Understanding Residential Mobility and Immobility in Challenging Neighbourhoods

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CRESR
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Understanding Residential Mobility and Immobility in Challenging Neighbourhoods

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Acknowledgements

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Executive Summary

As part of a study a major on-going study of the links between poverty and place - *Living Through Change in Challenging Neighbourhoods* - which is being funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, this working paper examines the issue of residential mobility and immobility in six deprived neighbourhoods across Great Britain.

It pays particular attention to the importance of the labour market as a factor influencing residential mobility. This is because it has been argued by a number of politicians and academics in this country that it *should* be a key driver of mobility in deprived neighbourhoods, as they house a disproportionately large amount of workless residents, a population group who *should* be willing to 'get on their bikes' and move to areas with greater employment opportunities.

Previous research into residential mobility has an examined a number of aspects of the phenomenon and it has been explored in a number of ways. For example, some studies have been concerned with exploring actual past residential mobility while others have been concerned with predicting and understanding intended future mobility. This study is concerned with both past and future mobility: in addition to highlighting the factors driving past residential mobility (and immobility) for residents in our case study areas it also concerned with identifying the factors driving future mobility.

The paper draws on data generated from in-depth interviews with the 179 residents that comprised the 'wave one' survey undertaken by the study team in late 2007/early 2008 and to, a lesser extent, data garnered from the 'wave two' survey, which comprised interviews with 97 residents in the spring and early summer of 2009.

Key findings

- Most residents in our sample could be described as being immobile i.e. they had not moved in the recent past and did not intend to do so in the immediate future. However, the majority of these were not immobile because they were 'trapped' in their neighbourhoods but because they were happy to remain living within them.

- The labour market did not emerge as a being a significant driver of residential mobility for residents in our case studies and not one resident reported that they wanted to move neighbourhood to enhance their labour market opportunities or take up work elsewhere. Furthermore, for those residents who had 'got on their bikes' and moved relatively long distances to reside in their current neighbourhood, the labour market did not appear to be a significant contributory factor behind their decision to do so.

- The research identified a multitude of push pull factors for residents in our case studies. It was possible to categorise most of them under three broad categories, which emerged as being the key drivers of mobility in our case studies: factors

relating to the social, cultural and physical characteristics of place; factors relating to family and friends; and factors relating to the home.

- A number of push pull factors relating to 'place' appeared to play an important role in shaping residential mobility in our case studies. Some of these related to the physical attributes of a neighbourhood including: its location; its perceived 'attractiveness'; and inextricably linked to this, the presence of green spaces and water in the neighbourhood, whether in the form of a river or, especially, the sea. And some factors related to the social characteristics of a neighbourhood including social ties and interaction and perceived levels of crime and anti-social behaviour. Finally, one push pull factor relating to place had both physical and social dimensions: the quality of neighbourhood infrastructure and amenities in an area, as these were found to be important arenas for social interaction within neighbourhoods.

- For many residents in our six case studies it was the need to live close to their family and friends that appeared to be the biggest push pull factors in their lives and for a large proportion it was the desire to live close to their family that had 'pulled' them to their place of residence.

Reflections for policy

- A number of academics and policy makers have argued that the housing system in this country has acted as a 'check' on its labour market and that if it could be 'freed-up', workless and low paid residents looking for work, many of whom are located in deprived neighbourhoods, could (and would) move neighbourhoods to find work. But the analysis presented earlier suggests that this will not be case as the labour market did not act as a significant push pull factor for residents in our case studies and very few had moved home for employment related reasons. Moreover, and perhaps more importantly, relatively few reported that it was a factor that would shape their future housing decisions. And linked to this, none of the residents that reported that they wanted to move neighbourhoods attributed this aspiration to labour market related factors. Therefore, this suggests that, all other things being equal, attempts to promote labour market driven mobility amongst workless and low paid residents living in deprived neighbourhoods are likely to be unsuccessful.

- Furthermore, the analysis presented in this paper suggests that greater mobility may not be the positive and desirable phenomenon that many academic and policy makers argue it is. This is because it appears that many workless residents in deprived neighbourhoods are only able to 'get by' in often very difficult and challenging circumstances precisely because they are immobile, as the neighbourhood provides them with a vital resource: the support of their friends and family. For these residents moving away from the neighbourhood would deprive them of this much needed resource, with potentially negative consequences.

- The research has highlighted the importance of 'public' social spaces within neighbourhoods as mediums for social interaction, which have been referred to as third places of interaction after the home (first place) and workplace (second place). Where possible, efforts should be made to retain and improve these places.

- There needs to be a rethink about the language associated with low mobility as the connotations associated with the terms associated with it are mainly negative, with immobility appearing to be perceived as being a 'failure' to move and immobile

residents as being 'failed' mobile residents. But given the positive impact that immobility can have, which this study has clearly demonstrated, and the fact that most for people living in this country it is the norm, and not a state of 'failure', more positive epithets are perhaps needed when discussing the phenomenon. So when referring to communities with low levels of mobility it may be more appropriate and helpful to describe them using more positive terms such as 'settled' or 'stable'.

1.   Introduction

This working paper examines the issue of residential mobility and immobility[1] in six deprived neighbourhoods across Great Britain. It is one of a number of outputs to emerge from a major on-going study of the links between poverty and place - *Living Through Change in Challenging Neighbourhoods* - which is being funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. The study, which began in 2008 and will be completed at the end of this year, involves exploring the experiences, attitudes and perceptions of residents living in six deprived neighbourhoods across England, Scotland and Wales, over a three year period. Although the study has drawn on some "non-traditional" research techniques such as solicited diary keeping, *photo novella*, and participatory arts, the principal way that it has done so is by undertaking in-depth interviews with residents.

These are being conducted over three 'waves.' Wave 1, which took place in the spring and summer of 2008 involved the study team interviewing 180 residents in the six case study areas. A year later, 97 of them were re-interviewed as part of the Wave 2 survey. The Wave 3 survey, which took place in May and June of this year, involved many of these residents being interviewed again, ensuring that experiences and perceptions of some have been tracked over a three year period.

The study's six case studies are: *Amlwch*, a small town on the northern tip of Anglesey (Ynys Môn), which has suffered rapid economic decline in recent years; *West Kensington*, an ethnically mixed area comprising two social housing estates in inner west London; *Oxgangs*, a social housing estate located next to one of the most affluent suburbs in Edinburgh; *West Marsh*, an area with relatively little social housing located close to the centre of Grimsby; *Wensley Fold*, an ethnically and 'tenure' mixed area in Blackburn; and finally, *Hillside*, a social housing area in Knowsley (further information about the case studies is provided in their 'profiles' in Appendix 1).

The areas are all in the lower two deciles of the relevant national deprivation index, and were selected to represent broad differences in the extent of diversity, connectivity and residential mobility according to relevant social indicators. At this juncture it is worth noting one other important point about the case study areas: that four of them – Oxgangs, Wensley Fold, West Kensington and Hillside – have been the site of major regeneration work, with the latter two being the site of New Deal for Communities programme.

Drawing on the experiences of residents in all six areas, this paper, then, explores residential mobility in our case studies with particular attention focusing on highlighting its key drivers. In doing so, it examines the importance of the labour market as a factor influencing residential mobility. This is because, as will be explored in the next section, it has been argued by a number of politicians and academics in this country that it *should* be a key driver of mobility in deprived neighbourhoods, as they house a disproportionately large amount of workless residents, a population group who *should* be willing to 'get on their bikes' and move to areas with greater employment opportunities.

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[1] In order to avoid repetition, for the remainder of the paper the term 'residential mobility' is used in its broadest sense so that it also captures immobility.

Significantly, this is clearly view of the current government whose Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Ian Duncan Smith, noted in a recent interview on Sky News:

> *The second thing is to remember something else. In the UK today under the last government we have created almost ghettos of poverty where people are static, unable to get work because there isn't any work there, unable therefore to get to work because the salaries, the wages aren't high enough so they can't get there and they are stuck so we have got two and three generations unemployed in households and whilst there has been more work created over the last 15 years, actually most of that has gone to households that already have work... Most people I meet on these housing estates, they desperately want work and they are trapped and it is trying to help them find a way out.*
> (Sky News, 2010)

The paper is divided into five sections, including this one. Section two seeks to locate the research within the broader policy and academic context. Section three explores the nature of mobility within our case studies while section four highlights the drivers of residential mobility within them. This section also explores the extent to which the labour market is a driver of residential mobility in our case study areas. As this working paper has been produced as part of a study that has been funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, it pays particular attention to the implications for policy to emerge from the research, and the last section highlights these.

2. Research and Policy Context

The last forty years has seen a growing interest amongst members of the policy community in this country in residential mobility in deprived neighbourhoods. This interest has arisen from a concern that the housing system in the UK has hampered the labour market in this country, and as a result, put a break on economic growth. This is because, it has been argued, housing supply has not allowed residents to move relatively easily from one area to another thereby (*in theory*) preventing them from moving from unemployment 'hotspots' to areas of high employment.

This was clearly the view of the Conservative Government that came to power in 1979 who were keen for workless residents in deprived neighbourhoods to 'get on their bikes' and move to areas with greater labour market opportunities:

> *We cannot ignore the price unemployment today is exacting. I know these problems. I grew up in the 1930s with an unemployed father. He didn't riot. He got on his bike and looked for work and he kept looking until he found it.*
> (Norman Tebbit, 1981)

The appeal of this view has not been eroded with time and two of the most important policy reviews undertaken in the housing arena for the Labour Government of Tony Blair, most of whose findings were accepted by it – the *Barker* and *Hills* reports – concluded that housing supply acted as a check on the labour market in this country. The foreword of the *Barker Report* (Barker 2004), which presents the key findings to emerge from the economist Kate Barker's Review of housing supply in the UK, notes:

> *A weak supply of housing contributes to macroeconomic instability and hinders labour market flexibility, constraining economic growth….The UK should have a more flexible housing market.*
> (op.cit, p1)

In a similar vein, one of the key conclusions of Professor John Hill's review of social housing (Hills, 2007) was that it acts as a break on the labour market and economic growth by making it very difficult for its tenants, many of whom, of course, are located in deprived neighbourhoods, to move home.

> *By Spring 2006 more than half of those of working age living in social housing were without paid work, twice the national rate…… Even controlling for a very wide range of personal characteristics, the likelihood of someone in social housing being employed appears significantly lower than those in other tenures. There is no sign of a positive impact on employment of the kind that the better incentives that sub-market rents might be expected to give. Potential explanations of this include: the way those with the greatest needs even within any category are screened into social housing, but out of other tenures; particular fears about loss of benefits on moving into work within the social sector; the location of social housing and "neighbourhood" effects from its concentration in deprived areas; possible "dependency" effects of welfare provision; and the difficulty of moving home to get a*

job once someone is a social tenant. There is no evidence on the relative importance of these factors, but the rate of employment-related mobility within social housing is strikingly low. Nationally, one in eight moves is associated with work, but only a few thousand social tenants each year move home for job-related reasons while remaining as social tenants (even within the same area), out of a total of nearly four million.
(op.cit, p12)

The Hills Report conclusion that social housing acts as a check on labour mobility was enthusiastically received by the New Labour Government and its housing ministers at (around) the time that it was produced: Yvette Cooper and Caroline Flint. The latter, who was particularly of critical of the role of social housing called for the sector to be reformed in order to allow greater mobility within it and from it, in a speech to the Fabian Society in February 2008:

Today, more than half of all households in the social sector have no working aged adults employed. This has been called a 'collapse' in employment rates among social tenants. And it's a major contributor to inter-generational poverty - with some children growing up without ever seeing an adult get up and off to work in the morning. Originally, council housing brought together people from different social backgrounds and professions but this has declined. We need to think radically and start a national debate about how we can reverse this trend, to build strong, diverse estates.
(Flint, 2008)

The debate that Flint called for did materialise, with their being considerable discussion (and concern) amongst the policy and practitioners community about possible reform, although the reform she called for never took place.

In addition to Barker and Hills, a number of other academics, most of whom also have backgrounds in economics, have also problematised the relative immobility of residents in deprived neighbourhoods. For example, in 1998, Andrew Henley (Henley, 1998, p414) noted that while *"immobile households might not per se represent a pressing economic or social problem"* they *"seriously inhibit the ability of the labour market to match vacancies with potential employees."* In a similar vein, Boheim and Taylor (2002) note that the failure of workless residents to move home has had an adverse affect on the labour market in this country.

More recently, the economic historian Tim Leunig, writing with James Swaffield (Leunig and Swaffield, 2007), called for residents in the North of England, which was characterised as having a scarcity of jobs and a disproportionately large amount of deprived neighbourhoods with 'failed' labour markets, to move to the South, to take up some of the many jobs in the region, and to drive growth within it, and therefore the country as a whole.

Underpinning these arguments are the presumptions: i) that the labour market is – and should always be - an important driver of the locational preferences of workless and low paid residents living in deprived neighbourhoods; and, ii) more of them would move to areas with good labour market opportunities if a freed-up and rejuvenated housing system in this country allowed them to do so. This paper provides some insight into the validity of these presumptions by exploring the views of residents in six deprived neighbourhoods across Great Britain. In doing so, it considers the broad range of factors driving residential mobility, and perhaps, more importantly, immobility in these areas.

This paper is timely in a number of ways. First, although there is a large and growing literature which has sought specifically to unpick residential mobility (Bailey and Livingston, 2008), it is limited in a number of ways. For example, it is largely an American literature. While it is important not to overstate this issue as much of the excellent work undertaken by American academics in the field has international relevance (see for example, Speare, 1974, Varady, 1983 and Clark and Ledwith, 2006) the relative uniqueness of the American situation in terms of residential mobility – it has a comparatively high mobility rate - to some extent undermines its value. In 2008/9, 12.5 per cent of the American population moved home (US Census Bureau, 2010). This compares to 7.9 per cent of residents in England (in 2007/08) who did the same and the one in ten people (on average) in the Netherlands who move home every year (Feitjen and Van Haam, 2009, p2108).

However, there is a growing UK centred literature on residential mobility which provides a valuable insight into this issue in this country. Studies include Burrows (1999), Pawson, and Bramley (2000) and, as noted earlier, Boheim and Taylor (2002) and Henley (1998). Five studies are of particular relevance to this study: Cheshire *et al* (2003); Cole *et al* (2007); Kearns and Parkes (2003); Bailey and Livingston (2008); and Rabe and Taylor (2009).

Turning first to the former study, drawing on data gleaned from an evaluation of the Harlesden City Challenge programme, Cheshire *et al* (2003) examined the characteristics of outmovers from their study area and noted that they were significantly less likely to be unemployed.

Kearns and Parkes (2003) examined the main drivers of residential mobility for a sample 3,366 residents across England derived from the 1991 and 1996 English House Condition Surveys. In doing so, they highlighted the main drivers for residents living in poor neighbourhoods. They found residential attributes relating to the home to be the most important drivers with neighbourhood attributes fulfilling a less important role. However, three factors relating to the neighbourhood did emerge as being important: the trajectory of a neighbourhood and, more specifically, whether it was perceived to be in decline; 'local disorder' i.e. issues relating to personal, home and car security; and *"the surrounding environment (covering issues of appearance, cleanliness and nuisance like dogs, traffic and condition of the pavements)"* (Kearns and Parkes, 2003, p846). Significantly, they also found that only one per cent of residents who reported that they wanted to move attributed their desire to do so to employment related factors.

The study undertaken by Ian Cole and colleagues at CRESR as part of the national evaluation of the New Deal for Communities (NDC) programme also makes a valuable contribution in the field. Using a range of statistical techniques, and drawing on a sample of 19,500 residents across the 39 NDC Partnership areas, the study highlighted the key drivers of mobility and immobility for three mobility groups. Although the key findings to emerge from this study will be considered in the next section it is worth noting here that the authors found employment factors to be a relatively unimportant driver of residential mobility in NDC areas.

