House of Commons

Communities and Local Government Committee

Community Cohesion and Migration

Tenth Report of Session 2007–08

Report, together with formal minutes

Ordered by The House of Commons
to be printed 30 June 2008

Communities and Local Government Committee

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Summary

There is no straightforward relationship between the number of migrants in a particular community and levels of cohesion within it. England has experienced a number of waves of migration in its recent history. Most of the people who arrived here have stayed, and their children, have also. Today, we face a different type of migration, with many economic migrants not planning to stay long term, and this presents different challenges for integration and cohesion.

Many migrants make significant contributions to local communities, for instance working in our public services such as the NHS. The arrival of new migrants need not have a detrimental effect on cohesion, although we found that it can have a negative effect on community cohesion, particularly in areas that are experiencing a rapid pace of change and/or deprivation.

There is significant public anxiety about migration, some of which arises from practical concerns about its effect on local communities. On our visits we heard from settled residents about many such concerns, including the limited English of new arrivals; the problems associated with Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) lived in by migrants; a perceived increase in anti-social behaviour; and pressures on public services. The practical concerns of settled residents about migration need to be addressed by central and local government for cohesion to be improved, and cannot simply be dismissed as expressions of racist or xenophobic sentiments.

Recent migration has placed pressures on local public services in areas that have experienced rapid inward migration, including pressures on schools, translation services, social care, English language teaching, policing and the NHS. These pressures are currently left unfunded by Government, because resource allocations are being made on the basis of flawed population data. Leaving local services with inadequate funding to cope with added pressures from migration is not only detrimental to the service provided to local communities; increased competition between groups for access to limited public resources can also negatively affect community cohesion. We recommend immediate action to ensure the adequate funding of local public services that are under pressure from migration, and the establishment of a contingency fund to address the current funding shortfall.

Many organisations have responsibility for, or are involved in, promoting cohesion and integration. Local authorities have a critical role in providing community leadership and co-ordinating action. Political leadership is a vital ingredient in effective action to promote cohesion, for instance in taking action to counter myths about migrants. The effective integration of migrants into local communities is dependent on migrants having contact with settled residents. One way in which integration can be increased is through local authorities encouraging existing community groups to involve migrants in their organisations.

One of the main barriers to the integration of migrants is the limited English of new arrivals. The Government has a responsibility to ensure that English language tuition is

accessible to migrants. Currently this is not the case, with demand for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) far outstripping the supply. We agree that employers should pay more towards the cost of provision for their employees, but this does not negate the fact that the primary responsibility for provision lies with Government.

The Government has increased its activity on cohesion and migration over the past year. Nonetheless, there is still room for improvement. The Government needs to ensure that action across departments is co-ordinated. In particular, the Government's migration policy needs to ensure that it takes into account the effect of migration on community cohesion.

1 Introduction

Migration is the issue of greatest public concern, overtaking concerns on crime and terrorism. For nearly one in five Britons there is no bigger issue.—results of a MORI poll conducted in January 2007[1]

Community Cohesion and Migration

1. In recent history England has experienced a number of waves of inward migration. The arrival in the 19th century of thousands of Jews from Eastern Europe fleeing persecution; the migration of many Commonwealth citizens from Asia and the Caribbean in the 1950s and 1960s; and, in the 1970s, the arrival of Ugandan Asians, again fleeing persecution, are just a few examples. Trevor Phillips, Chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), told us that "today, we face a completely different sort of migration", as migrants are not necessarily coming to England to settle.[2] Many of the recent arrivals from Eastern Europe are principally coming for work and may not stay. The nature of migration today, with increasingly transient populations, presents a challenge in creating cohesive and integrated local communities.

2. There are significant public concerns about the scale and pace of migration. A November 2007 poll showed record levels of public concern about the number of migrants living in Britain. Some 41 per cent of those surveyed stated that there were too many migrants.[3] Given the level of public concern about migration and the pace of change experienced in some communities, there is a need for an informed national debate on the effect of migration on community cohesion.

Our inquiry

3. Our inquiry set out to examine the effects of migration on local communities and community cohesion in England, and local and national actions to manage these effects. Our task has been to examine public concerns, to reach conclusions and to make recommendations on what more is needed to improve community cohesion in areas experiencing migration.

4. Our Report is published a year on from the Commission on Integration and Cohesion's (CIC) report *Our Shared Future*.[4] The Government established the Commission to investigate what further action was needed to promote integration and cohesion locally. The CIC made a large number of recommendations to Government and our inquiry provided a timely opportunity to examine progress in implementing recommendations relating to migration, as well as looking more widely at central and local government's actions to promote cohesion and integration.

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1   Ev 78

2   Q 1

3   Ipsos MORI, *Attitudes towards immigration*, 9 April 2008, www.ipsos-mori.com.

4   Commission on Integration and Cohesion, *Our Shared Future*, June 2007. Thereafter '*Our Shared Future'*.

5. The social effects of migration have been at the heart of our inquiry, complementing the work of others on different aspects of migration policy. A recent House of Lords Select Committee on Economic Affairs inquiry has examined the *Economic Impact of Immigration*.[5] We have a keen awareness of the debate on the accuracy of migration statistics, and comment on this issue in chapter six. Our sister departmental select committee, the Treasury Committee, has examined this issue in great depth in its report *Counting the Population*.[6] We have not attempted to scrutinize the Government's overall migration policy, though we recognise its important effect on community cohesion, as this is the role of the Home Affairs Committee. In examining the effects of migration on local public services, we have concentrated on local government services, since it was to these services that the majority of the concerns expressed to us related.

6. We received 40 evidence submissions and held four oral evidence sessions. A central part of our approach was to develop an understanding of the challenges faced by local communities in building community cohesion. Committee members visited three very different parts of England to learn from first-hand experience. In Peterborough, we heard about the challenges caused by rapid inward migration, primarily from Eastern Europe. In Burnley, we learnt about the need to increase understanding and contact between second and third generation Asian and white communities. Our final visit was to Barking and Dagenham, where we gained an appreciation of the sheer pace of change in the borough. On all our visits we met settled and new residents and a wide range of local stakeholders. We would like to thank all those who contributed to our inquiry by providing evidence or meeting us on our visits. We are particularly grateful to our two specialist advisers for this inquiry, Alveena Malik, Principal Associate at the Institute of Community Cohesion, and Rachel Pillai, Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Employment Studies.

Defining terms

7. Community cohesion may be considered a somewhat nebulous concept; certainly it is a phrase not commonly used at the grassroots.[7] The expression was adopted by the Government following Professor Ted Cantle's report on the disturbances in a number of northern towns in the summer of 2001, and since has often been associated with race.[8] The CIC called for a new definition of community cohesion to recognise the importance of integration to cohesion, and to go beyond race relations. The Government has accepted a new definition:

> Community Cohesion is what must happen in all communities to enable different groups of people to get on well together. A key contributor to community cohesion is integration which is what must happen to enable new residents and existing residents to adjust to one another.[9]

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5   House of Lords, *The Economic Impact of Immigration*, First Report of the Select Committee on Economic Affairs, Session 2007–08, HL Paper 82.

6   Treasury Committee, Eleventh Report of Session 2007–08, *Counting the Population*, HC 183.

7   Annex

8   The Cantle Report, *Community Cohesion: A Report of the Independent Review Team*, December 2001.

9   Communities and Local Government, *The Government's Response to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion*, February 2008, para 1.3.

A shared understanding of the term is vital as a starting point for discussion on this topic. We welcome the Government's new definition: it recognises that cohesion is not simply about race or faith, nor only the responsibility of new residents, but how we all get on with other people within local communities.

8. The Government has developed a new standard form of measurement of community cohesion. The new Public Service Agreement (PSA) 21 covers community cohesion and includes three particular indicators. The main indicator on cohesion, which has been used for a number of years, and was the sole cohesion indicator included in the previous PSA 10 on reducing race inequalities and building community cohesion (CSR04), is "the percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area".[10] This indicator is measured through the national Citizenship Survey and included as a Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI).

9. Equally important is the need for a shared understanding of the term migration. Migration—the movement of people—is not synonymous with immigration. We have deliberately used the broader term migration throughout our inquiry, as we recognise that internal movement of people within the UK affects local communities as well as international inward migration. We are an increasingly physically mobile society, moving within the UK and internationally. One in nine people moved within the UK in the year before the last census was taken.[11] We recognise that there has also been a recent increase in the number of migrants going back to their countries of origin, given the current economic situation in the UK.[12] And there is significant emigration from the UK, with an estimated 400,000 leaving in 2006.[13]

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10 Ev 87

11 ONS, *Distance moved by people changing address within the UK in the year prior to the 2001 Census*,15 December 2005, www.statistics.gov.uk.

12 IPPR, *Floodgates or turnstiles? Post-EU enlargement migration flows to (and from) the UK*, 30 April 2008.

13 ONS, *Total International Migration 1997-2006*, 20 May 2008, www.statistics.gov.uk.

2 Effect of migration on community cohesion

Numbers of migrants

10. Despite the widespread movement of people within England, the main focus of public concern is immigration. Immigration levels have significantly increased in recent years, particularly following the accession of eight new states to the European Union in 2004.[14] Net migration—defined as immigration minus emigration from the UK—has, according to recent figures, been the main driver of UK population growth since 1998.[15] In 2006, an estimated 191,000 more people immigrated to than emigrated from the UK.[16] In 2006–07 National Insurance number registrations to overseas nationals increased by 51,000 to a total of 713,000. The largest increase in registrations was to accession nationals, which increased by 16 per cent from the previous year to a total of 321,000.[17]

11. Immigration has become increasingly dispersed throughout England, leading to new arrivals living in areas that have had little previous history of ethnic diversity. London has historically been the main destination for new migrants, but other areas are becoming increasingly popular. For example, since 1999 the East of England region has experienced the largest increase in immigration, with a recorded 60,000 immigrants arriving in 2006.[18] The increased dispersal of migrants means that the effects of migration are being felt by people across the country, and as such policies to address the effects are needed nationally as well as locally.

12. There is a national debate taking place on the actual number of migrants in the UK, and the appropriate level of inward migration. While we acknowledge that this is an important debate, and comment on the need for accurate migration statistics, this has not been the central point of our inquiry. We are concerned with the type of effects that local communities are experiencing from migration and how best to respond to them.

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14   Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

15   ONS, *Components of Population Change, UK*, 22 August 2007, www.statistics.gov.uk.

16   ONS, *Total International Migration 1997-2006*, 20 May 2008, www.statistics.gov.uk.

17   Department for Work and Pensions, *National Insurance Number Allocations to Overseas Nationals entering the UK 2007*, www.dwp.gov.uk.

18   ONS, *Total International Migration 1997-2006*, 20 May 2008, www.statistics.gov.uk.

Tensions between migrant and settled communities

24 per cent of those surveyed believed that there was a 'great deal' of tension between people of different races and nationalities. And 52 per cent said they believed that there was a 'fair amount' of tension. Only four per cent thought there was no tension at all.—MORI Poll, April 2008[19]

13. Tensions exist within and between all communities, not only between new migrants and settled white populations. During our visit to Barking and Dagenham, the police informed us that the most significant level of reported hate crime in the area was of white-on-white crime between people of different nationalities.[20] In Burnley, there remain tensions between settled white and second and third generation Asian communities. We were told that racially motivated crime, including assaults, on both Asian and white people was a problem in the area.[21] The Community Development Foundation (CDF) told us that it was aware of new patterns of racial prejudice and hostility between settled Asian and Caribbean communities and new ethnic minorities, who may resent the increased competition for 'race equality' resources.[22] Trevor Phillips argued that the potential and actual conflict between new and last wave migrants is a phenomenon that has been neglected in the national policy debate on migration and cohesion. He explained that many new migrants move into areas adjacent to the last wave. The settled migrants can resent new arrivals whom they do not perceive as having worked as hard as their generation.[23] And indeed 47 per cent of Asian respondents in a 2007 MORI poll agreed with the statement that there were too many migrants in Britain.[24]

14. Some degree of tension between individuals is not necessarily problematic and can be seen as an indication of a healthy democracy. The problem is when tensions escalate to a point where they negatively affect community cohesion. Open disturbances between migrant and settled communities are rare. Thankfully, to date no disturbances have occurred on the scale of those which took place in Burnley, Bradford, and Oldham in the summer of 2001 between settled Asian and white communities—though there have been localised disturbances in areas such as the Caia Park estate, Wrexham, and Boston, Lincolnshire.[25] Although they may not be widespread, we are still concerned about tensions between migrants and settled residents, and how through addressing the underlying causes of these tensions disturbances may be prevented from arising. Our evidence, particularly from our visits, indicated that there are many tensions relating to practical issues and fears over the changing nature of communities, and the pace of that change, as well as concerns about the pressures placed on public services from migration.

15. The case studies below show the types of tensions and concerns that local people expressed to us on our visits.

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19   Ipsos MORI, *Rivers of Blood Survey*, April 2008, www.ipsos-mori.com.

20   Annex

21   Annex

22   Ev 90. See also Q 33.

23   Q 6

24   Ev 78

25   Ev 75

Peterborough, East of England

The area has experienced the arrival of large numbers of Eastern European migrant workers. Many migrants work in the fields surrounding Peterborough providing agricultural labour.

65 per cent of the local population believe that people of different backgrounds get on well together in their local area, in comparison to the national average of 82 per cent. Peterborough has the 21st lowest level of cohesion out of 386 local authority areas.[26]

Concerns raised about migration included the increase in houses in multiple occupation (HMOs); anti-social behaviour; litter and fly-tipping; drugs; prostitution; street drinking; car crime; benefit abuse; the limited English of migrants; the pace of change; and pressures on public services.

Burnley, Lancashire

The area has significant settled second and third generation Asian communities alongside settled white communities. Burnley has experienced increasing deprivation with the decline of its traditional manufacturing base. It is ranked 21 out of all local authorities in England in terms of average deprivation.[27] The area has also experienced a steady decline in its overall population.

53 per cent of the local population believe that people of different backgrounds get on well together in the local area. Burnley has the third lowest level of cohesion out of all local authority areas in the country.[28]

Concerns were raised on the separateness of Asian and white communities; the limited spoken English of many Asian women; the effects of arranged marriages on integration; hate crime based on nationality and race; and deprivation.

Barking and Dagenham, London

The area, particularly Dagenham, has experienced a significant increase in ethnic diversity, with people of many different nationalities, primarily migrants from inner-London Boroughs, moving into the area. Barking and Dagenham is ranked 22 out of 354 local authorities in England in terms of average deprivation.[29]

Barking and Dagenham has the second lowest level of cohesion out of all local authority areas in the country.[30]48 per cent of local residents believe that people of different backgrounds get on well together in the local area.

Residents' concerns included the pressures on social and affordable housing; the pace of change; and pressures on public services, such as schools.

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26   The Audit Commission, Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) data 2006–07.

27   Multiple Indices of Deprivation 2007

28   BVPI data 2006–07

29   Multiple Indices of Deprivation 2007

30   Boston, Lincolnshire, had the lowest level of cohesion in 2006–07 at 38 per cent. BVPI data 2006–07.

Practical concerns about migration

16. These case studies show that settled residents often have practical issues of concern about migration—though these concerns do not relate exclusively to migrants.[31] We were struck by the similarity in the concerns expressed by migrants that we met in Peterborough, and Barking and Dagenham, to those of settled communities. Migrants acknowledged that there were valid concerns about the effect of migration on crime, litter, housing, and the limited spoken English of new arrivals.[32] Sarah Spencer, Associate Director at the Centre for Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS), also found from her research that migrants and non-migrants had a striking degree of agreement on issues of concern about their local neighbourhood.[33] **Public concerns about the effects of migration cannot simply be dismissed as racist or xenophobic. Tensions often arise on real practical issues, such as the proliferation of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).**

Houses in multiple occupation (HMOs)

17. Many witnesses expressed concerns about the problems associated with HMOs. While migrants are not the sole occupant of HMOs, witnesses reported that many of these dwellings were increasingly being occupied by migrants, particularly by single male working adults.[34] In Peterborough, residents were very concerned about the rapid increase in the number of HMOs in their area, in response to demand from migrants moving into the area. Mr Blake-Herbert, Director of Resources, Slough Borough Council, reported that Slough had seen a net growth in HMOs catering for the new migrant population.[35] Fenland District Council estimates that the vast majority of HMOs in its borough cater for migrants and that they continue to receive reports of properties being converted to HMOs to house migrant workers.[36] Figures from the Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR) show that 60 per cent of new migrants to the UK in the last five years live in private rented accommodation.[37] Despite some local evidence on the number of migrants living in HMOs, no national assessment appears to have been made of the overall effect of migration on the number of HMOs.

18. There are many problems associated with the proliferation and concentration of HMOs. Peterborough residents reported an increase in fly-tipping and uncollected rubbish as a result of homes being converted into HMOs.[38] Mr Blake-Herbert stated that, in Slough, one of the key complaints about HMOs in Slough was the "level of refuse that is created within those individual properties".[39] The Chartered Institute of Housing argued that the

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31   Annex

32   Annex. See also Q 184.

33   Q 184

34   Q 44. See also Annex.

35   44

36   Ev 107

37   EHRC and LGA, *Allocation of Social Housing by Local authorities in England and Wales—letter to Chief Executives from Sir Simon Milton and Trevor Phillips*, 8 April 2008, www.lga.gov.uk.

