Linking Home and School

Ken Worpole

DEMOS

Contents

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Adrian Moran, Head of Innovation and Good Practice at the Housing Corporation, and Patricia Lankester, Director of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, for generously securing the funds needed to carry out this study. I am also grateful to Althea Enfushile, Director of Education and Community Services at the London Borough of Lewisham; Gordon Mott, Director of Education and Leisure at the London Borough of Southwark; Tim Brighouse, Director of Education and Graham Farrant, Director of Housing at Birmingham City Council; and Julia Molloy and Clare Demuth of Brighton Council for keen support in getting the project off the ground. Many other officers in these authorities also played an invaluable role in helping the research team, and it is with regret that it is impossible to mention each and every one by name.

Thanks are also due to Richard Thompson, Director of Housing at Nottingham City Council; Mrs Daphne Lockwood, Chief Health and Housing Officer at Carrick District Council; Gerald Adye, Head of Schools Section, Cornwall Education Department; and other officers in these authorities who offered advice, assistance and material.

I would like to thank Ben Jupp and Tom Bentley at Demos, and Joe Hallgarten and Sue Regan at the Institute for Public Policy Research for thoughtful comments on the project, and for providing access to their own research.

Finally, special thanks are due to Liz Greenhalgh who helped set the project up, and to Ian Christie, Diane Warburton and Rachel Wight, who undertook the research for the case studies and who provided unfailing intellectual support for the task in hand – as well as providing convivial and stimulating company.

Ken Worpole

Preface

The policy handshake approach

This project arose from previous work on urban policy carried out in 1998 and 1999 by Comedia and Demos jointly, under the title of *The Richness of Cities*. A number of specialist working papers were commissioned and published, together with a final report, all of which attracted considerable interest and attention. While the government had already expressed its frustration with narrow departmental approaches to urban and social policy, promoting such concepts as 'joined up government' and 'inter-agency' working, many were as yet unready to embrace 'holistic government' in a single step. Our approach to the wider issue of urban consolidation and sustainability led us to believe that some areas of public policy seemed to form natural alliances or linkages: we called them 'policy handshakes'.

For example, in the complex world of urban strategy, land-use planning and telecommunications policies are now obviously interconnected and synergistic; so too are economic development and welfare, culture and environment, quality of life and social justice, strategic planning and governance. Putting two policy areas together suddenly illuminates new ideas; indeed at times putting two problems together from different fields sometimes produces a mutually beneficial 'third way' solution.

We identified another handshake, which we decided to investigate further, between housing and education, and that is the subject of this report.

This study is about the political drive to introduce market disciplines and greater consumer choice in housing and education provision in the UK, and the collective outcomes of such choices. It is, therefore, about the difficult balance to be sought between *individual choice* and *community*, or *economy* and *social pluralism*, and *the common good*. Support for unrestricted parental choice, for example, may over time run counter to other government aspirations to support the neighbourhood and community as the moral contexts for citizenship, as well as the government's expressed wish to support greater local environmental sustainability through the reduction of car-use and unnecessary travel.

This scene-setting, strategic study tackles recent developments in

housing and education trends and policies, and attempts to bring them together in dynamic and enlightening ways to stimulate public debate. It combines national statistical and trend analysis with qualitative interviews in a number of local authority areas, principally Birmingham, Brighton and Hove, Lewisham and Southwark, with additional interviews conducted in Carrick, Cornwall County, Newham and Nottingham. In addition, the research team interviewed a number of parents, organised and spoke at seminars, and published several position papers.

The study focuses principally on the impact of parental choice during the 'moment' of transition from primary to secondary education. It also concentrates on the impact of parental choice on those living in public (or social) housing, where both housing and education choices remain under-developed or even illusory in places, despite a surplus of public housing in some northern cities, and a severe under-supply in some southern ones.

It also focuses on the dynamic educational and social relationships between neighbourhoods and their schools. At heart is a wish to explore the spatial and social dynamics at work in urban areas that might be putting urban renewal, greater social inclusion and even long-term environmental sustainability at risk. The starting point is a consideration of the wider social implications of 'parental choice' in education, one of the most radical and dynamic policies to have impacted upon communities for a very long time. It recognises, however, that 'geographical dislocation' is only one factor of many now evident in the changing relationship between home and school.[1]

Finally, as is evident from the case study authorities, the study principally deals with the connection between housing and education policies and practices in urban conurbations, often with a broad social and ethnic mix.

Introduction

The Labour government elected in 1997 promised new thinking across a number of existing public services and simultaneously promised 'joined-up government' to deliver them. Nowhere was this more urgently needed than in education and in public housing policy, and in both areas of service there have been many new – and radical – initiatives.

This report argues that today it is impossible to separate the two. All housing choices for families with young children have educational implications and, conversely, the planning and delivery of education is a dynamic factor in local housing and the vitality and viability of neighbourhoods.

As a result, policies to improve housing and education, especially in deprived urban neighbourhoods, must be designed and delivered together. This requires a shift in the way we think about, and manage, schools as community resources. It also requires politicians and commentators to embrace a more diverse and forward-looking definition of 'community'.

Extending choice further in housing and education is the only way to create new opportunities and tackle deep-seated structural disadvantage in urban housing and education. This in itself requires government policy to take a radical step on from the current confusion, in which some policies enable choice while others seek to curtail or constrain it for the sake of building 'strong' communities. Such choices should also be accompanied by a much clearer approach to building networks and institutions that enable cross-sector collaboration and build or mobilise positive and relevant forms of community.

The primary school is a key institution in any residential community – possibly the most important locus of social and civic cohesion. Yet the recent apprehensions about parental choice at secondary level leading to a widening of social polarisation – as ambitious parents shop around, and even move house, to secure advantage in the education marketplace – are now being felt at primary level. Once a primary school is perceived to be failing, parents scramble for alternatives, and sooner or later, 'Whoops, there goes the neighbourhood!'. That is why, controversially, we recommend paying primary school teachers more than other teachers in the state education system, in recognition of the vital role they play in helping to sustain social mix and social cohesion.

While the report recommends strengthening the links between geographical neighbourhoods and primary school catchment policies, it argues that the situation is very different for secondary schools, where greater choice and differentiation of provision is now increasingly advocated and accepted. For many children currently trapped in poor neighbourhoods served by failing secondary schools, denying them a choice to travel further and experience new opportunities and possibilities is clearly wrong. Reinforcing the geographical boundaries of failing communities – even while pumping large sums of money into regeneration projects – does not seem to work.

Arguing for different attitudes and policies towards primary and secondary school allocation systems – strengthening geographical loyalties in the former, widening territorial horizons in the latter – seems the most judicious way of acknowledging the ever-present tensions, both practical and political, between community and diversity, tensions that have exercised philosophers and political theorists from Aristotle onwards, and see no signs of going away or being resolved.

Good management is central to the development of both community and diversity in modern neighbourhoods. Effectively coordinating local patterns of educational and housing choice, the transport movements that arise from these choices and the development of multi-site educational provision, as well as newer forms of intermediate education (including home-based provision), will be a complex operation. At present nobody does it, but in future someone could. The challenge for the government, now publicly committed to neighbourhood management as a key ingredient of social cohesion, is to manage diversity and choice rather than managing social control.

Much in this report suggests that managing and supporting greater choice in housing and education provision need not mean the breakdown of 'community'. It could result in stronger, more nuanced and culturally diverse communities, which ultimately have more to offer those who live in them than the over-planned communities of an earlier era, or the economically polarised neighbourhoods that result from unregulated market choice.

1. Policies in parallel

The natural connection between housing and education policies is among most obvious, for the connections between the two have become part of the daily experience and 'common sense' thinking of millions of parents as they seek to secure the best education for their children. In doing so, they often find that catchment areas, selection policies, and the implications of greater parental choice all impact upon prices in the private housing market. In areas of large-scale public housing, too, the reputation of particular estates is often linked to the perceived success or failure of its local schools.

Figure 1 illustrates the policies, trends and pressures that have influenced housing and education policies in the recent past, uncannily similar in almost every detail.

Policy conflicts around housing and education develop principally in extreme situations, where social cohesion is most threatened and where even minor discrepancies of policy between agencies can magnify very quickly, and even disastrously. Opinion polls and attitudinal surveys tell us that most families in Britain are largely satisfied with where they live, whether it is public or private housing, and satisfied with the education their children receive (though teachers much less so it seems). It is also reasonable to argue that the quality of housing and education in general continues to improve, although there are often very big local differences. The reason why policy development so often concentrates on the worst-case scenarios is that these scenarios can have an emblematic or even prophetic function for the wider body politic, and we learn from extreme situations more quickly than we learn from the routine.