Using 2001 Census data, Bailey and Livingston (2008) examined migration flows from deprived neighbourhoods in England and Scotland and explored the impact these flows had on them, with particular attention focussing on the impact in areas subject to regeneration programmes. Their analysis supports the idea that selective migration is

undermining attempts to regenerate deprived neighbourhoods although they note that its overall impact is relatively small and should not be overstated:

> In relation to reduce spatial segregation, the finding support the idea that ABIs are fighting an uphill struggle, with selective migration undermining their efforts, but they also suggest that the size of this problem should not be overstated.
> (Bailey and Livingston, 2008, p958)

Rabe and Taylor (2009) examined the relationship between neighbourhood quality (adjustments) and life-course events and residential mobility drawing on data derived from the British Household Panel Survey and Indices of Multiple Deprivation. They concluded: *"that not all life-course events that are associated with moves lead to neighbourhood quality adjustments."* (Rabe and Taylor, 2009: ii)

A further limitation of the literature on residential mobility in terms of its relevance to this study is that most of the studies that have been undertaken in the field have been *quantitative* in their approach. These include the four British mobility studies highlighted above. While these studies and other recent quantitative studies such as Clark *et al.,* (2006), Andersen (2008) and Feijten and Van Ham (2009) provide us with valuable insights into the key drivers of mobility they say little about *how* and *why* these drivers are important to residents. It has been argued that an insight into these important issues can only be obtained by employing a *qualitative* research approach (Wallace, 2004; Winstanley *et al*, 2004; Smith *et al*, 2006).

However, in recent times this approach has become more common. For example, drawing on in-depth interviews with recent movers, Hickman *et al* (2007), in a study funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, highlighted the key drivers of residential mobility in four neighbourhoods in the Yorkshire and Humber region of England, two of which were relatively deprived.

At this point, it is also worth noting that studies in other academic 'disciplines' have also shed light on the phenomenon of residential mobility. Given that one of the aims of the paper is to explore the extent to which labour market opportunities shape the propensity of residents to move home, it is perhaps worth reflecting here that the literature on labour markets does partially address the issue. For example, a recent study of social housing and worklessness highlighted the key factors driving the residential mobility decisions of the tenants interviewed as part of the study (Fletcher *et al,* 2008).

This study is particularly relevant to this paper because the authors note that for the 107 social housing tenants they interviewed in three local authority areas (Derby, Sheffield and Islington) across England labour market opportunity opportunities were *not* a key driver of their residential mobility decisions. This was also the conclusion of Fletcher (2009), who focused on the housing decisions of fifteen residents in one of the neighbourhoods – the Manor Estate - that formed part of the Sheffield case study in the aforementioned study.

Second, the paper is timely because with unemployment growing in this country and with it predicted to grow in the future as the impact of austerity measures are felt across the country – the Office for Budget Responsibility estimates that 610,000 jobs will be 'lost' in the public sector over the next six years (BBC, 2010) - and with the party who traditionally have been most concerned with supply side issues, the Tories, now (co)holding power at Westminster, central government is likely to pay even greater attention to the issue of residential mobility in deprived neighbourhoods and the

propensity of residents living there to move home for employment reasons. And, as noted in the preceding section, we are already seeing evidence of this.

3. Approach to the Research

Previous research into residential mobility has an examined a number of aspects of the phenomenon and it has been explored in a number of ways. For example, some studies have been concerned with exploring *actual* past residential mobility while others have been concerned with predicting and understanding intended *future* mobility. Therefore, it is important here to be clear about the focus of this paper. It is concerned with both past and future mobility: in addition to highlighting the factors driving *past* residential mobility (and immobility) for residents in our case study areas it also concerned with identifying the factors driving *future* mobility.

While the paper draws on data derived from both the Wave 1 and 2 surveys, more reference is made to data garnered from interviews undertaken as part of the first wave. This is because more time was devoted within them to exploring the issue of residential mobility than in interviews undertaken as part of Wave 2, which only addressed the issue as part of a broader exploration of how respondents' lives has changed in the last year. In the Wave 1 interview the following issues were explored with respondents: their housing history; how they came to be living in their current property and neighbourhood; the factors driving their residential preferences; and their future housing intentions.[2]

Before moving on to consider the research findings it is important to make a contextual observation about the issue of mobility in our case study areas. That is, in line with the picture at the national level, residential mobility in all of our case studies is low with most residents being immobile: in the case study area with the highest turnover rate – West Marsh - only a little over one in ten residents (13.2 per cent) had moved home in the one year period between July 2007 and July 2008. Moreover, the gap in turnover between the highest turnover area, West Marsh, and the lowest, Amlwch (4.2 per cent) is relatively small.

This turnover data has been provided by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Small Area Popular Estimates Team. It uses migration counts that have been derived from patient register data for July 2007 and July 2008. The data does not include international in-or out-migrants, or persons who moved to/from elsewhere within the UK who had a GP registered address outside England and Wales at either 1 July 2007 or 30 June 2008. It also does not include population movement within Middle Super Output Areas (MSOA). While it also important to note that the MSOAs are larger than the case study neighbourhood areas this does, however, provide the most up to date estimate of the scale of likely turnover in the immediate area. The turnover rates for the other case studies where comparable data is available are: West Kensington:12.6 per cent; Blackburn: 9.7 per cent; and Knowsley: 6.5 per cent it was not possible to obtain a figure for Oxgangs is not available). The figure for England and Wales as a whole for the same time period was 7.9 per cent.

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[2] It had been hoped when the project was conceived that the wave two sample would include a small number of 'outmovers' i.e. residents who had moved out of a case study area to move to another neighbourhood. However, although we spoke to a number of residents who had moved *within* our case study areas, in line with the experiences of other studies, tracking outmovers proved very difficult and we were only able to speak to one.

It is also worth making one final contextual point about the issue of mobility in our case study areas – that is there is a scarcity of affordable housing in all of them with the problem being particularly acute in West Kensington, Oxgangs and Amlwch.

4. Residential Mobility within the Case Study Areas

4.1 Introduction

The 180 residents who took part in the Wave 1 survey were asked to indicate how long they had lived at their current address for: as Figure 4.1. reveals, 86 per cent reported that they had done so for more than a year, with 14 per cent indicating that they had moved home in the last year. The response to this question varied across the case studies with residents in Wensley Fold being most likely to indicate that they had moved home - 8 of the 30 residents interviewed there reported that they had done so – with those in West Kensington being least likely to respond in this fashion. Indeed, none of the 28 residents we interviewed there had moved home in the last year.

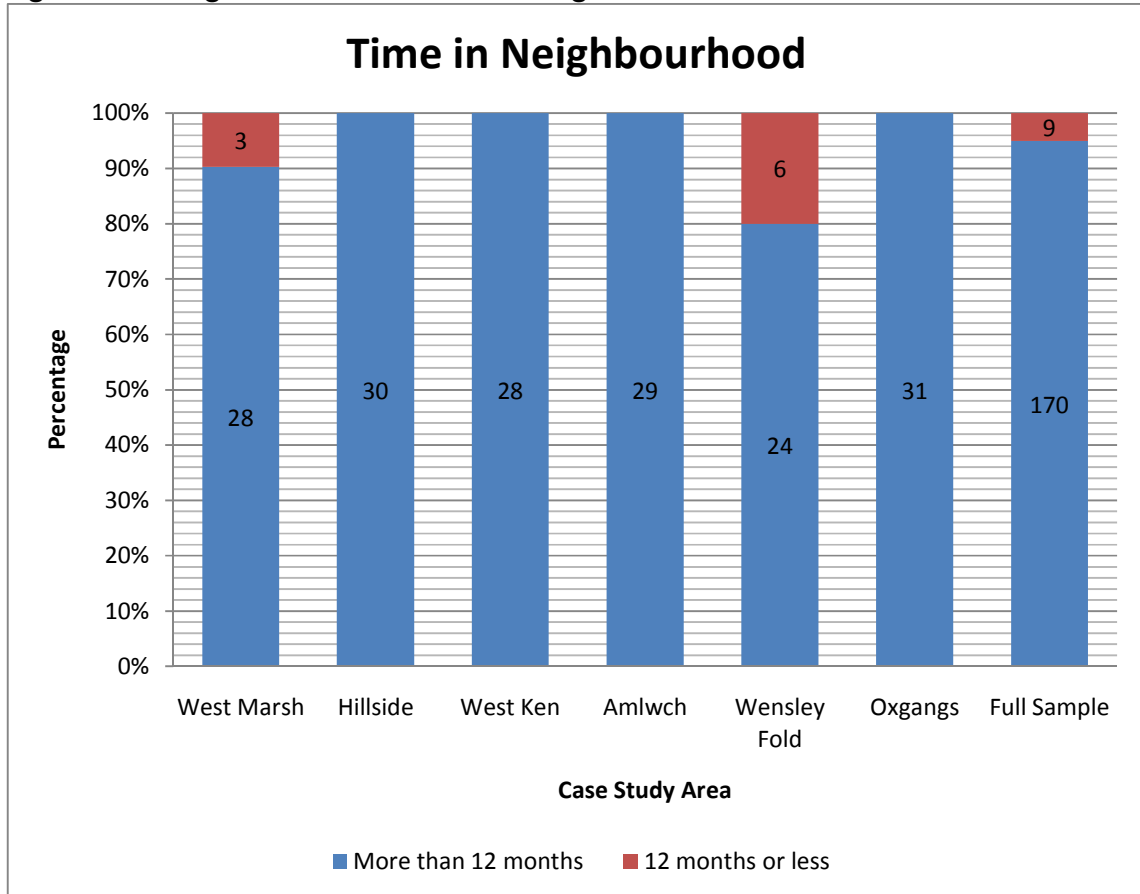**Figure 4.1. Length of Residence at Current Address**
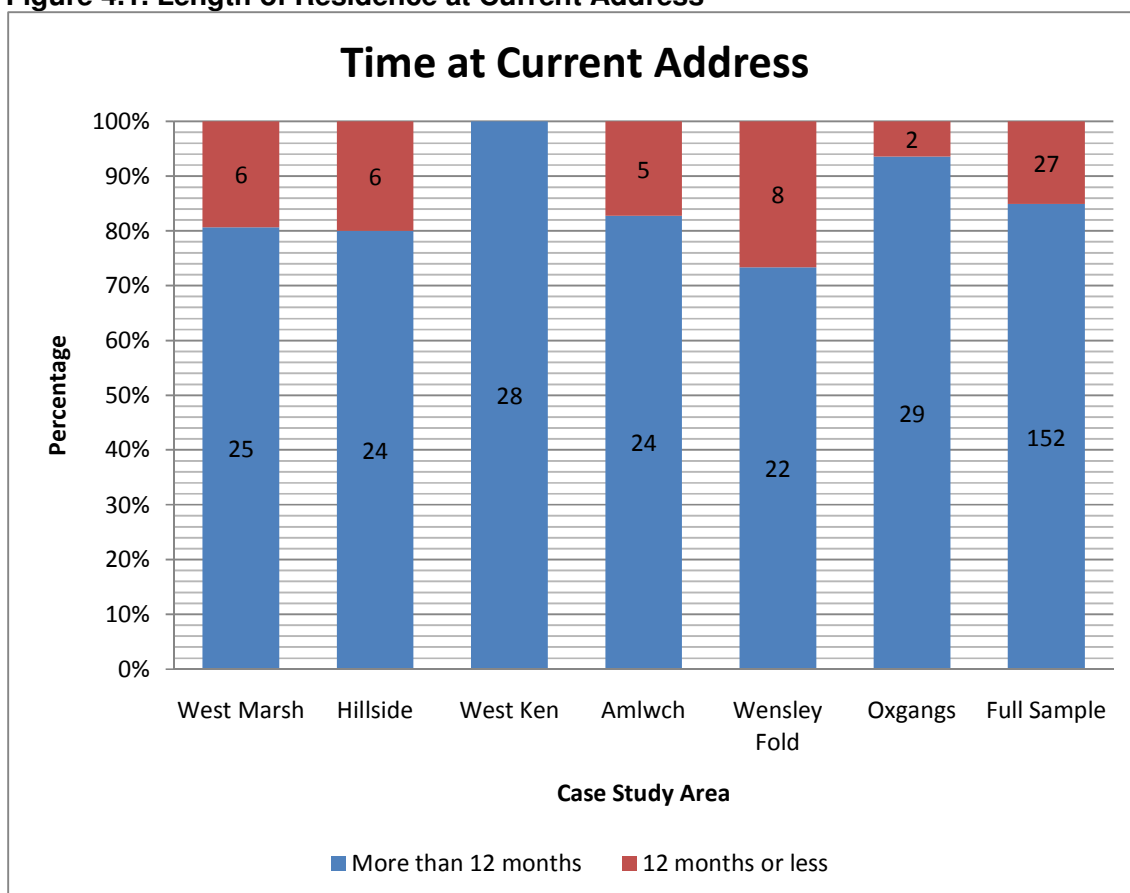
n= 179, Source: Wave 1 interviews

Consistent with the findings of other studies including Cole *et al* (2007), most residents who had moved home had moved a relatively short distance. As a comparison of figures

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4.1 and 4.2 reveals, most residents had moved from another part of the neighbourhood with only nine – or five per cent of the total sample - reporting that they had moved neighbourhoods in the last year. Again, the response to this question varied across the case studies. While six residents in Wensley Fold, and three in West Marsh, had moved neighbourhood in the last year, in Amlwch, Oxgangs, West Kensington and Hillside none had done the same.

Figure 4.2. Length of Residence in the Neighbourhood

Time in Neighbourhood

West Marsh: 28 (More than 12 months), 3 (12 months or less)
Hillside: 30
West Ken: 28
Amlwch: 29
Wensley Fold: 24 (More than 12 months), 6 (12 months or less)
Oxgangs: 31
Full Sample: 170 (More than 12 months), 9 (12 months or less)

Legend: ■ More than 12 months ■ 12 months or less

n= 179, Source: Wave 1 interviews

Turning now to residents' future housing intentions, interviewees in the wave one survey were asked whether they thought they would move home in the next year. Relatively few – less than ten per cent – replied in the affirmative.

Given this, and the fact that most residents had not, as noted earlier, moved home recently, one could legitimately describe our sample as being relatively immobile. The remainder of this section explores why this is the case and highlights the principal factors behind the relative immobility of residents we spoke to in our case studies. The most important and commonly cited of these was that they were satisfied with where they lived and were therefore *voluntarily* immobile.

4.2 Voluntary immobility

Many residents in all six areas reported that they did not want to move home, and had been immobile for a long period of time, because they liked where they lived. For example, this was clearly the case for Gary from West Kensington:

> *I like the area (where) we live. I will want to have my council house in this area. I have already fall in love with this area, really. Whatever is the situation it's where I want to live my life. And it's going to be improving as well. There's a lot of monies coming every day and the council coming and improving the area is quiet and peaceful really.*
> (Gary, 45-64, West Kensington)

In a similar vein, two residents in Oxgangs reported that they really liked living in the neighbourhood and had no intention of leaving it.

> *No, I must admit I wouldn't part with this place. I'm glad when I go away and I come back and it's home, because it is, it's just lovely being round about here.*
> (Renee, 45-64, Oxgangs)

> *(I'm going to) stay in this area, yes….. there's a good community spirit here. You do walk up the street and bump into people you know. And it does have a bit of a bad reputation but I think everybody does look out for everybody else.*
> (Zara, 30-34, Oxgangs)

For some residents, their satisfaction with their current residence and their desire not to move appears have to been driven, to some degree, by their previous housing experiences. For example, Ceri from Amlwch, who had moved to the area from Wigan, enjoyed the tranquillity and "quietness" of her life, something that was absent when she lived in Wigan, and, before that, Manchester:

> *I've put a lot of work in it, I've paid a lot of money for it (the respondent's property). I won't move for anyone. I love the area. I'm happy. I'm settled…. Yeah I love it, my husband loves it, he wouldn't go back to Manchester….It's quieter (in Amlwch).*
> (Ceri, 40s, Amlwch)

In a similar vein, the high level of residential satisfaction exhibited by a single parent in West Kensington appears to be partly attributable to her dissatisfaction with her only other experience of living in the UK: the respondent moved to this country from Somalia:

> *Before that I used to live in Plymouth… (I moved to West Kensington) because I have a friend here and family. Not close family but family….the reason I move because I feel a bit lonely there…...Yeah, I very much, yeah (like living in West Kensington)…. Before that (living in Plymouth) I come straight away in my land, Somalia.*
> (Aaliyah, mid 20s, West Kensington)

In a similar vein, a resident in West Marsh compared her current residential experience with that of her former place of residence: Barnsley.