38   Annex

39   Q 51

"poor management of properties exacerbates the problems, and can affect community cohesion in an area (e.g. if rubbish accumulates, if people are coming and going at night due to shift work)".[40]

19. HMOs do not just cause problems for the people living in surrounding properties. The people living in the HMOs themselves can also suffer from poor quality housing, overcrowding and unscrupulous landlords.[41] The Local Government Association (LGA) pointed out that a minority of landlords exploit migrant workers with many living in "overcrowded properties in a poor state of repair with attendant fire or other health and safety problems".[42] Fenland District Council told us that it had experienced several serious fire incidents in HMOs the last few years, and that the vast majority of the occupants were migrants.[43]

20. One of the ways in which local authorities are tackling HMOs and their associated problems is through the HMO licensing scheme. The Housing Act 2004 introduced compulsory licensing for HMOs, and enabled local authorities to apply for extended licensing powers where there are problems. Peterborough City Council told us that it was seeking to extend its licensing powers to tackle the problems associated with unscrupulous landlords, who often take advantage of migrants, but that it had found the process long and excessively bureaucratic.[44]

21. The Government has recently acknowledged, in its Migration Impacts Plan, that migration may have an effect on the number of HMOs. It has made a new commitment to ensuring that its commissioned review of the private rented sector examines the effect of migration. The Government also states that it will "work with local authorities to develop discretionary licensing schemes in those local authority areas with a high number of properties housing migrant workers".[45] **We welcome the Government's commitment to ensuring that the review of the private rented sector examines the effect of migration on housing. We recommend that the review include a detailed assessment of the effects of migration on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and the problems which result both for existing communities and for the individuals who live in them. We also welcome the Government's commitment to supporting local authorities in the use of their discretionary licensing powers. However, further action is needed. We reiterate the recommendation made in our Report *The Supply of Rented Housing,* where we argued that the Government should make it easier for local authorities to regulate HMOs, and in particular that the process of applying for extended licensing should be easier.**[46] **In areas where migrants tend to live in HMOs, public concern about migration can be reduced if the problems of HMOs are tackled.**

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40   Ev 76

41   Q 49

42   Ev 131

43   Ev 107

44   Annex

45   Communities and Local Government, *Managing the Impacts of Migration: A Cross-Government Approach*, June 2008, p 30.

46   Communities and Local Government Committee, Eighth Report of Session 2007–08, *The Supply of Rented Housing*, HC 457, para 188.

The pace of change

25 per cent of British adults felt that local areas were losing their sense of Britishness because of immigration, a 13 per cent increase from 2005—MORI poll, April 2008[47]

22. People are worried about the cultural effects of migration as well as the visible impact. During our visits, people repeatedly stressed to us their fears over the scale and pace of migration into their local area. In Barking and Dagenham, one resident that we met stated that many long-standing residents no longer felt safe as they no longer knew their neighbours, and consequently many white people were moving out of the area. Others voiced their concerns about the lack of spoken English.[48] The residents we spoke to in Peterborough, and Barking and Dagenham, argued that there were simply too many migrants moving into the area in a short time period.

23. The pace of change in some local areas has been dramatic. Barking and Dagenham Borough Council told us that its area has experienced the fastest changing demography in the country: "in 1991, only 6.8% of the borough's population was non-white […] and is now, it is estimated, approximately 25%".[49] Dagenham has experienced a particular change, primarily from the movement of people from inner-London boroughs who are attracted to the area by the availability of cheaper accommodation, rather than directly from other countries.[50] Slough Borough Council described the severity of the consequences for the local area of the pace of change:

> If the town continues to attract in poorer communities that cause both white flight and the flight of wealthier sections of the other non-white communities, its future sustainability is in doubt.[51]

24. The feeling that a community is changing too quickly can be exacerbated in areas that have little previous history of inward migration. The CIC report identified three types of areas where the newness of diversity can lead to particular cohesion problems: urban areas, such as outer London boroughs; rural areas, such as areas around the Wash; and ethnically diverse urban areas, such as inner cities that are experiencing new migration from non-commonwealth countries.[52] Evidence from our visits supports the CIC's findings. Peterborough (located near the Wash), and Barking and Dagenham (an outer London borough) have experienced rapid change and experience poor cohesion. **The rapid pace of change experienced by many communities has led to increased local public concern about migration and can negatively affect community cohesion.**

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47   Ipsos MORI, *Rivers of Blood Survey*, April 2008, www.ipsos-mori.com.

48   Annex

49   Ev 132

50   Annex

51   Ev 148

52   *Our Shared Future*, para 2.33.

The national picture

25. Nationally, there is a positive picture of cohesion, with 82 per cent of people agreeing with the statement that people of different backgrounds get on well in their local area.[53] Locally, the picture of cohesion is quite varied, with cohesion levels ranging between 38 and 90 per cent.[54] A small minority of local authority areas have significantly low levels of cohesion; ten local authority areas out of 386 have levels below 60 per cent.[55]

26. There is no straightforward relationship between the number of migrants in an area and levels of cohesion. Figure 1 illustrates this, using National Insurance number allocations in 2006–07 as an indicative proxy for migrant numbers.[56] The areas ringed in black are the 20 per cent least cohesive local authority areas in the country. Although some areas have experienced high levels of migration and poor cohesion, it is not always the case that the one leads to the other. For example, some inner-London boroughs such as Newham and Brent have experienced high levels of recent migration,[57] yet experience cohesion levels above the national average.[58] This may be because these areas have a history of diversity and migration. On the other hand, Boston has the lowest level of cohesion in the country and has experienced high levels of recent migration. The Secretary of State informed us that an estimated 25 per cent of the Boston population is from Eastern Europe.[59]

27. Figure 1 and the example areas above demonstrate that local communities are complex, and there are many interrelated factors that can influence how cohesive the area is. The CIC concluded that there are a wide variety of factors influencing cohesion and identified five as key: deprivation, discrimination, crime and antisocial behaviour, diversity and immigration.[60] The Commission suggested that attention should be focused on areas that are experiencing change and that are less affluent. In its memorandum to our inquiry, the Government stated that "affluent areas experiencing migration usually have higher than average cohesion".[61] Data from the Citizenship Survey showed that people's perceptions of community cohesion declined the greater the extent of deprivation in their area.[62]

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53   Communities and Local Government, *Citizenship Survey April – December 2007*, England and Wales, p 10.

54   Ev 78

55   Based on BVPI data 2006-2007, those 10 areas are: Boston, Barking and Dagenham, Burnley, Pendle, Oldham, Fenland, Thurrock, Great Yarmouth, South Holland, Stoke-on-Trent, and Corby.

56   These figures should not be regarded as the total number of non-UK nationals, as there are a number of limitations on the data. NINO data do not show when overseas nationals subsequently depart the UK, the length of stay in the UK, nor record movement between UK areas: consequently the data do not provide information on outflows or movement within the UK. Non-UK nationals are not required to de-register when they move; consequently the data show the inflow of registrations but do not capture the movement of migrants within and out of the UK.. The figures exclude migrants who do not require a National Insurance number, for example students.

57   In Newham, 16,160 non-UK nationals registered for a National Insurance number in 2006–07; in Brent, 15,600 registrations were recorded.

58   The level of community cohesion in Newham and Brent is 85 percent, in comparison to the national average of 82 per cent.

59   Q 229

60   *Our Shared Future*, para 2.15.

61   Ev 79

62   *Our Shared Future*, para 2.17.

28. **There is no straightforward relationship between the number of migrants in an area and levels of cohesion. Some areas experience high inward migration yet have a good level of cohesion in comparison to the national average. Nevertheless, cohesion can be negatively affected by migration, particularly in areas where there is poverty and/or little previous experience of diversity.**

Figure 1: Community cohesion and non-UK National Insurance number allocations, 2006–07

Community cohesion and migration
Cohesion and non-UK National Insurance Number allocations, 2006/07

Non-UK NINo allocations per 1000 population and 20 percent least cohesive local authorities

London

Non-UK NINo Allocations
per 1000 population

- 0 - 20   Lowest 20% of Local Authorities
- 20 - 40
- 40 - 60
- 60 - 80
- 80 - 100   Highest 20% of Local Authorities
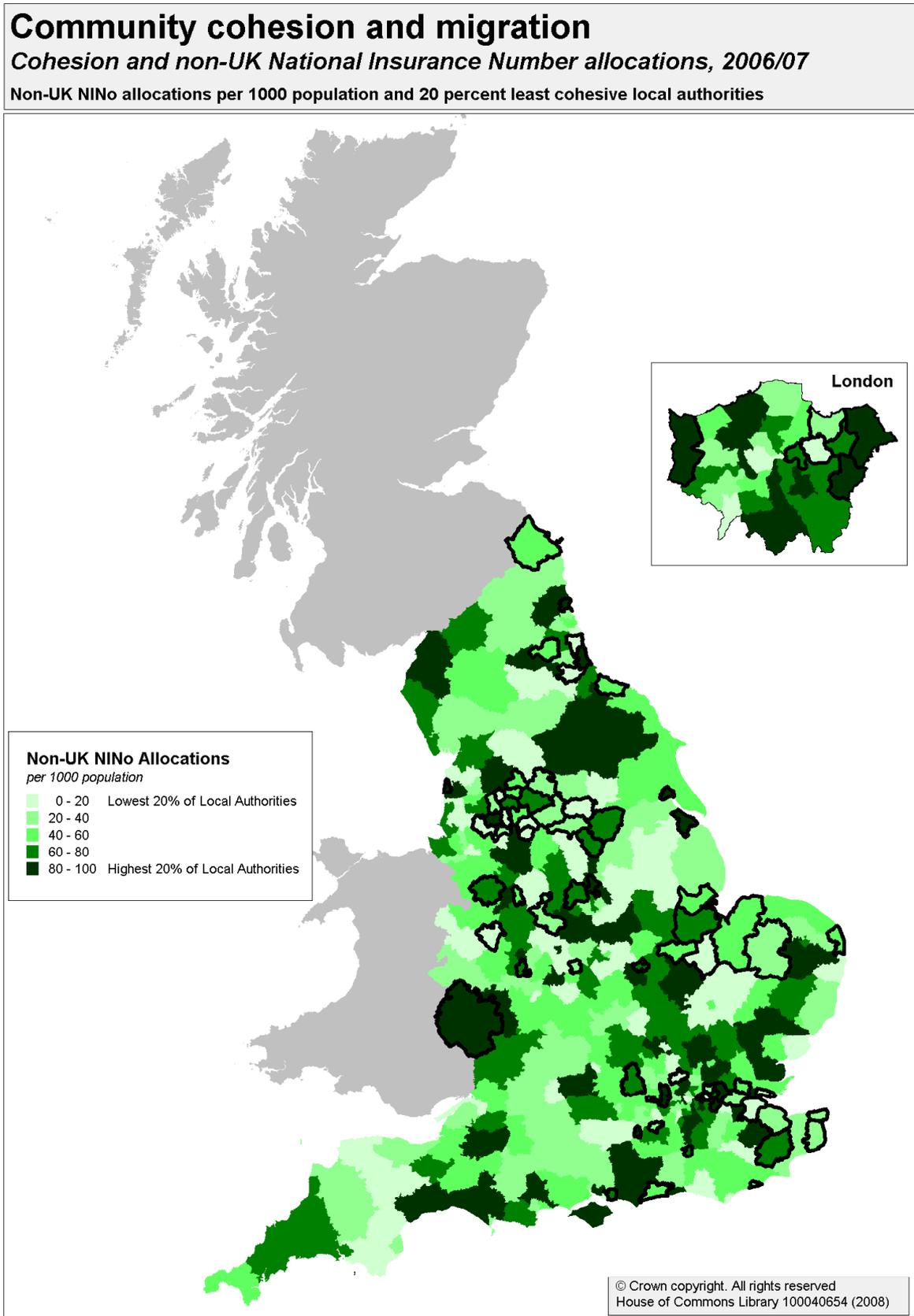
3 Pressures on local public services

56 per cent of British adults believe that some groups get unfair priority access to public services. The groups most often named as receiving unfair priority were asylum seekers, refugees or immigrants. —2007 MORI poll[63]

29. Migrants make use of a wide range of local public services, alongside the rest of the local population; any increase in a local population is likely to lead to some increased pressures on services. Witnesses drew our attention to a number of particular pressure points including translation services; community safety; social care, such as the increase in unaccompanied children; schooling; health care, and English language teaching.[64] As well as the pressures placed on services, the public is concerned about migrants' perceived unfair access to public services.

Pressures on local authority services

30. The most commonly cited areas of concern about local authority services are the pressures on schools and social housing.

Schools

31. Evidence to us stressed the difficulties faced by schools in coping with increases in migrant children. The Audit Commission notes that the arrival of migrants can make planning school places more difficult.[65] In Peterborough, we learnt that there were a number of school closures planned owing to the projected decline in the number of local children. However, the planned closures did not take into account the unexpected arrival of migrant children.[66] The unplanned arrival of migrant children can lead to increased competition for school places, which may cause tensions with the settled community.

32. Concerns regarding the effect of migration on schools are not simply about the number of migrants. The limited English of migrant children was stated as a problem for many schools, causing difficulties for learning and increased costs.[67] The number of children who do not speak English as their first language is rising. In primary schools, the most recent figures show that 14.4 per cent of children did not speak English as their first language, in comparison to between seven and eight per cent of children in 2002. And in state-funded secondary schools, the most recent figures show that 10.8 per cent of pupils' first language is not English, in comparison to approximately 8.5 per cent of pupils in 2002.[68]

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63   Ipsos MORI, *Rivers of Blood Survey*, April 2008, www.ipsos-mori.com.

64   Ev 120, 131, 140,162.

65   The Audit Commission, *Crossing borders-Responding to the local challenges of migrant workers*, January 2007.

66   Annex

67   Ev 120, 131, 147.

68   These figures are not an exact comparison as the 2002 data use key stages as the basis for estimates. Department for Education and Skills, Statistics of Education: Pupil Progress by Pupil Characteristics 2002, June 2003, para 80. See also Department for Children, Schools and Families, Statistical First Release, Pupil Characteristics and Class sizes in maintained schools in England, January 2008, published 29 April 2008, www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway.

33. Other difficulties that schools face in coping with increased migration stem from the diversity of new arrivals and the difficulty in placing children appropriately and responding to the flow of new arrivals during the school year. Schools can face particular challenges in catering for migrant children from a diverse range of countries, who may speak many different languages.[69] Schools can also find it difficult to cater for the educational needs of migrant children owing to their lack of educational records and assessments.[70] Migrant children arriving in the middle of the school year can be disruptive to the learning of the whole class.[71] The IPPR reported that mid-year arrivals can be costly, with increased administrative costs for schools and a lack of staff to cope with the additional intake.[72]

Social housing

34. Trevor Phillips told us that "there are millions of people who believe that migrants somehow 'jump the queue'" for social housing.[73] One Barking and Dagenham resident that we met suggested that this view was often held as ethnic minorities tended to have larger families than white people, and as a result qualified as in greater need for social housing, leading to resentment from white working-class indigenous communities.[74] Another resident suggested that confusion can arise because migrants may rent or own properties that were former council housing stock, and there is no visible way of distinguishing between the two.[75]

35. The EHRC and the LGA commissioned a study of the allocation of social housing to investigate public fears over queue jumping. It found no evidence to suggest that the system gives migrants privileged access. Only two per cent of those in social housing are recent migrants who have entered the UK in the last five years. And 90 per cent of those in social housing are UK-born.[76] A8 migrants do not qualify for social housing until they have been in the UK for one year, and it is estimated that only one per cent live in social housing.[77] **We welcome the EHRC and LGA commissioned study into the allocation of social housing, and welcome its interim report findings showing that there is no evidence to suggest that migrants receive unfair priority access to housing.**

36. **Tensions between groups caused by issues of access to housing are undoubtedly exacerbated by the acute shortage of social and affordable housing in England.** The waiting list for social housings has risen by almost 60 per cent since 1996, whilst social housing stock has reduced by more than 10 per cent since 1996.[78] In 1981, 32 per cent of

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69   Ev 150

70   Ev 131, 150.

71   Ev 118, 131.

72   Ev 120. See also House of Lords, *The Economic Impact of Immigration*, First Report of the Select Committee on Economic Affairs, Session 2007–08, HL Paper 82, para 142.

73   Q 12

74   Annex

75   Annex

76   LGA, *Allocation of Social Housing by Local Authorities in England and Wales—letter to Chief Executives from Sir Simon Milton and Trevor Phillips*, 8 April 2008.