This study looks at particular parts of particular cities where the

Figure 1. Trends in housing and education	
Public Housing	**State Education**
Identification of failing estates	Identification of failing schools
Break-up of monolithic local authority supply	Break-up of monolithic local authority supply
Bad neighbour evictions	Rising exclusions
Residualisation of the poorest	Residualisation of the poorest
Poor reputations become self-fulfilling	Poor reputations become self-fulfilling
Competition between social housing providers for 'good' tenants	Competition between schools for 'good pupils'
Surplus of voids and empty properties reaches critical mass of decline	Surplus of places reaches critical mass leading to closure
Inappropriate physical design to meet 'work/study/home' needs	Inappropriate physical design to meet new new education/community needs
Market increases gap between affluent and poor areas	Market increases gap between popular and unpopular schools
Rapid price inflation as indicator of desirability	Over-subscription as indicator of desirability
Rejection of lettings offers or allocations	Appeals against allocations
High turnover of refugees and similar groups in inner city housing	High turnover of refugees and similar groups in inner city education

Policy developments	
Public Housing	**State Education**
Right to Buy & Choice in Social Housing	Parental choice
Continuing growth of housing associations & RSLs	Local Management of Schools and growth of specialist schools
More ethnic & religious providers	More ethnic & religious providers
Tenants Charters	Parent-school contracts
Security by entry-phone	Security by swipe-card
Housing Plus	Schools Plus
Public housing to be re-branded	Non-aided schools to be re-branded as 'community schools'
Lack of mutual associations for self-management of housing	Lack of parent mutuals for self-management of schools
Social housing providers constrained by national policy	Locally managed schools constrained by national policy
Lifetime homes	Lifelong learning

issues are at their most sharp, and therefore does not claim to be in any way typical or representative of the continuing functionality and basic satisfaction of everyday life for most families.

2. The impact of parental choice

Parental choice is now having particular impacts on housing provision and location. This impact was given credence in a statement made by a director of one of the largest estate agents in the UK, Edward Rook, of Knight Frank, in April 1999 when he noted that:

> 'Families today choose schools for their children for a wide variety of reasons. This changing attitude to schooling has to some degree affected the structure of the prime housing market around Britain.'[2]

A week later, one of Britain's better known local authority urban regeneration officers, Fred Manson, addressed the same theme:

> 'It is estimated that £10,000 a head has been spent on "regeneration projects" in the London borough of Southwark, yet Fred Manson, its director of regeneration, reckons there has been no discernible benefit. He concludes that the money must have been spent in the wrong places. Look after the schools and housing and everything else will fall into place, he argues. Get them wrong and nothing else will work.'[3]

The temptation for government might be to let these patterns of aspiration, selection and spatial re-configurations work themselves out in the changing and dynamic town or city. Yet it is also committed to urban regeneration and must find ways in which support for greater individual choice can be allied to programmes that endeav-

our to create more mixed and inclusive communities, given that there is evidence that children from poorer families perform much better educationally if they are in schools with a wider social mix, and also that one of the most important factors in rescuing schools from failure is parental involvement.[4] Both factors depend upon a large degree of spatial cohesion or connectivity.

The following issues should also impact on any possible solution:

a) a large number of people, notably those in public housing, have much less choice about housing mobility, and may therefore be penalised in their educational choices. Lower levels of home ownership among some ethnic minority groups may be consolidating already existing disadvantage;

b) the pattern whereby schools that do well in league tables may thereby increase the value of the surrounding housing market further reinforces the link between wealth and educational opportunity, as poorer but equally aspirational parents may be priced out of the local housing market;

c) greater parental choice appears to be leading to longer school journeys and greater car use, and this has long-term environmental and transport policy implications. It also has social implications in that, as the Audit Commission noted as early as 1991, lack of car ownership among poorer parents discriminates against their right to choose a more distant school, particularly as policies on free school transport have not kept pace with the decline in public transport;

d) as school journeys lengthen so the spatial and cultural links may weaken between neighbourhood, home and school. This poses a major challenge to the government's wish to see the 'neighbourhood' as the nexus for social and civic renewal;

e) the weakening of the links between home and school might in the long term hinder the development and retention of local expertise, knowledge and community networks – in short, the neighbourhood's invaluable 'social capital'.

3. Recent trends in education and housing

There is clear evidence that in some parts of the UK, *house prices and school league table results are linked*. Buying in 'hot-spot' areas can add as much as 10 per cent to the purchase price of a home, according to the Royal Institute for Chartered Surveyors.[5] 'Parents will pay seriously over the odds – 10 to 15 per cent – if they can afford it. The breadwinner of the family may have to commute for hours, but that doesn't matter so long as the children get into a decent school.'[6] A survey of people's housing preferences carried out for the Housebuilders Federation (1997) found that 'near good schools' was the first priority for households with children.

In addition, *the search for good schools can result in urban de-population*. This was a thesis proposed in the Urban Task Force report, *Towards an Urban Renaissance*, when it noted that among the most important 'push' factors in urban de-population was education: 'For many people, the crunch comes with having children. An urban environment, previously perceived as diverse and stimulating, starts to appear unsafe. Schools and health services become more important.'[7] Recent research at the University of Reading suggests that 'high income households are more likely to leave (inner London) than low income groups. As a result, low income or low skilled groups become concentrated in the worst locations leading to processes of cumulative decline.'[8] Educational decisions may play a part in these choices.

The UK is also witnessing *a rise in the number of specialist, religious and other selective schools*. According to the 1998 OFSTED report, *Secondary Education in England*, the proportion of grant maintained schools increased sharply from 1993, and now forms just under one-fifth of all maintained secondary schools. Since 1997 four types of Specialist

School have been established, and religious schools are slowly increasing. More children are attending private day schools: between 1988 and 1998 the number of children attending private day school increased from 344,122 to 403,331.[9] In addition to this process of increasing differentiation of provision, particularly at secondary level, the numbers of home-educated children in the UK has grown from almost nothing twenty years ago to about 150,000 today.[10]

It is now claimed that *the gap between the best and worst schools has been widening.* The same 1998 OFSTED report cited above found that 'In 1992 the performance gap between the top 10 per cent and bottom 10 per cent of secondaries was worth 30.4 points at GCSE – equivalent to nearly four additional passes per pupil at the top A* grade. By 1996 that gap increased to 32 points.'[11] There are many reasons for this continuing polarisation of best and worst, but the housing/education loop may be one important factor.

Transport statistics clearly show that in the UK, *school journeys are getting longer.* The average distance from home to school for children aged five to ten increased from 1.1 miles in 1985/87 to 1.3 miles in 1995/97, and for children aged eleven to sixteen from 2.3 miles to 3.1 miles in the same period.[12] The government's White Paper on transport, *A New Deal for Transport* (July 98), suggests 'encouraging schools and local authorities to take account of the transport implications of their educational policies.'[13]

It is also clear that *fewer children are walking or travelling to school independently.* In 1971 seven out of ten seven-year-olds made their own way to school. Today it is less than one in ten. Over the past decade, 'escort education' trips have risen by 52 per cent (and mileage by 90 per cent), and now outnumber business trips in the UK. The increase in the use of cars to take children to and from school was responsible for 20 per cent of road traffic in urban areas during the morning peak period in 1995/97, compared with 14 per cent in 1989/91.[14]

Local research shows that in many places, *more parents are choosing to send their children to schools outside local authority boundaries.* In Islington, London, 40 per cent of children attend secondary schools outside the borough and, in many other London boroughs, large numbers of pupils cross borough boundaries every day to receive their education. This must have some implications for the relationship between the perception of the quality of local education and loyalty to a local civic culture.

There is evidence to suggest that *high turnover in housing can result in high pupil mobility and educational disadvantage.* A study of high mobility in schools noted that high mobility was often associated with low-income families, rented housing and rundown public housing estates.[15] Net turnover rates in council housing have doubled since the late 1970s, according to research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, and as a result, 'It is increasingly recognised that mobility rates have implications for social stability. Locally high rates of turnover are seen as both a symptom and a cause of social disorder.'[16] High pupil mobility does not necessarily result in educational disadvantage for individuals, but it can have a destabilising effect on the schools involved.

Public housing provision is being re-distributed to new forms of ownership and management, and there is growth in the number of specialist social housing providers. In response to government policy since 1989, local authorities are being encouraged to transfer local authority housing to non-profit-making companies, a number of which may be more focused on creating wider opportunities for their tenants apart from simply providing accommodation. The government's housing Green Paper also recommends 'widening the scope for lettings and transfers across local authority boundaries', in parallel with education trends to furthering cross-borough access and provision.[17]

Finally it should be noted that *urban regeneration strategies are now more likely to link housing renewal with wider social objectives.* Inner city areas have seen the growth of religious and ethnic housing associations, which also may have educational interests. In addition, many other government programmes and initiatives such as the Single Regeneration Budget and New Deal for Communities require bidding authorities to demonstrate the links between housing improvement and the achievement of wider social objectives.

4. Housing and education are brought to market

The evident shortcomings of collectivist provision in modern democracies led to a widespread questioning of the whole ethos of state planning and provision from the 1970s onwards, in which Britain played a leading role. It was argued that state provision often seemed to ride roughshod over individual choice in the name of some wider public good. In housing, transport, health, education and leisure, the greater efficiency and cost-effectiveness in supplying such goods and services to people – increasingly identified as consumers rather than citizens – through 'market choice' won widespread political support across the world.

Yet the trend to greater individualisation of lifestyles is not solely driven by market forces. For historical and social reasons, people are choosing to explore their individuality as a key part of their wider social identity, and the satisfaction of individual wants and needs is now as important a part of the political agenda as once was the satisfaction of national economic needs and interests.

