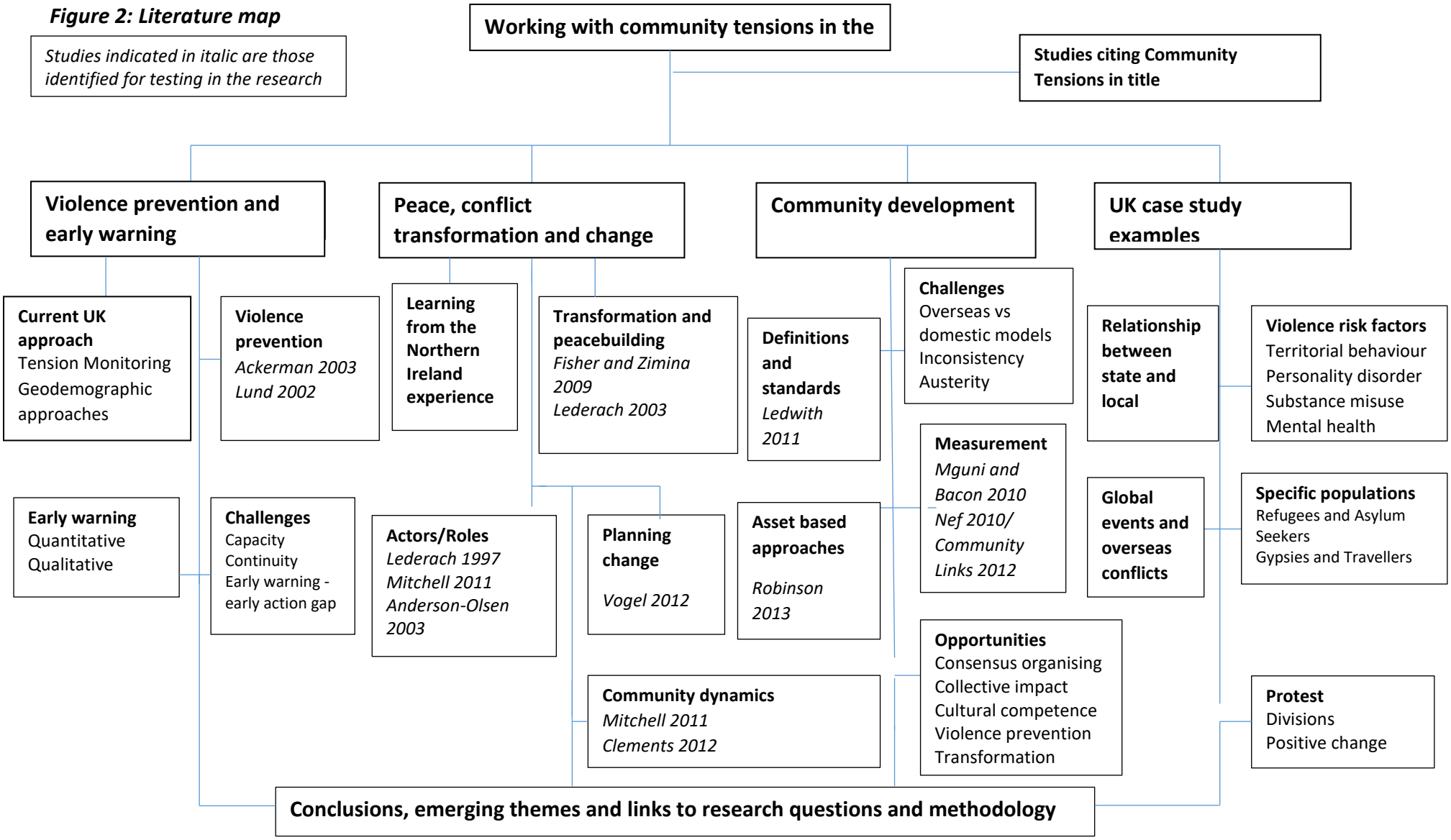
The second area of inquiry explores working with tensions for peace, conflict transformation and change. This is a central focus of this research so learning from peacebuilding, including both technical and transformational approaches to change, the timeframes, the roles of different actors, conditions that support change and the related dynamics, is key.

A third area of exploration relates to community development. A central tenet of working with community tensions in the UK is a community development approach that empowers communities to own and act upon the issues that affect them and not impose or parachute in solutions. Whilst this local ownership is the intent, community development in the UK has faced challenges in recent years so this section of the literature review seeks to explore the opportunities to revisit and potentially restate concepts from community development studies and how they contribute to working with tensions and transformational change.

The fourth area of inquiry is to research studies in the UK that relate to tensions, with specific populations, ethno-national groups and both local and global issues. It considers the relationship between state and local issues and whether these reinforce or undermine each other and the issue of protest and both a cause and effect of tensions. This diversity of review is undertaken to consider whether these studies include working with tension or conflict as a driver or catalyst for change, identify relevant learning and examples of good practice and inform the research questions and methodology.

A literature map showing summary themes explored through the literature is shown in Figure 2. The studies indicated in italic on the literature map are those identified for testing in the research.

***Figure 2: Literature map***



**Working with tensions for violence prevention and early warning**

The current system in the UK uses a model of assessing and measuring tensions based around three components – Experienced, Evidenced and Potential (EEP) (Coventry University 2007, 2011). The 'Experienced' component assesses how communities feel and what they think is happening to them, in effect 'the word on the street', where rumour and perception are as relevant as factual information. 'Evidenced' concerns what has actually happened or is happening in relations to hate crimes and incidents, other events but also situations affecting the community such as closure of facilities, loss of services or employers or increased police activity such as stop and search. 'Potential' involves an assessment of what might happen or has the potential to happen, either as a result of the two previous categories or other upcoming events, anniversaries or emerging issues. Each component is scored, trends mapped and at an early point of raised tensions then a Community Impact Assessment is used to assess the situation, the risks, the options for action and the chosen interventions. EEP is supplemented by monitoring of open source information locally, nationally and internationally and of social media. The Cardiff On line Social Media Observatory (COSMOS), (Burnap, Rana, Williams, Housely, Edward, Morgan, Sloan and Conejero 2014) monitors social media data streams for signs of high tension and identifies deviations from the norm. The 'tension engine' of this observatory monitors 'cyber-neighbourhoods', including for example the use of social media platforms to organise and spread disorder. Now known as the Social Data Science Lab at Cardiff University, new research is directed at Brexit related hate crime.

The main challenges, in addition to the questions and contradictions identified in the introduction, include the ability to gather and collate information from multiple sources including communities and agencies, the skill and capacity to analyse and interpret the information and the skills and capacity to coordinate community based and multi-layered responses.

Additionally, geodemographic classifications are in use as exploratory tools to assess the vulnerability of an area. Many of these stem from the Vulnerable Localities Index (VLI) developed by the Jill Dando Institute (Thompson 2012) which was specifically developed in

relation to requirements for the police to address community tensions but is now used more widely in community safety. The VLI used six variables including two crime categories, two indices of deprivation, the count of 15 to 24 year olds and educational attainment. In Northern Ireland the Community Prioritisation Index (Ferguson and Macbeth 2011 unpublished), uses 21 data sets at Super Output Area level to measure community polarisation, social stress, disengagement and crime and disorder.

Preventing violence or destructive conflict is a major theme of international literature in studies of peace and conflict. Much of the literature is based on inter-state and intra-state conflicts and wars, armed conflicts and deeply divided societies. The purpose of this prevention 'is not to avoid conflict altogether but to avert violent conflicts. Conflicts pursued constructively are creative and form a necessary means of bringing about change' (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall 2016: 145). They pose the question as to whether it is a good thing to prevent violent conflict if it is the only way to remedy an injustice, but argue that 'violent conflicts often result in lose-lose outcomes for all parties and the population at large and, second, that attempts to prevent violence must also involve the satisfaction of needs, the accommodation of legitimate aspirations and the remedy of manifest injustices' (Ramsbotham et al 2016: 146) They further describe one of the aims of prevention efforts as increasing the range of situations where violence is not a possibility and creating the conditions where there are expectations of peaceful change. They argue that 'preventive conflict resolution is concerned with resolving conflicts before they become violent and creating the *contexts, structures* and *relations* between parties that make violence less likely and eventually inconceivable' (Ramsbotham et al 2016: 146). The focus on creating these contexts, structures and relations signifies a more proactive mindset and approach to tensions and conflict that is not only about violence prevention but the creation of something different.

An earlier definition of destructive conflict prevention is 'any structural or intercessory means to keep intrastate or interstate tensions and disputes from escalating into significant violence and use of armed forces, to strengthen the capabilities of potential parties to violent conflict for resolving such disputes peacefully and to progressively reduce the underlying problems that produce these issues and disputes' (Lund 2002:117). The three

strands to this definition – to stop escalation into violence, to build the capabilities for nonviolent solutions and to address and reduce the underlying causes - potentially add greater purposes not currently explicit in the current UK approach, so that working with tensions is not simply about stopping violence and a focus on immediate causes but about exploring alternative ways forward and a focus on underlying problems.

Both proximate and underlying causes of conflict need analysis to inform an effective preventive strategy and these should be part of an integrated framework of response (Ackerman 2003: 342). Ackerman identifies the conditions under which preventive action promises to be most effective, including that it is timely, multilateral, coordinated, varied, multifaceted, supported by a lead actor, cultivates a network of different preventive actors and supports indigenous capacities for long-term prevention (Ackerman 2003: 343). She also argues that it is insufficient to have a box of tools without a coherent preventive action strategy (Ackerman 2003:343).

Whether the current system in the UK reflects these conditions in a consistent and coherent way will be the subject of the empirical research, but the focus of police and partners has been predominantly on tension monitoring and the tools to support this rather than a more holistic strategy. There is also the issue of whether tensions which do not have a disorder, security or knock-on implications for other areas or communities are simply referred back to the local area to deal with locally and so a picture of underlying causes is potentially ignored in the analysis at the national level and not brought together in a coherent way. Equally, there is no mechanism or system for recording what works and where activities which are contributing to ongoing prevention are taking place or having an effect.

The concept and practice of early warning in the international realm include both qualitative and quantitative approaches and networks (Austin 2004). Qualitative systems include 'watch' groups such as Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and International Crisis Group who employ field based analysts and envoys to question, monitor and conduct research. Quantitative early warning use systematic data collection and processing to a given set of criteria to provide risk profiles, tension barometers and strategic assessments and supporting data.

The United Nations, European Union and the UK, through the Department for International Development, apply an early warning system to take a global view of countries where violence could be triggered by political, economic and security shocks, with a particular focus on fragile states. In parts of Africa, early warning has been used to address the potential for violence in the election cycle, where there has previously been violence pre-election, during the election period and the post-election phase. Martinluther and Stanley (2017) describe the strategy of early warning in Nigeria in relation to the election cycle in order to anticipate escalation of violence, collect and analyse information, formulate response options and communicate to policymakers to enable decision making and action. They point out, however, that reliable early warnings provide not only time to prepare for short-term interventions to but also for longer-term proactive strategies that reduce the likelihood of future negative conflicts (Martinluther and Stanley 2017: 135).

There are challenges to early warning systems. One issue is the low level of capacity for the effective gathering, analysis and storage of data and intelligence. Then there is the effect of 'constant and consistent policy summersaults and changes' by successive administrations which often contradict those of the previous administration. (Martinluther and Stanley (2017: 136) They suggest that failure to prosecute offenders tends to treat electoral violence as insignificant.

The main challenge, however, is that early warning does not necessarily lead to early response. Lund (1998:1) questions whether 'failures to respond result from a lack of will or a lack of way' and suggests that policy makers have action-orientated questions which early warning research may not answer or address. He works backwards from the point of early response to seek insights in to how the process might work better. He suggests that early responders need to be able to answer a series of policy and implementation questions – *what* kind of action might work, *when* should action be taken, *who* should act, *why* take action, *how* to organise this and *whether* action should be taken at all. He argues that most early warning has focussed on identifying causes of bad events rather than tracking good events and cooperative early stage engagements which have reduced tensions and led to more peaceful directions. He suggests the latter are more helpful as they might be replicated in future similar situations (Lund 1998: 3).

The early warning-early action gap exists for a number of reasons. Lund suggests that as early warning is undertaken by social scientists who see their role as diagnosing the problems and not devising solutions, and policymakers who see their task as deciding what to do, there is a split between 'conflict analysis and warning as pure knowledge, and conflict response as pure action and advocacy to spur it' (Lund 1998:3). Further, he suggests there is more focus on already escalated crises or intensely violent levels of conflict and post-conflict situations and much less on the dispute or pre-violent stages. The more dramatic nature of humanitarian crises and wars becomes the preoccupation of governments and agencies, and there is less time commitment from those governments and agencies to preventing these violent conflicts from happening in the first place. A lack of evaluation of Non-Governmental Organisations' efforts in early intervention compounds the issues (Lund 1998:4).

To address this Lund promotes two approaches; comparative case studies which illustrate the success or failure of preventive interventions, and, tools assessment to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of policy tools of early intervention. He suggests these approaches offer policy makers the opportunity to consider *'if-then'* statements in preventive initiatives. His final case is for 'rolling prevention' rather than the prevailing alarm bell model. He suggests this is best done at the level closest to the conflict arena and that small, repeated preventive peacebuilding measures may be the optimal form of conflict prevention (Lund 1998:6).

Early warning systems are there to identify the causes of conflict, to predict the outbreak of conflict and mitigate that conflict. Unless there is a mechanism for mitigation there is little to be gained from refining the accuracy of the various approaches (Austin 2004:2). The gap between commitment to prevention and the commitment in response is also a concern in relation to the European Union. Building peace constitutes one of the EU's core values yet despite their commitment, member states are not always willing to match those with the appropriate level of resources. Davis (2018) suggests EU policy makers have a conceptual confusion in the sphere of conflict prevention in that is regarded both as a way of acting in outside world and as a set of distinct activities (for example, conflict analysis, early warning and mediation). Secondly, this conceptual confusion compounds the problem

of a lack of leadership in this area which hinders the EU in conflict prevention (Davis 2018: 166). She also points out the different perceptions of what might be considered violent conflict in EU understanding and analysis and what constitutes root causes. Specifically she cites structural violence against women and girls as not being considered as a root cause 'revealing a blind spot in EU conflict analysis and early warning and therefore subsequent interventions (response)' (Davis, 2018: 158). Further she argues that prevention should not be synonymous with stabilisation as stabilisation could contribute to stabilising authoritarian regimes and, potentially, may reinforce structural violence (Davis 2018: 159). More generally, it is suggested that 'the EU continues to prioritize early preventive action over response, which constitutes an obstacle to bridging the early-warning early-response gap' (Juncos and Blockmans 2018: 133).

These lessons in relation to violence prevention and early warning resonate with the current UK experiences and the many groups, councils and police services I have worked with. There are issues of capacity in collecting and analysing data in a timely manner. In some places there are challenges about the capacity and capability to convene multiagency support for community based responses. The Oldham case study in Chapter 5 demonstrates an example of where the mechanisms, relationships and culture work together to enable speedy responses. In very many places there is a considerable gap between those undertaking the monitoring and those who have the resources, power and influence to act. There is no formal mechanism or system for recording short or long-term, small or major, interventions or collaborations, what works and where activities which might be described as 'rolling prevention' are in place. If such records exist they are localised and not routinely shared. Again, the risk register used in the Oldham Tension Monitoring Group serves the purpose of designing and implementing mitigating actions and assessing their effectiveness.

More generally, the concept of early action in the UK, across many disciplines including health and early years development, is considered important, but not always given priority. A at a time of austerity priority is given to the acute social problems and responding to crises rather than spending on prevention which might have reduced or avoided the problems entirely. This is ultimately economically unsustainable and that investment in prevention and early action will increase social benefits and reduce costs in the longer term.

Prevention and early action have been described as ‘common sense but not common practice’ (Community Links 2012).

Finally, in this section of the literature review, is the issue of the need for greater clarity in what it is we are trying to prevent and the need to distinguish between preventing direct violence whilst addressing underlying causes or structural violence. This is also a strong theme in the next section of the literature review.

**Working with tensions for peace, conflict transformation and change**

In the UK context, other than in Northern Ireland, peace and peace building are not generally part of the domestic vocabulary applied to communities or in public services, other than in such circumstances as a ‘breach of the peace’ concerning disorderly behaviour which may cause harm, ‘keeping the peace’ generally referring to personal and neighbourly relationships, or ‘peace and quiet’ and a desire for tranquillity and freedom from disturbance. In Northern Ireland the period of conflict between Nationalists and Loyalists from the late 1960s until 1998 is known as ‘The Troubles’, and ended with the Good Friday Agreement or Belfast Agreement, which set up a new power sharing government at Stormont, with representatives from both sides of the community. So, to take note first from the Northern Ireland experience, this section of the literature review starts with a review of two recent studies, and then explores some of the concepts and language from literature on peace, conflict transformation and change which might contribute to the narrative for working with tensions in the UK.

Northern Ireland is often cited as a positive example of peacebuilding, but Jarman (2016:117) suggests it is not without its limitations. He argues that the overall experience of the past 20 years emphasises the importance of ensuring a broadly inclusive process and the need for sustained commitment over a long period of time. However, the focus has been on establishing new institutions of governance and ensuring that the representatives of the divided communities are able to work together rather than anything more radical. Consequently, he argues that the situation in Northern Ireland ‘remains more of an example of conflict management or of conflict resolution rather than conflict transformation’

(Jarman 2016:134). In a similar vein, Morrow (2017) also poses the question as to whether Northern Ireland demonstrates 'truce or transformation' and concludes that there is a gap between reconciliation and 'mimetic rivalry' and that the outcome has been ambivalent. Clearly the antagonism in Northern Ireland has entered a new less violent chapter but there are still tensions and hostilities. He argues that as a result of 'a deep-rooted ecosystem of antagonism' there is an 'ambivalence about violence, unacknowledged complicity, contested categories of heroism and criminality and contested experiences of the rule of law'. Further, as both the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement, a multi-party agreement between most of Northern Ireland's political parties and an international agreement between the British and Irish governments, and the Patten Commission on policing structures and arrangements, did not deal with history but favoured a new beginning, 'the Northern Ireland peace project remains a work in progress' (Morrow 2017:113).

This opens up the question about what constitutes transformation in peace building. Fisher and Zimina (2009) suggest that, broadly speaking there are two types of peacebuilding - technical approaches and transformative approaches. Technical approaches involve 'incremental activity which aims to make a practical difference in a specific domain, without necessarily challenging the deeper context'. Transformative peacebuilding 'is work aimed at fundamental social and political change'. Whilst a technical approach can lead to a transformational one and will be valuable in the immediate situation it is 'unlikely to help change the wider system' and 'it may well serve to reinforce the unstable and inherently unjust status quo' (Fisher and Zimina 2009:20). This is an important message for working with tensions in the UK, and that the process must be much more than responding to an immediate crisis or event without proper regard the deeper issues.

Further, it is arid to talk of peaceful relations in terms of structures and organisations, but rather it is about the human condition and development (Curle 1971). He defines peace as 'active association, planned co-operation, an intelligent effort to forestall or remove potential conflicts' and that we should derive our learning and norm from successes rather than failures. This particular perspective has informed the design of this research. He describes 'unpeacefulness' as 'a situation in which human beings are impeded from achieving full development either because of their own internal relations or because of the

types of relation that exist between themselves (as individuals and group members) and other persons or groups'. He agrees with Galtung (1969 cited in Curle 1971) that 'violence (or, as Curle would say, unpeacefulness) exists whenever an individual's potential development, mental or physical, is held back by the conditions of a relationship' (Galtung 1969 cited in Curle 1971). He suggests that emotional, social or educational deprivation and low levels of health are symptoms of 'un-peace' and that whilst inequality may be accepted by communities, over time, when levels of awareness rise in the dominated group, the seeds of conflict germinate. This association between deprivation and low levels of health with the seeds of conflict flags up the relationship between health and violence which features in the empirical research and ultimately in the conclusions.

Transformational change involves new ways of seeing, thinking, doing and being. Starting from the premise that 'conflict is normal in human relationships and conflict is a motor of change', Lederach (2003:5) identifies that conflict transformation involves 'constructive change efforts that include, and go beyond, the resolution of specific problems'. His definition of conflict transformation is 'to envision and respond to the ebb and flow of social conflict as life-giving opportunities for creating constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships'(Lederach 2003:14). His map, or 'big picture' of conflict transformation suggests three lines of inquiry; the presenting situation, the horizon of the future and the development of the change process, each as a series of 'embedded spheres' (Lederach 2003:35). From this map he explores the concept of a 'process-structure' platform for change; a way forward that is both 'adaptable and purposeful'. He describes and combines both circular and linear change process into a 'transformational platform', not just a process and not just a structure, a circular journey with a purpose, that is both short term responsive and long-term strategic (Lederach 2003:47). He presents an opportunity to think and act based on guiding principles of understanding relationships and positive approaches to conflict rather than a rigid set of tools or structures. It is helpful in distinguishing between the immediate situations, which UK tension monitoring tends to focus upon at least in the first instance, and underlying structural issues, which are almost always present and require longer term approaches. It provides a language and potentially transferable framework to address a number of dilemmas and challenges that have faced

tension monitoring practice so far and offers the opportunity to set tensions in a broader and longer term social context and to explore transformational approaches.

However, to embrace these challenges requires much greater capacity to connect the people involved at different levels and across different agencies than currently exists in the UK. The current approach at the top is predominantly on the short term high profile issues, whilst concern at the community level is on both the immediate and longer term but also on issues often below the radar and at an individual or small scale level. Lederach (1997) describes a pyramid of actors in a conflict situation, with top-level leadership, middle-range leadership and grassroots leadership, each with different approaches available to them, and stresses the need for 'recognition, inclusion and co-ordination across all levels and approaches' (Lederach 1997: 60). Of particular importance, he suggests, are the middle range leaders who have a role to play in connecting the grass roots to the top level and the top level to the grass roots but also have a 'middle out' role across a range of actors and have the 'greatest potential to serve as sources of practical, immediate action and to sustain long-term transformation in the setting' (Lederach 1997:39). He later describes this as 'integrating the vertical and horizontal capacities' (Lederach 2005:79). This concept has the potential to articulate the role and function of tension monitoring groups more clearly but also the roles and responsibilities of other actors, and will be a concept tested in the research.

The context in which actors interact and work together and generate coherence in the whole system is a key component in sustainable transformational change. Clements (2012:344) maintains that 'sustainable peace is most likely in stable cooperative and compassionate communities that place a higher value on trust, equality and welfare than safety and security'. He suggests that 'more analytic and political attention should be directed to understanding bottom-up strategies for peace and how to connect these to the top-down long-term structural prevention of violence' (Clements 2012:344). He suggests that 'while political systems can generate macro conditions for empathetic awareness, equality of opportunity and outcome, and social and political security, their willingness to do so depends on individuals and groups articulating these values as ideals and making commitments to realize these ideals in practice' (Clements 2012: 349). By inference, this

also implies a willingness to listen at the top level and a role for the mid-level to listen, connect and facilitate, both vertically and horizontally.

Then there is the question of coordination of actors and roles and who initiates and oversees change processes in conflict situations. Mitchell (2011) uses the term 'change agents' who are 'enablers' rather than drivers of change with the roles of 'enhancer of resources, monitor and provider of early warning' and 'the construction of some kind of learning environment (or at least a process) in which old positions, aims and strategies can be rationally reviewed, new ideas offered or generated, alternative futures (including their relative costs) considered coolly rather than immediately rejected, and "road maps" towards acceptable solutions and future relationships constructed' (Mitchell 2011: 96-97). Within this is a diverse range of roles which no one person or agency can fulfil, needs a number of organisations or individuals working in conjunction with one another and requires the key role of co-ordinator. Whether these co-ordinator roles exist in the UK will be explored in the research.

However, change processes operate in a dynamic context, some of which may support change and some which may potentially reinforce the status quo. Michell (2011) describes four aspects of change and conflict: change that produces new conflicts (conflict *formation*); change that exacerbates or intensifies an existing conflict (conflict *exacerbation* or *escalation*); change that reduces conflict or makes it less rather than more intense (conflict *mitigation); change* that produces (or assists in the development of) settlements or solutions (conflict *resolution* or transformation). He also describes the state of being trapped in an 'action-reaction' sequence as one of 'dynamic stability' and a part of 'conflict *perpetuation* – 'the conflict continues today because the conflict was there yesterday' (Mitchell 2011:77). This trap could be used describe situations where there have been tensions for many years in communities and where the action-reaction sequence results in maintaining a status quo rather than effecting change.

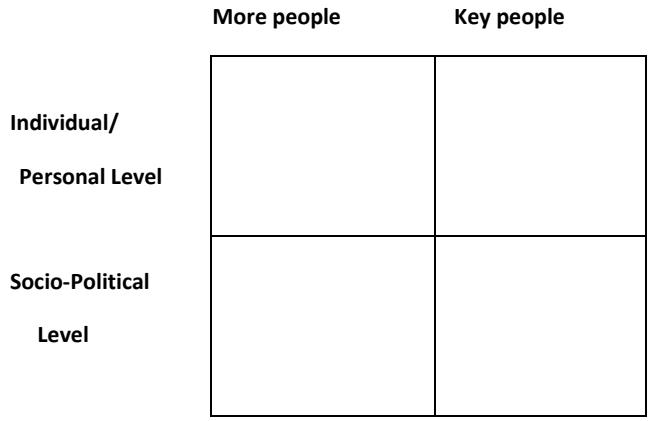
He describes six dynamics that intensify conflicts – escalation, mobilisation, polarisation, enlargement, dissociation and entrapment – and suggests a reversal of these dynamics to diminish conflict intensity – de-escalation, de-mobilisation, de-isolation, disengagement, re-communication, decommitment (Mitchell 2011:88). This model is useful to consider in

situations where conflict has escalated and, rather than just 'leaving things', as often happens, after the immediate crisis is over or the presenting problem apparently 'resolved', to actively address the dynamics of the build-up and reverse the processes with a view to developing future opportunities. At least one of the case studies will test this set of dynamics.

The literature on peacebuilding includes a wide range of models, strategies, methods and activities, informal and formal, aimed at effecting technical and transformational change, immediate issues and underlying causes, implemented at the grassroots, middle and top levels. With many players and many practices at different levels and the complexities of the immediate and longer term social and political circumstances of tension and conflict, the challenge of linking these into some sort of coherent approach is significant. There will be different and conflicting goals and 'policy, psychological, social and political obstacles to change' (Mitchell 2011:92). This raises the question as to how efforts are integrated into a collective framework.

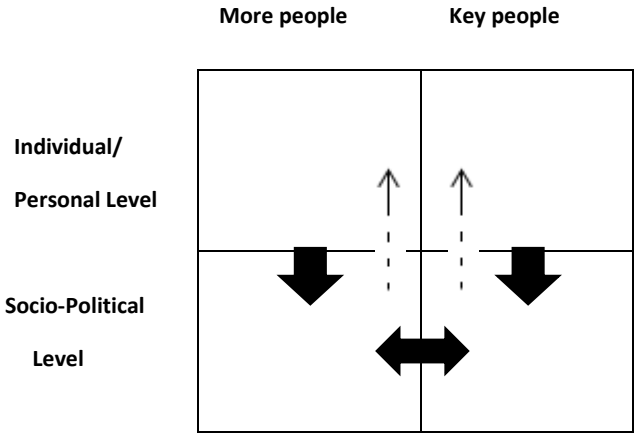
The notion of an integrated framework for transformational change goes beyond a simple commitment to partnership and collaboration between all of the actors. Lederach (1997) argues that peacebuilding activities need to be in an integrated framework where we 'think comprehensively about the affected population and systemically about the issues', and, further, think 'creatively about the progression of the conflict and the sustainability of its transformation by linking roles, functions and activities in an integrated manner' (Lederach 1997:79). Anderson and Olson (2003) in the Researching Peace Practice (RPP) study identified, from a wide array of peace practice, that there were two basic goals: stopping violence and destructive conflict, and, building just and sustainable peace. They suggest that in spite of the great variety of peace programmes in operation, the activity can be mapped in a simple matrix. This is shown in Figure 3 below.

***Figure 3: Simple matrix based on Anderson and Olson (2003)***




The discussion explores practice which is aimed at 'more people', which may mean a few more people or many more who are committed to a peace building process and a focus on 'key people' who have influence or leverage on public opinion and whilst some programmes do both, many concentrate on one or the other. The vertical axis at the at the individual/personal level concentrates on activities intended to bring changes the thinking, attitudes, values or perceptions of individuals. Other programmes, which believe that systemic, institutional, societal level change is necessary for peace, focus activity in the public realm of politics, economics, justice systems and other institutions. One of RPP's main findings is that work that stays in any one quadrant of the matrix is not enough to build momentum for significant change. This does not mean that each agency needs to have activities in all quadrants but they need to have connections with others to address overall effectiveness. Especially important are connecting the' individual/personal level' and the 'socio-political level', and connecting 'More People' and 'Key People' at the Socio-Political level. So, the important transference of impacts is illustrated in Figure 4.

***Figure 4: Interconnections between approaches and levels in the Anderson and Olson (2003) model***




Anderson and Olson (2003:56)

Interactions among quadrants increase the momentum and impacts of peace efforts. The research concluded that the single most important connection for significant change is that whatever is done be translated into socio-political action. Without such action, fundamental and sustainable changes required for peace seem not to occur (Anderson and Olson 2003:58). The presence and impact of socio-political action in working with community tensions is an important consideration in the research.

One approach to generating multifaceted, multilayered and multiagency change in an integrated framework is 'theory of change' used extensively in international development. It combines reflective practice for empowerment and social change with an outcomes based approach to the design, implementation and evaluation of initiatives and programmes intended to support change in their contexts. Vogel (2012:4) summarises the basic minimum elements of a theory of change to include: the context of the initiative including social, political, and environmental conditions; the current state of the problem the project is seeking to influence and other actors able to influence change; the long-term change that the initiative seeks to support and for whose ultimate benefit; the process/sequence of change anticipated to lead to the desired long-term outcome; the assumptions about how these changes might happen, as a check on whether the activities and outputs are appropriate for influencing change in the desired direction in this context; a diagram and narrative summary that captures the outcomes of the discussion. It is best as a flexible approach where assumptions are made explicit and the changes represented in a visual

diagram – whilst recognising that change is not necessarily linear. Key findings stress the importance of 'making assumptions explicit', making strategic thinking realistic and transparent and that whilst theory of change thinking can be challenging it can create a strong organising framework to improve programme design, implementation, evaluation and learning

The relevance of this, through an example from personal experience demonstrating the importance of making assumptions explicit, emerged during a prior experience of conducting a Community Impact Assessment in relation to the different agency approaches to tensions and some violent incidents regarding the Roma people in Belfast, before the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the European Union. A number of community based organisations adopted an a approach of supporting Roma people to integrate with host communities; some statutory services responded to the status of 'no recourse to public funds' so excluded this community from services; police initially pursued enforcement activity against alleged illegal employment operations but later declined to pursue enforcement on other issues as they knew Roma had no means of payment; some politicians were keen not to welcome Roma people in case more were attracted. As a result of different political priorities and perspectives, public services were torn between ignoring the problems, or dealing with them either through enforcement action, or being proactive in building relationships. The different assumptions were not initially explicit, transparent, or understood until conducting the Community Impact Assessment and were still a challenge in advance of the changing status of Romanian migrants from January 2014.

Potentially some of the ingredients of 'theory of change' could be integrated with community planning approaches and the two have commonalities of grass roots empowerment, ownership and leadership, in-depth analysis and bringing together and coordinating the efforts of a wide range of stakeholders. The extent to which some form of theory of change or integrated framework exists, and the significance of this in the place, will be explored in the research in the four countries and three case studies.

In summary, the concepts and frameworks from this section identified for further application in the research are the integration of short-term responsive and long-term strategic approaches (Lederach 2003), technical and transformative change (Fisher and

Zimina 2009), integrating horizontal and vertical capacities of actors (Lederach 1997), the Anderson-Olsen (2003) model, change agents and drivers of change (Mitchell 2011), dynamics of conflict escalation and de-escalation (Mitchell 2011), compassionate communities (Clements 2012) and theory of change (Vogel 2012).

**Working with tensions and community development**

Community based change and the empowerment of communities is a central and fundamental approach across a number of disciplines, including peacebuilding, international development, regeneration and renewal, community safety, social care and health. A community development approach which seeks to empower communities to own and act upon the issues that affect them is a central tenet of working with community tensions embedded in the Tension Monitoring Guide (Coventry 2007, 2010). Since the 1970s community development in the UK has been seen as a means of intervening to prevent urban unrest, predominantly relating to race relations and housing. This section of the literature review explores the definitions and approaches, some of the current challenges and opportunities in community development and how they might influence the research.

Community development, in essence, involves transformative change towards social justice, working at the grassroots. Ross, Clarke, McConnell, Lachapelle and Stansfield (2018) consulted globally with practitioners and academics to develop a set of proposed international statements of values, purpose and standards for community development. They summarise the high level purpose of community development as 'to work with communities to achieve participative democracy, sustainable development, rights, economic opportunity, equality and social justice' underpinned by values of 'commitment to rights, solidarity, democracy, equality, environmental and social justice' (Ross et al 2018:13). Challenging injustice is a central feature of radical community development. Ledwith (2011) argues that the current circumstances of the uncertain global economy, shrinking state and widening inequality mean that 'never has there been a more important opportunity for community development to redefine its radical agenda and to engage with injustice in the process of progressive social change' (Ledwith 2011:2). The conceptual framework for radical community development espoused by Ledwith is based on five dimensions: 'radical

community development is committed to collective action for social justice and environmental justice; this begins with a process of empowerment through critical consciousness, and grows through participation in local issues; a critical approach calls for an analysis of power and discrimination in society; the analysis needs to be understood in relation to dominant ideas and the wider political context, and; collective action, based on this analysis, focuses on the root causes of discrimination rather than the symptoms' (Ledwith 2011:2). She describes the process of community development as 'based on confidence, critical consciousness and collectivity, consciousness being the linchpin between the two', and that the process is 'cemented together by the connections between people that are based on values of respect, trust, mutuality, reciprocity and dignity, and which result in conviviality, compassion and cooperation'(Ledwith 2011:3). Ledwith's definition, as arguably the most radical, will be used as one of the concepts to be tested in the research.

A number of challenges have faced community development in the UK in recent years. First, however, Clarke (2017:2) points out that the UK tradition is to have different models for external delivery, overseas as part of international aid, and internal consumption at home. The former concerns bringing sustainable social and economic change to developing countries, former colonies and fragile states as part of international aid efforts and the recognition that this cannot be imposed from outside but that grassroots participation is vital to the success of any intervention. Nonetheless, the identification of needs, resources, beneficiaries, goals and planning is mainly externally driven in the first instance. The domestic model, changing over time, has a history of local projects to tackle locally defined issues and problems, in social work, regeneration and race relations and focused around local authorities, voluntary and faith organisations. Whilst there have been successes, Clarke argues that community development has an unfulfilled role in the delivery of the welfare needs of communities, that there are mixed messages about its nature and purpose and that attempts to introduce consistency into social planning and locality initiatives have failed due to the anomalies and disparities in local conditions.

Over the las twenty five years, successive government efforts have been directed at 'safer and stronger', 'sustainable', 'cohesive' and 'strong and active' communities and a raft of

initiatives from neighbourhood renewal and New Deal for Communities to 'Big Society', localism, community organisers and community budgeting, and have, in theory, included a focus on empowerment and local leadership. The range of strategies and plans has been in constant flux, short term funded and crossed over different government departments and agencies. Most have been needs led, problem centred and prescribed within performance management frameworks that measure outputs based on external, top-down agendas that limit the perspective of dynamic and truly empowered communities. Community engagement, involvement, participation and development have often been conflated, characterised by structures and forums and consultative mechanisms, part of the responsibility of many agencies, ostensibly acting in partnership, but without a clear understanding or shared view of the values and purpose or the distinctiveness of community development as a process for facilitating social change. There is a danger that when community development becomes everybody's job it becomes nobody's job.

There is also a danger that a simple approach to engaging with communities and working in partnership puts oil into the system where grit may be needed. Pitchford with Henderson (2008) question whether the current context of partnerships encourages independence and influence on the part of communities and community organisations. 'Practitioners and community organisations often describe themselves as being controlled by the partnership and its agenda and can, ironically, feel disempowered through such arrangements' (Pitchford with Henderson 2008:57). They identify that community pressures and demands can lead to conflict, and that could have benefits, but that 'today, conflict is very much avoided and practitioners are often employed to manage conflict rather than providing it with and outlet' (Pitchford with Henderson 2008:61). They suggests that policy concerns have overtaken community concerns and that a growing number of voluntary organisations have become part of the bureaucracy, contracted to deliver services for communities (Pitchford with Henderson 2008:61).

Austerity and the cuts to government spending have also impacted on spending in relation to social, economic and community development and on the voluntary and community sector (VCS). Pratten (2013) describes the turbulence in the sector with the increasing emphasis on the VCS as providers of services for the state rather than those which are

ancillary or complementary to the welfare state, a shift from grants to contracts which pose challenges to smaller grassroots organisations and squeeze many out through competition, and cuts in prevention and non-crisis services that many VCS organisations provide. She argues that there has been a loss of focus and resources on the other roles VCS organisations play, such as advocating on behalf of marginalised individuals and communities, 'speaking truth to power', giving people the skills and confidence to speak for themselves and developing social networks and social capital. Similarly, there has been a loss of focus on increasing social and economic participation, particularly in disadvantaged areas, often in ways that reduce reliance on public services. Consequently, the VCS as a source of social innovation, finding new ways of addressing social problems, from the bottom up, has been diminished.

A further challenge is that, to date, the connections between community development, promoting community wellbeing and working with community tensions have been limited, though wellbeing has been a key platform of public policy for almost two decades, albeit in different forms. Community strategies, introduced in the Local Government Act 2000 had the potential to join up and develop long term approaches to community development, however their replacement, health and wellbeing strategies introduced in the Health Act 2012, do not include police or community safety in the local leadership structures, so there is a challenge to see how working with tension and conflict can be part of a coherent local approach. The development of an agenda for working with tensions linked to promoting individual and comunity wellbeing offers potential opportunities (Foresight2008).

Another missed opportunity is that asset-based approaches have not been widely adopted in the sphere of tension and conflict in the UK. Mguni and Bacon (2010) developed the 'Wellbeing and Resilience Measure' (WARM), a framework to measure wellbeing, resilience and social wealth at a local level. The framework uses existing datasets designed to encourage communities and agencies to create a narrative about their neighbourhoods, their concerns and aspirations, strengths and weaknesses, who is vulnerable and who is not and which services are having an impact on their lives. They define emotional resilience as 'capacity of individual to bounce back from adversity, quality of social supports and the availability of assets to help restore communities following a shock'. The WARM process

was recommended as part of Coventry University's Hate Crime and Cohesion report in Belfast (2011) and whilst this was not implemented there is interest in further exploration at a community level as part of the next phase of research for community planning. Further research by the Young Foundation (Norman 2012), using WARM in two areas of Birmingham, distinguished between 'survival resilience' as a survival and coping lens which relates to disasters, crises and shocks, and 'adaptive resilience' which seeks to create positive outcomes in spite of adversity and suggest that the circumstances to facilitate this involve relationships and ties, however weak, outside the neighbourhood to enable people to tap into external resources. From one of the areas studied it was observed that lack of weaker ties stretching out beyond the community had led to problems and rising tensions going unnoticed and invisible to local agencies who had assumed that the community was coping (Norman 2012: 40).

However, there is a view that the language of resilience – withstanding the worst – presupposes problems, victim and perpetrators. Robinson (2013:3) argues that this is 'reactive, reductive, pessimistic, discouraging and, even at its very best, insufficient. The language of readiness – becoming the best we can be – identifies assets and builds on strengths. It is proactive, optimistic, aspirational and motivating'. This viewpoint stresses the need for readiness to benefit from opportunity as well as manage difficulties and adapt to change. This particular concept is not in common usage in the UK but it is included in the concepts to be tested to consider the implications in the context of community tensions. It is a strong feature of the Nursing Home case study in Chapter Five.

The true value of community development has been difficult to measure. However, a Social Return on Investment (SROI) study of community development (nef 2010) demonstrated the relationship between community development workers and community volunteers as co-producers of community wellbeing. It describes community development as 'a way of working with local communities, to achieve change within communities, to problems that they themselves identify. It is a collective process, not a one-off intervention, coproduced with, not for, communities' (nef 2010:2). Using the SROI methodology across four local authority areas, it indicated that community development creates £2.16 of social and economic value for every £1 invested – a SROI of 2.16: 1 and that the return on investment

of the four local authorities involved in the study was £15 for every £1 invested – or £3.5 million benefit (over a five year benefit period) for £ 233,655 invested in community development. The outcome measures used included composite indicators for personal wellbeing (resilience and self- esteem, and positive functioning), and social wellbeing (supportive relationships, and trust and belonging). The research identified a key outcome of community development was to create a positive image for a place: a benefit to the entire community of a place which was poorly regarded in mainstream public perception. This impacted on community wellbeing and also individual self-esteem and wellbeing. The approach to cost-benefit or social value and other challenges in measuring success will be further considered in the research. National indicator sets in Scotland and Wales provide high level frameworks for measurement and the emerging work on the Thriving Communities Index and the Neighbourhoods Using Local Assessment process, both in Oldham, offer innovative approaches at the local level. These are described in chapters four, five and six.

There are, nonetheless, opportunities. Though far from new, the concept of community building from the inside out and specifically an 'asset-based' approach to community development (sometimes referred to as ABCD) rather than a 'deficit-based' approach was developed in the USA in the early 1990s (Kretzmann and McKnight 1993), and has begun to have traction in the UK particularly in the field of public health. Asset based working values the capacity, skills, knowledge, connections and potential in a community and aims to promote wellbeing and resilience in communities through building social capacity, promoting face-to-face community networks, encouraging civic participation and citizen power. Foot with Hopkins (2010) argue that a growing body of evidence suggests that asset based approaches strengthen a community's confidence and ability to address their own needs and lever in external support. Asset based approaches also favour co-design or co-production of public services and a commitment to 'place-based partnership working' between agencies that supports community building. The perspective also offers public bodies the opportunity to think differently: opportunities to learn from success rather than failure and to measure performance based on positive outcomes rather than flagging up negative indicators.

Further models for community development approaches emanating from the United States of America include 'consensus organising' and 'collective impact'. Consensus organising has similarities to other forms of community organising and development approaches but Ohmer and DeMassey (2009:13) argue that it is distinctive in that it focuses on consensus rather than conflict approaches and 'on building partnerships between individuals in communities and powerful external players who can contribute to communities based on their mutual self-interest'. Their approach is asset based, discovering local leaders and exploring opportunities to harness self- interest as a motivation for improving the welfare of communities. It involves building on internal community assets but also analysing and engaging members of the external power structure. It seeks to achieve short-term goals and then position the participants to make even greater gains in the future.

Similarly, collaboration is nothing new but Kania and Kramer (2011) argue that 'collective impact' initiatives require the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem. The argument for a collective impact approach is that large scale social change comes from better cross-sector co-ordination than from the isolated intervention of individual agencies. Their five conditions of collective impact are; first, a common agenda, shared vision for change, understanding of the problem and commitment to a joint approach; second, shared measurement and consistency in data collection and measurement of results; third, mutually reinforcing activities, different activities co-ordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action; fourth, continuous communication to build trust, assure mutual objectives and create common motivation; fifth, backbone support – a separate organisation with staff and specific skills to serve as the backbone of the initiative and co-ordinate organisations and agencies (Kania and Kramer 2011:39). These conditions seem highly relevant to working with community tensions and to the conditions for success and whilst there may not always be a separate organisation, the need for 'backbone support' has resonance. These two models reinforce an approach which brings communities and agencies together in a shared endeavour, respecting the community needs and wishes but providing agency support, resources and coordination.

Such models need to be reinforced by behaviours and culture. The role of community development in understanding conflict and forming a community based preventive approach to violence and hate crimes requires cultural competence, contact and dialogue (Hoffman 2017). He summarises the five factors associated with the origins of extreme group violence, from Staub (2013), as 'life struggles, culture, unhealed trauma, bystander effect and personality traits', and the three fundamental elements of a community development programme, 'as active participation, intergroup contact among community members and psychological interdependency in achieving specific goals' (Hoffman 2017:65). He emphasises the use of green space programmes that provide therapeutic healing and opportunities for people to work together, and the promotion of more cooperative and prosocial behaviours of 'empathy, belief in a just and fair world, social responsibility, internal locus of control and low egocentrism'. He encourages cultural competence through education and respectful dialogue and argues that adults who practice caring behaviours particularly towards new communities and in diverse neighbourhoods serve as positive role models for young people in those neighbourhoods. He maintains that a lack of preventive community development projects that provide opportunities for growth and understanding is a contributing factor to conflict, aggression and hate crimes (Hoffman 2017:68). This has similarities with Clements (2012) 'compassionate communities', Ledwith's (2012) values and consequences of 'conviviality, compassion and cooperation' and approaches based on altruism and concern for the welfare and wellbeing of others, including future generations.

Different forms of dialogue feature in community development. Tensions in the UK are sometimes assumed to have a predominantly urban connection and the main focus for community development, but the importance of community development in rural communities is significant. Globally, much community development is directed at rural areas, including addressing issues of health, economy, education, infrastructure and protection. Based on rural experiences, Mtika and Kistler (2017:83) advance the term 'contiguous community development'. They distinguish between development *in* the community where people come together to address their problems and needs, and development *of* the community, where relationships, togetherness, enthusiasm and self-worth are enhanced. They describe the success factors of contiguous community

development as, first, 'exposure to new ideas, reflection on those ideas, then engaging in action'. A second factor is 'people acquiring or developing and retaining, into their conscious, values including the desire to learn from each other, understanding a problem and the need to address it, hard work and visioning what a better community would look like'. Thirdly, they identify 'organic organisational growth that is responsive to what people are learning and doing'. Finally their case for contiguous community development is that there needs to be integration of development *in* and development *of* the community. The foundation to the approach lies in dialogue, including 'descriptive dialogue' to define and gather information on a problem or issue, 'exploratory dialogue' to deepen understanding of why the problem is occurring and the impact, and 'praxis dialogue' which brings together the understanding and reflection with action. Together these are described as 'transformative dialogue' in contiguous community development (Mtika and Kistler 2017:88). However, Mtika and Kistler do not specifically address circumstances where there is tension or conflict within or between communities and there is a presumption of a desire for cooperation and shared problem solving. So whilst the ideas are extremely useful and add to the understanding of dialogue and community development in general terms, they do not add any specific new learning in relation to working with community tensions.

However the links between mobilising communities and youth violence prevention is explicit in the discussion of the National Academic Centres of Excellence for Youth Violence Prevention in the USA (Vivolo, Matjackso and Massetti 2011). These centres are based on academic and community collaboration and 'focus on building community capacity and competence so that evidence-based programs for youth violence prevention can be successfully implemented through effective and supportive research-community partnerships' (Vivolo et al 2011: 141). They are also explicit in making the link with public health, and the centres are promoted through the Division of Violence Prevention at the Centre of Disease Control and Prevention. They address violence 'at all stages of the public health model: monitoring violence related injuries; conducting research on risk and protective factors for violence; developing and evaluating the effectiveness of violence prevention programs and strategies; conducting research on and promoting the widespread adoption and dissemination of evidence-based prevention programs and strategies; and helping state and local partners plan, implement and evaluate prevention programs and

strategies' (Vivolo et al 2011: 141). The approach, based on a logic model, includes components directed at universal and high risk populations and address both long and short term outcomes. Inputs have a focus on building relationships with partners and motivating conditions for developing and maintaining those relationships, and developing and delivering a community mobilisation plan. The research-community partnership approach is a form of 'praxis dialogue' described above (Mtika and Kistler 2017) and in the work of Ledwith (2011), and is deemed as essential in building relationships with communities so that evidence-based programmes are adopted and implemented. What is also important here is the leadership and support given to state and local partners for planning, based on an evidence based approach. This kind of support, logic framework and praxis dialogue would benefit work with community tensions in the UK. Additionally, the public health approach provides a dynamic foundation for community and agency cooperation and enhanced capacity for preventive action. This approach features further in the research.