77   Ev 76

78   LGA, *Allocation of Social Housing by Local Authorities in England and Wales—letter to Chief Executives from Sir Simon Milton and Trevor Phillips*, 8 April 2008.

households in England lived in a total of 5.5 million social rented homes. That figure has fallen to 3.8 million social rented homes today, 19 per cent of all households.[79] Residents in Barking and Dagenham told us that many local people waited years to access social housing. We were told that the sales of homes through Right to Buy had resulted in a significant decline in the stock of social housing in Barking and Dagenham, and consequently increased unmet demand.[80] The Right to Buy is the main cause of the decline in the number of social rented homes in England.[81] Residents also expressed concern that the migration of people from inner-London boroughs had contributed to house price rises in the area.[82] The House of Lords Select Committee on Economic Affairs concluded that net immigration is one factor that contributes towards higher house prices.[83]

Other local service pressures

37. Migration can cause particular pressures on other local services such as the police and the NHS. The West Norfolk Partnership, the local strategic partnership for the borough, reported pressures on hospital services. It stated that maternity services were under pressure from the increase in the young migrant population. It also reported that Accident and Emergency services were seeing an increased demand from migrants without documentation, who are able to access treatment that they would be unable to obtain through GP services.[84] However, in contrast to this evidence, the Audit Commission suggests that demand for health services is lower among migrants than local communities, because they are generally young and healthy.[85] The IPPR stated that the majority of A8 migrants tended to place less of a burden on healthcare and adult social care than the local population, though it acknowledged that these younger groups of migrants tended to be relatively greater users of specific services, such as sexual health and maternity services.[86]

38. During our visits we learnt from the local police about the effects of migration on the prevalence of different types of crime. In Peterborough, certain types of crime were seen as increasing as a consequence of migration: these included the growing of cannabis, the trafficking of Eastern European women and girls, drink-driving and knife crime.[87] In Barking and Dagenham, white-on-white crime between different nationalities and ethnic groups was the most significant race issue for the police.[88] In Burnley, the prevalence of forced marriages was an issue of particular concern.[89] The effect of migration on crime

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79   Communities and Local Government Committee, Eighth Report of Session 2007–08, *The Supply of Rented Housing*, HC 457, para 5.

80   Annex

81   Communities and Local Government Committee, Eighth Report of Session 2007–08, *The Supply of Rented Housing*, HC 457, para 5.

82   Annex

83   House of Lords, *The Economic Impact of Immigration*, First Report of the Select Committee on Economic Affairs, Session 2007–08, HL Paper 82, para 172.

84   Ev 163

85   The Audit Commission, *Crossing borders-Responding to the local challenges of migrant workers*, January 2007.

86   Ev 120

87   Annex

88   Annex

89   Annex

levels is debated—it has been argued, sometimes on the basis of the same evidence, that migration leads to increased crime and that it does not. Peter Fayh, co-author of an Association of Police Chiefs (ACPO) recent paper on the subject, said "the influx of eastern Europeans has created pressures on forces in some areas" but also stated that "the evidence does not support theories of a large scale crime wave generated through migration".[90] Professor Cantle told us that migrants are "more often victims of crime than perpetrators".[91] Our evidence suggests the types of crime committed in areas experiencing migration is influenced by changing profile of the people living in the area. This requires the police to adapt to the changing local need. For example, in Peterborough we met Petr Torak, a Roma Gypsy originally from the Czech Republic who works as a Police Community Support Officer.[92] He is fluent in five languages, which helps him to resolve tensions with migrants.

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90   ACPO, "Comment on migration and policing", press release issued 16 April 2008, www.acpo.police.uk.

91   Q 68

92   Annex. See also "Roma gipsy who fled Czech Republic is the new face of British policing", Mail Online, 5 April 2008, www.dailymail.co.uk.

4 Responding to migration locally

39. The CIC argued that local areas have unique qualities that demand "tailored and bespoke local activity to build integration and cohesion".[93] On our visits to very different types of areas, we received a strong message from local councils that targeted responses were needed and that central government should 'let go'.[94]

Local political leadership

40. There are many organisations involved in responding to the effects of migration at a local level. They include statutory public bodies such as primary care trusts; housing associations; voluntary sector bodies, including local community groups that support migrants; and the employers of migrant labour.

41. Local authorities are at the frontline in responding to the effects of migration, not only because of their role in delivering services but because of their role as community leaders. Local authorities have a critical role in co-ordinating action across a complex range of bodies, particularly through their leadership role on local strategic partnerships and implementing the community strategy for their areas.

42. A detailed understanding of local areas is a prerequisite for local leadership. The CIC recommended that all local authorities map their communities, developing local intelligence on the types of people that live across the area.[95] Local intelligence on current, and projections of future, migration flows is vital to enable local authorities to take strategic action on integration and cohesion, appropriately target activities and resources, and plan ahead. The arrival of large numbers of migrants from European Accession states appears not to have been anticipated by many of the local authorities who have received them. For all the positive recent work we saw in Peterborough, for example, we were not convinced that the local authority had responded in as timely a manner as might have been the case had it realised that the heavy dependence of their local economy on agriculture was bound to make it an attractive destination for workers from Eastern Europe; although in recent years, local intelligence on migrant worker trends in Peterborough and the surrounding areas has improved as a result of research commissioned by the East of England Development Agency.[96] **In order to respond to migration effectively, it is critical that local authorities do all they can to improve their local intelligence on current and future migration flows and plan ahead.**

43. The CIC concluded that local authority leadership has a critical effect on cohesion. The type of leadership will determine whether actions are taken to promote cohesion and tackle areas of tension, and influence the attitude of partner organisations. The CIC stressed the important role of elected representatives.[97] During our visit to Barking and Dagenham we

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93   *Our Shared Future,* p 4.

94   Annex

95   *Our Shared Future*, para 4.24.

96   Ev 163

97   *Our Shared Future*, para 4.30.

were struck by the central role of elected representatives both in responding to the effects of migration and in influencing the response of settled communities to new migrants. The Leader of Barking and Dagenham Borough Council has direct responsibility for implementation of the local authority's cohesion strategy.[98] The council's response recognises local priorities. Following wide consultation it has adopted a local definition of community cohesion to focus action on fairness, respect and safety.[99] The concentration of effort and attention on fairness is a response to significant local concern about the perceived unfair access of migrants to services. On the other hand, elected representatives can also potentially damage community relations. The CIC expressed concern that local councillors are able to make inflammatory statements that negatively affect cohesion, without any consequences.[100] Community relations can also be damaged if local political decisions are made without adequate consultation. Residents in Barking and Dagenham felt that the council had not conducted adequate consultation or provided a vision for local regeneration.[101]

Myth-busting

44. Local authorities can demonstrate leadership in combating local myths about migrants. These myths can be triggered by local events or situations. In Barking and Dagenham we learnt of the myth that migrants in inner-London boroughs were being offered £50,000 to move into the area. This myth had apparently arisen because of the increase in the number of black and minority ethnic families moving into the area from inner-London, owing to the ready supply of cheap private rented accommodation. We also heard that black and minority ethnic families were getting unfair priority access to social housing. It was suggested that this myth arises because these families were seen living in properties that were formerly council housing which had been purchased under the Right to Buy, but which were physically indistinguishable from social housing.

45. The people that we met on this visit all stressed the important role for councils in myth-busting. However, they equally argued that communications from the council need to be sensitive, and go beyond simply refuting myths to understanding and addressing their root causes. Research by the IPPR indicates that people can find myth-busting patronising if it is perceived as telling people that 'we know best and you don't'. Communications also run the risk of reinforcing myths if they simply repeat them and then refute them.[102]

46. The CIC argued that local authorities need to take preventative action to stop myths arising, particularly myths arising from competition for resources. In Burnley, we heard that many tensions had arisen because of perceptions that regeneration funding was disproportionately benefiting Asian communities.[103] Mr Rumbelow, Chief Executive of Burnley Council, acknowledged that one of the contributing factors to past tensions had been poor communication on why money was being invested in certain areas. In this case,

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98   IPPR, *One London? Change and Cohesion in three London boroughs*, March 2008, p 20.

99   Annex

100   *Our Shared Future*, para 4.33.

101   Annex

102   IPPR, *One London? Change and Cohesion in three London boroughs*, March 2008, p 20.

103   Q 103

the funding had been targeted at the most deprived neighbourhoods, which have high concentrations of Asian population.[104] Councillor Birtwistle, Leader of Burnley Council, told us that local people now understood how and why funding decisions are made because of an active effort to communicate decisions to all communities.[105] **Local authorities need to have transparent decision-making, including in relation to decisions on the allocation of social housing. Councils also must communicate effectively with their local communities to prevent myths about migrants arising and spreading.**

47. The national and local media have a role in influencing people's views on migrants. In Burnley, Ms Majeed, a programme manager at a local voluntary organisation, explained that in the past the local press had contributed to the spread of rumours, but that now more positive messages were being communicated.[106] The CIC recommended that the local media be engaged in discussion about community tensions and the effect that media coverage has on local communities.[107] Through working with the local press, and broadcasters, media coverage can help to prevent and counter myths.

48. The CIC recommended that the Government establish a national rapid rebuttal unit to counter myths about migrants. It argued that this unit should "produce training packs for local officials and councillors dealing with positive media messaging and diversity awareness".[108] This was the only CIC recommendation to be entirely rejected by the Government. The Secretary of State, Rt hon Hazel Blears MP, argued that myths needed to be rebutted locally for the responses to be meaningful.[109] We agree. **Local authorities need to take the lead in countering local myths on migrants. We see no necessity for a national rapid rebuttal unit, but recommend that central Government share best practice on myth-busting and communication strategies.**

Integrating migrants and the local community

49. Migrant and settled communities have a shared responsibility for integration. Integration is necessary to ensure that migrants understand the norms and expectations of their new local communities. It is also necessary to ensure that migrants can access public services; are able to participate in local community life; and understand their rights in order to avoid exploitation, for example by unscrupulous landlords or employers. Some local authorities, such as Slough Borough Council and Peterborough City Council, have responded to migration through taking practical and innovative measures, providing information to new arrivals and the settled community, integrating migrant children into schools and the local community. The case study below outlines an example of best practice in welcoming new arrivals.

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104 Q 119

105 Q 121

106 Q 93-94, Q 102.

107 *Our Shared Future*, para 7.22.

108 *Our Shared Future*, para 7.29.

109 Q 248

The New Link Centre, in Peterborough, has been established by the local council as a 'one-stop shop' for new arrivals. It delivers a range of services including the provision of information and advice, employment support and training to new arrivals. The centre is based in an area where many new arrivals live. It works closely with the settled community to promote cohesion. For example, courses are provided to the settled community to help develop cultural awareness about migrants and 'myth-bust', and community events are organised. When new arrivals first go to the centre a range of personal details are recorded on areas such as health, employment, housing, and whether they have children. These details are then passed on to the relevant agencies, such as schools. The data are used to help plan services, help migrants to integrate into the local community, and to utilise the skills that migrants bring with them: for example, their language skills can be used to assist with translation.[110]

50. One means of providing information to new arrivals is through the establishment of a welcome centre, like the New Link Centre described above. Lord Goldsmith, in his report to Government *Citizenship: Our Common Bond*, called for the Government to consider "whether new migrants should be required, as a condition of receiving a National Insurance number, to register with a local welcome centre".[111] He argues that this would increase the proportion of new migrants who receive information about their local community. He noted that the New Link Centre had only been able to reach 20 per cent of those new migrants who registered for a National Insurance card.[112]

51. In Barking and Dagenham, it was stressed that local communities and authorities need the flexibility to develop appropriate local responses to migration. Their area did not have a welcome centre but new arrivals were being given information about the local area through other means.[113] Darra Singh, Chair of the CIC, did not agree that the Government should necessarily fund welcome centres, or any single initiative.[114] Requiring every local authority to have a welcome centre goes against the spirit of the CIC's report, which stresses the need for locally targeted responses to cohesion and migration. It would also be disproportionate, as not all areas experience high numbers of new arrivals.

52. Another means of providing information about the local community to new arrivals is the distribution of a 'welcome pack'. Many local authorities have produced welcome packs containing information about services and expectations. This can be a useful means of avoiding unnecessary conflict. For example, one of the frequently cited public concerns about migrants is that they leave rubbish piling up outside their properties. The simple preventative solution is for migrants to be given information on how the local rubbish collection system works. The Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) has produced, with the support of CLG, a guide to local authorities on producing welcome

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110 Annex

111 Lord Goldsmith QC, *Citizenship: Our Common Bond*, March 2008, p 114-115.

112 Lord Goldsmith QC, *Citizenship: Our Common Bond*, March 2008, p 114-115.

113 Annex

114 Q 152

packs. This implements the CIC's recommendation for national guidance to be provided on the production of such packs.[115]

53. The Educational Assessment Centre in Slough is a further example of an innovative and practical solution that responds to migration.

> **The Slough Assessment Centre** has been established by Slough Borough Council. It enables a detailed assessment to be made of migrant children's educational and welfare needs prior to starting school. It caters for all newly arrived secondary school pupils without school records who attend during the summer holidays. The centre provides support to newly arrived parents to support the full integration of the children.[116]

54. Slough Borough Council stated that it is not aware of anyone else offering such a service and suggested that other areas could benefit from adopting such an approach.[117] It is undoubtedly true that many areas could benefit from such an approach and that awareness of such best practice examples needs to be spread. However, Slough's solution may not be appropriate in all circumstances. **Local authorities need the freedom to develop local responses to migration; a one-size-fits-all solution is not appropriate. The Government should encourage local authorities to learn from each other, particularly where there are examples of innovative solutions to migration, such as establishing educational assessment centres and local welcome centres for new arrivals.**

Promoting contact

55. Voluntary organisations have an important role in promoting community cohesion. Activities that facilitate contact between people from different backgrounds are often delivered by the voluntary sector. The aim of such activities is to increase understanding and foster trust. One of the Government's three performance indicators on cohesion is "the percentage of people who have meaningful interactions with people from different backgrounds".[118]

56. Sarah Spencer, Associate Director and Programme Head of the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS), informed us that a recent study found that one in four Eastern European migrants had no social contact with British people after living in the country for two years.[119] Lack of contact between people of different backgrounds can be compounded by residential segregation with people leading parallel lives. There are different views on the extent to which people from different background live parallel lives, and the extent to which this is a problem. In Burnley, we heard from Ms Majeed who argued that there is residential segregation of Asian and white communities, but that

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115 Communities and Local Government, *The Government's Response to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion*, February 2008, p 41.

116 Ev 150

117 Ev 150

118 Ev 86

119 Q 175

people interacted in other spheres of their lives: "it is not the case that in the supermarket there is an aisle for Asians and an aisle for everyone else".[120] She also pointed out that the reasons why people live in certain areas are often about positive lifestyle choices, rather than based on any desire to live separately:

> If people choose to live in a certain part of the area because there is a higher percentage of Asians, it is probably because it is convenient for them. The shops are close by, the mosques are close by and the schools are close by. It is a lot about convenience and the feeling that they want to live close to family members.[121]

The Leader of Burnley Council acknowledged that locally people lived parallel lives, but stated that "provided at the end of the day the parallel lives meet and create some cohesion as and when it is required then I feel it is fine".[122]

57. Professor Cantle agreed that there is a risk of focusing too much attention on residential segregation and argued that the "real problem is when physical segregation is compounded by segregation in education, the workplace, in social, cultural and other spheres".[123] His report into the disturbances in northern towns in the summer 2001, including Burnley, concluded that one of the main causes of the conflict was the segregation of Asian and white communities.[124] The Institute of Community Cohesion argued that breaking down structural segregation in housing, schooling, and employment is necessary to ensure the effective integration of migrants.[125]

58. The ethnic segregation of children in schools is a particular issue of concern.[126] Professor Cantle, in a recent publication by the Smith Institute, has pointed out that evidence has begun to emerge which shows that on average ethnic segregation in schools is greater than it is in the surrounding school neighbourhood.[127] He also outlined ways in which ethnic segregation in schools can be broken down: through the twinning of schools with different ethnic profiles and joint working with students and their parents across schools. The Government's capital investment programme in schools, *Building Schools for the Future*, presents an opportunity to promote cohesion. In Oldham, for example, a multi-faith academy has been proposed.[128] **We recommend that the Government monitor the extend to which schools are more ethnically segregated than the communities they serve.**

59. In evidence to us, Professor Cantle nevertheless stressed that any attempt at forcing integration, such as bussing children to schools in different areas, could be counter-productive.[129] Witnesses argued for more voluntary opportunities to be provided to

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120 Q 90

121 Q 90

122 Q 125

123 Q 63

124 The Cantle Report, *Community Cohesion: A Report of the Independent Review Team*, December 2001.

125 Ev 124

126 Annex

127 The Smith Institute, *Citizenship, cohesion and solidarity*, June 2008, p 13.

128 Q 64

129 Q 63

promote meaningful interaction between people from different backgrounds, rather than any forced means of integration.[130] Ms Majeed argued that community development work is important in creating opportunities for interaction, but stressed the need for this interaction to be meaningful rather than an approach she characterised as "Let's sit down and have samosas".[131] The IPPR's research supports the view that contact needs to be meaningful to be effective in promoting community cohesion. Its report on cohesion in London commented that contact does not always reduce prejudice, for instance where contact is based around one-off events, without enabling people to have the chance to get to know each other.[132] **Integration should not be forced; rather, opportunities to promote sustained and meaningful interaction between people from different backgrounds should be encouraged, for example through encouraging participation in community groups around issues of common concern.**