> *Basically, I've lived here (West Marsh) for about two year. I come from Barnsley. I met Peter and I come and moved over here with Peter…. I did have opportunity to*

stop in Barnsley but I find it a quieter place than Barnsley….I prefer to be over here than Barnsley, to be honest.
(Connie, 30-35, West Marsh)

It is important to note that residents who reported that they did not want to move were not 'blind' to the problems that existed within their neighbourhoods and several were quick to highlight the social problems that existed locally. Instead, they felt that these problems were an 'everyday' feature of life in this country and therefore in their eyes, their area was 'no worse than anywhere else.' Residents in West Kensington were particularly likely to feel this way:

It's a nice area West Kensington, Fulham, Gibbs Green. It's just a problem with teenagers everywhere. Wherever you go in London now there is drugs, I think. Everywhere you go it's a place which is quieter than the other one but this problem you can find them everywhere in London.
(Cordell, 30s, West Kensington)

It (the anti social behaviour of young men in West Kensington) was a case of the kind of people that was coming in the area but I guess you can get that anywhere.
(Saburi, 20s, West Kensington)

One West Kensington resident, who was very much aware of the area's social problems, including the anti-social-behaviour of local gangs, reported that these issues did not affect her as local gangs did not target her because, as a long-term resident of the area, they 'knew' her. She reasoned that this might not be the case if she moved to another area where she was not 'known.'

If I'm honest, because I know this area and I know a lot of people in this area. I've seen a lot of people walking in this area at a night time ….. more than in another area ….. just say I'm walking along the road and I see somebody: I more or less know them or they know Leon (the respondent's partner). Do you know what I mean? People know each other. Whereas, if I'm somewhere else I feel more at risk because I don't know the people.
(Sandra, mid 20s, West Kensington)

In a similar vein, residents in other case study neighbourhoods highlighted the importance of 'knowing' the people and the area where they lived.

Well, for me (I'm happy because) it's just because I've always lived here and I know everybody.
(Cordell, 30s, Amlwch)

I used to live round here when I were young. From when I were born. I moved when I was 16 from round here and then I've only had two moves since then and then to here… (I moved back because) my girls go to school down road and my partner's family all live round here. And my doctor's is round here and I know the area. I know a lot of people round here.
(Tracey, 25-29, Wensley Fold)

I would rather stay in Oxgangs…. I wouldn't have wanted to go anywhere else

because I wouldn't know anybody else. Whereas I know here…..I've got friends here and I'm close to my mother and I know the area.
(Bobby, 45-64, Oxgangs)

Finally, Susannah from Amlwch reported that she would not move from the town because she 'knew' everyone' within it and, if did she move, she would move to part of it that she 'knew' well.

(If I move) I'd still stay in Amlwch in an area I know….. I don't know (where). Somewhere nice with a bit of land…. I wouldn't go from Amlwch because I know everyone.
(Susannah, 30-34, Amlwch)

Therefore, there is a suggestion that for some voluntary immobile respondents their desire to stay in the current neighbourhood may, to some extent, be more about their reluctance to move to places that they did not 'know' and were unfamiliar with and less about their satisfaction with their current neighbourhood *per se*. Moreover, there was a sense that some residents were reluctant to experience new residential experiences and appeared to follow the maxim, 'better the devil you know.' The importance of residents 'knowing' their area and being 'comfortable' within it has been recognised by other researchers including Kearns and Parkinson (2001 p2106) who highlight the desirability of 'predictable' encounters within the neighbourhood:

The familiarity that can be constitutive of the neighbourhood is apparent when we consider the neighbourhood in terms of encounter and narrative. If cities are 'landscapes of marginal encounter' (Gornick, 1996), then neighbourhoods (especially the first and second levels…. the home area and the locality) ought to be arenas of predictable encounter (which for many people would also mean comfortable and secure encounters) where, to use Beauregard's (1997) terminology, people know the narrative rules of encounter and have the appropriate discursive strategies easily to negotiate public space: they feel 'at home'. Residents in their own neighbourhoods can read encounters correctly and can respond appropriately without having to resort to assertiveness and inventiveness since lower levels of discursive and social competence will suffice.

It is important to note at this juncture that, like those residents whose voluntary immobility appeared to be informed, to varying degrees, by their reluctance to experience new residential experiences and a 'fear of the unknown', the immobility of another voluntarily immobile group could also be attributed to factors that could be described as being less 'positive' in nature. This group comprised residents who, although they were voluntarily immobile, had *chosen* not to move even though they *wanted* to do because they could not face the upheaval of moving and establishing a new life in a new neighbourhood. And, indeed, for members of this group, one could make a strong case for arguing that the descriptor 'involuntarily' rather than 'voluntary' immobility is a more accurate and appropriate term to describe their situation.

Perhaps, not unexpectedly, older residents were more likely to feel this way. For example, a fifty five year old man in Amlwch noted that, although he wanted to leave the town, he was too old to do so:

I: We've talked about this before, but are you tempted to say 'I want to get out and move somewhere else'?

R: Yes, but …. I'm stuck in my ways, maybe. If I was younger maybe I'd take the chance. But I'm coming up to 55 now and getting too old to move.

I: Last year you talked about potentially moving out to Bullbay (a coastal village close to Amlwch)?

R: Yes, I'd love to move there. The people there are more my type of people.
(Paul, 45-64, Amlwch)

Another 'older' resident in the town noted that she would not be moving to her preferred place of residence – Chester – as she was too old to "start over again."

I was thinking the other day: 'I could do with moving on from here.' But you'd have to start all that over again wouldn't you. And I'd hate to have to start thinking about that again….. I'd love to live near Chester but I'd lose all my friends, all your contacts. I've got a friend who moved up there but her daughters live up that way. Chester's a lovely city.
(Wendy, 45-64, Amlwch)

In a similar vein, residents in Oxgangs and Wensley Fold noted:

Not, now (I won't move). ….you get to a certain stage and you think: 'no, too many bothers with the upheaval.' I think it's an age thing.
(Norma, 45-64, Oxgangs)

Not all residents that were involuntarily immobile because of concerns about the stresses of moving and 'starting over again' were older: some were relatively young. For example, an Amlwch resident in her early 20s was deterred from making her "dream" move back to Scotland by, what she described, as the "hassle" of moving house:

Really, just the hassle of getting a house (is stopping me moving back to Scotland) I can't move all my stuff and that. I've gotta go up first and try and get a house.
(Stephanie, early 20s, Amlwch)

And Abi in Wensley fold noted that she would not be moving and "uprooting" as she did not think this was feasible when her children were not fully grown, while Tracey from the same area highlighted how much she "hated" moving house, a factor which contributed to her reluctance to leave the neighbourhood:

I'm not uprooting and going anywhere. I think it's too late to do that unless your kids are grown up.
(Abi, 35-44, Wensley Fold)

No, I'm not moving. We hated moving five years ago.
(Tracey, 25-29, Wensley Fold)

4.3   Involuntary immobility

While for most residents their decision not to move home was taken for positive reasons – that is, because they liked their home and neighbourhood - for others the situation was very different. These residents were immobile not because they had chosen to do so

and were satisfied with their residential situation, but because they were unable to move because of a number of factors which constrained their mobility. One of these was the need for respondents to provide support and care for family living locally. This really important issue is explored in the next section which highlights the key push pull factors for residents in our case studies, a number of which were associated with 'family.'

By far the most important of the factors constraining mobility was the (perceived) scarcity of high quality affordable housing in the areas that residents wanted to move to, including their own: many involuntary immobile residents expressed a preference to move to another property within their neighbourhood. Perhaps not unexpectedly given the 'tightness' of the London housing market, of the six case study areas West Kensington had the highest proportion of residents who are immobile for this reason.

Nearly half of respondents in West Kensington reported that they would like to move from their neighbourhood but were prevented from doing so because they either did not have the financial resources to buy a property or were unable to secure affordable rental housing in the area(s) they wanted to move to. For some respondents, such was the scarcity of local affordable housing that 'escaping' from their area was simply a fanciful "pipe dream", which in the case of two respondents, could only be secured with a lottery win:

> I: *Can you see yourself getting to a situation where you might move back to Ireland?*
>
> R: *No, not unless I win the lottery.*
> (Nuala, mid 20s, West Kensington)

> *No, (I won't move) not unless the lottery comes up tonight. I can't afford a house around here. The nearest house I can think of is across the road in Ramfield Place and that would be about £450,000. I don't have that kind of money. I've got some money but not that kind of money. And I wouldn't want to have a mortgage of that kind of money unless I could afford to pay it straight off.*
> (Anthony, late 30s, West Kensington)

Many respondents in West Kensington were quick to highlight the high price of housing in their area and that they were effectively "priced-out" of the local market:

> *I couldn't move because I couldn't move if I wanted to. Everything's too expensive. Houses are too expensive. I couldn't afford it.*
> (Sandra, early 20s, West Kensington)

> *No, I'm glad the thing about the car came up because that's quite a big thing really. I've been priced-out of the house market many years ago.*
> (Sarah, late thirties, West Kensington)

> *You can buy a house up there (Manchester) for £50,000. You can't even buy a garage down here (West Kensington) for £50,000.*
> (Kenneth, mid 40s, West Kensington)

In West Kensington, a number of residents noted how difficult it was to secure social rented housing in the area. For example, Mary-Anne was frustrated that she had been unable to secure the property she wanted through the choice based letting system operated by the largest social housing landlord in the area – the Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO), Hammersmith and Fulham Homes:

> *Every two weeks you can get a magazine from council or library, anywhere, agencies and all that. So you just bid at that. You can bid for up to three flats or houses or whatever. And then if you get anywhere – there's no chance me to get any 'cos I'm on benefit. There is A, B, C rent, I'm on C. So, A's the more priority, and then B, and then C. So I'm the last one, so…. I don't have a girl, or three boys, so they give me reason like three boys can sleep all in one room. I don't think it's right. Because once they grow up they need their own bedroom, they will want their own and everything. So, yeh, the problem is feeling like you don't have a choice. You want to do something but you can't do it because of so many reasons.*
> (Mary-Anne, early 30s, West Kensington)

However, it is important to note that involuntary immobility triggered by a shortage of affordable local housing was not a phenomenon confined to West Kensington: it was a feature in all six case studies. For example, it also appeared to be an issue in Amlwch: one resident there, Robert, who lived in a private rented flat with his pregnant partner, reported being "priced-out" of the local housing market:

> R: T*he (house) prices around here (Amlwch) are just so stupid.*
>
> I: *Are you basically priced out of the market?*
>
> R: *Oh completely. I mean, I don't know anybody my age, that graduated from school, who actually owns their own house.*
>
> I: *So the cheapest one here, what would it be?*
>
> R: *About £90,000, and you're only talking two or three of those, and they're really not to a good standard*
> (Robert, mid 20s, Amlwch)

The same respondent noted that it was his relatively low income combined with comparatively high local house prices and the iniquitous allocation system of the main social housing landlord that was apparently preventing him from moving:

> *If we had a higher income we won't have to live here. It's as simple as that….. If you're a single mother, sixteen years of age, you'll get a council house. If you're a working family like us two, we're not as much priority, the government will penalise us … we're paying our rates and paying our taxes and everything else. It doesn't feel that the government's giving us any chance or trying to help us. I feel that I pay my taxes. They help people that take advantage of the system.*
> (Robert, mid 20s, Amlwch)

Involuntary immobility caused by a scarcity of affordable housing locally was also an issue in Oxgangs, where many residents highlighted the problem.

> *There's not a lot of houses empty in Oxgangs. They tell you when you put in for a house: 'Don't even ask for Oxgangs because they're not there.' But there's been a*

few since they've let these ones out. But the minute they're empty they're full again so it's as quick as they're out.
(Renee, 45-64, Oxgangs)

In a similar vein, another resident in the area was unhappy that his attempts to secure a house on the estate had been unsuccessful:

We have no chance of getting (the newly built) houses…..we've not got silver priority because it's not a priority for a young male and a female to share a bedroom…... which I think is absolutely shocking. I've had my name down as soon as I had my daughter. I thought eventually we're going to need a bigger house so we've been on the list for 15 years.
(Angus, 45-64, Oxgangs)

The difficulty of securing high quality affordable housing in the case study areas was recognised by a number of residents who were not involuntarily immobile and were happy with where their lived. A number described themselves as being "lucky" to have secured the housing they lived in:

I fought so hard to get this house because the intention I believe was not to give these houses to White people and families. They wanted an Asian community round here I think. So we were very very lucky to get this but I fought me way to get this. I wasn't backing down so I got this and here we are.
(Tracey, 25-29, Wensley Fold)

I didn't want to leave Oxgangs. That was a hard job to try and get a house here but I was lucky enough. I got a nice one.
(Jackie, 30-34, Oxgangs)

This finding is consistent with Batty and Flint (2010) and Mee (2007). The latter noted that several of the social housing tenants she surveyed in Newcastle in Australia, many of whom were living in difficult and challenging circumstances, reported that they were "lucky" to be living in their home:

"Several other tenants who participated in this project also drew on heavenly connotations in describing their homes, calling them a "blessing". A substantial number of tenants used words indicating high levels of satisfaction and attachment to their homes. They said they "loved" living in their homes, others described their homes as "wonderful" or "beautiful". A number of tenants indicated that they felt "lucky" to have such a home." (Mee, 2007, p.215)

It is important at this juncture to make another important point about the scarcity of affordable housing in our case study areas. That is, a number of residents reported that that they had not wanted to move to their current property and had only done so because they felt that they had 'no choice.' Perhaps not unexpectedly, social housing tenants were most likely to feel this way. For example, a social housing tenant in West Kensington observed.

At the time when we got this property it was actually only one offer. So if you refuse it, it then means that you have to find your own (property)…. No, not really. No (I did not want to move to West Kensington)…. most of us were on house list, hoping to get something more decent. ….this estate is 180 flats altogether, 190. So people

always want to get something nice. A nice house with a garden, especially if you have kids, so that's the reason why we're not happy.
(Michaela-Anne, 30-34, West Kensington)

Interestingly, a number of residents who reported that they did not want to move to their neighbourhood because they perceived it to be a problematic area and/ or were seeking a property elsewhere, reported that they had now "come to terms" with the move and their 'situation'. This was certainly the case for a resident in Wensley Fold.

The last thing I wanted to do was come back here. It was the very last thing I wanted to do. And I think the last time I was interviewed ….. I had quite a strong feeling: 'I'm here but I don't particularly want to be here.' Now I've come to terms with the fact that I'm here…. I thought I'd get in and within 12 months I'd want to move on.
(Martha, 35-44, Wensley Fold)

There was a sense amongst these residents that they had become 'accustomed' to, and 'tolerant' of, what they perceived to be the difficulties of life in their area.