In the UK the growth of owner-occupied housing and car ownership, for example, went in parallel with a widespread movement to a more privatised domestic life and culture, recently characterised as 'suburban flight'. Britain now has – with the exception of Ireland – the largest percentage of home-owners in Europe, at 67 per cent of all households, compared with 54 per cent in France, 50 per cent in Denmark, 48 per cent in the Netherlands, and 42 per cent in Germany.[18] According to another survey, between 1981 and 1991 (the most recent census) the number of households in England that owned their own home increased from 9.9 million (57 per cent of all households) to 13 million (68 per cent).[19] However, this pattern was not uniformly spread across all social and ethnic minority groups. Other housing research showed that only 35 per cent of Afro-Caribbean householders owned their home compared with 62 per cent of White, 76 per cent of Indian and 78 per cent of Pakistani householders.[20]

In terms of the drift away from public transport, in the UK car ownership rose from 50 to 331 vehicles per 1000 persons between 1950 and 1988, and the percentage of households without a car dropped from 86 per cent to 32 per cent between 1951 and 1994. The era of large-scale public investment in housing, schools, health care, transport systems, libraries, parks, swimming pools and sports centres – the social infrastructure of towns and cities – has been in some places checked, partly as a result of a fiscal crisis in public spending, but also as a result of more people choosing to exercise their right to buy more personalised – and what are often perceived to be better – services in the marketplace, leaving public provision as 'provision of the last resort'.

Changing provision of and attitudes to public housing illustrate these trends. For example, in 1963 the average weekly income for those living in public housing in the UK was roughly the same as for the general population; 30 years later those living in public housing had incomes equivalent to only half of the national average. In three decades public housing moved from being an average-income form of tenancy to being almost exclusively for the poor.[21] Furthermore, as we found in a number of the case-study authorities (including rural Cornwall), local authority allocations are now often dominated by the need to house the homeless.

Young Asians in Nottingham expect to buy their own homes

Recent research in Nottingham among young Asian adults found that few, if any, expected to rely on council housing for their needs and instead assumed that they would be buying their house.[22]

Research studies funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation into the state of public housing in the UK in the 1980s and 1990s have found widespread evidence of the 'residualisation' of poverty and a culture of low expectations on peripheral council estates, especially – but not exclusively – in the north of England.[23] Living in social

housing may inhibit educational advantage in many ways. A recent MORI poll found that 48 per cent of pupils living in social housing are more likely to mention at least one housing factor affecting their ability to do well at school compared to just 27 per cent in owner-occupation.[24] The impact of crime creates another direct link between housing and educational performance:

> 'Crime is the key driver of unpopularity and low demand at neighbourhood level, but it is clear that low demand can increase the opportunities for crime, so the two phenomena reinforce each other ... the transience often associated with low demand tends to weaken community ties and creates significant problems in schooling.'[25]

Today the outstanding repairs bill for council housing is such that the government has now expressed a wish to persuade local authorities to transfer all remaining 3.2 million council houses to not-for-profit companies by 2010.[26] The year 2000/01 is expected to see an unprecedented transfer of council houses to the not-for-profit sector, with 22 local authorities proposing to hand over their entire stock in this way.[27] It is important to remember however, that the negative image of council housing – which has often transferred to the tenants themselves – has frequently been the result of poor management and allocation policies, rather than any inherent problem with publicly provided rented accommodation *per se* which still works well in many towns and cities, and which in other European countries continues to thrive. Indeed, even in the UK over 80 per cent of people who rent from the social sector claim to be satisfied with their accommodation.[28]

Similar market processes have been brought to bear upon educational provision. As the 1998 OFSTED review of secondary education noted:

> 'In 1992, the White Paper *Choice and Diversity* spelled out both the detailed rationale for measures taken in the years immediately preceding and the government's plans for the education system for the future. That rationale had at its heart a market theory. Local management of schools and

GM status, coupled with more open enrolment of pupils, gave schools both the freedom and the motive to compete for pupils.'[29]

Opening up greater choice has also involved giving grant-maintained status to an increasing number of schools, and awarding Specialist School status to 196 technology, 47 language, six sport and three arts colleges. The academic success of religious schools, noted by the 1998 OFSTED Report, which often out-perform secular schools in the state system, has led to pressure to support more such schools in the interests of diversity. Until recently only Anglican and Catholic schools were directly grant-maintained, whereas Orthodox Jewish schools and Muslim schools had to be entirely financially self-supporting. This is now changing. Among schools now seeking state funding are Islamia Primary School in Brent, Feversham College, a Muslim secondary school for girls in Bradford, Gateshead Jewish infants school, a Greek Orthodox primary school in Croydon and a Sikh college in Hillingdon.[30] The Church of England's Board of Education has reported 'a surge in applications' from primary and secondary schools seeking church status as a means to improve their popularity with parents.[31]

In the UK at present one in four primary schools is run by the Church of England and about one in ten run by the Roman Catholic church. The proportion of secondary schools administered by religious faiths is much lower. However, the Church of England is currently developing a strategy to double its number of secondary schools over the next ten years.[32]

In Northern Ireland, however, 97 per cent of children attend religious schools. It should be noted that in Australia and the United States, for example, it remains illegal to finance religious schools from the public purse. In the UK, religious schools are increasingly not only seen to do better academically – this now appears statistically proven. A recent OFSTED report noted that:

> 'Results achieved by pupils in denominational schools are higher than the average for all schools. Roman Catholic schools do particularly well, given that levels of disadvantage in these schools, as indicated by free school entitle-

ment, are also slightly higher than average. Results in Church of England schools are also high but they tend to serve areas with less advantage.' (OFSTED 1998)

It is to be expected that such trends will continue, and that more schools will be the focus of religious community and less the focus of geographical community, though many parents who now seek to secure a place for their child in a religious school are likely to be as much motivated by prospects of academic success as they are by the strength of their religious convictions.

In education, the number of children attending private day schools has risen, from 344,122 in 1988 to 403,331 in 1998, rather than declined.[33] The percentage of places at Oxford and Cambridge taken by privately educated children has also risen: in 1969 privately educated children made up 38 per cent of Oxford students, but by 1996 it was 50 per cent.[34] This rise has recently led to public charges by government ministers of elitism in Oxbridge selection policies.

There are also many other forms of full-time and part-time education being offered outside the state system. The growth of home schooling is slow but steady, as it is in almost every other part of the world. More and more families look to forms of supplementary education to provide particular religious or cultural influences that state education is not required to do. Perhaps most importantly, there is a growing sector in electronic education, accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week, which to some extent must represent a challenge to traditional places and modes of education. Joe Hallgarten points to internet-based schemes such as Digitalbrain, Anytime Anywhere Learning and Notschool.net as examples of these new kinds of entry into the educational marketplace.[35] He asserts that 'the ways that achievement is measured and knowledge communicated, the places where learning occurs and the age-related organisational structure of schooling are all likely to be transformed.'[36]

Growing flexibility in institutional forms and timetables all seem to be unavoidable trends, and something that neighbourhood regeneration schemes should now acknowledge. Similarly, a new study of women's perspectives on 'neighbourhoods of the future' notes that 'women in our groups argue for a different concept of home and neighbourhood. [They] want to extend their options in housing and to have their home in a neighbourhood setting that is multi-functional and maximises opportunities for social networking.'[37]

In the balance between public and private forms of housing and education, those relying exclusively on public provision are likely to find themselves at a disadvantage, or outside the loop of rising achievement that the greater freedom of choice of both schools and residential districts home ownership offers.

Housing and Education Joint Policies in Lewisham, Newham and Nottingham have already begun

Understanding housing and education in relationship, or synergy, together is therefore crucial, and in 1999 Lewisham Council established a 'Housing and Education Commission' to bring these two policy fields into closer relationship. Also in Lewisham the Housing Directorate has been brought within a Regeneration brief, which makes it easier to make links with other budgets and services.

In Newham the Housing Strategy Statement for 1999–2010 specifically details six areas where housing policy impacts upon education in the borough, and proposes joint strategies with education to: 1) develop showcase mixed use housing and education; 2) develop safe routes to school schemes; 3) develop joint housing and education consultation strategies; 4) develop homework centres on estates; 5) ensure education boards of Governors reflect local communities; 6) consider joint use of school buildings to maximise income and usage.

At Nottingham City Council, now that Unitary Status has been achieved, housing and education departments have begun working together on joint projects, principally tackling vandalism and crime on estates by joint home-school initiatives. In a statement on why housing and education policies need to be developed in tandem, the Director of Housing has said that, 'It should be remembered that many children are the victims of anti-social behaviour on the city's housing estates and the quality of life on our estates has a major impact on the education service and the life chances of many of the city's children. the opposite is also true where the quality of our education service has a major impact on the quality of life on our housing estates.'

5. The end of universalism?

In the political settlement and consensual politics of the period after 1945, Britain aspired to creating equal opportunities for all. The basis of the welfare state was that all citizens, regardless of income, should have equal access to decent housing, education and health provision. The provision of public housing and universal state education were meant to signify this commitment. In planning terms, new estates would often be spatially centred around the primary school, regarded as the heart of the new community. Comprehensive secondary education, supported by all political parties after 1965, would create equality of educational opportunity and 'parity of esteem' for all children, and it was assumed by many that eventually the last bastions of selective education, the grammar schools, would wither on the vine. Since 1979 that consensus has largely come to an end, particularly in cities.