Ultimately, at the heart of community development is participatory practice. Ledwith and Springett (2010:13) argue that 'participation is a transformative concept. It is a way of life, a way of seeing the world and a way of being in the world'. This is not simply an approach to working in communities but impacts on all levels of society. They believe that it is vital to capture the connection between epistemology – the way that we make sense of the world – with ontology – the way we act in the world; ' . . . how we see the world affects our behaviour . . . if we alter the way we see the world, in turn our behaviour will change' (Ledwith and Springett 2010:212). Their participatory world view is built on such values as cooperation, equality, diversity and human dignity and frames the vision for participatory practice. Their work concludes with ten proposals for 'learning for democracy': taking sides; acting in solidarity; taking risks; developing political literacy, working at the grassroots; listening to dissenting voices; cultivating awkwardness; educating for social change; exploring alternatives; exposing the power of language. They suggest that this approach to learning for democracy has the potential to herald a new era for community development in a 'world of movement' (Ledwith and Springett 2010: 219). Their work presents many ideas for working in situations of tension and conflict that are geared towards transformative change.

In summary, the concepts and ideas to be tested from this section of the literature review are the model of radical community development from Ledwith (2011), the concept of readiness (Robinson 2013), and further exploration of measures of success to include the Wellbeing and Resilience Measure (Mguni and Bacon 2010) and cost benefit or social benefit measures such as nef (2010).

**Community based research and case studies of tensions in the UK – some examples of approaching tensions as a driver of change**

This section explores some themes in UK studies which will inform the research method, questions and lines of enquiry. Different angles drawn from different disciplines, which touch on the issue of community tensions, are considered. They are designed to explore a variety of academic literature which relate to some prevalent themes identified from prior experience in working with tensions. The first of these is the relationship between state policies and political conditions and local conditions and priorities. Secondly, as violence can be both a cause and result of tensions, studies relating to violence risk factors in the UK are considered, and these specifically identify the health dimension of violence, again as both cause and effect. Thirdly, the impact of global events and overseas conflicts within diaspora and in general communities in the UK, and the risks and opportunities of these events are considered using Joseph Rowntree Foundation supported studies. The fourth theme reviews studies of approaches and learning relating to the specific populations of Refugees and Asylum Seekers and Gypsies and Travellers. Finally in this section is the issue of protest, again both as a potential cause and result of tension, and both a threat and an opportunity for change.

The first theme concerns the interplay between state policies and communities, whether these are consistent and reinforcing or contradictory and undermining. Indeed the very concept of 'community' has different meanings under different political regimes. In his critical examination of how the concept of community influenced political discourse and urban policy under New Labour, Wallace (2010) argues that in seeking to empower people in cohesive and sustainable communities through its community partnership approach to regeneration and urban governance in poor neighbourhoods, it inscribed an 'anaemic

meaning of community which foreclosed the multiplicities, tensions and differences of the local' (Wallace 2010:805). He argues that the New Labour approach depoliticised social relations and assumed a degree of homogeneity and unity within neighbourhoods which were then imposed in government designed regeneration pathways. Further, he argues that the policies 'failed to offer a concept of community allied to a theory of social division or power relations, and instead sought to stigmatise and moralise in the pursuit of simplistic definitions of liveability and cohesion' and that this 'supported and reinforced an anaemic account of social relations that actually works to obscure the processes by which neighbourhoods are made whilst undermining efforts to support the most marginalised' (Wallace 2010:816). A more nuanced approach that takes account of different identities, values and needs, and the complexities of how communities function, or are dysfunctional, is required.

What followed under the premiership of David Cameron was the 'Big Society', which was not a more nuanced approach to communities but rather an initiative to redefine how the public, private and third sectors worked together to deliver public services, with a smaller contribution to delivery from the state and an increase in personal responsibility. Once again, as Fenwick and Gibbon (2017) argue, the initiative failed to recognise the complexity of relationships, this time between public, private and third sectors as providers, that the concept was woolly and vague, and that the relevance of the Big Society was transient and now passed.

This attempt to shrink the state coincided with a shrinking of state funding. The specific implications of recession, spending cuts and poverty for community relationships, is explored in a neighbourhood study in Bradford (Hudson, Davidson, Durante, Grieve and Kazmi 2011). The study surfaced a concern in the voluntary sector about the potential conflict between cuts and the Big Society empowerment agenda in which they were meant to be playing a key role. Their concern was that critical work with hidden and disadvantaged communities, such as socially segregated Gypsy and Traveller and migrant worker communities, would be affected. Unemployment also fostered a culture of resentment to some groups, negatively affecting relationships with ethnic minorities and migrants and increasing disaffection, particularly amongst young people. The common view

was that the recession had made the problems that existed before the recession worse. However, despite the pessimism there was a shared view that everyone had responsibility for community relationships. This would require creativity, greater collaboration across agencies to intensify joined up efforts, and that 'community mediation agencies need to explore the scope for volunteers to have a greater role in preventing community disputes and tensions from escalating in the difficult financial and economic climate' (Hudson et al 2011:3). Whilst such creative approaches were present, they needed evaluation of costs and benefits and the sharing of good practice, and the study highlights the tension between state policies relating to austerity and how this translates into increased tensions within and between communities and the fear of greater marginalisation of those already most marginalised.

In a different geographical context and setting, that of the tensions between national and local politics and stakeholder power relationships in town and country planning in rural Wales, Scott, Shorten, Owen and Owen (2011) highlight the dichotomy between communities' visions for their rural areas and the reality of what is actually experienced in development affecting the countryside. The challenges of rural development differ from those of urban areas yet they are treated similarly. Local countryside priorities are for 'multifunctionality, integration, wider countryside protection, development based on need and local distinctiveness according with the thrust of planning policy at the local and national levels'(Scott et al 2011: 417). However the reality reflects 'universal criticism over the type, pace and scale of development, lack of rural specificity, and a failure to take account of local community needs and priorities'. They conclude that 'effective engagement of top down approaches synergising with bottom up community led ideas is long overdue' (Scott et al 2011: 417).

This set of studies reinforces much of the learning in the earlier section on peace, conflict transformation and change and the need for the whole system to work together to achieve successful and sustainable outcomes. In particular the approach to the four nations studies includes a review of relevant legislation and key policies and whether the conditions set at the national level reinforce local priorities.

The second theme explores studies relating to violence risk factors as this is a highly relevant aspect of community tensions in the UK. Violence can be both a cause and consequence of community tensions.

The first of these concerns territorial behaviour. Kintrea, Bannister, Reid and Suzuki (2008) explored the manifestations and impacts of territorial behaviour among young people, and, whilst there are benefits of mutual support and close association with neighbourhoods, there is a darker side which potentially leads to isolation and violence, particularly with territorial groups from other neighbourhoods. Their research identified over 200 local projects across Britain that were 'anti-territorial' and concluded that whilst there a range of successful activities, including diversionary activities, education, increased contact between groups and conflict resolution, the projects were not able to tackle the underlying problems of deprivation and disconnectedness from the labour market. Overall the study identifies, 'across the whole field of policies for young people at national level in England, it is quite hard to make sense of the range of relevant targets, policies, plans, action plans, strategies, pilots, programmes and projects, which all seem forever in flux. Responsibility crosses over between several government departments and government agencies . . . there may be risks, at least, of a lack of coherence. The complexity of the field means that there is some inevitability that policy-makers working from one perspective will struggle to know about all of the relevant schemes and initiatives emanating from other departments' (Kintrea et al 2008:54). This description closely mirrors the experience of working with community tensions more generally than just in relation to young people, and it is interesting that the research also identified the short-term successes but lack of longer-term programmes to address underlying causes.

A further perspective on violence amongst young men in the UK is advanced through a comparative analysis between China and the UK by Coid, Hu, Kallis, Ping, Zhang, Hu, Bui, Ullrich and Bebbington (2017). The starting point is that violence is a public health problem and that young men are the main perpetrators and victims of serious violence. British men reported of 'early violence persisting into adulthood, confidence in fighting ability, perception that violence is acceptable behaviour, and experience of violent victimisation. More British men screened positive for antisocial personality disorder and substance

misuse'. They also identified a higher prevalence of life-course persistent antisocial behaviour amongst British men. In Chinese men there was a higher prevalence of intimate partner violence, reflecting a different cultural and other contextual factors (Coid et al 2017: 1267). Yang, Wong and Coid (2013) addressed violence risk factors amongst UK women, and found a higher prevalence of common mental health disorders and some types of personality disorder amongst violence prone women compared to their non-violent counterparts and that mental health care and violence prevention could work alongside each other, including training non-mental health workers, such as police and social workers, to identify violence prone women.

The approach to violence reduction in Scotland, learning from work in the USA, identifies this as a public health problem not just a criminal justice problem. The Violence Reduction Unit, established in 2005, aims to reduce violent crime and behaviour by working with partner agencies to achieve long-term societal and attitudinal change, and, by focusing on enforcement, to contain and manage individuals who carry weapons or who are involved in violent behaviour. The Unit also aims to explore best practices and develop sustainable, innovative solutions. This includes, for example, viewing treatment for violent injury within a medical setting as a 'teachable moment to provide a brief intervention for reducing violence' within a medical setting (Neville, Goodall, Williams, and Donnelly 2014). The Scottish approach is now being explored by the Metropolitan Police, and whilst this has become a major policing issue, the question remains as to whether all agencies need a greater focus and join up across a range of preventive measures, including health, to address these issues upstream, to prevent and intervene early. This influences the research questions regarding the conditions for positive impact and sustainable change.

A third theme is the impact of overseas conflict on tensions within and between communities in the UK. Collyer, Binsaisa, Qreshi, Oeppen, Vullnetari and Zeitly (2011) explore the impact of overseas conflict on UK communities and draw the distinction between community of place and community of ethno-national groups. Their research identifies six important variables influencing the extent and nature of the impact of conflicts on UK communities: the nature of UK involvement in the conflict; the proximity of the conflict to the UK; the timing and duration of the conflict; the size and date of diaspora

communities in the UK; transnational engagement of diaspora; media coverage. Where the overseas conflict results in new arrivals into UK communities, good practice includes networking of professionals and institutions to provide information to enable local services to respond effectively, and information for local communities where the newcomers are housed. There are examples of groups previously divided in their home countries finding ways to build good relations in the UK, informally in the workplace or though the support of community organisations. However, responding sensitively to the impact of overseas conflict requires expertise and understanding not necessarily available in local authorities and the research suggests that there needs to be greater links between national and local level policy-making which draws on the expertise of individuals facing the conflict and also disseminates the expertise which is currently generated centrally in government departments or national institutions. This seems to be an area of community tensions where some top-down information and expertise might be better developed to inform and help at the local level. Whilst there is such expertise and regular information sharing through police networks, there is not a systematic approach outside of this.

Global issues and the impact on UK communities were also summarised by Hanley (2011) bringing together findings from research projects, programme papers and events run as part of the JRF 'Globalisation, UK poverty and communities' programme 2010-2011. Both risks and opportunities are identified. In relation to economic tensions and labour force issues, the study of the caterer 'Gate Gourmet' dispute at Heathrow in 2005 and the series of strikes at Lindsey Oil Refinery in North East Lincolnshire in 2009 identified that workers achieved some short-term success in influencing employment policy locally, in part due to mobilising action which would have a global impact. The research also highlights the opportunity for global action in relation to addressing poverty and the organisation of demonstrations and protests around such events as meetings of the G20 and suggests there is the opportunity for anti-poverty activists to do more in relation to taking local issues to a global level.

The fourth area of exploration is to seek out positive examples relating to community tensions and cultivating peaceful communities. The purpose here is to be alert to approaching the research from the lens of success and how success is described. Many

studies of community tensions in the UK start from an analysis of where things have gone wrong, or what Pearson (2012:60) calls the 'dead-end discourse' brought back to life after the 2011 English riots, about feral children, dysfunctional families and communities, amoral materialism and a moral landslide – a 'vocabulary of complaint' where 'everything changes but nothing moves' (Pearson 2012:61). Indeed, in a volume of nineteen essays on the English Riots of 2011(Briggs 2012), not one addresses the issue of where riots didn't happen and seek out any reasons for this.

One area where tensions have been experienced in the past, but some lessons have been learned, is in the 'dispersal' of refugees and asylum seekers. Often both host communities and the refugees and asylum seekers themselves were ill prepared to meet each other and whilst there were undoubtedly acts of kindness and welcoming there were equally acts of hostility and opposition to very vulnerable newcomers. Over time lessons have been learned and communities have themselves mobilised to welcome new arrivals. The City of Sanctuary movement is one such local social movement which 'not only offers the chance for individuals and groups to challenge the way the asylum debate is framed in the UK but is also concerned with creating a culture in which the virtues of welcome and hospitality are valued and through which asylum seekers and refugees are free to make a full contribution to their cities and engage with local communities' (Darling, Barnett and Eldridge 2010:46). Since the inception of City of Sanctuary in Sheffield in 2005, groups and networks have developed throughout the UK and provide not only personal and social connections and support but celebrate the contribution of refugees and asylum seekers and campaign to increase understanding of why people seek sanctuary and the difficulties they experience whilst living in the UK. Darling (2015) stresses the need for communication and community preparation in resettlement and accommodation programmes, alongside the need to shift the discussion in the mainstream media and political discourse away from the notion of sharing a burden to a recognition of the role refugees play in making successful cities. That requires appropriate funding and effective collaboration between agencies to provide services. He also argues that moments of crisis in relation to migration also offer opportunities – both to highlight the challenges in the nations from which people are displaced and to develop sustainable and socially just responses. He considers a network cities across Europe as a vehicle to promote this. There are other similar initiatives for

refugee resettlement involving communities across the UK with refugees from across the world and in more recent research, Collyer, Brown, Morrice and Tip (2017) argue that whilst it is still relatively unusual to the recognise the expertise of refugees in research, there are even fewer examples where refugees are placed at the centre of planning refugee resettlement programmes (Collyer et al 2017:19). So, whilst there have been improvements in the past twenty years there is still scope to bring greater involvement and coproduction in research and development of services to this population.

Another population experiencing exclusion and frequently involving tensions is the Gypsy and Traveller community. The issue of Gypsy and Traveller site provision is often contentious and open to public opposition. Gypsy and Traveller housing needs have sometimes been poorly addressed and legislation has placed duties on local authorities, which should result in the provision of more Gypsy and Traveller sites. The Housing Act (2004), in conjunction with Circular ODPM 1/06, requires councils to assess the needs of Gypsies and Travellers and, via the Regional Planning Body, to include how this need will be met in local development plans. Richardson (2007) seeks to learn from a range of different experiences and approaches to the issue in six local authority areas and find out how local authorities can plan for appropriate accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and how the often-arising community conflict can be resolved. There is a stark contrast in the approach and levels of political commitment to Gypsies and Travellers between some of the case studies. One has no sites and there seemed to be little engagement with the cultural issues and needs of Gypsies and Travellers. Two areas have large Gypsy and Traveller populations; one of these has a strong leader of the council and this has impacted positively on the ground; and the other has effective officers who have been proactive in disseminating the council's positive approach to managing sites. Of the other four areas, there is public support from politicians in two of the authorities, and the remaining two are not so vocal in supporting Gypsy and Traveller issues. Overall, four key 'foundation stones' are identified as critical in taking forward this agenda in a positive way and addressing potential opposition from the wider community. These are: setting a positive context for debate; effective management of existing authorised and unauthorised sites; effective consideration of new sites with clear, well-managed communication of proposals; strong political leadership to

set the context for action Richardson 2007:67). These foundations stones are transferable to other situations where there are tensions with specific communities and to the overall picture of building peaceful communities.

A fifth relevant theme is protest, a further important aspect of working with community tensions. Protest is a legitimate part of democratic societies and free speech and free assembly are fundamental rights. Protest can lead to positive change and also act as a safety valve for strongly held views. Protest can also lead to divisions, fears and tensions within communities and potential conflict and disorder. The issue raised in the protest may mask, often thinly, other issues and prejudices. Sanders, Clarke, Stewart and Whitely (2003), specifically referring to the period 2000 to 2002 in the UK, link protest to economic circumstances and 'if people generally feel good about their economic circumstances, they should be relatively unlikely to protest; if they feel bad, protest should be more likely' (Sanders et al 2003: 691). Birks (2017) also considers protest in the economic context in relation to the 2008 financial crisis and the UK Uncut protest against austerity and proposing a crackdown on tax avoidance as an alternative. Her study highlights that 'periods of crisis are fertile times at which to precipitate change' but also explores how the argument is played out in media and public discourse, and transforming the 'moral framing of tax avoidance from the injustice of making the poor pay for the financial crisis through cuts into the unfairness of middle class earners paying higher taxes than wealthier individuals and corporations' (Birks 2017: 296). The term 'hardworking taxpayer' was brought to the fore. The study highlights how different actors pick up aspects of the argument for their own purposes and how the messages are changed according to different agendas.

At least one of the case studies in the research, the Scout Hut, includes an element of protest at the local level, ostensibly about allocation of resources, and applies the dynamics of conflict escalation and de-escalation from Mitchell (2011) to aid understanding of the circumstances.

The studies in this section illustrate there are multi-dimensional facets of community tensions, and that these have been addressed through different disciplines. However, they have not been brought together in any integrated studies of community tension in the UK, which is where this research seeks to make a contribution. This section also has highlighted

that there is learning and good practice to bring to the subject, but there has been very limited sharing and development in practice.

**Conclusions**

The first and strongest theme across the literature review is that working with tension and conflict involves integrating technical, short-term approaches to stop or reduce violence with longer-term transformative change to address underlying causes and work for greater social justice. Both are needed – to focus just on the former risks being trapped in an action-reaction sequence as one of dynamic stability and a part of conflict perpetuation resulting in maintaining a status quo rather than effecting change.

A second theme is that the essence is to enable bottom-up approaches within communities whilst creating the macro or top-down conditions for equality of opportunity and outcome, supported at the mid-level which integrates vertical and horizontal capacities and provides the framework to support change. The middle-range of actors has the greatest potential to serve as sources of practical, immediate action and to sustain long-term transformation, with roles which might include enhancer of resources, monitor and provider of early warning and the construction of a learning environment or process in which old positions, aims and strategies can be rationally reviewed, new ideas offered or generated, alternative futures considered and pathways towards acceptable solutions and future relationships constructed.

A third theme is that sustainable change only occurs when the activity is translated into socio-political action. This does not mean that activities and the personal and group level are not important, and indeed are essential, to working with tensions and conflict but that the socio-political dimension is vital to changing the prevailing dynamic. A key means by which this can be achieved is through community development based on confidence, critical consciousness and collectivity, cemented together by the connections between people that are based on values of respect, trust, mutuality, reciprocity and dignity, and which result in conviviality, compassion and cooperation. In addition, a vision of the future and a change process shared between the community and other agencies, acting in the role of enablers

supporting community development approach, is necessary for transformational change. Theory of change is one means of bringing coherence to generating multifaceted, multilayered and multiagency change.

Fourthly, learning from success and evaluating and valuing good things also emerges as a desirable but underused paradigm. Viewing community tensions through a series of systems, processes and tools alone is unhelpful – human relationships are key. The language we use to articulate the purpose and perspective on tension and conflict is vital to what happens and whether, in the final analysis, communities benefit.

These themes offer invaluable learning to the approach to tensions and conflict in the UK, a basis on which to address some of the challenges, concerns and contradictions outlined in the introduction and the potential for a new narrative. The current economic environment and massive change in public services poses challenges but also accelerates the need for innovation, new ways of working and more fundamental, longer term solutions. Of particular interest in the context of this review are the social and economic benefits of prevention and early action on tension and conflict and the platform for addressing and integrating the longer term change processes within the current policy environment.

The research applies fourteen concepts identified from the scholarly literature to the research findings in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and to case studies in Belfast, Leicester and Oldham, in order to consider their relevance and applicability to the both the specific topic of working with community tensions and the specific geography and context of the UK. The literature also informs the research questions, choice of case studies and the lines of enquiry within the interviews. This is discussed further in the following chapter on methodology.

## Chapter Three: Methodology

**Introduction – summary of research problem, purpose, questions and hypothesis**

The problem this research addressed was that work with tensions and conflict in communities in the UK, locally and nationally, suffered from a lack of shared clear purpose, a confusion of values, intents, different roles and expectations of those involved, and limited theoretical frameworks and capacities between agencies to understand the dynamics of tension and conflict and to address these in the short and long term. There has been an emphasis on tools and systems rather than outcomes and benefits. Current approaches were primarily problem oriented on the presenting issues rather than opportunity focused on the future possibilities.

The intent of the research was to consider the purpose, conceptual frameworks, values and approaches to working with community tensions and the conditions for sustainable change. The aim was to identify a clearer narrative for working with community tensions which will enable all actors to engage in multifaceted, multi-layered and multiagency change in an integrated and holistic framework, with the ultimate purpose of promoting peaceful relations and compassionate communities.

The research sought to discover the conditions in which working with tensions can integrate short-term approaches with longer-term transformational change. It explored the conditions which enable bottom-up and top-down approaches to work together and the role of middle-range actors in this. It sought to investigate the conditions for sustainable change at the community level. It endeavoured to identify and document success and identify what constitutes good practice through the evidence collected.

The central research questions was 'How can community tension be a catalyst for positive change and what are the conditions that are most likely to enable this in the UK context'? The sub-questions were 'how can positive outcomes to short-term events or crises be built upon to address longer term, underlying tensions' and 'what are the conditions and circumstances which enable different stakeholders involved in community tensions to achieve positive impact and sustainable change'?

The hypothesis for the research topic is that the current narrative is unclear in purpose, that tension and conflict can be a catalyst or opportunity for change, and that there is a need to look beyond monitoring to explore deeper underlying causes of tensions and develop longer term approaches to bring about beneficial sustainable change and cultivate peaceful communities. The study adopted the starting point of 'working with' tensions, rather than 'monitoring' or 'managing' tensions in order to open up a broader range of possibilities and to challenge the notions of the monitors and the monitored, or the managers and the managed. Rather, the aspiration was for a more respectful and inclusive approach to communities as active participants and architects of their futures and relationships. This paradigm also recognised the need to intervene on a broad front rather than a narrow focus on the presenting issues, involving longer-term timeframes and opening up opportunities, not just addressing immediate problems. The hypothesis was that the current lack of clarity relates, in part, to the location of work with tensions in the statutory sphere, predominantly as a crime and disorder issue.

**Summary of research phases**

The research was conducted in six phases. These are summarised in Figure 5 below.

***Figure 5: Summary of research phases***

| Phase | Activities | Rationale |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Literature review | Exploration of academic knowledge relating to the topic. | To learn from different disciplines.<br><br>To identify concepts to be tested.<br><br>To discover emerging themes and considerations for the research. |
| 2. Preliminary research | Short questionnaire with 35 police officers responsible for Community Tensions.<br><br>3 preliminary case studies. | To test the problem statement with those most involved in current approach.<br><br>To explore the approach for the main case studies, inform the choice and consider the questions to be asked. |
| 3. Four nations studies:<br><br>England<br><br>Northern Ireland | For each nation:<br><br>Review of relevant legislation and policy frameworks. | To identify the top-down approaches and the links across the system.<br><br>To identify the tensions being experienced and the ways of working with these. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Scotland<br><br>Wales | High level semi-structured interviews with senior police and government officers, including short pre-interview questionnaire. | To identify successes, challenges and opportunities<br><br>To collect information to enable testing of the 14 concepts identified from the literature review.<br><br>To identify the conditions that contribute to change. |
| 4. Three case studies:<br><br>The Nursing Home, Belfast<br><br>The Scout Hut, Leicester<br><br>Oldham | Exploration of options for case studies.<br><br>Rationale for choice.<br><br>Research of historical wider context, local area context, community tensions, from reports, documents, population profiles, grey literature and visits in the area.<br><br>Semi-structured interviews, including short pre-interview questionnaire. | To identify the experiences and approaches at the community level and the links across the system.<br><br>To identify the tensions being experienced and the ways of working with these.<br><br>To identify successes, challenges and opportunities<br><br>To collect information to enable testing of the 14 concepts identified from the literature review.<br><br>To identify the conditions that contribute to change. |
| 5. Interpretation and analysis | Analysis of findings through application of concepts – grouped under 4 themes:<br><br>Underlying premises to guide change.<br><br>Actors and roles.<br><br>Communities, community dynamics and working with communities.<br><br>Measuring success.<br><br>Summary and overview of analysis. | To apply the concepts from the literature review to the four nations and three case studies.<br><br>To distil the learning. |
| 6. Conclusions | Assessment of the method and relevance of the concepts tested.<br><br>Addition to definition for community tension.<br><br>Answers to research questions.<br><br>New definition for working with tensions. | To review research questions, findings and draw conclusions. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Potential for a new context.<br><br>Assessment of contribution to knowledge. | |

**Methodology**

The research was predominantly qualitative but did include a small quantitative element to assess the extent to which the hypothesis, that the current narrative has inadequacies and contradictions, was true. This was an initial questionnaire, conducted with 35 senior police officers who were the senior lead in their force for community tensions and was designed to test the problems that I had identified in the Introduction with those most involved in the current approach. The results of this are shown in Table 10: Initial survey of 35 police officers – Single Points of Contact (SPOCs) for Tension Monitoring, towards the end of Chapter 5. The questionnaire was amended slightly and used as a pre-interview questionnaire with participants in the research, and shown in tables 2,3,4,5,7,8,9 and a combined score for all interviewees shown in Table 11. A comparison between the two sets of results in shown in Table 12.

However this quantitative element had limitations. Community tensions exist in complex histories and multiple social and political contexts, with different experiences, perspectives and viewpoints, so the rationale for predominantly qualitative research was to develop a rich description of these experiences in the different settings. Community tensions involve dynamics and change. The approach was to learn the meaning that the participants held about community tensions, their own words and viewpoints and explore descriptions and explanations of experiences, behaviours and beliefs. A case study approach was designed to collect information from several sources including background and contextual data, published and grey literature and semi-structured interviews. Some short preliminary case studies were undertaken to explore the approach, inform the choice of case studies and the interview questions.

The advantages of using a qualitative approach for this study was that it was flexible and open ended and enabled a richer narrative to emerge than would be the case with a set of survey questions in which the response categories are fixed. In enabled information that had not been anticipated to emerge and was not limited or predetermined by the researcher's knowledge. The research topic is nuanced and the qualitative approach opened up the opportunity to explore this using the participants' own words. There was also the opportunity to explore other sources of data, from legislation and policy documents to minutes of meetings, letters and newspaper reports.

There were potential limitations to adopting a qualitative approach. In terms of the interviews, the information were filtered through the interviewees' views. Not all interviewees were equally articulate and perceptive and may only have had a partial knowledge of the situation. In this case these limitations were not considered significant as the topic involved different perceptions and world views, so this was not a weakness in this case. Potentially more problematic was the ability to identify situations and locations which had the possibility to form a generalised conclusion or replicability in other situations or locations. This was an important consideration, particularly in the choice of case studies, and whilst the criteria for choice sought to address this, given that every place has a different and unique history, context and dynamic, replicability in all cases cannot be claimed. However, the analysis and approach to the conclusions presents a framework which other areas can use as a benchmark for their specific circumstances, so present opportunities for meaningful comparison.

My role as a researcher and personal background shaped the study. Past experience with the research problem was used to form the aims and objectives, research questions, hypothesis and approach to the literature. My values of social justice and tackling inequalities also were relevant biases to recognise.

My experience has included training for all police services in the UK and many different local partnerships and community groups, extensive work in preparation for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and the many local community implications and risks of these events, research into hate crime, production of case studies and 'Theory of Change' plans,

exploring the management of protest and many practical multiagency workshops to analyse specific tensions using Community Impact Assessments. This experience and knowledge of the deficits and challenges, as well as the strengths and possibilities, enabled an informed approach to the intent of the study. Similarly, the experience of many different localities, organisations and communities provided the means to consider a range of possible places for enquiry and the network of contacts provided access to people at all levels.

This experience was of value in accessing interviewees and places. Police Scotland, for example, do not normally give interviews to academic researchers, and my request was referred to the Strategic Planning Development Team for approval, with the support of the Chief Inspector I had contacted for interview. Interviewees, particularly at the four nations level, generally required some information on personal background to consider whether they would agree to allocate time, which in all cases they did. The one exception to this was the National Community Tensions Team, where the initial contact, who was fully aware of and supportive of the research, was on maternity leave and her temporary replacement felt unable to participate.

Notwithstanding my experience, I was clear that my role as a researcher was to listen and learn from participants. There were no right or wrong answers and their experience and views were what mattered. Participants were all very forthcoming and shared their stories openly, some prompted to deep reflection or disclosure of very personal information.

The focus on what constitutes success was welcomed and in fact prompted people to self-reflect, challenge themselves and volunteer that they did have positive stories to tell but hadn't got all the answers and it was, for the most part, work in progress. They welcomed being part of the study and considered it an acknowledgement and valuing of their experience.

Further detail on each of the phases in the methodology are indicated below.

**Concepts identified from the literature review (Phase 1)**

The literature review informed the research questions and methodology as well as some specific concepts to be tested. The main concepts to be analysed were grouped as:

***Underlying premises to guide change:***

1. Proximate issues and underlying causes (Ackerman 2003)
2. Prevention, non-violent solutions and reducing underlying problems (Lund 2002)
3. Short-term responsive and long-term strategic (Lederach 2003)
4. Technical and transformative change (Fisher and Zimina 2009)
5. Theory of change (Vogel 2012)

***Actors and roles***

6. Integrating the horizontal and vertical capacities – bottom-up, top-down and middle-out (Lederach 1997)
7. The Anderson-Olsen model - significant change needs to be translated in to socio-political action (Anderson and Olsen 2003)
8. Change agents and drivers of change roles - and co-ordination (Mitchell 2011)

***Communities, community dynamics and working with communities***

9. Dynamics that intensify conflicts – escalation, mobilisation, polarisation, enlargement, dissociation, entrapment, and the reverse process - de-escalation, de-mobilisation, de-isolation, disengagement, re-communication, decommitment (Mitchell 2011)
10. Compassionate communities – valuing trust, equality and welfare above safety and security (Clements 2012)
11. Models of community development (Ledwith 2011)
12. Readiness (Robinson 2013)

***Measuring success***

13. Indicators of wellbeing (Mguni and Bacon 2010)

14. Cost benefit analysis in relation to community development (nef 2010) and early action (Community Links 2012)

**Preliminary research (Phase 2)**

In order to make an initial exploration of the approach and confirm the hypothesis, two preliminary research exercises were undertaken.

First, a short questionnaire was conducted with 35 police officers from across the UK who have the job of monitoring tensions locally and coordinating local responses. They were officially the 'Single Points of Contact' (SPOCs) for monitoring community tensions in their forces and meet occasionally under the auspices of the Chief Police Officers Association (formarly the Association of Chief Police Officers). The survey was conducted at one such meeting and was in the form of ten questions to assess current perceptions of working with tension and the intents.

This test was limited to a police perspective, but was useful to confirm many of the issues outlined in the introduction and research problem, from the perspective of those with the most experienced in monitoring tensions on a daily basis. Some amendments were made to the questions for the subsequent research to reflect the language of 'working with' tensions rather than just monitoring. The questionnaire is shown as Appendix 4 and the results shown in Table 10.

The exercise also raised the question as to how much a quantitative approach of this nature could add to the research. Even in one organisation, the police, there were different levels of experience – from the analysts who interrogate the data, to the constables working directly with geographic or specific communities of interest, and the senior officers who assess the overall risks, threats and demands and determine priorities in a complex and demanding system. Across agencies and communities, the quantitative element was considered an indicator of views and perceptions, posing aspirations and dilemmas, some answers, more questions, or confirming the identified contradictions. However it had limitations so the emphasis was predominantly for a qualitative approach.

Second, three limited case studies were undertaken to explore and identify the potential approach in terms of content, methodology and inform the rationale for choice of case studies. The three preliminary case studies were undertaken in Belfast. The purpose was to explore whether the lens of learning from success would work, what that might involve and the most effective way to derive learning. The exploratory studies were in relatively close proximity to each other and this was to assess whether there were significant variations or common themes within an area, the different types of situations being addressed and the limitations and opportunities of what might work as a more detailed study.

The first preliminary case study was in Lower Old Park where there had been a history of violence, injuries, damage to property, attacks on homes and rioting on the night of 11th July, the traditional night for bonfire parties. The Community Impact Assessment tool, part of the tension monitoring process, was used to develop a more structured planning process across both communities, improve communication and advise on what the most appropriate style of policing would be. This was drawn up with community leaders from both communities and led to an extensive action plan to engage local people in the lead up to the event. On this occasion there was a peaceful evening, followed by the parades the following day proceeding without incident in that area, something of a departure from previous years. The case study demonstrated the success of using a tool effectively, requiring a huge amount of focus, effort, communication, work with individuals, communities and agencies to achieve the result. Whilst this was an important success there was no complacency as there were still many challenges in relationships both between communities, with the police and with the authorities involved in a new integrated housing development on an adjacent site, so transferable learning even in that locality was limited. There was also a concern that by recording the success it could put the spotlight on the area and invite a reaction. This concern was not unique – that there is a need to keep some things below the radar and not invite attention. However distilling the lessons for research purposes was welcomed. This preliminary study indicated that success with a specific tool and planning for a specific event was important but may not carry over to the broader situation, so the choice of case study would need to go beyond use of a specific tool or system.

The second preliminary case study in Inner East Belfast, also an area of ongoing social and economic deprivation and sectarian conflict, had a long track record of cross community activity and dialogue. However the case study flagged up a weariness of short-termism in both funding and planning and being crisis driven rather than addressing root causes. There was an eagerness to have a ten-year plan with the agencies, addressing issues such as employment and skills, integrated education and celebrating the green and orange as a strength. Whilst having many skills, the community felt they needed the agencies to work with them more effectively in the longer term. This case study also confirmed many of the issues highlighted in the background to the research. The study highlighted the need to seek out an example of where there was a more integrated and long term approach by a range of actors working together.

Thirdly, the Greater Ardoyne preliminary case study demonstrated similar concerns that the absence of long-term planning creates a culture of short-termism, a reactive approach to the annual calendar and a vacuum for a positive programme of social and economic change. However, although there were gaps in the involvement of some actors in this scenario, this study led to the identification of the Nursing Home case study, as a bold, innovative and creative development which disrupted the status quo in a unique way.

All three studied flagged up the paramount role of community leaders, community dialogue and engagement, and the need for agencies to work in support. Long-term planning and better use of resources was needed, but the ongoing monitoring work was also important in dispelling rumours and tackling flare-ups and was regarded a key element of preventing violence and damage.

The learning from the case studies was used to identify the criteria for selection of the three areas and the interview questions. Specifically, success would ideally involve progress beyond the status quo, involve longer term sustainable change and work towards new goals and futures.

**Four nations research (phase 3)**

The data collected is presented in Chapters 4 and 5. Chapter 4 explores the approaches England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. First there was a review of relevant legislation. Whilst community tensions are not specified in legislation in any of the four nations, there are related statutory duties with regard to, for example, equalities, good relations, community engagement and wellbeing, which give an indication of priorities and direction in each of the four nations. Secondly, relevant policy frameworks were researched, including strategy documents and specifically commissioned reports. Third, in order to investigate the current narrative across the UK in the words of those with strategic responsibilities for working with tensions, the research involved eight high level telephone interviews, with one senior police and one senior government official for each of the four nations of the UK, and explored national perspectives, experiences and approaches across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. It included exploring where work with tensions, and community relations more broadly, fitted into the national context, through legislation and policy frameworks and overall approach. Examples of the types of tensions experienced, how these were being addressed, how progress was measured, and the challenges and opportunities, were themes in the interviews. Each interviewee completed a pre-interview questionnaire and the results summarised at the end of each nation. One interviewee in England declined to complete this questionnaire, as they felt they had nothing to contribute (Tables 2,3,4,5).

The interviewees in England were from the Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Metropolitan Police. Initially the intention was to interview a representative from the National Community Tensions Team, but the person who had agreed to take part was on maternity leave and her replacement was unable to participate. There are thirty nine territorial police services in England, the largest of which is the Metropolitan Police covering Greater London, which has a dedicated team for community tensions, and involved in supporting other areas and related issues beyond its geography, so this was selected as the service for interview. Northern Ireland interviewees were from the Police Service of Northern Ireland and The Executive. Senior officers from the Scottish Government and Police Scotland were interviewed for Scotland. Wales has four territorial

police services, and the lead for equality, hate crime and cohesion for Gwent police was suggested by the interviewee from the Welsh Government as a good contact in this regard. All had strategic responsibilities in relation to the topic and an overview of priorities, knowledge of how the systems worked, and had networks of relationships at different levels including with ministers, partners nationally and locally and communities, and were able to convey the culture and essence of their approach in ways that addressed the overall research questions.

The interviews were semi-structured using open ended questions, as follows:

Name, Position and Organisation

Key priorities of your role

Organisational values and principles

1. What is your key role in working with community tensions?
2. Do you use any specific definition of community tension?
3. Main tensions over the last few years?
4. Any specific systems, processes or methodologies?
5. Any legislative frameworks/context?
6. What do you think is the main purpose of working with community tensions?
7. How would you define success in this regard?
8. Main challenges?
9. Main opportunities?
10. Any other comments?

Interviewees were sent transcripts of the interviews in order to add additional comments or make amendments. Extracts from the interviews form a key part of the data.

The write up of the four nations research forms Chapter Four, and presented in the same themes – legislative background, policy framework, community tensions and measuring progress, followed by the summary of pre-interview questionnaires.

**Three local case studies**

To investigate local level approaches to working with tensions, three case studies were researched. Tensions exist in multiple contexts, involve different disciplines and stakeholders and there are different capacities and resources available. Places operate differently in terms of their systems and interventions and their overall approach to community based change. The case studies sought to reflect some of these variations.

The rationale for the choice of localities these included several elements. First, the case studies were primarily exploring the potential for tension and conflict to be a catalyst for positive change and the conditions that affect this. The research sought to learn from success, so the case studies were identified by an indication that there was something that had worked, was working or might be working, that could be explored. This did not mean that there weren't ongoing or deep seated challenges and problems but the focus was particularly on the conditions that had contributed to a breakthrough or change – however small. It may have been that the success was a one-off, and that success for some may not equate to success for others, so there were no assumptions that there was a basis for sustainable change.

The case studies needed to reflect different histories, social and political contexts, sources of tension and approaches to bring a varied and nuanced understanding and the opportunity to test the conceptual frameworks in different settings. They each had a 'story' in a historical context as well as a current story, so that the short and long term perspectives could be considered.

There was a focus on the assets and strengths in communities, not just the problems. The study was also concerned with the different actors and roles of communities and agencies and how these worked together.

In order to identify the locations for the case studies, further preliminary research was undertaken to identify where there might be useful learning in different settings and circumstances and where there was agreement to participate in the study. Conversations were held with a number of possible areas. One was very keen to be involved, but on the

basis that things weren't working and there were significant problems which they hadn't yet addressed in a coherent way, so they were seeking help rather than able to make a contribution to the research and learning objectives. Other areas which had made progress were identified and considered, but many of the key actors had moved on and the institutional memory was limited. A further area considered had a very successful hate crime management system, but as one of the preliminary case studies flagged up, there was a need to look beyond tools and systems. One option seriously considered was a school merger programme involving schools with very different populations and cultures, and this was initially agreed, but in the event the timing was unsuitable to the head teacher. So, the final choice of selected sites for case studies offered three different settings in terms of scale, community tensions history and context, and different opportunities to test and learn from the concepts and frameworks in the literature review. These involved a physical development in contested space in a city, an area that had experienced recent protest and competition over resources on a housing estate, and a local authority area which had embarked upon a whole system approach to building a cooperative borough.

The first of the case studies was The Nursing Home, Belfast, a study at a highly stressed, vulnerable and sometimes violent interface where physical, social and economic regeneration has brought communities together to address underlying social problems. The case study explored the roles of all of the actors and the significant community benefit. It was different in that it involved a private sector developer in a key role, working closely with community development workers.

Second, Thurnby Lodge, Leicester was a traditional white working class outer estate with some increase in black and minority ethnic communities, particularly Muslim, and where competition over a community resource led to protests, demonstrations, threats and hate crimes. The local issues, between the 'Forgotten Estates' group of protesters, a 'splinter group' of local residents, and the 'As Salaam' group were exacerbated by external involvement by far right groups. The issue was 'resolved' in the short term and the case study explored whether the underlying issues were being addressed and if there had been any change in the communities as a result of the protest and the decisions made. The case

study was particularly useful in looking at the escalation and de-escalation dynamics involved in the protest.

Third**,** Oldham, was described by Shafique, Kippin and Lucas (2012) as having 'longstanding issues of social inequality, ethnic division, poor governance, limited social capital and complex housing and social welfare problems which interact with an often fractured policy mix that has struggled to strategically grapple with the need to encourage more inclusive and responsive communities, beyond the usual prescription of grants and top-down intervention' (Shafique et al 2012:43). There have been numerous studies and reports at the five and ten year anniversaries of the 2001 disturbances, and some successes, and a new co-operative and transformative model of local government has been developing. A key measure of success as 'the degree to which they are able to develop a strategic approach to community cohesion and empowerment – one which works with the grain of people's lives and drives cohesion from a number of levels' (Shafique et al 2012: 45). The case study demonstrated a whole system approach and culture to do just this.

The research for the case studies included initial visits to identify interviewees and walk around the area, researching the area profile, demographic and statistical analysis, history, context, background to tensions, published reports, news reports and relevant grey literature. Interviewees were identified on the basis of their role or function, people of influence or influenced in the setting, people making change and those affected by the change. Conversations were held with many people in the areas, not just those who were formally interviewed.

Twenty three semi structured interviews were held across the three studies. Each interview was preceded by a simple and short questionnaire to assess the current perspective on working with community tensions. The participants varied according to the context and included community members, elected representatives (politicians), police, local authority and voluntary and faith agencies. The profile is shown in Table 1.

***Table 1: Summary of interviewees***

| Role | Nursing Home | Scout Hut | Oldham |
|---|---|---|---|
| Statutory body (Council/police) | 1 | 2 | 5 |
| Voluntary/Faith | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Community | 7 | 2 | |
| Elected representatives | | | 2 |

The interviews were semi-structured around the following questions:

1. About the area and the story

   Background

   History

   Good things about the area – strengths, assets

   Community relations

   Recent events
2. How would you describe your approach to the challenges (Principles/values/frameworks)
3. Is there a shared vision for the future of the area?
4. There are a lot of stakeholders/interested parties – where does the driving force lie?

   What are the different roles involved?
5. What are the main strengths in this situation? Conditions that help things move forward . . . .

   . . . and main challenges.
6. Resource implications? Cost benefit analysis?
7. Do you have any measurement of change – practical achievements and assessment of relationships, trust, changing attitudes and behaviours?

8. Any other thoughts or reflections?

The interviews were transcribed and sent to participants for checking.

Every interviewee was given a short questionnaire prior to, or at the start of, the interview. The purpose was to gather an initial view or perception of working with tensions prior to any discussion. The questions were simple and relevant to communities and agencies at all levels and were based on the survey undertaken with police officers in the preliminary stage. However, not all interviewees ringed one answer as the instructions required, so the summaries involved splitting the answers proportionately. This diluted the impact of the survey. It did not occur with the initial test with police officers, who arguably had a greater familiarity with the subject in policing practice, whereas the other interviewees experienced tensions in different ways. There were still some indications to be drawn, but the exercise also reinforced the need for a primarily qualitative approach.

There is a summary of the quantitative element at the end of each case study (Tables 6, 7 and 8) and a combined summary with the four nations in Table 9. Whilst the questions were not identical in the pre-research exercise with police officers and the interviewees, the summary in Table 11 was included to add comparisons, identify similar themes and continuing questions.

The data for the three case studies forms Chapter Five.

**Interpretation and analysis (Phase 5)**

All of the data collected was reviewed to consider the findings, reflect on the information, events, experiences and insights of those involved and how these impacted on the aims and objectives of the research and the research questions. From this review and reflection, a process for systematic analysis and interpretation of the data was framed.

The analysis considered to what extent the fourteen concepts identified in the literature review were present or absent in the narratives of the four UK countries and the three case studies and the implications for a future narrative. Not every place exhibited evidence

relevant to every concept, whether positively or negatively, but where there was such an absence it was indicated for completeness.

The chapter is organised around the four groups of concepts: underlying premises to guide change, actors and roles, communities, community dynamics and working with communities, and measuring success. The concepts were then applied across the seven places, not always in the same order, but keeping countries and local case study places together. The rationale for analysis through groups of concepts, rather than place by place, was that this approach better addressed the research questions and enabled some comparisons to be made. This process for merging the data was designed to enable discussion and a greater understanding of the lessons learned on a thematic basis, conveying different perspectives and highlighting similarities and differences.

In addition to the fourteen concepts, references back to the literature review and new references, raised by the research, were included as relevant, in response to issues or ideas raised by the research. This added to the interpretation of the data through drawing on additional academic knowledge.

The interpretation and analysis forms Chapter Six. Table 13 presents a summary analysis of concepts and places, which seeks to distil and amplify the messages.

**Conclusions (Phase 6)**

The research drew conclusions regarding the answers to the research questions, identified the conditions that enable tension and conflict to be a catalyst for change, the roles and actors involved, elements of community dynamics that affect change and the challenges and emerging means of measuring success.

The conclusions also put forward a new definition for working with tension and the potential for a new context through which tension and conflict might be approached, through a language of care rather than fear, as part of wellbeing and cultivating peaceful relations.

The conclusions form Chapter Seven. Figure 6 presents the conclusions in summary form.

**Ethical considerations**

The research was conducted with adherence to Coventry University's Ethical Research procedures and was reviewed periodically during the research, including questions at annual performance review panels. The Ethical Approval Application is attached as Appendix 1.

There were a number of specific considerations in the research. The first concerned the current means of collecting information about community tensions and that this is subject to varying levels of protection, confidentiality or secrecy. Much of the information concerns recorded crimes, many very serious, unrecorded incidents and intelligence. Some discussion was held with the police as to whether the research would require a higher level of security clearance to have access to information. However, it was mutually concluded that this was not needed for the research and could add an unnecessary complication. Nonetheless, the basic levels of confidentiality and data protection were observed as previously adopted in professional practice on this topic over a long period.

Permission was sought for the interviews. At the national level, in some cases this was through a formal process, in most cases this was through initial dialogue and explanation of the research and how the data would be used so that participants were confident of the purpose and saw the value of giving their time. At the local level permission was sought to work on site with participants of my choosing, and to operate freely in the area, accessing different people and places within them, and making the purpose known at all times. The interviews, mainly at the local level, potentially and in reality, did involve a number of unsolicited disclosures of prior criminal activity. All participants had full written information about the nature of the research, its use, confidentiality and anonymity and that they had the opportunity to withdraw during or after the interview. All gave informed consent to the use of the material. The Participant Information Sheet is attached as Appendix 2 and Informed Consent Form as Appendix 3. There were no issues of anyone wanting to withdraw or retract information or challenges to the conduct of the research. Such information was not quoted in the research unless explicitly relevant.

Reporting of data from non-published sources was presented anonymously. The data was stored securely in a study and on a personal computer not used by, or accessible to, any other person.

## Chapter Four: The current narrative in the four nations – England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales

### The approach in the four nations of the UK - findings

### Introduction

To address the central question 'How can community tension and conflict be a catalyst for change and what are the conditions that enable this in the UK context', this chapter documents the approaches to working with community tensions in each of the four parts of the United Kingdom. It takes a broad view of the context of tensions and includes a wide lens on the social, political, economic and environmental considerations that can impact on tensions in the short and long term.