I'm a single mum with two kids. I've lived in this area for nearly five years now, on divorcing my partner I moved from Scatham. And so it was quite a big change for me…. I thought would be a big change but it's not as different as I thought it would be….I think from a totally personal point of view, I left semi detached three bedroomed house. I moved into a rented two bedroomed terraced house and, yeah, being a snob I was devastated.
(Geraldine, 35-44, West Marsh)

The attitudes of involuntary immobile residents to their situation

Those residents who reported that they were effectively 'trapped' in their homes because they could not secure alternative housing, were asked how they felt about this. One might have expected most to (understandably) express frustration and anger at their situation and this was the case for some:

Yes, I'm stuck. I hate it, I'd do anything to get out. What I do for a bit of light relief is on BBC iPlayer you go round couple's moving into a £450,000 property. And you go round. They (the TV show's presenters) look at four or five (properties). I can just lose myself in that now. It's like I've been out.
(Holly, 45-64, West Marsh)

However, these respondents were in the minority and most adopted a 'phlegmatic' approach to their situation, which was seen not as being a 'predicament' but one of life's challenges. This appeared to be particularly the case for residents in the case study where affordable housing was scarcest: West Kensington.

I suppose you make problems for yourself. I don't know. I don't really think I face any problems, apart from wanting to move. But I can't move because the council has stupid things on moving. But I think to myself: I don't face many problems.
(Sandra, mid 20s, West Kensington)

One respondent appeared to deal with her inability to move home by making a conscious decision not to think about the possibility of doing so:

No (I'm not moving) because I know I can't afford to…. (there is) no point living in limbo land is there? And dreaming?
(Cordell, mid 20s, West Kensington)

The apparent 'even spirit' with which involuntary immobile residents appeared to deal with their situation may be partly attributable to the fact that most were hopeful that eventually they would be able to secure the move they wanted, even when it appeared that it was very unlikely to happen. For example, one West Kensington resident thought she might get "lucky" and secure the move she wanted:

You know, because I am bidding now... I don't know, maybe with luck, I might get it. Because they said, once they offer to band A, and if they don't like it or don't want it, they give it to B. And if they don't like it then give it to C. So, that's quite far away to come. Sometimes I thinking maybe luck means I get it….I don't give up hope. No. Because I want to move.
(Christina, early 30s, West Kensington)

Another social housing tenant in West Kensington was hopeful that she would be able to swap her flat with a tenant in an area that she wanted live in, such as Hampton Court or Richmond:

To be honest, I think I'm just gonna get on with it. And I do think in time …. somebody who does live in Kingston …..wouldn't mind moving here. There's actually a girl I know: she lives in … an area called East Molesey. It's near Hampton Court. A friend of mine lives up there. And she lives up there but she works in London and really just wanted to live in Central London, West London. And she had a one-bedroom flat so she was no good to swap with me anyway, but she wanted to move. So, if I come across someone like that it could happen.
(Sandra, mid 20s, West Kensington)

And a West Kensington resident who had been living in temporary accommodation for two years was adamant that she would eventually secure a permanent move from the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham:

It (this flat) is just temporary. I know that someday I will move and go to
permanent accommodation. This is temporary…. for two years… I'm on waiting list now for the council. So when they find me house with two bedrooms in this area, Hammersmith and Fulham, they will give me, I'm on the list in B…. B category yeah….so when I'll be A I will be priority then I will have…. (this will take) maybe another year. Maybe two year, who knows. You can't say.
(Suzzii-Lee, 30-34, West Kensington)

The positive outlook adopted by many respondents towards their housing situation is perhaps not unexpected given that many exhibited a remarkably positive outlook on life generally, despite having to grapple with the challenges of living in poverty in deprived neighbourhoods. There was a real sense that 'you've just got to get on with it (life)' and keep "plodding" on because something better might be "'round the next corner", and many of the residents we interviewed could be described as exhibiting qualities of 'resiliency.'

I'm quite happy with what life I've had, what I've got at the moment. Yeah I suppose a little extra money would be nice and I suppose picking up this flat and

putting it somewhere else would be a bonus but I wouldn't change anything. I think we all have ups and downs and you've just got to get on with it really. Or sort it out as best you can. Because nobody else is going to do it for you. I've learnt that much.
(Sarah, 45-64, West Kensington)

R: *I think you just get used to the struggle, don't you? You just keep on plodding along month by month and just…*

I: *That's very interesting. Yeh, does that get you down, then?*

R1: *Oh yeh, definitely. It's something that's really that you just get used to and you just get on with it, just go to work every day and just plod along.*

I: *What keeps you plodding along then, is it the feeling that it's gonna get better?*

R2: *To be honest, well, some of it's gonna get better, isn't it?*

R1: *I've always thought just carrying on and seeing what's round the next corner.*
(R1: Robert, mid 20s, Amlwch; R2: Rose, early 20s, Amlwch)

Yeah, such is life… I can't get everything I want…yeah, I feel badly but there's nothing I can do… It is getting better but all the sudden something comes, maybe absence of money or something, there, something get damaged or….
(Gary, early 40s, West Kensington)

The issue of resilience is explored in depth in another of the study team's working papers (Cole and Batty, 2010), which can be accessed via the Living Through Change in Challenging Neighbourhoods website.[3]

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[3] http://research.shu.ac.uk/cresr/living-through-change/index.html

5. Understanding Residential Mobility – Key Push Pull Factors

5.1 Introduction

Past explanations of residential mobility have tended to over-simplify what is a highly complex process, and to exaggerate the extent to which certain 'triggers' drive it. As Hickman *et al* (2007: 1) note:

> *Past explanations of residential mobility, and by implication, housing market change, have tended to focus on the impact of life course 'triggers' and push-pull factors on residential mobility.. . while not underestimating the importance of 'triggers', 'pushes' and 'pulls', it found residential mobility to be a far more subtle process.*

However, while it is important to look beyond the rationale narratives that residents present for moving home or for wanting to move home, it is also important to acknowledge the existence of common and shared push pull factors that do, to some extent, drive residential mobility. That is, factors that *push* residents away from a neighbourhood and *pull* them towards it. This section looks at some of these factors for residents in our six case study areas.

The numerous studies that have been undertaken into residential mobility since Rossi undertook in his seminal work on the subject in 1955 (Rossi, 1955) have highlighted a myriad of push pull factors that impact on it (Speare, 1970; Stokols and Shumaker, 1982; South and Crowder, 1997). Analysis of data gleaned from resident interviews undertaken by the study team revealed a similar picture in our six case studies, with a multitude of factors appearing to drive it. This section concentrates, then, on highlighting the most important of these. In doing so, it examines the importance of labour market opportunities as a driver of mobility and explores whether it is an important push pull factor in our case study areas.

Before turning our attention to this issue, it is important to make two important observations about the push pull factors in our case study areas. First, and in line with the findings of other studies (Hickman *et al*, 2007, Astone and MacClanahan, 1994; Clark and Onaka, 1983), our analysis revealed that they varied by population group and on occasions a pull factor for one was a push factor for another. Furthermore, the combination of push pull factors driving mobility appeared to vary between groups. Second, while a number of shared push pull factors emerged across the six case studies there were some factors that were unique to individual areas. Moreover, the combination and salience of shared factors driving mobility also varied between areas.

These points need to be borne in mind when considering the analysis presented below as it very much focuses on highlighting shared push pull factors that were present in most, if not all, of the case study areas. However, some attempt is made to differentiate between the case studies and it also worth noting that located at the end of the chapter is a summary of the key push pull factors for each of them.

5.2   The Impact of the Labour Market on Residential Mobility

Proponents of the argument that workless residents in deprived neighbourhoods should move to areas with better employment prospects would hope that our analysis would reveal labour market opportunities to be a major driver of residential mobility in our case study areas, as all of them had relatively large workless and low paid populations. But this was unequivocally not the case: the labour market was neither an important driver of past or future mobility. And not one resident reported that they wanted to move neighbourhood to enhance their labour market opportunities or take up work elsewhere.

Furthermore, for those residents who had 'got on their bikes' and moved relatively long distances to reside in their current neighbourhood, the labour market did not appear to be a significant contributory factor behind their decision to do so. This appeared to be the case for the many residents in Amlwch who had moved to the area from the North-west of England. It was argued by one long standing 'indigenous' resident of the town that these incomers had little understanding of its labour market and were 'surprised' when they arrived by the paucity of its employment opportunities.

> *This house is private rented. And the person that bought it's from Manchester. And they bought it because she's a teacher and she'd been promised a job in the university in Bangor. And it (the job) fell through. So then they bought it so they decided to rent it out and stay where they were with the job she was in. So people do think of moving here but then there isn't the jobs.*
> (Harriet, 25-29, Amlwch)

In terms of other residents who had made long distance moves, the case of Vanessa and her partner also highlights the relative unimportance of labour market opportunities as a driver of residential mobility. This is because their decision to relocate from Maidstone to Wensley Fold appears to have been driven primarily by the availability of affordable housing in the area and not by opportunities in the local labour market. As Vanessa notes, her success in finding a job appears to have been based more on good fortune than on any rigorous assessment by her of the employment opportunities within the labour market in the Blackburn area, and Wensley Fold specifically.

> *We lived in Maidstone, originally …..We were on the council list and the council houses were greatly in demand as well. So we were sat on the list but nothing happening. We had a look on the internet and what these houses were up on the internet for sale as part ownership and when we saw this buying in at 25 per cent part ownership. We said: 'that's it, that's about all we can go for'. So we travelled up from Maidstone to see it and actually fell into the church at the bottom of the road, as well, which we didn't' know was there. We just happened to stumble across it. And there was a job going in the church as well. And we said: 'this is it.' And my husband got the job in the church and we went for this house and it all came together.*
> (Vanessa, 35-44, Wensley Fold)

It is important here to make another important point about the relative unimportance of the labour market as a driver of residential mobility. That is, the phenomenon cannot be attributed to an abundance of employment opportunities in our case study areas, as, to varying degrees, there is a scarcity of suitable jobs in all six of them and the areas that

surround them, with Hillside and Amlwch in particular being unemployment 'hotspots'. Furthermore, most residents we interviewed recognised this.

> *It's hard work (to find a job in this area). Because like I say, I'm not working. I haven't worked since 79 really, it's hard work to get into the labour force. They are trying to get people, like, off the sick into work. But they should sort out these people who can work first. I mean now there's so much unemployment. I think they did say in 2010 it's probably over three million.*
> (Artur, 45-64, Wensley Fold)

Our findings are in line with those of three other studies in the field. Kearns and Parkes (2003) found that only one per cent of the 842 respondents in the 1991 English House Condition Survey who reported that they would be moving home in 1992 cited 'another job' as a reason for moving. In a similar vein, Fletcher *et al* (2008) found that relatively few of the social housing tenants they interviewed who wanted to move home cited the desire to seek employment opportunities elsewhere as a contributory factor behind this aspiration. Finally, Cole *et al* (2007) found that less than one in ten of those residents who left an NDC area between 2002 and 2004 attributed their move to employment related factors.

While taking-up labour market opportunities did not appear to have been a driver of residential mobility for residents in our sample, some did report that employment issues had impacted on their past residential mobility decisions. For example, several reported that they had moved to the current neighbourhood because it was close to where they worked. Many of these residents were from West Marsh:

> *The only reason really why I bought the house in the first place was because at the time I was working at a factory just over there…..you know where that row of houses is on Ellston Road?...There's a factory behind it and I used to work there…it's like 10 minutes walk. That's why I bought the house in the first place. That's the only reason why I bought it.*
> (Ethel, 35-44, West Marsh)

> *Well, we lived in the Moresby Street area. And I also lived in and grew up around Cleethorpes. We also lived in Carlow, didn't we? (we moved here because) it was cheap at the time. Property price was quite cheap and it was right near work. It's only five minutes to work from here…it was handy and cheap.*
> (Horatio, 35-44, West Marsh)

In a similar vein, a resident in another case study area – Tracey-Lee from Oxgangs - also noted:

> *It was a number of reasons (why I moved here). My fiancé at the time worked in the barracks up the road so he didn't have a car. I did. He didn't. So we had to get somewhere local that he could walk to work or not be too far as it was going to be a problem. I still wanted to be close to my family. And because I knew at the time the high flats and things like that the area was going to be upcoming it was maybe a good investment. I think it has been from what I've been told. It's gone up quite a lot from when I bought it.*
> (Tracey-Lee, 35-44, Oxgangs)

However, as the last two quotes illustrate, it is important to note that for those residents whose residential locational decisions had been influenced by their desire to live close to their place of work, other factors also appeared to be behind them. Thus, for Horatio his desire to be close to his family and to invest in an area with the prospects of good equity growth were also factors that influenced his decision to move to West Marsh, while for Tracey-Lee the relative affordability of housing in Oxgangs appeared to be a major factor behind her decision to locate there.

In a similar vein, a resident who wanted to remain close to his work when he moved home also noted that his preferred destination – the 'other' side of the river in West Marsh - was attractive to him because it had a low crime rate.

> I: *We talked about your house. You said you were still looking in case something comes up, where would you think about moving to, in the same area?*
>
> R: *Yeah. I want to be within the same walking distance to work as I am now or maybe a little bit nearer if it came up. But I want to stay within this area.*
>
> I: *You mean this side of the river?*
>
> R: *Yeah, if it's possible. I think for the simple reason that there is virtually no crime in this area. You go one street down and there is: why that is I've no idea. I suppose it's the same everywhere. But in this L shaped section we all look out for one another. It's close knit and everybody knows what everybody's doing. If one's on holiday everybody looks out.*
> (Julie, 45-64, West Marsh)

Further discussion about the issue of worklessness can be found in another of the study team's dissemination outputs: *Work and Worklessness in Deprived Areas: Policy Assumptions and Personal Experiences* (Crisp *et al*, 2009).

5.3.   Key push pull factors

If the desire to take up employment opportunities is not a significant driver of residential mobility in our case studies, then this begs the question, what are the main drivers? As noted earlier, there are a multitude. However, it was possible to categorise most of them under three broad categories which emerged as being the key drivers of mobility in our case studies: factors relating to the social, cultural and physical characteristics of place; factors relating to family and friends; and factors relating to the home.

These findings are in line with other studies in the field. For example, Fletcher *et al* (2008: 3) found 'property' and 'place' to be important drivers of residential mobility.

> Some tenants were keen to move house and neighbourhood, but the common drivers of mobility were the desire to move to a 'better' neighbourhood or to move into more suitable accommodation.

Furthermore, the same authors (op.cit. p52) also highlighted the importance of family ties as being a major push pull factor for residents in their study:

> Many respondents were connected to their local area by family ties. Leaving the neighbourhood would involve leaving behind this important resource. Strong family

ties to the local were most apparent among residents of the concentrated areas of social housing in Derby (Austin), Peterborough (Welland) and Sheffield (Manor), who frequently pointed to long-standing family ties to the neighbourhood and the existence of dense local networks of kith and kin when explaining why they could not contemplate moving for work-related reasons.

In a similar vein, Cole *et al* (2007) found, that in addition to 'personal factors', the most commonly cited reasons given by 'voluntary' out-movers for their decision to leave their NDC neighbourhood were related to area and property: 36 per cent cited push pull factors relating to the area while 21 per cent cited property related issues. Finally, a number of studies have highlighted the importance of 'place' as a driver of residential mobility (Mandic, 2001; Lee *et al*, 1994; Orbell and Uno, 1972).

Analysis of the data relating to the three key push pull factors in the study areas resulted in the production of a comprehensive dataset for each of them. In order to keep this paper to a manageable length only two factors are examined here: 'place' and 'family and friends.' Two reasons lay behind this decision. First, unlike (to a large extent) 'property', both issues are central to the study as a whole. Second, in the context of residential mobility, the impact of 'property' has been heavily researched with relatively little attention focusing on the role of 'place', a point which is acknowledged by Feitjen and Van Hamm and Clark *et al* (2006: 324):

Until now, the emphasis in the studies of residential mobility has been on the house and its components as the core explanation for residential moves and is still primarily privileged in the models of mobility and residential choices.

Push pull factors relating to 'place'

A number of push pull factors relating to 'place' appeared to play an important role in shaping residential mobility in our case studies. For example, for many residents the physical 'attractiveness' of an area appeared to be an important factor driving their residential preferences. While understandings and notions of 'attractiveness' varied between residents, two attributes of the physical environment were identified being as being desirable by them: the presence of green spaces; and the presence of water in the neighbourhood, whether in the form of a river or, especially, the sea.