In this context, this consensus was particularly interesting because it was underpinned by a belief in the benefits of 'social mix': that people would become more understanding and tolerant citizens if communities – particularly as a result of housing and education policies – contained individuals and families of all social classes. Social mix remains the elusive grail of democratic social policy, now revived strongly with the present government's concern with social inclusion and recreating more harmonious communities. As the housing Green Paper asserts: 'A joint objective of our planning and housing policies is to encourage mixed and balanced communities.'[38] It is also the subject of a recent piece of extensive research undertaken by Demos on social mix in housing, to which this study is related.[39] It also informs the Prime Minister's recent expressed wish 'to arrest the flight of middle-class parents from inner-city state schools',[40] and the Deputy Prime Minister's desire to create new socially mixed 'urban villages' as a priority for urban regeneration.

Social mix has historically implied the mixing of social classes, principally among the indigenous white community of Britain. This project has clearly changed now that Britain has become a multicultural society. Today issues of race, and gender now impact significantly upon, and indeed challenge, the traditional universalist assumptions in new ways. Tackling racism on housing estates is now more likely to be a priority than opposing right-to-buy policies that are held to be diluting social mix. In education, race and gender factors are as likely to impact upon a school's self-image and public reputation as much as class factors, particularly in the larger cities.

For example in London, where the proportion of single-sex secondary schools is, for historical reasons, high, serious problems are raised by gender imbalances. One of the dilemmas of offering 'choice' along gender lines reveals that parental preferences are not coherent. Many parents would prefer their daughters to be educated in a single-sex school, but their sons to be educated in a mixed school. These two aspirations are logically incompatible.

Single-sex schools and parental choice in London

For historical reasons there is a higher percentage of single-sex schools here than elsewhere in the UK. While many parents, some for religious reasons, prefer their daughters to be educated in a single-sex school, this produces a gender imbalance in some mixed schools which is quickly perceived as a serious disadvantage. In Southwark, one secondary school has a boy:girl ratio of 3:1. This is certainly one contributory factor in the school's poor public image.

Similar imbalances also occur around the even more sensitive issue of race, again more commonly a feature of inner city schools. For historical reasons immigrants tend to settle in particular parts of the city and schools in the immediate locality come to be perceived by the wider population as becoming more distinctly 'black' or 'ethnic', and can lead to white parents preferring to send their children to other schools. Of course parents will not give this as a reason

when asked about influences on school choice, but most of the educationists and teachers we talked to agreed this was a factor that affected patterns of choice, particularly at secondary level. Such concentrations of the ethnic population also occur in housing. One response by black and minority ethnic parents to what they perceive to be under-achieving state schools is to press for funding for supplementary schools – Southwark has nearly 60 such schools operating on Saturdays and in the evenings – or for Muslim schools or Black Majority Church schools.

Secondary education and differentiation in Lewisham and Southwark

Listed in the table below are all the secondary schools in Lewisham and Southwark, with their differentiated status given – religious, single-sex or mixed, state, voluntary-aided, grant maintained or independent.[41]

Lewisham	
Addey & Stanhope	State, Voluntary Aided, Comprehensive, Mixed (A small school of 41 pupils, selection by interview)
Bonus Pastor RC School	State, Special Agreement, RC, Comprehensive, Mixed
Catford Girls' County	State, Comprehensive, Girls Only
Crofton School	State, Comprehensive, Mixed
Deptford Green	State, Comprehensive, Mixed
Forest Hill	State, Comprehensive, Boys 11 – 16, Mixed 16 – 18
Malory School	State, Comprehensive, Mixed
Northbrook CE School	State, Voluntary Aided, CE, Comprehensive, Mixed
Prendergast School	State, Voluntary Aided, Girls Only
St Joseph's Academy	State, Voluntary Aided, RC, Comprehensive, Boys
Sedgehill School	State, Comprehensive, Mixed
Telegraph Hill School	State, Comprehensive, Mixed
Sydenham School	State, Comprehensive, Girls Only
Haberdashers' Askes'	State, CityTechnology College, Comprehensive, Mixed (Selection by test and interview)
St Dunstan's College	Independent, CE, Selective, Boys 4 – 19, Mixed 16-18
Sydenham High School	Independent, Selective, Girls

Of 16 secondary schools in the borough therefore, just 6 are 'standard' mixed-sex, non-selective, comprehensive schools.

Southwark	
Aylwin Girls' School	State, Comprehensive, Girls Only
Archbishop Ramsey	State, Voluntary Aided, CE, Non-selective, Mixed
Bacon's College	State, City Technology College, Comprehensive, Mixed (Selection by interview)
Dulwich High School Boys	State, Comprehensive, Boys
Geoffrey Chaucer School	State, Comprehensive, Mixed
Kingsdale School	State, Comprehensive, Mixed
Notre Dame RC School	State, RC, Voluntary Aided, Comp, Girls
Sacred Heart	State, RC, Voluntary Aided, Mixed
St Michael's	State, RC, Voluntary Aided, Comprehensive, Mixed
St Saviour's/St Olave's	State, Voluntary Aided, CE, Comp, Girls
St Thomas the Apostle	State, RC, Voluntary Aided, Comp, Boys
Walworth School	State, Comprehensive, Mixed
Warwick Park	State, Comprehensive, Mixed
Waverley School	State, Comprehensive, Girls
Alleyn's	Independent, Selective, Mixed
Dulwich College	Independent, Selective, Boys
James Allen Girls	Independent, Selective, Girls

Of 17 secondary schools in the borough therefore, just 4 are 'standard' mixed-sex, non-selective comprehensive schools.

It is briefly worth comparing this extraordinary differentiation of schools in two London boroughs with, for example, secondary school provision in Cornwall. Cornwall County Council provides 31 secondary schools, all of which are mixed comprehensives; there are no single-sex, religious or grant-maintained secondary schools in the county whatsoever, though there is a small independent (private) sector. Intense differentiation and competitiveness is a much more marked feature of the big city or urban conurbation.

6. Winners and losers from choice

Issues of economic disadvantage, and social and ethnic balance may have been addressed in the past by forms of social engineering. In North America the desire to create greater ethnic mix in schools in the 1960s was for while achieved by 'bussing' policies, which took students from black areas of the city and spread them more evenly around the city's network of schools. But such was the resentment caused by this crude method of achieving parity, in both black and white communities, that it was eventually abandoned. In London the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) had for many years a banding policy for secondary school allocation, by which all students were banded by ability at the end of their primary school career, and secondary schools had to take an equal share of pupils in all three ability bands.

Since the abolition of ILEA this policy no longer operates. But since grant-maintained schools are still allowed to choose their students by academic selection, and religious schools by virtue of religious affinity, and since catchment area allocations also reinforce the social divisions of the housing market, some schools tend to get left with the children that remain. The 1998 OFSTED report into secondary education also noted the self-fulfilling prophecy that poor examinations results can foster, whereby:

> 'Some secondary schools have become locked into a vicious circle. The fact that their examination results are modest has meant that few parents outside their immediate catchment area indicated a preference for them. As a consequence they have unfilled places and have regularly been confronted with the demand that they admit difficult pupils. The difficulty of assimilating such pupils has rendered some schools even more unpopular with parents.'[42]

These issues are not without their own political ironies. In the Conservative borough of Wandsworth, the education committee chairman, Malcolm Grimston, has argued for selection as a means of achieving greater social mix in schools. If schools simply rely on catchment area, he argues,

> 'The only people who might benefit are a few rich middle-class parents who are able to afford homes near these (selective) good schools. That will be at the expense of more able children from less well-off parents elsewhere in the borough, who will be denied a place.'[43]

What we are witnessing therefore is the growth of a secondary education sector in which selection by ability, religious affinity, or residential catchment co-exists with a 'comprehensive' sector which has to take the rest. Now there is no doubt that remarkable schools with remarkable teachers can buck the trend – and indeed often do – achieving very good exam results despite having little choice as to whom they accept. The government at present clearly pins it political hopes on this pattern of 'exceptionalism', but in the longer term more considered ways of handling allocation and choice may be needed to prevent what, despite a general improvement in results nationally in recent years, are still processes of educational, if not social, polarisation.

As OFSTED has noted, one of the main problems about encouraging choice is that there simply aren't enough 'good' schools around to satisfy that choice, as far as parents are concerned. This is why appeals against allocations rose by 73 per cent between 1992 and 1997, now totalling 6 per cent of all admissions.[44] However, the situation has strong local variations. In Croydon, for example, appeals were made against 26 per cent of primary school admissions, and in Enfield against 37 per cent of secondary school admissions. Such high levels of dissatisfaction, now reaching down into issues of primary school choice, could rebound. In fact what started out as a sec-

ondary school transfer phenomenon – the sharp end of parental choice – now impacts almost as much upon primary school choice and even nursery education. Once parents see the connecting links between particular nursery schools, primary schools and finally secondary schools, they realise that the process to secure the secondary school of their choice starts at the age of three, with the crucial feeder nursery class.

Paradoxically, as evidence from Cornwall suggests, the rural fall-out from parental choice has been exactly the opposite. In Cornwall, all secondary education is delivered through comprehensive schools, where reputations fluctuate much less markedly, and where head teachers abide by local protocols designed to prevent aggressive competition for pupils from beyond the geographical catchment area. Almost universally parents send their children to the nearest comprehensive school. However, at primary school level parental choice now cuts across catchment boundaries. This is because there are many more primary schools than secondary schools (because they are much smaller), often clustered in the larger towns and villages, some of which are voluntary-aided religious schools, and reputations are more volatile. At primary level, therefore, parents do choose to travel further to access the school of their choice, although it means driving them their or paying to use the school bus (which is only free to parents who send their children to the nearest school).