For each nation, there were two interviews, one with a senior government official and one with a senior police officer. These interviews picked up differences in terminology, approach and emphasis within and between nations. Generally, there was greater consistency of language and approach across the four police services, who all use common definitions of community tensions, tension levels and a common reporting system. This language, approach and system was not always known to the government officials. Each interviewee also completed the short pre-interview questionnaire to capture a brief picture of working with community tensions in their experience. These are summarised in a table at the end of each part. Though participants were asked to circle one answer, some circled more than one, so the results allocated as a proportion. One participant felt unable to complete the questionnaire.

Arranged in four parts, England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, the material broadly sets out, first, a short review of the current relevant legislation in the four nations. The relevant legislation differs in relation to those powers which are devolved and those which are reserved to the UK government. Defence and national security, foreign policy and immigration are reserved powers, though separation of powers is not always straightforward as in the case of immigration, the devolved governments will care for asylum seekers in their countries pending the decision of the Home Office of their right to

remain or otherwise. Health, education, social work, housing, economic development and the environment are amongst devolved powers. Police and justice was devolved to Northern Ireland in 2010 and to Scotland in 2012 but is not devolved to Wales. Consequently this has led to some different approaches, in some cases through enhancement of UK legislation, for example in relation to equalities, and in other cases separate nation-specific legislation concerned with the sustainable development of the nation, its land and people, in a global context.

Second, the key policy drivers are briefly outlined with a view to establishing where the focus of community relations is located and any underlying principles or priorities.

Third, there is a collection of examples of some of the main issues raising community tensions in recent years. These illustrate the diversity of tensions, though there are strong themes around the impact of international events and politics, acts of terrorism and their aftermath, the connections between what happens in one part of the country or world and its very rapid impact or manifestation in local communities.

Additionally, each section includes observations from the interviewees on the issues and opportunities in the current circumstances. There is also a consideration of how success is measured, both quantitively and qualitatively.

Whilst they are all work in progress, it is apparent that the narratives in Scotland and Wales are broadly clear, holistic and have strong political leadership. Northern Ireland is struggling with, amongst other things, the Assembly being suspended from January 2017 and the long-term unresolved issues which still impact on how Northern Ireland is approaching building a united community without a united government. Work started to have a more systematic approach to community tensions has been in abeyance for some time since the collapse of power sharing. The section on England gives some of the history of the last fifteen years of addressing issues of 'cohesion' and 'integration' but indicates a changing political and policy approach which has lost overall direction or traction at the top level and a varied picture locally. The Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper, HM Government (2018) is under consultation and as yet the commitment and impact untested.

Analysis and interpretation of the information for the four nations, considered against the concepts and frameworks identified for testing from the literature review, are set alongside the analysis of the three case studies and form Chapter Six.

**England (Population 55.6 million)**

***Legislative Background***

There is no single or specific legislation that focuses on community relations or tensions. Working with tensions is not, in itself, a specified statutory duty.

The Equality Act 2010 addresses duties in relation to socio-economic inequalities, protected characteristics, prohibited conduct, provision of services, premises, employment and education. The Public Sector Duty requires 'all public authorities subject to the equality duty must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not' (Equality Act 2010, s.149). Protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The monitoring of the legislation is focused on the protected characteristics and not geographical communities or situations where there are issues other than those relating to protected characteristics.

Other relevant legislation crosses a range of disciplines, including Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and specific duties with regard to Prevent; Immigration Act 2016, which addresses illegal migrants; legislation relating to racially or religiously aggravated crimes including the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and amendments, and Section 145 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003; and public order, including the Public Order Act 1986 which was the first legislation on this for fifty years, and followed the Southall riot of 1979, Brixton riot of 1981 and miners' strike of 1984 to 1985 and updated the legislation to contemporary issues such as violence at sporting events and raves.

More generally the Sustainable Communities Act 2007, which addressed 'ghost town Britain', Sustainable Communities (Amendment) Act 2010 and the Localism Act 2011 make provisions to support the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of communities and give local people more power to shape what happens in their area including delivering services, taking over and owning public assets and neighbourhood planning. These replace the Local Government Act 2000 which introduced the duties and powers of wellbeing and required local authorities to form Local Strategic Partnerships and produce community strategies. These are no longer requirements and whilst, in part, community strategies have been replaced by the requirement, in the Health and Social Care Act 2012, to produce Health and Wellbeing strategies, and they concern social, economic and environmental wellbeing, there is no reference in any of the statutory guidance to social or community relations. This is more the domain of Crime and Disorder legislation and statutory developments from the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, with a focus on preventing and reducing crime, victims, reoffenders, specific crime types, partnerships and the public role in community safety.

***Policy Framework***

In 2001 'community cohesion' entered the policy lexicon following disturbances in Oldham, Bradford and Burnley. Based on independent reviews by Ritchie (2001), Ousely (2001), Clarke (2001) and Cantle (2001), the Home Secretary established a review group on Public Order and Community Cohesion (Denham 2001). The Denham Review focused on government responses to minimise future disorder and to build community cohesion, and the practical help government could give to support local solutions. More on these reviews is included in the Oldham case study. Guidance produced jointly by the Local Government Association, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Commission for Racial Equality and The Interfaith Network (2002) defined those factors which produce cohesive communities as: 'a common vision and sense of belonging; the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued; those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities, and; strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds and circumstances in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods'.

The Commission on Integration and Cohesion (2007), chaired by Darra Singh, conducted a further review, and 'Our Shared Future, the report of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion', added three further factors to the definition; 'there is a strong sense of an individual's rights and responsibilities when living in a particular place; there is a strong sense of trust in institutions locally to act fairly in arbitrating between different interests; there is a strong recognition of the contribution both of those newly arrived and those who already have deep attachments to a particular place, with a focus on what they have in common' (Commission on Integration and Cohesion 2007: 42).

The language shifted with the coalition government and 'integration' was adopted in preference to 'cohesion'. 'Creating the conditions for integration' (Department of Communities and Local Government 2012:5) set out five factors that contribute to integration; common ground, shared aspirations and values and a focus on what people have in common; responsibility and a strong sense of mutual commitments and obligations; social mobility and people able to realise their potential and get on in life; participation and empowerment with people of all backgrounds being able to take part, be heard and take decisions in local and national life; tackling intolerance and extremism with a robust response to threats, whether discrimination, extremism or disorder, that deepen division and increase tensions'. The approach was for local authorities and their partners to take the lead with government only acting exceptionally. The aspiration was to 'rebalance activity from the public to the voluntary and private sectors and from centrally led to locally led action' (Department of Communities and Local Government 2012:2).

The approach was at the same time as the abolition of regional government. One specific function undertaken by the regional offices was the collation of monthly tension monitoring reports from local authorities. Police services have a weekly tension monitoring system involving partners, but the demise of the government offices and the removal of any requirement for local authorities to report on tensions significantly reduced this activity with other partners. Partnerships still exist, including in the two English case study areas in Leicester and Oldham where they are very strong, but the picture is patchy and the police leadership of this agenda is more the norm.

Post-coalition the then Prime Minister and Home Secretary commissioned a further review into integration and opportunity in isolated and deprived communities. The Department of

Communities and Local Government (2016) Casey Review: 'a review into opportunity and integration' identified discrimination and disadvantage feeding a sense of grievance and unfairness, isolating communities from modern British society. She identified 'high levels of social and economic isolation and in some places cultural and religious practices in communities that are holding people back, run contrary to British values and sometimes our laws' and that 'too often leaders and institutions were not doing enough to stand up against them and protect those who were vulnerable' (Department of Communities and Local Government 2016:5).

So, over the fifteen year period there is no shortage of policy frameworks, analyses, perspectives, strategies or guidance in relation to cohesion and integration but Casey observes:

> 'As a nation we have lost sight of our expectations on integration and lacked confidence in promoting it or challenging behaviours that undermine it.
>
> For the last fifteen years governments have commissioned many reviews of community cohesion and developed strategies to improve it. But these cohesion or integration plans have not been implemented with enough force or consistency, they have been allowed to be diluted and muddled, they have not been sufficiently linked to socio-economic inclusion and communities have not been engaged adequately' (Department of Communities and Local Government 2016:16).

Further, she adds:

> 'Programmes and projects have followed the easier paths, taking up the 'positives' but not addressing the 'negatives'. We have relied on inter-faith groups and faith leaders to take the initiative in dealing with the many challenges but lacked the courage to set the values and standards we want the nation as a whole to uphold and unite around' (Department of Communities and Local Government 2016:16).

A Government Official added in the research interview:

> 'Historically there have been vast tracts of information and documents – but these have not necessarily been held in institutional memory or embedded. The new Integration Strategy will start from the more recent challenges and the increased need for action.
>
> Community tensions sits with the Home Office alongside hate crimes. We are aware of the manifestations and the views of ministers are contained within speeches, discussions, parliamentary questions, particularly after an event and noting how communities have responded'.
>
> *Senior government officer*

The policy response to the Casey review was not published at the time of the interview but from the Conservative and Unionist Party Manifesto (2017:55) there is a commitment to an Integration Strategy:

> '. . . we will bring forward and integration strategy which will help people in more isolated communities to engage with the wider world, help women in particular into the workplace, and teach more people to speak English. We will work with schools to make sure that those with intakes from one predominant racial, cultural or religious background teach their students about pluralistic, British values and help them get to know people with different ways of life.'

The Government official interviewed pointed to the challenges of addressing segregation:

> 'In preparing the strategy there has been great deal of thinking and internal discussion about segregation, what it means and the rationale for intervention. We know that segregation is linked to poorer performance in education, employment and other key outcomes but is this a symptom or a cause? There are different drivers, including long term settlement patterns, and so many layers of complexity that overlaying one 'theory of change' over this is difficult and we need to look at what is viable politically.
>
> The opportunity now is to shift from an environment where we have funded a number of national demonstration projects in areas of challenge to a more muscular approach of layering interventions, in a planned way, in more targeted areas. We need to do this more in places where there are future challenges and develop area based initiatives to create a real and lasting sustainable impact, acting as a catalyst to joining it up locally and then mainstreaming to enhance integration'.
>
> *Senior government officer*

The Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper, published in March 2018, identifies the challenges to integration as: level and pace of migration; school segregation; residential segregation; labour market disadvantage; lack of English language proficiency; personal, religious and cultural norms, values and attitudes; and lack of meaningful social mixing. The strategy is to eliminate these barriers through building on good practice, taking a whole government approach and implementing a national framework of priorities locally.

***Community tensions***

Police services across the whole of the UK use the definition of community tension developed by Coventry University in 2007 and updated in 2011. They also use the modified Woodland model for assessing tension levels. The model, developed by the late Detective

Constable Ron Woodland was modified by the Coventry University work and is currently in daily use. The model assesses tensions in three ways - experienced, evidenced, potential (EEP): experienced – how people are feeling and the 'word on the street' including rumours; evidenced – what has actually happened or is happening; potential – what might happen based on these two previous factors or upcoming events, anniversaries or other circumstances. Assessments are made on a six level scale for each element. Reports are submitted to the National Community Tensions Team at the Chief Police Officers Association who collate the national picture, digest relevant open source information and look for trends or cross border issues which might affect different parts of the UK.

The research interview identified that the approach from the police is based on community engagement.

> 'We recognise that a reactive approach is inefficient and are trying to be preventive - through environment scanning - so that we are not surprised. This requires a good level of knowledge and engagement.
>
> The team here (at the Metropolitan Police) has a good level of engagement across communities. It has a contacts database of over 600 community contacts which is reviewed and updated every six months.
>
> The team monitors the effects of local, national and international events and the ripple effects into communities. The team also has the role to facilitate lawful, peaceful protest and support the Public Order branch. Intelligence is shared from Community Officers and dedicated Ward Officers who know what's happening on their patch.
>
> We aim to increase the confidence of the community in working with the police and demonstrate appropriate levels of response. Our job is to uphold the peace and we seek to do that with community support and confidence and uphold the reputation of the Metropolitan Police'.
>
> *Senior Police Officer*

The police interviewee described some examples of different types of and sources of tensions in recent years. Many of these illustrate the impact of international events on local tensions and similarly the effects of events in different parts of the UK on local communities.

> 'The murder of Assah Shah in Glasgow (March 2016) caused tensions and panic in the Ahmadi community. We invited them in for discussion and support.
>
> The unofficial visit of President Modi to the UK from India led to Sikhs, Muslims, Christians and members of the Dalit community coming together to campaign

against the visit and protest at his address to the UK's Indian diaspora at Wembley Stadium. The mass demonstrations to protest against discrimination from Modi and his party against India's minority groups united people who would not normally protest together. There was a lot of shouting but no major disruption.

Sikh and Muslim tensions were raised following the Rotherham grooming and abuse cases. We now have a bespoke Sikh Forum in addition to the four Independent Advisory Groups for race, gender, disability, faith.

Brexit has been a huge issue for the settled European communities, including from Lithuania and Poland and has required time to allay fears and anxieties.

The terror attacks in Manchester, Westminster Bridge, and London Bridge have played into the right wing narrative. Prior to these, the reaction was around buildings – existing or proposed mosques – with protests and incursions into mosques by Britain First. The leader and deputy leader of this group have been arrested in Belfast. The Finsbury Park incident and Jo Cox murder were right wing attacks – at Finsbury Park the Imam kept the crowd at bay to minimise any further violence. Right wing incidents in America and Canada also impact here.

Islamophobic attacks after terrorist incidents, including in Paris and elsewhere, have been mapped. There are spikes of reported crime after such incidents. Generally, the greater the loss of life involved the longer it takes for tensions to return to 'normal'.'

*Senior Police Officer*

Engagement and relationship building is a priority for government also, as the government interviewee explained.

> 'Every area is different, has a different chemistry, so it's not a case of one size fits all. We had have had years of relationship building, locally and nationally, and sought to build visible collective leadership and support community resilience at the local level'.
>
> *Senior government officer*

The police interviewee identified that partnership working has been variable over this fifteen year time frame and across England, but suggested that it is re-emerging. However, further leadership at a government level was needed to give more direction for partners.

> 'Since the Westminster Bridge attack there has been greater information sharing with Local Authorities and the Prevent networks. The Community Impact Assessments for Westminster Bridge, London Bridge and Parsons Green (sanitised versions) were shared with local authorities. Partnership working is re-emerging because of the terrorism picture, especially with the Prevent network. Prevent is

local authority owned and includes practitioners, police, local authorities, and is more about engagement and support to make lives better.

There is more partnership working in relation to Prevent – with schools, education, health, local authorities. There could be greater partnership in relation to planning for events and joint responses. Where there is criminal fall out then the lead will fall to the police, but there are opportunities for greater joint enterprise across the whole agenda – it needs someone at government level to own this and give direction. '

*Senior Police Officer*

***Measuring progress***

With the changing strategic approaches, priorities and performance frameworks, measuring progress is not an easy exercise. In quantitative terms, the Equalities and Human Rights Commission has a statutory duty to report on report regularly on the extent to which equality and human rights are improving in Britain. The Commission's report, 'Is Britain Fairer?' (2015) presents data and evidence based around 10 domains: education; standard of living; productive and valued activities; health; life; physical security; legal security; individual, family and social life; identity, expression and self-respect; and participation, influence and voice. Within each of these domains, there is a set of indicators and measures that have been used in order to evaluate progress.

Across the domains there are progress in some areas but inequalities and the difference in in outcomes for traditionally deprived groups persist, and in some cases have widened.

Qualitatively, measuring success is also challenging. The police interviewee stressed that the monitoring system is not a performance measure but an assessment tool to measure the level of tension for operational purposes.

'Success is difficult to quantify – you can't put a measure on engagement. The EEP levels are not indicators of success, they serve a different purpose. Success is about having a good spread of engagement and being able to support other officers with information to support their engagement and understanding.'

*Senior Police Officer*

The government is exploring measurement for the new integration strategy, and the government interviewee stressed the need for these to have local meaning and relevance, be affordable and appropriate and undertaken regularly.

'It is critical that we address local priorities. We will aim for coproduction of local metrics – and a matrix of metrics which can set a direction of what to measure. These could include:

- measuring meaningful interactions between groups
- Skills to enable interaction, such as proficiency in English language skills, access to employment and education
- Participation in economic activity especially amongst women. Work is considered a key driver for a range of outcomes but also a platform for interaction and integration

We need an appropriate and affordable approach to measurement. We constantly need to measure as communities are dynamic, access to opportunities change and different voices come forward'.

*Senior government officer*

***Pre interview questionnaire***

Only the police interviewee was able to complete the questionnaire and the government official felt unable to do so – effectively a 'don't know' response. So the results in Table 2 are only from a police perspective and consequently the results reflect their specific role and experience. The main focus was national security, counter-terrorism and Prevent and concerned with big events, national and international issues. It was seen as top-down, reactive, stopping bad things from happening, calming things down and avoiding failure. However it was also considered that long-term issues affecting the community is the emphasis and that partnership between agencies and communities was the desired approach.

***Table 2: Pre-interview questionnaire: England***

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Main focus of community tensions | National security, counter terrorism, Prevent **1** | Local community issues and concerns | Public Order | |
| 2. Lead responsibility | Police | Council | Community | Partnership between agencies and communities **1** |
| 3. Lead responsibility in 2 years' time | Police | Council | Community | Partnership between agencies and communities **1** |
| 4. Currently working with tensions is . . . | Top down **1** | Bottom up | Equally top-down/bottom up depending on circumstances | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5. Currently working with tensions is . . . | Predictive | Reactive **1** | | |
| 6. Current tensions are . . . | Small scale, nuanced, including hate crimes/feeling scared | Big events, national and international **1** | | |
| 7. Priority is . . . | Stopping bad things from happening **1** | Helping good things happen | | |
| 8. Emphasis is . . | Seeking to avoid the costs of failure **1** | Seeking to invest in the benefits of successful outcomes | | |
| 9. Emphasis is . . . | Concerned with long term issues affecting the community **1** | Concerned with short term issues and events | | |
| 10. In my experience working with tensions is . . | About calming things down **1** | About looking at how things might change | | |

**Northern Ireland (Population 1.9 million)**

***Legislative background***

The reference point for the legislative basis for building good relations is Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, which requires public bodies designated for the purposes of the Act to comply with two statutory duties. The first duty is the Equality of Opportunity duty, which requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions in relation to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between the nine equality categories of persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; men and women generally; persons with a disability and persons without; and persons with dependants and persons without. The second duty, the Good Relations duty, requires that public authorities, in carrying out their functions in relation to Northern Ireland, have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group (Northern Ireland Act 1998 s75).

Much of the Northern Ireland specific legislation is with regard to protests and parades. Here, the main legislative instruments covering both protests and parades taking place in

Northern Ireland are the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 and Public Order (Northern Ireland) Act 1987. The Public Processions Act states that advance notice of a parade must be given at least 28 days prior to the event and stipulates the details which must be provided and adhered to as a part of the event. The Parades Commission was established from the Public Processions Act and acts as a governing and mediating body with regards to any such planned events in Northern Ireland.

The Northern Ireland Executive (2015) published, 'A Fresh Start: the Stormont Agreement and Implementation Plan; an agreement to consolidate the peace, secure stability, enable progress and offer hope '. This gave new measures to address issues around flags and parades whilst also giving new obligations to elected members to work together against paramilitary activity. This piece largely underpinned existing legislation and gave clarity to issues of prior disagreement or confusion.

***Policy framework***

Following previous initiatives to develop the approach and strategy, the Northern Ireland Assembly adopted the Strategy of the Northern Ireland Office of the First Minister/Deputy First Minister (2013), 'Together: Building a United Community', as its commitment to improving community relations and building a united and shared society. The vision is for 'a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation – one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance'.

'Together: Building a United Community' identifies a set of shared values that link political leadership with individual and community effort and motivation. These are: cohesion, acceptance, sharing, rights, responsibilities, respect, interdependence, integration, diversity, inclusion and fairness and working towards a community based on equality, good relations and reconciliation.

The strategy has four priorities. First is children and young people, where the aim is to improve attitudes amongst young people and to build a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations. Second is to create a shared community

where division does not restrict the life opportunities of individuals and where all areas are open and accessible to everyone. Third is to create a community where everyone feels safe and where life choices are not inhibited by fears around safety. Fourth is to create a community which promotes mutual respect and understanding, is strengthened by diversity and where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced.

Implementation activities so far have included over a hundred cross community summer camps in 2015-16, announcement of five new urban village shared housing developments and five shared education campuses, United Youth volunteering programmes for young people not in education, employment or training, cross community sporting events and the first of the interface walls to come down through community effort.

***Community Tensions***

In order to harness commitment and action to the strategy across government, a Ministerial Panel was established, with thematic sub-groups to reflect the key priorities of the strategy. One such sub-group was dedicated to considering community tensions and first met in February 2015.

The initial task of this group was to establish whether there was a structure in place for overseeing and gathering information about tensions in order to inform decision making, allocate resources to mitigate tensions and to inform strategic planning for longer term interventions. This identified that the annual cycle of funding Good Relations projects and programmes did not help a long-term approach to tackling underlying causes at scale (Northern Ireland Assembly Community Tensions Overview 2015:4-5). 'The annual cycle of funding for Good Relations projects and programmes is not conducive to a long term approach to tackling the causes of community tension and to bringing about the scale of change required across our society. The current approach is restrictive and limits the potential for long-term thinking as well as hindering the (community and voluntary) sector in its ability to be more innovative and creative in their approach' (Northern Ireland Assembly Community Tensions Overview 2015:5 unpublished).

The community tensions sub-group also identified the need for the work to be more planned, structured and with more careful attention to resource allocation. 'As a matter of urgency a more strategic approach to funding Good Relations activities and intervention

programmes is required. Whilst this would complement an overarching strategic approach to community tensions, it is essential to enable groups and communities in reducing community tensions across our society on a more planned and structured basis. Resourcing must be based on what is needed to tackle tensions. The resourcing of activities and interventions needs to be based on the information that has been analysed centrally' (Northern Ireland Assembly Community Tensions Overview 2015:5).

It also highlighted the criticality of political support and commitment at the strategic level. 'Continued demonstration of political support for and commitment to the Together: Building a United Community Strategy is essential to ensure the necessary buy-in from all communities. If the strategic approach (proposed for community tensions) would be applied, political support from right across the Executive would be critical during its implementation' (Northern Ireland Assembly Community Tensions Overview 2015:5). The support and influence of politicians at the local level was also highlighted, mainly, but not always, as a positive. 'Some members of the sub group have highlighted that at times of community tension the words and actions of political and community leaders can be very helpful in bringing calm and perspective to difficult and challenging situations. In addition to this, there can, occasionally, be an alternative stance taken by political representatives, which can present a challenge in taking forward actions aimed at resolving/reducing tensions. The need for collective political and community leadership on contentious issues is essential in helping to reduce community tensions' (Northern Ireland Assembly Community Tensions Overview 2015:5).

Progress in implementation of the work of the group has been slow and then put on hold due to the suspension of the power sharing arrangements at Stormont from January 2017.

High level interviews confirmed the analysis. The police interviewee likened the situation to a form of perpetual crisis management rather than an organised approach to building good community relations.

> 'We are mainly managing the failure to manage community tensions by keeping a lid on public order. There are hundreds of manuals on public order. We're addicted to crises – this has built up over decades
>
> The public sector is a dysfunctional state. One in three people are employed in the public sector. Businesses are dependent on the public sector, for example, double

glazing. The community sector is completely dependent. Less money will change behaviours.

A lot of the work is about public order and not about building good relations – it should be the latter'.

*Police senior officer*

Similarly, the government officer voiced the need for better planning, coordination and collaboration at all levels.

'It's all informal and reactive. The Community Tensions sub-group needs to be strategic, preventative and move the focus to transformative change rather than rewarding bad behaviour (through funding) as has been done in the past. The main challenge is collaborative working and what that looks like from both the top down and bottom up – and is truly partnership led. We need government departments to change how they look at tensions and how they behave and influence funding for long term change'.

*Executive senior officer*

There is recognition of the need to work differently, across longer term timeframes and across the whole system. Relationships, behaviours and a 'trajectory of change' are central to what working differently might include.

'There is a need for long term integrated planning in education, housing, health, economy, improving jobs and life expectancy**.** This is the responsibility of all, not just the police. We need to change vulnerable people's mindsets to absorb, embrace and tolerate differences.

This is a craft not a science – it is not formulaic. It is about policing *with* the community, clarity of decision making and accountability to the community. It is about building relationships at many different levels and layers. It needs to use the right language and have nuanced behaviours and actions – including non-verbal communications.

We need to be able to show a trajectory of change in hard outcomes both in the short and longer term – across the wider social determinants of health and wellbeing'.

*Police senior officer*

***Measuring progress***

Since 2012, the Community Relations Council of Northern Ireland, with the support of the Joseph Rowntree Trust and Joseph Rowntree Foundation, has produced an annual Peace Monitoring Report which examines extensive datasets across four domains – security, equality, political progress, cohesion and sharing. It documents the progress and pressures affecting communities and the effect on the peace process overall. The five reports published to date (Nolan 2012, 2013, 2014, Wilson 2016, Gray, Hamilton, Kelly, Lynn, Melaugh and Robinson 2018) evidence and document two trends, the positive and the negative, that run alongside each other.

A number of common themes run through the reports. The first is that whilst the 1998 peace accord has prevented the return of large scale violence, the model on offer from the top is peace without reconciliation, resulting in a culture of endless negotiation. This has led to shakiness in the political institutions and public dissatisfaction with the lack of achievements of the Assembly. Threats to stability are both external, including austerity, the Scottish referendum on independence and the Brexit vote, and internal, with paramilitarism being the biggest scourge cited in every report. The poor economic position and ongoing inequalities pose particular challenges in relation to youth unemployment and overall poverty. These inequality gaps are perceived differently, and 'are perceived through narratives that allow all new developments to fit within a story that connects with the patterns of the past. The nationalist narrative is of an upward trajectory, whilst the unionist narrative is one of loss. This latter perspective tends to magnify the sense of diminishing shares, whilst the nationalist perspective tends to emphasise an historical drive towards equality. The conflict of the two narratives risks a return to zero sum politics where a gain for one is seen as a loss for the other'. (Nolan 2013:8). Whilst Northern Ireland has become more pluralistic, political and public services are dominated by men.

Nolan (2014:14) also concludes that 'failure in Northern Ireland comes cost-free. The whole society may pay but not particular actors. When the multi-party talks on flags, parades and dealing with the past ended in failure, none of the political parties had to pay a political price. When the policing cost for contested marches and events spiral into millions, the organisers never receive a bill. The consequences have been felt at the sharp end in

education and health. Devolution, which was supposed to bring responsibility closer to local level, has failed to do so in Northern Ireland'. No one picks up the tab (Nolan 2014:14).

However, he also evidences that at grassroots level the reconciliation impulse remains strong and that much of what happens in local neighbourhood defies the stereotypes. He cites very many small events that happen below the radar and argues that 'reconciliation continues to be stronger at the grass roots than at the top of society' (Nolan 2014:14).

The most recent Monitoring Report (Gray et al 2018) points to a feeling and reality of a society standing still with 'legislative and political paralysis' (Gray et al 2018:11). Uncertainties around Brexit is placing stress in relationships both within Northern Ireland, cross border with Ireland and between the British and Irish governments. 'Lack of progress on everyday social policy issues is permeating every aspect of life and is disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable people in society' (Gray et al 2018:12). Patterns of educational inequality are unchanging, and in some cases worsening, namely in working class Protestant boys and Traveller children. (Gray et al 2018:14). Whilst there has been a lack of direct confrontation around parades, there is still unease, as remains the case in relation to flags and bonfires, and 'the debate around the recognition and status of the Irish language in NI has become central to the ongoing political stalemate' (Gray et al 2018:13). There are some positive indictors in the report, in relation to a stronger performance in the economy, relatively high feelings of wellbeing amongst the population and a reduction in hate crimes, other than those motivated by faith or religion (not including sectarian crimes which are separately recorded and have fallen).

All of the reports present an honest and comprehensive account of progress and challenges. The big question is how much these reports are discussed, debated and used to inform action, particularly in the context of the political vacuum.

***Pre-interview questionnaire***

Table 3, based on the pre-interview questionnaires shows that the main focus for working with community tensions is local community issues and concerns, though these are both small scale and nuanced as well as influenced by big events. Police currently lead on working with tensions but there is a desire for this to be partnership led in the future. Significantly, working with tensions is seen as top-down, reactive, seeking to avoid the costs

of failure, short-term and about calming things down, rather than looking at how things might change.

***Table 3: Pre-interview questionnaire: Northern Ireland***

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Main focus of community tensions | National security, counter terrorism, Prevent | Local community issues and concerns **2** | Public Order | |
| 2. Lead responsibility | Police **2** | Council | Community | Partnership between agencies and communities |
| 3. Lead responsibility in 2 years' time | Police | Council | Community | Partnership between agencies and communities **2** |
| 4. Currently working with tensions is . . . | Top down **2** | Bottom up | Equally top-down/bottom up depending on circumstances | |
| 5. Currently working with tensions is . . . | Predictive | Reactive **2** | | |
| 6. Current tensions are . . . | Small scale, nuanced, hate crimes/feeling scared **1** | Big events, national and international **1** | | |
| 7. Priority is . . . | Stopping bad things from happening **2** | Helping good things happen | | |
| 8. Emphasis is . . | Seeking to avoid the costs of failure **2** | Seeking to invest in the benefits of successful outcomes | | |
| 9. Emphasis is . . . | Concerned with long term issues affecting the community | Concerned with short term issues and events **2** | | |
| 10. In my experience working with tensions is . . | About calming things down **2** | About looking at how things might change | | |

**Scotland (Population 5.4 million)**

***Legislative Background***

The Scotland Act 1998, 2012 and 2016 gave powers to the Scottish Government to run the country in relation to matters that are devolved from Westminster. These include: the economy, education, health, justice, rural affairs, housing, environment, equal

opportunities, consumer advocacy and advice, transport and taxation. The power to set a Scottish rate of income tax is a new addition.

In terms of the Equality Act 2010, Scotland has built on the UK legislation to enhance policy in relation to groups with protected characteristics, mainstream the equality duty and strengthen performance through the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. Scotland had previously strengthened Hate Crime Legislation through the Offences (Aggravation by Prejudice)(Scotland) Act 2009 and commissioned Lord Bracadale to lead an independent review of hate crime legislation and consider whether existing criminal law provides sufficient protections for those who may be at risk, whether changes are needed to current laws, whether existing offences should be extended to other groups and whether all hate crimes should be brought into one area of legislation. The Scottish Government response to his report, following consultation, is due in summer 2019.

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 creates new rights for community bodies and introduces new duties on public authorities, strengthens the voices of communities in the decisions that matter to them and also strengthens the statutory base for community planning. It is prevention focused, person centred and concerned with tackling inequalities, barriers to access and the discrimination people experience. There are 32 Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) across Scotland, one for each council area. Each CPP is responsible for developing and delivering a plan for its council area. Senior officials of the Scottish Government, usually at Director level, act as location officials for the thirty-two groups of Community Planning Partnerships, providing support and advice.

***Policy Framework***

The Scottish Government (2011) vision for a successful Scotland is set out in the National Performance Framework, introduced in 2007 and refreshed in 2011 and 2016. The Framework actively supports wider engagement between the Scottish Government and its delivery partners, including local government, third sector and public bodies to provide a unified ten year vision. It was refreshed again in 2017, following community engagement, and embeds the UN Global Sustainable Development Goals into one comprehensive vision of national wellbeing for Scotland and charts progress towards this through a range of

social, environmental and economic indicators. National Outcome 11, 'building inclusive and supportive communities and ensure that the rights and wellbeing of Scotland's minority communities' is central to the business.

The whole public service reform agenda is geared around of tackling inequalities and supporting economic growth across Scotland: where communities are empowered and supported to take responsibility for their own actions; and public services are confident and agile enough to allow that to happen. There is a clear focus on prevention and early intervention, with the aim of breaking cycles of inequality and poverty.

In terms of policing, Police Scotland (2017) have a ten year strategy, '2026 – Serving a Changing Scotland'.

> 'Within the priorities and principles is a strong commitment to localism – understanding our communities better and recognising that communities face different challenges because of geography or the makeup of the community and therefore we need a flexible approach – not one size fits all. So we have overarching strategies but are flexible with different techniques for different communities and circumstances.'
>
> *Senior Police Officer*

The Police Scotland (2017) Implementation Plan 2017 - 2020 also has priorities of: protection, based on threat, risk and harm; prevention, tackling crime, inequality and enduring problems facing communities, focused on localism, diversity and the virtual world; knowledge, informing the development of better services; innovation, to be dynamic, adaptable and sustainable.

The Scottish Government (2016) received the report of the Independent Advisory Group on Hate Crime, Prejudice and Community Cohesion they had commissioned, and the Scottish Government (2017) response, 'Tackling Prejudice and Building Connected Communities' took on board all the recommendations and established a multi-agency delivery group with Ministerial oversight to take these forward. It also established an Advisory Panel on Community Cohesion to provide expert advice on strengthening the approach to building cohesive communities and safeguarding people from harm.

***Community tensions***

As elsewhere, sources of tensions are many, and include national and international incidents, political events, natural disasters, local issues, crimes and incidents within or between communities, or with agencies such as the police, local authority or NHS. A strong theme across the stories cited as leading to tensions in Scotland is the interconnectedness of global and local issues. The police interviewee first described the cumulative impact of acts of terror happening outside Scotland, but affecting communities within Scotland.

> 'From January 2015 and the Charlie Hebdo incident in Paris there was an assessed rise in community tensions. As the frequency of terrorist incidents has increased there is a general rise in community tensions and fears, then after an incident it comes down, but maybe not back to the previous pre-incident level, then possibly a rise after another incident and it comes down again maybe not to the previous level, so overall, in my view, there has been a general raising of fears and tensions in society. However over the last couple of years our communities may have become used to such incidents and so those post incident tensions may not be increasing where it once did. There could be a number of reasons for this including the work having been done by many groups and communities to promote community cohesion'.
>
> *Senior Police Officer*

The changing nature of terrorism has also raised fears and reactions in communities.

> 'The low level, lone individuals using a low sophisticated weapon, such as a knife or vehicle as a weapon, has also likely raised fears, as people realise that such attacks could happen anywhere and at any time. There is also a rise in the backlash, with far right groups targeting refugees and asylum seekers in particular, or Muslims or people perceived as Muslims but who may in fact be Sikh or from the Middle East in general. We try to work with relevant partners and the different communities to negate that backlash'.
>
> *Senior Police Officer*

A local example, also cited for its repercussions in the data presented for England, describes an example of tensions in intra-community relationships, demonstrates that groups within communities are not homogenous and there is a need for a sensitive and nuanced understanding of different beliefs and practices within groups and communities.

> 'In March 2016 we had a murder of a shopkeeper in Glasgow by an individual from England who is currently serving a life sentence. The victim was an Ahmadiyya Muslim**,** well liked in the local community, with particular views on the Muslim faith. Knowledge of him was picked up on social media by an Orthodox Muslim from

> Bradford, who drove to Glasgow and made a brutal murder in public. Fear and anxiety was raised in both the Ahmadiyya and Orthodox Muslim communities and there was potential for global ramifications, for example in Pakistan. This is just one example, there are underlying issues between Shia and Sunni Muslims but also sub groups within the Sunni community in particular, those with conservative or more extreme views to more moderate and mainstream views. This will likely not lead to terrorism, but intolerance and community tensions will likely increase amongst Muslim communities. So we need understand better and be more sensitive to communities within communities and the further sub-groups within those'.
>
> *Senior Police Officer*

The government official also referred to the impact of overseas events on tensions in Scotland.

> 'There is a small Jewish community in Scotland with strong links to Israel and the Jewish diaspora. At the time of the 2012 events in Gaza the Jewish community felt isolated, under threat, anxious and experiencing anti-Semitism. We had face to face dialogue and ensured support.'
>
> *Senior Government Officer*

However, there was also an occasion where a relatively small community interfaith event in Scotland drew international attention and abusive responses which impacted back into the local community.

> 'In January 2017 there was an interfaith event at St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in the west end of Glasgow. A Muslim woman read a passage from the Koran which was filmed on YouTube. Two weeks later there were thousands of comments from all over the place including the USA – negative comments and abuse about the inclusion of this particular reading at the event. This led to great concern and anxiety for the ministers. As we had the direct links we were able to advise and support the church with the assistance of local operational officers and provide specialist support and advice appropriately'.
>
> *Senior Police Officer*

Community engagement is at the heart of the approach for both the government and police. There are national standards for community engagement to guide good practice. The government representative presented a clear statement of the role of Scottish government in this, the need to act across government and the role of ministers.

> 'Our role is to be connected, have relations with local communities, keep in touch, facilitate a multiagency approach with open dialogue, plugging into a bigger picture

response across different parts of government and supporting ministers in their engagement with local communities.'

*Senior Government Officer*

The police response is a careful balancing act between engagement and understanding communities and different beliefs and practices, whilst preventing crime and enforcing the law. The approach is non-judgemental and if a policing response is required then the aim is that it is timely, proportionate and necessary.

> 'The police have a duty to promote safety and wellbeing and prevent crime, harm and disorder. We do that with partners and communities, cooperation and support. We engage with a network of community groups to promote cohesion and good relations, both locally and nationally, with basically a multi layered approach. The more engagement the better understanding will be achieved by all.
>
> We don't interfere in faith or cultural practice or make an opinion or judgements, but if any laws are broken or there is any promotion of hatred and intolerance then we have laws to deal with that. We will take appropriate action but in a proportionate and necessary manner.
>
> We seek to understand our communities better and engage at a local level with communities and minority groups such as LGBT, disability, faith, race. Our response is proportionate and we have to be careful not to be seen as spying or interfering.
>
> At a strategic level we engage with many different groups including faith and belief groups at a national level, encourage networking and dialogue so that matters can be addressed quickly and proportionately before they escalate.'
>
> *Senior Police Officer*

There is strong recognition that engagement is about the quality of relationships and of the importance of trust. This involves continuous conversations with all parties in a situation where there are tensions, so that people feel they have the opportunity for a fair hearing. This needs to occur whilst maintaining confidentiality.

> 'We are very careful about how we engage. I am very honest and make sure my integrity is not put into question. Often we engage with Jewish, Arab, Muslim communities and we need to be seen as trusted and that people will get a fair and honest hearing. Trust is there – if not seen – or measureable. We don't take sides – we are 'actively fair'.
>
> There are constant issues of the Scottish Palestinian and Scottish Israeli communities. We have to uphold people's right to protest and people's right to conduct their businesses. Both peoples can come for discussions, quietly, behind the scenes, subtly and not sensationalised – and we work with this in partnership with

> the right people. We don't market this. It is about people's lives and needs confidentiality.
>
> So the benefits of trust and how to promote it at the grass roots are key to the vision and we have to avoid tokenism and gimmicks'.

Close engagement also aids readiness to recognise and work with tensions that may not yet have surfaced but are simmering underneath, again often related to other conflict zones in the international sphere.

> 'I work in communities to be ready for community tensions and to recognise them – often things have been simmering away and they don't pop up unless something serious happens – then people realise what's been going on and the implications.
>
> With the increase of communities coming in from conflict zones we need to be able to recognise those conflicts through engagement. We try to make them feel wanted and recognised under their own identity and to have the trust and confidence to come forward when things simmer. For example, when the Kurdish referendum was held in Iraq there were increased tensions within the small Iraqi Kurd community in Glasgow. Through engagement we were ready if there were disagreements or arguments within that community and prepared for demonstrations if they happened. '
>
> *Senior Police Officer*

Scotland also takes a different approach to Prevent and extremism and related matters than that of England. The Scottish approach is to tackle all forms of extremism through the processes of engagement and safeguarding.

> 'We have approached Prevent differently – starting in 2011 we have approached all forms of extremism and not Muslim focused. Our engagement with the Muslim community is under general community engagement. Contest – pursue, protect, prepare – is under Organised Crime and Counter Terrorism. Prevent is in Safer Communities and forms part of the safeguarding agenda. We can confidently say when talking to Muslim communities that there haven't been any cases where we have been over-reactive or insensitive. We have very careful case management – in most cases it is about other social issues.'
>
> *Senior Police Officer*

Scotland also has a different approach to issues such as honour based violence, which they treat as violence against women rather than a form of extremism.

> 'We have a different view to the UK government on extremism and don't think the rationale on extremism is always correct – for example honour based violence is about violence against women and it is problematic to call it extremism in terms of

> our close engagement with affected communities. The UK rationale for cohesion originally came from the 2001 riots in England. Our focus is more on engagement and highlighting the positive benefits of cohesion.'
>
> *Senior Government Officer*

***Measuring progress***

There is measurement of progress in education, employability, health and wellbeing generally, and for minorities. The Scottish Government (2016) Social Attitudes Survey shows improvement in the attitudes of LGB people since same sex marriage was legalised, but there has been less shift and some regression in other groups. National Outcome 11 is refreshing the indicators that measure that particular outcome, relating to inclusive and supportive communities.

Measuring success is difficult in terms of demonstrating what 'didn't happen' as the result of engagement and knowing communities.

> 'Following the shooting of Mark Duggan, the 2011 riots that occurred in England and Wales didn't happen in Scotland.
>
> Also in the las few years there have been no major terrorist arrests or cases that reached the national media.
>
> Through positive and productive engagement we are in a relatively better position. We have a population of 5.5 million and not experienced major community tensions – there are issues and incidents, but we recognise the different groups, have the connections and a vision and belief in community engagement.'
>
> *Senior Police Officer*

Similarly, it was observed that the very positive way that agencies and communities handled the Manchester bomb had a ripple effect on the communities and tension levels in Scotland and seeing how Manchester people reacted and addressed some of the issues really made a difference. So the good response in Manchester impacted in a positive way elsewhere. This, again, is invisible: only problems, such as the commonly experienced spike in hate crimes following such an incident is noticed, rather than the absence of such a rise.

But a focus on prevention is a central pillar of Public Service Reform in Scotland so there is a growing culture of seeking to work upstream and 'prevent the preventable' across a range of issues and challenges.

Scotland recognises many challenges in this agenda. These include the uncertainty of Brexit and the communities from Europe who live in Scotland, the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, the far right narrative in the US, Europe and UK, refugee and asylum seeker crisis, the growth of social media and technology enabling anybody to watch anything, sexual grooming and extremism, Islamic Jihadist and far right. Work with far right extremism is perceived as something of a gap needing more attention.

> 'In terms of far right extremists, Nazis and Neo-Nazis, they may never change their views but there may be vulnerable people around them who don't truly understand the issues. If we sat down and listened to these extremists then they could be challenged. If we could put them on the fence then that would be a good achievement – make them more 'indifferent' rather than 'against'. We need to create a safe space for these people to have that engagement and tackle what they believe. We need to address this as a society. It's an area of work where there is a gap.'
>
> *Senior Police Officer*

The opportunities are also many. Faith in the political commitment to building inclusive and supportive communities, and in communities themselves, underpins the policy framework and reflects a shared commitment.

> 'Community Tensions response can be reactive and short notice. We are seeking to be preventive, have the relationships, build and sustain relationships at the national level. We are seeking to harness knowledge of what works and build up engagement with communities, multi-agency working and a shift to person centred approaches
>
> The political climate is positive for tackling inequalities and provides a strong platform towards achieving National Outcome 11. Ministers are very committed.'
>
> *Senior Government Officer*
>
> 'We have to create those opportunities – to build community cohesion, build networks, support multifaith, interfaith and intrafaith work, support local government and support the media. Every day I deal with negativity – but I believe in hope and believe in our work with communities.'
>
> *Senior Police Officer*

***Pre-interview questionnaire.***

In Scotland, the main focus is local community issues and concerns. Lead responsibility is considered a partnership between agencies and communities and this is the continued

desire for the future. The work is viewed as equally top-down and bottom up depending on the circumstances and is in part predictive but also reactive and affected by national and international events. Though the tendency is towards stopping bad things happening and calming things down there is agreement that working with tensions is concerned with long term issues affecting the community. So investing in successful outcomes as well as avoiding the costs of failure both feature.

***Table 4: Pre-interview questionnaire: Scotland***

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Main focus of community tensions | National security, counter terrorism, Prevent | Local community issues and concerns **2** | Public Order | |
| 2. Lead responsibility | Police | Council | Community | Partnership between agencies and communities **2** |
| 3. Lead responsibility in 2 years' time | Police | Council | Community | Partnership between agencies and communities **2** |
| 4. Currently working with tensions is . . . | Top down | Bottom up | Equally top-down/bottom up depending on circumstances **2** | |
| 5. Currently working with tensions is . . . | Predictive **0.5** | Reactive **1.5** | | |
| 6. Current tensions are . . . | Small scale, nuanced, including hate crimes/feeling scared | Big events, national and international **2** | | |
| 7. Priority is . . . | Stopping bad things from happening **1.5** | Helping good things happen **0.5** | | |
| 8. Emphasis is . . | Seeking to avoid the costs of failure **1** | Seeking to invest in the benefits of successful outcomes **1** | | |
| 9. Emphasis is . . . | Concerned with long term issues affecting the community **2** | Concerned with short term issues and events | | |
| 10. In my experience working with tensions is . . | About calming things down **1.5** | About looking at how things might change **0.5** | | |

**Wales (Population 3.1 million)**

***Legislative background***

The Equality Act 2010 is a significant foundation and strengthened existing law in a number of areas. It extended the circumstances in which a person is protected against discrimination, harassment or victimisation because of a protected characteristic.

As described for England, it also created a duty on public bodies to eliminate conduct which the Act prohibits; to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not; and to foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristics and people who do not. The practical effect is that public bodies have to consider how their policies, programmes and service delivery affects people with the protected characteristics.

The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is concerned with improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act requires public bodies to think more about the long term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach. It requires public bodies to do what they do in a sustainable way and make sure that when making their decisions they take into account the impact they could have on people living their lives in Wales in the future. It requires them to work together better, involve people reflecting the diversity of communities, look to the long term as well as focusing on now and take action to try and stop problems from getting worse, or even stop them happening in the first place.

The Act also established a statutory Future Generations Commissioner for Wales whose role is to act as a guardian for the interests of future generations in Wales, and to support the public bodies listed in the Act to work towards achieving the well-being goals. The Act established Public Services Boards (PSBs) for each local authority area in Wales. Each PSB must improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of its area by working to achieve the well-being goals. These goals relate to prosperity, health, resilience, equality, cohesive communities, vibrant culture and global responsibility

***Policy framework***

The strand 'a Wales of cohesive communities' from the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act is delivered through a Community Cohesion National Delivery Plan. The 2016-17 Plan included seven areas of activity: tackling hate crime, addressing modern slavery, engaging with Gypsy and Traveller communities, inclusion of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, addressing the impact of poverty on those with protected characteristics, supporting local Public Service boards in relation to community cohesion and monitoring and responding to community tensions. The draft 2018-19 Delivery Plan (to be published Autumn 2018) (Welsh Government 2018) integrates Equality, Community Cohesion and Community Safety objectives across a spectrum which, taken together, seek to strengthen overall community resilience, where work to strengthen equal rights and opportunities, foster good relations and supporting people to break down feelings of fear or distrust, then prevents downstream community safety incidents and circumstances such as hate crime, community tensions, discrimination and vulnerability to radicalisation. Wales has developed its own description of community cohesion which pays regard both to the need to respect difference and the need to break down barriers to wider aspects of social inclusion.

> 'We have a definition for community cohesion – which is 'what must happen in all communities to enable different groups of people to get on well together, whatever their backgrounds or circumstances. Cohesion within and between communities is an essential component of people's quality of life and of their local and national identity. Community cohesion involves us all, and how we relate to others who are different. It is not just about how people from different ethnic groups, religions or nationalities relate and get on, although this is a vital component. It also involves us working to break down the barriers to inclusion in our society caused by income inequality, or caused by isolation and loneliness amongst older people; or caused by barriers that prevent the inclusion of disabled people.'
>
> So, community tension is when there is a risk of cohesion not happening'.
>
> *Senior Officer Welsh Government*

Policing Delivery Plans vary across Wales depending on the priorities of the Police and Crime Commissioner. Police and Crime Commissioners are elected in every police service in England and Wales and are there to hold the Chief Constable to account and ensure the police service is accountable to the communities they serve. In Gwent, for example, Community Cohesion is one of the five priorities of the Plan, working closely with communities to tackle hate crime and to support local and national organisations to help

communities work together better. However, policing in Wales in non-devolved so is part of the Home Office system. (Youth Justice is devolved). This can impact on priorities.