60. There are many different focuses of work promoting contact. Many faith organisations are involved in community work. Where faith communities promote understanding between people of different faiths this can be a positive force in promoting community cohesion. For example, in Burnley we visited a faith centre which caters for people of all faiths. The centre hosts faith events throughout the year which deliberately involve people of all religions: for instance, an event celebrating Ramadan attracted 70 people, 50 of who were non-Muslims.[133]

61. Another strand of work in promoting contact is focused on resolving conflict. In Peterborough we learnt about the 'linking communities' project, which aims to resolve neighbourhood disputes between migrants and the settled community. A number of local migrants had been trained to act as community facilitators to mediate in disputes. For example, if a complaint was reported about a Polish family not putting out their rubbish, a Polish mediator might liaise with the family and explain the rubbish system.[134] The Building Bridges programme, in Burnley, brings people together from different backgrounds to talk about issues of common concern. We were told that one of the core aspects of their work was in reaching out to people who were not the 'usual suspects'.[135] Mr Rochester, a member of a residents' association in Burnley, pointed out that often it is only the "same old faces" that you see interacting between Asian and white communities.[136] **To promote cohesion effectively, all activity that promotes contact between people of different backgrounds should reach out as widely as possible to people who are not normally involved in community initiatives.**

Supporting the whole community

62. As well as work deliberately designed to promote contact between people of different backgrounds, general voluntary activity that promotes civic participation—involvement in

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130 Annex

131 Q 95

132 IPPR, *One London? Change and Cohesion in three London boroughs*, March 2008, p 12.

133 Annex

134 Annex

135 Annex

136 Q 110

public life—can be of equal importance for community cohesion. One of the Government's three measures of cohesion is "the percentage of people who feel that they belong in their neighbourhood".[137] A sense of belonging to local neighbourhoods can be increased through participation in community life. Community groups, such as residents' associations, have an important role in bringing people from different backgrounds together, often on issues of local concern, for instance anti-social behaviour. Involvement in such groups can facilitate meaningful and sustained contact. The residents' groups that we spoke to stressed the need for greater support for their work. Mr Bone, a member of a residents' group in Burnley, argued that the Government needed to trust community groups and give flexible funding.[138]

63. Despite the good work being undertaken by community groups such as residents' associations, witnesses reported the limited involvement of recent migrants. Ms Spencer argued that there were barriers to migrants actively participating in community life owing to the nature of the work migrants were employed in (long hours, low pay and shift work).[139] A representative from a residents' association that we met in Barking and Dagenham stated that it wished to involve more black and ethnic minority residents in their work, but that this was proving difficult as very few volunteered.[140] A Joseph Rowntree-funded study of the experiences of Eastern European migrants found low levels of community participation. Their sample group of migrants were less than half as likely to volunteer locally than the UK population.[141] Fewer than 25 per cent of the migrants interviewed felt that they could influence local decisions, in comparison to the national average of 38 per cent.[142] The study also found that new migrants had significantly lower attachment to their local neighbourhood than settled residents. While a sense of belonging and participation in local community life may increase with length of stay, a significant increase in attachment to the local area is unlikely to occur without new arrivals being encouraged to be involved in the local community. **Community groups, such as residents' associations, have an important role in promoting community cohesion and participation in community life. Local authorities should encourage community groups to involve migrants in their organisations.**

64. The Government has a commitment to empowering communities and is expected to publish a White Paper on empowerment in summer 2008. A recent independent study of community participation, by the Research team on Governance and Diversity at Goldsmiths, University of London, concluded that the Government's policy on community empowerment has developed in parallel to its agenda on community cohesion, and argues that there is an urgent need for the two agendas to be drawn together.[143] **We recommend that the Government ensure that its work on community empowerment, and the**

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137 Ev 86

138 Q 117

139 Q 184

140 Annex

141 Markova, E and Black, R, *New Eastern Immigrants and Social Cohesion*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, May 2007.

142 *ibid.* See also Communities and Local Government, *Citizenship Survey, April-September 2007*, England and Wales.

143 Ev 112

development of a Community Empowerment Bill, include measures to encourage the participation of migrants in civic life.

Single identity groups

65. An issue of recent contention has been the public funding of single identity groups—groups formed on the basis of a particular identity, such as ethnicity or religion. The CIC concluded that there should be a presumption against funding single identity groups. The rationale for this is that funding single identity groups does not necessarily help cohesion, but rather can negatively affect it by reinforcing difference between groups. The CIC made three recommendations on single group funding: first, that if single identity group funding is provided, the reasons for the award need to be clearly publicised to all communities in the local area; secondly, that such groups need to take steps to be more outward-facing; and thirdly, that CLG should issue guidance to grant-making bodies on the appropriateness of single identity group funding.[144] On our visit to Barking and Dagenham, a resident argued that general community groups, such as residents' associations, were disadvantaged by the focus of funding on single identity groups.[145]

66. On the other hand, Ms Seabrooke, Chief Executive of CDF, expressed concern about the CIC's recommendations. She argued that single identity groups can support cohesion and feared that funding to marginalised groups could be reduced because of the CIC's recommendation.[146] Ms Bowles, also from the CDF, suggested that the term 'single identity groups' can be misleading, as it implies only one identity. She explained that the term can be problematic if it is interpreted by funders, such as local authorities, as referring to a wide range of groups whose participants may have multiple identities. For example, if an Asian women's group is perceived as being a 'single identity group' then funding could be threatened; yet this group could comprise women from different nationalities, religions and backgrounds.[147]

67. In response to the CIC's recommendations on single identity group funding, the Government has issued draft guidance which calls on funders to "look for opportunities to maximise" interaction between people of different backgrounds and consider how activities will promote community cohesion in their consideration of funding decisions.[148] The guidance nevertheless recognises that in some circumstances single identity group funding may be appropriate. The Secretary of State explained in a letter of response to the Chair of the CIC why such funding may be justified: "new migrant groups, for example, may find the support of other new migrants essential to acclimatising to their life in the UK".[149]

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144 *Our Shared Future,* Annex D: The question of Single Group Funding.

145 Annex

146 Q 226

147 Q 228

148 Communities and Local Government, *Cohesion Guidance for Funders*, February 2008, Foreword.

149 Communities and Local Government, *Letter from Hazel Blears, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to Darra Singh, Chair of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion*, 6 October 2007.

68. Focusing funding on activities that bring people of different backgrounds together benefits the whole community, including migrants. On our visit to Barking and Dagenham migrants stressed the importance of opportunities to mix with the settled indigenous population. One participant remarked that she did not want her daughter to grow up only speaking to people of her own nationality. **Funders should expect community groups to look for opportunities to maximise interaction between people of different backgrounds. Where funding is granted to single identity groups, the criteria against which funding is awarded need to be clearly publicised to all communities in the local area.**

Local authority performance

69. The Audit Commission found that "in general, councils' approach to community cohesion is not well developed […] Strategy was a particularly weak area, with individual council work on community cohesion often not part of a wider strategic framework".[150] A further criticism made was that "a number of councils still do not have an overarching strategy, resulting in uncoordinated or untargeted activity".[151] Mr Davies, from the Audit Commission, qualified these statements in oral evidence, remarking:

> it is clearly those parts of the country where this [migration] is a newer phenomenon where they [councils] are much more challenged by this and do not have the existing depth of skills and capacity to deal with it.[152]

He also commented that the support provided to councils by the local government sector was "dramatically better" than it was several years ago.[153] The LGA and IDeA have provided a range of best practice materials to promote cohesion and the integration of migrants. Professor Cantle described community cohesion work as "fairly new", and stated that "over 200 local authorities now have dedicated staff for community cohesion […and that] there are now dedicated action plans and performance frameworks in place".[154]

70. The new performance framework for local government, the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA), comes into force in April 2009 and will take into account community cohesion. Local authorities will be assessed primarily against locally selected targets from a set of 198 national performance indicators. Two out of the 198 indicators are on community cohesion. The Minister of State, Rt hon Hazel Blears MP, informed us an expected 85 local authorities would include community cohesion as priority local targets.[155] The inclusion of community cohesion in the local government performance framework was recommended by our predecessor Committee in its report on social cohesion in 2004.[156] **We welcome the inclusion of community cohesion within the Comprehensive**

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150 Ev 66

151 Ev 67

152 Q 27

153 Q 28

154 Q 62

155 Q 256

156 ODPM Select Committee, Sixth Report of Session 2003-04, *Social Cohesion*, HC 45, para 28.

Area Assessment. This will be useful in encouraging local authorities actively to promote community cohesion and respond to migration, particularly in areas where there are tensions.

5 Responding to migration nationally

National roles and responsibilities

71. Many Government departments have responsibility for different aspects of policy in relation to migration and community cohesion. The Home Office has lead departmental responsibility for the Government's migration policy. CLG holds lead responsiblity for community cohesion. In October 2007, a migration directorate was created within CLG; its role is to "co-ordinate work across Government to support local authorities and communities in identifying and managing the consequences of migration at the local level, both for cohesion and the provision of services".[157] Other departments are also responsible for aspects of migration and cohesion. For example, the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) is responsible for policy on the provision of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) tuition, which has implications for integration. The new Government Equality Office (GEO) has responsibility for tackling inequalities, which some migrant groups experience.

72. In addition to Government departments, myriad other groups and organisations are either responsible for or involved in community cohesion and migration. Four non-departmental public bodies (NDPDs) hold responsibility for different aspects of work: the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), which is responsible for promoting equality and good relations; the Advisory Board on Naturalisation and Integration (ABNI), which advises Government on the requirements for citizenship; the Community Development Foundation (CDF), which advises Government on community development work and administers grants; and finally, the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC), which advises Ministers on the labour market implications of migration. Last year, a further body was established, called the Migration Impacts Forum (MIF). The role of this group is to provide a forum for debate on the wider impacts associated with migration experienced by local areas.[158] Others also hold some degree of responsibility for community cohesion in relation to migration. This includes local authorities, regional development agencies, the regional government offices, the police, the NHS, employers of migrant labour and voluntary organisations.

Too many cooks?

73. Given the sheer number of bodies involved in migration and cohesion, some argue that a new national body for migration is needed to rationalise the situation. The CIC argued that a new national body was needed to manage the integration of all migrants. Currently responsibility for policy on migrants is held by different bodies, depending on the type of migrant—refugees, asylum seekers, or economic migrants. The CIC suggested that the new body should be sponsored by CLG but independent: "the model might be that of the ABNI".[159] Its suggested role could include overseeing the development of a strategy for all migrants, gathering evidence, spreading best practice and providing guidance on

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157 Ev 79

158 Ev 85

159 *Our Shared Future*, para 5.22.

integration.[160] Darra Singh argued that "there needs to be a focal point in terms of responsibility and accountability and also an ability to respond".[161] The ABNI agrees that "there could be a role for a new body"—though does not comment in its evidence on whether its own organisation should be merged into this new body.[162] Sarah Spencer argued that a new national body may be better at delivering than a Whitehall department, but stressed that a body is not a substitute for a government strategy on migration.[163]

74. On the other hand, the EHRC is "cautious" on whether to create a new national body, on the grounds that action is best pursued locally with national guidance. It argues that it would be "preferable to encourage a more strategic approach among existing central and local government institutions, including the major role that the EHRC can play".[164] Trevor Phillips told us that "some of the basics" need to be got right first, before considering whether a new body is needed.[165] Professor Cantle expressed concern about a new body, stating "I would be worried about some sort of 'one size fits all' approach".[166] He argued that action to promote integration inevitably falls on local authorities, so was unconvinced of the necessity of a new body.[167]

75. The Government has considered the case for establishing a new national body with responsibility for the integration of migrants. It concluded that there was "no clear rationale for developing an Integration Agency", arguing that "these functions can feasibly be provided within existing structures, and the development of an additional agency does not justify the cost that this would entail."[168]

76. **We agree with the Government's conclusion. We did not hear sufficient evidence to convince us that a new body is necessary at this time, and we find persuasive the Government's analysis that establishing a new body could risk duplicating the work of existing bodies and prove costly.[169] Instead, we recommend that all bodies with responsibility for the integration of migrants take further concerted steps to ensure that they are working together to follow a common strategic approach to the task. We also recommend that the Government review the case for further rationalisation of existing structures on migration and cohesion when it reports in early 2009 on its progress in implementing the actions set out in its report *Managing the Impacts of Migration: A Cross-Government Approach*.[170]**

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160 *Our Shared Future*, para 5.24.

161 Q 145

162 Ev 64

163 Q 193

164 Ev 101

165 Q 9

166 Q 85

167 Q 85

168 Communities and Local Government, *Review of Migrant Integration Policy in the UK*, June 2008.

169 Communities and Local Government, *Review of Migrant Integration Policy in the UK*, June 2008.

170 Communities and Local Government, *Managing the Impacts of Migration: A Cross-Government Approach*, June 2008, p 11.

The national policy framework

77. There is currently no single Government strategy for the integration of all migrants. The UK has a National Refugee Integration Strategy but no strategy for the integration of economic migrants. The CIC has indicated its support for a national strategy covering all migrants. It points out that, unlike the UK, other EU countries have introductory programmes for all new migrants. It argues that a consequence of not having a national strategy is that a "plethora of local initiatives" have developed, many of which are good, "but there is a duplication of effort".[171]

78. The Government has acknowledged that there may be a case for developing a single 'Migration Integration Strategy,' and announced that the Migration Directorate within CLG will take forward work on this.[172] A single national migration strategy may be useful in bringing together the work of different Government departments into a coherent single approach. However, a single strategy is not necessarily going to be the most effective means of achieving good practice on integration locally, where the delivery work takes place. There is a widespread consensus that there is a need for varying responses to migration and cohesion in different local areas. The Government says that at the heart of its approach to cohesion and migration "is the belief that cohesion must be understood and built locally", and that central government's role is to set the "national framework" for local action.[173] The LGA agrees, arguing that each local area is unique and therefore requires different responses.[174] **If the Government decides to introduce a single national 'Migration Integration Strategy,' it must not take a one-size-fits-all approach. Central Government should not dictate to local authorities what practice should be adopted locally. Rather, the role of central government should be to set a national policy framework for action on integration and community cohesion, and provide guidance and support to others, particularly local government.**

79. The current absence of a national strategy for the integration of migrants does not mean that the Government is taking no action. There has been a flurry of recent Government activity, primarily in response to the CIC's recommendations. In June 2007, the CIC made 57 recommendations on community cohesion, many of which related directly to migration. All of the recommendations but one have been acted on.

80. The Government has recently published a Migration Impacts Plan that sets out the Government's approach to managing the impacts of migration.[175] Its activity has also included establishing a migration directorate; establishing two new advisory bodies, the Migration Impacts Forum and the Migration Advisory Committee; integrating performance measurement on community cohesion into the new PSA and Local Area Agreements (LAAs); introducing a duty to promote cohesion on schools; undertaking consultation on the provision of ESOL; introducing a community cohesion fund; and

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171 *Our Shared Future*, para 5.20.

172 Communities and Local Government*, Review of Migrant Integration Policy in the UK*, June 2008.

173 Ev 79

174 Ev 129

175 Communities and Local Government, *Managing the Impacts of Migration: A Cross-Government Approach*, June 2008.

publishing a number of guidance documents. Darra Singh indicated that overall the Government's response had been positive—"the pint glass is at least half full, if not a little bit more".[176] Trevor Phillips told us that he was "broadly" content with the Government's response.[177] Much of the Government's current activity on community cohesion and migration has been instigated in the past year, and it is too early to judge the overall effectiveness of the Government's actions in response to the CIC. **We welcome the Government's increased activity on community cohesion and migration. As much of this activity is new, we recommend that the Government review the overall effectiveness of its activities in response to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion in 2009.**

The role of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

81. Community cohesion is not solely the responsibility of central government. At a national level, the EHRC is of particular importance: community cohesion cannot be achieved without tackling inequalities. The EHRC is a non-departmental public body, launched in October 2007. The EHRC has an important role in promoting community cohesion through two related areas of work: tackling inequalities, and promoting good relations.

82. The first area of the EHRC's work is focused on reducing inequalities. Its strategic focus is on "narrowing gaps in life-chances and outcomes for disadvantaged groups […including] migrant communities".[178] The Equalities Review, which reported to the Government in 2007, found that some migrant communities were significantly disadvantaged. For example, based on current trends, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women will never have the same access to employment as white women.[179] And the employment rate among immigrant Somalis is just 12 per cent, in comparison to 67 per cent for all other new immigrants.[180] The CIC concluded that discrimination and inequality are barriers to integration and cohesion.[181] Professor Cantle pointed out that if inequalities are tackled then there will be increased opportunities for people to relate to each other on an equal footing, for example in the workplace or at university.[182] The second area of the EHRC's work is promoting good relations among and between groups, which is a statutory requirement under the Equality Act 2006. The EHRC distributes grant funding to voluntary groups to promote good relations, from an overall funding pot of £10 million.[183] From 2002 onwards public authorities have been statutorily obliged to promote race equality. The EHRC is responsible for enforcing the race equality duty which can be an important tool for promoting the integration of migrants.