Meanwhile public, or social, housing policy seems on the brink of similar transformations. For many years the allocation of council housing was principally made on the basis of need, resulting in an over-concentration of the poorest and most dysfunctional individuals and families on particular estates where there were plenty of vacancies. The new housing Green Paper makes widening choice – while avoiding residualisation – one of its key concerns.

At present, 40 per cent of Southwark housing allocations are made to people who are homeless. In Brighton and Hove (and indeed in Carrick in Cornwall), housing the homeless takes priority over the rest of those on the waiting list, which, as a result, is not reducing. Jill Clark et al concluded in their study that:

'Over time, as the [social] landlord increasingly began to house families on the basis of need, the local school found that growing numbers of young children were unprepared for schooling, that their attainments were depressed, that behavioural problems increased and that parental involvement became more difficult to achieve.'[45]

The transfer of council housing to various other kinds of social housing providers has allowed some degree of more balanced allocation, though by no means entirely. Critics of the 'social engineering' policies needed to create more balanced communities should remember that the social engineering already used to make some estates more liveable (higher rents, evictions and exclusions), has made other estates even more unliveable, and will require further positive action to remedy these failings.

The major difference between housing and education is that most people in the UK live in private sector houses and social housing is a minority sector. The reverse is true in education. But there is still a considerable degree of convergence, both in trends and policy responses.

7. Community and diversity?

If we are witnessing the furthering of individual choice in both housing and education, in what are clearly becoming markets rather than forms of planned state provision, we should look at what pressures such processes put upon notions of community, particularly where community is principally understood as relationships of place and spatial proximity.

Modern politics evokes community not only as the *aim* of much social policy, but also to describe the *participants* and even the *location* of change. It's a hard job for such a small word to do. The concept of community allows policies to be directed at a space somewhere between society as a whole and the individual. It has become a central focus for current government policy in the UK, growing in importance as the powers of local authorities continue to decline. The government's emphasis draws more on concepts of community developed in the US, particularly Etzioni's communitarianism, than British approaches. In the US, communitarianism has been envisaged as the social 'glue' which shores up the social, moral and political foundations of society through local participation in traditional institutions such as the family, church, school and civic societies.

The school is a key institution in the communitarian mission for a new moral, social and public order, and in the creation of strong communities:

> 'If the moral infrastructure of our communities is to be restored, schools will have to step in where the family, neighbourhoods and religious institutions have been failing.'[46]

The communitarian focus on 'too many rights, too few responsibilities' is reflected in the Prime Minister's recent pronouncements on community:

> 'The central belief that brought me into politics, and drives everything that I do, is that individuals realise their potential best through a strong community based on rights and responsibilities. I have always believed that the bonds that individuals made with each other and their communities are every bit as important as the things provided for them by the state.'[47]

The emphasis in this discourse on strong communities, bonds, and rights and responsibilities is markedly different from the radical liberal traditions of community in the UK, which have focused much more on a particular quality of relationship, more immediate than society, and a style of politics which 'normally involves direct action and direct local organisations working with people'.[48] This concept of community is much more open and fluid, inclusive and welcoming of difference, than communitarianism, which can be interpreted as static and unyielding – even imposed, paradoxically, from without.

The UK tradition of community has been articulated through a variety of idealistic approaches, many of which are based on a recognition of the key role of local schools. The improvement of education has recently been portrayed partly as a community responsibility: 'turning around schools doesn't just depend on motivated teachers and pupils; it also depends on parents, on local people willing to give time as governors or mentoring children.'[49] Communitarians at such moments usually evoke the African proverb: 'It takes a village to raise a child.' This is based on an older tradition, in which there was an explicit emphasis on mixed communities based on an understanding of the links between where people lived and how children were raised.

This 'neighbourhood' version of community is still strong and still subtly underlies much thinking in social policy, including, inescapably, this study itself. It is a geographical concept which became a social and also a moral concept too. And while much aca-

demic attention has been given to exploring other definitions of community, notably the influential notion of 'community without propinquity', which emphasises the many other communities that people belong to which are not spatially bounded in and around where they live, social policy reverts time and again back to the neighbourhood as where it all goes right – or wrong.

8. Creating housing mix

Given that it is the socially mixed 'community' that has so often become the political ideal – both for 'One Nation' Conservatives as much as for New Labour communitarians – greater attention has been paid recently to re-creating socially mixed communities through housing policy and design. Whether at the Prince of Wales' model village at Poundbury, or through John Prescott's proposed urban villages, securing social mix through mixed tenure developments is now taken very seriously. A new development of 3,000 homes at Camborne in Cambridge will include a hotel, business park, commercial centre, police station, health centre, library and primary school. The development will include 600 shared owner-ship and rented homes 'to ensure that locals are not priced out', and instead of being grouped together as one social housing cluster, they are being spread throughout the new settlement.[50] 'Pepper-potting' social housing in a fairly even spread among private housing is the trend for new developments where local authority planning per-mission is used as a lever to create greater social mix.

It is also the subject of Ben Jupp's detailed research study, *Living Together: Community life on mixed tenure estates*, which has already cast helpful light on a very complex subject. Jupp's study for Demos was based on 1,000 personal interviews with residents on ten mixed tenure estates developed in recent years. He concludes that residents themselves show little concern for differences in tenure, and believe it to have little connection to how they feel generally about the estate in which they live. Interviewees still maintained their other social networks, and continued to draw most of their social life from these wider networks, and where people did occasionally mix with

people in other forms of tenure, it was much more likely to be at street level. Neither the pub nor the local shops were thought by interviewees to be places where they met new people, and Jupp concludes that it is local schools and nursery schools alone which *'are by far the most important local amenity for meeting other people'* (our italics).[51]

Time and again, much social policy research (including this study) leads back to the crucial role that primary schools play in neighbourhood stability and perceived quality of life – and therefore in the likelihood of retaining or consolidating social mix. Yet primary school teachers enjoy the lowest status of all professionals in the educational chain. This is partly because primary schools are staffed predominantly by women – only 12 per cent of primary teachers are men – and (as a result?) they are paid less than most other educational professionals. In the sociology of status, work done by women, work with young children, and work involving generalist knowledges all score low.[52] Yet any government serious about neighbourhood renewal and social inclusion would surely see that one of the most efficient and speedy ways of strengthening communities would be to focus resources upon primary schools, and reward their teachers and related para-professionals appropriately. Is there any logical reason why primary teachers should be paid less than secondary teachers, or even university professors?

While the nursery school and the primary school may still be regarded as 'neighbourhood' or 'community' facilities, with a clear attachment to the locality, this is certainly not the case with secondary schools at all (except in rural areas, as already noted in Cornwall). Our research shows that in some of the local authorities we looked at, as a result of parental choice, individual secondary schools were taking children from as many as 84 feeder primary schools (College High, Birmingham). Other research has suggested that,

> 'The break between primary and secondary level is exacerbated by having so many children from so many primary schools – there is little likelihood of valuable and pastoral information being passed on.'[53]

Primary schools still retain local catchment policies, prioritising children who already have siblings at the school, come from within the school's catchment area or share the school's religious affiliation, broadly. Primary school catchment policies are now as likely to influence local housing markets as secondary selection policies. Appeals against primary allocations are becoming as common as appeals against secondary school choices. However, schools that serve single-tenure neighbourhoods, with little social mix, can still be successful, as the Michael Faraday School on the Aylesbury Estate in Southwark appears to demonstrate.

Social mix is not a pre-condition for educational success: Michael Faraday School in Southwark

The Aylesbury Estate, which this primary school serves, has high crime levels, high unemployment and a history of low academic achievement. More than 50 per cent of the school's pupils receive free school meals. Yet 78 per cent of pupils leave with level 4+ in literacy (national average 70 per cent), 78 per cent with level 4+ in numeracy (national average 69 per cent), and 97 per cent leave with level 4+ in science (national average 78 per cent).[54] The school is a focus for local SRB initiatives and local people think it leads the fight on the Aylesbury Estate for a better community.

In Southwark, the council has decided to prioritise securing greater resources for its primary schools, in order to secure and retain the educational loyalties of its incoming middle-class residents and families. Given the historic planning relationship between the home and the primary school, this may be also where joint housing and education initiatives should focus initially.

One area where housing providers may be more honest and open in their thinking than educationists is around questions of social mix, according to some of the people we interviewed. Housing officers are now upfront in talking about the need to 'protect' improving estates from falling back again as a result of inappropriate allocation policies, whereas in some areas of education this is still taboo. Indeed some politicians and senior educationists are still refuse to acknowledge the very real and damaging effects that the concentration of poverty and loss of aspirations, or even the disruptive presence of a volatile and anti-social minority, can have on the culture of the school, whereas in housing this understanding is no longer in any doubt.