A number of respondents we interviewed expressed a preference to live by the sea. Not unexpectedly, given their location, most of these were located in West Marsh and Amlwch. For example, in Amlwch a long standing resident noted that one of the reasons he liked living in the area was because it was located on the coast:

I prefer the seaside and the quietness around here, to be honest with you. I prefer… how can I put it? I prefer the environment around here. It's a lot nicer than living in the city where everybody's got some sort of agenda and everything's a rush.
(Carl, 25-29, Amlwch)

Moreover, for many of those Amlwch residents who had moved to the area from the North-west of England it appeared that it was its coastal location that was the

I: Did you come here to semi retire?

R: That was the idea, by the sea,
(Harold, 65+, Amlwch)

Basically, I wanted to live in the country 'cos I came back from the country a long time ago….. we wanted to live by the seaside ….plus the fact that it's near the sea.
(Dianna-Patricia, 45-64, Amlwch)

A long-standing resident in the area felt it was the location of the town on the coast that made it attractive to people from the North-west:

I: What attracts the people from Manchester and the North West? Why here, why not Llandudno or somewhere a bit bigger, what's the attraction?

R: I imagine it's well you've got the sea in Llandudno. But (in Amlwch) it's the coast and the walks and the mountains fairly close.
(Daffyd-Hugh, 65+, Amlwch)

Not all residents that highlighted 'the sea' as a pull factor were resident in Amlwch. For example, it was an important factor for Cheryl-Monica from West Marsh who cited it as one of the reasons behind her and her partner's decision to move to the neighbourhood from Milton Keynes.

(We moved for) a change of scenery and they were building a football pitch near where we used to live. I'm not really into football so thought we'd move here. I've always wanted to live near the sea.
(Cheryl-Monica, 25-29, West Marsh)

Turning now to the preference of some residents to live in a property with a riverside location, perhaps not unexpectedly, residents in the only case study area with a significant river – West Marsh – were most likely to exhibit this view.

I tell you what attracted me to this place more than anything else. What I was looking out at, without paying an abundant amount of money, was I could get a riverside view. Birds. Fresh air. No neighbours looking into me house from that direction.
(Robbie-Lee, 35-44, West Marsh)

A number of residents in all six of the case study areas highlighted a preference for living in neighbourhoods which had high quality green spaces. For example, this was certainly the case for a resident in Wensley Fold who had always 'hankered' to live in an area with green spaces and greenery.

I love green spaces… I have a dream of living on a hill somewhere looking down on everything out in the sticks with streams and trees….. I always hankered after something better and greener.
(Martha, 35-44, West Marsh)

In a similar vein, a resident in West Kensington noted how his partner aspired to live in Richmond because it had more "greenery", "fields" and "space" than where they lived.

My girlfriend is always talking about wanting to live more Richmond, where there's a bit more greenery. A bit more fields. A bit more space. And I think that generally changes people's attitudes. I mean here it's just concrete everywhere…. there are a lot of parks around but it's not on your doorstep. It's not as if can you open your window onto them… so going out to the park is actually going out to the park.
(Leon, 25-29, West Kensington)

A number of residents also expressed a preference for living in a rural area. Not unexpectedly, residents in the only rural case study - Amlwch - were most likely to feel this way and the view of one resident there was typical of many.

Yeah, I like it (life in Amlwch). You drop down and mellow out. In a town you wake up and you can heard the birds coughing. Here you look out and you can see cows in the field and from the front window you can see the sea.
(George, 45-64, Amlwch)

However, it is interesting to note, though, that George observed that for Amlwch residents quality of life benefits accruing from living in a rural area were contingent on them having a job.

It's a better quality of life if you've got a job.
(George, 45-64, Amlwch)

For some residents the location of an area was also important. For example, for residents in Oxgangs, West Kensington, Wensley Fold, and West Marsh the location of their neighbourhoods close to the town/ city centre was seen as being as a very positive attribute and a significant pull factor.

I didn't want to be here. I would have moved six months ago. But it's actually a nice place to live in, isn't it? To actually walk into town on a summer, 9 o'clock on a summer's night is beautiful. We've walked the same distance when we lived in Patrick Street and it was an absolute nightmare wasn't it to walk?
(Mikey, 30-34, West Marsh)

This push pull factor appeared to play a particularly prominent role in Wensley Fold where a number of residents highlighted the advantages of living close to the town centre of Blackburn.

I can just walk and get there (Blackburn town centre) …. those people from Beardwood (an area in Blackburn) they have to make a special trip just to get to town and we take two seconds and we get there.
(Roderic, 35-44, Wensley Fold)

I like this area because the town centre is near from here.
(Kamran Ahmed, 16-24, Wensley Fold)

In one of our case study areas, Amlwch, the location of the town was not a pull factor for most residents. And, indeed, for many its relative geographic isolation and perceived poor transport links appeared to act as major push factor. Residents who had moved to the town from other parts of the country were most likely to feel this way. This was the view of a single parent who had moved to Amlwch from a town near Edinburgh.

> *I feel stuck in here…you can't go anywhere and that… it's just so boring.*
> (Stephanie, 16-24, Amlwch)

The quote above highlights an important point about location as a push factor for residents in the town. For some, it appeared that that their concern with the relative isolation of the town had more to do with their unhappiness with its perceived lack of amenities, facilities, services and leisure activities and less to do with its location *per se*. A number of residents in the town highlighted the paucity of its amenities and services and the view of one was typical of many.

> *We used to have a cinema, and now it's just flats and flats and flats getting built everywhere…There are very few shops in Amlwch so I have to leave to buy clothes and things like that. There used to be five butchers and a lot of other little shops for different things, bakers a veg shop but they've been shut down and replaced by Chinese restaurants, Indian restaurants. I don't know how they survive in such a small place.*
> (Adrianna, 35-44, Amlwch)

It is important to note one other point about this issue. For many residents who had lived in Amlwch for all their lives the relative isolation of the town allied to the paucity of its neighbourhood infrastructure did not act as a push factor. This was because they saw these aspects of the residential environment as being 'normal', 'ordinary' and something that they were 'used to', as they had always lived in the area. A resident in Amlwch appeared to acknowledge this point:

> I: *Does it bother you that you are geographically quite a long way away from other places?*
>
> R: *No. I don't think it does because I don't know any different. Do you know what I mean? I've always lived here, so in that sense, no, I'm quite happy. If I could just lift my house and just move it….*
>
> I: *Some people say there's lots going on in Bangor and in Amlwch there's nothing there. Would you agree with them or not?*
>
> R: *Well, I'd agree with them to say there's nothing here. But I'm used to it. But for someone from Bangor to come and live here they'd be bored to tears. Because they (residents in Bangor) have got the cinemas; they've got the pubs; the clubs; whatever. So I suppose they'd find it really dull, you know?*
> (Susannah, 30-34, Amlwch)

In a similar vein, another resident in the town noted that its remoteness and lack of recreational and leisure facilities did not "bother" him because he was a "local lad."

> *I'm, like, a local lad. I love it round here. We haven't got a cinema but I've got Sky movies so that doesn't bother me. Shopping, as I said, shopping's a day out really.*
> (Graham, 25-29, Amlwch)

The quality of neighbourhood amenities also emerged as being an important 'place' related driver of residential mobility in all six of our case studies. It appeared to be a particularly important factor in Wensley Fold. One resident there attributed his recent decision to move to another property within the area to the quality of its neighbourhood infrastructure.

No, the reason why I moved (to Wensley Fold) to tell you the truth are…. First of all there the infant school is there. And the high school is just down the road on the other side. And after that the college is next door. And the shopping centre is near. And there's a mosque near as well: two or three mosques nearby. And our Asian shops are there…. I've thought of moving out of this area a few times but the reason if I go somewhere else I will not get them facilities.
(Mohammed Nazir, 45-64, Wensley Fold)

In a similar vein, another resident in the area attributed the decision of his family not to leave the area to the quality of its amenities and services.

They (local amenities) are very convenient and they're just round the corner really. We have a community centre down there, it's very nearby, the Bank Top community centre and ….it's just straight across from the school so it was very convenient. That's why we've decided to stay in this place and not move elsewhere because of the facilities really.
(Riffat Parueen, 35-44, Wensley Fold)

And finally, another resident in the area observed:

(My property) is close to town, close to the shops, close to the school. It's close to everything. We're quite handy for the community centre and all that…and the nursery is just round the corner, everything is very handy.
(Tariq Nazim, 30-34, Wensley Fold)

In West Marsh one amenity emerged as being particularly important: schools. A resident there noted that he and his partner did not want to move from the area because they liked the local primary school that their child attended.

I: *Do you want to move from West Marsh?*

R: *No, we like the school.*
(Stuart, 30-34, West Marsh)

The quality of the local primary school acted as a pull factor for another resident in the area who described it as being "very good":

I left here (West Marsh) when me daughter was five and ….we moved to the other side of town. But the (the primary school in West Marsh) is a very good school for children.
(Callum, 45-64, West Marsh)

Finally, another resident in the area reported that he and his family would be leaving it when his child reached secondary school age because he did not want him to attend the school that served the area.

So we're hoping it's not going to be too long (before we move from West Marsh) because as, I say Josh is seven now, and I don't want him going to the local (secondary) school. The school he's at now is fine but the secondary school isn't. ….. I don't really like the school that they'll send him to…my parents both live in Hingham and we want him there…. it's not just because I went there, because a

lot of people have said it's got such a good reputation. And you just want the best for your kids at the end of the day.
(Georgina, 30-34, West Marsh)

It appeared that neighbourhood amenities were valued in another way: they provided residents with a valuable opportunity to socially interact. These places have been described by the Ramon Oldenburg (Oldenberg and Brissett, 1982; Oldenburg, 2007) as being 'third places' for social interaction after the home (first) and workplace (second). Residents in all six of our case study neighbourhoods appeared to value the opportunities that third places such as launderettes, mosques, shops, cafes, churches, pubs and community centres, provided for social interaction in their areas.

In all six case study areas much of the social interaction that residents appeared to value took place in these social spaces. Moreover, the importance of these places as social places was recognised by a number of residents we interviewed. For example, Adrianna from Amlwch was unhappy about the reduction in the number and quality of social places in the town:

It's sad that there are no more little shops and cafes because there aren't enough places to socialise now.......in the 1970s the Chapel on this street closed and was turned into a warehouse, now the Welsh Chapel on Salem Street is closing. The streets are the heart of Amlwch and they're being ruined by big flat developments. The old Chapel on this road is now being turned into a block of flats and it's just not attractive for people living here, it's not going to be a community space anymore and that's a shame.
(Adrianna, 35-44, Amlwch)

Likewise, Winnie from Hillside highlighted the negative impact of the closure of many of the area's shops on its social environment and social interaction within it.

We've always had to travel (to access services or shops). We've never had a chemist round here. The hairdressers have gone. I used to use that, now and then: I used to have a colour done, but that's gone. So you have to travel now to do that…... I prefer the little shop. I used to love it where you knew everyone….. And the woman who owned it: her daughter was a teacher in the school and she knew my children, going to the school and all that. And her friend in Knowsley – he knew them by name - you know like a small world…we had a supermarket and everyone knew everyone. You know it was, it was nice round here years ago.
(Winnie, 45-64, Hillside)

The excerpt below highlights the experiences of Candy, a middle aged woman from Amlwch, who was actively involved in the local community, and visited many places in the town that provided the opportunity to socially interact. Again like Winnie, she clearly valued the opportunities to interact socially that the town's third places provided her.

You have the lunch club. I go to the lunch club. We go on trips from the lunch club and it's up to you what you want to do. We have the arts. I go and do my art in the community, well next to the police station, the council offices. We do that on a Wednesday. There's bowling. There's gardening….there's the train at the top there and the swimming pool and it's up to you. I feel well enough at the moment to do it. Not everybody does of course. Other people might say different, but I don't believe in sitting in and being sorry for myself. I'd rather I go down to the shops every day.

At least you see someone to talk to. This morning I saw a friend I haven't seen for years and she's come back to Amlwch to live.
(Candy,45-64, Amlwch)

However, as is alluded to in both the quotes above, one third place in particular emerged as being of particular importance to residents: local shops. This finding is in line with those of other studies (Matthews *et al*, 2000; Flint, 2006). In all six case study areas shops appeared to fulfil an important role as a vehicle for promoting social interaction between residents. For example, this was clearly the case for a resident in West Marsh who particularly valued being "known" by other residents in the local shops he visited.

Well, I was well known because every shop I've been in I knew a lot of people. When I used to come here of a weekend I couldn't walk down say Freeman Street without being stopped you know. I knew a lot of people but I don't know whether they were two faced then but I've said all along that this place has been spoilt.
(Francine, 65+, West Marsh)

Further discussion about the role of the third places in our case study areas can be found in the working paper, *Neighbourhood Infrastructure, "Third Places" and Patterns of Social Interaction* (Hickman, 2010).

In addition to third places, other elements of the social environment within neighbourhoods also appeared to act as important push pull factors. For example, a number of residents highlighted the importance of living in a neighbourhood where people were 'friendly' and there was a strong sense of 'community.' This was clearly the case for one resident in Oxgangs.

I'll stay in this area, yes. I wouldn't' mind so much moving out of Oxgangs but I do like it here. There's a good community spirit here. You do walk up the street and bump into people you know. And it does have a bit of a bad reputation but I think everybody does look out for everybody else.
(Zara, 30-34, Oxgangs)

In a similar vein, a resident who had recently moved from one part of Amlwch to another felt socially isolated in his new home because his new neighbours were not as 'friendly' and 'sociable' as his former ones.

If I could, I think I would move back to that house tomorrow because here, it's a lovely big house but it's sort of isolated. Over there you could come out of your door and there would always be someone to talk to. So there is a lot of positiveness about living down there. I do miss it. Well, I could go out of this front door now and there's nobody sat on the wall talking. There's no kids playing there. Over there, when I lived there, because it was a nice little cul-de-sac, it was about eight houses it was …. no matter where you went you'd walk out… always be someone there to go: 'hello you all right?', even if it was only the kids. But here you can feel really down. You can go out through the front door and there's nobody. Nobody's going to be sitting out here talking. The children are not going to be playing outside. Very private, it is here.
(George, 45-64, Amlwch)

Residents in Amlwch were particularly likely to highlight the existence of a strong community within their area.

We've got a bit of a community going on here. And I like to know who lives next door and who's who. And I know a lot of people that live round here. I know their families, their sisters, you know. I quite like the feel of that.
(Stephanie, 16-24, Amlwch)

If you've lived here all your life, you go into the shops, you go into the chip shop, everyone knows you by your first name and everything. But if there's a stranger, I suppose it'd be hard for them to integrate into the community… Yeh, community spirit. You've got a really good community spirit round here.
(Graham, 25-29, Amlwch)

However, it is important to note that not all residents valued living in 'tight knit', 'friendly' communities, where people 'looked out' for each other, and indeed some did not like living in areas where these attributes were evident. This was because they were not able to 'live their life in peace' and without 'intrusions', whether well meant or not, from other members of the 'community.' For these residents, the existence of a 'close knit' community was a push factor that made them want to leave their neighbourhoods. This was clearly the case for a resident in Amlwch who resented the 'nosiness' of residents there.