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176 Q 136

177 Q 5

178 Ev 101

179 The Equalities Review, *Fairness and Freedom: Final Report of the Equalities Review*, February 2007, p 26.

180 The Equalities Review, *Fairness and Freedom: Final Report of the Equalities Review*, February 2007, p 40.

181 *Our Shared Future*, para 2.21.

182 Q 80

183 Q 25

83. In our Report of last year on *Equality,* we recommended that the EHRC work closely with the private sector to promote equality and tackle unfair discrimination.[184] This approach is equally necessary for work on integration and good relations as it is for work to reduce inequalities. The CBI told us that some employers already take action to integrate their employees beyond encouraging their workers to learn English, with one in six (16 per cent) providing practical information about life in the UK to help their workers integrate.[185] Other examples of employers taking steps to integrate their workers include providing new arrivals with a 'buddy', helping set up bank accounts, and finding accommodation.[186] The CIC recommended that the EHRC, in partnership with the CBI, convene regular forums where employers and employees can meet to set out clear action plans for how employment issues can contribute to integration and cohesion. This recommendation has been accepted.[187] **We welcome the EHRC's intention to convene regular forums for employers and employees on integration and cohesion. In addition, we call on the EHRC to encourage and support employers in taking action to integrate their migrant employees into local communities.**

Government performance—room for improvement

84. Despite the Government's recent increase in activity and policy focus on community cohesion and migration, there still remains room for improvement. We have identified four areas where improvements are needed: the co-ordination of policy across departments; the spread of best practice; the provision of English language tuition; and policy on the integration of short-term economic migrants.

Co-ordination across Whitehall

85. Given the shared responsibility for community cohesion and migration and the number of organisations involved, it is worth highlighting the importance of co-ordination. The Audit Commission noted that at least six Government departments have a direct interest in inward migration and found that "local agencies are not always clear about where to go for information or support".[188] The need for a more joined-up approach across Government is perhaps best illustrated in the recent controversy over English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision. The Secretary of State, Rt hon Hazel Blears MP, told us that she "could not possibly overestimate" the importance of speaking English for the integration of migrants.[189] Yet last year DIUS introduced changes to ESOL funding which restricted access to free tuition.[190]

86. A further example of where there is a need for a more joined-up approach across departments is between the Home Office and CLG on the Government's overall migration

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184   Communities and Local Government Committee, Sixth Report of Session 2006–07, *Equality*, HC 468, para 27.

185   Ev 99

186   Ev 99

187   Communities and Local Government, *The Government's Response to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion, February 2008*, p 47.

188   Ev 66

189   Q 258

190   See para 92

policy. The limited data on migration flows across England makes it difficult for CLG and local authorities to anticipate and respond to the consequences of migration. In early 2008, the Government began to phase in a new points-based system for managing migration, with five tiers of entry level depending on skills. The number of migrants, the type of work that they are engaged in, and where they move to will all undoubtedly affect local communities. The Minister for Borders and Immigration, Mr Liam Byrne MP, told us that "community cohesion is one of the issues that we take into account as we launch the new points system".[191] The Government's impact assessments indicate that cohesion has been considered. However, no detailed assessment has been made, as data are sparse.[192] **The effect of migration on community cohesion should be central to decisions on migration policy. We recommend that the Government closely monitor the effects of the new points-based system on community cohesion and publish regular evaluations of its findings, starting next year.**

87. We have commented in previous reports on CLG's dependency on others to deliver.[193] Given this dependency and the sheer number of Government departments and bodies involved in cohesion and migration, it is of vital importance that the Government ensure that there is a joined-up approach. The Secretary of State told us that the need for a corporate approach was one the reasons for establishing the Migration Directorate.[194] The tensions that exist between different departmental priorities indicate that CLG faces a challenge in influencing other departments to prioritise community cohesion. CLG's recent publication of a migration plan, *Managing the Impacts of Migration: A Cross-Government Approach*, indicates that the department recognises the need for it to take a lead in ensuring a joined-up approach across Government to migration. **We welcome the Government's recent publication *Managing the Impacts of Migration: A Cross-Government Approach*. Success in achieving a joined-up approach on community cohesion and migration depends on the leadership and influence of CLG. The publication of the migration plan is a promising development: the Government now needs to build on that plan to ensure that all its departments, and their respective policies, take account of and prioritise community cohesion in their day-to-day work.**

Best practice

88. Evidence from the Audit Commission, and others, suggests that there is a need for best practice on the integration of migrants to be disseminated (para 69). National expertise can, in the words of Sarah Spencer, reduce the potential for the "re-invention of the wheel".[195] Over the past year, there has not been a shortage of Government guidance on the subject. CLG's published documents include *Community cohesion contingency planning and tension monitoring,[196]Cohesion guidance for funders,[197]* and *Translation of*

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191 Q 229

192 Home Office, UK Border Agency, *Points-based system—key documents*, www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk.

193 Communities and Local Government Committee, Second Report of Session 2007–08, *Departmental Annual Report 2007*, HC 170, para 1.

194 Q 266

195 Q 192

196 Communities and Local Government, *Guidance for local authorities on community cohesion contingency planning and tension monitoring*, May 2008.

publication,[198] and the Government is expected to publish a 'Cohesion Delivery Framework' on best practice in Summer 2008. While the increased availability of information on community cohesion and integration is undoubtedly welcome, we are not aware of any evidence showing that it has, as yet, led to enhanced community cohesion.

89. The term best practice can sometimes be misused. There can be a tendency to refer to any local initiative that is innovative as 'best practice', without any proper evaluation. The CIC commented on the "plethora of local initiatives" that have developed in recent years.[199] There are many examples of projects and activities labelled as good practice which may have clear outputs, such as the number of people who participated in an event, but are less clear on outcomes.[200] The Community Development Foundation (CDF) administers grant funding, including work to promote community cohesion, on behalf of Government. CDF told us that community development work tends to be long term and leads to "subjective outcomes" which are difficult to measure.[201] Its evaluation process primarily relies on the funded groups completing questionnaires stating how they feel the projects went, rather than an evaluation of the experiences of the beneficiaries. This type of evaluation also neglects the effect of projects on overall local community cohesion. CDF acknowledged that "further evaluations and perhaps a longitudinal study should be undertaken" to determine the impact of community development work on community cohesion.[202]

90. **The long-term nature of work to promote community cohesion and the integration of migrants should not be a barrier to, or an excuse for lack of, effective evaluation. The spread of best practice on community cohesion and integration is meaningless without a shared understanding of the actual effectiveness of different initiatives. We recommend that the Government develop and disseminate guidance on the evaluation of community cohesion and migration initiatives.**

English language provision

91. There is a widespread consensus that the ability to communicate in English is vital for the integration of migrants—a view shared by the Government.[203] The CIC concluded that a shared language is fundamental both for settled and for new communities.[204] Communicating in English is important to ensure access to work and participation in community life.[205] The settled residents we spoke to on our visits expressed concern about the limited English of migrants in their neighbourhoods. Improving levels of spoken English among migrants can help to alleviate public concerns, as well as improving the ability of migrants to integrate.

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197 Communities and Local Government, *Cohesion Guidance for Funders: Consultation*, February 2008.

198 Communities and Local Government, *Guidance for local authorities on the translation of publications*, December 2007.

199 *Our Shared Future*, para 5.20.

200 Ev 67, 97

201 Q 213

202 Ev 97

203 Ev 63, Q 74, Q 258, *Our Shared Future*, para 5.35.

204 *Our Shared Future*, para 5.35.

205 Q 74

92. The Government provides funding for ESOL tuition. In August 2007, funding changes meant that adults taking English language classes no longer automatically qualified for a rebate on tuition fees, reducing the amount of free provision available.[206] The Minister for Lifelong Learning, Bill Rammell MP, explained why the changes were needed: "the current position is simply unsustainable. A massive increase in demand for free ESOL tuition is having an adverse impact on the overall skills budget".[207] The increase in demand for ESOL classes is demonstrated by the Government's increased expenditure on provision: between 2001 and 2004 ESOL spending tripled, and is now just under £300 million.[208]

93. The funding changes have been heavily criticised for reducing access. The Refugee Council expressed concern about the effect on asylum seekers, arguing that the funding cuts ran counter to the Government's objective to secure the integration of migrants,[209] and argued that all asylum seekers should be eligible for funding from the date of their claim, rather than having to wait six months or until being granted refugee status.[210] The University College Union (UCU), which represents ESOL teachers, argued that "women from low income families, especially those from African and Asian settled communities are hit hardest by the new fee regime".[211]

94. Notwithstanding these objections, the overall effect of the funding changes on different groups is not clear. Patrick Wintour, Acting Chair of the ABNI, explained that providers tend not to identify learners by their immigration status,[212] so data are available on the overall number of learners, but not the type. Sally Hunt, General Secretary of UCU, told us that there had been a decline in the number of people learning English at the lower qualification levels, which she claimed indicated that the most vulnerable learners had been most affected by the funding changes. However, she acknowledged that "the difficulty is, without having the data available in a way we can really break down, we think it is not possible for huge judgements to be made".[213]

95. Our evidence indicates that large numbers of migrants who want to learn English are unable to because of restrictions on, or lack of, free provision. ABNI told us that in many areas there are long waiting lists for access to classes.[214] In Peterborough, we were also told that there were long waiting lists.

96. In Burnley, we heard that many Asian women who came to the UK as spouses had limited English. Sally Hunt noted that English language classes were inaccessible to such women, as spouses do not qualify for free ESOL provision for a year.[215] The Government

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206 *Provision of English language courses for speakers of other languages* (ESOL), Standard Note SN/SP/4271, House of Commons Library, February 2008.

207 "False claims make me snap, crackle and pop", The Guardian, 16 January 2007 at www.education.guardian.co.uk.

208 Ev 81

209 *Provision of English language courses for speakers of other languages* (ESOL), Standard Note SN/SP/4271, House of Commons Library, February 2008.

210 Ev 143

211 Ev 155

212 Q 159

213 Q 161

214 Ev 62, 121.

215 Q 172

has no plans to change this requirement. It is currently consulting on whether people coming to the UK on spouse visas need to acquire some English before they can come.[216]

97. Following criticisms about the effect of the ESOL funding changes on integration and cohesion, the Government issued a consultation, *Focusing ESOL on Community Cohesion*, on the refocusing of funding priorities. The policy objective is to target English language provision at those who intend to stay in the UK long term and to areas in need, particularly areas of low community cohesion.[217]

98. We **recognise that there are finite resources for free English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision. Nevertheless, we are concerned about the effect of the Government's restrictions on access to free ESOL provision on community cohesion. We are also concerned about the absence of national data on the type of learners who access tuition and levels of unmet demand. Given the Government's stated priority to encourage the speaking of English to promote integration, the absence of data is a major flaw. We recommend that the Government take immediate action to collate these national data, which will enable an assessment to be made of the effectiveness of ESOL provision in promoting integration. We further recommend that, in light of these data, the Government review ESOL provision. This review should include considering the case for removing the requirement for spouses to be resident in the UK for 12 months before they are eligible for free ESOL provision.**

Paying for ESOL

99. The Government has proposed that employers of migrants should do more to pay towards the cost of English language provision, arguing that "those who benefit economically from migration should also bear some of the costs".[218] The Government's latest consultation document states that it "will seek to do more to secure contributions from employers, particularly those who recruit directly from overseas".[219] The Government has not specified how it will ensure that employers pay towards English language provision. In response to a question on whether compulsion was necessary, the Secretary of State informed us that DIUS was "in dialogue with employers", saying "I do not think that they have ruled out the possibility of legislation if absolutely necessary".[220]

100. All our witnesses agreed with the principle of employers paying towards the teaching of English for their workers. The ABNI argued that some of the pressure on English language classes could be alleviated by employers taking responsibility for provision.[221]

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216 Q 258

217 Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS), *Focusing ESOL on Community Cohesion*, DIUS Consultation, January 2008.

218 Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS), *Focusing ESOL on Community Cohesion*, DIUS Consultation, January 2008, Introduction.

219 Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS), *Focusing ESOL on Community Cohesion*, DIUS Consultation, January 2008, Introduction.

220 Q 266

221 Ev 63

Professor Cantle argued that there should be a "strong onus" on employers to pay, noting in particular that it is essential that workers understand health and safety instructions.[222]

101. However, there are different views on whether employers should be forced to pay, or simply encouraged. Sally Hunt argued that there is a "very strong case for compulsion" because relying on voluntary contributions from employers does not work. She suggested that in many circumstances it is not in the individual interests of businesses to encourage their workers to learn English, as English enables workers to understand their employment rights.[223] UCU pointed out that "around two thirds of employers provide no workplace training whatsoever".[224] The TUC argued that "the reality is that in the absence of adequate levers" employers are unlikely to pay. It suggests that additional fees could be raised from agencies registered under the Gangmasters Licensing Authority.[225] Nevertheless, even if statutory requirements on employers are introduced, Patrick Wintour told us that "employers are extremely adept at being able to find their way round all sorts of statutory requirements" on training.[226]

102. On the other hand, evidence from the CBI indicates that it is not necessary for employers to be compelled to pay as many already voluntarily provide language training. For example, First Bus—a bus company that recruits employees from mainland Europe—provides free English language training for three months to applicants prior to their employment. Once in the UK, employees are encouraged to continue learning English.[227] The CBI told us that 28 per cent of employers provide English language training to their employees or signpost them to relevant courses.[228]

103. **We are not convinced that compulsory measures to make employers pay towards the cost of English language provision are needed. We do, however, consider that the Government is right to encourage employers to pay more. We recommend that the Government examine the case for introducing financial incentives, including through the taxation system, to encourage employers to pay more towards the provision of English language tuition for their employees.**

104. Even if employers pay increased contributions towards English language provision for their employees, this is not a complete solution to the problem. There are other barriers to learning English than cost, such as the amount of time required and the accessibility of classes. It may be difficult for migrants to learn English if they are working long hours or shift work.[229] Further, not all migrants are in employment. Witnesses have pointed out, for example, that there are many Asian women who come to the UK as spouses who tend to have low levels of English and employment.[230] The Equalities Review found that only one

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222 Q 70

223 Q 171

224 Ev 156

225 CCM 38

226 Q 167

227 CCM 34, para 14.

228 CCM 34, para 12.

229 Q 184

230 Annex

in ten Pakistani women are in employment in the UK, and it identified lack of English as a significant barrier to employment.[231] **Speaking English is vital for participation in community life, not just vital in the workplace. It is important that the Government's current emphasis on employers paying for ESOL does not detract from the need to ensure that English classes are available to all those in greatest need, including in particular Asian women in settled communities.**

Integrating short-term economic migrants

105. Just under half of new migrants into the UK intend to stay only between one and two years—44 per cent of new migrants in 2005.[232] The changing nature of migration, with the arrival of large numbers of short-term economic migrants, presents challenges for integration and community cohesion, although the rate of immigration from EU countries may be slowing.[233] If migrants do not intend to stay in the local area there is less incentive for them to get involved in the community, understand local norms, and to learn English. Local authorities need to respond in different ways to integrate short-term migrants. For instance, information provided to migrants about the local area may need to be continually repeated and reinforced because of the high population turnover.[234]

106. Questions remain about how the Government is going to ensure that the limited English of short-term migrants is improved. The Government's approach is to place the onus on employers to pay for English language classes. Trevor Phillips supports this, arguing that for short-term migrants "to be perfectly honest, they can help themselves or their employers ought to help them".[235] The LGA is concerned about the effect on community cohesion of the Government's emphasis on long-term migrants.[236] Under the new points-based system for international migrants, one of the criteria for obtaining an employment visa is the ability to speak English. EU migrants are treated differently from international migrants; there are no requirements on them to learn English to work in the UK. Professor Cantle argued that short-term migrants should have the same access to free ESOL as long-term migrants, as they still need English to participate effectively in the workplace and as a citizen.[237]

107. There may be little incentive for employers to pay for English language provision for short-term migrants if staff are only employed for short periods of time. Equally, there may be little incentive for individual short-term migrants to invest in learning English if it is not a requirement for work and they do not intend to stay in the UK long term. The result of this situation may be an unhappy stalemate—with Government, employers and individuals all unwilling to pay for learning English. **The Government's emphasis on targeting free ESOL provision at long-term migrants is right. However, there is still a need for short-**

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231   The Equalities Review, *Fairness and Freedom: The final report of the Equalities Review*, February 2007, p 70.

232   ONS, International Migration, Series MN no.32, 2007, para 2.1.

233   IPPR, *Floodgates or turnstiles? Post-EU enlargement migration flows to (and from) the UK*, 30 April 2008.

234   The Audit Commission, *Crossing Borders, Responding to the local challenges of migrant workers*, January 2007, para 74.