However in some parts of the major cities and conurbations, mobility of population is now a condition of life and has to be acknowledged and worked with rather than resisted or fought. As one chair of governors of a London school has argued, when looking at the impact of various regeneration schemes:

> 'Little of it seems to take into account the fact that this area is more and more a zone of transition. Have we failed to regenerate it because aid money is sometimes spent on the 'wrong' things? Or because many families leave after achieving some success – like a new job or a job not in the 'grey' economy; getting training or a qualification? Maybe we need policies which assume permanent patterns of international and local migration and organise our schools (and other services) on that basis?'[55]

Pupil turnover rates in several Birmingham primary schools reach over 86 per cent per annum (this means notionally that 43 per cent of children leave to be replaced by the same number). Such schools are either located near the university, where mature students may be attending the university for only a year and place their children in local schools, or are in parts of the city where the homeless, or new immigrants and asylum-seekers, cluster. These are areas where accommodation is easier to secure because for the indigenous population it has become very low choice. In Brighton, 41 per cent of homeless young people had been in the town for less than one year, 20 per cent less than one month. In Lewisham, there is a large and growing population of dependants, refugees and asylum seekers – mainly Jamaican, Kosovan and Nigerian at present – currently placing a considerable strain on local schools, and usually housed on the 'worst' estates.

The clustering of high mobility populations cannot be solved by selective displacement or re-allocation in most cases, either because there is a structural reason for high mobility – work or education – or because immigrants, refugees and asylum-seekers seek some comfort and security in staying close together. In such circumstances, it seems imperative that housing and education authorities, along with other services, work closely together to develop new forms of education that respond more flexibly in high-turnover neighbourhoods, possibly concentrating on individual learning plans that can be more easily transferable from one education system to another.

9. Crossing the border

All local authorities participating in this study reported clear patterns of pupil transfer and mobility, especially in the transition from primary to secondary school. In Nottingham, education officers reported a 'loss' of 17 per cent of pupils at this age from the city to surrounding local authorities. In Southwark, it was estimated that some 20 per cent of pupils leave the borough every day to be educated in other boroughs, notably to the east, in Greenwich and Lewisham. In Lewisham, the drift is southwards and eastwards towards Beckenham and Bromley. In Birmingham, it is 'outwards in concentric rings towards the leafier suburbs', with some wards on the edge of the city reaching 23 per cent of pupils transferring out of the city. Senior planning and housing officers in Birmingham also report that district councils outside the city are actively encouraging the development of more executive housing in their areas in order to encourage affluent Birmingham families to relocate outside the city, thus helping to underwrite local investment in the educational and leisure infrastructure. Were such trends to continue, Birmingham would become a more 'residualised' city, as has already happened in Liverpool.

In Lewisham, 'imports' and 'exports' of pupils are now closely tracked in the differing ability ranges. Interestingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, it is the highest band of measured ability pupils who are the most mobile. The number of band 1a pupils 'exported' by Lewisham in 1999 was 23.4 per cent; however, it imported 21.6 per cent of band 1a pupils in the same year from nearby local authorities. Lewisham is now actively seeking to retain pupils.

'Retention of pupils in secondary schools and prevention of the seepage which many London authorities experience when pupils move from local primary schools to secondary schools outside the area has been a key focus for the authority.'

In 1998, therefore it was decided that Lewisham secondary schools would be allowed to retain a higher proportion of band 1a pupils identified in the secondary transfer tests, but this is based on choice rather than compulsion or restriction. It is hoped that Lewisham schools will benefit from the retention of some of the borough's more able pupils and, as a result, Lewisham parents would be more likely to send their children to Lewisham schools, thus strengthening the links between the communities and the schools. In Newham, the number of pupils transferring out of the borough has been reduced by making education a key borough priority, marketing the achievements of local schools and in other ways convincing local parents that local schools can offer excellence and choice.

Generally, though, there is a growing assumption, as one education officer noted, 'that further is better', or to put it another way, that 'local means worse'. Another made the point that parents who witnessed the invariable noise, bustle and high spirits at the nearest secondary school at coming home time were put off using it for that reason, assuming that schools further away decanted their pupils at the end of the day decorously and quietly. Distance lends enchantment to the view – and lower decibel levels too.

However, our research into mobility in East Brighton showed how some communities are trapped by poverty, and lack of access to car ownership or decent public transport services – and so suffer from a lack of school choice. Nearly two-thirds of households on the Moulescombe estate in East Brighton do not have a car. And while some 50 per cent of Moulescombe children go to the primary school at Coledean, a neighbouring residential area, the bus service was withdrawn in 1999, causing major problems for parents. Poverty and the lack of access to transport facilities and resources virtually imprisons some families and their children. One East Brighton parent interviewed, a council tenant, wanted her children to go to Catholic primary and secondary schools, and this requires her to

take seven buses per day, taking four hours travelling time and costing nearly £4 a day (with concessions).

In Cornwall, we were also told that poverty and/or lack of car ownership can limit the choice of some parents in accessing a wider range of primary schools, though not in the same way to secondary school education – where school transport is provided as a matter of course. Creating a more open market in education needs more than the abolition of catchment areas and an end to over-zealous local authority allocations policies – it will also need to address poverty and transport issues that impact on mobility if there is to be a level playing field.

Paradoxically, some parents continue to send their children to schools in other boroughs that may have much poorer exam results, or in other ways be less successful, than their local school. In Southwark, for example, some children were being sent by parents to a school outside the borough that was on 'special measures', despite the fact that the local school was doing well. We were also told a similar story in Cornwall, where children were driven miles to attend a 'respected' religious school, which was also on 'special measures', rather than attend the primary school close to hand. Such apparent inconsistencies lead to an appreciation of the sheer complexities of parental choice, and the number of variables and factors involved. Although it is commonly assumed that league table results are a key factor influencing parental choice, an ICM poll commissioned by the Guardian newspaper found that 81 per cent of parents surveyed claimed not to use league tables to help select their children's school.[56]

10. Reasons for choice

Parents, and the children themselves of course, may make a particular school their First Choice for a variety of reasons, including the fact that:

- it is near and easy to get to;
- older siblings have already gone there;
- it has good nursery or after-school provision (primary level)
- it has a particular religious affiliation;
- it has Specialist School status;
- it is mixed/single-sex;
- it has good league table results;
- it has a modern building and good facilities;
- it has a local reputation as a good school;
- it has a charismatic head teacher;
- the school has a clear marketing strategy;
- there are strong parental assumptions, both positive and negative, about other pupils around race and class.

In a very dense and still economically and socially mixed London borough such as Lewisham or Southwark, many of these characteristics can be found unevenly distributed in schools very close together. In September 1999, at two schools in Southwark, barely one mile apart, one had 630 first choices for 150 places, and the other had 30 first choices for 247 places. Nevertheless, the general trend is to travel further, to shop around and to make proximity a less important factor than it once was.

As a result, schools are now marketing themselves more thor-

oughly, as they perceive themselves to be in competition with each other, particularly at secondary level. In Nottingham, the trend is still to emphasise the school's commitment to serving the local community as a major factor, whereas in the more competitive marketplace of inner London, non-communitarian factors may be stressed rather more, notably academic achievement. Lewisham's Director of Education, Althea Efunshile, believes that her borough was slow off the mark in marketing its schools effectively to local parents, and that neighbouring boroughs doing this better partly accounts for some movement out of Lewisham at the age of eleven. Marketing policies are now being addressed, which means that each secondary school needs to define its particular strengths more clearly. For example, Deptford Green School, in Lewisham, actively promotes itself as a multicultural school with 25 per cent of its teaching staff from ethnic minorities, along with many of the ancillary workers, and this has gone down well locally. In Southwark, even primary schools now market themselves to local parents, and apparently the provision of after-school clubs and homework centres now features prominently in the profile that the schools present of themselves to local parents.

Again there is a parallel here with what is happening in housing. As social housing providers move away from allocations policies based exclusively on need – apart from the specialist providers that prioritise allocation on religion or ethnicity, for example – others are choosing to market their developments on the basis of the liveliness and amenities offered by the neighbourhood. Bricks and mortar are not enough anymore, housing too is seen to come with a neighbourhood attached. This is encouraging some housing providers to play a wider role in local affairs, including education. 'Schools Plus' and 'Housing Plus' programmes are now complementary, both recognising the need to connect with wider community aspirations and to develop more sustainable communities.

11. Buildings and intermediate spaces and places

Some schools and some housing developments - especially those which are either very old, have poor facilities or have been badly maintained - struggle against tremendous odds to attract students and tenants. As Southwark's Director of Education and Leisure, Gordon Mott, pointed out, Southwark entered the twenty-first century with 40 per cent of its primary schools built not in the previous century, but the one before that! It is really quite hard to see how nineteenth century buildings can be fully adapted to meet twenty-first century high-tech needs. One of the more ambitious experiments in Southwark education is the new joint project with the Architecture Foundation as part of the 'School Works' design initiative. Substantial funding has been secured from the DfEE to completely redesign Kingsdale School in Southwark, to tackle deep-rooted design problems that have hindered effective use of the buildings in the past, to involve students and staff in the re-design process and to create a greater design and architectural permeability between the school and its neighbourhood. The project steering group includes the school's head teacher, the chair of governors, the director of education, and representatives of the DfEE, the Architecture Foundation, the director of Demos, and several distinguished architects, including Francis Duffy and Marco Goldschmied.