I detest the place to be absolutely honest with you …they (Amlwch people) are nosey people, and what they don't know about you they'll make up about you. They're very nosey people.
(Harold, 65+, Amlwch)

Residents who did not like living in 'close knit' communities tended to 'keep themselves to themselves', as the quotes below illustrate:

We talk to people on the street but we don't really bother with them, we keep ourselves to ourselves… most people on this street is each to their own. Keep their-self to their-self.
(Holly, 45-64, West Marsh)

Everybody keeps themselves to themselves probably that's what I like about it.
(Grace, 25-29, West Marsh]

I talk to the neighbour next door when she's got her head out of the door and that … this neighbour I hardly talk to him. We talked to him when he first moved in, found out who he was, where he come from and all that. He said: 'you're really nice people, I hope you enjoy yourself' … There's another neighbour that takes our bin out for us every Wednesday morning …but we tend to keep ourselves to ourselves.
(Mark, 16-24, West Marsh)

Further discussion about social interaction and 'community' in our case study areas can be found in an academic paper produced by another member of the team, Richard Crisp (Crisp, forthcoming).

In line with the findings of other studies including Cole *et al* (2007), one of the most important 'place' related push pull factor in our case studies was the perceived level of safety and security afforded by a neighbourhood. Not unexpectedly, residents in all of

our case study areas expressed a preference for wanting to live in an area where they felt safe and the views of two were typical of many we spoke to.

Yeah, if it's possible (I'd like to stay in this area). I think for the simple reason that there is virtually no crime in this area. You go one street down and there is - why that is I've no idea. I suppose it's the same everywhere. But in this L shaped section we all look out for one another. It's 'close knit' and everybody knows what everybody's doing. If someone's on holiday everybody looks out.
(Julie, 45-64, West Marsh)

Me life's better here because I feel safer leaving the kids to go in the garden to play, when I'm just pottering about in the house or putting stuff away…whereas in my old one (house) I wouldn't. Me little girl didn't go out then. Obviously I wouldn't leave them, walk down the street or owt like that at the minute. But I'd be happy for her to play up and down the street with her friends when she got a bit older. I wouldn't before… it seems safe around here so I'm happier with doing things.
(Mel, 16-24, West Marsh)

Cole *et al* (2007) identified a number of problems relating to perceived anti-social-behaviour and crime in the neighbourhood that contributed to residents in NDC areas leaving their areas. These factors were: 'problems with neighbours', which was cited by 8 per cent of voluntary outmovers; 'increase in crime' (7 per cent); 'area deteriorating' (6 per cent); 'drugs' (5 per cent); 'gangs hanging around' (4 per cent); 'unsafe' (3 per cent); and 'noise' (2 per cent). All of these issues were important push factors in our sample.

For example, residents in all six of our case studies were unhappy about the perceived anti-social-behaviour of 'gangs'. Residents in West Marsh were most likely to feel this way. For example, Stephane noted how local gangs had harassed him and his partner, vandalised their property and targeted two local brothers who lived together, because it was thought that they were a cohabiting gay couple.

I love the house. I wish I could just uplift it and move. I love the house it's the area I can't stand….Yes, it has (got worse). …..The police do try and crack down on it. They just don't crack down on it at the right time….you get two different gangs of lads. I mean I've already had one word with one of the parents but nothing's been done. It was while Emma was pregnant last year. They was harassing her something awful. They was dropping their trousers and everything. The police? Nothing. They never came. So I pulled one of the parents up. She says: 'Oh, it's nothing to do with my son.' But he's the instigator as well as his friend. Them two are the instigators. I've been writing everything down …. and I'm taking my list in to the police. Well, they won't do anything because they're under 15. There's just not enough being done….in Gilby only a couple of days ago there's a car that's parked…. That's had all his windows smashed in… two brothers… have had the car damaged I don't know how many times. They've had the windows smashed in twice. Because the kids round here think that they're queers but they're not, they're two brothers. They're twins. Because they're identical but the kids round here think they're puffs. But they're not. They're targeted quite easily and I've been told that if you say too much to the kids round here I'll get targeted. Why should they get away with it? We had work done for the two (broken) doors. £75 each. Why should we pay for it? It's not us that broke 'em. Parents should start having to be made to pay.
(Stephane, 45-64, West Marsh)

A young couple from the area, Stuart and Wendy, also highlighted the problem of gangs in the area.

> I: *Do you go anywhere within West Marsh?*
>
> R2: *Just the school really*
>
> R1: *The park and school.*
>
> I: *Is there a reason why you don't go out round here or…*
>
> R2: *I won't go out at night will I?*
>
> R1: *No, she won't leave house on her own at night time because street lighting round here.*
>
> R2: *If I need to go to shop it's a nightmare. This passage way, alley way gangs and gangs about it.*
>
> R1: *People waiting for drugs and things.*
>
> R2: *And it's absolute pitch black.*
> (R1: Stuart, 30-34, R2: Wendy, 30-34, West Marsh)

Residents in all six case studies reported that they had experienced 'problems' with their neighbours and that their perceived anti-social-behaviour had resulted in them wanting to leave the neighbourhood. The case of one resident was typical of many we spoke to.

> R1: *They (our neighbours) fill the garden with rubbish.*
>
> R2: *She doesn't believe in bin bags.*
>
> R1: *All her rubbish is scattered down the garden…. dirty nappies and everything. And a dog that barks from morning till night. She lets it out, ….it's a little yappy thing. A Jack Russell.*
>
> R2: *We had a little bonfire. We phoned the council and checked that it was all right and all the rest of it. And not next door, but next door but one, came out and give us a mouthful for it. They threatened to burn the house down…. then they called the police on us didn't they? …. and told the police that we threatened to burn their house down.*
>
> I: *So did the police come 'round?*
>
> R1: *They didn't come round here. They went and spoke to all the neighbours. And they just put it down to malicious phone calls. So it's all been a bit shit really.*
> I: *So it's not got any better then?*
>
> R2: *Got worse. We're still waiting for Shoreline (the stock transfer social housing landlord) to move us.*
> (R1: Alf, 35-44, R2: Eve, 35-44, West Marsh)

The presence of drug dealers and their clients and the anti-social-behaviour of both groups also emerged as being a significant push factor in our case studies. For example, in West Marsh Stuart and Wendy recounted the story of Stuart's unpleasant (late night) experience with someone looking to buy drugs in the area.

> R2: *They (local drug dealers) were there when I come back from school actually…. two of them.*
>
> R1: *I actually waited for a taxi cos I had to go somewhere the other week and ….. I waited there for the taxi because we can't hear them, obviously. Someone come up asking me for drugs. They thought it were me they had to meet.*
>
> R2: *They come up to me and said: 'I've just spoke to you on phone, you're carpet man aren't you?' It must be a code name or something. I said: 'eh?'.*
>
> R1: *Banging on door as well. 3 o'clock in the morning. Banging door down asking me to sell 'em…*
>
> R2: *They said: 'is such and such here?' I said 'no.' They said: 'are you sure?' I said: 'well, we should know we live here'.*
> (R1: Stuart, 30-34, R2: Wendy, 30-34, West Marsh)

The perceived deterioration of the neighbourhood, which was sometimes linked to a perception of rising crime levels, was also was a significant push factor in our case study sample. However, it appeared to be a particular issue in Amlwch, and despite being the site of a major regeneration initiative, Hillside. A number of residents in Amlwch noted how the area had declined in recent years.

> *It's just a shame to see a lot of the shops in the street closing down. And that's just a shame to see but not much you can do….years ago you'd have a shoe shop. I think there was two shoe shops at one time. There was three fruit and veg shops. Not now.*
> (Bunny, 30-34, Amlwch)

In a similar vein, many residents in Hillside were quick to highlight the decline of the neighbourhood, with many being particularly unhappy about the denudation of its neighbourhood infrastructure with the closure of a number of shops in the area.

> *Lot's (of shops have) closed down. There used to be a chip shop and everything, yeah that closed. And the one next door to her was a hairdressers…it's all quieter.*
> (Heidi, 65+, Hillside)

Furthermore, the creation of barren empty spaces in the neighbourhood as a result of its extensive demolition programme, was also seen as contributing to its decline.

> *It's just unbearable (living here). It's like the black hole of Calcutta of a night when the winter comes. It's horrible. There's no-one living round me and it's just an awful depressing thing to go home to. I hate even being in there now and I loved my home when my children were growing up. I never ever thought I'd ever say that.*
> (Carrie, 45-64, Hillside)

It's all getting knocked down and that and it's crap at the minute....it's just you come out your door and it's like: 'ugh, what's going in 'ere?' There's nothing there no more. You haven't your nice neighbours that lived over the road who you'd say 'good morning' to and whatever. They're not there now. So that's the only like maybe bit of emotional side of it.
(Polly, 30-34, Hillside)

Further discussion about neighbourhood change in the case study areas can be found in another working paper produced by the study team: *Neighbourhood Change and its Impacts* (Bashir and Flint, 2010).

It is important to note at this juncture that the issue of anti-social-behaviour should not be seen only as being a push factor 'encouraging' residents to leave our case study neighbourhoods. Instead, for some residents it was a pull factor that attracted them to move into one of them. This was because, compared to where they had previously lived, they felt that their current neighbourhood was relatively devoid or crime and anti-social-behaviour. For example, a couple in West Marsh, Michaela and Gregory, were happy to be living in the area after experiencing anti-social-behaviour when they had lived in two other parts of Grimsby: Patrick Street and the Nunsthorpe Estate. They recounted the story of when one of their neighbours urinated in- front of them and their children.

R1: *Patrick Street was a total disaster. We had no choice because the landlord decided to sell. So we moved there….*

I: *So you've seen the other side of it?*

R1: *Yeah. Cos that was smack alley, wasn't it? Oh yeah, all down there.*

R2: *Your daren't say owt because, if you did, your window's would be put through…you just didn't want to look out your own window because you know that people'll just call you a nosy cunt and to start gesture, gesticulating towards you, that type of thing. I caught somebody urinating right opposite the window the last week we was there. And all I was doing was I loading the van up or the car with little bags and that, ready to move. And he was there pissing in front of me kids. And his mate shouted: 'what are you looking at you pervert?' So that made me fire back and I said: 'well, it's the middle of the day. Me kids are here. Do you really need to be doing that round here?' And they started gobbing off. It just so happened there was a policewoman in the house where they was urinating up against taking a statement. She had an unmarked police car and she came and he got arrested straight away. But that was all my fault: 'you'll pay for that. we know where you live.' I was giving it: 'yeah you will know where I live' but we was going the next weekend….. that (living in Patrick Street) was worse than Nunsthorpe*

R1: *I couldn't sleep at night. Every night I was looking at the car, looking round the side of the house.*
(R1: Michaela, 30-34; R2: Gregory, 30-34, West Marsh)

They also noted how the family that had moved into their previous residence in Patrick Street has been the 'target' of anti social behaviour and how relentless
and cruel this 'targeting' could be:

R1: *Saying that, though, the people that moved in after us, they had nothing but trouble. I mean it is an area where if you're targeted you get it and they don't stop.*

R2: *Yeah, the next door neighbours was targeted all the time weren't he?*
R1: *Oh, yeah they used to walk in his house…*

R2: *Take everywhere what they wanted.*

R1: *Beat him up. They helped themselves to his money or whatever he had and he was just a total coward, weren't he?*

R2: *Yeah, he just took it. I caught 'em climbing up the outside of the house when we first moved in there and pulled them up about it and I never got any more of it since, did I?*
(R1: Michaela, 30-34; R2: Gregory, 30-34, West Marsh)

'Family' and 'friends' push pull factor

For many residents in our six case studies it was the need to live close to their family and friends that appeared to be the biggest push pull factors in their lives. Turning first to the former, in narratives provided by residents who liked where they lived, for many the proximity of family members appeared to be main factor contributing to this.

Well, I've got a few family who live in Amlwch. I've got two sisters living on the estate itself, they bought their houses. They're further round the other side. So I quite like living here for that reason. And there's quite a few kids here that everybody looks out for everybody's children, you know? So, yeh, I like that aspect of it.
(Stephanie, 16-24, Amlwch)

Well, basically (we moved back to Blackburn from Bedford because) I was born here. I was from a big family and had the opportunity of living with a lot of people around me. And my children didn't have the opportunity that I had in that family orientated respect. So I wanted to give them the same opportunity that I had basically. I wanted them to play with their cousins and uncles and aunties and get spoilt from them. So we came back for the family and for my wife as well for support…. in the family respect, yes (life is better)… in the sense that where before I used to do things with my friends I do more things with my brothers and sisters. And we go to each other's houses. And I've got the potential to do that. I can always get involved in weddings and functions. And I found it very difficult before. I had to make a special effort to come up here because I was living 200 miles away.
(Khaliq Ahmad, 30-34, Wensley Fold)

As the last quote illustrates, for many residents in our case study areas it was the desire to live close to their family that had 'pulled' them to their place of residence. This was certainly the case for one Amlwch resident who moved back to the area after living and working in Bangor. Significantly, for this resident being close to his family was a much more important push pull factor than living in a place with perceived good employment prospects.

I: *So, basically, you were in Bangor, and you thought you'd like to come back here. What brought you back here?*

R: *I missed my family and stuff.*

I: *So basically your immediate family and your broader family around here.*

R: I*t's a bit lonely out there.*
(Carl, 25-29, Amlwch)

In a similar vein, a resident in West Kensington had returned to the area because he missed his family, and in particular the support they provided. Significantly, he believed that with this support he would be able to find work, something which without it in another part of the country he had been unable to do.

I: *What made you come back to London?*

R: *Missing home innit. Miss being in my own town. Miss this place, just missed home, had enough of going, getting no help or surviving by myself and not having family to lean on now and then, it does make a difference.*

I: *So you've got people around you here that can offer you support?*

R: *Support yeah, that's what I need, a little guidance really. Yeah, I just wanted to come back home, sort my life out, start working, stop signing on the dole and that… My mum had cancer like so that was another reason. She was… I don't like the phrase schizophrenia, I always say people with illnesses like, like come back for my mum.*
(Nelson, 35-44, West Kensington)

For this resident, who was typical of many others, his family was an essential part of his life and were an important resource for him: he saw them on a regular basis and they provided him with much needed support. Support from the family could take many forms including emotional support, financial support – a number of respondents reported that they borrowed money from family members – and childcare provision. The importance of family as a resource to residents in deprived neighbourhoods has been noted by other studies including Fletcher *et al* (2008).

In addition to acting as a pull factor for residents in our case study areas, it is also important to note that, as noted in section four, 'family' also had the effect of constraining mobility for some residents as a number reported that they could not leave their neighbourhood because they provided support, in a number of different forms, to family members who lived there.

This was the case for one West Kensington resident who appeared keen to leave the area but was reluctant to do so because she felt she had to care for her younger siblings:

Yeah, definitely (I'd like to move). That's more in the future, to be honest. I wouldn't mind if it was right now but, like I said, there's my brother and sister, they still need me. And I'm the next female figure, so they still need me… you have to sacrifice certain things.
(Cordell, 30-34, West Kensington)

In a similar vein, a resident in Oxgangs noted:

It (the reason why I am going to stay in the area) is only because my mum lives up the road and I've got to look after her. Otherwise I would go completely somewhere else in the world. But I have to stay here. That's the only reason why I put down for Oxgangs to get housing in Oxgangs is because I have to look after my mum. So it's nothing to do with me personally wanting to stay in the area.
(Elijah, 35-34, Oxgangs)

And a resident in Wensley Fold who was keen to leave area reported that he would not do so because he had to look after his mother who lived in the neighbourhood.