235   Q 11

236   Ev 131

237   Q 76

term migrants to integrate for community cohesion, and learning English is an important means to integration. Although it may not be the primary responsibility of the state to pay for short-term migrants to learn English, it is the role of Government to encourage short-term migrants to learn English, for the sake of settled communities that are experiencing this type of migration, as well as for the sake of the migrants themselves.

108. The Government does not have any specific policy or guidance on what action is needed to integrate short-term economic migrants. There is also no Government guidance on what, if anything, local communities have the right to expect from short-term migrants in return for living in the UK, particularly as there is freedom of movement within the EU. The Government's policy in relation to the rights and responsibilities of migrants is focused on what is required to become a British citizen. However, not all overseas nationals who live in the UK wish to become citizens, including many short-term economic migrants from Eastern Europe. The Government's lack of guidance on how to manage the integration of short-term migrants and what is expected from them makes it more difficult for local areas to respond to migration. **We recommend that the Government's guidance to local authorities on migration and cohesion take into account that many overseas migrants are not here to stay long term, which presents increasing challenges for achieving integration.**

6 Government funding

109. There are two areas of Government funding for migration and community cohesion: first, funding provided specifically for work to promote community cohesion and the integration of migrants; and secondly, funding provided for mainstream public services, which should fund any increased pressures on local public services from migration.

110. The first area of funding comprises £50 million investment, over three years, announced by the Secretary of State in October 2007. The overwhelming majority of this money, £38.5 million, is allocated to local authorities through the new Area Based Grant— a non-ring-fenced general grant.[238] This funding is allocated to local authorities who have the lowest levels of cohesion. Westminster City Council pointed out that this funding is insufficient to make a significant difference: "the maximum allocation per authority in year 1 is £120,000 although some eligible councils will receive only £26,000—insufficient to fund even one full time equivalent post".[239] Out of the rest of this funding, a further £4.5 million funds activities for young people, £3 million has gone towards developing local capacity building, and the remainder relates to future decisions about the Connecting Communities Plus grant programme.[240] The additional funding allocated by the Government may be welcome; however, the £50 million investment is relatively small, and marginal to the funding debate, in comparison to the scale and need for funding in the second area—pressures on local public services.

Funding local public service pressures

111. Migration may benefit the country as a whole economically; but this money is not automatically passed down to public services in the local areas most affected. Migration places two types of pressures on local services: pressures arising from the specific costs associated with the type of people moving into the area—migrants—and costs arising from the general increase in the population. Inward migration may lead to additional service pressures owing to the specific needs of migrants, for instance the need for translation or English language tuition. But the main cause of financial pressure is the increased number of people, which inevitably leads to increased pressures on, and costs to, public services. In the UK, funding for local public services comes primarily from central government, and funding allocations are based upon estimates of population size. The Statistics Commission, the independent body previously responsible for advising the Government on official statistics, pointed out that £100 billion a year is allocated on the basis of population statistics.[241] This funding affects local health, police and local government

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238 Communities and Local Government, *The Government's Response to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion*, February 2008, p 8.

239 Ev 159

240 Communities and Local Government, *The Government's Response to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion*, February 2008, p 13.

241 The Statistics Commission, *Statistics of International and Internal Migration, letter to the Minister of State at the Home Office and others*, 8 May 2006.

services. Approximately 76 per cent of local government expenditure is financed from central government grant.[242]

112. Adequate funding for local public services to cope with migration is not only important for service delivery; it is vital for community cohesion. The LGA, and others, have expressed concerns that community cohesion can be negatively affected by the increased competition for resources created as a consequence of inadequate funding for migration.[243] The CIC found that the public were increasingly concerned about the fair allocation of public resources.[244] In areas where there is increasing competition for resources, such as access to social and affordable housing, and the Government does not provide adequate funding, it is easy to see how tensions can arise. **It is of vital importance for effective service delivery and community cohesion that funding for local services adequately take into account the number of migrants.**

Data flaws

113. The inadequacy of UK population statistics is widely recognised. The main component of population growth in the UK is migration, explaining the central importance of accurate migration figures. The Treasury Committee, in its Report *Counting the Population*, concluded that the current local population estimates (mid-year population estimates) are not fit for purpose as they fail properly to account for internal migration.[245] The Secretary of State said "I entirely acknowledge that, because of the pace of change that has taken place, our data is not as up to date as it could be, or as comprehensive as it could be".[246] There are two main areas of concern about official population statistics: first, that the figures rapidly become out of date owing to the reliance on the census, conducted every 10 years; and secondly, that official statistics do not capture population churn within local areas. Local authorities expressed concern to us about the accuracy of statistics. Mr Blake-Herbert, Director of Finance, Slough Borough Council, told us that "according to the ONS, there are less children living in Slough than the number of children being paid child benefit".[247] Assuming that no mass benefit fraud is taking place, this example alone indicates that there are significant flaws in current official statistics.

114. The second area of concern is that official statistics do not capture 'population churn', which is caused by the movement of people within the UK and from overseas. Mr Blake-Herbert remarked "it does not matter whether someone comes from Putney or from Poland" as it is the overall number of migrants that needs to be captured in estimates of local population.[248] Mr Allen, from the LGA, argued that local populations are often much higher than official statistics suggest because of this 'churn'.[249] Local populations may be much higher than official estimates because the figures do not include short-term overseas

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242 House of Commons, Library Standard Note, January 2007, p 4.

243 Ev 128, 148.

244 *Our Shared Future*, para 2.46.

245 Treasury Committee, Eleventh Report of Session 2007–08, *Counting the Population*, HC 183, p 3.

246 Q 230

247 Q 59

248 Q 37

249 Q 41

migrants who intend to stay for less than 12 months, which will include many of the new arrivals from the European Accession states. The Treasury Committee concluded that the absence of short-term migrants in population estimates did not fully meet the needs of local authorities.[250]

115. The Office of National Statistics (ONS) is working to improve migration statistics, following a taskforce report in 2006.[251] Planned improvements include a rolling household survey which includes questions on migration, the inclusion of migration related questions in the Labour Force Survey, and the e-Borders project (which includes passport scanning).[252] The House of Lords Select Committee on Economic Affairs concluded that "it is too early to assess the effectiveness of the Government's measures to improve migration statistics, some of which will take many years to implement".[253]

116. The LGA has welcomed the ONS's planned improvements to population statistics but has pointed out that it is estimated to take seven years for the improvements to have an impact. It advocates the use of local administrative data to check and adjust ONS estimates of local population.[254] The Secretary of State said that the LGA had suggested looking at National Insurance Numbers for worker registrations, GP registration numbers, benefit data and even the footfall in supermarkets.[255] The Treasury Committee has recommended that the Statistics Authority work with local authorities to identify alternative administrative data sources that can be used.[256] **We recommend that Government urgently prioritise work to incorporate the use of alternative administrative data into local population estimates.**

The need for additional funding

117. Even if population and migration statistics are dramatically improved, there is still a need for additional funding for local government services that are under pressure from migration. Central government funding to local government is primarily allocated through a three-year funding settlement. Funding allocations are inevitably based on out of date population statistics: the settlement will not take into account the rapid population change experienced in some local areas during these three years. Two main proposals have been made to provide additional funding to local public services experiencing rapid migration. First, it is suggested that a contingency fund be established for local government. Secondly, the Government has announced that it plans to introduce a transitional fund for local public services from April 2009.[257] Both suggestions stem from an acceptance that there is a

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250 Treasury Committee, Eleventh Report of Session 2007–08, *Counting the Population*, HC 183, para 83.

251 ONS, *Report of the Inter-departmental Task Force on Migration Statistics*, 15 December 2006.

252 Q 230

253 House of Lords, *The Economic Impact of Immigration*, First Report of the Select Committee on Economic Affairs, Session 2007–08, HL Paper 82, para 40.

254 Ev 130

255 Q 230

256 Treasury Committee, Eleventh Report of Session 2007–08, *Counting the Population*, HC 183, para 85.

257 Communities and Local Government, *Managing the Impacts of Migration: A Cross-Government Approach*, June 2008, p 36.

need for Government to respond to the immediate pressures placed on local communities who experience rapid change.

118. The LGA has called for a contingency fund of £250 million for local authorities where there is evidence of particular pressures on services from migration.[258] This figure represents one per cent of the overall funding allocation to local government and reflects an approximate one per cent underestimate of actual population.[259] Funding allocations to local government are now made through a three year settlement. The main argument in favour of a contingency fund is that it provides a funding mechanism to respond to rapid population change in between decisions on the three-year settlements.[260]

119. The Secretary of State explained that the Government is against the proposal for a contingency fund on three main grounds. First, the "stability and predictability of having a three year settlement" is important for local government and "if you were to create a contingency fund that money has to come from somewhere", which could result in less money in the settlement.[261] Secondly, an additional fund to local government is unnecessary as current funding allowed for a "whole range of contingencies". And thirdly, it is not realistic, as "even the LGA themselves were prepared to admit that they do not have the specific evidence, data and ability" to detail how the fund should operate.[262]

120. In response to the Government's first argument, we agree that the introduction of three-year settlements to local government provides necessary stability, but we do not agree that a contingency fund would necessarily undermine this; the fund would not undermine stability if it were established as an additional funding pot, as the LGA suggests. Creating a new additional fund is not a new concept. There are a number of targeted grants to local government, such as the current community cohesion fund, and the basic need safety-value schools funding,[263] which provide funding in addition to funding allocated through the formula grant.

121. In response to the Government's second argument, we recognise that there are some limited contingences built into the local government settlement, but as the Secretary of State herself acknowledged, these contingencies cover everything, from costs arising from waste pressures to those arising from the increased demand for social care for the elderly. The three-year funding settlement does not, and cannot, adequately take into account changes in population between settlement periods.

122. The final argument against a migration contingency fund is that it would be difficult to set criteria for funding allocations. This is a difficulty that the Government manages successfully to overcome in the establishment of all its numerous existing funding schemes. We agree that it is important for the funding criteria to be fair and transparent and are

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258 Ev 131. See also Q 151.

259 Ev 131

260 Q 54

261 Q 243

262 Q 243

263 This fund delivers additional capital funding where an authority is facing exceptional circumstances because of the rate of growth of pupil numbers, or significant internal movement of population and demographic changes. www.teachernet.gov.uk.

confident that this can be achieved through close working with the local government sector.

123. The Government and the LGA agree that the long-term solution is to improve the data that are used as the basis for resource allocations.[264] The dispute is on whether an additional fund is needed in the short term. Improvements in official statistics will take time. There is clear evidence showing that some local authorities have experienced unexpected service pressures from migration, which are currently left under-funded. We recognise that the Government has taken some measures to fund changing need. The introduction of an exceptional circumstances grant will provide extra money to schools that experience increases in pupil numbers between funding settlements.[265] However, the IPPR argued that this funding is limited and that most local authorities will be unable to benefit owing to the restrictive criteria on access.[266] Furthermore, this funding does not compensate schools for the provision of additional specialist support for migrants or compensate local authorities for the full range of service pressures caused by migration.

124. Instead of setting up a contingency fund, the Government intends to establish a transitional fund for local public services, as outlined in the green paper on the immigration system, *The path to citizenship*.[267] The Government gives the following description of the fund:

> Money for the fund will be raised through increases to certain fees for immigration applications, with migrants who tend to consume more in public services—such as children and elderly relatives—paying more than others. We will work closely across Government to develop a clear and transparent methodology for the appropriate surcharge. We would aim to raise tens of millions of pounds, with the fund operating from April 2009.[268]

125. The Government's decision to establish a transitional fund may provide a mechanism for generating a small amount of much needed additional funding for local public services. However, the fund has limitations. First, the money that this fund will generate is very limited; press reports suggest that the fund would raise only £15 million.[269] If this figure is correct, it is a drop in the ocean, in comparison to the needs of local government— equating to only 0.001 per cent of total local government expenditure in 2005–06,[270] and the fund is suggested to cover all local public services, including the police and the NHS, not just local government.[271] Secondly, though the principle of asking migrants to pay towards local services is sound, the fund will not be paid into by all migrants. Only

264 Q 243, and Q 55

265 Ev 83

266 Ev 121

267 The Home Office, Border and Immigration Agency, *The path to citizenship: Next Steps in Reforming the Immigration System*, February 2008.

268 The Home Office, Border and Immigration Agency, *The path to citizenship: Next Steps in Reforming the Immigration System*, February 2008, para 207.

269 "British Citizenship Test Plans", BBC News Online, 20 February 2008, www.news.bbc.co.uk.

270 Communities and Local Government, *Local Government Finance Key Facts: England*, November 2007, p 5, www.local.communities.gov.uk/finance/stats.

271 "Police to get extra funding to help with immigration costs", Guardian online, 17 April 2008, www.guardian.co.uk/politics.

international migrants need visas, so EU citizens nor anyone moving within the UK will pay. This raises questions about the equity of the scheme—why should international migrants alone pay extra to fund local services under pressure from all migrants?

126. **We are not convinced that the Government's recently announced transitional fund will provide sufficient income to fund local public services under pressure from migration. We recommend that the Government immediately establish a contingency fund capable of responding effectively to the additional pressures which may be put on local government services from migration. The Government should work closely with the local government sector to develop appropriate funding criteria.**

7 Conclusion

127. Migration is having significant effects on some local communities across the country. The sheer pace of change experienced in some areas has escalated public concerns about migration to the point where migration has become the single greatest public concern in Britain, overtaking concerns on crime and terrorism.[272] On our visits, some settled residents told us of their belief that there were simply too many migrants in their area, and expressed their views on various negative effects of migration. Community cohesion cannot be improved without addressing and alleviating public concerns about migration. These concerns are not merely based on prejudice, but can often be grounded in genuine anxieties about the visible and practical effects of migration.

128. Migration can have positive benefits for local communities. Much of the health service is dependent upon migrant labour. The Government pointed out that migrants made up 17.8 per cent of the health care workforce. Many care homes are also dependent on migrant labour; migrants made up 13.3 per cent of the social care workforce in 2005–06.[273] Schools can benefit from the arrival of migrant children who help to raise the quality and educational attainment levels of the whole school.[274] The LGA noted that some local authorities have specifically encouraged migration to support the growth of their local economy.[275] The Minister of State for Borders and Immigration, Mr Liam Byrne MP, commented, "Birmingham wants to grow its population by about 100,000—and we do not think that all of that population is going to come from the resident population".[276] England is experiencing a rapid growth in the proportion of elderly people in comparison to those of working age, and the arrival of people of working age can help rebalance the overall population.

129. Recent migration has placed particular pressures on local public services in areas that have experienced rapid inward migration, including schools; translation services; social care; English language teaching; policing and the NHS. Currently these services are left under-funded owing to the Government's reliance on allocating money based on flawed population data. The consequence of this is not only vital services left without adequate funding, but detrimental effects on community cohesion as competition increases for limited public resources. The continued under-funding of migration pressures at the local level increases the risk of community tensions escalating, particularly given that the majority of people in the UK already believe that some groups, such as immigrants, get unfair priority access to public services.[277]

130. The Government needs to take immediate action to address public concerns about migration, and to defuse tensions before they lead to disturbances. We have set out a

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272 Ev 78

273 Ev 84

274 House of Lords, *The Economic Impact of Immigration*, First Report of the Select Committee on Economic Affairs, Session 2007–08, HL Paper 82, para 144

275 Ev 131

276 Q 236

277 Ipsos MORI, *Rivers of Blood Survey*, April 2008, www.ipsos-mori.com

number of steps that the Government needs to take. It must introduce measures to ensure that migrants can access English language tuition in order to integrate into local communities, including ensuring that employers pay towards English language classes for their employees. It should ensure that its actions are co-ordinated across departments and that best practice on integration and cohesion is communicated to local organisations. Most importantly, the Government needs to ensure that local organisations, particularly local authorities, are adequately resourced to cope with local pressures on public services from migration and take action to integrate migrants. Only if it does so can we ensure that England receives the full benefit from past, current and future migration.