The project has inspired thinking elsewhere in the borough about the redesign of school buildings, and the commissioning of new ones that might be more flexible and adaptable to meet a much wider range of community need apart from restricted day-time education. Already some 2,500 Southwark children are in after-school clubs from 3.30pm until 6pm, on existing school premises. The

stretching of the school day has become an enthusiasm of the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, partly based on his own experience of education in the independent sector where classroom learning is complemented at both ends of the day by extra-curricular activities, including homework.[57] In March 2000, the New Opportunities Fund announced grants totalling £10.2 million to finance out-of-hours learning projects, including summer school activities, at 625 schools.[58]

In Birmingham, the City's Education Director, Tim Brighouse, was early in promoting additional educational experience by establishing the University of the First Age (UFA) in 1995, a pioneering approach to urban education. When children transfer from primary to secondary school, they also have an opportunity to join the university and take part in three vacation and two distance learning courses. The first UFA Summer School started in 1996 with 300 young people from six pilot schools who enrolled in courses to learn French, Spanish, Urdu, science and technology, and mathematics. The Millennium Commission has granted £50 million towards the costs of the city's Millennium Point project, which means a permanent home for the UFA in the city centre science park, and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation has awarded the project £430,000 to finance the appointment of 64 teacher fellows who will take forward the UFA concept. In 1999, the government awarded the UFA £400,000 to expand the concept nationally. Tom Bentley's book, *Learning Beyond the Classroom* explores other such new opportunities for creating more active and viable learning situations, particularly for those who find conventional schooling un-engaging.[59]

What is particularly exciting about this university is that it offers young people opportunities for both place-based education (the school) and intermediate forms of education, some of them home-based. So it creates a new space between home and school, and therefore a new relationship to the neighbourhood or city. As Tim Brighouse noted, 'It's about a change in the way we provide education to adolescents. Previously it's been either/or – schools or Illich. But why not belong to the local school and another institution?' (NB Ivan Illich is a famous advocate of de-schooling.)

But the initiatives are not all one-way, spreading from the school outwards. Some housing departments and housing associations are themselves instigating wider educational and community connections. The Metropolitan Housing Trust owns 522 properties in St Anne's, Nottingham, and in recent years has undertaken several educational initiatives. It has supported turning a redundant classroom in an infants' school into a 'quiet' area, and supported a parent training centre in the junior school. It has also joined a multi-agency forum to develop closer links with one of the local secondary schools, and hosted a career roadshow for black and ethnic minority pupils. In Falmouth, Cornwall, the Beacon Regeneration Partnership, set up primarily to invest in energy-efficiency insulating and heating schemes on the Beacon Estate, developed into a wider social undertaking, linking up with health and school providers to regenerate a hard-pressed community. As a result other indices of improvement were noted, including improved school performance and a lowering of the number of children on the 'at-risk' register.

Broadwater Farm is another area where housing has taken the lead, according to a recent study on neighbourhood management by Anne Power and Emmet Bergin.[60] There the neighbourhood manager is the coordinator of childcare projects and breakfast clubs on the estate, and a number of self-development projects linked to the local school. In the London Borough of Waltham Forest, the Orient Regeneration programme has developed 'The Click', a modern Cyber Cafe on Leytonstone High Street with an advice centre and ICT training, targeted at two local social housing areas with a high proportion of young people. Tenant activity and initiative were both crucial to getting this project off the ground. The report on 'neighbourhood management' by the Policy Action Team 4, part of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, encourages the setting up of homework clubs, summer universities, neighbourhood learning centres and family literacy schemes.[61]

In Brighton and Hove, though, the story is less encouraging. Because new housing land is particularly scarce, given that the built up area is squeezed between the sea and the Downs (now registered as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), new housing is largely infill onto brownfield sites in and around the town centre. This is the kind of development encouraged by the Urban Task Force report, *Towards an Urban Renaissance*. Yet the result is that houses are

built regardless of the availability of, or impact on, local schools and other facilities. New terraced houses are built in the town centre with no gardens, and so children play in the street – which in modern times is almost immediately seen as a public nuisance. We were told of similar developments in some of Cornwall's larger towns, where new housing is still being developed with little or no consultation with the education authority.

These are early days for joint approaches, and immediate success stories will be rare, for innovations in housing and education take some time to work through the system and produce wider individual and social benefits. But it is clear that, in many urban areas, a new and stronger link between the two areas can lead to a more effective, more sustainable and more imaginative approach to improving standards, creating opportunities and strengthening genuine communities. In the final section, a number of key recommendation and conclusions, designed to sharpen the focus on innovation and encourage a wider sense of involvement, are proposed.

12. Conclusions and recommendations

Housing and education markets and choices are inextricably linked, and providers of both, particularly in the public sector, can do more to widen choice and bring about the benefits cross-cutting strategies. Moves in this direction are already underway in a number of local areas.

Changing social and demographic trends, changing work patterns, the impact of new technology, and greater religious and cultural diversity will result in radically new configurations of neighbourhood and community. In turn these will bring pressures for significant institutional adaptation and flexibility. Those responsible for providing and managing housing, for planning and developing new residential communities, for providing education and for new forms of neighbourhood management and greater environmental sustainability will need great skill in managing greater choice and diversity – but it is the only way to sustain vitality and opportunity in neighbourhoods and communities.

1   Greater choice is now part of the system.
Today people expect significant elements of choice in where they live and the quality of schools they wish their children to attend. Widening choice has to be the active principle informing future policies in housing and educational provision.

Recommendation
Greater flexibility in the design of both family housing and schools will be needed in the future to accommodate new and more individualised electronic forms of learning and accessing information,

as well as different timetables and patterns of home use. The concept of 'lifetime homes', designed to be accessible and able to accommodate differing physical abilities at different stages of life, could be complemented by educational institutions that are more open and accessible to the community, including opportunities for 'lifelong learning'. Smart home-based technologies are already beginning to appear, offering new forms of access to information resources and electronic distribution networks for shopping, local information, and other kinds of information. Development of home-school technology networks which enable more effective communication and coordination between housholds and education institutions should be accelerated.

2   In areas of social exclusion and reduced choice, regeneration policies offer the opportunity for housing and education providers to work together. In this study Single Regeneration Budgets have provided major financial and policy incentives for housing and education providers to work together.

Recommendation
Joint housing and education bids should be given higher strategic priority in regeneration programmes, given that the connections seem to be at the heart of developing more socially inclusive and sustainable communities. This step is a precursor to the 'mainstreaming' of this link for all relevent planning and investment decisions. Linking housing to education provision is particularly important in urban areas receiving investment in higher density housing; if new housing is created in existing areas of cities (especially deprived ones), planning and reshaping of relevant education provision must be addressed simultaneously.

3   The primary school is likely to remain the principal focus of aspiration and identity in many neighbourhoods and communities. Even though parental choice is now increasing mobility and transfer at primary school level, for most people the local primary school remains a key institution. Given that it is quicker to create opportunities for social mix in education rather than housing (which has a longer turnover cycle), housing managers should help

support and sustain the reputation and quality of local schools. This matters in areas which are attempting urban regeneration and, more widely, in preventing the decline of vulnerable neighbourhoods.

Recommendation
Housing providers should seek ways to develop their relationship with local primary schools, through developing (and sponsoring) joint 'safe routes to schools' projects, developing partnership bids for regeneration money, with particular attention to local environmental improvements, and in other ways jointly accessing funds and expertise to create safer and better quality settings for schools and their residential hinterlands. Issues of joint facilities-management and maintenance should be explored.

4   The role that primary teachers now play in securing greater stability and even social mix in many communities is not fully recognised in the status accorded to them. Time and again we note, so much social policy research (including this study) leads back to the crucial role which primary schools play in neighbourhood stability and perceived quality of life. Any government serious about neighbourhood renewal and social inclusion would surely see that one of the most efficient and speedy ways of strengthening communities would be to focus resources upon primary schools, and reward their teachers and related para-professionals appropriately. But they also need to be supported in developing capacity for more outward engagement in the communities they serve.

Recommendation
The role that primary teachers play today in securing greater social inclusion should be acknowledged by paying them as much, if not more, than secondary school staff. Their job descriptions and professional roles should also include stronger involvement in local decision-making, for example about housing investment and initiatives, and in developing community based learning opportunities that go beyond the reach of the school timetable.

5   Neighbourhood management and geographically defined regeneration policies, while valuable, should not seek to inhibit educational and social connections to wider opportunities. In some of the case studies, it is clear that creating opportunities for young people to access educational and social opportunities away from their neighbourhood represents a necessary and important break with histories of local failure and low aspirations. Mobility, in this sense, should be promoted, so that local areas are both sending their residents further for some learning opportunities, and receiving a bigger influx of leaners from other areas.

Recommendation
Both housing and education providers should jointly encourage better public transport links to local and more distant schools in order to give non car-owning and poorer families access to wider educational opportunities. They should also provide information and registration across LEA and neighbourhood boundaries, and expect much greater flow, in both directions, across those borders.

6   Develop more flexible or inter-changeable performance indicators for housing and education providers. One of the problems with many performance indicators, as we have seen in this study, is that they can serve to reinforce departmental attitudes and services. Housing providers are tested by speed of lettings policies, for example, and schools by exam results: neither are currently measured for the quality of life for the wider community upon which these performance indicators may impact.

Recommendation
Housing and education providers could experiment with developing mutual or interchangeable performance indicators. Housing managers could be responsible for attendance rates, while schools could be responsible for cleaning up local graffiti. The government's Best Value programme could be of great help here in developing more sophisticated measures of holistic neighbourhood renewal. These new indicators should also encompass a shift toward new measures of social capital and satisfaction with community life, measured through the activities and interactions which local residents actually experience, rather than more static measures such as tenure mix.