> 'This can be problematic. Wales is fortunate that the Welsh Government places a priority on Cohesion and Hate Crime and we work very closely with them. But Westminster priorities can be different and this can impact in areas such as funding, where we find ourselves unable to apply for certain funding streams'.
>
> *Senior Police Officer*

Policy implementation is supported by a national, regional and local structure for delivery. Important in linking these is a network of regional Community Cohesion Coordinators who have a strong role in facilitating community engagement, problem solving and building local partnerships.

> 'They know their patch well and liaise with the police and other agencies and know what's happening locally on a day to day basis. I seek to ensure this is happening well and would only become involved if there are trends developing or changes that need attention. We work at a national level on issues such as race and religion – with relevant groups and forums'.
>
> *Senior Officer Welsh Government*

The role and value of co-ordinators is a concept in the literature (Mitchell 2011) to be considered in the analysis.

***Community Tensions***

As in the other parts of the UK, terrorist incidents elsewhere impact locally in Wales with an increase in hate crimes and extreme right win social media traffic.

> 'There are tensions associated with incidents – for example recent attacks in Manchester and London manifest locally in a spike in hate crimes for 2-3 days after the events, including extreme right wing narratives in social media'.
>
> *Senior Police Officer*

Local planning issues cause tensions but also the longer term issues of poverty are highlighted.

> 'Issues in communities, for example in Newport, where plans to identify a permanent Travellers' site led to communities being quite vociferous and some public order and hate crime incidents. There are longer term tensions around run-down areas and poverty and where public services are not meeting demands.'
>
> *Senior Police Officer*

Migration also poses challenges to tensions, particularly where there is a much needed requirement for labour but where this happens over a short period of time and is linked to major developments so the numbers of economic migrants may be high. Although much smaller numbers are involved in relation to Refugees and Asylum Seekers, Wales, and particularly small local communities in Wales, has been proactive in welcoming and integrating these individuals and families.

> 'Economic migrants, particularly Polish and Portuguese, can lead to local issues and tensions and particularly the big infrastructure developments that would involve migrant workers, such as the new prison in the northwest and the nuclear power plant in Anglesey, pose challenges. Integrating Refugees and Asylum Seekers is a potential issue and one where we have been particularly proactive and largely prevented problems'.
>
> *Senior Officer Welsh Government*

Currently the monitoring of tensions is primarily police led and follows the system for the UK as a whole.

> 'As the lead for Hate Crime I have a role in developing the way we identify tensions. The Diversity and Inclusion Team focuses on community cohesion and has analysts who support the weekly Tension Assessment process. They scan the system for hate crimes, murders or other crimes where there could be a tension dimension (Bronze incidents), national issues and social media. Neighbourhood policing teams input and there is some community input. Assessments are used to help Senior Investigating Officers in identifying actions.
>
> This is predominantly police led and feeds into the National Community Tensions Team system. There are gaps in terms of input from other partners and communities. Operation Element (the digest of open source information and a collation of the national picture produced by the National Community Tensions Team) is a useful resource – the quality varies across forces but it is good to have the analysis from a policing perspective.
>
> Community Tension is built into the Manual of Guidance for Murder and Manual for Major Incidents, such as plane or rail crashes.
>
> *Senior Police Officer*

There is a plan to improve on the current system through greater partnership effort, recognising a more holistic analysis and response. So, this is an interesting case of where there is a commitment to improve on the technical aspects of working with tensions, alongside the vision for transformational change.

'Building cohesion is the reason why we carry out the tension assessments – it is about empowering communities and not just reacting.

It is the role of public services to support the social needs of communities to work within themselves. In a context of austerity, terrorism and poverty, we need to understand their worries, get to the root causes and build resilience. Then, when flare ups happen, the symptoms are more likely to be quelled by communities themselves

The Welsh Government have developed a Cohesion Strategy. Included in that document is a strand on Community Tensions as an area we will invest time in. The aim is for improved partnership in this area – there will still be a police lead but there is a need to ensure a more comprehensive network on information sharing'.

*Senior police officer*

***Measuring progress***

The annual National Survey of Wales is a comprehensive community wellbeing and satisfaction survey and includes measures of: 'to what extent do people feel they belong to their place; to what extent do people from different backgrounds in their place get on together; to what extent do people treat each other with respect and consideration'. The per centage ratings have fallen in each category from 2014-15 and 2016-17: sense of belonging changing from 82 per cent to 72 per cent; getting on well from 79 per cent to 72 per cent and respect and consideration from 79 per cent to 73 per cent. It is noted that, unlike 2014-15 the questions in the 2016-17 survey were placed immediately after a set of questions on wellbeing, which may have affected how people responded to the subsequent set of questions and so there may not be a direct comparison. People who are older, from rural areas, with high overall life satisfaction, are Welsh speakers, are owner occupiers and do not have disabilities or life-limiting illnesses respond more positively to these questions.

The Wellbeing of Wales Report (2017) charts progress and challenges across all of the goals in the Wellbeing of Future Generations legislative framework. It is a holistic approach and represents a single set of clear priorities.

Alongside the data analysis are the experiences and stories of communities working to create good relations. Particularly positive in Wales has been the response to Syrian refugees and engagement with the Syrian vulnerable persons resettlement scheme. Though the numbers are small, the compassionate local responses to the plight of those in Syria led

to months of dedicated planning, fundraising and preparation leading up to welcoming families, ongoing practical and moral support, addressing specific needs and interests and genuine friendship and inclusion in communities. Initiatives have come from across Wales, from individuals and small groups of friends, church groups and mosques, schools and universities, working with local authorities and other statutory and voluntary agencies, in many cases supported through the Regional Cohesion Coordinators.

These positive stories are important to counter negative stories that can impact on community relations.

> 'One of the challenges we face is that we have very little control over the wider narratives that are out there – there is a divisive narrative in the media, for example in relation to Muslims and Gypsies and Travellers who get a lot of negative rhetoric. How can we counter this . . . through positive stories'.
>
> *Senior Officer Welsh Government*

The Wellbeing of Future Generations approach is adding a stronger partnership dimension to the forward planning and thinking. There is an appetite and optimism to build on the strengths of communities and the sense of belonging.

> 'We have a single set of clear priorities. We are now working more upstream to build capacity and resilience and prevent the manifestations of tension.
>
> Linked to that we are seeking to improve the provision of fair and equitable services – tensions are often a symptom of inequality and poverty. The Welsh Government can put in place policies which support cohesion, for example housing policies which understand and provide legislation to support travellers. They are impressive in their approach.
>
> We can develop a 'living Tension Assessment' where we are closer to communities and understand their needs even when there are no tensions'.
>
> *Senior police officer*

***Pre-interview questionnaire***

The main focus is on local community issues and concerns, small scale nuanced issues including hate crimes and feeing scared, but national security, counter-terrorism and public order also affect these. Perception of lead responsibility is split between police and partnership but there is a shared desire for partnership lead in the future. Similarly the perception about whether working with tensions is top-down or equally top down and

bottom up is split. However, significantly, the perception is that the priority is to help good things happen, to invest in the benefits of successful outcomes, concerned with long-term issues affecting the community and about looking at how things might change.

***Table 5: Pre-interview questionnaire: Wales***

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Main focus of community tensions | National security, counter terrorism, Prevent **0.33** | Local community issues and concerns **1.33** | Public Order **0.33** | |
| 2. Lead responsibility | Police **1** | Council | Community | Partnership between agencies and communities **1** |
| 3. Lead responsibility in 2 years' time | Police | Council | Community | Partnership between agencies and communities **2** |
| 4. Currently working with tensions is . . . | Top down **1** | Bottom up | Equally top-down/bottom up depending on circumstances **1** | |
| 5. Currently working with tensions is . . . | Predictive **1.5** | Reactive **0.5** | | |
| 6. Current tensions are . . . | Small scale, nuanced, including hate crimes/feeling scared **2** | Big events, national and international | | |
| 7. Priority is . . . | Stopping bad things from happening | Helping good things happen **2** | | |
| 8. Emphasis is . . | Seeking to avoid the costs of failure | Seeking to invest in the benefits of successful outcomes **2** | | |
| 9. Emphasis is . . . | Concerned with long term issues affecting the community **2** | Concerned with short term issues and events | | |
| 10. In my experience working with tensions is . . | About calming things down | About looking at how things might change **2** | | |

**Link to analysis of the four nations**

Analysis of the findings in the four nations against the concepts identified from the literature review is combined with the analysis of the findings of the case studies (Chapter Five), and together form Chapter Six.

Analysis of the pre-interview questionnaires for the four nations, combined with those for the case studies, is presented at the end of case studies (Chapter Five, Table 11) and a comparison with the pre-interview questionnaires with police offices also tabled (Table 12).

## Chapter Five: Case studies

### Introduction

The rationale for the case studies is presented in Chapter Three: Methodology. In short, tensions exist in multiple contexts, involve different disciplines and stakeholders and there are different capacities and resources available. Places operate differently in terms of their systems and interventions and their overall approach to community based change. The case studies sought to reflect some of these variations.

The Nursing Home is situated on a complex and contested interface in Greater Ardoyne, Belfast, yet is developing as a shared space for both communities. The case study of community ambition for physical regeneration and renewal explores the approach to addressing underlying issues of unemployment and skills through continuous community engagement to realise opportunities and benefits for both communities. The context is of sectarian tension and high levels of deprivation.

The case study around the Scout Hut in Thurnby Lodge, Leicester, describes the dynamics of the escalation of a conflict, and some de-escalation, relating to the allocation of a building to a Muslim community organisation. Whilst the situation is technically 'resolved' and there are positive developments, there is still a way to go in terms of recommunication and decommitment. In reality, the situation was less about scarce resources and more about longstanding fears and prejudices, and a sense of abandonment by the Council felt by some members of the community. The context is of a predominantly white working class estate with a history of far right activity and with a changing and more diverse population in close proximity.

No other academic studies or research has been undertaken on either of these sites.

The third case study, Oldham, has been the subject of many studies particularly since 2001. This case study seeks to explore the conditions of success in 2017 and not the events of 2001. At its heart is the commitment to a cooperative culture and approach in a very challenging environment of deprivation. The context is of a whole metropolitan borough,

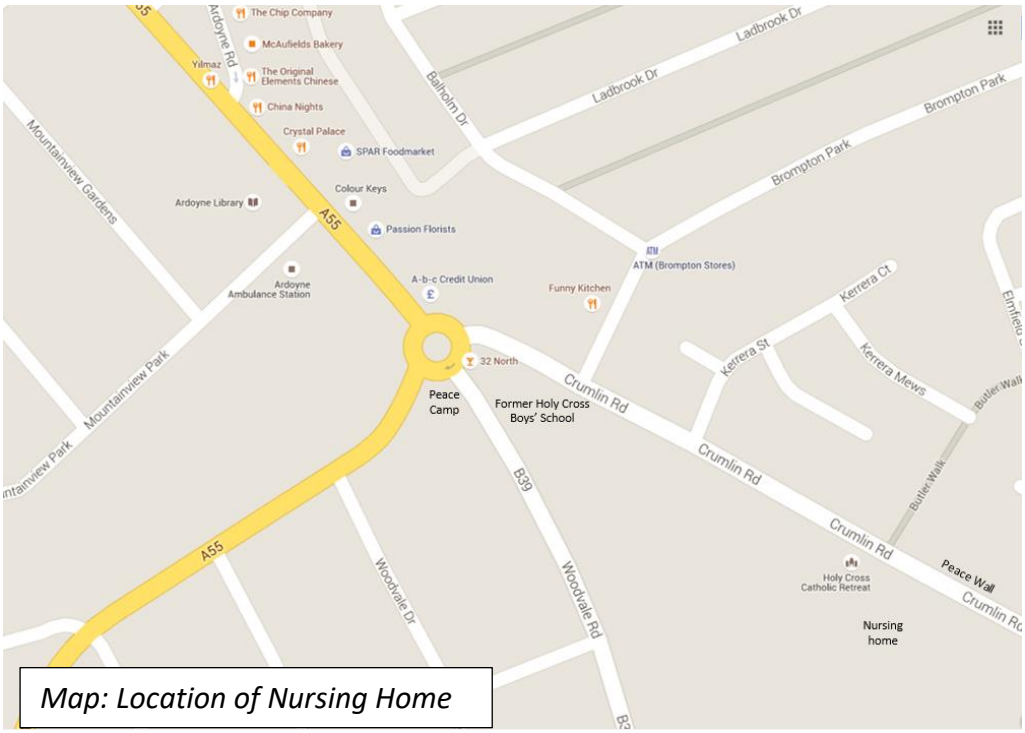
within the devolved city region of Greater Manchester, which is engaged in fundamental transformation to improve the outcomes for its residents.

They tell three stories of change and challenge. They illustrate different actors, roles and partnerships, approaches to community development and how progress is measured. They provide more detail of some of the complexities and struggles involved in communities and those working with them, and add a bottom up dimension to the four nations' studies. They would all describe themselves as 'work in progress' and none are complacent about the risks of setbacks and situations which might threaten their peace and stability. They all engage in regular monitoring of community tensions.

The analysis against the concepts identified from the academic literature is discussed in Chapter Six.

**Case study 1: The Nursing Home, 342 Crumlin Road, Belfast**

*Photo: Bradley Manor Nursing Home*


*Map: Location of Nursing Home*

'The Police Service in the main does not object to this planning application but it must be made clear that this is a sensitive area and the police service does have concerns about the conflict in the local area. The reasons for the concerns by the police service are that it could be viewed by some members of the local community that this development is deemed as territory lost or gained at the expense of the opposing community. This proposed development is within a contentious area, which has seen sectarian conflict across neighbourhoods, and that territorial areas have previously been contested.' *(PSNI December 2008 – comment on Planning Application).* (McHugh 2008)

***Introduction***

An interface is 'the conjunction or intersection of two or more territories or social spaces, which are dominated, contested or claimed by some or all members of the differing ethno-national groups' (Jarman 2004: 7). Interfaces are both physical and psychological barriers which reinforce segregation and polarisation particularly in relation to housing and schools. They have a 'chill factor that comes from fear, distrust and reluctance to use space that is identified as belonging to the other side' (Goldie and Ruddy 2010: 9), who also cite lack of qualifications and skills, poverty and educational disadvantage as factors which contribute to contested space and that prevent shared space.

Since the peace agreement in 1998, the concept of shared space which is safe, common and accessible to all has become a reality in much of Northern Ireland. Although for Northern Ireland as a whole over 80% of the population affirm a preference to live in a mixed-religion neighbourhood, research undertaken by the Housing Executive with the Ardoyne/Alliance Local Area Network in 2014, covering an area opposite the nursing home site, identified that less than half (48%) of respondents would be in favour of their area moving towards a more mixed community, but that less than a one third (32%) of respondents stated that they would consider living in a new housing development where units were allocated on a cross community basis. Almost two-fifths (39%) felt community spirit in the Ardoyne/ Alliance area was 'poor/ very poor'. Only 27% of respondents thought community relations were better now than they were five years before.

Into this context, a private developer, who had been brought up locally and had experienced the violence, distrust and social stress in the area, in part wanted to create a sustainable business but also wanted to contribute to change. His vision was to involve the community and his commitment to five-star quality in every aspect of the building, the quality of care and the staff team led him to decide that this would be the first home that he would build but also operate. He recognised the huge part that the Community Development Manager played in getting the communities involved and particularly his vision and drive for local labour. Other community workers from both sides also played a vital role and, with the Developer, were the principal 'change agents' (Mitchell 2011) in this scenario, enabling change and co-ordinating effort. The developer describes one of the ingredients of success

as ‘you need to be a doer not a talker’ but the success of the venture relates to many other factors and concepts explored in the initial literature review and subsequently in the analysis.

Whilst this area is described as intense and a flashpoint, it has also been suggested that it could be the area which could ‘turn the key’ for the wider community in terms of transforming community relations. The developments in the immediate vicinity as well as the ambition to replicate in other parts of the city are hugely impressive.

Perhaps the critical ingredient for success in this case study is what Lederach (2000) calls the ‘moral imagination’: ‘to imagine responses and initiatives that, while rooted in the challenges of the real world, are by nature capable of rising above destructive patterns and giving birth to that which does not yet exist . . . responses and initiatives . . . that transcend and ultimately break the grip of those destructive patterns and cycles’ (Lederach 2002:182).

***Area context***

342 Crumlin Road, the site of the Bradly Manor Nursing Home (Pictured on page 127) is located at the centre of a ‘patchwork of orange and green’ in Crumlin Ward and the adjacent Ardoyne, Woodvale and Shankill wards. They have some of the highest levels of deprivation and poorest health outcomes in the whole of Northern Ireland. Examples of indicators from the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service ward profiles (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency 2015) in Table 6 show high levels of benefit and crimes of violence.

***Table 6: Indicators of deprivation in the four wards adjacent to the Nursing Home***

| Measure | Crumlin | Ardoyne | Woodvale | Shankill |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Proportion of people with at least one disability related benefit - % | 32.5 | 26.4 | 27.4 | 28.7 |
| Low income – proportion of population claiming at least one of main benefits - % | 61.8 | 58.9 | 55.7 | 60.4 |
| Proportion of working age people claiming income support | 26.1 | 26.4 | 20.5 | 24.1 |
| Proportion claiming housing benefit -% | 39.7 | 35.9 | 34.0 | 41.9 |
| Violent crime against the person – number 2010/11 | 2,820 | 4,012 | 1,593 | 3.463 |

Life expectancy, educational attainment and skills are significantly lower than the NI average and all crime types higher than the NI average. Hospital admissions for self-harm and prescribing of antidepressants are higher in North and West Belfast than anywhere else in Northern Ireland (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency 2015). (Shankill is in West Belfast for constituency data but in North Belfast for Police and Community Safety Partnerships purposes).

Historically, during the Troubles of the late 1960s to 1990s, the area became more segregated than previously. The Holy Cross dispute in 2001 and 2002 was as a result of a Catholic Girls school being left in the middle of a Protestant area, through which the girls had to walk to reach the school. The origins of the start of the disputes, protests and riots are contested but the dispute heightened tensions in the area and whilst a range of interventions have been put in place to address this, community workers on both sides acknowledge progress has been slow and both inter-community and intra-community tensions remain. This was identified from the preliminary case study in the area when the community led Tension Monitoring Group set the context. This group is predominantly community representatives, chaired by a council officer and with police and Housing Executive support.

> 'Community relations after the Holy Cross incidents (2001/2) were at their lowest, zero point. From 2001/2 relations have improved slowly, however there are pockets such as parades, football matches, where there may be flare ups. However there hasn't been a break off in dialogue since 2002'.
>
> *Greater Ardoyne Tension Monitoring Group*

The Greater Ardoyne Tension Monitoring Group has identified that not only is there an increase in ethnic diversity but also 'indigenous migration' due to rental rates which are around a third cheaper than other areas of the city. Some may have moved into this area as they have been excluded from their own community, which in turn brings its own problems.

There are ten interfaces in the area, however this doesn't include some other physical as well as mental barriers.

More recently, in July 2012, a Parades Commission decision stopped an Orange Order parade taking place on a stretch of the adjoining Crumlin Road, which separates unionist and nationalist areas, with resultant clashes. Attempts were made to resolve the matter for

the following year, but these failed so in February 2013 Loyalists set up a peace camp at the corner of Twaddell Avenue and Woodvale Road. Serious violence erupted in the area in 2013 when Orangemen were stopped from marching past Ardoyne while returning from their annual Twelfth of July parade. Every evening from 6.30 pm to 8.30 pm up to one hundred protesters gathered outside the camp with police vehicles blocking the way to the other side of the Crumlin Road. Mediation and other attempts to resolve the matter failed and whilst there was agreement for the Apprentice Boys and Black Preceptory to march up the road, this did not extend to the Orange Order. Policing costs were reported at £40,000 per night. The camp was eventually dismantled in October 2016.

The camp is within 100 metres of the Nursing home.

> 'The area is the most violent in Northern Ireland'.
>
> *Twaddell Residents Association*

***The development of the Nursing Home***

In an area of low aspiration it would have been understandable to have low ambitions. In reality, the ambition was for everything to be 'state of the art' and of benefit to the whole community.

> 'It's the best site I've ever worked on. I chose this site on this interface. I am from one of these communities. The site was wasteland – a buffer zone. Now it is regenerating the area and uniting people. My ambition was to develop five star surroundings and five star quality care. Everything is planned to be well above minimum standards. The rooms are 16.5 square metres to 20 square metres (standard requirement is 13 square metres) and each has its' own front door, colour co-ordination and plasma screen TVs. There is a library, hair salon, cinema, prayer room, dining rooms and family rooms for relatives needing to stay with residents near the end of their lives. There is 'real-time software' to record patient care and medical records and sensors in rooms to pick up movement at night as part of falls detection. Everything is state of the art'.
>
> *Developer*

The 'dream' for a nursing home was in the mind of the Ardoyne Association for almost two decades. A number of different proposals came forward but the initiative in March 2008,

from a property developer specialising in building nursing homes and 'just trying to build a sustainable business', was different because the developer was from the local community.

> 'This developer was different, he was from this area with knowledge of the geography and history that an outsider would not have understood. He was prepared to listen, take guidance and manoeuvre. The social clauses around employment and training were vital'.
>
> *Ardoyne Association*

The planning application was approved in June 2009 with conditions which took five years to resolve and the funding linked to the development also ran out at the end of June 2014, so in the end there was a rush to get on site. Construction went ahead even through the July period when building sites normally close.

The construction involved a local labour force of bricklayers, joiners, other tradespeople and site security staff from both sides of the community. In the eight month construction period there was one minor incident of a broken window.

> 'Had there not been this cross community employment policy we would have been at the site every weekend throughout the construction period'
>
> *PSNI Neighbourhood Officer*

In October 2013, the Ardoyne Association had discussions with the developer about the training and employment opportunities that would become available once the nursing home was up and running. In a letter from the Developer to the Ardoyne Association (Yates 2013) he confirms:

> 'that Healthcare Ireland will be providing a Training and Employment School at the newly developed Nursing Home (Crumlin Road Belfast) Holycross.
>
> The training and employment opportunities will provide employment opportunities for cross community benefits and to the wider sectors of the surrounding communities. Healthcare Ireland will also be providing work experience opportunities and places, through our own and careers agency websites which are linked to 2000 nursing home groups across Ireland and the UK and this will provide a much longer opportunity for those who wish to expand their horizons and careers.
>
> The Nursing Home business is known for employing between 0-75% of its staff from local and surrounding communities, we feel at Holy Cross this number will be of the higher percentage.

We will forward in due course job descriptions . . . . Healthcare Ireland guarantees all applicants an interview and an equal opportunities based salary . . .'

*Letter to Ardoyne Association from Developer*

***The training***

Building the aspirations of people in the community was not easy initially, but once trust was built the momentum gathered apace.

'What would have been the point if we'd advertised 100 jobs and no-one from the area applied as there were no skills? How would that be? We saw the opportunity but needed the community to respond. Do you want it or do you not want it?

We try to keep moving forward – not always in a straight line. We tried to get the churches to be part of this – they were negative so we dropped them. We went to the grass roots and spoke to groups of women directly. The process involved walking the streets to talk to people. There are a lot of thankless tasks – but that's the foundation. Building trust is the biggest thing.

They came in . . . hungry'.

*Community Development Manager, Ardoyne Association*

A Training Manager was appointed by the Ardoyne Association in November 2014, approximately nine months before the anticipated opening date. From a nursing background, she identified the skills required by Healthcare Ireland, identified the trainers and, alongside the Community Development Manager, identified the women who wanted to be involved. There was a lot of grass roots contact, work outside the school gates, word of mouth and telephone conversations. The majority of the women coming forward had never worked in paid employment, were mothers and often with additional caring responsibilities. They had very low self- esteem and lacked any self-confidence.

'It was more about opening the doors of opportunity where the girls said 'we're interested in doing that'. So there was a list of names and we just worked through it. We tried to make sure there were some from this side and some from that side, so equal from both sides of the community.

It was very important to do the training when it suited the trainees. And not to put in too much information at once. There were girls who hadn't worked for years. Just getting them together and saying, 'look this is the opportunity you can have', and as soon as we started introducing the opportunities they were just like sponges. They just couldn't wait to participate.'

*Training Manager, Ardoyne Association*

The training lasts 9 weeks, one day per week and is accredited. At the end of the course they have a graduation and celebration. So far they have completed four groups and totalling 48 – 50 trainees aged between nineteen and mid-fifties. Of these about 16 are in employment and others have interviews lined up. The Training Manager is working with the others to get them employed. A couple of the women would like to go and get their GCSEs, then on to an Access Course, then progress to a Nursing Degree.

> 'We have built their confidence so much – they're just lovely and nobody has taken the time to do this for them before, and we have believed in them – and they thought they would never have believed they could do this – now they know they can and they're going for it'.
>
> *Training Manger, Ardoyne Association*

There was a lot of self-help, mutual support and commitment in the group.

> 'There were no issues about the two communities – they just worked together. They saw themselves as all the same – a common bond. There was lots of practical learning. There was socialising and banter. The early arrivals helped with setting up the kit. They had big conversations, supported each other, felt they were getting their lives back.

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*Trainer*

> 'The women were fabulous. Education fails so many – there are no expectations of them. Attendance was fabulous, people came on time and the commitment was unbelievable'.
>
> *Trainer*

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*Trainee*

Content removed from the electronic version of this thesis on data protection grounds

*Trainee*

There will be around 80 staff and an experienced manager is in place. There is a coming together both in terms of staff and community.

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***Challenges***

Throughout, there were rumours and some difficult practicalities.

The main entrance to the Nursing Home is on the Crumlin Road – facing into the nationalist community – with panoramic views down the hill and over the city. Making a pedestrian access from the other side of the building would involve breaking through a listed wall and demolishing a bungalow. The developer and planners had been keen to find a solution but it has not been achieved, though the reasons seem to be understood and accepted.

The Tension Monitoring group were very much involved in brokering discussions and seeking to address a number of planning issues though establishing the facts and communicating clearly.

Twaddell residents were supportive of the development but were anxious about whether the jobs would generally fall to a 50:50 formula, which in reality they have, as a result of the planning and training. Ultimately the residents of the home should be from both communities – and that is the intention.

> 'There was one serious issue at an interview session where two women went for care jobs and the interviewers said they would interview them as cleaners and made some derogatory remarks. They didn't walk out of the interviews – but one didn't

come to the next training session as she didn't want to spread negativity. There was a lot of anger and chaos around this. It turned out the two interviewers were quite inexperienced and didn't understand the agreement around local employment and the background. I managed to sort it out. The women were incredibly supportive of each other and it bonded them further'.

*Community Development Manager, Ardoyne Association*

***Further developments***

The building next door to Bradley Manor was formerly Holy Cross Boys School. It is being redeveloped as a Social Enterprise with childcare facilities, catering for up to 40 children, for the staff of Bradley Manor and other local nursing homes, including the Special Needs Centre further up the road. The Ardoyne/Shankill Health Partnership are leading on the initiative.

Next to that is another small parcel of land for which Ardoyne Association are seeking asset transfer in order to continue the process of building jobs and skills in the community.

'Our next issue is some jobs and training for young men. Suicides are high here. There is a piece of land by the old school, on the roundabout that we want to turn into an outdoor play area. This would provide another focal point for training. We need to get the land – it's MoD and we're seeking a transfer as a community asset. Then we want to train young people in how to build a play area. We are developing a strategy with the community – need to get the idea and concept agreed as a focus and then start the ball rolling – maybe in August and start the training in September/October. Tension Monitoring will need to be part of it.

We need people to be ready to take the opportunities. We need ways to guide people through the obstacles built into the plan. Then we need to sit back and let people develop'.

*Community Development Manager, Ardoyne Association*

Opposite the Nursing Home, on the other side of the Crumlin Road is a section of a Peace Wall about 50 metres long. That wall is going to come down and be replaced by some attractive fencing and give light to the residents behind the barrier.

'Step by step . . . '

*Ardoyne Association*

After finishing the grounds at Bradley Manor Nursing Home, which will include a '60s telephone box, post box and Morris Minor, the developer has plans to acquire further nursing homes predominantly in deprived communities and refurbish to the high standards of Bradley Manor, bringing jobs into those communities and regenerating them physically, economically and socially.

The wall mentioned above was, in fact, taken down in July 2017, the first wall to have been removed as part of the goal to remove all interface barriers by 2023.

***Pre-interview questionnaire***

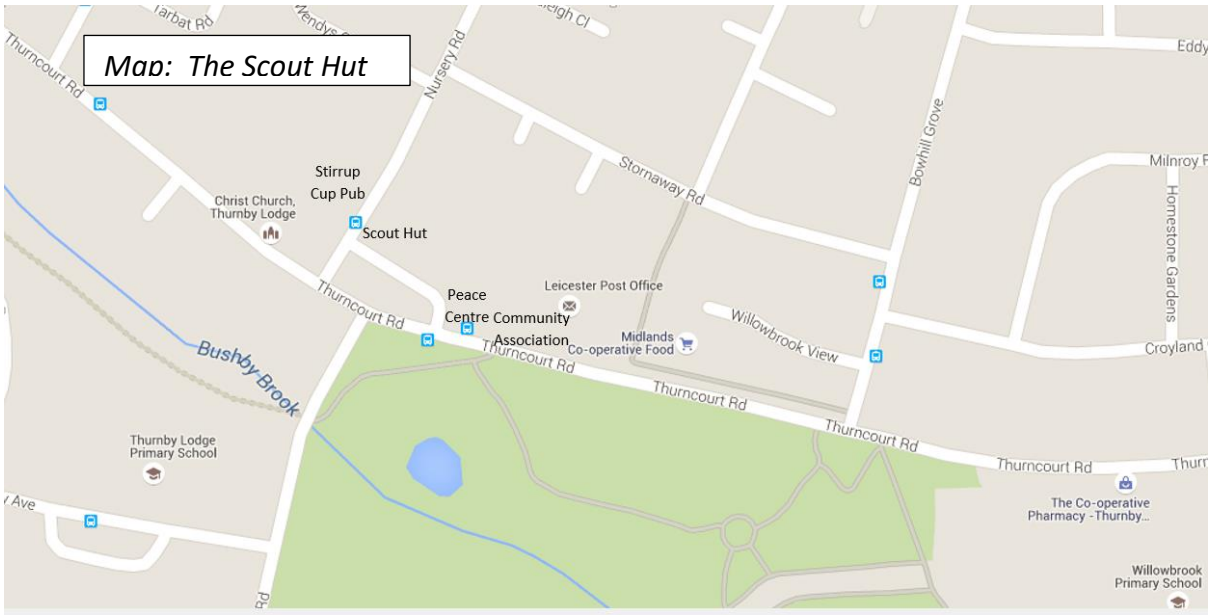
Local issues and concerns and small scale nuanced hate crimes and feeling scared are the primary issues. Working with tensions is regarded predominantly as a partnership responsibility, mainly reactive, short-term, stopping bad things from happening and calming things down rather than proactive, and seeking to affect long term-change. For the most part, this reflects the general context of the area and ongoing struggles, rather than the specific achievements of the case study.

***Table 7: Pre-interview questionnaire: the Nursing Home***

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Main focus of community tensions | National security, counter terrorism, Prevent | Local community issues and concerns **10** | Public Order | |
| 2. Lead responsibility | Police **2** | Council | Community **1** | Partnership between agencies and communities 7 |
| 3. Lead responsibility in 2 years' time | Police | Council | Community | Partnership between agencies and communities **10** |
| 4. Currently working with tensions is . . . | Top down **2** | Bottom up **3** | Equally top-down/bottom up depending on circumstances **4** | (none of these **1**) |
| 5. Currently working with tensions is . . . | Predictive **3.5** | Reactive 6.5 | | |
| 6. Current tensions are . . . | Small scale, nuanced, hate crimes/feeling scared 8.5 | Big events, national and international **1.5** | | |
| 7. Priority is . . . | Stopping bad things from happening 8.5 | Helping good things happen **1.5** | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8. Emphasis is . . | Seeking to avoid the costs of failure **6** | Seeking to invest in the benefits of successful outcomes **4** | | |
| 9. Emphasis is . . . | Concerned with long term issues affecting the community **2** | Concerned with short term issues and events **8** | | |
| 10. In my experience working with tensions is . . | About calming things down **8.5** | About looking at how things might change **1.5** | | |

**Case study 2: The Scout Hut, 70 Nursery Road, Thurnby Lodge, Leicester**


'This option meets everyone's needs and I am therefore offering both groups the opportunity to make this happen. I think both groups recognise we have worked very hard with them to find a solution which meets everyone's hopes and needs. Both recognise there is a need to move forward in a constructive way and I've been encouraged by the responses both have given'. *Sir Peter Soulsby, City Mayor* (Leicester Mercury 2013)

***Introduction***

Leicester is one of the most diverse cities in the UK and has changed rapidly in recent decades. The arrival of the Ugandan Asians, of predominantly Guajarati Indian origin, in the early 1970s, was a significant migration event in Leicester's recent history. Subsequently, the migration of Somalis to the UK since 2000 and migration seen over the last decade, due in part to the accession of 10 countries of Eastern Europe, has contributed to further demographic change. Over this same period, there has also been inward migration of third country nationals, mainly from Africa, who have come to the UK either as students or as the result of government recruitment of professionals, such as nurses, to address labour shortages. Many of these people are originally from Zimbabwe, Nigeria and Ghana, with others from the Philippines and southern India. As a designated National Asylum Seeker Service dispersal city, Leicester is also home to about 450 asylum seekers. The asylum seekers and refugees who began to arrive in the 1990s were a diverse group from places such as the Balkans, Kurdish areas of Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan. More recently there have been asylum seekers from sub-Saharan Africa, predominantly from Zimbabwe, with others arriving from Afghanistan, Somalia, Sri Lanka and Eritrea (Leicester City Council 2012).

The 2001 census recorded 60.54 per cent as White British and 63.85 as Total White population. At the 2011 census this was 45.06 percent White British and 50.52 per cent Total White. Asian/Asian British accounted for 30.43 per cent of the population in 2001 and 37.13 per cent in 2011. The figures also showed that the city has the highest percentage of people born in India and Zimbabwe than anywhere else in England and Wales.

The majority of the Asian and British Asian communities live close to the city centre and on the north and east sides of the city centre, with white populations being concentrated in the south and west and on the northern and eastern edges, often in post war housing estates.

Although a city that celebrates its diversity and promotes its many cultures as an asset, and with many political, business and public figures prominent in civic life, this significant demographic change and concentrations of particular groups in particular areas poses challenges for the city. One of these has been the perception that outer estates miss out in terms of resources, regeneration and services.

The case study describes how a previously unused resource, the Scout Hut, became the focus for dispute, nine months of protest, divisions within the white community, and intimidation of the Muslim community, which had formerly been accepted as a regular 'user group' of one of the existing community facilities. The presenting problem was, on the surface, relatively minor, but exposed underlying issues and divisions in the community and attracted a return of far right activity which had been a feature of the local politics since the 1970s. Although the situation was eventually 'resolved', the case study illustrates that 'success' can be skin deep and that without close attention to some of the concepts and approaches being tested in this research, there is no sustainable change. As such this case study is different to the other two, but is equally helpful as a contrast to more significant and potentially more lasting change. It also provided the particular opportunity to consider the Mitchell (2011) model of dynamics that intensify conflicts and those which de-escalate, which is a potentially significant to the learning.

***Area context***

Thurnby Lodge and Netherhall are located on the eastern edge of the city of Leicester and are generally known as part of the 'outer estates' built by the council from the 1950s to prepare for slum clearance in the city from the 1960s. They form the constituency ward of Thurncourt, which has a population of around 10,600 at the 2011 census.

Whilst the population of Leicester is 45 per cent white British, 82.1 per cent of people living in Thurncourt are white British. The religious make up of Thurncourt is 44.5 per cent Christian, 24.0 per cent no religion, 10.2 per cent Muslim, 8.9 per cent Hindu, 5.7 per cent Sikh, 0.1 per cent Buddhist.

Leicester as a whole is the 21st most deprived authority in England and deprivation in Thurncourt is higher than the Leicester average (Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government 2015). The indicators for child poverty, long term unemployment, deaths from cardiovascular disease and adults drinking over recommended levels are also significantly worse than the England average. Crime levels in Thurncourt are the fifth lowest in the city overall, however violent and sexual offences have risen by 32% and criminal damage and arson by 13% in the year 2018-19 (Police UK 2019).

Historically there have been incidents and issues around far right activity amongst a minority of the population in both Thurnby Lodge and Netherhall, dating back to the National Front. In 2010 the British National Party candidate polled 10 per cent of the vote. There are visible symbols of support for the English Defence League on some properties and 'traffic' on social media.

Facilities in the area include a parade of small shops including a Co-operative Store, two primary schools, a medical centre, large church, Community Association building, Raven Youth Club, Willowbrook Boys Club with outdoor activity areas, a Childcare/Early Years centre, park with green gym and a large public house.

***Background to the Scout Hut situation and brief timeline***

The Scout Hut was in the ownership of the Scout Association on land for which Leicester City Council has the freehold. The Scout Association had not used the building for several years and agreed to work with the City Council to market the lease. Following a 'clear and open process' conducted by Property Services, a decision was made to select As Salaam, a local Muslim group, as the only organisation, of those expressing and interest, who could meet the criteria for the lease.

As Salaam had been present in the area for three and a half years, hiring rooms at the back of the Community Association for around three hours a day and providing a significant income to the Association.

The lease for the Scout Hut was signed by As Salaam in early July 2013.

When information about this decision reached the community, a petition, which attracted 1,500 signatures, was organised by the licensee of the local pub, the Stirrup Cup, against the lease being assigned to As Salaam, and handed over to the City Council by an English Defence League supporter. The petition group named themselves the 'Forgotten Estates'. This term reflected feelings that resources were being directed to city centre projects and other outer estates such as Braunstone and Saffron Lane which had benefitted from significant regeneration funding over the years, from New Deal for Communities or Single Regeneration Budget, whilst Thurnby Lodge missed out and were 'forgotten'. There was also a counter petition in favour. The issue was on the agenda for a local ward community

meeting in late July, but due to the large number of people who turned up it had to be cancelled. Local protests started at the beginning of August. The City Mayor and senior council officers met with community representative to listen to their views.

However the following weekend, on the evening of 10th August, a group of around 400 people gathered around the Scout Hut and amongst the group were members of the English Defence League and the British National Party, including their leader, Nick Griffin. Whilst he tweeted about the success of his 'anti-mosque march' and that his 'speech was very well received', the reception on the ground was that his presence was not welcome. Other far right groups, including Casuals United and 212 Poison, also became associated with the protest. Leicester Unite Against Fascism were active in support of As Salaam and it was rumoured that A J Choudhry was being invited in.

As Salaam said they were prepared to talk and explore other options. In late September a council report presented an audit of the use of the community buildings in the area and came up with some potential options to meet the various needs. Meanwhile the protests continued with smaller groups every day but higher numbers turning out at the time of Friday prayers. Residents generally were feeling fearful and not wanting to come out when there were protesters standing outside the facilities. At times the protests went to the Imam's house and there was personal intimidation, abuse and physical threats. The Imam and his family faced threats and intimidation but he was consistently seeking to keep the Muslim community calm and working for a peaceful resolution.

> 'There was a lot of misinformation as to what was happening and people were being misinformed - Muslims are taking over - it's going to be a mosque with minarets and domes. One person (pub landlady) thought her business was going to have to close down as 'there's only going to be Muslims around here'.
>
> Some BNP and EDL members living on the estate made direct threats to me and my family and other community centre users. Various organisations got involved to help us – Race Equality Council told us about our rights and Unite Against Fascism helped support us because EDL were there – but this was only with our approval as we thought the less opportunity there is for tension the quicker we can reach a resolution. We were happy to look at alternatives – close by.
>
> It was very difficult – a third of our children that were attending left for fear of intimidation and harassment, photos being taken. Adults were harassed. 'We'll follow you home'. Many didn't come back for fear. Verbal attacks not physical.

> It was very difficult to keep a lot of people as calm as possible – we had intimidation on a daily basis for 6/7/8 months – people were frustrated. Constant meetings with police and council – police officers around my house at any time of day or night – our approach is that we are in search of peace and we know that violence is not the way out – not a solution – will create more tensions and become ugly and nasty for no reason. Keep calm. Keep the peace. Don't increase the tensions. The Almighty was putting the faith of the people in me. I reminded people of their responsibilities as Muslims. What is right and what is wrong.'
>
> *Imam, As Salaam*

Forgotten Estates organised a march from the Town Hall to the main city council offices in October 2013, primarily to speak to the media and present a further petition. They also wanted to distance themselves from what was described as a 'right wing splinter group' or 'hardcore' protesters. Sir Peter Soulsby, the City Mayor, went out to meet the protesters and invited some representatives into his office to talk to him and explore solutions. As Salaam were also invited to meet the Mayor.

The council went out to consultation with the community on two options. Option one was that the council would lease the Scout Hut to the protest group known as the Forgotten Estates who would develop community activities there, would lease the Raven Youth Centre to As Salaam and that the youth services would relocate to the rear of the Community Centre. Option two was to lease the Scout Hut to As-Salaam and the use of the Raven and Community Centre would remain as they were. Questionnaires were distributed to 7,000 households and consultation ended on 21st December.

On the morning of 26th December the Imam arrived at the Community Centre to find a pig's head on the doorstep. No other users were booked to use the Centre that day. The police removed the pig's head and subsequently there were four arrests leading to one individual being charged with the incident. After that incident the general feeling in the area was reported as being subdued. Local people supported police efforts to arrest the perpetrator and the Forgotten Estates group were said to be frustrated by the incident as it undermined their campaign as an overtly racist and Islamophobic act. The following day only six or seven Muslims attended for Friday prayers.

On 3rd January 2013 the City Mayor issued the results of the consultation and his decision. Of the 1,407 responses, a 20% return rate, 74.4% indicated a preference for option one,

8.9% for option two and 8.5% had no preference. There were over a hundred comments basically saying people didn't agree with either option and there was insufficient choice. So the decision was to grant the lease on the Scout Hut to the Forgotten Estates Committee for two and a half years rent free and to grant the lease on the Raven Centre to As Salaam. The youth groups in the Raven Centre would transfer to the Community Association next door.

The matter still took time to negotiate, particularly around the rental terms on the Raven for As Salaam. The Forgotten Estates protesters ceased their demonstrations but the 'splinter group' continued. The Forgotten Estates raised money and work in kind to refurbish the Scout Hut which opened in mid- March 2013. The landlady of the Stirrup Cup said the building would be renamed 'The 55th' after the Scout Group that once met there. The rooms at the back of the Community Association were refurbished and redecorated to the specification of the young people.

Nonetheless there were still tensions. The Thurncote Ward Community meeting on 27th March 2013, attended by 60 residents, 'with 40 seated and a group of twenty-plus people standing at the back who were members of the splinter protest group' includes in the records:

> 'When As Salaam was mentioned there were shouts of terrorists'.
>
> 'At this point the meeting was becoming out of control and chair tried to close the item and move on'.
>
> 'Once again the meeting became unruly with a lot of shouting'.
>
> 'There was a great deal of commotion at the back of the meeting and the Police managed to move the protest group out of the building. There were still a lot of raised voices outside and one member of the public was arrested'.
>
> 'Representatives of As Salaam were not at the meeting'.
>
> *Notes of Thurncote Ward Community Meeting 27.03.2013.* Leicester City Council (2013)

At the end of March the splinter group ceased to protest. One resident explained how difficult it was to cease the protest after investing so much time into it.

> 'When I walked away I had only just come off my bail (6 weeks), was still standing there, walking away was really hard – was I doing the right thing? I had been

through a lot. I had been invited to be part of the BNP Green Weekend in Wales – but I decided half way through it wasn't for me.

There was a stage I went through when I didn't want my children mixing with As Salaam because of what people had put into my head – about bad things happening around the world and your children are going to be groomed – it laid deep in my heart as a mum – drumming things into my head – and I looked at my girls and thought I don't want this for them. But then I stopped and something clicked and I thought there's good and bad in everybody and people cannot say As Salaam were terrorist – I'm from Ireland so they could say I'm a terrorist – they've not done anything bad. Our children need to see the good in their children'.

*Resident*

As Salaam took over the Raven on 1st April and renamed the building 'The Peace Centre'.

The Council's Head of Community Services was a key figure over the months – seeking to keep dialogue going with all parties – both in the community, in the council and across agencies. He addressed the circumstances from a community perspective whereas the original involvement by the council had been more as a property transaction.

Policing over the period was reported as £500,000 including bringing police in from other areas on occasions.

***Developments***

The Scout Hut was renamed 'The Forgotten Estates 55th Community Building' and is primarily used for boxing and occasional parties.

The Peace Centre is established in the former Raven Youth Centre and in addition to prayers and classes runs a weekly food bank for the community. The food bank has over 150 people on the register with around half regular users. Food parcels are put together by the team of around a dozen Muslim women volunteers – for single people, couples, and families. I spent a morning at the food bank with the Imam and twelve volunteers all from the Muslim community. All but two of the 68 users observed on the visit were white, one Black African and one White/Asian mixed heritage (his description). Everyone was greeted and welcomed personally by the Imam, collected their parcel and some stayed for a cup of tea and a chat. There was a lot of chatter and laughter and clearly the volunteers know the regulars well. Some of the food bank users were former protesters. There were four new registrations.

One elderly man hadn't eaten for three days and his cats hadn't eaten for five days. When he reached the counter he asked for anything that required 'heating up' to be taken out as he had no gas. He was pleased there was a tin of tuna fish for the cats. Afterwards I told the Imam about this man – he hadn't heard the exchange as he was speaking with the local vicar who had called by with fresh produce from their Harvest Festival. He immediately called over the volunteer who had taken the man's details and said he would go round to his house to help with his gas and anything else.

The young people who moved from the Raven have good facilities at the back of the Community Centre.

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The longest protesting resident became the Secretary of the Community Association and then the Labour candidate for the ward, duly elected with the majority of the votes at the election in May 2015.

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There is one member of the As Salaam community on the Management Committee of the Community Association. There are St George's flags around the bar.

> 'They were put up for the football – they stayed up because someone wanted them to stay. He's not a racist he's a lovely person he works with As Salaam. The flags – people just think we should be able to have a tiny bit of our heritage here –

Christmas, St George. Lot of elderly people here whose husbands fought in the war and parents fought and died. People feel they shouldn't be ashamed to have the flags. If As Salaam put a flag in their window we wouldn't' dispute the flag – so a lot of the men feel they should be able to have this.'

*Resident*

A Community Engagement Worker was appointed in February 2014. Her role is to support the neighbourhood and the neighbourhood centres to increase usage and to support the ward councillors. She was not in employment at the time of the protest but expressed concerns about the situation.

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One seventy-six year old resident who has been on the estate for 51 years, has previously been the ward Labour councillor, a city magistrate and is active in the Community Association as the Licensee and a volunteer in the IT suite, reflected on different sources of tension and his ongoing concerns. Despite the Community Association and the Peace Centre being next door to each other he had not been into the Peace Centre since As Salaam had taken on the lease. His reflections point to ongoing divisions within the community, including within the white community.

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These reflections indicate that whilst there was a technical solution to the situation, the underlying issues remain and attitudes are unchanged.

***Pre-interview questionnaire***

In Thurnby Lodge working with tensions is regarded as predominantly reactive and about local issues, including small scale issues and feeling scared. Whilst the priority is seen as helping good things to happen and seeking to invest in the benefits of successful outcomes, it is predominantly seen as calming things down rather than looking at how things might change. Currently council led, the aspiration is for community or partnership leadership.