Conclusions and recommendations

Effect of migration on community cohesion

1. Public concerns about the effects of migration cannot simply be dismissed as racist or xenophobic. Tensions often arise on real practical issues, such as the proliferation of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). (Paragraph 16)

2. We welcome the Government's commitment to ensuring that the review of the private rented sector examines the effect of migration on housing. We recommend that the review include a detailed assessment of the effects of migration on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and the problems which result both for existing communities and for the individuals who live in them. We also welcome the Government's commitment to supporting local authorities in the use of their discretionary licensing powers. However, further action is needed. We reiterate the recommendation made in our Report *The Supply of Rented Housing*, where we argued that the Government should make it easier for local authorities to regulate HMOs, and in particular that the process of applying for extended licensing should be easier. In areas where migrants tend to live in HMOs, public concern about migration can be reduced if the problems of HMOs are tackled. (Paragraph 21)

3. The rapid pace of change experienced by many communities has led to increased local public concern about migration and can negatively affect community cohesion. (Paragraph 24)

4. There is no straightforward relationship between the number of migrants in an area and levels of cohesion. Some areas experience high inward migration yet have a good level of cohesion in comparison to the national average. Nevertheless, cohesion can be negatively affected by migration, particularly in areas where there is poverty and/or little previous experience of diversity. (Paragraph 28)

Pressures on local public services

5. We welcome the EHRC and LGA commissioned study into the allocation of social housing, and welcome its interim report findings showing that there is no evidence to suggest that migrants receive unfair priority access to housing. (Paragraph 35)

6. Tensions between groups caused by issues of access to housing are undoubtedly exacerbated by the acute shortage of social and affordable housing in England. (Paragraph 36)

7. In order to respond to migration effectively, it is critical that local authorities do all they can to improve their local intelligence on current and future migration flows and plan ahead. (Paragraph 42)

8. Local authorities need to have transparent decision-making, including in relation to decisions on the allocation of social housing. Councils also must communicate effectively with their local communities to prevent myths about migrants arising and spreading. (Paragraph 46)

9.   Local authorities need to take the lead in countering local myths on migrants. We see no necessity for a national rapid rebuttal unit, but recommend that central Government share best practice on myth-busting and communication strategies. (Paragraph 48)

10.   Local authorities need the freedom to develop local responses to migration; a one-size-fits-all solution is not appropriate. The Government should encourage local authorities to learn from each other, particularly where there are examples of innovative solutions to migration, such as establishing educational assessment centres and local welcome centres for new arrivals. (Paragraph 54)

11.   We recommend that the Government monitor the extend to which schools are more ethnically segregated than the communities they serve. (Paragraph 58)

12.   Integration should not be forced; rather, opportunities to promote sustained and meaningful interaction between people from different backgrounds should be encouraged, for example through encouraging participation in community groups around issues of common concern. (Paragraph 59)

13.   To promote cohesion effectively, all activity that promotes contact between people of different backgrounds should reach out as widely as possible to people who are not normally involved in community initiatives. (Paragraph 61)

14.   Community groups, such as residents' associations, have an important role in promoting community cohesion and participation in community life. Local authorities should encourage community groups to involve migrants in their organisations. (Paragraph 63)

15.   We recommend that the Government ensure that its work on community empowerment, and the development of a Community Empowerment Bill, include measures to encourage the participation of migrants in civic life. (Paragraph 64)

16.   Funders should expect community groups to look for opportunities to maximise interaction between people of different backgrounds. Where funding is granted to single identity groups, the criteria against which funding is awarded need to be clearly publicised to all communities in the local area. (Paragraph 68)

17.   We welcome the inclusion of community cohesion within the Comprehensive Area Assessment. This will be useful in encouraging local authorities actively to promote community cohesion and respond to migration, particularly in areas where there are tensions. (Paragraph 70)

Responding to migration nationally

18.   We agree with the Government's conclusion [on the establishment of a new national body with responsibility for the integration of migrants]. We did not hear sufficient evidence to convince us that a new body is necessary at this time, and we find persuasive the Government's analysis that establishing a new body could risk duplicating the work of existing bodies and prove costly. Instead, we recommend that all bodies with responsibility for the integration of migrants take further

concerted steps to ensure that they are working together to follow a common strategic approach to the task. We also recommend that the Government review the case for further rationalisation of existing structures on migration and cohesion when it reports in early 2009 on its progress in implementing the actions set out in its report *Managing the Impacts of Migration: A Cross-Government Approach*. (Paragraph 76)

19. If the Government decides to introduce a single national 'Migration Integration Strategy,' it must not take a one-size-fits-all approach. Central Government should not dictate to local authorities what practice should be adopted locally. Rather, the role of central government should be to set a national policy framework for action on integration and community cohesion, and provide guidance and support to others, particularly local government. (Paragraph 78)

20. We welcome the Government's increased activity on community cohesion and migration. As much of this activity is new, we recommend that the Government review the overall effectiveness of its activities in response to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion in 2009. (Paragraph 80)

21. We welcome the EHRC's intention to convene regular forums for employers and employees on integration and cohesion. In addition, we call on the EHRC to encourage and support employers in taking action to integrate their migrant employees into local communities. (Paragraph 83)

22. The effect of migration on community cohesion should be central to decisions on migration policy. We recommend that the Government closely monitor the effects of the new points-based system on community cohesion and publish regular evaluations of its findings, starting next year. (Paragraph 86)

23. We welcome the Government's recent publication *Managing the Impacts of Migration: A Cross-Government Approach*. Success in achieving a joined-up approach on community cohesion and migration depends on the leadership and influence of CLG. The publication of the migration plan is a promising development: the Government now needs to build on that plan to ensure that all its departments, and their respective policies, take account of and prioritise community cohesion in their day-to-day work. (Paragraph 87)

24. The long-term nature of work to promote community cohesion and the integration of migrants should not be a barrier to, or an excuse for lack of, effective evaluation. The spread of best practice on community cohesion and integration is meaningless without a shared understanding of the actual effectiveness of different initiatives. We recommend that the Government develop and disseminate guidance on the evaluation of community cohesion and migration initiatives. (Paragraph 90)

25. We recognise that there are finite resources for free English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision. Nevertheless, we are concerned about the effect of the Government's restrictions on access to free ESOL provision on community cohesion. We are also concerned about the absence of national data on the type of learners who access tuition and levels of unmet demand. Given the Government's stated priority to encourage the speaking of English to promote integration, the absence of data is a

major flaw. We recommend that the Government take immediate action to collate these national data, which will enable an assessment to be made of the effectiveness of ESOL provision in promoting integration. We further recommend that, in light of these data, the Government review ESOL provision. This review should include considering the case for removing the requirement for spouses to be resident in the UK for 12 months before they are eligible for free ESOL provision. (Paragraph 98)

26.   We are not convinced that compulsory measures to make employers pay towards the cost of English language provision are needed. We do, however, consider that the Government is right to encourage employers to pay more. We recommend that the Government examine the case for introducing financial incentives, including through the taxation system, to encourage employers to pay more towards the provision of English language tuition for their employees. (Paragraph 103)

27.   Speaking English is vital for participation in community life, not just vital in the workplace. It is important that the Government's current emphasis on employers paying for ESOL does not detract from the need to ensure that English classes are available to all those in greatest need, including in particular Asian women in settled communities. (Paragraph 104)

28.   The Government's emphasis on targeting free ESOL provision at long-term migrants is right. However, there is still a need for short-term migrants to integrate for community cohesion, and learning English is an important means to integration. Although it may not be the primary responsibility of the state to pay for short-term migrants to learn English, it is the role of Government to encourage short-term migrants to learn English, for the sake of settled communities that are experiencing this type of migration, as well as for the sake of the migrants themselves. (Paragraph 107)

29.   We recommend that the Government's guidance to local authorities on migration and cohesion take into account that many overseas migrants are not here to stay long term, which presents increasing challenges for achieving integration. (Paragraph 108)

Government funding

30.   It is of vital importance for effective service delivery and community cohesion that funding for local services adequately take into account the number of migrants. (Paragraph 112)

31.   We recommend that Government urgently prioritise work to incorporate the use of alternative administrative data into local population estimates. (Paragraph 116)

32.   We are not convinced that the Government's recently announced transitional fund will provide sufficient income to fund local public services under pressure from migration. We recommend that the Government immediately establish a contingency fund capable of responding effectively to the additional pressures which may be put on local government services from migration. The Government should work closely with the local government sector to develop appropriate funding criteria. (Paragraph 126)

Annex: Notes from the Committee's visits

Visit to Peterborough: 29 January 2008

Members who attended the visit:

Jim Dobbin   Dr Phyllis Starkey

Anne Main   Emily Thornberry

Dr John Pugh

1. Visit to New Link

The Committee visited the New Link Centre in Peterborough which aims to create a new model for managing new arrivals in the UK. New Link delivers a range of services including information and advice, and employment support to new arrivals. The Centre works with the settled and migrant communities to promote cohesion. The New Link centre was established through Government funding—an Invest to Save bid of £2.2 million.

The Centre Manager, Suchitra Rampal, provided an introduction to the centre. Her presentation included an overview of the role and function of the service, an explanation of the different projects underway, and an outline of the centre's work with community groups.

Suchitra described the history of the centre and inward migration to Peterborough. Peterborough became an asylum dispersal area in 2001. She explained that the issues and challenges faced by the centre today differ considerably from those faced in 2001 owing to the changing profile of the migrants that staff now work with: today the centre primarily works with economic migrants rather than asylum seekers and refugees.

Suchitra outlined the range of countries that migrants living in Peterborough came from. She also explained that the centre works with the settled existing community to promote integration. For example, the Millfield and New England Regeneration Partnership (MANERP)—the local area where New Link is based—held some of its meetings at the centre.

In response to a question on where migrants moved on to after leaving Peterborough, Suchitra explained that they had no record of this and that it was difficult to track the movements of migrants.

In response to a question on the role of the English language in the integration of migrants, Suchitra stated that there were not enough ESOL classes. She stated that there were long waiting lists for classes and that the funding changes, which have resulted in classes no longer being free, were a major block to integration.

Following this, two members of staff at the centre then spoke about their respective roles— Julie Solley, Training Awareness Officer, and Kasia Chiva, Community Development Worker. The staff explained that a training programme is run for the host community to

promote understanding about migrants, cultural awareness and 'myth busting'. The types of myths tackled include assumptions that Eastern Europeans do not have electricity or rubbish collection in their countries. Staff at the centre also see their role as listening to the concerns of local people and demonstrating that they are not ignored. Kasia described the role of the Polish Women's Association and stressed the importance of creating opportunities for people to come together to integrate, for example through community events, or volunteering in schools.

2. Meeting with representatives of migrant community groups

Participants:
Jovita Zigonyte (Lithuanian)
Liliana Fonseca (Portuguese)
Petr Torak (Roma Czech)
Dan Cissokho (Peterborough African Community Organisation, Senegal/Nigeria)
Tariq Zandi (Iraqi)
Kasia Chiva (Polish)

Meeting participants introduced themselves and explained their reasons for coming to Peterborough. Dan explained that he came to Peterborough as an asylum seeker in 2002 and that as an asylum seeker you did not have any choice about where you moved to. He stated that in the past, before New Link was established, it was more difficult to integrate, as there was no support or information to assist migrants. He stressed the isolation that asylum seekers felt.

Lenka explained that she came to Peterborough eight years ago seeking work. She felt that in the past it was easier to integrate, as there were more job opportunities.

Tariq stated that he was treated badly by the system on arrival in the UK. He arrived in London and then moved to Liverpool, which was a designated dispersal area. He too stressed the isolation felt by asylum seekers upon arrival.

Liliana said that she first arrived in Peterborough in 1998 when it was much easier to find work, as there was less competition.

Petr argued that the tensions between migrants and the host community related to valid concerns about practical issues and not simply about race; concerns over litter and people not respecting the law, for example.

In response to questions about why economic migrants chose to come to live in Peterborough, participants explained that the area had many low-skilled jobs that do not require a high level of English, for example food packing and agricultural labour, and that the living costs were lower than in London. Whether migrants planned—or hoped—to return to their home countries differed and depended on the economic and political situation in the home country.

Participants stressed the importance of opportunities to meet people from other backgrounds, such as through community events, and the importance of speaking English. A particular concern was the ability of migrants' children to integrate and to progress at

school: it was felt that more help needed to be given to such children, particularly in learning English. Two examples were given of migrants' own initiatives to tackle this problem.

3. Meeting with New Link staff

Fiona Baugh, the employment coordinator, provided an overview of her work in supporting migrants into employment. She explained that 95 per cent of her clients were from A8 countries, reflecting the number and types of migrants in the area, rather than deliberate design. Fiona stated that in her experience, there is often a gap between migrants' level of English and their skills, with some highly qualified migrants working in low-skilled factory jobs. She explained that there were also difficulties with equivalency in international qualifications.

The main types of employment for migrants were low-skilled packing and picking work; but many migrants have aspirations to move on to higher-skilled work in the long term. Staff at the centre try to match individuals' skills with the employment opportunities available and support them in moving into sustainable employment. As with many of the centre's services, there was quite a long waiting list for in-depth advice, although a walk-in service had been established for advice on immediate employment needs.

The Committee was told that employers were generally supportive of the efforts being made, since they needed the employees and appreciated that those employees needed the backup of suitable education and housing.

The Committee then met David Copeland, who outlined the work of the 'linking communities' project aimed at resolving neighbourhood disputes between migrants and members of the host community. He explained that a number of residents groups had formed in the local area solely because of concerns about inward migration. He explained that many of the tensions arose from practical issues such as waste, maintenance of properties, late-night parties, and issues related to the proliferation of the private rented sector.

David explained that in his view simply bringing people together does not solve any problems: rather, the underlying issues need to be dealt with first. The project had so far trained 14 people to act as community facilitators and had dealt with ten cases. Often disputes arose from misunderstandings or lack of information: for example migrants need to understand how the rubbish collection system works. He stressed the importance of early intervention in disputes. The project had a relatively high success rate in resolving disputes, but David explained that even where they were not successful, the local indigenous community at least felt that they had been listened to and their concerns heard.

David stressed the importance of mechanisms to manage the problems associated with the private rented sector. The high level of turnover amongst tenants created a wide range of problems, such as rubbish left outside the property. The local council is seeking to expand its licensing powers (selective licensing Housing Act 2004) but the application process is believed to be long and difficult. He stated that anything that could be done to expedite this process at the centre would be helpful.

Cohesion was an ongoing, long-term issue: if it was to be achieved, it was essential for problems such as these to be addressed. A major challenge in the future will be the increasing number of migrants entitled to social housing.

4. Meeting with local residents

Participants:
Hema Patel, Chair of MANERP, Millfield and New England Regeneration Partnership
Christine Cunningham, Vice-Chair of the Greater Dogsthorpe Partnership (neighbourhood management)
Jenny Farnham, Orton Waterville parish councillor and Chair of Governors, Bushfield Community College
Madeleine Lillywhite, Hampton Parish Council Steering Group

Participants stated their views on inward migration to Peterborough. A number of problems were outlined as being a consequence of migration. These included: increased litter, fly-tipping, anti-social behaviour, drugs, prostitution, street drinking, road-traffic offences, benefit abuse, cars being sold illegally and pressures on public services, such as schools. It was recognised that these were not new problems, or ones associated solely with migrants, but the increase in the numbers of migrants had stretched the agencies dealing with them beyond their ability to cope. It was a struggle to get the local council to deal with the problems because of the lack of resources.

The problems brought by the increase in houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) were stressed. HMOs often contained increasingly large numbers of typically single males who came and went at all times of the day and night, had little to do with the rest of the local community and caused a great deal of disruption and nuisance. Participants stated that there had been a massive increase in the number of HMOs in recent years. It was felt that migrants who did not mix with the local population could be intimidating. Unscrupulous landlords were exploiting migrants but were also causing great distress to existing residents.

The lack of English spoken by migrants was viewed as a problem. One of the consequences of this is that teachers were viewed as struggling to cope, with 40 languages being spoken in some schools. One participant argued that migrants should be taught English in a Saturday school to help them integrate. One participant told the Committee that her school provided literacy classes to the parents of migrant children at the school, which was beneficial. However, the group felt that migrants should pay for English classes themselves and that the cost should not fall on the taxpayer.

There was a general view that there were too many migrants coming into the area and that it was the number of new arrivals that was the central issue of concern. The group recognised that some migrants were hardworking individuals but felt that there were also individuals who did not want to work. There was a feeling that there had been insufficient planning for the influx of migrants and that the local agencies had not been properly prepared for the numbers which had come.

5. Meeting with local stakeholders (held at Peterborough City Council Town Hall)

Participants:
Gillian Beasley, Chief Executive, Peterborough City Council
Caroline Parsons, Head of Communications, Peterborough City Council
Paul Phillipson, Northern Division Chief Superintendent, Cambridgeshire Police
Councillor John Peach, Leader of Peterborough City Council
Councillor John Holdich OBE, Cabinet member for Housing, Regeneration and Economic Development, Peterborough City Council
Jawaid Khan, Cohesion Manager, Greater Peterborough Partnership
Maureen Phillips, Assistant Director Children's Services, Peterborough City Council
Angela Bailey, Chief Executive, Peterborough Primary Care Trust
Steve Compton, Acting Chief Executive, Opportunity Peterborough (Urban City Regeneration Company)
Adrian Chapman, Head of Strategic Growth and Development, Peterborough City Council
Andy Wheatcroft, Technical Resources Manager, Perkins Engines Ltd.
Nicola Walsh, Human Resources, Ikea Distribution Services Ltd.

The Chief Executive opened the meeting and welcomed the Committee to Peterborough. An overview of migration into Peterborough was given. Peterborough had experienced the largest share of migrants in the eastern region as it was a designated asylum dispersal area. The pressure on the area had been exacerbated by the combination of designation as a dispersal area with the influx of high numbers of A8 migrants. Participants felt that the Government significantly underestimates the number of migrants in the area, which affects local government funding.

One participant stated that a difficult consequence of unplanned inward migration is that it makes it difficult to plan for school numbers. The area had seen a number of planned school closures owing to the projected decline in the number of children, and yet had in actuality experienced an increase in migrant children. The increase in the number of children whose first language was not English was naturally a problem, although the Committee was assured that a great deal of work had been done to ensure that the resource devoted to helping such children was not being diverted from the children of the indigenous community.