7   If super-caretakers are one answer to difficult estates, are super school-caretakers an answer to difficult schools? It is clear that the value of those 'conspicuous care' jobs in any neighbourhood has been under-estimated in the past. Concierges and estate caretakers not only provide a physical service, they also provide a human presence and a watchful pair of eyes. Greater integration of school care-taking and estate care-taking could create more opportunities for joint approaches to community safety and physical enhancement, as well as creating local job opportunities. As choice in housing tenure grows, and more and more educational opportunities may be accessed at different sites, the management, timetabling and programming of facilities becomes paramount. This question also connects strongly to the more diverse and intensive use of school facilities by a wider range of community groups, which is currently being encouraged by some PFIdevelopment of school buildings, opening up new revenue streams for schools as well as new access for other groups. These new caretaker roles are important, not just for revitalising the most difficult areas, but also more widely as a preventative measure.

Recommendation
The findings of this report may be helpful in developing the government's approach to wardens and other forms of physical management of neighbourhoods.

8   Creating greater social mix in new neighbourhoods requires joint housing and education policies. As new estates are built that mix private and social housing, greater thought could be given to providing more choice within secondary schools, so that parental wishes for single-sex education on particular occasions, or other forms of banding, could be accommodated within a single school rather than, as at present, requiring parents to choose different – and distant – schools for such reasons.

Recommendation
The planning of new communities and urban villages, and of urban areas where there will be significant changes in population, should give as much priority to educational opportunities as is currently given to housing mix, in their overall strategy. This may mean thinking about federating secondary schools, so that pupils can access different kinds of education at different sites and clustering primary schools to offer a similar set of opportunities.

9   More thought should be given to creating or supporting a variety of intermediate community institutions where education could be accessed in more flexible ways. The success of homework centres in public libraries, internet cafes and centres, or creating opportunities for parents and teachers to meet outside the school, has demonstrated the positive role that intermediate institutions and networks could play in bridging the gap between home and school.

Recommendation
Agreed percentages of housing and education budgets should be available for experiments in creating intermediate community learning institutions. Where possible stand alone budgets should be used to develop these experiments in particular cities or local areas. For example, part of the new Neighbourhood Renewal Fund could be used in this way.

10   Planning gain could be used to provide educational facilities where planning permission is given for new housing development. At present only large-scale housing developments seem to take educational provision into account, and sometimes not even then. Yet the infill policies advocated by the Urban Taskforce may result in large amounts of housing being created with little or no thought given to improving educational provision or opportunities whatsoever.

Recommendation
All new proposals for housing development, at whatever scale, should require a statement of the impact upon local educational provision. Planning gain could be used to fund local educational innovation and investment.

11   Housing key workers in the community. One way of creating greater social mix in some communities is to develop housing policies that recognise the value of providing good, reasonably priced accommodation for key workers – nurses, hospital doctors, teachers, transport workers and so on. It is clear from this study that in inner London, for example, teacher retention could be improved by 'key-worker' housing policies.

Recommendation
Housing providers should pay renewed attention to policies that help key workers live near their place of work.

12   Housing and education providers should jointly work to combat the self-fulfilling prophecy of the poor reputation of some estates and schools. This study has noted the success of some initiatives in cultivating good relations with local newspapers and community organisations – to combat unjustified poor reputations – by bringing such people into the schools to see the quality of the education for themselves. Such approaches are also important in preventing the decline of vulnerable neighbourhoods.

Recommendation
Given that both housing and education operate in local markets, they should jointly seek to inform and educate local opinion-formers (community organisations, local media, estate agents) more widely in the achievements of local provision, particularly where this is felt to be unjustly denigrated.

Notes

1. Hallgarten J, 2000, *Creating Stakeholder Schools*, IPPR, London. Hallgarten's study for the IPPR, which coincided with this one, has been a source of invaluable insights into other aspects of the home-school relationship. A joint seminar was organised by the two projects, which was very productive. Researchers can co-operate if the will is there, and academic status or 'competitive advantage' is not an issue.
2. 'Educating England', Knight Frank, 20 April 1999 (Ref: 234s/98).
3. *New Statesman*, 26 April 1999.
4. Hallgarten, 2000, op cit.
5. 'In the market for a popular school', *Guardian*, 24 April 1999.
6. 'When free education costs you £20,000', *Observer*, 12 September 1999.
7. *Towards an Urban Renaissance*, final Report of the Urban Task Force, E& F Spon, 1999, p35.
8. Meen G and Andrew M, 'The Role Of Housing in City Economic Performance: Summary', ESRC, January 2000.
9. 'Educating England', op cit.
10. 'Children taught at home learn more', Observer, 13 August 2000, citing research into home education conducted by Paula Rothermel of Durham University.
11. 'Tory market theory 'widened schools performance gap', *Guardian*, 11 June 1988.
12. 'Focus on Personal Travel', DETR 1998, p41.
13. *A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone*, CM 3950, July 1998, p147.
14. 'Focus on Personal Travel', op cit.
15. Dobson J and Henthorn K, 1999, *Pupil Mobility in Schools*, DfEE Research Report RR168.
16. Joseph Rowntree Foundation *Findings*, October 1998.
17. *Quality and Choice: A decent home for all* the Housing Green Paper, DETR, April 2000, p78.
18. *Housing Statistics in the European Union*, 1998, compiled by MEA Haffner, European Commission, Brussels, p46.
19. Green H, Bumpstead R, Thomas M and Grove J, 1999, *Housing in England 1997/98*, Office for National Statisitics, London, p.8
20. Green et al, ibid, p.9 These figures are for 1984.
21. Jupp B, 1999, *Living Together: Community life on mixed tenure estates*, Demos, London, p22.
22. This information was supplied by Nottingham's Director of Housing, January 2000.
23. See for example, Power A, 1997, *Estates on the Edge*, Macmillan, London, and Tunstall R, 1995, *Swimming Against the Tide: Polarisation or progress on 20 unpopular council estates, 1980 – 85*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York.
24. *National Housing Federation/MORI School Omnibus Report*, 1998, cited in NFH Newsletter, Housing and Education, 1998.
25. Julian Dobson, *New Start*, 18 February 2000, quoting an unpublished study by Professor Glen Bramley of Heriot-Watt University.
26. 'Prescott plans to abolish council housing', *Guardian*, 24 January 2000.
27. RIBA Bulletin, 27/1/2000.
28. *Social Trends 29*, The Stationery Office, 1999. Table 10.19, p176.
29. *Secondary Education in England 1993–97*, Ofsted, 1998, p20.
30. 'God's value-added academies', *Guardian*, 3 December 1998.
31. 'Parents lead demand for church school status', *Daily Telegraph*, 2 June 1999.
32. 'Church of England may double its secondary schools by 2010', *Guardian*, 12 January 2000.
33. Figures supplied by Knight Frank, 20 April 1999.
34. Adonis A and Pollard S, 1997, *A Class Act: The myth of Britain's classless society*, London, p56.
35. Hallgarten, 2000, op cit.
36. Hallgarten, ibid.
37. Andrews L and Townsend M, 2000, *Women@2020 Living: Perspectives on housing and neighbourhoods of the future*, the Housing Corporation, London .
38. DETR, 2000, ibid, p75
39. Jupp, 1999, ibid.
40. 'Prime Minister Tony Blair is desperate to arrest the flight of middle-class parents from inner-city schools', *Observer*, 28 March 1999.
41. *Secondary Schools in Lewisham*, London Borough of Lewisham, 1999.
42. Ofsted, 1998, op cit, p20.
43. 'Schools told to stop "creaming off" best pupils', *Guardian*, 7 August 1999.
44. A detailed consideration of parental choice is currently being undertaken by Joe Hallgarten at the Institute for Public Policy Research, wh provided these figures. His report is due to be published in autumn 2000.
45. Clark et al, op cit, pvi.
46. Etzioni A, 1995, *The Spirit of Community: Rights, responsibilities and the Communitarian agenda*, Fontana, London, p89.
47. Tony Blair, Speech to the NCVO Annual Conference, January 1999.
48. Raymond Williams, 1988, *Keywords*, Fontana, London.
49. Blair, Jan 1999, op cit.
50. *New Start*, 28 January 2000.
51. Jupp, 1999, op cit, p47.
52. See Chapter 3, 'Professional Realities' in Chambers R, 1999, *Whose Reality Counts*, Intermediate Technology Publications. I am indebted to Diane Warburton to alerting me to this rewarding and provocative study.
53. From a report in the *Guardian* (22 February 2000) citing research by Professor Maurice Galton and Dr Linda Hargreaves into why some children drop back in their first year at secondary school.
54. Statistics provided by Michael Faraday School.
55. Cited in Dobson and Henthorn, 1999, op.cit., p 48
56. 'A good report', *Guardian* Education, 29 February 2000.
57. 'PM urges longer school days', *Guardian*, 3 December 1999.
58. *New Start*, 31 March 2000, p9.
59. Bentley T, 1998, *Learning Beyond the Classroom*, Routledge, London. See chapter 4, 'Active Learning in Practice' for further examples of these new community-based learning initiiatives.
60. Power A and Bergin E, 1999, Neighbourhood Management, CASE paper 31, LSE, London, p51.
61. *National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal*, Policy Action Team 4, Neighbourhood managament, The Stationery Office, April 2000, p69.