***Table 8: Pre-interview questionnaire: the Scout Hut***

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Main focus of community tensions | National security, counter terrorism, Prevent **1** | Local community issues and concerns **4** | Public Order | |
| 2. Lead responsibility | Police **1** | Council **3** | Community **1** | Partnership between agencies and communities |
| 3. Lead responsibility in 2 years' time | Police | Council | Community **3** | Partnership between agencies and communities **2** |
| 4. Currently working with tensions is . . . | Top down **2** | Bottom up | Equally top-down/bottom up depending on circumstances **3** | |
| 5. Currently working with tensions is . . . | Predictive **1** | Reactive **4** | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6. Current tensions are . . . | Small scale, nuanced, hate crimes/feeling scared **4** | Big events, national and international **1** | | |
| 7. Priority is . . . | Stopping bad things from happening | Helping good things happen **5** | | |
| 8. Emphasis is . . | Seeking to avoid the costs of failure **2** | Seeking to invest in the benefits of successful outcomes **3** | | |
| 9. Emphasis is . . . | Concerned with long term issues affecting the community **2** | Concerned with short term issues and events **3** | | |
| 10. In my experience working with tensions is . . | About calming things down **4** | About looking at how things might change **1** | | |

**Case study 3: Oldham**


*Photo: Oldham Old Town Hall*


*Map: Greater Manchester showing the location of Oldham*

In 2009 Oldham Town Hall was declared one of the UK's 'Top Ten Buildings at Risk' by the Victorian Society following 30 years of neglect. The Old Town Hall had become a symbol of decline but it has now been restored to one of civic pride. 'This development sends out the message that we're deadly serious about delivering better for Oldham – our people and our place'.

*Councillor Jean Stretton, Leader of the Council.*

***Introduction***

It is difficult to assess the extent to which media attention following the events of May 2001 has shaped Oldham people's own current narrative of themselves, but it is still a reference point, certainly outside the town if not within it. An article was published in the Observer during the research period under the category 'Terror attacks NEWS' and headed, ''We must not live segregated lives', said May. But in divided Oldham, that's not always easy. The town witnessed some of Britain's worst race riots in 2001. Ben Quinn visits a community still seeking cohesion.'

> 'A homemade union flag and cards with 'democracy' and 'multifaith' adorn the window of the children's nursery that stands on what – 16 years ago- was a key flashpoint in some of Britain's worst race riots. It was here in May 2001 that a firebomb came crashing through a window of the Live and Let Live pub as Oldham became one of a number of northern English towns to be rocked by a wave of violence that raised questions about segregation, integration and the relations between white Britons and their Asian neighbours. Last week, in the aftermath of the London Bridge and Manchester terror atrocities, Theresa May declared: 'We need to live our lives not in a series of separated, segregated communities but as one truly United Kingdom. In places like Oldham, acting on such sentiments represents a daunting challenge. Residents speak of their shock at recent events and express a cautious optimism that much has changed. But there is also a sense that efforts to improve community relations in Britain's most divided towns remain a work in progress – along with some worries about the future impact of cuts.'
>
> Quinn (2017) *The Observer 11.06.17*

The rest of the Observer article includes positive and optimistic quotes from local people about their communities and neighbours, but quotes from outsiders reinforce the messages from 2001. The colour photograph is of an area of Oldham in 2005. There was no reason to go to Oldham for this article about the London Bridge and Manchester Arena attacks as there was no relevant 'news' in the article, and the headlines belied the stories from local residents. The story of the community response to hold a vigil in Royston, where two of their residents had died at the Arena, was unreported, and that the students of Oldham College, who also lost a member of staff in the bomb, held a minute's silence and set up a blood bank, was also untold. This is a regular occurrence and this example is far from the worst.

The disturbances in Oldham, Bradford and Burnley in summer 2001 also led to a number of political and policy reviews. Ritchie (2001) charted the social history of Oldham from its' industrial roots, immigration and arrivals, patterns of settlement, social interchange and 'separate development' and the role of the British National Party in exploiting divisions. He highlighted segregation in housing and education as critical, as well as in employment and leisure as underlying features, identified deprivation as a key contributor to tensions and criticised civic leadership for failing to provide the vision, strategic direction and policies to address the challenges in the borough. However his report faced some criticism from both the statutory agencies and the Asian community for its methodology and lack of engagement with younger Asian people.

Ritchie's report was one of several independent reviews at the time, linked to disturbances in other towns. Earlier the same year, in a study commissioned prior to the disturbances, Ousely (2001), explored race relations in Bradford, using the question 'Why is community fragmentation along social, cultural, ethnic and religious lines occurring in the Bradford district?' The focus was on the 'drift towards self-segregation, the necessity of arresting and reversing this process and the role of education in tackling ignorance and bigotry' as well as identifying excellent exemplary projects and initiatives on which to build. Ousely suggested an institutional framework for tackling racial discrimination, social exclusion and unfair treatment; a coherent response from public services to meet their obligations under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, and to promote social interaction and mixing; leadership at all levels supporting social and cultural interaction; a higher profile for positive initiatives that point the way forward. Clarke (2001) concluded that the disturbances in Burnley were not race riots but a series of incidents sparked by a war between Asian and white drug gangs and claimed they were subsequently exploited by organised racists and fuelled by the tensions arising from grinding poverty.

The Home Secretary established an independent review team on community cohesion (Cantle 2001) and a review group on Public Order and Community Cohesion (Denham 2001). Both took an overview of the three towns and the Cantle Review also visited areas where there were diverse populations but where there had not been disturbances and there were positive experiences upon which to draw. The Denham Review focused on government responses to minimise future disorder and to build community cohesion, and the practical

help government could give to support local solutions, whilst the Cantle Review was given the specific remit to find the views of local people and community organisations. From these reviews, the concept of 'community cohesion' entered the policy vocabulary.

The descriptions of parallel lives, fault lines in communities, fractured communities, spatial segregation, self-segregation and structural inequalities led to many recommendations based on building a sense of belonging, valuing diversity, promoting equal life opportunities and building relationship in schools, workplaces and neighbourhoods. Whilst these were considered and taken on board, Oldham is beginning to tell its' own story, based on its own values and principles and planning and based on its own theory of change. Oldham is far from complacent and recognises the significant and complex challenges: 'We know Oldham is a place where deep social and economic disadvantage still exists and life can be a struggle for many. The statistics on key indicators like educational attainment and health and wellbeing tell that story. We don't pretend there are any easy routes to shifting stubborn inequalities but we are clear that our role is to challenge those lazy perceptions and assumptions that damage our town and we can do that by leading by example' (Oldham Partnership 2017).

The narrative is distinctively Oldham, and whist it draws on local, national and international learning and ideas, it is ultimately home grown and rooted in the people and place of Oldham.

The cooperative narrative is deeply values driven. The values drive a culture of collaboration and a way of working with citizens which in turn seeks to drive better outcomes for people and places.

***Area context***

Oldham is one of the ten metropolitan boroughs that make up the Greater Manchester conurbation, shown on the map on page 151. One quarter of the borough lies within the Peak District National Park with beautiful countryside and outdoor activity. Oldham and other smaller towns and suburbs make up the remaining urban landscape. A pre-eminent mill town in the nineteenth century it was known as the world's manufacturing centre for cotton spinning – literally the textile processing capital of the world. Textile related engineering and coal mining supported the cotton industry.

Now, former historic buildings are being regenerated and Oldham is redeveloping its cultural and heritage assets, such as the Old Town Hall pictured on page 151, building new housing, educational and leisure facilities, improving green spaces and country parks and developing quality retail, entertainment and public realm. Oldham's good transport links have been hugely enhanced by the recent Metrolink development making it a short ride away from the City of Manchester.

Due to the town's prevalence as an industrial centre and thus a hub for employment, Oldham attracted migrant workers throughout its history, including from all parts of the UK. In the 1950s and 1960s, in an attempt to fill a shortfall of workers, inward migration from the Commonwealth was encouraged from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and the Caribbean. At the time of the 2001 census, over one in four of its residents identified themselves as from a South Asian or British Asian ethnic group.

The population is 224,900, predicted to grow to 241,100 in the next five years. It is a young population and has a high working age population compared to the England average (Oldham Council 2019:6).

More than three quarters of Oldham people are white British, 10 per cent Pakistani and 7.3 per cent Bangladeshi. In terms of religion, 60 per cent are Christian, 18 per cent Muslim, 16 per cent no religion, less than one percent Hindu and 6 per cent 'Other' (Oldham Council 2019:8)

There are 6,240 businesses in Oldham, spanning key sectors including advanced manufacturing, health, construction, digital, creative, financial and professional services, including national and international brands (Oldham Council 2019:16).

Oldham has 1200 voluntary, community and social enterprises and 37,000 volunteers who contribute hours to the value of £82 million per year. Overall the sector brings in £102 million in funding per year across the borough from all sources, internal to Oldham and external (Voluntary Sector interviewee).

Oldham ranks number 34$^{th}$ of 326 Local Authorities in England in the English Indices of Deprivation produced by the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2015), a decline in the rankings from 2010. At least half of wards are in the most deprived

20% in England overall. The key domains of income, employment and health all place Oldham in the lowest ranked 10% nationally, and it appears that health and crime in particular have declined (relative to other areas) since 2010. One ward is in the worst position nationally for adult skills and another is ninth. Relative to other areas, the domains "Barriers to Housing and Services", and "Living Environment" have markedly improved since 2010.

Community relations in Oldham have been subject to much review, analysis, debate and comment. The focus on three days of disturbances in May 2001 has led to considerable exploration of the experiences and realities of people's lives, or perceptions of these, but also turned a relentless media spotlight on the town which continues to this day and frequently defines the place in relation to those events sixteen years ago.

On 3rd November 2015 the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, comprised of ten local authorities of which Oldham is one, formally endorsed the Devolution Agreement negotiated with government, with powers and responsibilities to be transferred from Whitehall to Greater Manchester. The agreement is unique in England in that includes devolution of health services and also gives new powers, responsibilities and access to resources across public services. Devolution came into effect in April 2016 and a new Mayor elected in May 2017.

The impact, or potential impact, of devolution for Oldham is significant, combining the boroughs own local plans and approaches with ambitious Greater Manchester-wide plans, based around the twin approaches of inclusive growth and radical public service reform. The vision is to deliver 'the fastest and greatest improvement in the health, wealth and wellbeing of Greater Manchester's 2.8 million population'. The most fundamental transformation is in health and social care, where there is action across a whole range of services and fundamental system change, but specifically a radical upgrade in prevention, early intervention and promotion of self-care, and reaching a new deal with the public to take greater charge of, and responsibility for, their own health and wellbeing. It involves more people managing health through looking after themselves and each other across each stage of the lifecourse, from giving children the best start in life to developing well with good work, and helping people age well.

Political leaders and Executives in Oldham are integral players in the Greater Manchester strategy, both shaping the agenda, providing leadership in particular areas such as equality and inclusion (Council Leader), mental health and developing integrated workforces (Council Chief Executive), as well as delivering transformational reform in their own Borough.

Equally, Oldham is benefitting from collective research, insight, strategy and action across Greater Manchester to improve the wellbeing of local people.

***Key elements of the Oldham approach***

This case study seeks to distil some of the key elements of the Oldham approach, their language and terminology and from both formal documents and interviews, and consider, later in chapter six, the correlation these have with concepts and frameworks identified in the literature review which might impact on work with community tensions. It documents cooperative values and principles, partnership, inclusive growth and regeneration, and thriving communities.

*Cooperative Values and principles*

The context in which cooperative councils (and all councils) are operating is stark.

> 'Massive demand challenges and a climate of fiscal austerity. Big ticket reform areas in health, education, criminal justice and welfare reshaping the landscape within which they operate. The emergence of devolution and city-regional working as the new vehicle for growth and public service reform within places. And latterly the Brexit vote illustrating a profound disconnect between some civic institutions and the people they represent and serve' (Kippin, Randall 2017:5).

Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council is one of 22 councils nationally who have declared themselves 'Cooperative'. This is the central tenet of their ethos and approach. Oldham is committed to developing a co-operative future: one where citizens, partners and staff work together to improve the borough and create a confident and ambitious place. Put simply, being or becoming a co-operative borough is about everybody doing their bit and everybody benefitting. It is not a slogan or campaign, though there are campaigns attached, nor is it a series of projects. The cooperative ethos influences and permeates every decision, policy, service and activity.

Co-operative values, developed by the International Co-operative Alliance, are 'self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, cooperative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others' (International Co-operative Alliance).

A number of principles stem from these values and inform the Oldham approach. The first is that of social partnership between citizens, communities, enterprises and the Council, based on a shared sense of responsibility for wellbeing and mutual benefit. Second is supporting the active democratic engagement of the full range of residents in decision making and priority setting. Third is the principle of co-production and enabling citizens to be equal partners in designing and commissioning public services and determining the use of public resources. In relation to enterprise and the social economy, the principle is to promote community-based approaches to economic development that focus on supporting the creation of jobs, social enterprises and other businesses and provide an environment for cooperative and mutual enterprises to thrive. There is also a focus on maximising social value and wider social, economic and environmental outcomes and impact. The role of councillors is being redefined - as community connectors, brokers and leaders and helping the community to contribute to local outcomes. The principles encourage new ways of working, innovation and learning.

In Oldham, working co-operatively is about working in a way which helps to empower residents to take greater control of their own lives but also gets the maximum benefit from the resources that are available to the community and public sector. The cooperative ethos guides decision makers, workforces and residents.

> 'How do we raise Oldham's aspirations and build a thriving borough? It's not just about services, though it is important to deliver good services, but about strengthening social and economic wellbeing. The Council is *in* the borough, and *of* the borough.
>
> The cooperative ethos is central and provides the core values based framework. We don't do this alone – we have a cooperative workforce – in health, education, recycling . . .
>
> The 'Your Oldham' Festival in September is a programme of events to celebrate achievements, recognise the hard work of everyone involved, consider what comes next and inspire and engage residents and visitors through enjoyable events and good conversations.

> It's fundamental to our approach. We're just relaunching in a more accessible way – '#our bit, #your bit, #result'. It not about 'projects' but about how we work, our values and how we enact them and that we are all equally responsible for the outcome. *We* are *they'*.
>
> *Council Chief Executive*

The approach is asset based and about proving support to help people be in control of their own lives.

> 'The cooperative approach weaves into everything – for example, our programme of 'Early Help' is about getting people back into control of their own lives. We apply the same philosophy in everything: how do we empower communities to address their own issues?
>
> We are also about building shared identity and pride campaigns, such as 'Love where you live', promoting the borough and engaging people in volunteering, social activities, having their say.
>
> There is a shift to a positive, asset based approach.'
>
> *Council Senior Officer*

Similarly, the cooperative ethos drives the approach to working with businesses and the regeneration of the borough.

> 'Everything we do is *with* and *for* local residents. It is a constructive narrative and very important local driver. It influences our approach to the private sector partnership and how we lead and conduct our capital programme – done in partnership and with an openness to engagement and comment.'
>
> *Council Senior Officer*

The voluntary sector also recognise the significance o the cooperative approach and the leadership to create the space for this to flourish.

> The Cooperative Oldham narrative is very significant. The values of Cooperative working are very important. There is an honesty in the system to keep working at it – that's what keeps me interested. It's hard to share powers, but there is good leadership from Leader and Chief Executive of the Council – and the Cooperative Charter says 'working towards . . .' a cooperative borough'.
>
> *Voluntary Sector Senior Officer*

*Partnership*

Partnership operates at several levels. At a strategic level, the Oldham Partnership brings together proactive and engaged public, private, voluntary and community organisations in

Oldham. All of these partners share the common vision 'to make Oldham a place of ambition' and are committed to working with each other and with the people of Oldham to create a productive place with healthy, aspirational and sustainable communities. The Oldham Leadership Board is the governing body of the Oldham Partnership. It comprises public sector chief executives, key elected members, and business, community and voluntary sector leaders. It is more than just a partnership of organisations; the body is responsible for leading and championing Oldham, not just at the borough level but at the city region and beyond. It produces the Oldham Plan and supports the development of solutions for Oldham with emphasis on collaboration, alignment, joint commissioning and investment. It is valued.

> **'**Partnership can be an overused word. Partnerships can sap energy. When I first came the Partnership was sapping energy – the Council just telling others what we were doing every six weeks and everything just carrying on as normal. We wanted the partnership to be a space of energy where there was shared energy, power and influence and action. We wanted a space for ideas and learning and where there wasn't a blaming culture. People responded fabulously well. Now, sometimes we lead, or help or fix or sometimes stay out of the way. We celebrate collectively'.
>
> *Council Chief Executive*
>
> 'The Policy Team have a very positive influence on partnership and carve out space for Action Together. The Leader and Chief Executive provide positive leadership and understand the need for a rich tapestry of engagement, and for diversity, not just one large scale single approach. Despite the fact that funding from the Council has declined, perceptions of the relationship are still more positive, and specifically that people can have influence in Oldham'.
>
> *Voluntary Sector Senior Officer*

Partnership at a neighbourhood level involves joining up services to seek integrated solutions with communities. This is known as place based working, focusing on the people in a place in a holistic way, not based on individual services or providers of services but blended teams working with the fine grain of communities.

> 'Integrated place-based working is the key – we're reforming public services to develop multi-agency teams in localities – especially in high demand, high risk, high dependency localities. We seek integrated solutions to a whole range of problems including antisocial behaviour, obesity, health, employment – everything in the geography.

> We have clear strategies on community capacity and shrinking the distance between state and community. We have started in two areas and are developing the model, which covers many issues and means being close to the community, ear to the ground, partnership between agencies and communities. It relies on relationships rather than just a focus on problems'.
>
> *Senior Police Officer*

Alongside the structural aspects of partnership is the culture to enable and foster collaboration. The cooperative values are underpinning but the leadership style is creative, supportive, constructive and self-questioning.

> 'It is an enabling environment. There is encouragement to get on with things without unnecessary constraint. The leader of the Council and Chief Executive create the strategic context and conditions for the work to happen. There is good collaborative working, building a common purpose, shared endeavour.
>
> People who are part of the fabric of Oldham drive change – community leaders, Interfaith Forum, community projects, GPs. There is genuine valuing of communities, working cooperatively and investing in that.'
>
> *Senior Police Officer*

This culture of distributed leadership, where the ambition, principles, approach and strategic framework are in place but there is freedom and encouragement to act within these guidelines, means that anyone can lead in their own context, be that in the council, health facilities, local communities, workplaces, organisations of every hue. This engenders creativity and imagination, essential aspects of transformational change.

> 'It's fundamentally bottom up. There is a strong pool of community leaders. Relationships are critical. Everything done through networking.
>
> Our approach in working between the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector and the statutory agencies on our shared agenda is threefold: first, believe it's possible – believe in the power of people; second, strength in others – build capacity; third, be true – be the voice when it's difficult, raise difficult issues, be a credible voice for communities or agencies and hold ourselves to account.'
>
> *Voluntary Sector Senior Officer*

This commitment to self-accountability is encouraged across workforces in order to test that actions reflect cooperative values and assess the cooperative difference that is being made.

> ‘We promote a Human Development approach and Human Centred Design. This is about designing services around the people who actually live in Oldham. For example, in Gloddick, we worked on diabetes with the Asian community; previously the NHS advice was based on a western diet and then translated, and the new approach was based around what people actually eat and providing mentors to support. Some themes or services are standardised, some have a cultural or geographical focus, others vary according to individual need.
>
> Our Plan is based on a Theory of Change and we always ask a series of questions to test that we are delivering our cooperative values and to test what is the cooperative difference, such as, ‘are residents involved in the design and delivery of services, who are the workforce, volunteers and partners, have we encouraged apprenticeships, how is the local spend benefitting the community?’ We encourage staff to take ownership to drive high performance and change. We come at things from the reality of situations and there is a lot of honesty in how we question ourselves.’
>
> *Council Chief Executive*

*Inclusive growth and regeneration*

Bringing about improvement in the economic fortunes of Oldham residents, improving economic sustainability of the borough and the progression of residents is a huge challenge, given the economic history and deprivation profile. The challenge is to create inclusive growth where all communities can contribute to, and benefit from, growth.

Starting with early years and schools, Oldham has invested in an Education and Skills Commission to improve school readiness, life readiness and work readiness, and improve attainment and outcomes across the board. Of significance in the context of this case study is the merger of a number of secondary schools, which were previously highly segregated in terms of ethnicity, into new mixed schools. Hewstone, van Zalk, Al Ramiah, Scmid, New, Wolfer, Fell, Floe and Wigoder (2016:10) found consistent evidence that attitudes relating to trust and tolerance of other groups were more positive and, as would be expected, mixing was more frequent, in mixed than segregated schools. Mixing in the classroom and more social mixing led to more positive attitudes towards others than in segregated educational settings, and, over time, led to less anxiety about others (Hewstone et al 2017:16).

Many people in Oldham are trapped in low wage low skilled positons.

> ‘In relation to skills, on paper the skills profile is poor, with some of the lowest levels of residents in Greater Manchester and in the country with skills above Level 4 and some of the highest levels of residents with no qualifications. However, those statistics mask that we are very successful at improving the skills of 16-18 year olds, although we don’t always get them back after University.
>
> Similarly, the skill levels of those of working age in the labour market is poor but presents a great opportunity for reskilling the existing labour market. This is a key issue – it is not just about young people and school leavers. So we are addressing in-work progression of working age adults who are trapped in a low wage low skill positon. The Career Advancement Service works with employers and individuals to support skills enhancement and progression, using skills diagnostic, brokerage and training and increasing the uptake of Learner Loans’.
>
> *Senor Council Officer*

Businesses are intrinsic to developing the vision for the economic future.

> ‘The private sector care deeply about our residents – yes they have commercial interests but they are bound up with their workforces and the local context. Residents are aware of the business contribution – there are some big employers and medium to large employing 100 to 200 workers and with turnovers of £5 million to £15 million. They employ a lot of local residents and communicate in the firm on issues such as productivity, growth, export potential and local regeneration.
>
> The community at large are aware of economic regeneration and the developments are well known. There are some negative comments but it is largely positive – and the active interventionist strategy is widely known and it is a positive conversation.
>
> *Senor Council Officer*

Oldham has developed a ‘Fair Employment Charter’ which encourages employers from all sectors to pay a living wage, offer fair contracts and stability of employment, offer access to training and support membership of trade unions. It also promotes the cooperative ethos by requiring employers to enable and encourage employees to 'do their bit' for the borough and support local people into work through Get Oldham Working. This includes apprenticeships which have been very successful in helping people into work.

The diversity of communities is carefully considered throughout, reflecting the commitment to place based working, human centred design and coprooduction.

> ‘All interventions are designed to fit diversity – geographically, and with regard to ethnicity and gender. For example, targeting support for the re-employment of

unemployed adults aged 50 plus in Werneth ward which is predominantly Pakistani; employment support for Care Leavers'.

*Senior Council Officer*

Capital developments and regeneration are beginning to make a difference in Oldham. In addition to housing developments including extra care provision, new schools, leisure facilities and parks improvements, there is also ongoing redevelopment of the town centre. The tram link has brought vital connectivity for the town centre and the Old Town Hall redevelopment as a cinema is regarded as a symbol of ambition rather than one of decline. It also increases spaces for social mixing.

'The children's play area in the town centre is always buzzing with children and families from different communities. The library is used by all communities. We have invested in Alexandra Park which is used by all. We have invested in two leisure centres, a theatre and Heritage Centre – been bold about investing'.

*Council Leader*

The next phase of redevelopment is in the community consultation phase and there are ambitions to be an 'all age' town centre and support a physically active environment which is accessible and inclusive.

There is commitment and dogged determination to working with individuals, communities, neighbourhoods, employers and partners to bring about inclusive growth where everyone benefits and no-one is left behind.

'The level of poverty is appalling. National changes to Universal Credit will worsen the economic situation for many people and global economics will hit us. This worries me. We can improve outcomes for some – but they move on. We are a net importer of poverty because of the large private rented housing sector. One third of our children live in poverty.

It's hard to make progress. You've got to be a scrapper to work here. People are here because they want to work here. You're never not on duty'.

*Council Chief Executive*

Transforming the borough requires a long term view as well as attention to immediate issues such as the inequality gaps in skills, employment and income. The strategy is for active intervention in the market to build growth and to take steps to ensure that Oldham's communities will be ready to benefit from such growth.

> ‘It’s very challenging – economic regeneration and renewal is a never ending process. We have redoubled our efforts but there is always something else to be done – regeneration is a process and evolutionary, not a task. It’s a hard day-to-day grind. It’s a 15-20 year process of turning around the economic fortunes of post-industrial collapse. It’s not irrecoverable but it’s not quick or easy or overnight. We have to accept that if we leave it to the market it won’t happen – Greater Manchester has had market led regeneration and this gives a skewed approach to growth which has excluded large parts of the conurbation.
>
> Our approach is for inclusive growth and active intervention in the market to promote spatial rebalancing.
>
> I have a positive view in the medium term. The town centre redevelopment, for example, we can package a scheme with a high chance of success with investment partners. There are grounds for serious optimism – but it’s a hell of a grind to get there. Even if we’re successful, so will others be, so there is still a need to keep going and constantly chasing closing the inequality gap’.
>
> *Senor Council Officer*

*Thriving communities*

‘Thriving communities’ is the term Oldham uses to describe their approach to community engagement and empowerment. The vision is for people and communities ‘to have the power to be healthy, happy, able to make positive choices and both offer and access insightful and responsive support when required’. It represents a shift from a top down approach to coproduction and using the assets in communities to support community-led solutions.

The strategic partnership plan to deliver this is fourfold. First it involves gathering community insight through the use of community researchers and connectors and being influenced by the results. A Thriving Communities Index to measure subjective citizen experience and resilience is under development. Second is system leadership, a commitment to learning including a School of Thriving Communities at Oldham College, ensuring momentum and resolving blockages. Third is creating the culture, system and climate for a cooperative workforce across all sectors and elected members, delivering against common objectives and drawing on the strengths of communities; ensuring asset

based working and coproduction is embedded in a unified workforce and scaling up good practice.

The fourth strand is social action, infrastructure and cohesion. This includes systematically targeting the root causes of loneliness and social isolation in all ages, a focus on social prescribing and investing in social action. It involves developing the role of community anchors to act as hubs for social action and community connectors to link provision into the community. It is proactive in fostering community cohesion and pride, bringing communities together, creating an attractive environment and building on cultural and heritage assets.

***Challenges***

Population change, cultural differences, local incidents, external events, tensions, crimes and threats to community safety and confidence still pose challenges which are taken very seriously, with improved coordination and sophistication.

In relation to population change, Oldham has a growing population of people of Asian heritage, Eastern Europeans and Asylum seekers.

> 'In relation to the Asian community there are two trends: areas where there is residential segregation and lack of contact between communities (in the centre), and parts where communities are becoming more mixed.
>
> There has been progress in recent years in social interaction, the development of the town centre and cinema, for example, have been positive in this regard.
>
> There has been a growth in the number of Eastern Europeans, and also of Asylum Seekers mainly from Africa who have settled – so the population is becoming more diverse.
>
> The biggest issue has been Eastern Europeans – different behaviours around refuse, schools, scrap metal businesses and clashes in expectations of acceptable behaviour. This has tipped over a bit in relation to a spate of burglaries in mosques leading to the Asian community being up in arms and organising some community patrols – with a risk of harm, but also there is an issue of drugs in Asian community.
>
> We have a Roma Outreach worker leading on short and long term issues of child exploitation, trafficking, underage sexual activity – and issues arising from clash in understanding and differences of cultural and family values.'
>
> *Senior Council Officer*

During 2015-16 there were 285 hate crimes and 107 non-criminal hate incidents in Oldham. The number of reported hare crimes has increased in recent years, in part a reflection of work to improve reporting, though with recognition that there is still under-reporting of hate crimes and incidents. The rise also relates to events and incidents such as the Manchester bomb and the London attacks in 2017. Most are reported to be motivated by prejudice on the basis of race (85%), with smaller proportions motivated by homophobia (8%), religion (5%) and disability (5%), (these total more than 100% because hate crimes may be motivated by more than one factor).

There is constant vigilance around tensions and incidents.

> 'There is a strong system of managing Community Tensions – lots of partners are involved and there is buy-in at the senior level. The Council drives this rather than the police – but the police are there. The weekly document (using the Experienced, Evidenced, Potential system) is produced by the Council. It includes work scanning social media.
>
> The Group does the weekly analysis but also has a Strategic Risk Register and looks at long term issues as well. Some Community Impact Assessments are done in partnership.
>
> People understand the need to take community cohesion seriously'.
>
> *Senior Council Officer*

Politicians contribute to this process. The multiagency group concerned with vulnerable people also have input.

> *'*The weekly Community Tensions Report goes to all Cabinet Members and they contribute to it.
>
> The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub, working with vulnerable individuals and communities is valuable'.
>
> *Council Chief Executive*

A number of issues or incidents have caused heightened tensions in recent years. The 2011 riots in London, Birmingham and other Midlands towns and cities, Bristol, Liverpool and reaching Manchester and Salford, did not spread to Oldham. The Shaw gas explosion in 2012, where one property exploded as a result of a deliberate act, causing the death of a small child in the adjacent house and resulting in the evacuation of 175 properties and £1.2 million damage, had massive local impact. During 2014/15 the conflict in Gaza between

Israel and Palestine was a major source of tension, with feelings running very high about the deaths and suffering caused and particularly the impact on civilians, including children. In 2017 the Manchester bomb affected different parts of the communities of Oldham:

> 'In the Manchester Arena bomb, two women from Royston were killed. It's a predominantly white area and there has been far right involvement in the past and still some in the present – there was potential for tension. There were shockwaves in the community and things could have escalated. We set up a community hub in Royston where people could come to express their emotions. From scanning social media we found the family wanted a vigil so we responded and organised that with them – we were conscious all the time of the need to support and help.'
>
> *Council Chief Executive*
>
> 'After the Arena bombing, the day after, one of the local mosques was targeted in an arson attack. There was cross-community condemnation'.
>
> *Council Leader*

There is no complacency about the potential for tensions to 'tip over'. There is continual learning.

> 'We knew what to do when the Manchester bomb occurred – to support families, to get out to families, to be there, to be visible. But even then I think we should have acted even sooner on the Sunday night.'
>
> *Senior Council Officer*
>
> 'We are sensitive to the complexities when there are incidents. For example, when two girls were killed in a road traffic accident on New Year's Eve, or if there's a stabbing, we always look at ethnicity and the dynamics of the incident – it's never just straightforward'.
>
> *Council Chief Executive*

The responses are not just agency driven:

> 'The voluntary and faith sectors are brilliant. People just help out – when there was the Maple Mill fire, a rest centre was quickly set up and one of the mosques came in with food.'
>
> *Council Leader*

There are dedicated workers whose job is to join things up locally, involve communities and act as connectors. The six district teams comprise Coordinators and Caseworkers and support local members in their community leadership role, engage and coordinate

partnership activity in tackling disadvantage and in promoting integration, mutual trust and respect, and developing a shared vision. They have a lot of local knowledge and experience.

> 'All our community development workers are wonderful. They take the initiative and are proactive in working with communities and partners. Whenever we have something go wrong they are there, such as the 2012 Shaw gas blast. They have been to see every tenant in the tower blocks (since Grenfell) and the Fire Service has been out six times and put on extra patrols'.
>
> *Council Leader*

The elected members are embedded in their communities and constantly listening and giving voice to residents.

> 'Oldham Members are the salt of the earth grounded types, absolutely committed, truly reflective of communities and very determined for real benefit to them. They are consistent and provide stability. They will say no to Greater Manchester or national initiatives if they don't think they are of real benefit or are not consistent with the cooperative approach.
>
> There is active citizenship in Oldham. They have voice through the members. They can be demanding or angry if we're not delivering. The Council seeks those voices.
>
> *Senior Council Officer*

The Chief Constable is committed to neighbourhood policing and to the partnership work. The approach to crime and community safety includes both longer term problem solving and community engagement alongside appropriate and proportional enforcement activity.

> 'Long term problem solving and community engagement linked to supportive enforcement activity at the extreme end. Enforcement and policing responses to counter terrorism are critical where there is an immediate threat. Responses must be linked in to the community context. Connectivity across services is important – and we're pretty good at that. Engagement, problem solving and longer term relationships – we need to get ever better at that.'
>
> *Senior Police Officer*

The risk register is also a means to be proactive around issues that are known to have the potential for raising tensions. Adverse coverage of asylum issues in the media has the potential to create antipathy and result in hate crimes and incidents against asylum seekers. SERCO provide accommodation and support for dispersed asylum seekers in the North West. There is a risk that in future SERCO may seek to procure properties in areas where a concentration of asylum seekers could result in community tensions. The Council is

managing this by refusing procurement of properties in wards which exceed the 'cluster limit' of one asylum seeker per 200 population. Further procurement is currently being prevented in Alexandra, Chadderton South, Coldhurst, Failsworth West, Hollinwood, Medlock Vale, St. Mary's, Waterhead and Werneth wards. A peaceful protest by a group of Somali people about children being taken into care by social services highlighted a need for engagement with this group, which had previously not been visible.

Further pressures from the impact of austerity and welfare reform are emerging with tensions linked to social and economic stress.

> 'There is increasing pressure on employment and benefits – and economic stress which crosses over to community tensions. There are increasing signs of economic and social stress due to austerity having an impact – even if these do not show up in the employment figures, we are aware that communities are under serious economic stress. Brexit adds to the risk going forward.'
>
> *Senior Council Officer*

***Pre-interview questionnaire***

In Oldham, as Table 8 indicates, community tensions are predominantly concerned with local community issues and concerns, with some focus on national security, counter terrorism and Prevent. The lead responsibility is predominantly seen as partnership and that remains the future preference though 2 people preferred community led. It is mainly viewed as an equally top down and bottom up process depending on the circumstances. It is seen as a predictive process and concerned with small scale or 'nuanced' aspects of community tensions and short term issues and events. The priority is just biased in favour of stopping bad things happening but also investing in successful outcomes and how things might change.

***Table 9: Pre-interview questionnaire: Oldham***

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Main focus of community tensions | National security, counter terrorism, Prevent **2** | Local community issues and concerns **6** | Public Order | |
| 2. Lead responsibility | Police **1** | Council **1** | Community | Partnership between agencies and communities **6** |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3. Lead responsibility in 2 years' time | Police | Council | Community **2** | Partnership between agencies and communities **6** |
| 4. Currently working with tensions is . . . | Top down **3** | Bottom up | Equally top-down/bottom up depending on circumstances **5** | |
| 5. Currently working with tensions is . . . | Predictive **7** | Reactive **1** | | |
| 6. Current tensions are . . . | Small scale, nuanced, hate crimes/feeling scared **7.5** | Big events, national and international **0.5** | | |
| 7. Priority is . . . | Stopping bad things from happening **4.5** | Helping good things happen **3.5** | | |
| 8. Emphasis is . . | Seeking to avoid the costs of failure **2.5** | Seeking to invest in the benefits of successful outcomes **5.5** | | |
| 9. Emphasis is . . . | Concerned with long term issues affecting the community **3** | Concerned with short term issues and events **5** | | |
| 10. In my experience working with tensions is . . | About calming things down **3** | About looking at how things might change **5** | | |

**Questionnaire summaries**

The following three tables summarise the initial survey with police officers undertaken as part of the preliminary research (Table 10), the combined scores for the pre-interview questionnaires in the four nations and three case studies (Table 11) and a comparison between the two (Table 12).

The initial survey demonstrated that for police officers with the lead responsibility for monitoring community tensions in 35 forces, tension monitoring was primarily about local community issues, but national security, counter-terrorism, Prevent and public order were also considered as part of the purpose. Tension monitoring was primarily police led but the significant aspiration was to move this to being partnership or community led in the future. The monitoring process was considered bottom up, with over two-thirds considering it a

reactive process and less than a third considered it predictive. The experience locally was that monitoring community tensions was primarily about big events and major issues rather than addressing small scale or nuanced aspects of community tension. The emphasis was strongly on stopping bad things happening and driven by seeking to avoid the costs of failure. Over two-thirds considered that the emphasis was on short-term issues and events and that tension monitoring had mainly been effective.

***Table 10: Initial survey of 35 police officers - Single Points of Contact (SPOCs) for Tension Monitoring***

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Primary purpose of tension monitoring | National security, counter terrorism, Prevent **9** | Local community issues and concerns **21** | Public Order **5** |
| 2. Current lead responsibility | Police **31** | Partnership **2** | Community **2** |
| 3. Like to see lead responsibility in 2 years' time | Police **1** | Partnership **26** | Community **11** |
| 4. Currently tension monitoring is . . . | Top down **6** | Bottom up **21** | Equally top-down/bottom up depending on circumstances **8** |
| 5. Currently tension monitoring in my area is . . . | Predictive **10** | Reactive **25** | |
| 6. Current tension monitoring in my area concerns . . . | Small scale, nuanced aspects **7** | Big events, major issues **28** | |
| 7. Tension monitoring is primarily about . . . | Stopping bad things from happening **29** | Helping good things happen **6** | |
| 8. Overall emphasis is . . | Seeking to avoid the costs of failure **26** | Seeking to invest in the benefits of successful outcomes **9** | |
| 9. Overall emphasis is . . . | Concerned with short-term issues and events **23** | Concerned with long term issues **12** | |
| 10. In my experience tension monitoring . . . | Has mainly been effective **24** | Has mainly been ineffective **11** | |

***Table 11: Community tension – what does it mean to me? COMBINED SCORES of Pre Interview Questionnaires – case studies and four nations (note: 1 abstention)***

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Main focus of community tensions | National security, counter terrorism, Prevent **4.33** | Local community issues and concerns **25.33** | Public Order **0.33** | |
| 2. Lead responsibility | Police **7** | Council **4** | Community **2** | Partnership between agencies and communities **17** |
| 3. Lead responsibility in 2 years' time | Police | Council | Community **5** | Partnership between agencies and communities **25** |
| 4. Currently working with tensions is . . . | Top down **11** | Bottom up **3** | Equally top-down/bottom up depending on circumstances **15** | None of these **1** |
| 5. Currently working with tensions is . . . | Predictive **13.5** | Reactive **16.5** | | |
| 6. Current tensions are . . . | Small scale, nuanced, hate crimes/feeling scared **23** | Big events, national and international **7** | | |
| 7. Priority is . . . | Stopping bad things from happening **17.5** | Helping good things happen **12.5** | | |
| 8. Emphasis is . . | Seeking to avoid the costs of failure **14.5** | Seeking to invest in the benefits of successful outcomes **15.5** | | |
| 9. Emphasis is . . . | Concerned with long term issues affecting the community **12** | Concerned with short term issues and events **18** | | |
| 10. In my experience working with tensions is . . | About calming things down **20** | About looking at how things might change **10** | | |

First Table 11 shows that taken as a whole, those interviewed see working with community tensions as focusing on local community issues and concerns and not on public order or national security. This is reinforced by the aggregated answer in question six, that the tensions affecting people most are small scale 'nuanced' aspects of community tensions such as hate crimes and feeling scared and insecure in day-to-day life.

Whilst over half of the interviewees considered working with tensions was currently partnership led, 80 percent wanted to see partnership leadership in the future and the remainder wanting it to be community led, with no respondents selecting police or council leadership for the future.

Half of respondents regarded working with tensions as equally top-down and bottom-up, depending on the situation but most of the others considered it a top-down process. Slightly more respondents regarded working with tensions as reactive rather than predictive and also slightly more saw the priority as stopping bad things from happening rather than helping good things to happen. Views were almost equal about whether the emphasis was driven by seeking to avoid the costs of failure or seeking to invest in successful outcomes. There were a greater number identifying the emphasis as concerned with short term issues and calming things down, rather than longer term issues and looking at how things might change.

Overall, the responses served to provide a test of perceptions to some of the potential questions set out in the introduction and that, with the exception of the clear emphasis on local issues and the desire to address through partnership, there is a still uncertainty around the priorities and purpose. However these were not binary questions with a right or wrong answer and many respondents ringed more than one answer. So it is legitimate, for example, to be concerned both with short and long-term issues and to seek to avoid failure as well as invest in success. The interpretation of this is that the intents need to be made more explicit in the overall narrative. However, as Table 11 illustrates, there are some interesting differences between the pre-research test with police officers and the combined scores of the pre-interview questionnaires across the interviewees in the four nations and three case studies.

There is a list of caveats to including this table. The questions were not identical in the two exercises as those for police officers referred to tension monitoring whilst those to interviewees referred working with tensions. There were some variations in questions and the questions for interviewees included a few more words of explanation, as the police officers would be more familiar with the language and terminology.

There were 35 police officers. They were all very familiar with the topic as the leads in their police authority. There were 30 interviewees (one abstention to the questionnaire) less familiar or unfamiliar with the terminology of community tensions, though with considerable experience nonetheless.

There was less certainty in the interviewees, many splitting choices and not simply opting for one answer as the form required. This did not occur in the initial test with police officers. Nonetheless it flagged up that people could identify competing or complementary priorities and different lenses on the challenges. The summary is about perceptions, thoughts and experiences.

As the methodology noted, there isn't one organisational view. Within the police, analysts, community front-line officers, specialists in specific crimes and senior strategic officers have different perspectives. This will be mirrored in councils, other statutory agencies, across communities and the voluntary sector. There are many views.

The summary comparison has been included to flag up where there are some areas of potential agreement and also some questions.

***Table 12: Comparison of preliminary test with police officers and combined scores of pre-interview questionnaires (four nations and three case studies).***

| Question | Potential answers | Police officers | Interviewees | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The main focus on community tensions is about: | A. National security, counter-terrorism, Prevent<br>B. Local community issues and concerns<br>C. Public Order | A. 9<br>B. 21<br>C. 5 | **A**. 4.33<br>B. 25.33<br>C. 0.33 | Overall agreement of emphasis on local community issues.<br>Higher focus on National security and public order from the police than interviewees. |
| 2. At present the lead responsibility for working with community tensions locally is: | A. The police<br>B. The Council<br>C. The Community<br>D. Partnership between agencies and communities | A. 31<br>B. Not offered<br>C.2<br>D.2 | A. 7<br>B. 4<br>C. 2<br>D. 17 | Police saw monitoring as police led whereas interviewees had a greater emphasis on partnership. This reflects the choice of case studies – all three of which had tension monitoring groups led by the council and community. So they represented a particular profile that may not be common or the norm. |
| 3. In 2 years' time I would like to see work with community tensions in my area: | A. Police led<br>B. Council led<br>C. Community led<br>D. Partnership led | A. 1<br>B. Not offered<br>C. 11<br>D. 26 | A. 0<br>B. 0<br>C. 5<br>D. 25 | Agreement that future work needs to be in partnership and not a police led activity. |
| 4. Currently working with community tension is: | A. A top down process – the agencies initiate responses<br>B. A bottom up process - the community initiates responses<br>C. Equally top-down and bottom up – it depends on the situation | A. 6<br>B.21<br>C. 8 | A. 11<br>B. 3<br>C. 15<br>None of these 1 | This is a difficult one to read. The police response emphasises bottom up and this could reflect how they work with communities to achieve their policing outcomes. The interviewees responses are equally top down and bottom up or top down – perhaps reflecting the involvement of more partners, a diversity of agencies and responses. |
| 5. Currently working with community tensions in my area is: | A. Predictive – we try to anticipate problems and try to prevent violence<br>B. Reactive – we react to problems when things have boiled over | A. 10<br>B. 25 | A. 13.5<br>B. 16.5 | Police result is predominantly reactive but one third predictive.<br>Interviewee response is more evenly balanced between prediction and reaction. |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6. Currently the tensions that affect me and my area most are: | A. Small scale or 'nuanced' aspects of community tension such as hate crime or feeling scared in day-to-day life<br><br>B. Big events, national and international issues | A. 7<br><br>B. 28 | A. 23<br><br>B. 7 | This is initially a surprising difference – first given the police response to question 1 and the focus on local community issues and concerns and yet the response here on big events, national and international issues. This could reflect the evidence and many examples in the research of the impact of national and international events on the local scenarios.<br><br>As the case studies involved local people, personal feelings of safety and security would be potentially a significant factor in this question. |
| 7. I think that when there are community tensions locally our priority is: | A. Stopping bad things from happening<br><br>B. Helping good things to happen | A. 29<br><br>B. 6 | A. 17.5<br><br>B. 12.5 | Stopping the bad is the main priority in both populations, but over a third of interviewees identified helping good things happen as a local priority. |
| 8. Overall I think the emphasis in working with tension in communities is: | A. Driven by seeking to avoid the costs of failure<br><br>B. Driven by seeking to invest in the benefits of successful outcomes | A. 26<br><br>B. 9 | A. 14.5<br><br>B. 15.5 | The police emphasis is potentially a reflection of the fact that when things go wrong, they are in the public eye – at least in the moment, and in the media. |
| 9. Overall it think that the emphasis in working with tension in communities is: | A. Concerned with long-term issues affecting the community<br>B. Concerned with short-term issues and events | A. 12<br><br>B. 23 | A. 12<br><br>B. 18 | Whilst in both populations there is a view that emphasis is with the short term there is around a third who consider that the emphasis concerns longer term issues. |
| 10. In my experience working with tension: | A: Is about calming things down<br>B: Is about how things might change | | A: 20<br><br>B: 10 | The question in the initial test with the police asked if, in their experience, tension monitoring had mainly been effective (24 said yes) or mainly ineffective (11 indicated).<br><br>Two thirds of interviewees saw working with tension as being about calming things down rather than how things might change. |

## Chapter Six: Analysis and interpretation

**Review of findings against concepts and frameworks being tested.**

**Four nations and 3 case studies**

**Introduction**

The central questions of the research are 'how can community tension and conflict be a catalyst for change and what are the conditions that enable this in the United Kingdom context'. The sub-questions are: How can positive outcomes to short-term events or crises be built upon to address longer term, underlying tensions? What are the conditions which enable different stakeholders involved in community tensions to achieve positive impact and sustainable change?

The literature review identified a number of conditions, theoretical frameworks and approaches deemed of potential relevance to these questions.

Some of these are drawn from analyses in armed conflict situations and wars, so the question is whether these models, and the learning from them, is transferrable to tensions and conflict that are not wars, but are not peaceful.

The illustrations in the national profiles and case studies demonstrate that the issues that manifest as tensions and boil over into various levels of fear or violence, or have the potential to do so, are broad, from the international and national to the local and personal. Equally, the underlying causes, bubbling under, are broad, deep, longstanding and generally linked to, or include, deprivation. Galtung (1969 cited in Curle 1971) suggested that emotional, social or educational deprivation and low levels of health are symptoms of an un-peaceful state of community dynamics, and that whilst inequality may be accepted by communities, over time, when levels of awareness rise in the dominated group, the seeds of conflict germinate. The research flags up the centrality of inequality and deprivation as underlying causes or exacerbating factors in tension and conflict across the UK.

The analysis considers to what extent these frameworks were present or absent in the narratives of the four UK countries and the three case studies and the implications for a

future narrative. Not every place exhibits evidence relevant to every concept, whether positively or negatively, but where there is such an absence it is indicated for completeness.

The chapter is based around groups of concepts and then applied across the seven places, not always in the same order, but keeping countries and local case study places together.

The concepts are grouped into four:

***Underlying premises to guide change:***

1. Proximate issues and underlying causes (Ackerman 2003)
2. Prevention, non-violent solutions and reducing underlying problems (Lund 2002)
3. Short-term responsive and long-term strategic (Lederach 2003)
4. Technical and transformative change (Fisher and Zimina 2009)
5. Theory of change (Vogel 2012)

***Actors and roles***

6. Integrating the horizontal and vertical capacities – bottom-up, top-down and middle-out (Lederach 1997)
7. The Anderson-Olsen model - significant change needs to be translated in to socio-political action (Anderson and Olsen 2003)
8. Change agents and drivers of change roles - and co-ordination (Mitchell 2011)

***Communities, community dynamics and working with communities***

9. Dynamics that intensify conflicts – escalation, mobilisation, polarisation, enlargement, dissociation, entrapment, and the reverse process - de-escalation, de-mobilisation, de-isolation, disengagement, re-communication, decommitment (Mitchell 2011)
10. Compassionate communities – valuing trust, equality and welfare above safety and security (Clements 2012)
11. Models of community development (Ledwith 2011)
12. Readiness (Robinson 2013)

***Measuring success***

13. Indicators of wellbeing (Mguni and Bacon 2010)

14. Cost benefit analysis in relation to community development (nef 2010) and early action (Community Links 2012)

**Underlying premises to guide change**

***Introduction***

A strong theme in the scholarly literature is that working with tension and conflict requires both attention to the immediate presenting issues and a process or framework to address the underlying causes and longer term considerations. Without the latter, it is suggested that there is limited scope for change.