No (I won't move) because things just keep plodding on. I know she (my mother) in a worse situation with her legs. But that's because she's got that psoriasis on her legs thing. I've got to look after her and try and be there most of the time but sometimes I feel like I want to just escape, get out of the house and just go. But when you've got responsibilities you can't just up and go.
(Artur, 45-64, Wensley Fold)

Living close to friends also appeared to be a really important aspect of what residents wanted from the place where they lived. When respondents were asked to highlight why they liked living where they did, it was one of the most commonly cited responses:

I like (West Kensington) because ….. I have friends and lot of people that come from same country that I come from, so that you can have a chat and help if I need it sometimes.
(Tabasxamu Aba, mid 20s, West Kensington)

Everything's close by. Everything we need shopping wise, family, friends. Everything is just close… That's it. That's the main thing (why I like living here).
(Aaliyah, 25-29, West Kensington)

Probably not, no (I wouldn't live anywhere else). All me mates are from round here and …just the club, me family, me friends (keep me here).
(Wayne-Lee, 25-29, Hillside)

And the need to be close to friends was a common reason cited by residents for not wanting to leave their neighbourhoods:

No. No. I don't want to move from here. I'll tell you why I don't want to move. If you move the likes of me now at my age and everything else like that, and you sort of put me in some place I'd be away from everywhere. You see, I …need me neighbours, I need me friends.
(Rufus, late 60s, West Kensington)

As was the case with 'family', friends provided support in a number of different ways:

Some people have lived here for years and years and I've known them for years. And they're there if you needed them…. some of them, yeh. I could knock on somebody's door at three o'clock in the morning and they'd be fine about it… I can knock on my neighbour's door for a bit of milk. In the summer some of us sit out on the wall, and the children are playing. And we chat to each other. And you don't get that a lot in other estates. That is nice.
(Denietta, 35-44, Amlwch)

Before moving on to highlight some of the key policy messages to emerge from this study, it is important to highlight another important driver of residential mobility in our case study areas which is in inextricably linked to the push pull factors of 'family' and 'friends': the desire of many residents to live in neighbourhoods where they had 'roots.' The view of a resident in Wensley Fold was typical of many we spoke to.

I wouldn't move out. This is where my roots are. This is where I was born. I was born in Blackburn and this is… all my memories and stuff like that. This is where they are - on these very streets. And it's very hard to replace that…look, my roots lie in Blackburn. I was born and bred in Blackburn. Everything that's ever happened to me was around Blackburn or my area. To lose that would be like losing a part of me. And sometimes it's too much to lose; all the memories and the happiness that lies here. I wouldn't want to lose all that.
(Faisal Hussain, 16-24, Wensley Fold)

In a similar vein, a resident in West Marsh noted that he would never leave the area because he 'belonged' there.

I just feel as if I belong. I wouldn't want to go anywhere else, not even a different street or somewhere to live. It's never entered my head: 'oh, we'll sell the house and go somewhere else.'
(Mulbery, 30-34, West Marsh)

The issues of 'belonging', neighbourhood attachment and 'roots' are explored in more depth in another of the working papers produced by the study team: Cole and Green (2010). And for further discussion about the role of friends and family in the lives of residents in our case study neighbourhoods, please see Crisp and Robinson (2010).

Figure 5.1. Key Push Pull Factors in the Case Study Areas		
Pull Factors	**Factors which both *pulled* and *pushed* residents**	**Push factors**
Amlwch		
Location by the sea	Friends and family	Relative geographic isolation of the area
Access to the countryside	The relative 'tranquillity' and 'quietness' of the area	Anti-social-behaviour
Rural location	Close knit community where 'everyone knows each other'	Lack of leisure activities and 'things to do'
Economic heritage of the area	Cost of owner occupied housing	'Tensions' between the 'indigenous' (Welsh) and 'new' (English) populations
		Paucity of transport links A neighbourhood in decline?
Hillside		
Quality of the housing stock	Friends and family Close knit community where 'everyone knows each other'	Anti-social-behaviour Paucity of neighbourhood infrastructure….
		…. and lack of third places Barren spaces and the paucity of the physical environment A neighbourhood in decline?
Oxgangs		
Proximity to the centre of Edinburgh	Friends and family	Anti-social-behaviour
Community centre	Close knit community where 'everyone knows each other'	
Neighbourhood amenities and services		
Quality of the local housing stock		
An area 'on the up'?		
Wensley Fold		
Proximity to the centre of Blackburn	Diversity of the area's population	Anti-social-behaviour
Neighbourhood amenities and services	Cultural richness of the area	Lack of green spaces
The type of accommodation in the neighbourhood	Friends and family	
Good equity growth/ good investment prospects	Close knit community where 'everyone knows each other'	
West Kensington		
Location in the heart of London	Diversity of the area's population	Paucity of community facilities
Excellent transport links	The cultural richness of the area	Anti-social-behaviour
Wealth of shops and amenities in the area	Friends and family	Fragmented 'community'….
North End Road market	The housing stock Earls Court Redevelopment Plans	….. lack of community spirit
West Marsh		
Proximity to the centre of Grimsby	Friends and family	Anti-social-behaviour
Quality of the local primary school		Quality of the local secondary school
Riverside location		Fragmented community
Community centre		

6.   Reflections for Policy

The preceding commentary has examined residential mobility in our case study neighbourhoods and highlighted some of the key push pull factors for residents living there. This section highlights the implications of the research for policy.

First, the research has important implications for policy in relation to housing policy, specifically in relation to housing supply. As noted earlier, a number of academics and policy makers have argued that the housing system in this country has acted as a 'check' on its labour market and that if it could be 'freed-up', workless and low paid residents looking for work, many of whom are located in deprived neighbourhoods, could (and would) move neighbourhoods to find work.

But the analysis presented earlier suggests that this will not be case as the labour market did not act as a significant push pull factor for residents in our case studies and very few had moved home for employment related reasons. Moreover, and perhaps more importantly, relatively few reported that it was a factor that would shape their future housing decisions. And linked to this, none of the residents that reported that they wanted to move neighbourhoods attributed this aspiration to labour market related factors.

Therefore, this suggests that, all other things being equal, attempts to promote labour market driven mobility amongst workless and low paid residents living in deprived neighbourhoods are likely to be unsuccessful. This conclusion is consistent with those of Fletcher *et al* (2008: 55) who noted that measures to stimulate mobility within the sector with the highest proportion of workless and low paid residents living in deprived neighbourhoods – social housing – are likely to fail:

> *These findings suggest that efforts to facilitate greater mobility within the social rented sector for work-related reasons are unlikely to have any significant impact on levels of worklessness among social tenants.*

Furthermore, the analysis presented in this paper suggests that greater mobility may not be the positive and desirable phenomenon that many academic and policy makers argue it is. This is because it appears that many workless residents in deprived neighbourhoods are only able to 'get by' in often very difficult and challenging circumstances precisely because they are immobile, as the neighbourhood provides them with a vital resource: the support of their friends and family.

For these residents moving away from the neighbourhood would deprive them of this much needed resource, with potentially negative consequences. As noted at the beginning of section 5.3.2, this was certainly the case for one of the residents we interviewed, Carl, who had returned to his 'home' town of Amlwch after a very difficult time spent away from his friends and family in Bangor, a town he had moved to enhance his employment prospects. Again, this finding is consistent with those of Fletcher *et al.,* (2008: 52) who found that:

Many respondents were connected to their local area by family ties. Leaving the neighbourhood would involve leaving behind this most important resource.

The preference of many residents we spoke to live near to friends and family and the desire of policy makers for workless residents to find employment should not be seen as being mutually exclusive and conflicting. This is because we found evidence that the support of family and friends gave workless residents the confidence and practical assistance, whether in the form of childcare support, somewhere affordable to live, or a lift home from work, that they needed to find (and hold-down) employment. This was clearly the case for the West Kensington resident, Nelson who, as noted in section 5.3, had moved back to the area because he believed that the support of his family would 'get him off the dole and into work'.

It is also important to note that the disruption to family networks that mobility *may* bring about may have significant implications for public resources, particularly in relation to social care, as vulnerable outmovers are forced to turn to the state, and not their family, for support.

Therefore, amongst certain sections of the policy and academic communities there needs to be a re-appraisal of the function and value of immobility in deprived neighbourhoods and recognition of the positive contribution it can make. Furthermore, and more broadly, there also needs to be a rethink about the language associated with the phenomenon as the connotations associated with the terms associated with it are mainly negative, with *immobility* appearing to be perceived as being a 'failure' to move and *immobile* residents as being 'failed' mobile residents.

But given the positive impact that immobility can have, which this study has clearly demonstrated, and the fact that most for people living in this country it is the norm, and not a state of 'failure', more positive epithets are perhaps needed when discussing the phenomenon. So when referring to communities with low levels of mobility it may be more appropriate and helpful to describe them using more positive terms such as 'settled' or 'stable'.

In addition to the desire to live close to friends and family, two other push pull factors emerged as being particularly important amongst the multitude of factors driving residential mobility: 'place' and 'property.' Much of the discussion in the preceding section focused on highlighting and exploring a number of push pull factors associated with the social and physical dimensions of place.

In terms of the social attributes of an area, the research has highlighted a number of important messages for policy makers. First, in line with the findings of a number of other studies, it has highlighted the importance of perceived anti-social-behaviour as a major push factor driving residents from neighbourhoods: tackling this problem will enhance the quality of lives of residents living in deprived neighbourhoods and encourage more of them to remain there.

Second, the research has highlighted the importance of 'public' social spaces within neighbourhoods as mediums for social interaction, which have been referred to as third places of interaction. Where possible, efforts should be made to retain and improve these places.

Third places are attributes of an area that have both social and physical dimensions and the physical characteristics of neighbourhood, including the quality of its infrastructure

(i.e. amenities and services such as shops, cafés, pubs and community centres), the quality of its green spaces, and its location, emerged as being important drivers of residential mobility in our case study areas. This has a number of important implications for policy.

First, policy makers and practitioners should recognise the importance of the physical environment of a neighbourhood and devise policy policies which reflect this. More specifically, where residents perceive it to be inadequate they should put in place measures to improve it. And linked to this, they should seek to arrest a nationwide trend that is clearly evident in our case study areas, and which has been exacerbated by the recent economic downturn: the decline in the quality of the physical environments of deprived neighbourhoods.

Tackling these issues will improve the quality of life of residents and make them less likely to want to leave their neighbourhoods. Furthermore, it may also positively alter their views on the 'health' of their neighbourhoods: there was a very strong sense amongst residents in all six of our case study areas that quality of an area's physical environment is an important barometer of its health and vibrancy. As a result, its denudation is perceived as being a very tangible marker and symbol of decline, with the closure of shops being particularly significant. This clearly appears to have been the case in three of our case studies - West Marsh, Amlwch and Hillside and Primalt – where the decline of the physical environment in the neighbourhood, principally though the reduction of the number and quality of its amenities and services, was presented by residents as evidence that these areas had declined.

Therefore, efforts should be made to ensure that recession does not result in their further erosion in deprived areas. Before exploring what form these efforts might take, it is important to note that the scope for policy makers and practitioners to improve the infrastructure of deprived neighbourhoods may be relatively limited by a number of constraining factors. These are: an adverse and potentially deteriorating economic climate; the decline in funding for regeneration; the increasing economic hegemony of larger superstores; and the private ownership of many amenities.

Policy makers have several policy instruments that they can draw on to improve neighbourhood amenities. For example, they could, as Carley *et al* (2001) suggest, appoint a *"retail liaison officer".* They note (op. cit. p.72) that *"every local authority concerned about the quality of retailing in and out of regeneration areas would benefit from designating an officer to develop competence in this area."* They could also ensure that neighbourhoods are well lit so that residents can visit key third places after dark; ensure that recreational areas are well maintained and managed; and provide support to local groups (in the form of subsidised rents and advice) to encourage them to occupy empty retail units.

Further insight into how policy makers and practitioners can improve the 'socio-physical' attributes of a neighbourhood, including its design, infrastructure and amenities, is provided by a number of studies funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation into how people use public spaces, and why these spaces are important to the residents and communities that use them. For example, Holland *et al* (2007) make a number of recommendations about the design of urban public spaces while Watson and Studdert (2006) explore how markets can (and do) fulfil an important role as social spaces, and how this can be achieved. The key messages to emerge from the Joseph Rowntree

Foundation's research programme on public spaces are highlighted in Worpole and Knox (2007), while all the reports produced as part of this programme can be downloaded from its website: http://www.jrf.org.uk/work/workarea/public-spaces.

Two other reflections for policy emerge from the research, both of which are concerned with the neighbourhood renewal process. The first of these relates to the criteria used to select the neighbourhoods to be included in area based regeneration programmes, whether at the national, regional, or sub-regional levels. Historically, most of these may be described as being 'compositional' in nature as they are derived by combining a range of indicators of deprivation to form a composite score of the severity of the 'problem' in a neighbourhood. This score is then used to determine which neighbourhoods are included in a programme with the usual convention being to allocate resources to those with the 'highest' scores.[4]

However, while this approach has many merits, and the reliance on 'hard' secondary data ensures that the exercise is perceived as being as objective as possible, in one important way it is fundamentally flawed: it makes no attempt to capture the quality of the social and physical attributes of a neighbourhood, which include its infrastructure. This is important because this research has shown that the quality of neighbourhood infrastructure is an important driver of residential mobility.

Therefore, in line with the conclusions of a number of other studies, including Cummins *et al* (2007), quantitative *compositional* measures of deprivation should be supplemented by data which seeks to provide an insight into the broader social, cultural and physical c*ontext* within a neighbourhood. This data will probably be qualitative in nature as these characteristics are not easily quantified. However, this does not negate its value. And including a '*context profiling*' exercise in the neighbourhood selection process will result in it being more 'bottom-up' and rounded. This is because it will be more in tune with the views of local residents, who as this research has demonstrated, attach great importance to the physical and social attributes of a neighbourhood, including its infrastructure.

The second policy reflection for regeneration relates to the focus of activities in renewal areas and, in particular, to the importance of ensuring that residents' 'voices' are heard within the renewal process. In recent years in England, as part of the housing market renewal process, there has been a growing emphasis on changing the nature of deprived places, a phenomenon that, following the publication of the Lyons Inquiry into Local Government and the Local Government White Paper (Lyons, 2007), has increasingly been referred to as 'place-shaping (Hildreth, 2007). This process has largely been driven by policy stakeholders and strategic planners with the 'voices' of residents being not so evident.

While this is a concern for a number reasons, not least because it seems ethically and morally 'wrong' that residents do not have a central role in the process, the failure to fully take-on board their views may have an adverse impact on the 'place-shaping' process. This is because without understanding *how* and *why* residents use the places they live in and the infrastructure and the social spaces within them, policy makers may make decisions that have unforeseen negative impacts on the neighbourhood and residents' lives.

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[4] The flagship area based regeneration programme in England, the *New Deal for Communities Programme*, took a slightly different approach and allowed itself some flexibility in terms of the areas it funded. While it did focus its attention on the 88 most deprived wards in England identified using compositional data, it did not look to specifically fund initiatives in the 39 *most* deprived neighbourhoods in the country.

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Appendix 1 – Case Study Profiles

A1.1 Hillside and Primalt, Knowsley

The Knowsley case study is made up of two adjoining neighbourhoods, Hillside and Primalt. Primalt is the formal name given to the area for planning purposes and by the NDC partnership, but the whole area is generally known by residents as Hillside, and this is as the term for the case study area in the rest of this report. The neighbourhoods make up one-third of North Huyton New Deal for Communities (NDC) intervention area (the other areas are Finch House, Fincham, Woolfall North and Woolfall South).

These two neighbourhoods, and the wider NDC area, form a part of the collection of inter-war and post-war municipal housing estates that were developed as 'overspill' from the City of Liverpool slum clearance programmes and the expansion of the Liverpool Docks. The majority of dwellings are two storey semi-detached and terraced family houses arranged in traditional street patterns. Households in the case study area are predominantly White, with just one per cent of residents from a minority ethnic background, according to the 2001 Census.

Analysis from the 2007 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) for the two lower super output areas (LSOAs) that approximate most closely to Hillside show that the area is in the most deprived decile on four of the seven domains: income, employment, health, and education, skills and training; it is in the second most deprived decile on 'crime' and 'living environment', and the third lowest decile on 'barriers to housing and services'. The ONS statistics on population turnover for 2005/6 showed a rate of 50 per 1,000 (compared to a median turnover rate for Medium SOAs in England and Wales of 78 per 1,000).