There is also an emphasis on transformational change, which requires a new way of seeing, thinking, doing and being. In contrast to incremental change, which involves building on and improving the current situation through small adjustments which typically do not significantly threaten existing power structures or alter current methods, or step change which might be a more significant change or major step forward but still within the existing paradigm, transformational change involves a more fundamental, radical change from one form to another. One description of transformational change is that it is 'distinguished by radical breakthroughs in paradigms, beliefs and behaviour. In transformational change, what were seen as obstacles may morph into opportunities, apparently irreconcilable opposites may come to be seen as creative tension, and change that seemed improbable or requiring long development may quickly come into being' (Gass 2010:1). It is grounded in having a positive vision rather than starting from negatives and failures and involves hearts and minds as much, if not more so, as structures and systems.

This section assesses the four countries and three case studies in turn against the concepts contained in Ackerman (2003), Lund (2003) Lederach (2003), Fisher and Zimina (2009) and Vogel (2012). Additional references from the literature review and new references are included as relevant.

***England***

In England, as in the rest of the UK, there is an established system for monitoring tensions and conflict. This is a mandatory police activity and the system measures and collates the

assessment of tension levels from local to national level. It is based on community engagement and knowing and understanding different community interests and concerns, particularly race and faith communities. There is horizon scanning of current international, national and local events to be alert to their potential impact on communities. There is a desire to predict and prevent and the quality of the engagement can be effective in supporting communication when tensions rise and increasing opportunities for dialogue with affected parties, potentially reducing escalation. The extent to which other partners are involved is very variable. It has generally reduced over time in many places due to a lack of strategic requirement, lack of a guiding framework and resource pressures. The separation of 'monitoring', and addressing short term issues, from the analysis and attention to underlying causes, is a weakness in the system. In policy terms, it is a messy picture and there is no consistency or continuity of effort. The coalition document, the last statement of government policy prior to the most recent Green Paper, (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012) had a potentially useful and comprehensible blend of elements, but was never followed up. The guidance on new strategies required for local level, such as Health and Wellbeing strategies, do not include integration or community relations. There are now just a handful of 'live' community cohesion, or cohesion and integration, strategies in England (Calderdale, Thameside, Stoke-on-Trent, Lincoln and Lancashire, which expired 2017). Some elements may have been included in Equalities and Diversity strategies, subsumed into community safety plans or, most likely, fallen by the wayside. The Integration Strategy Green Paper (Department of Housing Communities and Local Government 2016) advocates a whole government approach, a national framework and tailored local plans and interventions. Initially five areas are identified as 'Integration areas' from which learning can be derived and distilled. However it is early days in the consultation and there is a way to go before this strategy becomes statute.

Research on addressing health inequalities provides some further useful concepts. Marmot (2010) describes the differences in outcomes in health and wellbeing between the socially and economically disadvantaged and those with more economic wealth and choices as unfair. He describes this as 'the social gradient of health' and that action on health inequalities requires action across all the social determinants of health (Marmot 2010:15).

He identifies that focusing solely on the most disadvantaged will not reduce health inequalities sufficiently and that 'to reduce the steepness of the social gradient in health, actions must be universal, but with a scale and intensity that is proportionate to the level of disadvantage'. He calls this 'proportionate universalism' (Marmot 2010:15). The transferability of this concept into working with community tensions is that it offers a model for working with all communities and not stigmatising particular groups or localities. It also picks up on those communities who are not the most deprived or showing the worst outcomes, tensions or risks, and, as a result, can be overlooked, or 'forgotten'. The Public Health England document, 'Protecting People, Promoting Health', (Bellis, Hughes, Perkins and Bennet 2012), advocates a public health approach to violence prevention, but, aside from the developments in Scotland described later in this chapter and subsequent interest from the Metropolitan Police, there has been little evidence of a national push to implement or develop this approach in any strategic way. The study in the *Journal of Public Health* by Learmonth, Henderson and Hunter (2018) of Health and Wellbeing Strategies in North-East England makes no reference to violence as an issue, nor community relations, though choice and independence, social factors, social isolation and inclusion, antisocial behaviour and social capital are mentioned as features of the twelve strategies researched.

So, as yet there is no integrated framework of response in England in the terms identified by Ackerman (2003), where both proximate and underlying causes of conflict are analysed to inform an effective preventive strategy, nor is there guidance to support local areas to do this. The process of Community Impact Assessments (CIAs) to analyse problems, assess risks and consider alternative actions potentially addresses the first of the three strands of action identified by Lund (2002) to stop escalation into violence and possibly explore options in relation to the second aspect, to build the capabilities for nonviolent solutions to immediate issues, but this tool doesn't necessarily seek to address and reduce the underlying causes.

Lederach (2003) concluded that conflict transformation involves 'constructive change efforts that include, and go beyond, the resolution of specific problems' and suggested three lines of 'Inquiry'; the presenting situation, the horizon of the future and the development of the change process that is both short term responsive and long-term strategic (Lederach 2003:35). Inasmuch as the current approach at a government level has

largely been gleaned from responses to parliamentary questions, contained within ministerial speeches or discussions, particularly after an event, this suggests a piecemeal, reactive response. The Integration Strategy Green Paper (Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government 2016) gives some indication that this will be addressed, but given the experience of the last fifteen years it is unclear how effective it will be and how it will be supported through leadership, nationally and locally, and with resources for community infrastructure at the neighbourhood level.

The England picture, at a strategic level, at best, has an emphasis on the technical approach to peacebuilding described by Fisher and Zimina (2009) as 'incremental activity which aims to make a practical difference in a specific domain, without necessarily challenging the deeper context'. They describe transformative peacebuilding as 'work aimed at fundamental social and political change'. Whilst a technical approach can lead to a transformational one and will be valuable in the immediate situation, it is 'unlikely to help change the wider system' and 'it may well serve to reinforce the unstable and inherently unjust status quo' (Fisher and Zimina 2009:20). This was certainly a danger identified at the outset and a concern that short term 'resolution' of tension and conflict may be a superficial exercise and not make a lasting or significant difference to the circumstances of people and their communities.

The big picture for England is further affected by the lack of an England level of government, and unlike the other three nations there isn't a vision of change specifically for England. The uncertainty of the picture in the context of exiting the European Union, the status of European nationals and the future movement of people adds further layers of questions about what the country is aiming for, and, whilst this affects the whole of the UK, the devolved governments, mainly in Scotland and Wales, are developing their own analysis of the key implications for themselves and their people. So, there is an absence of a narrative summary as envisaged in a theory of change and generating the multifaceted, multilayered and multiagency change as described by Vogel (2012). Initiatives and policies are spread across government and any unifying thread about the approach to community relations is not explicit.

However, in a nation of 53.5 million people, with complex urban and rural environments and very diverse populations, the approach to devolve issues that affect local communities to local authorities and their partners is clearly appropriate. However, other than the Public Sector Equality Duty to 'foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not' there is little current guidance or support to help localities in their analysis or approach. As a result there are localities where community relations and development are given a strong focus, as the Oldham case study demonstrates, and others where it is potentially ignored unless there is a problem or crisis. If the Integration Strategy Green Paper begins a process to address this then this would be a positive way forward.

***Northern Ireland***

Northern Ireland has a unique set of circumstances and history of sectarian conflict. Despite progress towards peace, the ongoing issues of flags, parades, paramilitarism, sectarian killings and the lack of an approach to dealing with the past mean there is still fragility. Further, threats to stability have come from outside Northern Ireland – austerity, the Scottish referendum and EU referendum have had significant ramifications. Economic insecurity and the slowest recovery from recession of any part of the UK, affecting the already most deprived communities, is translating into nationalist and unionist narratives that reinforce past divisions.

The sub-group of the Ministerial Panel formed to examine community tensions initially identified that there was no coordinated, consistent or structured approach. The recommendation was to develop a strategic plan to tackle causes of tensions and specifically to prioritise the issues in the Fresh Start Agreement (Northern Ireland Executive 2015) to tackle flags, identity, culture and tradition, parading and paramilitarism. It identified the need for a structured and consistent means of gathering, analysing, monitoring and reporting information in order to inform planning and resourcing, and particularly address the significant problem of short-term funding. However, the collapse of the power sharing arrangements at Stormont in early 2017 led to the suspension of the work of the panel and the sub-group so there has been no progress.

The interviewees describe the response to tensions as reactive, keeping a lid on public order and even 'being addicted to crises'. In addition to the Ackerman (2003) concept of the need to analyse both proximate issues and underlying causes, she also identified the conditions under which preventive action promises to be most effective, including that it is timely, multilateral, coordinated, varied, multifaceted, supported by a lead actor, cultivates a network of different preventive actors and supports indigenous capacities for long-term prevention (Ackerman 2003:143). Whilst there are undoubtedly many initiatives and actors, coordination is deemed weak. The questionnaire showed the priority was to stop bad things happening, calming things down, seeking to avoid the costs of failure and concerned with short term issues and events.

The Strategy, Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC), (Northern Ireland Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister 2013), has a laudable vision of 'a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation – one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance' (Northern Ireland Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister 2013:11). However, in terms of the basic elements of a theory of change as set out by Vogel (2012) there are some deficits. Her summary of the basic minimum elements of a theory of change were, first, the context of the initiative including social, political, and environmental conditions. Surprisingly, T:BUC doesn't refer to some aspects of this context, so the big issues of dealing with the past and the massive economic challenges don't feature. Nor does the issue of promotion of the Irish language, a very contentious issue, feature in the aim to celebrate and embrace cultural expression. Her second element of theory of change is to give an account of the current state of the problem the project is seeking to influence and other actors able to influence change, and this is also generalised in T:BUC. The process or sequence of change anticipated to lead to the desired long-term outcome and the assumptions about how these changes might happen, as a check on whether the activities and outputs are appropriate for influencing change in the desired direction, are also not explicit in the strategy. One example would be the commitment to removing interface barriers by 2023 and, whilst there is a very broad framework of ideas, each interface will be unique and require a bespoke approach, the

strategy is too high level and generalised to assess how it will be implemented. Again, the Ministerial Panel was the lead actor for guiding the Executive in this strategy and political leadership is identified as 'crucial to the implementation of the strategy' so, in short, both coherent, short-term responsive approaches and holistic, long-term strategic approaches to change are stalled at the strategic level.

Whilst constructive change efforts at the very local level continue, the process of community planning is not yet embedded, so holistic, system change is impeded and good initiatives tend to operate in isolation, are not necessarily recognised or mainstreamed. The conditions for transformational system change to address deep seated socio-economic challenges, let alone the challenges of community relations, are not in place.

To illustrate what this kind of transformational change can look like, on a similar, if slightly larger scale, is the approach in Greater Manchester (population 2.8 million, Northern Ireland population 1.9 million) highlighted in the introduction to the Oldham case study. Here the devolved authority has a strong vision and imperative to deliver the fastest and greatest improvement in the health, wealth and wellbeing of the 2.8 million population of Greater Manchester, based on the twin pillars of growth and reform. In terms of growth, as well as an economic growth strategy, the commitment is to 'inclusive growth' where all communities can contribute to, and benefit from, growth. Reform involves local services working together, focused on people and place and takes a more proactive approach rather than responding to crises. The principles of the reform agenda include building a new relationship between public services and citizens, communities and businesses, that enables shared decision making, democratic accountability and voice, genuine co-production and joint delivery of services - 'do with, not to'. It involves an asset based approach that recognises and builds on the strengths of individuals, families and communities rather than focusing on the deficits, and on behaviour change in communities that builds independence and supports residents to be in control. This place based approach redefines services, and places individuals, families, and communities at the heart, gives stronger prioritisation of wellbeing, prevention and early intervention and uses an evidence led understanding of risk and impact to ensure the right intervention at the right time.

The approach in Northern Ireland is quite some way behind this level of thinking and action, there is ongoing attention to the proximate issues, but this is uncoordinated, the underlying social and economic challenges remain, also without a long-term coordinated approach.

***Scotland***

The comprehensive vision for wellbeing in Scotland, developed through extensive engagement with all sections of society, provides a framework for social, economic and environmental change, based on global, national and community priorities. Vogel's (2012) 'multifaceted, multilayered and multiagency' approach is reflected here, including the combination of 'reflective practice for empowerment and social change with an outcomes based approach'. It actively supports wider engagement between the Scottish Government and its delivery partners, including local government, third sector and public bodies and is geared around tackling inequalities and supporting economic growth across Scotland; where communities are empowered and supported to take responsibility for their own actions; and public services are confident and agile enough to allow that to happen. There is a clear focus on prevention and early intervention, breaking cycles of inequality and poverty. This plays out further at a local level, through the statutory based community planning process and guidance in Part 2 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, which is 'prevention focused, person centred and concerned with tackling inequalities, barriers to access and the discrimination people experience'.

Policing priorities also have a strategic vison and set of principles, alongside a commitment to localism and flexibility to local community circumstances. The police lead on the technical aspects of monitoring community tensions, with the same process and tools as in England. Whilst not dissimilar to the other nations in the UK, the Police Scotland and Scottish Government examples of community tensions highlighted, particularly, the impact of overseas conflicts, international events and events in other parts of the UK on local tensions within Scotland. Returning to the literature review, Collyer, Binsaisa, Qreshi, Oeppen, Vullnetari and Zeitly (2011) explored the impact of overseas conflict on UK communities and made the distinction between community of place and community of ethno-national groups. Their research was primarily relating to overseas conflicts, but the examples in the interviews in Scotland in Chapter 4 also include international terrorist acts,

on-line activity, responses and reactions to local events from outside Scotland that further impact locally. The murder of the Glasgow Ahmadi shopkeeper and the response to the reading from the Koran in the multifaith service in St Mary's Cathedral are examples of the latter. So in terms of transformational change, there are underlying causes beyond those of social and economic disadvantage in a locality or place, which require a fine grained and sensitive approach to those communities affected. In Scotland the emphasis is on engagement with those ethno-national groups, religious groups and sub-groups, non-judgemental dialogue, 'actively fair' even-handedness, building relationships and facilitating peaceful protest where that is what people want. It is quiet engagement, subtle, confidential, behind the scenes and about building trust. So whilst this in not the same as tackling the underlying causes of those tensions, it accords with the first two parts of the Lund (2002) definition and approach of stopping escalation into violence and building the capabilities for non-violent solutions. It also cultivates a preventive approach so that the overseas conflict scenarios affecting communities in Scotland are recognised but not replicated or imported.

The Scottish approach to underlying causes also embraces the individual level. Firstly, the Scottish narrative on Prevent reflects the commitment to engagement with all communities, including the Muslim community, and has had a different history to the approach in England. Prevent here is concerned with all forms of extremism and is approached as part of the engagement strategy and part of the safeguarding agenda. There is careful case management and addressing social issues is part of this, not simply seeing through a radicalisation lens. Honour based killing is addressed through a perspective of violence against women and not specifically on a racial or cultural basis.

This also plays out in the violence reduction work, where Scotland has adopted a public health approach to violence, looking at the social determinants that may affect or cause violent behaviours, such as education, housing, family circumstances, employment or employment prospects, physical and mental health. Inspired by the World Health Organisation's first 'World Report on Violence and Health' (Krug, Dahlberg and Mercy 2002) the Scottish Government funded and established the Violence Reduction Unit in 2005, and the results have been dramatic with knife crime in Scotland now significantly lower than England and Wales. The Scottish experience suggest that while knife crime cannot be

eradicated, there needs to be a shift in understanding of the root causes to find a durable solution. The fact that this was government funded, not short -term and, whilst initially police led, it is truly multiagency and enables a more holistic approach. It also recognised that those most at risk of committing violent behaviour were also most at risk of being victims of such behaviour, so the whole emphasis was on identifying those most at risk and working intensively with them. Since the publication of the World Health Organisation's World report on violence and health, (Krug et al 2002), there has been a growing understanding in public health and partner organisations that violence is preventable, and that health services have a major role to play in prevention. A public health approach also involves 'the art and science of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organised efforts of society' (Acheson 1988), a holistic approach, involving both art and science, preventive and drawing on the collective contributions of all parts of society. A further aspect of public health is working at the individual level on behaviour change and promoting self-care, alongside scaling up to communities and whole population level change. These elements seem to fit well with the concepts of change being tested and have transferable elements to working with community tensions. Certainly this is happening in Scotland and the Metropolitan Police in London have also announced an intention to adopt aspects of the Scottish experience. Further, the public health definition encompasses and distils some of the concepts of change being considered here and potentially helps towards a definition of working with tensions. It includes 'the art and the science' aspects, preventing bad things and promoting good things, and working collaboratively across society.

Two further features of the work in Scotland are the independent review on tackling hate crime and building cohesion and connected communities, and Lord Bracadale's review of hate crime legislation. The Scottish Government's response has a spectrum of commitments which include improving evidence gathering, strengthening outcome measures, improving the reporting infrastructure, engaging in dialogue about definitions and terminology, review of strategies and action plans and establishing high level leadership structures to strengthen the approach to building cohesive communities and safeguarding people from harm. This spectrum spans data gathering and analysis, preventive measures, short-term and longer term actions, and both technical and transformational approaches.

***Wales***

In Wales there is a very clear 'golden thread' from the legislation through to the policy framework and local arrangements for Public Service Boards and goals of prosperity, health, resilience, equality, cohesive communities, vibrant culture and global responsibility. The principles embrace sustainability, the long term, working better with people and communities and between agencies, seeking to prevent problems and taking a more joined up approach.

The 'Wales of cohesive communities' strand is delivered through the Community Cohesion National Delivery Plan with the seven areas of activity: tackling hate crime, addressing modern slavery, engaging with Gypsy and Traveller communities, inclusion of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, addressing the impact of poverty on those with protected characteristics, supporting local Public Service boards in relation to community cohesion, and monitoring and responding to community tensions. The 2017-20 plan integrates equality, community cohesion and community safety objectives in a single plan, based on the premise that, taken together, work on equalities, community cohesion and community safety strengthens community resilience, and work upstream to strengthen equal rights and opportunities and foster good relations prevents downstream community safety incidents such as hate crime and vulnerability to radicalisation. All of this accords with what Ackerman (2003:343) identifies as the conditions under which preventive action promises to be most effective, including that it is 'timely, multilateral, coordinated, varied, multifaceted, supported by a lead actor, cultivates a network of different preventive actors and supports indigenous capacities for long-term prevention'.

In terms of a vision for the future and desired outcomes for Wales, these broadly follow a theory of change model as described by Vogel (2012). They are long-term strategic, transformational and addressing underlying causes. Whilst the big picture and transformational vision is clear and embedded in statute, and community cohesion is at the heart of the goals, interestingly, Wales is also seeking to improve their technical approach to community tensions. As Fisher and Zimina (2009) described, technical approaches to peacebuilding can and do make a practical difference in a specific domain. The police lead on tension monitoring in Wales based on the UK wide system, but this is seen as an area of

improvement for partnership working in the next phase. It is welcomed by both police and government and wider partners as a means of improving their monitoring of community tensions, prediction and prevention through a more systematic approach involving the regional Community Cohesion Coordinators. The aim is to improve with a greater partnership effort, make a more holistic analysis and response. The relationships and shared commitment are in in place. So the drive to improve tools and structures is firmly based in the broader context of the opportunity to think and act based on principles of understanding relationships and positive approaches to conflict (Lederach 2003). As well as building capacity 'upstream', there is recognition that tensions are often a symptom of inequality and poverty, so the provision of fair and equitable services is a priority. The housing policy which supports travellers is cited as 'impressive' by the police and the equality strand of the Community Cohesion Delivery Plan includes overcoming barriers to employment and raising educational attainment.

Likewise, the questionnaire responses illustrate that the priority is to help good things happen, to invest in the benefits of successful outcomes, concerned with long-term issues affecting the community and about looking at how things might change.

The definition of community cohesion used in Wales is home grown, not simply adopting the definitions developed in England in a previous decade, and is seen are core business, everyone's business, and a central component of quality of life. It is not just about how people from different ethnic groups, religions or nationalities relate and get on, although this is a vital aspect. It also involves working to break down the barriers to inclusion in Welsh society caused by income inequality, or isolation and loneliness amongst older people, or barriers that prevent the inclusion of disabled people.

***The Nursing Home, Belfast***

The Nursing Home, Belfast, was developed in a location with high social stress, ongoing tension, protest, flashpoints, flare ups and violence. The development looks beyond the immediate conflict and failures and begins to address underlying causes, particularly poverty and lack of employment. This aligns with Lederach (2003) and the 'constructive change efforts that include and go beyond, the resolution of specific problems'. It includes his three lines of 'Inquiry', or three lenses, on the immediate situation, the deeper

underlying context and a vision for the future, and to his guiding question in conflict transformation, 'how do we end something not desired and build something we do desire?' (Lederach 2003:30).

Change in this situation was never going to be a straight line and whilst there was a plan there was also an understanding of the need to get round obstacles and bends in the road and keep moving forward. Lederach (2003:47) describes and combines both circular and linear change process into a 'transformational platform', not just a process and not just a structure, a circular journey with a purpose, that is both short term responsive and long-term strategic.

The technical and short term aspects were particularly supported by the Tension Monitoring Group, comprising community organisations across the patch. This only formed in June 2013 and whilst there were some pre-exiting relationships it was the first time many had been around the same table or had built trust: 'People sat down together who had not sat down together before. Have faith – trust can emerge between people who have been arch enemies. Keep on trying. Keep going. Keep momentum'. They have been better able to interact and engage with residents on both sides and sound out issues with them. They were aware that people's mind sets could change for the worse overnight if there was a rumour, incident, controversy or crisis. There was a mutual commitment to work together and a capacity to recognise that setbacks were inevitable but were also further opportunities for more dialogue and building understanding and trust. As such they were picking up on the immediate issues whilst the longer term plan was progressing. Alongside this, all around the development were the ongoing challenges at the Peace Camp within 100 meters of the development, with nightly protests and police presence, marches and bonfires according to the calendar, so these required daily attention and engagement to reduce tensions and work to develop non-violent solutions.

There was a spatial masterplan for the area (wedge of land), but as discussed in the section on Northern Ireland, there is no community planning in place yet. Instead there were long term dreams of some community leaders and the developer, so whilst there wasn't a formal theory of change in place, the vision existed and was rooted in some people's imagination.

The physical regeneration of a partially derelict and contentious interface dividing the communities, to a state-of-the-art nursing home, built to a high quality specification, delivering five-star quality care is now a focus for both communities, shared space that is benefiting both and is equally owned. Construction and site security was provided by a workforce drawn 50:50 from both communities. The social clauses around employment and training were critical for local people to form 75% of the workforce. Bradley Manor contributes over £1m per year into the local economy, through wages, supplies, visitors and staff buying in local shops. These contribute to addressing underlying issues of worklessness, low skills, low self-esteem and raise aspirations and opportunities not just for those directly involved or employed but their families and neighbours. The regeneration is not confined to the single building, it is spreading to the adjacent sites and spawning new shared initiatives.

The transformation here is visible and tangible, both in the buildings and the people involved in them. The invisible is equally tangible – the joy of new beginnings, new relationships and breaking free or emerging from a very long struggle. There is also respect between people from opposite sides and increasing confidence in how things can and are changing.

This case study broadly fits with the underlying premises that guide change cited in Ackerman (2003), Lund (2002) , Fisher and Zimina (2009) and Vogel (2012). However it goes beyond a dialogue around techniques, preventive strategies or plans that are written down and seems to embrace what Lederach (2000:182) calls the 'moral imagination': 'to imagine responses and initiatives that, while rooted in the challenges of the real world, are by nature capable of rising above destructive patterns and giving birth to that which does not yet exist . . . responses and initiatives . . . that transcend and ultimately break the grip of those destructive patterns and cycles'. This kind of imagination is mobilised 'when four disciplines and capacities are held together and practiced by those who find their way to rise above violence. Stated simply, the moral imagination requires the capacity to imagine ourselves in a web of relationships that includes our enemies; the ability to sustain a paradoxical curiosity that embraces complexity without reliance on dualistic polarity; the fundamental belief in and pursuit of the creative act; and the acceptance of the inherent risk of stepping

into the mystery of the unknown that lies beyond the far too familiar landscape of violence' (Lederach 2000:5).

Addressing these four disciplines and capacities, first the capacity to imagine ourselves in a web of relationships that includes our enemies, describes what the Tension Monitoring Group set out to practice and was a completely new development. Community workers working across the divide faced serious repercussions within their own communities, but recognised the imperative. Second, the ability to sustain a paradoxical curiosity that embraces complexity without reliance on dualistic polarity is about seeking something beyond the current dualistic dynamic. The fundamental belief in and pursuit of the creative act involves providing space for something new and unexpected to arise from the everyday.

The acceptance of the inherent risk of stepping into the mystery of the unknown, which lies beyond the far too familiar landscape of violence, is all too real here. The community facility in Ardoyne on the Republican side is heavily protected with metal shutters and barriers, while the home of the community worker on the other side, just two doors down from the Peace Camp and roundabout, has reinforced doors and windows and no letterbox. Risk, Lederach suggests, requires vocation and this is evident in the actors here – discussed further in the next section of this chapter on actors and roles.

***The Scout Hut, Leicester***

The Scout Hut, Leicester case study primarily involves the resolution of a specific problem. The account of the experience and the background context, reveals considerable social deprivation and a history of far right activity.

There is little to indicate that the 'resolution' of the immediate problem is underpinned or followed through by tackling either the underlying issues of deprivation or those of prejudice. Whilst the solution did involve ensuring that the rights of all communities were addressed, and both the Muslim community and the protest groups given physical spaces, as the Community Engagement worker described, 'On the surface it looks like we're moving on. In the background I still believe there's something not quite right. Can't quite pinpoint what it is but there's something – some kind of tension around'.

There is no strategic vision for the area, no local neighbourhood plan and there is an emphasis on providing social activities and events rather than addressing some underlying issues. The food bank is providing a vital service, there are lunch clubs and the range of statutory services, but no sense of a drive to transform the estate or change the relationships within it. Attitudes have not changed and there is no plan in place to address this.

In this instance, it seems that the disruption of the protesting and the painful experiences for many, have not led to any transformational change, but rather a slightly different status quo. As identified by Fisher and Zimina (2009), whilst a technical approach can lead to a transformational one and will be valuable in the immediate situation it is 'unlikely to help change the wider system' and 'it may well serve to reinforce the unstable and inherently unjust status quo' (Fisher and Zimina 2009:20).

***Oldham***

Oldham has a clear vision for change, underpinned by a strong value base.

There is very close attention to the proximate issues that may cause tensions through a dedicated tension monitoring process involving a range of partners, including local councillors. As one of the interviewees explained, 'lots of partners are involved and there is buy-in at the senior level. The Council drives this rather than police – but the police are there. The weekly document (using the Experienced, Evidenced, Potential system) is produced by the Council. It includes work scanning social media. The Group does the weekly analysis but also has a Strategic Risk Register and looks at long term issues as well. Some Community Impact Assessments are done in partnership.' Ackerman's (2003) conditions for preventive action are present here. People are on the ground to listen and support communities in a timely manner, the agencies come together as needed and the networks of community contacts are in place and in regular dialogue; there is coordination at a borough level through the Council and at the local level through the District Coordinators; and the whole cooperative approach to working with communities seeks to support 'indigenous capacities for long term prevention'. There is nuanced assessment of the potential implications of local and external events and a strategy of listening to what

communities want in difficult situations, rather than making assumptions, and supporting them to do what they feel is appropriate.

Oldham's change process is 'both short-term responsive and long term strategic' (Lederach 2003:47). The Oldham Plan highlights the 'radical shifts' that are need in three key areas: inclusive economy, cooperative services and thriving communities. The key enablers to drive this fundamental change are empowering people and communities and public service reform. The current plan is based on the experience, learning and success of the previous five years and builds on these, with residents, to set higher ambitions. As such it combines 'reflective practice for empowerment and social change' with an 'outcomes based approach to the design, implementation and evaluation of initiatives and programmes intended to support change' (Vogel 2012:3).

The section of the case study on inclusive growth illustrates well the detailed measures underway to tackle the low wage low skill trap that many people find themselves in, alongside attracting higher skilled businesses to Oldham in order to try to retain well-educated young people in the borough. The 'Fair Employment Charter' sets a standard for all employers from all sectors. All interventions are designed with diversity in the forefront so that, for example, ethnicity and gender inequalities in employment are recognised, understood and programmes designed to address the challenges. Oldham is examining how public sector procurement can make the 'Oldham pound' work better for local businesses and generate further economic and social value.

The change process is also supported by the transformational reform in Greater Manchester, described above in the section on Northern Ireland, where it was used to illustrate what transformational public service reform can look like. This is also a massive collaborative change effort to which Oldham contributes and benefits from.

There are visible signs of change in the borough, particularly the town centre with Metro, new additions to the college, a new town centre leisure facility, old town hall redevelopment with cinema, retail and food, further major improvements for the town centre underway but also housing developments and local area improvements, including schools and health facilities, across the borough. As visible and tangible is the cooperative culture which drives everything and presents the opportunity to think and act based on

guiding principles of understanding relationships and positive approaches (Lederach 2003). Like the Nursing Home, there is moral imagination here, rooted in day-to-day challenges but seeking to create a new reality.

***Summary – underlying premises to guide change***

The concepts considered in this section, which are related, are all of relevance to working with tensions and the conditions for sustainable change. These conditions are: addressing both proximate issues and underlying causes in an integrated framework; a framework of prevention, identifying non-violent alternatives and reducing underlying problems; being both short-term responsive and long-term strategic; using technical approaches to addressing tensions and building peaceful communities alongside more fundamental transformative change; and, using a theory of change to guide the process.

At the national level, Scotland and Wales have a strong commitment to sustainable change and development goals and these contribute very strongly to a holistic vision in their narratives, including sustainable communities, integrated through a strongly identifiable thread from the national level through to communities. This is less strong in the narratives for England and Northern Ireland. Neither Wales nor Scotland would claim to have realised their ambitions, but they are clear what their ambitions are. Where these conditions are weak or absent the resultant effect is to dilute the sense and clarity of direction of change and consequently to weaken action for change.

In the three case studies, Oldham strongly demonstrates these conditions, in their own language and in a coherent framework. The Scout Hut is weak – there was a short-term solution to a problem but underlying causes are largely ignored and symbols of division remain, through separate buildings working independently, flags on houses and 'The Forgotten Estates' sign on the Scout Hut. The Nursing Home is a particularly interesting in that most of the frameworks and concepts being tested are present, but, though a spatial masterplan exists, these are not written down as strategic plans, rather they are driven by the intuition and imagination of change agents.

The strengths in these situations are to have a clear vision, underpinned by a set of shared values, collaborative relationships and a whole system approach, which integrates short and long-term timeframes. There is potential for the public health approach to be

adopted, building on the violence reduction approach in Scotland, towards a broader definition of working with tensions, as an art and a science, preventing violence, identifying non-violent solutions, reducing underlying causes and promoting peaceful communities through the organised efforts of society.

## Actors and roles

### *Introduction*

The actors, their roles, coordination and leadership form the second set of conditions, concepts and frameworks to be tested. Working with tensions is people driven not process driven, it is a craft requiring layers of relationship building, nuanced behaviours, communication and actions.

Three specific models will be discussed. First, Lederach (1997:39) describes a pyramid of actors in a conflict situation, with top-level leadership, middle-range leadership and grassroots leadership, each with different approaches available to them and stresses the need for 'recognition, inclusion and co-ordination across all levels and approaches'. Of particular importance, he suggests, are the middle range leaders who have a role to play in connecting the grass roots to the top level and the top level to the grass roots but also have a 'middle out' role across a range of actors and have the 'greatest potential to serve as sources of practical, immediate action and to sustain long-term transformation in the setting' (Lederach 1997:51). He later describes this (Lederach 2005:79) as 'integrating the vertical and horizontal capacities'.

Second, the Anderson-Olsen model identifies that significant change needs to be translated in to socio-political action (Anderson and Olsen 2003:58)**.** Their study identified that there were two basic goals: stopping violence and destructive conflict, and, building just and sustainable peace. The research concluded that the single most important connection for significant change is that whatever is done be translated into socio-political action. Without such action, fundamental and sustainable changes required for peace seem not to occur. So, in this section the transferability of the model and role of political leaders is considered.

Third, Mitchell (2011) identifies change agents and drivers of change roles, and that of co-ordination. He explores who initiates and oversees change processes in conflict situations. He uses the term 'change agents' who are 'enablers' rather than drivers of change with the roles of 'enhancer of resources, monitor and provider of early warning' and 'the construction of some kind of learning environment (or at least a process) in which old positions, aims and strategies can be rationally reviewed, new ideas offered or generated, alternative futures (including their relative costs) considered coolly rather than immediately rejected, and "road maps" towards acceptable solutions and future relationships constructed' (Mitchell 2011:97). Within this are a diverse range of roles which no one person or agency can fulfil and needs a number of organisations or individuals working in conjunction with one another and requires the key role of co-ordinator. These are precious roles and, where they exist, are valued greatly.

***Oldham***

Set alongside these concepts and frameworks, Oldham stands out most compellingly. They have strong, recognised and respected, political and managerial top-down leadership, from the Leader and Cabinet and the Chief Executive and Directors team, further strengthened by the Oldham Partnership bringing in leaders from other statutory agencies, higher education, the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector and the private sector. There is a truly bottom-up approach from communities, and whilst all interviewees stressed this, the voluntary sector representative confirmed, 'it's fundamentally bottom up. There is a strong pool of community leaders. Relationships are critical. Everything is done through networking'. The social partnership between citizens, communities, enterprises and the Council, based on a shared sense of responsibility for wellbeing and mutual benefit is supported by active democratic engagement in decision making and priority setting. Co-production is enabling citizens to be equal partners in designing and commissioning services and determining the use of public resources. Promoting community-based approaches to economic development is supporting the creation of jobs, social enterprises and other businesses and provides an environment for cooperative and mutual enterprises to thrive.

In the middle range, people work together in integrated place based teams, sometimes referred to as blended teams, where artificial organisational boundaries are unimportant

and communities and problem solving are important. As the senior police interviewee described, 'it means being close to the community, ear to the ground, partnership between agencies and communities. It relies on relationships rather than just a focus on problems'. This is exactly the description framed by Lederach (2003). People in the middle range are supported by the strength of partnership working, the cooperative culture, empowerment of staff and communities and a belief in subsidiarity, where decisions and actions are handled at the smallest, most local level rather than centrally. A high percentage of staff in the council are Oldham residents and many are long serving. The horizontal and vertical capacities are integrated through the value base, culture, ethos, relationships, vision and commitment to distributed leadership, where everyone can contribute.

The Anderson-Olsen model (2003) presents a conceptual framework that is very usefully transferable to this context. Their vertical axis of working with 'more people' at an individual and personal level reflects in the extensive range of community engagement, contacts and initiatives; and with more 'key people' through the partnerships and networks. The vertical connection to the socio-political is strong, both in terms of political leadership and drive and the fundamental approach to address the underlying social issues. Politicians are grounded in their communities. The role of councillors is being redefined - as community connectors, brokers and leaders and helping the community to contribute to local outcomes. Their role is to be an active and visible community leader on behalf of the whole community and encourage and support local people to play a positive and active role in building a confident and ambitious borough where everybody does their bit. Effectively, they convene the system to work as a whole at every level.

The District Coordinators and their small teams support change agents and drivers of change and are enablers and coordinators, as described by Mitchell (2011: 96-97). In the Oldham cooperative model, everyone can be a change agent and driver of change. But these coordinator roles provide essential added value, including, as Mitchell suggests, that of 'monitor and provider of early warning' and that of 'enhancer of resources' by bringing people together and coordinating effort. They are experienced, valued and trusted people who operate at the grass roots, in touch with communities and in touch with councillors, so they span the functions of integrating top-down and bottom up roles and capacities and the socio-political dimension of change. Mitchell identifies fifteen roles of change enablers:

monitor, explorer, reassurer, decoupler, unifier, enskiller, convenor, facilitator, envisioner, enhancer, guarantor, legitimiser, verifier, implementer and reconciler (Mitchell 2011: 97). Many people perform these functions in Oldham. The District Coordinators bring it together locally.

***The Nursing Home***

The Nursing Home in Belfast offers a rather different experience and perspective. It is a bottom up community led initiative, supported by statutory agencies working locally, particularly the council community safety officer, police, housing and planning. In terms of the pyramid of actors, there is no top down here. There is no input at a senior level from either national or local government. Whilst going through the statutory processes for planning and development, the initiative was kept 'below the radar' so as not to invite unhelpful interference or involvement from parties at any level who may have used it for other ends. A private developer, community development workers from the two communities and a small number of longstanding, trusted staff from the statutory agencies made this transformation happen. Local politicians were not involved. Local churches opted out. As such, this pyramid had no apex, a limited but dedicated mid-level of middle managers from the agencies, and relied mainly on the developer with the two, very small community development agencies to deliver the essential grassroots engagement. It could be re-presented as an inverted pyramid, with the community at the top, setting and leading the agenda and action and the agencies and government departments and politicians as less significant players.

Tackling the massive social issues of deprivation was not part of a coordinated plan, though there was a spatial masterplan for the immediate site. The skills, jobs, environmental, health and wellbeing outcomes achieved by the work were down to local aspiration and effort. In the absence of political leadership, both at Stormont and locally, a few community leaders had to hold the ring, and build local allegiances across old enemies. They have done this by working at the individual and personal level with 'more people' and 'key people', but 'translation to the socio-political level' is not currently in the frame. Nonetheless, the development is not a one-off. Not only was there the renovation of the adjacent old Boys School as a family centre, but the wall on the Crumlin Road, opposite the

entrance to the Nursing Home, has subsequently been removed and replaced with attractive landscaping. The Peace Camp has now closed and further work is underway to support young men into employment and help them address mental health issues. The developer is seeking to replicate the model in other parts of Belfast, particularly in more disadvantaged communities where the 50:50 approach to recruitment and training can benefit local residents from both sides of the community.

The developer undoubtedly was a primary change agent, but relied very much on the groundwork of the Community Development workers on both sides who were enablers of change. The Tension Monitoring Group, with both community and statutory organisations, provided coordination particularly in relation to community communications and problem solving, addressing questions, rumours, setbacks and bends in the road.

In this case the roles don't fit the first two models (Lederach's pyramid of actors or the Anderson-Olsen model). The absence of political involvement was possibly a positive thing in that the development did not become a political football. Rather the actors here were individuals with vision, willing to take a risk to transform the place and the relationships, to provide space and encouragement for others to join the vision and to build a different future.

***The Scout Hut***

Thurnby Lodge and the Scout Hut demonstrates some aspects of the pyramid of actors, but some notable weaknesses. The City Mayor was a key leadership figure who ultimately set the parameters for the practical 'resolution' of the dispute by providing options that didn't exclude any group or community, and specifically did not have an option that excluded the Muslim community. Unfortunately this political leadership was not backed up locally as one of the local councillors was 'absent' and the other was inexperienced and unable to provide an effective contribution. The community at the grass roots was divided with different community leaders taking different positions and a breakdown of relationships overall. Many people were fearful, with the Muslim community afraid to attend prayers and older people, in particular, from the white community afraid to attend their social activities. The middle range actors, from the council and police in particular, sought to manage the situation, listen to different voices, facilitate protest but also take necessary enforcement

action when required. However they were lacking in skills, failed to bring in any form of mediation process and people only came together at public meetings, which generally made matters worse. The outcome was decided by a postal consultation, effectively a referendum, which decided the outcome but didn't immediately stop the conflict which continued for over two further months. The focus was more on the physical buildings and less about building or rebuilding relationships.

Equally, there was little action in relation any of the quadrants in the Anderson-Olsen model and no initiative to address the social and political dimensions underlying the dispute. Whilst the city council's officer and the police provided a coordinating role, there were insufficient agents of change or people working on the ground to explore and develop alternative solutions through dialogue.

***Scotland***

In Scotland ministers play a lead role in driving the equalities agenda and leading the commitment to National Outcome 11, 'building inclusive and supportive communities and ensure that the rights and wellbeing of Scotland's minority communities'. They are visible at times of tension, engage with communities and facilitate dialogue where appropriate. From both government and police there is a strong commitment to localism, community engagement and empowerment. This is supported by the middle range actors, connecting top-down and bottom-up but also coordinating across agencies and government departments. The government official described their role as 'to be connected, have relations with local communities, keep in touch, facilitate a multiagency approach with open dialogue, plugging into a bigger picture response across different parts of government and supporting ministers in their engagement with local communities'. Senior officials of the Scottish Government, usually at Director level, act as 'location officials' for the 32 groups of Community Planning Partnerships, providing support and advice. The pyramid is in place, with mutually reinforcing roles and unified by vision, values and direction. The pre-interview questionnaire reflected that working with tensions is a partnership effort and is equally top-down and bottom up.

The Scottish Government response to the report of the Independent Advisory group on hate crime, prejudice and community cohesion illustrates the commitment to moving actions

into the socio-political sphere. The 24 actions listed in the response include: establishing a multiagency delivery group with Ministerial oversight to take forward the recommendations; establishing an advisory panel on community cohesion to provide expert advice and strengthen the approach to building cohesive communities and safeguarding people from harm; setting out a range of initiatives from the Equality Budget; developing public awareness campaigns around the impacts of hate crime; actions in schools, workplaces and with public transport operators; and considering the recommendations of the review of legislation on hate crime. Similar to Oldham, these actions demonstrate that the Anderson-Olsen model seems to have a strong relevance and can be applied to how things work in Scotland.

The coordination role is built in to the approach, across government and partners, and at national and local levels. In addition to the range of people driving and enabling change, there is a seeking out of expertise and best practice from within Scotland and beyond, and a review and learning ethos that seeks continuous improvement, refreshing and renewing definitions, policies, guidance and approaches. As such the enabling culture brings in many actors from diverse sectors.

***Wales***

Wales has many similarities with Scotland in this context – clear ministerial leadership and ownership of the cohesion and equalities agendas and of the broader social and economic challenges reflected in their definition of cohesion, which brings in such aspects as economic exclusion, social isolation and loneliness. Delivery structures reflect the pyramid of actors with national, regional and local links and networks. Police are similarly organised through national, regional, local and neighbourhood engagement and networks. The network of regional Community Cohesion Coordinators has a strong role in facilitating community engagement, problem solving and building local partnerships as well as connecting vertically. The pyramid works well together and there are plans to make this more effective with regard to community tensions to generate more information sharing, better analysis and more holistic responses.

There are many actions to build cohesive communities, ranging across Anderson and Olsen's four quadrants. They include, for example, involvement in sport, culture and social

activities, for their intrinsic value but also are underpinned by the political and policy direction to provide instrumental value. The resettlement of Syrian refugees is one example of how Wales has sought to provide a 'distinctive Welsh approach' to welcoming refugees, and they have produced a Welcome to Wales' pack to support refugees to learn more about their new home and settle into Welsh life more easily. A strong partnership approach between public authorities and the Third Sector is being taken to ensure positive outcomes for vulnerable families, in a clear embodiment of the principles of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. A framework is in place, supporting coordination and collaboration between public authorities and the third sector, led by a Ministerial Refugee Taskforce and an Operations Board. The Community Cohesion Delivery Plan includes specific focus on supporting refugee integration into local communities.

In her Foreword to the forthcoming Community Cohesion National Delivery Plan 2018-19 (Welsh Government 2018) the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty describes the role of Community Cohesion Coordinators as 'imperative to support the delivery of our Tackling Hate Crimes and Incidents Framework at a local level and support work to prevent violent extremism'. As in Oldham, these coordinators are connectors and joiners at a community level supporting the wider networks of enablers and agents of change.

***England***

The greater geographical complexities, scale of the population and diversity of actors in England means there is no single interpretation against the three concepts relating to actors. However the research did reveal a number of issues. First, that at the top level there is a messy picture and no consistency or continuity of effort. There is a changing narrative but it is unclear and disjointed. Responsibilities are spread across a range of agencies and government departments so it is hard to see where the leadership lies. Hate crime and community tensions sit within the Home Office. The strategy for integration in the Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government. Public health, though now a local government function still sits in the Department of Health and Social Care. Work with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector is fragmented across departments. As Casey (2006) concluded the picture has become diluted, muddled and inconsistent. A clearer narrative is needed. The Integrated Communities Strategy Green

Paper (HM Government 2018:17) does acknowledge this and starts with a vision for leadership: 'Our ambition is that challenging segregation and promoting integration should sit at the heart of all policy and public service delivery. We want all leaders in national and local government, and in the faith, voluntary, community and business sectors, to work in partnership and have the confidence to champion our shared values and challenge policies, practices and behaviours which stand in the way of integration. We expect leaders at all levels to make a step change and tackle segregation as they design and deliver services'. Further, they state 'Every government department will select a number of priority policies and services to review during this Green Paper consultation period to assess whether they exacerbate segregation and could be developed so that they actively drive integration. This will be more tangible than a general commitment to review all policies and services, and will enable government to be held to account. We call on local government and business, and voluntary and community sector organisations to commit to doing the same' (HM Government 2018:19). So the problem is acknowledged and commitment made. The police interview confirmed, 'it needs someone at the government level to own this and give direction'.

Second, partnership working is variable. The police interview suggested that partnership working had been reinvigorated as a result of the series of terrorist incidents. This is a reactive approach, not a preventive one. Notwithstanding the commitment and reach of police engagement and seeking to be upstream, their role and responses will inevitably be primarily short-term and dealing with proximate issues rather than underlying causes, and not necessarily translated to the socio-political level.

Third, devolved local approaches sensitive to local circumstances is appropriate but relies on local political commitment, knowledge of the complexities and nuances and the resources in terms of appropriate people to make it happen like the examples of coordinators cited above. Generally, Community Development workers are few and far between.

***Northern Ireland***

In Northern Ireland, as the Nursing Home illustrated, top level leadership is currently absent. By their own analysis, at times of heightened tensions political and community leaders can be very helpful in bringing calm and perspective in difficult and challenging

situations, but this is not true on all occasions and contentious issues can be heated up by the words and behaviours of such leaders.

Bottom-up leadership can be impressive, with many community organisations working consistently across the divide for several decades, but frustrated by short term funding, duplication and gaps, and lack of connection to the top level. Joiners and enablers exist but there is little clarity of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities.

Whilst there are undoubtedly exceptions, generally there is a lack of collaborative teamwork and mutually reinforcing activities to develop a whole system approach.

***Summary – Actors and roles***

There is a correlation between a clear future direction and transformational platform and clarity of actors and roles. Scotland and Wales have this clarity and the pyramid of actors reinforces the direction and the values guiding it. Ministers are visible and lead at the political level and create the conditions through which middle range and grass roots leaders are empowered and supported to build sustainable communities. This translates into the Anderson-Olsen model of building change activities into the socio-political sphere. The same is true in Oldham where the whole system is mutually reinforcing. Scotland, Wales and Oldham also invest in co-ordination at the local level which contributes significantly to enhancing capacity, facilitating communication, connecting people and mobilising resources.

Despite the peacebuilding process in Northern Ireland there remains a lack of coordination across the vertical and horizontal capacities, and, whilst 'more people' are involved in peacebuilding activities and creating change, the political impasse and short-term funding impede progress. Change agents exist but there is a lack of clarity and recognition of such roles. The Nursing Home case study demonstrates what can be achieved by communities with some support from local agencies and raises the question about how much more could be achieved, and how much more quickly, if there was an integrated effort across all levels of the system.

Localism in England means responsibilities for community relations are largely devolved to the local level, however centrally driven government policies impact significantly on this.

The Integrated Communities Strategy (2018) consultation seeks to improve leadership at all levels, but in the meanwhile the picture is extremely variable. The Scout Hut case study demonstrates that there may be insufficient people or skills at the middle range to address tensions and conflict.

Learning from the strengths in these situations, the opportunity is to develop, define, and make more explicit the roles at different levels. For example, the role of community leaders would include connecting with local people, relieving suffering and addressing need, providing support and advice, or challenge if needed. It would involve understanding people's fears and concerns and facilitating ways to help them find means to address these, working with other community leaders and organisations across areas of difference and seeking to explore platforms to build relationships across divided communities. It would require community leaders to engage the support of statutory agencies to meet local needs and concerns and support their engagement. The role of statutory agencies would include promoting the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of communities, keeping them safe and protecting the most vulnerable. It would require carrying out statutory functions and duties that deliver good outcomes for local people and are equitable, and working in effective partnership with statutory, voluntary and community organisations to achieve effective dialogue and cooperation for a shared vision and collective effort. The roles of Government departments require setting the policy context, conditions, structures and strategic plans to enable good community relations and building united and sustainable communities, ensuring there is coordination and cooperation across government, and listening to communities and engaging with them in delivering change. Roles of politicians, funders, co-ordinators and businesses could also be defined more explicitly in these terms, together with the accountabilities, skills and behaviours needed to work together in a whole system.

**Communities, community dynamics and working with communities**

***Introduction***

The third group of concepts, models and frameworks being tested relate to community dynamics and specifically those which intensify conflicts, and the reverse process, as

described by Mitchell (2011:88); the concept of compassionate communities (Clements 2012:344); community development approaches (Ledwith 2011:3); and the concept of 'readiness' (Robinson 2013:3).

***The Scout Hut***

The Scout Hut case study very much reflects Mitchell's *escalation* dynamics but the mitigating processes of de-escalation are less apparent. First, the *mobilisation* process began very quickly after the As-Salaam group signed the lease for the Hut. A petition was organised by the group calling themselves the 'Forgotten Estates' and then a counter-petition was produced. A community meeting to discuss matters was cancelled as too many people turned up.

The process of *enlargement* also occurred quickly as other parties became involved in the situation, specifically the English Defence League and the British National Party, including their leader, coming into the community to support the protesters. Casuals United and 212 Poison also associated themselves with the protesters, whilst Leicester Unite Against Fascism came to the support of As Salaam. These were not by invitation, but are characterised by Michell's description as 'deliberate intervention in order to support one side or the other, to pursue interests of one's own on another's territory or turf, to maintain a local position of advantage or to indulge in 'proxy wars'. Whatever the objectives or means by which enlargement occurs, the end result is to make the conflict more complex . . . and . . . change in the direction of resolution becomes much more difficult' (Mitchell 2011: 86). This seems evidently applicable to this situation.

Mitchell's third dynamic is *polarisation,* 'a conflict exacerbating dynamic which involves a 'widening' of the issues on which adversaries come to confront one another, beyond the initial goal clash that led to the conflict situation in the first place. There are both psychological and behavioural aspects of this dynamic, and they are intertwined in a complex fashion. However, the upshot is that, in many conflicts, adversaries come to perceive and believe that they are in opposition to one another over a wider and wider set of issues, which causes them to 'line up' against one another on more and more issues' (Mitchell 2011: 86). For the most part, these issues concerned the Muslim way of life – that the Hut was to be turned into a mosque, that the pub would go out of business as there

were ‘only Muslims round here’, that the Muslim community is insular, more concerned with religious instruction that encouraging their children to integrate and issues around grooming of young white women. This tipped over to verbal abuse, threats and intimidation, shouts of terrorism, and incidents such as the ‘pigs head’.

The fourth dynamic of *dissociation* involves ‘a declining frequency of physical contacts between the adversaries. In many cases they simply avoid one another and those meetings that do take place become formal and ritualised, often confined to the exchange of mutual accusations and protests’ (Mitchell 2011: 87). There is also a ‘narrowing and coarsening of communication’ and, ‘a deliberate closing of communication channels, the avoidance of information that runs counter to the negative images and perceptions that inevitably develop’ (Mitchell 2011: 87). In Thurnby Lodge this period was characterised by very few Muslims attending for prayers, parents keeping their children away, older residents not attending usual activities and the subduing effect of the pig’s head incident.

Mitchell’s fifth dynamic of *entrapment*, ‘can lead adversaries into a position where they have sacrificed time, effort, resources and lives well beyond what others might consider any possible value of ‘winning’, yet persist in the continuation of the conflict on the grounds that ’there is no alternative’ (Mitchell 2011: 87). Entrapment is a process by which parties in a conflict (and especially their leaders) become trapped into a course of action that involves continuing or intensifying the conflict with – apparently – no chance of changing the policy or ‘backing away’ (Mitchell 2011: 87). Even though the City Mayor announced the outcome of the consultation at the very beginning of January and the practical steps to implement this were set in motion, one of the protest groups continued to turnout every day and disruptive meetings continued into late March, before finally the protesters walked away at the very end of March, prior to the new arrangements becoming formalised at the beginning of April. The woman who had been seen to be leading this group, seen as potential recruit by the BNP and groomed for that, then rejected this as not what she wanted, eventually said ‘something clicked’ and ‘they’ve not done anything bad. Our children need to see the good in their children’.

A *de-escalation* process involves the reversal of each of these dynamics. *Demobilisation* occurred once the protests ceased. The *disengagement* of other parties also occurred at

this point, though external parties had largely been unwelcome, so this was already underway. *De-isolation* began slowly as the groups began to work on their new spaces and settle into their accommodation although, despite the proximity of the buildings, there was little interaction around this, each group pursuing their own plans and operating in relative isolation. The Forgotten Estates group retained their name on the Scout Hut, 'Forgotten Estates 55th', in contrast with the renamed Raven Centre, taken on by As Salaam, as the 'Peace Centre'. *Re-communication* was also very slow and limited. A member of As Salaam was on the Management Committee of the Community Association and children from As Salaam were invited to the Christmas party in the Community Association. There was continued separation and 'estrangement' between the two former protest groups and little contact between the people involved in each. The final conflict mitigating dynamic of *decommitment*, as a reverse process to entrapment, is marginally present, but does not extend to exploring future opportunities or investing in different or shared goals. The resident, previously targeted for recruitment to the BNP, was subsequently elected as Labour Ward Councillor, to represent the whole community.

As Salaam were eager to have constructive dialogue and seek a mutually agreeable solution from the beginning of the process. In the end the basic solution to the presenting issue was relatively straightforward. However, as Mitchell suggests, progression through each phase of exacerbation makes the situation more complicated, polarised and sets off a series of behaviours and events that make a simple solution, or a simple means to a solution, more difficult. Likewise, the de-escalation process is slow, and without the transformational change mechanisms or key actors in place, as discussed in the previous sections, the situation is a new status quo, without a new vision. A lot of time and energy from a lot of people went into the escalation process. Similar, or greater time and energy is required in the de-escalation process to make any difference to relationships and outcomes on the estate.

Staying in Thurnby Lodge but turning to the concept of 'compassionate communities', Clements (2012) argues that 'sustainable peace is most likely in stable cooperative and compassionate communities that place a higher value on trust, equality and welfare than safety and security' and suggests that 'more analytic and political attention should be directed to understanding bottom-up strategies for peace and how to connect these to the

top-down long-term structural prevention of violence' (Clements 2012: 344). Whilst there are undoubtedly many compassionate people in Thurnby Lodge there is a lack of 'analytic and political attention' to understand or engender a cooperative approach to building peaceful individuals, families, organisations and communities. The food bank at the Peace Centre demonstrates the needs, and the possibilities.

The approach to community development here is primarily linked to attracting residents to use the buildings or attend events, rather than building relationships or encouraging an ethic of collectivity, social responsibility and social justice, or to seek new ways of building from the recent events.

Likewise, the case study did not surface any asset based thinking or action to create and build readiness for new opportunities.

***The Nursing Home***

Situated at a violent interface, the Nursing Home exists in the context of the past Troubles and the 1998 Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. The area is in the process of de-escalation from the conflict. Many of the old, visible symbols of conflict remain – flags, marches, walls, the Peace Camp – but the Nursing Home presents a new and different visible symbol and a new network of relationships surrounding it. Demobilisation and disengagement are very largely, but not absolutely, in place, with dissident activity on both sides still affecting both communities. The Peace Camp itself and the nightly protests also were testament to the potential for tensions to rise and positions to polarise. The dynamics of de-isolation and re-communication are also deeply affected by the context but also residential segregation. The Greater Ardoyne Tension Monitoring Group did not form until June 2013, fifteen years after the peace agreement, when people who had not sat down together before came together. Originally the plan was to build up a joint residents' forum but that became unsafe. There were opportunities to meet residents in separate groups and individually, which were invaluable, and then the community leaders on both sides were able to interact and discuss the concerns. The Nursing Home, and the ripple effects, give very rich opportunities for new engagements and communication and an innovative and aspirational dimension to conflict mitigation.

Compassionate communities that place a higher value on trust, equality and welfare than safety and security is still a tough challenge in the context of the years of conflict. As Nolan (2014:11) observed, the model on offer from the top is peace without reconciliation, resulting in a culture of endless negotiation. However, at the grassroots level the reconciliation impulse remains strong and that much of what happens in local neighbourhood defies the stereotypes. He cites very many small events that happen below the radar and argues that 'reconciliation continues to be stronger at the grass roots than at the top of society' (Nolan 2014: 14). The Nursing Home is one such example, an impressive one in such a place. Health and social care know no religion and is a field of work where compassion is at the heart, so for residents of the home, their families, staff and local residents from both communities this is a shared space where good relations build more naturally and friendships form. There are many related stories of support and kindness across the divide in this community, such as the Community Worker on the Unionist side supporting other fathers on the Republican side who, like himself, have lost sons to suicide.

All of the people involved in the training, as trainers and trainees, were women. Women are regarded as key to the development of peaceful relationships. 'This is not only because women tend to have a more highly developed ethic of care than men but also because they are more attuned to social relationships in their communities, are more inclined towards integrative power than threat-based power, and see their security more in relational than agentic terms' (Cox and Ebooks Corporation 2008 cited in Clements 2012:353).

But communities still need more support to change environment in which they live and operate and for those outside the community to foster and underpin their efforts. In a conversation prior to this research, a community activist explained to me that he and a group of residents living at a nearby interface were very keen to remove the wall but wanted reinforced glass in the windows of their homes as a safety net to enable this to happen. The problem was that the relatively few houses involved had different ownerships, tenures and landlords, so finding a way of helping the residents to achieve this was proving problematic in terms of who would fund the reinforced windows, involving a morass of technicalities and obstacles to getting on with this. The ability to resolve this lies in the General Power of Competence contained in Sections 79-83 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014. This enables local authorities to cut through red tape to get things

done where there is social, economic or environmental benefit. As yet this power has only been used once in Belfast, and not specifically in the context of interfaces or community relations. So creativity and determination from external actors are needed to enable and enhance the constructive efforts of the local community.

Ledwith's (2011) description of the process of community development was expressed differently by the Community Development Manager in Ardoyne, but the sentiment was the same, 'the process involved walking the streets to talk to people. There are a lot of thankless tasks – but that's the foundation. Building trust is the biggest thing'. His approach was to pose the question, open up the possibilities and stand back and allow people in the community to come forward. It was non-controlling, empowering, collaborative and gave respect to women, in particular, who had not been afforded that time or space for themselves previously. The belief and confidence in them generated self-belief and self-confidence, and the whole experience generated mutual support. This was about training for real jobs with real wages, the ability to participate in activities which were previously out of reach, to be given a voice and be listened to. There were no specific models or theories of community development here, more an intuitive approach based on listening and learning, a commitment to work alongside people for personal and social change, and, explicitly, to ensure both communities benefitted as one community.

This is an excellent example of promoting 'readiness'. Robinson (2013) argued the need for readiness to benefit from opportunity, as well as the resilience to manage difficulties and adapt to change, as offering a sense of aspiration rather than a sense of failure. Mguni and Caister-Arendar (2012) distinguished between 'survival' resilience – where social bonds are strong but also defensive and introverted; whilst more integrated communities show more evidence of 'adaptive' resilience – where people were open to new ideas and connections from outside the community cluster but these relationships aren't always strong enough to make things happen. Readiness goes beyond this, equipping people with the skills and confidence to take up future opportunities.

Further, in the Nursing Home case study, the evidence shows that this readiness was achieved by developing deep value relationships. The term 'deep value' was coined by Community Links (2009) to describe the value produced when the relationships between

the people delivering and the people using services are effective. In these relationships, it is the practical transfer of knowledge that creates the conditions for progress, but it is deeper qualities of the human bond that nourish confidence, inspire self-esteem, unlock potential, erode inequality and so have the power to transform. The term is generally used in relation to services to individuals and families in difficulties – but there is a message about bringing deep value into relationships across the board, including between professionals and communities working with community tensions.

***Oldham***

It was not the purpose of the Oldham study to analyse the build up to the 2001 disturbances, although some information is included for context. Sixteen years on, the cohesion risk register does not include any specific risks around relationships between young people of Pakistani heritage and white young people, though there is very close attention to all risks including population changes, international events, specific times of year and hate crimes. As well as describing the dynamics of escalation and de-escalation, Mitchell also considered basic methods for overcoming obstacles and changing direction. These methods include: changing leaders; changing leaders' and followers' minds; changing strategies, policy and behaviour; changing parties' environments (Mitchell 2011: 92). He cites the movement in the 1990s to promote a culture of peace that 'consists of values, attitudes and behaviours that reflect and inspire social interaction and sharing, based on principles of freedom justice and democracy, all human rights, tolerance and diversity', which led to the UNESCO Decade of Peace (Mitchell 2011: 94). These conditions are relevant in Oldham.

Oldham's vision and actions towards 'thriving communities' reflects their cooperative values and commitment. The ambition is for people and communities to have the power to be healthy, happy, able to make positive choices and both offer and access insightful and responsive support when required. It represents a shift from a top down approach, to coproduction and using the assets in communities to support community-led solutions. It is about people looking after themselves and their neighbours and, amongst the ambitions is seeking an end to social isolation and loneliness. The narrative here, though using different vocabulary, closely reflects Clements view that 'sustainable peace is most likely in stable

cooperative and compassionate communities that place a higher value on trust, equality and welfare than safety and security'.

Oldham is establishing a Thriving Communities Hub to bring together learning from international and local work and to support local community leadership development. With 37,000 volunteers, many good neighbours, a strong community, voluntary, social enterprise and faith sector, it is remarked upon how people turn out to help in difficult times but also support each other on a daily basis. Equally it is remarked on how Oldhamers like to have their say and do complain if they are unhappy, but these voices are sought out and listened to, and residents will respond positively to a reasonable explanation. Trust and confidence is growing as people experience change happening, and residents have many opportunities to have their say through consultation events, individually with their local councillors and coordinators, through voluntary organisations and local teams. There are many channels of communication. Achievements are celebrated and hard work recognised. People can contribute to what comes next through fun events, good conversations, shared campaigns to build a shared identity and pride in Oldham. There is an absolute belief in the value of communities and that they hold the key. As the senior police officer described, 'people who are part of the fabric of Oldham drive change – community leaders, Interfaith Forum, community projects, GPs. There is genuine valuing of communities, working cooperatively and investing in that'. This is reinforced by the voluntary sector interviewee, 'our approach in working between the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector and the statutory agencies on our shared agenda is: believe it's possible – believe in the power of people; strength in others – build capacity; be true – be the voice when it's difficult, raise difficult issues, be a credible voice for communities or agencies and hold ourselves to account.'

What stands out here is a holistic approach that puts communities at the centre. Community development is the business of everyone. It is asset based, building on strengths and not deficits and is an integrated, whole system vision. It is concerned with deep social issues and the relationships people have with each other. Coproduction is a key pillar in this and is specifically geared around tackling disadvantage. To achieve coproduction, there needs to be a recognition that everyone is needed to produce a solution that works, that power must be shared and inequality of power must be recognised. Everyone must feel safe, valued and wanted and the process must feel fair,

open and honest to everyone. Diversity of people is essential for high quality thinking, and inequalities need to be identified and talked about. Coproduction also recognises that there are different ways of knowing things and all of them are valuable - first hand experience is as valuable as professional or academic knowledge. It is important to test new ideas and if they don't work then that is not a failure but an opportunity to learn and change. Coproduction involves all of the dimensions radical community development espoused by Ledwith (2011) and is the way of working together to address social problems and injustices. In Oldham they are still working on how to do this well, but are testing, evaluating and learning as they go.

The asset based approach also reflects the language of readiness, supporting individuals to take opportunities they might previously not have considered possible. This is particularly apparent in the economic development, or inclusive growth, aspects, but is also a feature of work across all stages of the lifecourse.

***Scotland***

The research for Scotland includes an interesting account of how, as the frequency of terrorist incidents has increased outside Scotland, in England and Europe, there is a general rise in community tensions and fears within Scotland. Then after an incident tension levels come down, but maybe not back to the previous pre-incident level, then possibly a rise after another incident and then come down again maybe not to the previous level, so overall there has been a general raising of fears and tensions in society.

However, it was observed that over the last couple of years communities in Scotland may have become used to such incidents and so those post incident tensions may not be increasing where they once did. A number of reasons could be ascribed to this, including the work done by many groups and communities to promote community cohesion.

There are important lessons to be drawn from this, in the context of Mitchell's dynamics, about investing time and sustained engagement after such 'spikes' in tensions, many of which include hate crimes against individuals and premises, and far right backlashes, so that de-escalation is treated as a more significant dynamic to be worked with, rather than just leaving things after the immediate crisis is over. In other words, addressing the aftermath is as important as the build-up and crisis itself. This would be an extremely useful lesson to

incorporate for a future narrative, based on Mitchell's dynamics, as it is a means of expressing the necessity of not simply retuning to the status quo, but addressing the polarisations and the underlying issues more fundamentally within that situation, to alter that status quo.

The terminology use in National Outcome 11 to describe Scotland's vision for its communities is 'building inclusive and supportive communities and ensure that the rights and wellbeing of Scotland's minority communities' is central to the business. The Scottish Government's belief is that 'an inclusive and respectful society, with communities that embrace diversity, and where people help each other, provides a better quality of life for all citizens. It allows more people to contribute to a growing economy, lead healthier, more independent lives and live in a more sustainable way that is better for the environment. A cohesive community is more likely to get involved in local issues. Building strong supportive communities is key to addressing the underlying causes of crime. Our communities set the wider social context in which acceptable behaviour is defined. Communities that embrace diversity, protect the rights of others, but also set appropriate boundaries on behaviour support a culture of dignity and respect'. So whilst the Scottish government can set the conditions at a national level they recognise the centrality of local communities in actually making an inclusive and respectful society. As Clements suggests, 'while political systems can generate macro conditions for empathetic awareness, equality of opportunity and outcome, and social and political security, their willingness to do so depends on individuals and groups articulating these values as ideals and making commitments to realize these ideals in practice' (Clements 2012: 349).

Scotland also sets national standards for community engagement which are intended to act as a central benchmark and reference point for best practice, and designed to reflect the developing policy relating to participation, engagement and community empowerment. The Police Scotland interview demonstrated strongly that there was engagement at the heart, ongoing, at many levels, nuanced, non-judgemental and quiet in potentially noisy situations.

No one model of community development is espoused, but creative methods which encourage maximum participation and dialogue are valued. The standards may fall short of

Ledwith's description of radical community development in that there is no discussion about developing a critical consciousness of power imbalances and social injustices. Rather they read as 'a good way of getting things done' rather than 'a good way of getting things challenged'. Nonetheless they are described as 'developing', so they may be at a stage in Ledwith's progression where participation in local issues develops that critical consciousness.

***Wales***

The research in Wales did not identify any specific circumstances through which Mitchell's dynamics of escalation and de-escalation could be analysed.

The Welsh definition of a cohesive community is based on people getting on well together, essential to quality of life and tackling all forms of exclusion. The National Cohesion Delivery Plan reflects this and, whilst it makes a link to community safety issues, the Plan favours upstream activity to build inclusive communities based on equality and welfare as the starting point, which then prevents downstream community safety incidents and circumstances. The integration of Refugees and Asylum Seekers was seen as a possible cause of tensions but through a proactive, welcoming and community sponsorship approach, this has largely been avoided. Rather, by supporting refugees in greatest need, including survivors of violence and torture, those requiring urgent medical treatment and women with children who are at risk, initially with their basic needs for housing and practical items, medical care, English tuition and support towards independence, there has been the development of mutually beneficial relationships, social interactions and friendships. The community sponsorship model requires that commitment, a lead in time of around a year to plan, raise funds, identify accommodation and ensure the necessary amount of community involvement, as well as services, are all in place to support the different needs of refugee families after their arrival. The accounts of the different sponsorship groups, often in small rural communities, illustrate many acts of kindness, generosity and thoughtfulness, well beyond the provision of material things, and similar kind acts of reciprocity as the newcomers begin to settle. The policy lexicon at the macro level may be a more formal terminology of equality and inclusion, but the realities at a micro level on the ground demonstrate the attributes of Clements' compassionate

communities. This example also demonstrates how positive stories are being used to counter the sometimes negative narrative about refugees in the media.

The Wellbeing of Future Generations agenda does set the framework for public bodies to work better with communities and each other. The Community Cohesion Coordinators are there to facilitate engagement in problem solving with communities. The police expression of this was, 'It is the role of public services to support the social needs of communities to work within themselves'. So there is an ethos, or an expectation, that public bodies will engage communities in their wellbeing goals, including social and environmental justice and sustainable development thinking and action. It does not explicitly go as far as the Ledwith model of 'empowerment through critical consciousness' though, like Scotland, it is work in progress.

***Northern Ireland***

As the section on the Nursing Home suggested, Northern Ireland is theoretically in the de-escalation period. For some people and some communities this may be well advanced. But, given the ongoing challenges, it is clearly not complete. The problem of dissident activity, by those who have not gone past the demobilisation stage, was a priority for the Ministerial Panel on Community Tensions, but since Stormont has been suspended there has be no further work on this over the last two years. There is unfinished business. Whilst there are inequalities within and between communities, Nolan (2013) suggests that these inequality gaps are perceived differently, and 'are perceived through narratives that allow all new developments to fit within a story that connects with the patterns of the past. The nationalist narrative is of an upward trajectory, whilst the unionist narrative is one of loss. This latter perspective tends to magnify the sense of diminishing shares, whilst the nationalist perspective tends to emphasise an historical drive towards equality. The conflict of the two narratives risks a return to zero sum politics where a gain for one is seen as a loss for the other' (Nolan 2013:8).

The Mitchell model could potentially be a framework for Northern Ireland, or local communities within it, to self-assess where on the de-escalation curve they sit, and identify the actions that need to happen to take them down to the next level. It could provide a

framework, potentially incorporated within a theory of change, as an alternative to the current patchy, short-term, piecemeal and generally uncoordinated approach.

The principles underpinning 'Together Building a United Community' (Northern Ireland Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister 2013), in theory reflect the description of Clements' compassionate communities. However the principles – cohesion, tolerance, sharing, rights, responsibilities, respect, interdependence, integration, diversity, inclusion and fairness, all underpinning the three strands of equality, good relations and reconciliation – are not defined in the strategy so, in reality, are likely to mean different things to different people and the strategy does not specify how they translate across the priorities. The priority area of 'our shared community' in the strategy describes the shared aim, 'in moving from contested spaces to shared spaces, we aim to create a community where division does not restrict the life opportunities of individuals and where all areas are open and accessible to everyone' (Northern Ireland Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister 2013:53 ). There are 99 different security barriers or defensive architecture in Belfast alone, and whilst 76% of the general population would like to see the walls come down now or in the near future, only 58% of peace wall residents would like to see the walls come down now or sometime in the near future. Whilst 38% of the general population believe that peace walls are necessary because of the potential for violence, this is 69% for residents at peace walls. Furthermore, 78% of the general population believe that segregation of communities is common even where there are no peace walls, as evidenced by the residential segregation with the majority of the population living in areas that are, at minimum, 80% either Catholic or Protestant (Northern Ireland Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister 2013: 54). 'Segregation is not unique to the urban environment and many of our rural towns and villages are divided not by walls or fences – but by an invisible line in the road or a local landmark. Where physical barriers exist, the people living on either side are divided in all aspects of life. They live apart, they socialise apart, and their children go to school apart. In rural settings, divisions can also be played out through patterns of avoidance where people choose not to go to another part of the town to avail of services or go shopping, or even to another town entirely' (Northern Ireland Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister 2013:55). Segregation is also described as 'a state of mind as well as a specific local or physical issue. It does not always equate to tension and

violence and does not always involve physical interface structures' (Northern Ireland Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister 2013:56). However there is recognition that there is a need to continue to work to change the landscape of society and that 'flags and symbols that are used in a way to cause intimidation, or to glorify violence, hate or prejudice can present a barrier to the development of truly shred spaces across our community' (Northern Ireland Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister 2013: 56). 'Our safe community' is also one of the four priorities in the strategy. So whilst trust, equality and welfare are valued, promoted and undoubtedly present, safety and security are still drivers of community life in Northern Ireland.

The history of community development in Northern Ireland over the past half century presents a changing picture, as a result of how the state, funders and communities viewed the activity at different junctures. Lewis (2006:4) documents the increase in community based activity from the early 1960s 'in response to the failure of government to address poverty and inequality – particularly that experienced by the region's Catholic population'. She cites the development of credit unions as an alternative for people excluded from borrowing from banks, and of housing associations setting up to deliver affordable housing to Catholics who had been discriminated against in the awarding of local authority housing. By the late 1960s 'government seem to have developed the view that community development could help allay grassroots discontent and bring Northern Ireland's separate communities together '(Lewis 2006:5). So in 1969 the Northern Ireland government established a Community Relations Commission 'to create bridges between Northern Ireland's two main communities through the adoption of a community development strategy. It was anticipated that social and economic issues, especially poverty, could draw warring factions together, that building the confidence of communities separately would facilitate good relations between them; and that community development could alleviate the frustrations of marginalised individuals and communities, as well as improve their relationship to the state. This was a radical agenda for community development' (Lewis 2006: 5).

However, this led to some contradictions, on the one hand promoting radical social change and, on the other, promoting access to services and resources. As the conflict escalated, some viewed community development as the product of the Nationalist community and

there was less activity in Unionist areas, and the perceived political motivations led to the abolition of the Community Relations Commission in 1974. Community development was then assigned to District Councils and had a greater focus on the provision of services and informal education and as such was seen as 'de-radicalised'. The Community Relations Council was formed in 1990 to promote better community relations between Protestants and Catholics and to promote recognition of cultural diversity. Lewis argues that whilst community development has contributed to building bridges between communities there is less evidence of the contribution to peacebuilding (Lewis 2006: 8). Peace Funding from the European Union Structural Funds impacted significantly on community development. Peace I funding did provide social and economic investment and an expansion in community development, but was considered by many to have served to solidify community divisions. Peace II had a greater emphasis on peacebuilding and it was no longer assumed that community development contributed to peace - funders and policymakers were unconvinced. Subsequently the emphasis shifted again to building social capital, providing services, developing the social economy and, more recently, community planning.

So, in many ways, this journey charts a move away from Ledwith's radical community development, although, notwithstanding the changes, Lewis concludes, 'whilst community development theories and practices may have evolved over the years, its values remain: a collective focus on community; positive change; participation for the purpose of self-help and opening up of decision making; holistic rather than sectoral approaches; challenging inequitable power relations; confronting prejudice and discrimination; and combatting social exclusion, poverty and disadvantage' (Lewis 2006: 14). However compelling and enduring these values, short-term and generally reducing funding, alongside the requirements of the state for specific roles and functions of community development may compromise the independence of the work and damage the challenge and advocacy role of community development. As the interview with the senior police representative pointed out, 'the community sector is completely dependent *(on the state sector).*'

Robinson's (2013) concept of readiness is not, formally, an aspect of thinking at the Northern Ireland level though it was strongly demonstrated in the Nursing Home case study.

***England***

Means to examine Mitchell's (2011) dynamics of escalation and de-escalation did not surface in the interviews. It would, nevertheless, be a very useful framework to test in areas where tensions have boiled over or there have been conflicts in recent years.

The government response to the Casey Review, the 'Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper: Building stronger, more united communities' has the ambition 'to build strong integrated communities where people - whatever their background - live, work, learn and socialise together, based on shared rights, responsibilities and opportunities' (HM Government 2018:10). It is based on 'fundamental British values' of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith. It is not dissimilar to previous ambitions and includes a number of practical measures to tackle segregation, in schools, workplaces, communities and social settings. Potentially, the encouragement of increased contact and 'meaningful interaction', improved English language proficiency for those who don't have English as a first language and addressing labour market disadvantage for women from minority communities are measures which could support the increase of levels of trust, cooperation and compassion in communities, particularly those who are segregated or isolated, over time. The question is what will be the difference this time around and what is the commitment and imperative to make a difference? In part the answer will lie in the levelling up of equality of opportunity and outcomes and achieving social justice and in part it will lie in local communities and whether and how the government strategy framework is reinforced and added to at a local level. The focus on leadership at all levels is to be welcomed. As Clements (2012) argues, understanding and supporting bottom-up approaches is critical.

There is a rub here, however, in relation to the current context of community development in England. Ledwith (2011:2) argues that the current circumstances of the uncertain global economy, shrinking state and widening inequality mean that 'never has there been a more important opportunity for community development to redefine its radical agenda and to engage with injustice in the process of progressive social change'. However, in 2016 the Community Development Foundation, the leading body set up to deliver community engagement programmes that mobilise communities, carry out research to influence policy

and help communities to receive support, was closed following the 'bonfire of quangos' announced initially, in principle, in 2010. Then the Transparency of Lobbying, Non-Party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Act 2014, known as the Lobbying Act, restricted charities in the UK, in receipt of government grants, to lobby government ministers or political parties in the run up to elections. This can disempower organisations and groups, particularly those who are campaigning in areas of public policy on behalf of others who may not have a voice, and election times are critical periods to air and debate such issues. Whilst non-government funds can be used, there are worries within the voluntary and community sector that the campaigning role of charities will be hindered, constrained and there are fears of repercussions. Further in 2016 the Office of Civil Society was moved from the Cabinet Office, which was seen as centrally placed and championing innovation across government, to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, the smallest department with potentially less cross government influence. So, as in Northern Ireland, there is a move towards the voluntary and community sector being a provider of services and less of an emphasis on empowering community voice.

In England, at government level, community resilience is generally equated with emergency planning, response, recovery, civil contingencies and business continuity, and also to counter-terrorism. At government level, the first of two main drivers for wellbeing and strengthening communities comes from the health sector and particularly public health. Social connectedness is seen as a key driver, alongside equity, control and voice, towards building confident and connected communities and better health outcomes. The methods and approaches are asset based, collaborative, improve access to resources and use social networking. The second driver in relation to community resilience is the Home Office, through the Community Safety Partnerships, and many local strategies espouse a stronger communities strand, approaching this through a lens of crime prevention and reduction, but also many local areas have incorporated their new duties for Prevent under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015) into their community safety strategies. The Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government's 'troubled families' programme also adds to the mix, with some authorities preferring to use the term 'building resilient families and communities' as a better reflection of their approach. There is an apparent lack of synergy between the different approaches and how they are articulated, but this is not

insurmountable as the integrated approaches in Scotland and Wales are beginning to demonstrate.

The language of readiness does not feature but the focus, for example, on increasing skills in English and increasing economic opportunities allude to this way of thinking.

***Summary - communities, community dynamics and working with communities***

Understanding the dynamics of escalation and de-escalation brings valuable added learning to working with tensions. The Scout Hut situation did follow the stages in Mitchell's analysis of escalation and, had there been greater awareness at the time, this could have potentially informed different interventions. Also significant here is the time invested during the escalation, and the contrasting lack of time invested in the de-escalation. The stages of de-escalation also provide a framework to explore and identify where communities are at, not just after a conflict in that community but also in the aftermath of events elsewhere, as was identified in Scotland in relation to the series of terror attacks in the UK and Europe. The framework would also be applicable in, for example, the Nursing Home area, where there is progress but still incidents, symbols and situations which illustrate polarisation and dissociation.

Central to Clements (2012) argument is that of 'sustainable peace' and that this is more likely where trust equality and welfare are valued more highly than safety and security. This advances the agenda for working with tensions to one which is more about supporting communities where people care for and are kind to each other, are welcoming, inclusive, and generous, rather than ones that are simply 'safer' and have less crime and violence. It has the starting point of care rather than one of fear. It also places the work more in the collective domain rather than a police-led domain. Oldham is closest to this thinking, arrived at through their cooperative values and way of working.

Community engagement is a strong feature of the research, very important to police and government, local and national. However the depth of community empowerment as described by Ledwith is variable and, it would seem, has generally reduced over recent years, both in the quantity and extent of that empowerment. Many of the initiatives, and indeed legislation, in recent years have been about communities running services, taking over assets from which to run services or consulting on spatial plans, all of which are useful

but, it could be argued, potentially reinforce existing power imbalances, as they are more accessible to those who have the capacity to use them, and don't necessarily touch the critical conscious and tackling inequalities that are necessary. As community empowerment and community led solutions are at the heart of working with tensions, a clearer understanding of what this actually means, the principles and the methods to enable this, are essential. Readiness is part of this empowerment.

**Measuring success**

***Introduction***

The literature review identified learning from success as a desirable but underused paradigm. However measuring and recording success poses challenges which are discussed first in this section. All of the country interviewees and case studies identified the difficulties in measuring success, but there are some indicators or emerging indicators in most places.

Two concepts were identified from the literature review. First, 'Taking the temperature of local communities: the Wellbeing and Resilience Measure (WARM)' Mguni and Bacon (2010), set out a new way to measure wellbeing and resilience. It starts from the assumption that the key to flourishing neighbourhoods is to boost local assets and social wealth, whilst also tackling vulnerabilities and disadvantage. WARM is designed to support local agencies and communities to better understand, plan and act. It starts from the point of making the best use of data that is currently available whilst also suggesting how it can be complemented by new data. It looks at the balance of assets and vulnerabilities. The focus is on subjective measures - how people experience the quality of their lives – as much as objective data. WARM is a tool for communities to better understand themselves and is bottom up, not a performance management framework for top down scrutiny.

Secondly is the concept of cost benefit and the nef (2010) Social Return on Investment study of community development as an illustration of one measure of social value. This is generally not well used and it is much more common to record the costs of failure rather than count the savings from success or valuing voluntary and community effort. Cost benefit involves assessing the cash inputs against the cash savings to arrive at a business

case for investment. Social value takes into account other considerations of social, economic and environmental value and the wider financial and non-financial impacts of programmes, organisations and interventions, including the wellbeing of individuals and communities, social capital and the environment. Social Return on Investment is one tool used in measuring social value.

The challenges of measurement are present across the short and long-term timeframes of working with community tensions. The data used at the 'early warning' and 'upstream' stage to identify risk profiles, tension barometers and strategic assessment are used to question and monitor vulnerable localities, for prediction and prevention. The challenges here are the availability of data at the appropriate geographic level, the selection of data and indicators, data classification in terms of what is unclassified, restricted, confidential, secret and top secret and data protection issues are around identification of individuals and addresses. Sample sizes for some survey material may also be questionable, for example this is particularly true of the perception data in the Northern Ireland Life and Times data.

There are also social and political issues in using data for predictions, including the risk of stigmatising an area through presenting them as the 'worst', instigating further fear by describing them as the 'most vulnerable' which may, in itself, invite further crimes and project tensions into an area because it is considered vulnerable. Such measurements can also compound existing 'postcode' discrimination, be that in relation to access to jobs, home or car insurance premiums or willingness of services to visit particular areas or addresses. Further, targeting resources based on such indicators can lead to community conflict resulting from perceptions of 'fairness' in resource allocation, can neglect areas that are 'marginal' but could deteriorate without attention and can undermine the sense of a commitment to the wellbeing of the whole population. These can lead to challenges for elected members in representing the case for resources that will benefit their constituents.

Other challenges, both at the early warning stage and thereafter, include the vast underreporting of hate crime, and related questions about identifying the problem in relation to the address of the victim, the perpetrators and the scene of the actual incident or crime.

In ‘real time’, the Tension Level Assessment tool is there to measure the level or tension in order to develop an appropriate response. It is not there as a performance indicator. Measuring tension as ‘normal’ or ‘Above normal’ is not a way of addressing the issues. Similarly, the Terrorism Threat Level is a tool for security practitioners working across different sectors of the Critical National Infrastructure and the police to use in determining what protective security response may be required. Again, it is there as an indicator from which actions can be developed.

There are challenges in measuring the success of any form of prevention or early intervention. We readily count the costs of failure but less readily see the savings or measures of success. Alongside this is the issue of measuring success by ‘things that didn’t happen’, cited in several of the interviews.

Often short term interventions and informal conversations go unrecorded and there isn’t a culture in many organisations of debriefing after every encounter, so relationship building and quiet exchange under the radar are not noted and valued as vital interventions. Therefore, ‘rolling prevention’, those ‘small, repeated preventive peacebuilding measures . . . may be the optimal form of conflict prevention’, Lund (1998:6), are frequently invisible to anyone other than those directly involved.

Long term measures relating to underlying causes are measured in all cases, particularly in relation to the main socio-economic indicators of attainment and skills, employment and income, health outcomes and safety. However, these are also affected by population churn which particularly affects the most deprived areas, where residents who are ‘more successful’ move out and are replaced by poorer residents, so that areas, such as Oldham and Ardoyne, become net importers of poverty. So, longer-term data is not always comparing the same population over time. Traditional measures of deprivation have been supplemented in recent years by indicators of wellbeing and human development.

There is a bias in the kinds of things that get measured towards the more obvious countable things like employment rates, crimes committed and exams passed. The things that often matter more in communities are less visible and less measured. There is a danger that in meeting specific targets we miss the point. Measuring trust emerged as the most

significant challenge in the study, there were few specific attempts to do this beyond public satisfaction surveys and this is an area for future development in relation to working with community tensions. Amongst a larger body of literature measuring trust, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. OECD (2017), has developed guidelines on measuring trust. They define trust as 'a person's belief that another person or institution will act consistently with his/her expectations of positive behaviour' (OECD 2017: 42). The distinguish two types of trust, that is, trust in other people - interpersonal trust, and trust in institutions - institutional trust. They maintain that 'generalised interpersonal trust is an important driver of many wellbeing outcomes and is the best available measure of social capital. At the individual level, people need to feel that other community members with whom they interact can be trusted. At a community level, trust in day-to- day interactions supports the prosperity of the economy, and a cooperative society is likely to be peaceful and inclusive'. They describe institutional trust as 'a prerequisite for people's political voice, important for the policies that rely on citizen compliance, and essential for economic activities that require confidence in investors and consumers. Trust requires that institutions are competent and effective in delivering on their goals and that they operate consistently with a set of values that reflect integrity and fairness'. Their measurement of institutional trust shows that it has fallen in most OECD countries since the financial crisis, with only 40% of people trusting their governments. They recommend further research both in the academic community and the national statistical agencies. In the meantime there is the opportunity for further exploration of the literature on trust, both interpersonal and institutional, and to promote dialogue on these measures amongst those working in the context of community tensions.

Other measures or evidence of success come through visible changes in communities and though stories, which can provide powerful testaments of people's experiences.

***England***

In England, the Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper (HM Government 2018) includes a proposed measurement framework with two sets of indicators: first at the individual level, measures such as increases in proficiency in speaking English; awareness of common rights and responsibilities; type and diversity of social networks; types and

contexts of social mixing between groups in local areas; types and contexts of social mixing among pupils in segregated schools; access to education, training and employment opportunities for the most isolated groups, such as economically inactive women. Second, at the institutional level, measures include: better coordination of local English Language support provision; better promotion of integration; better regulation of out-of-school educational settings; strengthening governance of minority faith community organisations to promote integration; better promotion of integration among employers; strengthening hate crime action plans and related partnerships (HM Government 2018: 64-65). These indicators will be tested over the next three years and used alongside other relevant indicators of social inclusion, equality and social mobility. At this stage it is unclear which of the requirements will be statutory and what resources will be available to support the strategy beyond an initial £50 million to concentrate work in five authorities.

The new indicators and the related suites of indicators, in theory, can combine to give a measure of how things are, where the problems lie and the trends in different population groups, for some areas of activity and for some indicators at a local level. The difference to the WARM measure is that WARM is place based and relates to local geographic communities. It also measures assets and resilience and well as vulnerabilities. It looks at how people feel about their own lives, the quality of social support and networks in the community and the structures and systems of the local infrastructure and environment to support people to achieve their aspirations and live a good life. As such it is dynamic, and as it is repeated over time can identify the extent to which interventions have led to tangible improvements in life satisfaction. However national and local indicators need to be combined to work with the fine grain and uniqueness of any place and so ultimately, local choice should guide the choice of measurement.

There have been no specific studies of the financial return on investment or social value in relation to working with community tensions in England. Taking account of social value is a requirement in commissioning since the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 came into force on 31st January 2013. It requires public bodies to consider how the services they commission and procure might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area. Social value is the benefit to the community from a

commissioning/procurement process over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and outcomes. It concerns the additional benefit to the community...over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and outcomes. As working with community tensions is not a commissioned service it has not featured in this approach. The closest analysis is a Social Return on Investment (SORI) study by nef (2010) of community development. Using the SROI methodology across four local authority areas, it indicated that community development creates £2.16 of social and economic value for every £1 invested – a SROI of 2.16 : 1 and that the return on investment of the four local authorities involved in the study was £15 for every £1 invested, or £3.5 million benefit (over a five year benefit period) for £ 233,655 invested in community development. The outcome measures used included composite indicators for personal wellbeing (resilience and self- esteem, and positive functioning), and social wellbeing (supportive relationships, trust and belonging).

An Audit Commission (2009:24) report calculated: 'A young person who starts showing behavioural problems at age five, and is dealt with through the criminal justice system, will cost the taxpayer £207,000 by the age of 16. Alternative interventions to support changes in behaviour would cost about £47,000. Over £113 million a year would be saved if just one in ten young offenders was diverted towards effective support'.

So there are studies that measure both the financial and social benefits of early action and there is scope to apply these to working with tensions. This would be a welcome addition to the work and would support the business case in a future narrative.

***Northern Ireland***

Northern Ireland has a developed a tool for identifying disengaged and polarised communities, the Community Prioritisation Index (CPI) (Ferguson and Macbeth 2011 unpublished). The CPI has four domains. First is Community Polarisation - areas that exhibit a lack (or absence) of community or social cohesion and thus a potential for instability and/or tension with neighbouring areas. It is measured with the following datasets: sectarian crimes/incidents (rate by population); racist crimes/incidents (rate by non-UK/Ireland population); interfaces and flashpoints (rate by hectares); attacks on symbolic premises (rate by populations); Population Polarisation statistics (Community Background).

The second domain in the CPI measures social stress - the combination of factors pertaining to identified stresses in any one area which could perpetuate the social malaise and may lead to further isolation. Individuals may then become increasingly attracted by the lure of crime or terrorism, whether for ideology, financial gain or increased social status. Datasets are: income deprivation; employment deprivation; Educational attainment (per centage less than level 2); demography (percentage of young people 15 – 24); health deprivation (per centage prescribed medication for anxiety /depression and per centage of suicides). Domain 3 measures disengagement - disenfranchised communities who have few (or no) relations with the police and other social partners. Datasets used here are: incivility complaints (rate by population); stop and search (rate by population); deaths during The Troubles (rate by population); paramilitary activity (rate by population); arrests for terrorist offences (rate by population); communities at risk (Intelligence Assessment). The fourth domain is crime and disorder and measures: violence, robbery and public order; vehicle theft; criminal damage; deliberate primary and secondary fires; antisocial behaviour incidents. The Community Prioritisation Index is an aggregation of the four domains, with weightings applied to the domain scores: community polarisation, 20 per cent; social stress, 30 per cent; community disengagement, 40 per cent; crime and disorder, 10 per cent. CPI scores are calculated for Super Output Areas and ranked in priority of the highest score. The tool allows for the identification and prioritisation of areas based on the experience of community harm and the potential risk from vulnerability and disengagement and enables police and partners to be more tightly focused with their interventions and resource allocation. It is used to establish priority locations that would be the focus of a strategic approach to the development of effective multi-agency arrangements to build good relations. It is also designed to prevent vulnerable people from either becoming criminals or supporting those opposed to moving towards a better future for all.

The most significant difference between this and the Well-being and Resilience Measure is that it focuses entirely on the problems and deficits and not the strengths and assets. It does not include wellbeing measures including social capital and relationships or structural features such as good transport links, proximity and quality of services and local buildings that allow communities to come together. These moderating factors are potential building blocks from which to build wellbeing and counter the vulnerabilities.

Northern Ireland benefits from the comprehensive Peace Monitoring Reports (Nolan 2012, 2013, 2014, Wilson 2016, Gray et al 2018) which include both quantitative and qualitative measures in relation to the immediate issues and underlying causes, record the events of the previous year and summarise the key issues in the peace process. The question is how much these comprehensive analyses are discussed and used to inform the way forward. This is not dissimilar to the observation of Lund (1998) in relation to the potential for disconnect between early warning and early action and, as early warning is undertaken by social scientists who see their role as diagnosis of the problems and not devising solutions, and policymakers see their task as deciding what to do, there is a split between 'conflict analysis and warning as pure knowledge, conflict response as pure action and advocacy to spur it' (Lund 1998:3). The Peace Monitoring Reports provide the analysis but also pose the fundamental political questions, so the lack of a devolved government in Stormont is, once again, a major stumbling block. Individual government departments are able to progress previously agreed strategies for improvement of outcomes across services, but those fundamental questions of peace without reconciliation remain.

There has been relatively few studies of financial or social return on investment in working with tensions in Northern Ireland. Information on policing costs of some activities are available, for example, a Freedom of Information Request showed the financial costs of policing the marching season in 2013 were £22.8 million compared to £6 million the previous year (Police Service of Northern Ireland 2013). These are police costs and don't include other costs in relation to the community, public services including health and justice, the environment and the whole system.

Quigley, Martynowicz and Gardner (2014) Social Return on Investment Study of the Le Chéile Restorative Justice Project in Limerick recorded a 1:2.92 SROI and benefits for the young people themselves, their families, the community, victims, the police, courts and health services. In terms of outcomes, young people reported that the Project had a positive, and in some cases profound, impact on their lives. Young people reported increased levels of empathy towards victims of crime and family members (which was supported and shown to be statistically significant quantitative data recorded by the Project); improved family relationships; decreased substance use; increased social peer

relationships and an overall reduction in their involvement in criminal behaviour and level of engagement with criminal justice agencies.

However, it must be emphasised that whilst early action in relation to tensions is cost effective, it is not cost free. It can be considerably cheaper than the acute intervention it heads off, but working with tensions requires good staff, premises for some organisations, and support for volunteers, programme costs, research and evaluation. In the sphere of working with community tensions there is a significant amount of community volunteer time given, often under the radar as well as working with paid professionals, with both groups effectively on call 24/7. As Community Links (2011:19) pointed out, volunteer time is not a 'free good', but needs to be counted as a contribution in terms of social and economic value.

***Scotland***

Scotland's National Performance Framework (Scottish Government 2011) measures progress across the range of education, employment and health outcomes, and National Indicator 11 is specifically about inclusive and supportive communities.