The age profile of the area according to 2006 mid year estimates broadly matches the wider local authority and national picture, with a slightly higher proportion of young people under the age of 16. In the 2001 census, 25 per cent of households were classified as lone parent (compared to 19 per cent in Knowsley and 10 per cent in England) and 53 per cent lived in social housing (compared to 32 per cent and 19 per cent respectively). In February 2008, 6.4 per cent of the working age population in the area was claiming Job Seekers' Allowance (JSA) (compared to 4.2 per cent in Knowsley and 2.2 per cent in England) and 19 per cent were claiming Incapacity Benefit (IB)/Severe Disability Allowance (SDA) (compared to 13.6 per cent and 6.8 per cent respectively).

Hillside is bounded by the M57, a dual carriageway (Seth Powell Way) and a park (Alt Park) and is one of the more isolated areas in the wider neighbourhood. In recent years void properties have been a significant problem in the housing stock, with many empty properties declared structurally unstable and dangerous. The sense of isolation has been reinforced by the demolition of a considerable proportion of the housing stock, leaving many unused open spaces that have yet to be developed as part of the masterplan for the area.

New development to replace demolished dwellings has recently been suspended, as a consequence of the economic downturn. The area has few public buildings and amenities, and one of the last remaining post offices in the area closed last year. Beechwood Primary School, which was one of three primary schools in the North Huyton area, has also recently closed down. The one public building in Hillside, the 'Hillywood' Community Centre, is well used by a range of local groups, residents and stakeholders. It is staffed by two paid community workers and a small band of dedicated volunteers.

The Primalt area comprises 648 units of accommodation including a renovated tower block known as Knowsley Heights. There are around sixty owner-occupied properties in the area. There are problems with anti-social behaviour in parts of the estate, and environmental problems, although one area, Pennard Field, is seen as a potential amenity for the whole community. There are no other public amenities in the Primalt area.

A1.2 Oxgangs, Edinburgh

Oxgangs is a suburb of Edinburgh, located in the south-west of the city. It is named after an 'oxgang', an ancient Scottish land measure. The development of the area started in the early 1950s; it had previously been mostly farmland and was considered part of the countryside on the fringe of the city. The area consists of large housing schemes, ranging from Edinburgh City Council-owned high rise tower blocks to private bungalows. A large proportion of former council-owned properties in Oxgangs have been bought by tenants under the Right to Buy scheme, and there is now a high demand for what remains of the council housing stock in the area.

An analysis of the LSOAs for Oxgangs in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) for 2007 shows that the area is in the third most deprived decile overall, and is classed in this decile for income, health and crime. It is in the second most deprived decile in terms of education, skills and training and housing, in the fourth most deprived decile for employment, and the fifth for geographic access. The age profile of the area in the 2006 mid-year estimates is broadly similar to the city and national picture, with a slightly higher proportion of older residents (21 per cent, compared to 17 per cent for Edinburgh and 19 per cent for Scotland). There was a relatively high proportion of lone parent households in the areas (14 per cent compared to 8 per cent in Edinburgh and 11 per cent in Scotland) and of households in the social housing sector (46 per cent compared to 18 per cent and 29 per cent respectively).

As of November 2007, 2.6 per cent of the working age population in Oxgangs was claiming JSA (compared to 1.6 per cent in Edinburgh and 2.1 in Scotland) and 14.7 per cent were claiming IB/SDA (compared to 7.2 per cent and 9.4 per cent respectively).

The neighbourhood is well served by a variety of shops, amenities and public facilities. It has two small shopping areas at each end of Oxgangs known to the locals as the 'top' and 'bottom' shops. The top shops (Oxgangs Broadway) are the larger and feature a small convenient store known as 'Denis's', named after the owner of the shop. Other shops in the top area include a newsagents, a hairdressers, and three take-aways. There is also a post office and a pharmacy.

The local library is a popular hub of the community, and is regularly used for meetings and classes as well as for its wide range of books and IT facilities. Oxgangs has three

primary schools, as well as a nearby high school with a very good reputation locally and further afield. Two neighbouring primary schools situated on Oxgangs Green (Comiston and Hunters Tryst) were recently merged and renamed Pentland Primary. Local churches in the area include: Church of Scotland, Scottish Episcopal Church, a Roman Catholic Church and a recently built Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses.

In 2003 Edinburgh City Council (in consultation with tenants) took the decision to demolish and redevelop Oxgangs high rise flats, originally known as Comiston Luxury Flats. In April 2005 the long-standing tower block, Capelaw Court, was demolished to make way for new housing. Capelaw was one of three high rise flats built in Oxgangs Crescent in 1961 and 1962. The other two buildings (Caerketton Court and Allermuir Court) were then demolished in November 2006. The new homes, built on the site of the high rises, were designed in consultation with local people, and provide a mixture of dwellings, including provision for the elderly and the disabled. The scheme reflected a local desire for 'low rise' housing, coupled with the need to achieve relatively high dwelling densities in the face of high housing demand. However, some local residents have expressed reluctance about moving into the newly available accommodation because of its location and lay-out.

A1.3 Wensley Fold, Blackburn

Wensley Fold is a neighbourhood of Blackburn, a Lancashire town with a population of some 100,000 in 2001, and the administrative centre of the unitary authority of Blackburn and Darwen (population 137,000 in 2001). The neighbourhood is located immediately west of Blackburn town centre. It is bounded to the North by the A677 Preston New Road, to the South by a mixed use retail and industrial area and to the West by a large park. The area has a population of approximately 3,000, occupies a hillside situation and is characterised by rows of parallel terraced houses organised in a compressed grid pattern. Recently, the area has been subject to redevelopment, as part of the Pennine Lancashire Housing Market Renewal programme, with a number of terraces being demolished and replaced by new-build terrace properties, with more space between each row allowing for gardens and back yards to be developed.

Blackburn has a long history of immigration, particularly from India and Pakistan, and one in five (21 per cent) of the population in the town were recorded as of South Asian ethnic origin by the 2001 Census. In the study area, more than half of the local population were recorded as having a non-White ethnic origin by the 2001 Census, and 51 per cent were recorded as of South Asian ethnic origin. The LSOAs that were combined to create an area almost equivalent to the case-study neighbourhood were in the most deprived decile on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2007. The area was in the most deprived decile on six of the seven domains measured by the IMD: income, employment, health and disability, education, skills and training, and living environment. In contrast, the area was in the least deprived decile in the 'barriers to housing and services' domain, reflecting its proximity to the town centre.

According to the 2006 mid year population estimates, the neighbourhood has a young age profile. A relatively large proportion of the population are children less than 16 years old (29 per cent, compared to 24 per cent in the local authority district and 19 per cent in England) and only 11 per cent are men over 65 years old or women over 60 years old (compared to 19 per cent nationally). The 2001 Census recorded a relatively large proportion of single person households (41 per cent) and households containing dependent children (39 per cent). The neighbourhood has relatively large social rented

(30 per cent) and private rented (16 per cent) sectors, according to the 2001 Census. Only half (50 per cent) of the households live in owner occupied accommodation, compared to 71 per cent of households in the district and 69 per cent of all households in England.

A relatively high proportion of the local population were in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance or Incapacity Benefit/Severe Disability Allowance in February 2008. The proportion of people in receipt of the latter was almost treble the national level (18.8 per cent in the case study neighbourhood, compared to 11.6 per cent across the district and 6.8 per cent across England).

The area has a vibrant local shopping centre, with local shops specialising in South Asian produce. There are also a number of major supermarket stores on the edge of the area and the town centre is within walking distance. Local community resources include a community centre that runs various training, educational and social activities targeted at the whole population, as well as places of worship and parks.

A1.4   West Marsh, Grimsby

West Marsh is a neighbourhood of Grimsby, the largest town in the district of North East Lincolnshire, with a population of about 90,000. Grimsby has a long history as a fishing port and nearby Immingham is a major container port. Other major employers in the district include the chemical and food processing industries.

West Marsh is located immediately adjacent to the town centre and also close to the A180, the main route into the town from the west. A major feature of the area is the River Freshney, which runs west to east through the neighbourhood. On the north side of the River is a park. Together, these two physical features divide the neighbourhood into two distinct areas. North of the River and West of the park is an area often to referred to locally as 'Gilby'. Centred on Gilby Road, this area is relatively isolated, and consists of three parallel no-through-roads, criss-crossed by six parallel no-through-roads. South of the river is an area that many local people refer to as 'West Marsh', which is characterised by parallel roads of terraced houses.

The population of the LSOAs that are almost equivalent to the study area was just over 3,000, according to the 2006 mid-year estimate. Almost two-thirds (64 per cent) were of working age and 23 per cent were less than 16 years old. The area has a relatively small older population (13 per cent of the population, compared to 20 per cent in North east Lincolnshire and 19 per cent in England). According to the 2001 Census, a relatively small proportion of households are couples, with or without children (46 per cent, compared to 57 per cent in the district and 57 per cent across England). 17 per cent of households are lone parent families, compared to 12 per cent in the district and 10 per cent in England.

The area is relatively deprived, falling within the most deprived decile of lower super output areas in England. The area is placed in the lowest decile in relation to education skills and training, crime and the living environment on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). It is in the second lowest decile in terms of income, employment and health. In February 2008, 15.7 per cent of the working age population were in receipt of JSA or IB/SDA, compared to 11.1 per cent of people of working age in North Lincolnshire and 9.0 per cent in England.

The neighbourhood, like the wider district, is ethnically homogenous. According to the 2001 Census, 98 per cent of the population of the neighbourhood and the district were White British or Irish, one per cent were White Other and one per cent were Mixed Heritage. The study team did come across anecdotal evidence, however, that migrant workers from the EU accession states had arrived into Grimsby in recent years, with some people settling in West Marsh, although the scale of new immigration is unclear. Terraced housing is the dominant built form in the neighbourhood. Many of these properties have no garden or curtilege at the front, the front door opening straight onto the street. A relatively large proportion of the housing stock is privately rented (20 per cent, double the district and national average), while the proportion in the owner occupied sector (64 per cent) is below the proportion in North East Lincolnshire (72 per cent) and England (69 per cent).

There are a limited number of community facilities in the neighbourhood and several shops are shut and boarded up. There is, however, a community centre on the northern fringe of the area, which provides various courses, classes and groups, including youth activities. Shortly before the study team visited the area for the first stage interviews a local man had been stabbed to death in the area. At the time of the visit, the police investigation was ongoing and police divers were combing the River Freshney for evidence.

A1.5   West Kensington, London

The West Kensington case study area is located in west London, in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. The area is located within walking distance of Earls Court Exhibition Centre and a number of London Underground stations including West Kensington, West Brompton, and Earls Court. The area is surrounded by several high status neighbourhoods including Chelsea, Baron's Court and Kensington.

The case study area, which comprises 1,800 properties in two social housing estates, West Kensington and Gibbs Green, forms part of a larger neighbourhood which most locals refer to as 'West Kensington.' The neighbourhood is centred on the intersection between North End and Lillie Roads, where most of the area's numerous shops, pubs and cafes are located. The area also has a bustling (semi-permanent) market which is located on Lillie Road. The West Kensington and Gibbs Green estates are located in the north of the neighbourhood on the eastern side of North End Road. Reflecting the diversity of the wider West Kensington area, the neighbourhood is a mixed income area and contains many households with above average incomes. In some parts of the area, property prices are very high, with some selling recently for more than £1.5 million.

The LSOAs for the area do not match the case study exactly, but are close enough to indicate the profile of deprivation in the locality. In terms of the IMD 2007, the areas were in the lowest decile for income and living environment, in the second lowest overall and in terms of employment, health and barriers to housing and services, and the third lowest for crime. It was however (just) in the least deprived half of LSOAs in terms of education, training and skills. In terms of the age profile, there is a slightly higher proportion of younger residents under 16 (20 per cent) than in the borough (16 per cent) or nationally (19 per cent) and a lower proportion of older residents (12 per cent) than in England (19 per cent). According to the 2001 Census, 23 per cent of households are lone parents, compared to 12 per cent in Hammersmith and Fulham and 10 per cent in England, and 11 per cent are multi-person households, compared to 13 per cent in the borough and just three per cent nationally.

65 per cent of households were described as 'white' or 'white other' in the area (78 per cent in Hammersmith and Fulham and 91 per cent in England) and 21 per cent described themselves as 'black' (compared to 11 per cent and 3 per cent respectively). The black and minority ethnic population includes members of Afro-Caribbean, West African and Somali communities. 57 per cent of households on the estates were in the social housing sector, compared to 33 per cent in the borough and 19 per cent nationally, and just 25 per cent were owner-occupiers (compared to 44 per cent and 69 per cent respectively).

The study area is covered by the North Fulham New Deal for Communities programme, and social housing units on the West Kensington and Gibbs Green estates are being modernised as part of this initiative. The West Kensington estate comprises approximately 1,000 units and was built in the early 1970s. It is a mixed development comprising five tower blocks, low rise flats, maisonettes and some terraced houses. The Gibbs Green estate comprises some 160 flats and maisonettes, built in the late 1950s/ early 1960s. The properties are set out in six four storey blocks and one eight storey block, which is due to be replaced by low rise housing and a communal hall under redevelopment proposals.

A1.6 Amlwch, Anglesey

Amlwch is a small town located on the northern tip of Ynys Môn (Isle of Anglesey). It is the fourth biggest settlement on the island and has a population of 1,400. It is relatively isolated geographically and the nearest towns to it are Llangefni (13 miles away) and Holyhead (20 miles). Amlwch comprises distinct neighbourhoods, including Amlwch Port, which was once a thriving port, Amlwch town itself, where most shops and services are based, and Craig-y-don, a small local authority housing estate located between Amlwch and Amlwch Port.   The residential areas contain a mixture of property types, although most of the stock consists of houses of traditional construction.

The town was once of the main centres of industry in Wales. It had one of the world's largest copper mountains (Parys Mountain), was once a centre for ship building and repair, and the base for a chemical plant which extracted bromine from sea water. However, these industries have all closed and, despite the continuing economic value to the town of the nearby Wylfa nuclear power station, the town has been in economic decline for the past thirty years or so. As a relatively deprived area, there is some regeneration activity being undertaken in Amlwch, coordinated by the regeneration agency for Wales, *Communities First*.

The LSOAs selected do not match exactly the study area but they nevertheless provide reliable estimates of its socio-economic position. In terms of the Welsh IMD, Amlwch is in the second most deprived decile in terms of community safety, environment, access to services and housing, and in the third most deprived in terms of income and its overall ranking. It is in the fourth most deprived decile for employment, heath and education. It does not have as high a WIMD score as many of the communities in the South Wales valleys, but the reason for selecting the area was due to its greater geographical isolation and relative immobility, signified by a population turnover rate for mid 2005 to mid 2006 of 44 per 1,000 population (compared to a median of 78 per 1,000 for England and Wales).

In the 2006 MYE, the age profile was broadly similar to district and national averages with a slightly higher proportion of those under 16 (20 per cent compared to 18 per cent for Ynys Mon and 19 per cent for Wales). Slightly higher proportions of the population were lone parent (13 per cent) or single person (35 per cent) households than in Ynys Mon (11 per cent and 29 per cent) and in Wales (12 per cent and 29 per cent). 98 per cent of the population is of 'White British/Irish' population ethic origin (the same as for the district and one per cent higher than the national average).

In the 2001 Census, just over two-thirds (67 per cent) of households in Amlwch owned their homes (68 per cent in Ynys Mon and 71 per cent in Wales) and 18 per cent were in the social housing sector (compared to 17 per cent and 18 per cent respectively). In February 2008, 5.1 per cent of the working age population were JSA claimants (3.1 per cent in Ynys Mon and 6.6 per cent in Wales) and 12.3 per cent were JSA/SDA claimants (compared to 9.5 per cent and 10.9 per cent respectively).

Many residents speak Welsh and it is the first language for some. In acknowledgment of this, residents were asked which language they would like to be interviewed in. Most did not have a preference, but two of the in-depth interviews undertaken by the research team were conducted in Welsh.