At a local level the Community Planning Partnerships are responsible for producing locality plans based on the needs, circumstances and aspirations of their communities. The guidance for community plans has close similarities to the Mguni and Bacon (2010) approach in that is maps assets as well as needs, aspirations and opportunities as well as inequalities and disadvantage. There is a strong focus on participation of local communities, locally derived and driven targets and shared resources and, once again, the public health narrative of 'collective efforts' to promote prevention, reduce inequalities and build community capacity. There is a whole system approach, with plans produced locally with communities backed up by guidance and ministerial duties to promote and support innovation. However, the Mguni and Bacon (2010) WARM model potentially has a greater level of detail and sophistication and uses a greater number of subjective indicators of people's personal assessment of their lives. This is highly relevant to community tensions as perceptions may be different from objective data, and how people feel is a significant factor. Crime may be falling but fear of crime can be rising; people may be satisfied with

their area and have strong community ties but the objective data shows high levels of poverty; housing allocations policies may be transparent but are perceived as opaque, unfair and advantaging 'others'. The WARM process involves, first, measuring how well the area has fared and is faring and then identifying assets and vulnerabilities. The third stage is benchmarking against national data. This distinguishes between the community level and wider trends and is presented visually so that the comparisons are readily seen. These three sources then are used to explore and understand the situation, leading to further discussion, planning and implementation. The guidance in Scotland is not dissimilar in general terms, or in principles, but the WARM approach has both a particular emphasis on life satisfaction and a focus on resilience. Measurement of these variables could aid a more dynamic and nuanced analysis of the community.

In relation to financial measurement, The Scottish Parliament Finance Committee (2011) considered a report on 'Preventative Spending', and how this could help to prevent negative social outcomes through addressing underlying causes and not the prevailing approach of reacting to the symptoms. Oral and written evidence was taken from the public and voluntary sectors and academics in Scotland and from Nottingham, who had branded itself 'Early Intervention City'. Scotland's Futures Forum cited evidence claiming that an estimated 40 to 45 per cent of public spending is negative, that is, short-term spending aimed at addressing social problems. The body of evidence describes a pattern where, 'we identify a problem (e.g. childhood obesity, youth disorder, poor literacy) and look to Government to fix it. Typically, Government accepts that challenge; puts in place a process; delivers a strategy; translates that into policy and an (often over-engineered) implementation process and, two or three years on, the problem (not surprisingly) isn't 'fixed'. This then becomes portrayed as a failure of the political leadership of the day so, we change Ministers or Government and start the same process all over again'. Further evidence describes, 'the overwhelming mindset that lurks behind how our public services are delivered is that we should invest at point of impact when things have gone wrong - indeed, when things have gone seriously wrong - instead of going back and putting something in systemically. We are far away from that latter approach'. Whilst there was not a specific SROI cited, the body of evidence confirmed the case for investment in prevention and early action, both in social and financial terms. The Scottish Government's

2011 budget included a £500 million increase in preventive spending despite a 9.2 per cent reduction in cash from Whitehall. Preventive action is integral to the approach to government in Scotland and delivering the outcomes set out in the National Performance Framework (Scottish Government 2011).

The national and local indicators and financial measurements predominantly relate to the longer term issues and underlying causes. Scotland also describes success in terms of examples of where 'things didn't happen' and where tensions are anticipated and dissipated through intensive and consistent community engagement, both at a visible political level and quietly behind the scenes. Some further research on metrics to measure community engagement and trust would be helpful to define and articulate this success.

***Wales***

The Wellbeing of Wales report, similar to the National Performance Framework in Scotland, has a suite of indicators across the seven wellbeing goals. These are available in headline form and in detail through an on-line interactive tool. They include objective indicators and subjective satisfaction measures from the National Survey of Wales.

Again, similar to Scotland, in Wales there is a structure for local community planning through the Public Service Boards in each local authority area. The process involves assessing strengths and assets of people and their communities. Boards are required to recognise and build on these strengths to help improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of the area. It is stressed that acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle is integral to the assessment process and doing a deeper examination of the information and data from sources like these will help the board prepare a more rigorous product. They are guided to look at the long term, consider what the evidence tells them about how to prevent problems from happening or getting worse, and involve other people with an interest in the well-being of the area. Greater use of subjective measures of life satisfaction, attitudes and perceptions could enhance the understanding of community dynamics and contribute to more effective work with tensions.

Social value is a feature of commissioning in Wales, as in England. As working with community tensions is not usually a commissioned service it can be overlooked in terms of

the analysis of both cost benefit and social value. There may well be return on investment clauses within contracts with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector who deliver on many aspects of the spectrum of community relations, but as these are part of confidential contracts and agreements it is difficult to measure the collective impact.

The need to counter a divisive media narrative was highlighted in Wales and telling positive stories is a means of countering this. They cited Muslims and Gypsies and Travellers as the subject of 'negative rhetoric', as well as refugees and asylum seekers, and, through documenting stories of achievement, generosity and talent as well as struggles, they contribute to a balance of stories and humanise and counter prevailing stereotypes.

***The Nursing Home***

In 'Crossing the Line', Goldie and Ruddy (2010) identified that 'social and economic regeneration provide the greatest material benefits of developing shared space' and that 'regenerating interfaces is crucial to peace building and normalisation. Regeneration is an immediate incentive to promote shared space when profits from enterprise are returned to the community' (Goldie and Ruddy 2010:8). In this instance the regeneration was inclusive of the community; without this inclusivity some regeneration can be regarded as 'gentrification' or generate further tensions around where resources are being spent. Their research also found that creating visible improvements to the physical environment was 'a key factor identified by respondents, who believed that restoring communal pride in an area empowered residents to take action in other areas of their lives, in the belief that improvement can happen' (Goldie and Ruddy:10-11).

This is true at the Nursing Home site. The main measure of success is visible physical regeneration, over 100 jobs directly created, new residential care facilities and family centre services. Bradley Manor is adding £1 million per annum to the local economy through wages and purchase of goods and services, as well as providing a five-star service for elderly residents and visitors at a sensitive interface. It is also demonstrated in the case study by the confidence and empowerment of the women who experienced the training and their families but also the confidence in the community to enable the removal of the wall on the

Crumlin Road opposite Bradley Manor. These, and the closure of Twaddell Peace Camp, in place for over three years at a policing cost in excess of £21 million (from February 2013 to October 2016), demonstrate how the development has been a catalyst for other changes, physical, economic and social.

However, there has not yet been any study of the cost benefits or social value of the development. A Social Return on Investment study, Leatham (2008) was conducted on interface work, commissioned by North Belfast Interface Project, to assess the impact of conflict intervention and social transformation work undertaken by staff and volunteers. The study found that for every pound invested in the work of the network, the return on investment over a three-year period was £45.03 to the local or national economy.

***The Scout Hut***

Leicester's Health and Wellbeing Survey, (Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute 2015), includes satisfaction questions and indicators of individual mental health, including feeling relaxed, optimistic, useful, close to other people, and also of isolation and exclusion, but no questions about community relations or how people of different backgrounds get on with each other. Generally Thurncourt ward is at the city average for most indicators, though worse than the England average. Whilst there is a Neighbourhood Planning facility in the city, there is no plan for Thurnby Lodge. The debate about 'forgotten outer estates', generally, still rumbles in the press in the light of city centre regeneration and investment.

Similarly there has been no financial measurement of change or social value in relation to the community engagement activity. The cost of policing over the nine months of the dispute was reported as £500,000 including bringing police in from other areas on occasions. Other costs were not quantified.

***Oldham***

Visible physical regeneration is also considered a measure of success in Oldham, with old symbols of decline being replaced by new symbols of confidence, with a sensitive link in the heritage of some buildings between past and present. The case study indicates that they inspire confidence and optimism that change is happening.

Oldham, like Scotland, also quietly considers 'things that didn't happen' as a measure of success, notably the 2011 riots in other parts of England and Wales, but also several incidents and experiences where there were potential and actual tensions, and where close engagement with communities, listening and supporting, led to peaceful outcomes. They are constantly vigilant on the dynamics of events and incidents occurring in Oldham and elsewhere and seek to learn from every situation. Like Wales, they use positive stories to build the narrative of local individual and community achievement.

Particularly significant, however, is the development of the Thriving Communities Index in Oldham. This is a product, nearing completion, they have developed to understand the 'as is' position of which communities are more or less resilient or thriving, in order to inform where future interventions take place and the form of those interventions, and a prompt for deeper dives, either into the area analysis or the situational analysis. It also provides the facility for understanding relative change over time and the position on the individual indicators, or groups of indicators that make up the Index. There are three sub-domains: first those of place and relating to the cooperative ethos, including assets and attitudes; second, personal wellbeing of residents, including health behaviours, enterprise and skills and empowerment; and third, reactive demand to referred services.

This is then to be supplemented by NebULA, NeighBourhoods Using Local Assessment. This is a community assessment, which in a short space of time can give an overall health check on a neighbourhood to support the needs of the Thriving Communities programme, and in particular to provide key intelligence to fill evidence gaps within the Thriving Communities Index. NebULA assessments aim to be light-touch, and provide a view of the community and the communities assets, often in ways which could not be provided by a statistical source. It is a "panel of experts" based approach. Each assessment is conducted by a panel of those with expert knowledge of the neighbourhoods concerned. There is a pre-panel conversation with locality specialists such as Housing Officers, community leaders or others operating at the local level who have valuable intelligence, and Elected Members. Panels then involve district teams, area staff including district nurses and schools, community and faith leaders. The four elements of NebULA are : activism – volunteering, community connectors and informal connectors; attitudes – community tensions, social norms in

relation to families and the environment; resources – green space quality, cultural amenities and events, facilities for young people, age friendliness, accessibility to jobs and services; capacity – community venues and local groups. An assessment scoring matrix is produced and the advantage of the approach is not only that it can be more timely and at little extra staff resource than full asset mapping, but also it is able to cover some themes, such as community tensions, which it is not possible to cover with data driven approaches alone. Whilst it is not entirely bottom-up, it is a step closer to community involvement than a top-down completely data driven approach. The assessments then are subject to a testing and verification process with communities and local staff.

The model has similarities to the WARM index but is potentially less costly in time and money and most certainly includes community tensions as an integrated element. Cost benefit analysis and social value measures of investing in thriving communities are yet to be developed but are among the range of further evaluation tools to be developed.

The development of this model is a further example of Oldham working out their own narrative, measuring the things that are important and meaningful to them and their communities and not simply adopting frameworks derived elsewhere.

***Summary - measuring success***

None of the areas studied used the Mguni and Bacon (2010) WARM model. The emergent Thriving Communities Index in Oldham, alongside NeBULA, the Neighbourhoods Using Local Assessment, most closely accords with this, certainly in terms of measuring community assets as well as vulnerabilities, and subjective indicators as well as objective. NeBULA complements this and provides the opportunity for a local assessment by a panel, through a process which may be less arduous or costly as a full attitudes or perception survey suggested in WARM, with built in checks for community review of the Assessment. As such there is a combination of known data with informed assessment.

Elsewhere there are datasets for long-term outcomes, including varying levels of subjective measures. It was surprising, for example, that the Leicester Health and Wellbeing data didn't include anything on community relations.

On financial measurement, there is little on cost-benefit or social value, despite general policies. The main issue here is that working with tensions doesn't go through a commissioning cycle so has not been subject to value for money review, options appraisal or procurement and as such these measurements don't yet exist. It would be beneficial to explore this further and, given the level of experience in commissioning in public services, should be an achievable exercise and one beneficial to those engaged in the work and looking for quantifiable measures of outcomes and impact. It is sometimes suggested that things that don't get measured don't get valued or even things that don't get measured don't get done, so a focus on measurement is an important consideration. However, in transformational change processes we are envisioning something different and that is not necessarily an end state but is continuously evolving and developing. So, whilst measurement is important, equally important is understanding and creating the conditions for success.

Success is often visible in changes to the physical environment or in the stories from individuals and communities. The invisible, measuring individual and institutional trust, is a further area of development and the OECD (217) framework provides one starting point for this.

**A summary overview of this chapter follows in Table 13.** The summary seeks to display, in table form, the analysis of findings for each place against each concept. It seeks to distil and amplify the messages.

Looking at the vertical axis, for example, It demonstrates that where places are strong on the first group of concepts, the underlying premises to guide change, that is followed through to clarity and strength in the sphere of actors and roles, community dynamics and measuring success. Following through the Oldham column, for example, demonstrates that the integrated, holistic, long term approach, rooted in a clear vision and set of values plays through the actors and roles, with strong political leadership and local coordination, and to an asset based approach to build thriving communities, with an innovative approach to measuring progress. Where the approach to change is weak, as in the Scout Hut column, assessment against the other concepts also are generally weak.

The horizontal axis also reflects where there are variations across the geographies and where the absence of application of a particular concept has a negative impact. For example, across Mitchell's change agents and drivers of change the coordinator role in Wales an Oldham is highly prized, whereas in the Scout Hut scenario there is an absence of connectors or people with enough skills to address the situation. It also demonstrates that progress can happen even where important elements are absent, such as the importance of activity in the socio-political domain as in the Anderson-Olsen model, and the progress at the Nursing Home with no political involvement.

***Table 13: Summary/overview of concepts and places***

| Concept | England | Northern Ireland | Scotland | Wales | Nursing Home | Scout Hut | Oldham | Importance of concept to new narrative |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Underlying premises to guide change** | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Proximate issues and underlying causes (Ackerman 2003) | TM system for proximate issues<br><br>Obstacles to integration highlighted in Green Paper and measures to address identified | TM system for proximate issues currently stalled at top level<br><br>T:BUC sets out a vision, but strategy less clear | TM system for proximate issues<br><br>Strong focus on equalities and reducing inequalities | TM system for proximate issues<br><br>Strong focus on equalities and reducing inequalities | TM system for proximate issues<br><br>Addresses underlying causes of worklessness, low skills, low self-esteem, poverty | TM system for proximate issues<br><br>Mainly dealing with presenting problem – some attempt to address underlying attitudes to Muslim community | TM system for proximate issues<br><br>Strong focus on all forms inclusion | High – need to address both in an integrated approach |
| 2. Prevention, non-violent solutions and reducing underlying problems(Lund 2002) | Some measures – but not in an integrated system. | Much progress since the Peace agreement but this is slowing due to less money, economic downturn and political challenges | Strong on prevention and the 'public health' approach.<br><br>Integrated system | Yes – working towards this agenda and plans in place | Strong example in a very challenging interface context – community designed and led | Weak – situation could have potentially been prevented or resolved sooner and underlying problems not addressed | Yes – strong evidence of all three | High – similar to above |
| 3. Short-term responsive, long term strategic (Lederach 20030 | 'plans have not been implemented with enough force or consistency, have been diluted and muddled, not sufficiently linked to socio-economic inclusion and communities have not been engaged adequately' | Progress – but challenging environment and some key issues unresolved and no clear strategy to address these contentious issues | Yes - strong community engagement and local and national strategies | Yes – strong community engagement and local and national strategies | Yes – community vision backed up by persistent engagement on short-term challenges | Weak – slow short-term response, no long term plan | Yes – strong evidence of both | High – integrated timeframes |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4. Technical and transformative change (Fisher and Zimina 2009) | Some technical/practical approaches . Not a transformational approach | Some technical/practical approaches . Not a transformational approach | Working towards both/seeking to improve technical aspects | Working towards both | Yes – strong evidence | Absent | Strong on both systematic technical and transformational | High – emphasis has been more on the technical in the past |
| 5. Theory of change (Vogel 2012) | Limited at strategic level | Limited at strategic level<br><br>T:BUC has some limitations | Holistic vision linking community through to global goals | Holistic vision linking community through to global goals | Spatial plan and principles strong, not formally a theory of change approach | Absent | Yes – strong evidence of this in theory and practice | High – vision needed to drive change |
| **Actors and roles** | | | | | | | | |
| 6. Integrating horizontal and vertical capacities (Lederach 1997) | A messy picture: changing policies and leaders at the top level, varying commitment at the middle level, reduced capacity building at community level due to financial climate | A lack of coordination across the vertical and horizontal capacities | Ministerial leadership, community empowerment and coordination at the middle range | Yes - Pyramid of actors reflected in delivery structures and mechanisms | Pyramid' of actors has no apex – community driven with middle range support at a community level | Some top-down and middle range actors, but limited skills to address division at the grass-roots level | Very strong – horizontal and vertical capacities are mutually reinforcing | High – need to develop 'job roles', skills and behaviours |
| 7.The Anderson-Olsen model – significant change needs to be translated to socio-political action (Anderson and Olsen 2003) | Varies due to localism. | 'More ' people involved in peacebuilding activities and creating change but political impasse and short-term funding impede progress | Political ownership across the agenda, for example the response to the review of hate crime demonstrates the practical and the political | Activity in all quadrants and translated into the socio-political sphere | No political engagement. 'More' people engaged through community work. More could potentially be achieved in the wider community if political support allowed this | Insufficient activity in all four quadrants and lack of action around underlying issues | Yes - Political leadership and cooperative model translates to both key people and more people in the socio-economic sphere. Members convene the system. | High – political leadership essential |
| 8. Change agents and drivers of change roles (Mitchell 2011) | Varies due to localism | They exist but lack of clarity of roles and recognition of such roles | Exist across government and partners and specific roles to support community planning at the local level | Community Cohesion Coordinators are strong local 'connectors' and support other change agents | Community development workers, Tension Monitoring Group, Developer. | Largely absent – insufficient people on the ground exploring alternative solutions | Culture of enabling change through leadership at all levels with district coordinators joining it up locally | High – significance of co-ordinators and connectors |

| Communities and community dynamics | England | Northern Ireland | Scotland | Wales | Nursing Home | Scout Hut | Oldham | Importance of concept to new narrative |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9. Dynamics that intensify or de-escalate conflicts (Mitchell 2011) | Not specifically mentioned | De-escalation still work in progress in some parts of the community | Account of cumulative effect of terror attacks elsewhere in raising tensions | Not tested | In de-escalation stage, symbols of separation and segregation remain. | Conforms to escalation dynamics. Lack of attention to de-escalation process | Ref Mitchell's methods for overcoming obstacles and changing direction | High – lessons to learn on investing in de-escalation process |
| 10. Compassionate communities (Clements 2012) | 'Strong integrated communities where people live, work, learn and socialise together, based on shared rights, responsibilities and opportunities' | Trust, equality and welfare are valued but safety and security are still drivers of community life | Vision for 'inclusive and respectful society' | Vision for 'inclusive communities based on equality and welfare' | Sharing space for care of elders provides setting for compassionate relationships to develop | Not yet recognised as part of the narrative here but food bank is good example of the possibilities | Cooperative ethos, values and 'thriving communities 'closely mirrors Clements' description | High – starting point of care rather than fear changes the emphasis |
| 11. Models of community development (Ledwith 2011) | VCS more a provider of services than empowering community voice | History of being de-radicalised and very dependent on public sector funding | More' a good way of getting things done' than 'a good way of getting things challenged' | Includes social and environmental justice goals – work in progress | Huge community engagement by experience and instinct – grass roots led | Limited to shared events | Asset based, coproduction | High – need a clear purpose |
| 12.Readiness (Robinson 2013) | Speaking English and economic inclusion feature in new strategy | Not a concept used – despite strong reference in Nursing Home | No reference to readiness | No reference to readiness | Building readiness is a central feature | Absent | Building readiness in economic development and other aspects of the lifecourse | High – term not commonly used but concept important |
| **Measuring success** | | | | | | | | |
| 13. Wellbeing and Resilience measure (Mguni and Bacon 2010) | Proposed new indicator set not specifically including assets or subjective measures | Measurement for Early Warning CPI, Peace monitoring and analysis | National Indicator set – including NI 11<br>'What doesn't happen' | Wellbeing of Wales indicators<br><br>Stories | No specific measurement system – more visible improvements | Very limited | Thriving Communities Index and NeBULA<br><br>Stories | High – Oldham model has great potential |
| 14. Cost Benefit analysis and SORI in relation to community development (nef 2010) and early action (Community Links 2012) | Extremely limited<br><br>Social Value Act relates to commissioned services | Extremely limited – more information on costs of failure | Useful report and approach to 'Preventative spending' | Social value features – but in relation to commissioning | Some known costs and some known financial benefits – not pulled together into one place | None | Not at present | High – need for some economic appraisal of the work |

## Chapter 7: Conclusions

This chapter revisits the context of the research, why the topic was chosen, the research questions, findings and conclusions, and the contribution to knowledge.

**Context and why this topic was chosen**

Over the decade of engaging in the field of tension monitoring in the United Kingdom, the work I have undertaken has generated a body of experience and understanding of the topic, and has contributed to practice, but has also thrown up some questions and contradictions. There was a need to reflect on the learning, bring an academic critique and new thinking to those experiences. There was a need to move beyond the tools and systems of tension monitoring and take a broader view.

The desire was to explore and learn more about the conditions that are successful in developing peaceful relationships and how tension and conflict could be exploited as an opportunity to generate change. A frequent experience was that attention was paid to situations where tensions were rising or had tipped over into a conflict and addressing the presenting issues, seeking to resolve those in the short term, but not investing time and resource into deeper issues and building something new.

Experience from tension monitoring had also surfaced the issues of roles and relationships between communities and agencies, and whether there was a shared approach and common goals. Again, a frequent experience was that those involved in monitoring were often close to communities but had little influence in agencies, so their knowledge and effectiveness was limited and often detached from decision making and planning. Similarly, whilst communities are central to addressing their own challenges and deciding their own futures, opportunities for community engagement, empowerment and the encouragement of community voice varied hugely from place to place. So actors, roles and working with communities posed a central set of questions.

**What the research sought to discover and how**

The intent of the research was to consider the purpose, theoretical frameworks, values and approaches to working with community tensions and the conditions for sustainable change. The aim was to identify a clearer narrative for working with community tensions which will enable all actors to engage in multifaceted, multi-layered and multiagency change in an integrated and holistic framework, with the ultimate purpose of promoting peaceful relations and compassionate communities.

The literature review opened up many possibilities and a range of relevant concepts and frameworks which framed the scope of the research and the objectives. The central question of the research was 'how can community tension and conflict be a catalyst for change and what are the conditions that enable this in the UK context?' The sub-questions asked, 'How can positive outcomes to short-term events or crises be built upon to address longer term, underlying tensions? 'What are the conditions which enable different stakeholders involved in community tensions to achieve positive impact and sustainable change?'

The research was predominantly qualitative. In order to consider the 'current narrative' research into the current legislative and policy context in each of the four nations of the UK was undertaken, with interviews with a senior government official and senior police officer in each country. The different histories, demographies and priorities of the devolved administrations, and England, demonstrated the challenges and the opportunities of different thinking each of the countries. The three case studies sought to look in greater depth at local challenges and enabled the testing of concepts from the literature review in three different contexts. The short pre-interview questionnaire provided a means to test and gauge current experience and perceptions.

**Findings and conclusions**

***Methodology***

The methodology enabled the research questions to be answered and combining the exploration of the four nations with three local studies allowed seven 'stories', contexts and sets of experiences to be brought to those questions. It enabled views from the top level and the grass roots.

The positive lens was particularly useful in helping people to identify the conditions that worked, in their experience, but did not preclude examples of where things had not gone well and the difficulties, or lead to any complacency regarding the need for ongoing vigilance and ever more careful, considered attention to the challenges and opportunities.

All of the concepts considered in the analysis were of considerable relevance to the topic. This is probably unsurprising as they were identified based on a level of prior knowledge and experience of the topic, but not of the concepts themselves. What was especially noticeable was that those concepts drawn from literature in the sphere of war and violent conflict did generally translate well to the domestic agenda, whether that was violent or threatening in other ways. In some cases there was evidence that the concept applied directly to the place, either confirming a positive application of that concept, albeit using different language, or exposing a deficit or challenge through the absence or very limited application of that concept or framework. As an example, in relation to Lederach's pyramid of actors and integrating horizontal and vertical capacities, Oldham demonstrated this very strongly, whereas Northern Ireland had a void at the high level and self-identified the problem of the lack of coordination and join up at all levels. So the model is relevant in both scenarios, where it is present and where it is absent.

***A catalyst for change***

The research showed that whilst community tension has previously been largely perceived as a threat, and the current definition reinforces that, it can also open up opportunities for constructive change that make a positive difference to communities. There is evidence that parts of the UK are thinking more holistically and longer term about community dynamics and looking at causes rather than reacting to events. All of the examples described at a country level or in more depth in the case studies involve some form of change, from prevention and early action, to short term or more fundamental change.

The degree to which the nature of change was clearly articulated, holistic and embedded varied across the study areas. Scotland and Wales had a long term vision mainstreamed through the system, from legislation through to communities. Northern Ireland, notwithstanding the difficulties, has a strategy towards building a united community and a clear desire to change the status quo and take the peace process further forward. The Green Paper for integration in communities in England sets out the government's plans to address the isolation experienced by some communities through, for example, lack of English language, unemployment or monocultural schools. The Nursing Home demonstrated a community held dream for a different future. Oldham was entirely based on a transformative change process and whilst the Scout Hut showed the least depth of change, the Forgotten Estates group and As Salaam did achieve their immediate objectives.

**The first conclusion,** therefore is to put forward an additional final sentence to the definition of community tension to open up this wider perspective, as follows:

> 'Community tension is a state of community dynamics that may threaten the peace and stability of communities or cause fear and anxiety in the whole or part of the community.
>
> *It may also be a catalyst for change.'*

This last sentence opens up the possibilities of seeing community tensions as offering opportunities to look beyond the immediate situation, to broaden the scope and ambition and to treat potential threats as prospects to see and do things differently. It offers an invitation to 'take the lid off' situations and delve deeper, rather than trying to 'keep the lid on' and avoid addressing the real causes and challenges. Of course there may be immediate dangers or specific threats to address, but that should not preclude a process or processes that generate exploration of more fundamental responses.

Regarding community tension as a catalyst for change enables a discontinuity and disruption of the status quo and affords the opportunity for breakthroughs to new understandings, behaviours and actions. It invites wider and deeper exploration, beyond monitoring.

***The conditions that enable change***

Applying a range of concepts from the academic literature to the national situations and case studies, the research indicated the conditions which enable tension and conflict to be turned into positive change.

All four countries and the three case study areas had tension monitoring systems and tools in place. At nation level these were police led and at local level more partnership led, including, particularly in Oldham, political engagement in the process. The many examples, documented in the research, of recent tensions and situations occurring indicates the need to keep up with, and preferably ahead of, local, national and international issues which are ever present and can be very fast moving. So there is a continued commitment to monitoring as a daily activity. The technical aspects of monitoring and early warning remain important. These include the 'Experienced, Evidenced, Potential' model, Community Impact Assessments and monitoring of open source information, underpinned by continuous community engagement through both formal and informal means.

But the research also demonstrated the wider picture in which tensions develop and the conditions which enable a longer term and more fundamental drive towards peaceful and sustainable communities. The first group of necessary conditions was that an area has a vision of change, a guiding set of values or principles towards a future where people are more equal and there is social, economic and environmental justice. To make a real difference, that vision needed to be transformational, a creative tension which envisaged apparent obstacles as opportunities for something more desirable. Where that transformational lens was absent, as in the Scout Hut scenario, change was shallow and the underlying problems remained. There are technical aspects to transformational change – processes and tools which help to structure ideas and bring different viewpoints, concerns and aspirations together, and these would include community and neighbourhood planning, theory of change, commissioning for transformation and related multilayered planning tools for 'whole system' change. However transformation also requires creativity, imagination, building relationships and systems alone are insufficient.

**The second conclusion,** therefore, is that working with tensions requires both technical and transformative approaches, attention to both proximate issues and underlying causes and to be both responsive in the short-term and strategic in the long-term. It requires

preventive activities, exploration of non-violent solutions and a means of progressively reducing underlying problems, rooted in a theory of change.

***Actors and roles***

To achieve this more holistic approach, the research confirmed the desire for, and desirability of, greater partnership and joint enterprise, multiple actors with mutually reinforcing roles. This was most effective when there was strong top-down and bottom-up leadership connected by a middle range acting together in a place, where organisational boundaries were blurred in favour of finding better outcomes for the people in that place. Political leadership was extremely desirable and highly valued where it was considered strong, visible and in touch, but there were situations where political leadership was weak, limited, absent or even a potentially negative force, so community or managerial leadership had stepped in to fill the void, as was the case in the Nursing Home scenario. The Anderson-Olsen model, that fundamental and sustainable change needs to be translated into the socio-political domain nevertheless was relevant in that case as it could be argued that, even though the success of the home was impacting on other adjacent initiatives, there was no obvious mechanism for wider transferability to other communities, nor an obvious route to share the learning and replicate the approach.

The presence of experienced co-ordinators at the community level added significantly to the ability to bring people together and support collaboration in the change processes and their roles were most effective when they were explicit, defined and recognised, as, for example, in Oldham and Wales. There was greatest potential where the pyramid of actors was connected to, and rooted in, the long term vision and reinforced by a culture of collaboration. Scotland, for example, also demonstrated coordination at the government level with officials specifically dedicated to joining up responses across government to support ministers, but also senior officials designated to support the community planning partnerships at the local level and ensuring a two-way flow of information, dialogue and action.

The analysis suggested that where there was clearer definition of roles and expectations for community leaders, statutory agencies and government departments, the desired partnerships were more effective. Oldham was the most explicit in the expectations of

individuals and communities, what communities should expect of agencies and the expectations of staff, and that through cooperation there would be a better outcome. Councillors convene the system and enable different parts of the system to convene and collaborate.

In **third conclusion**, integrating horizontal and vertical capacities of stakeholders, political leadership and activity in the socio-political domain, coordination at all levels, but in particular at the local level, and making roles explicit, are the key conditions for success in relation to actors.

***Community dynamics***

The research also identified a number of aspects of community dynamics which add to the current understanding of community tensions. The first was the dynamics of escalation and de-escalation. Whilst a great deal of time can be spent during the escalation of a situation, less time and attention is spent on de-escalation and specifically on understanding the dynamics of reversing the escalation process. This was most richly illustrated in the Scout Hut Case study but it has relevance in the Nursing Home area and is an immensely useful framework to assist thinking across the board. The concept makes more explicit the processes involved and could inform the dynamics, such as that illustrated in Scotland, of the progressive increase in tensions following a series of terrorist incidents in other parts of the UK or Europe, then the process to pull this back down through rebuilding relationships. This adds a further dimension to the importance of not only paying attention to tensions early and upstream but giving more weight to dynamics downstream and not falling into the trap of conflict perpetuation. Mitchell's methods of overcoming obstacles - changing leaders, changing leaders' and followers' minds, changing strategies, policy and behaviour, changing parties' environments and changing direction - have particularly strong resonance in Oldham and present a further contribution to the understanding and narrative of community dynamics, and the process of change.

The concept of sustainable peace and compassionate communities that place a higher value on trust, equality and welfare than safety and security, opened up a new line of thinking. The policy language is littered with words and phrases which have been used, discarded, replaced and frequently have different meanings to different people in different places at

different times. Many of these rely on a perceived future state of a community – such as 'cohesive', 'integrated' or 'safer and stronger'. Peaceful relations and compassionate communities come from more selfless human qualities of kindness, fairness and hospitality. This was illustrated in the Wales examples of welcoming Syrian refugees and in the way relationships developed at the Nursing Home. Oldham's thriving communities is perhaps the closest comparator. Whilst 'compassionate' is not currently used anywhere in the UK in this context, it would be a helpful to bring the agenda back towards thinking about the nature and quality of human relationships rather than new policy constructs around how communities should be organised.

The research confirmed that community engagement and empowerment are central features of working with tensions, however the degree to which that involved challenging power imbalances or building critical consciousness is questionable. If deep-seated differences, prejudices and resentments are to be addressed, then then these need to be surfaced in a constructive and supportive way that respects different perceptions, even if those perceptions are not necessarily reality. The 'Forgotten Estates' group still felt sufficiently forgotten to use this label on their building, even though they had achieved their goal of using the Scout Hut in the way they wanted. The findings showed that community development was highly valued and seen as essential but varied from a means of bringing people together for social activities, consultation to create plans and strategies, coproduction of services, through to problem solving and attention to sensitive issues, publically or behind the scenes. Making critical consciousness a more explicit part of community development in relation to tensions would be challenging but give the potential to dig deeper into people's fears and anxieties and face the real issues and concerns. However this does rely on people with the skills and time to build the necessary trust for this to happen.

The concept of readiness was not generally used or recognised, yet it featured very significantly in the Nursing Home study in particular, and without it the whole enterprise would have been diminished in the event that others, who already had experience and skills, would have taken up the opportunities.

The **fourth conclusion**, therefore, is that there are specific aspects of community dynamics that develop our understanding of community tensions and contribute to the change processes. Mitchell's dynamics of conflict escalation and de-escalation provide a valuable framework, both to support prevention by recognising the different stages in escalation and enabling earlier intervention, and in identifying the need for more rigorous attention to de-escalation and completing the dynamics of that process. Thinking about the nature of human relationships in terms of compassion and kindness shifts the lens away from a safety and security perspective, to care rather than fear. This perspective is reinforced by the Ledwith process of community development combining confidence, critical consciousness and collectivity, with critical conscious at the heart, and the process 'cemented together by the connections between people that are based on values of respect, trust, mutuality, reciprocity and dignity, and which result in conviviality, compassion and cooperation' (Ledwith 2011:3). In such communities, identifying assets and building on strengths, and enabling readiness to take up opportunities, provide a proactive, aspirational and motivating culture.

***Measuring success***

Understanding the conditions of success are, in part, affected by the ability to measure that success. Examples were given in the research where violence or disturbances 'didn't happen' when they were happening elsewhere, and these examples were not by accident but by engagement and vigilance. Other successes included visible changes in communities from physical regeneration, creating new symbols of progress to replace old symbols of decline. The research showed a number of performance management frameworks in use, using both objective data on social, economic and environmental indicators, but in some cases subjective data on people's perceptions of their own lives, their feelings about other people and their place. Alongside this, some models were developing that measure assets as well as problems and deficits.

The emerging Thriving Communities Index in Oldham, with the related NeBULA assessments, offers innovation from which there is good potential learning and replicability. The OECD framework for measuring trust also offers a contribution to measuring a key aspect of working with tensions which the research identified as elusive for some people.

Cost benefit and social value are underdeveloped in this context. It is suggested that this could be an effect of working with community tensions not going through a commissioning cycle and therefore the business processes of examining need, resource input, outcomes, options appraisal, procurement, delivery, review and evaluation have not been applied. So, establishing value for money, cost benefit analysis, the added social, economic and environmental value are uncalculated and potentially unrecognised, other than through an appreciation of the costs of failure. There is scope to develop this through future research.

In **fifth conclusion**, measuring success in relation to working with tensions is an emerging area. It includes recognising where there has been prevention through things that didn't happen but may have happened elsewhere, or might have happened previously in similar circumstances. Visible symbols of regeneration are important and objective measures of renewal equally so, with some caveats around population change and churn. Measuring community assets as well as vulnerabilities alongside subjective measures of community perceptions and attitudes are vital elements. Measuring trust and social value are areas for further research and development and would assist the business case for prevention activity. In all cases, involving communities in such measures and assessment, with regard to what matters to them most, is critical.

***A new definition for working with tensions***

Following on from the addition to the definition of community tensions and the conditions to achieve a positive impact and sustainable change, a potential new definition of working with community tensions has emerged. This is suggested, based on adapting the Acheson (1988) definition of public health, and encompasses the concepts described above.

> 'Working with tensions is the art and science of preventing hatred and violence, developing constructive futures, and promoting peaceful relations and compassionate communities, through the organised efforts of society'.

This definition builds on the initial hypothesis, that 'working with tensions' offers a starting point and aspiration for a more respectful and inclusive approach in which communities are active participants and architects of their futures and relationships, rather than simply monitoring or being monitored. Described as an art and science, it combines technical and transformational approaches and activities – creative efforts, building relationships and

imagining, as well as using tools and systems. It combines prevention of destructive behaviours with developing constructive futures and uses a language of care rather than fear with regard to human relationships. The 'organised efforts of society' reflects the strongly represented views in the research that this is a partnership activity, multilateral and multi-agency, and takes it out of a police led domain.

***The potential for a new context***

These conclusions lead into a further conceptual conclusion and proposition that working with community tensions could be better located in the sphere of wellbeing. Wellbeing is about feeling good and functioning well. It is a 'a dynamic state, in which the individual is able to develop their potential, work productively and creatively, build strong and positive relationships with others, and contribute to their community. It is enhanced when an individual is able to fulfil their personal and social goals and achieve a sense of purpose in society' (Foresight 2008). The proposition here goes beyond the prevention of violence as a health issue because of the consequences of death, disability, mental ill-health and substance misuse and the specific safeguarding needs to prevent violence against children, elders, sexual violence and self-violence as well as interpersonal violence. Rather it flips the coin to a positive approach to promoting personal wellbeing and its contribution to wider community wellbeing.

There are a number of potential benefits here. Wellbeing has an explicit statutory framework, duties and requirements in England and Wales and forms part of the community planning process in Scotland and Northern Ireland. By building work with community tensions into existing frameworks which are already community focused, partnership driven and supported, and with a horizon on the future, there is greater potential to contribute to the whole picture, which is both more efficient and likely to be more effective. Building on the synergies with a public health approach to violence reduction identified in the research, both in Scotland and internationally, the focus on wellbeing includes benefits to individuals and society as a whole and involves having both positive experiences and positive relationships. It involves action across the lifecourse and addressing social determinants of health and wellbeing, including the educational, economic and environmental factors, having social connections and a sense of purpose and control.

It is a universal approach, with proportionate targeting. Using the Marmot concept of proportionate universalism, it concerns all communities and avoids stigmatising groups in a way which has had a potential detrimental effect on some communities and places found in previous approaches, for example the experiences of the Muslim communities in Prevent or the places involved in the 2001 disturbances. There may be a need for proportionate attention to some groups and places within the context of the universal approach. This would not only mean the most deprived or vulnerable to tensions but also those in the middle who can be at risk, but can be forgotten. Placing this as part of the wellbeing agenda takes it more clearly out of a community safety or counter-terror realm as a prevailing lens, into how people experience their lives and relate to each other. It brings wellbeing and peaceful relations together.

**Contribution to knowledge**

This study has sought to make a contribution to knowledge by bringing international research, concepts and ideas from different fields of learning and testing and applying these to the domestic situation. It draws on the published works from several disciplines including violence prevention and early warning, peace and conflict transformation and community development, but also from research in public health and public service reform, and combines these in a new way. It extends the scholarly work of others into a defined topic and geography in an original approach, which has not been done previously in any comprehensive way in this specific field in the UK.

The research also identified that there are lessons to be learned from what works and that there is much to learn from success and the conditions that enable success. Whilst not unique, it is more common in this sphere of activity that things going wrong are the prompt for analysis and debate.

The identification of new definitions offers a different paradigm on the topic which addresses the gaps and contradictions in the existing approach identified at the outset.

Finally, the research set out towards a new narrative for working with community tensions. As well as exploiting the theoretical concepts and frameworks from the literature, there was

a wealth of wisdom and experience amongst the interviewees in the four nations and three case studies – people working at different levels and in different capacities, but facing issues relating to community tensions almost every day. Sometimes they may not have had the words to describe how they worked, and their practice was more instinctive or intuitive, but reflected a sensitivity and care about the communities they lived or worked in. So, the emerging narrative, summarised in these conclusions, brings together the scholarly literature with the lived experience of the participants in the research.

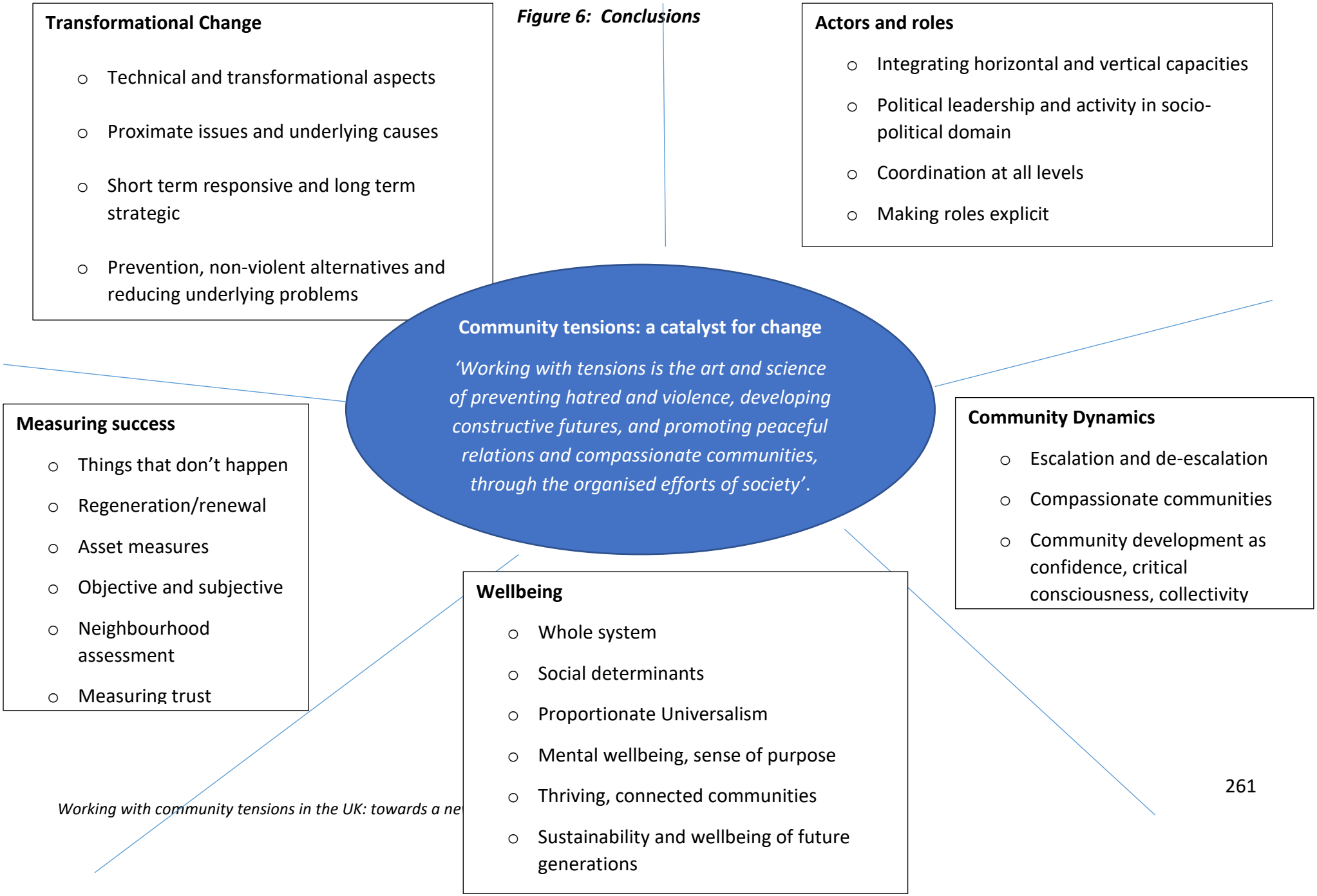


***Figure 6: Conclusions***

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## Appendix 1: Ethical Approval Application

1. Project Information

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**Appendix 2: Participant Information Sheet**

## Participant Information Sheet

**Study Title**

Working with Community tensions: towards a new narrative

**The purpose of the research**

The purpose of this study is to understand more about tension and conflict in local communities and the conditions which support positive and sustainable change.

**Participants in the study**

The study will involve interviews and focus groups with adult participants drawn from statutory and voluntary agencies and local communities. The only criteria will be that the participants will have had some experience of a situation or situations where there have been community tensions.

**Voluntary participation**

Participation is entirely voluntary. If you change your mind about taking part in the study you can withdraw at any point during the interview or focus group and at any time in the two weeks following the discussion. You can contact me by email to do this and the information you provide will not be included in the study.

**Taking part**

This will involve an interview or group discussion lasting up to one hour. A record will be kept of the discussion and you will be given a copy of the notes. In some cases there may be need for follow up to clarify any specific points – this may be done by phone or email.

**Advantages and disadvantages of taking part**

The most important advantage is that you will have the opportunity to get your views across and your concerns and ideas listened to and recorded. This is a challenging topic and sometimes there is a confusion of purpose and intention between agencies and with communities and it will be important to hear different voices and experiences. The learning will be used to support all of the different participants involved in working with tensions so that there is greater clarity for everyone involved.

There should be no disadvantage in taking part – but if any aspect of the interview makes you feel uncomfortable or you do not wish to answer then you can skip the question and we can move on or you can withdraw. It is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers.

**Confidentiality**

Your identity will be confidential and your views will be included in the research in general terms which will not enable you to be identified specifically.

The consent forms are stored separately and securely until the research is fully completed and then destroyed.

**Application of the research**

It is intended that the research will be used in a number of contexts:

- It will be written up and presented as part of a PhD study and contribute to academic learning
- Some aspects will be included in a manual to support working with community tensions in Northern Ireland
- It will be presented to policy makers and agencies at the local and national level to support improvements in decision making and practice

**The researcher**

The researcher is Linden Rowley, a postgraduate at the Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations at Coventry University. Linden has experience of working with community tensions and with different agencies and diverse communities and has developed resources and training in this area of activity.

**Appendix 3: Informed Consent form**

**Consent Statement**

Participant Reference Code . . . . . .

I have read and understand the attached participant information and by signing below I agree to participate in this study.

I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study without giving a reason at any time during the study itself.

I understand that I also have the right to change my mind about participating in the study up to two weeks after the interview is concluded.

I give permission for the interview to be recorded.

Signed . . . . . .

Print Name . . . . . .

Witnessed by . . . . . .

Print Name . . . . . .

Researcher's signature . . . . . .

**Appendix 4: Initial questionnaire for police officers**
**Ring the letter that most closely reflects your view or experience**

**1. The PRIMARY purpose of tension monitoring is :**

A: National security, counter-terrorism, Prevent

B: Local community issues

C: Public order

**2. Tension monitoring in my area is currently:**

A: Police led

B: Partnership led

C: Community led

**3. In two years' time I would like to see tension monitoring in my area:**

A: Police led

B: Partnership led

C: Community led

**4. Currently tension monitoring is:**

A: A top-down process

B: A bottom-up process

C: Equally top-down and bottom- up

**5. Currently tension monitoring in my area is primarily:**

A: Predictive

B: Reactive

**6. Currently tension monitoring in my area is primarily:**

A: addressing small scale or 'nuanced' aspects of community tension

B: about big events or major issues

**7. I think tension monitoring is primarily about:**

A: Stopping bad things from happening

B: Helping good things to happen

**8. Overall, I think that the emphasis in tension monitoring is:**

A: Driven by seeking to avoid the costs of failure

B: Driven by seeking to invest in the benefits of successful outcomes

**9. Overall, I think that the emphasis in tension monitoring is:**

A: Concerned with short-term issues and events

B: Concerned with long-term issues

**10. In my experience tension monitoring**

A: has mainly been effective

B: has mainly been ineffective

**Appendix 5: Pre-interview questionnaire for participants**

**Community tension – what does it mean to me?**

**Ring the letter that you most agree with or reflects your experience.**

1. **I think the main focus on community tension is about:**

   A: National security, counter-terrorism, Prevent

   B: Local community issues and concerns

   C: Public order

2. **At present the lead responsibility for working with community tensions locally is:**

   A: The Police

   B: The council

   C: The community

   D: a partnership between agencies and communities

3. **In two years' time I would like to see work with community tensions in my area:**

   A: Police led

   B: Council led

   C: Community led

   D: Partnership led

4. **Currently working with community tension is:**

   A: A top-down process – the agencies initiate responses

   B: A bottom-up process – the community initiates responses

   C: Equally top-down and bottom- up - it depends on the situation

5. **Currently working with community tensions in my area is primarily:**

   A: Predictive – we try to anticipate problems and try to prevent violence

   B: Reactive – we react to problems when things have boiled over

**6. Currently the tensions that affect me or my area most are:**

A: small scale or 'nuanced' aspects of community tension, such as hate crimes or feeling scared and insecure in day-to-day life

B: big events, national and international issues

**7. I think that when there are community tensions locally our priority is:**

A: Stopping bad things from happening

B: Helping good things to happen

**8. Overall, I think that the emphasis in working with tension in communities is:**

A: Driven by seeking to avoid the costs of failure

B: Driven by seeking to invest in the benefits of successful outcomes

**9. Overall, I think that the emphasis in working with tension in communities is:**

A: Concerned with long-term issues affecting the community

B: Concerned with short-term issues and events

**10. In my experience working with tension**

A: is about calming things down

B: is about looking at how things might change