An additional stated challenge of migration was viewed as the increase in children in care. Over one third of care proceedings dealt with migrant children. Often these cases have a high level of complexity necessitating additional resource, for example, travelling to other countries to complete a child's assessment.

Housing was viewed as a further area of pressure from inward migration. Many migrants lived in HMOs and the number of HMOs was increasing owing to demand. Inward migrants often not only did not have much money, but also had no accommodation history, which resulted in high demand for low quality accommodation and plenty of opportunity for exploitation by unscrupulous landlords.

As part of the 2004 Housing Act the council secured additional licensing powers to enforce HMOs. The council is now in the process of applying for selective licensing powers to tackle the problems associated with unscrupulous landlords; however the process was seen as long and difficult. The council had designated a full time employees to put together the case for selective licensing powers. It was argued that the Government should make it easier for local authorities to extend its licensing powers and that it should be mandatory for all private rented accommodation to be licensed.

Other problems associated with housing included the purchase by landlords of large numbers of houses which might otherwise be available to first-time buyers; and the pressure on council house waiting lists from increasing numbers of migrant workers who had been in the country long enough to gain eligibility. The upward pressure on house prices was also affecting eligibility for regeneration funding.

A discussion took place on the economic effects of migration. 8 per cent of the Peterborough workforce were migrants. This figure appears low as many migrants live in Peterborough's central wards and travel outside the area to work—for example to agricultural jobs in the Fens.

One firm explained that its growth was constrained by the low number of high-skilled workers in the local area. It perceived the increase in inward migration as an opportunity for the business to exploit their talents. It called on Government to develop a strategy to utilize the skills of migrant workers.

Another company stated that it had benefited from migration through the increase in supply of people willing to work regular shifts. However, the company acknowledged that it could improve the way it utilized the talents of its existing migrant staff and integrated the different cultures.

A participant highlighted that parts of the public sector, particularly the NHS and social care, benefited from migrant workers filling vacancies.

A discussion took place on the importance of the English language. One participant, commented that often migrant workers have limited English language skills and so enter the employment market at a lower level than would otherwise have been the case. It was stated that speaking English was critical to realising the skills of migrant workers and necessary for them to function effectively in British society.

Another participant echoed the views of the local residents who felt that, although Peterborough had a proud history of welcoming migrants over many generations, the present influx amounted to too many over too short a space of time. It was becoming too much for existing communities to deal with. A system was needed where those with skills needed for the economy were taken in, but not those for whom there were not jobs.

The police representative stated that increased inward migration had resulted in diversity in the types of crimes committed, although these crimes were by a small minority of the migrant community, in the same way that every community has a small criminal element. The types of crimes that had increased were the growing of cannabis, the trafficking of Eastern European women and girls, drink-driving and knife crime.

The police had responded to tackle these crimes. For example, PCSOs were being recruited from migrant communities and the police had increased their roadside checks of cars.

A further problem covered in the discussion was that of migrants who became destitute. This included failed asylum-seekers and migrant children leaving the care system. It was felt that there was little, if any, support for these groups, who then had to resort to crime or the black economy.

GP practices in the area were 50 per cent oversubscribed, largely owing to the influx of migrant workers. Pressure was also placed on health services from the relatively higher levels of smoking, heart disease, diabetes and infant mortality commonly found in migrant populations.

The Committee was told that there was a difficulty in capturing information about the numbers and characteristics of inward migrants. The fee for worker registration was a significant disincentive to registering. Localised systems of registration could help in providing information about migrants in the area and the help which could be provided as a result would be an incentive to individuals to register.

Visit to Burnley: 3 March 2008

Members who attended the visit:

Mr Clive Betts	Dr John Pugh
Andrew George	Dr Phyllis Starkey
Mr Greg Hands	Emily Thornberry

Meeting held at Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre

Participants:

Mike Waite, Head of Community Engagement and Cohesion, Burnley Borough Council

Naveed Ahmad, Community Cohesion Officer, Burnley Borough Council

Terry Murnane, Community Faith Coordinator, Lancashire County Council

Abdul Hamid Qureshi, Project Coordinator, Building Bridges in Burnley

Sam Tedcastle, fieldworker for Mediation Northern Ireland

Terry Hephrun, Chief Officer, Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Council for Voluntary Services

Abdul Rahim, Practitioner for Good Relations Programme

Shahida Akram, Partnership Development Manager, Lancashire Forum of Faiths

Simon Cheyte, Detective Inspector, Hate Crime and Diversity Unit, Lancashire Constabulary

Stuart Smith, Headteacher, Burnley Schools' Sixth Form

Angela Rawson, Principal Adviser, School Effectiveness Service, Lancashire County Council

The Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre was established in September 2006. The centre is funded by Lancashire County Council to provide a focus for the educational, personal and spiritual development of young people of all ages. The centre was described as comprising a central activities facility, a quiet room available for prayer and reflection and resources to deliver inspirational and integrated learning opportunities.

The centre and projects related to it take a broad view of faith, and cater for all people not just people from the main religions. The main religions in Burnley are Christian and Muslim. There are 40 churches and eight mosques in the local area.

The Committee was informed about the role and work of the centre. The centre is in constant use for a diverse range of activities. All Burnley schools, as well as some colleges and universities, make use of the centre and it is used by all sections of the community. Participants explained that community cohesion was enhanced through the centre's work by bringing people together in a 'safe space' to share experiences. It was stressed that the work of the centre was not about forced integration; rather, it was about providing opportunities for both young people and the wider community of different faiths (or no faith), race and culture, to come together, mix and learn about each other.

One participant stressed that the centre's activities had a pivotal role in promoting cohesion in the local area; but that they do not use the term community cohesion in advocating the centre's activities.

Many organised events take place during the year for people from different faiths (or no faith) to mix with each other. For example, at Ramadan the centre hosted a festival celebration attended by 70 people, 50 of whom were non-Muslims.

The Committee was informed about the work of the organisation 'Building Bridges' in initiating inter-faith programmes. Participants explained that in all their activities efforts are made to reach out to people who are not the 'usual suspects'. For example, Building Bridges had organised a series of talks on different issues in predominantly white neighbourhoods to provide an opportunity for Asian and white people to speak to each other.

A discussion took place on the importance of the English language in promoting understanding and community cohesion. Participants stated that speaking English was important. One participant explained that not understanding English was a particular issue for women who have come to Burnley from Asia through arranged marriages. Another participant said that many Asian women may understand English but often have a confidence issue about speaking it. There were many ESOL classes available in Burnley, but there had been occasional instances of low take-up; availability was not the only issue to be tackled.

It was explained that in secondary schools there was not a significant issue of students not speaking or understanding English. However, there is a small, contained, issue of Polish students in one school who need additional language support.

One participant explained that lack of understanding of the English language by parents can be a disadvantage to their children's education. If English is not the language spoken at home, parents are sometimes unable to understand their children's work or help them with their homework.

One participant stated that English language is not really a problem in Burnley. The disturbances that took place in 2001 were between Asian and white people who were born and brought up in the area, all of whom were native English speakers.

The effects of arranged marriages on community cohesion were discussed. Comments were made that it is difficult to estimate the number of arranged marriages but that within the local Asian community it was common for them to take place. This practice results in new migrants from Pakistan, and other countries, arriving whose cultural background is likely to be very different and whose English may not be very good. This presented a challenge for achieving community cohesion.

The police representative stated that forced marriages were an issue in the Lancashire area. His force was dealing with one new case per week of either forced marriages or domestic violence. All the cases the police were aware of were of girls being forced into marriages.

Racially motivated crime was an issue in Burnley. 250 hate crimes had been recorded in Burnley since April 2007. The crimes were racially motivated assaults on both white and Asian people, more or less equally divided between the two.

A project had been developed in the town to mediate between people who would not be prepared to meet each other. The project used DVDs to enable them to hear each others' views.

The Committee asked the group why Burnley appeared to have low levels of community cohesion in comparison to the national picture. One participant replied that there was a lot of good work taking place to build community cohesion but that individual projects on their own would not solve the problems.

Another attendee argued that despite all the good work taking place on community cohesion, social trends were working against it. Physical segregation in housing and schools remained an issue. Burnley had high levels of deprivation, which had a significant impact on relations, and could create jealousies over competition for resources.

Another participant commented that Burnley does not have the same level of diversity as in other cosmopolitan areas and is characterised as having 'Asian' communities and 'white' ones. One person suggested that Burnley had a 'small village mentality' where the physical isolation of the town had led to people having a closed-minded attitude.

The Committee was informed about the "Building Good Relations" project, which built on the Northern Ireland experience and was assisted by people who had been involved there. The project included some "civic diplomacy" activity which aimed to enable civic leaders both to consider what role they could play in addressing issues of community cohesion in their town and also to discuss the extent to which they themselves might be contributing to the problem. Similarly, discussion was promoted amongst the agencies working in the town both to develop understanding between communities and to consider how they themselves might be playing a role in creating or exacerbating tensions. A number of people had been trained in mediation through the project.

The Committee asked about the leadership shown by local elected councillors. Members were told that following the 2001 disturbances they had moved very quickly from denial that there was a problem in the town to a recognition that something had to be done.

Visit to Barking and Dagenham: 1 April 2008

Members who attended the visit:

Jim Dobbin   Mr Bill Olner
Anne Main   Dr Phyllis Starkey

1. Meeting with migrants

Participants:
Andrejs Babins, Chair, Russian Speaking Group
Myrvette Panxhaj (Kosovan/Albanian)
Huyla Gelman (Turkish)
Zahra Ibrahim (Somalian, involved in a Somali Women's Association)
Tokunbo Durosinmi (Nigerian)

Following introductions, participants were invited to tell Committee members about their experiences and those of their communities in the borough.

One participant stated that the community cohesion strategy for the borough was very important, particularly to overcome the barriers to the integration of migrants. The main barriers to integration were seen to be the inability to communicate in English and lack of cultural understanding. Both of these issues affected migrants' ability to seek help and advice on matters affecting their lives such as housing or employment support. Difficulty in finding suitable housing was a particular problem for many migrants. The media was also seen to be a problem as many stories focused negatively on migrants, and did not reflect the positive contribution which they made.

Others stressed the importance of community groups and opportunities for different communities to meet and interact with each other. Outreach work was viewed as important, as was the need for migrant community groups to work with the host community and not just interact with other migrant groups. However, there was a lack of resources available to assist in the integration of migrants.

One attendee argued that written translation was important to help support migrant communities but that alone was not enough. She explained that through her work as an interpreter she was aware that a significant proportion of migrants, for example in the Turkish community, can not read or write. In addition to learning English people also needed to understand how things work in the UK. For example, benefit forms are very complex and people need assistance to complete the form, not just translation. Others also made the point that explanation was as important as translation.

Another attendee stated that there was a balance between the need for translation and the need to encourage migrants to learn English. If groups were too self-sufficient, they had less incentive to integrate.

Participants said that services were under pressure because of the rapid rate of inward migration into the borough. Many schools were oversubscribed.

One attendee noted that black and minority ethnic families tended to be larger than white families and consequently they needed larger properties. This was a source of tension and resentment with white residents owing to the shortage of larger family housing. She felt that local authority housing officers needed to understand and recognise the need for larger family homes to respond to the needs of the local black and ethnic minority population.

Another source of tension was seen to be the increase in people from inner London receiving priority for housing. Homeless people were being placed into the borough and perceived as living in social or private rented accommodation which would otherwise be available to locals. There was also an issue of perception relating to former council houses sold under right to buy. Many were now being rented privately, but local people simply saw new migrants entering what they think are council homes.

One participant said that the borough seemed to have no long-term plan to prepare and respond to the changing profile of people in the borough. Services needed to adapt to the different needs of the changing population. For example, there is a growing older black and minority ethnic population that has different needs. At the same time, the council needed to recognise that as long as there were ongoing problems in the country of origin, new arrivals would continue to come and there would be a continuing need to receive them into the borough.

Another participant stated that she had problems contacting council officers: how, she asked, could newly-arrived or even more longstanding members of her community be expected to get the help they needed if even she, who had spent a long time working with the council, could not get the answers she was looking for? Many gave up and simply didn't bother seeking help. It was also suggested that the council did not adequately support the work of voluntary organisations.

Minority ethnic groups were trying to mix and undertake activities with other communities, but were finding it difficult. They were tending to mix with other minority groups, but not with the majority. It was felt important to mix with the pre-existing community because, among other reasons, it would help to show that they were not being given special treatment, but were suffering from just the same or even worse problems than the existing community.

One attendee said that she had experienced racist remarks being made to her. She had lived in the borough for 19 years yet still was perceived by some white residents as being a refugee and newcomer.

It was generally agreed that migrants did make a contribution to the local economy, but they needed to be given further opportunities and assistance to do so. It was also generally agreed that local people faced very much the same issues and problems as migrants. It was suggested that the council needed further resources, and a long-term strategy, to promote "one borough".

2. Meeting with representatives of residents' associations

Participants:

Darren Rodwell, Reede Road Tenants and Residents Association
Graham Letchford, Becontree Tenants and Residents Association
Peter Cleland, Valence Tenants and Residents Association
Mickey Lincoln, Tenants Federation, Scrattons Estate Tenants and Residents Association
Rita Giles, Ibscott and Wyhill Tenants and Residents Association
Dave Cross, Leaseholders Association

Participants explained that the areas of Barking and Dagenham are separate and distinct with different identities. Historically, Barking has had a significant black and minority ethnic population but Dagenham had not experienced diversity. The rapid rate of inward migration into the area had a real impact on Dagenham because of the scale of change.

One attendee argued that myths and rumours about migrants had fuelled the rise in the popularity of the British National Party within the local area. For example, one myth was that migrants had been offered £50,000 to move from inner-London boroughs to Barking and Dagenham. The attendee argued that it was a mistake for the council to discredit these myths without explaining why they were not true and the context. Myths needed to be countered through sensitive and detailed communication of the real picture. More than one participant suggested that they had tried to alert the council for some time to the growing tensions in the borough caused by inward migration, but that it had not listened.

One participant outlined her experiences of the pace of change in the borough. Over 30 years ago there were only a couple of black families living on her council housing estate. Today, two thirds of the housing estate residents were black. She explained that the white residents felt that the black residents were not mixing and that many did not speak English.

Another participant told the Committee that his association had difficulties in trying to get black and minority ethnic residents involved. The council was not providing sufficient support to residents' associations to help them with this and their community work. He also stated that the council was not providing any information to new residents about their local area and that this task was left to others, such as residents associations.

A number of participants voiced their concerns about the shortage of affordable housing in the borough and the pressures of migration on housing. One attendee was concerned about the effect of migration on the housing allocations system. He suggested that black and minority ethnic communities families tended to be larger than white families and therefore needed larger properties. white people felt resentful that they were being penalised for not having enough children to get allocated a council house. There were very long waiting lists for social housing, which increased tensions. Referring to the issue of the perception of migrants being allocated council housing which in fact was privately rented, he argued that this sort of explanation or "myth-busting" was no use when waiting lists were rising so steeply.

A number of attendees felt that many white people were moving out of the local area, to places such as Essex, because of the changing ethnic profile in the borough. People felt

pushed out because they did not feel safe and no longer knew their neighbours. Black and minority ethnic long-standing residents were also unhappy about the pace of inward migration to the borough.

Participants stressed the damage caused by the loss of community infrastructure in the borough. Over the past 20 years the number of community centres and halls had declined. One participant referred to the decline in community infrastructure as "asset stripping". All participants agreed that the area was getting worse.

Migration was seen as contributing to the rise in house prices, particularly migration from people in inner-London boroughs. Other problems were migrants' inability to communicate in English, and information issues, such as not understanding when to put the rubbish bins outside.

Attendees argued that voluntary groups needed more support to promote cohesion. Support was needed to provide advice to groups, not just financial resources.

One participant argued that it was easier to get funding for specific identity groups than general groups, such as residents' associations. Residents' groups were seen to be disadvantaged by the funding rules, which was not helpful to their work in promoting community involvement.

One attendee argued that children needed to be provided with more opportunities to mix with people from different backgrounds through social activities.

Participants did not feel that the council provided a vision or adequate consultation on the regeneration strategy for the borough. A number of participants felt that the new house building, predominantly flats, would benefit people from outside the borough but not local young people.

There was general agreement that the pace of change, particularly of inward migration, was too quick.

3. Meeting with stakeholders

Participants:
Cllr Charles Fairbrass, Leader, Barking and Dagenham Council
Rob Whiteman, Chief Executive, Barking and Dagenham Council
Anne Bristow, Director, Adult and Community Services, Barking and Dagenham Council
Roger Luxton, Director, Children's Services, Barking and Dagenham Council
Hilary Ayerst, Chief Executive, Barking and Dagenham Primary Care Trust
Tony Eastaugh, Borough Commander, Metropolitan Police
Ted Parker, Principal, Barking College
Sheila Delaney, Director, Racial Equality Council
John Wainaina, Chair, Ethnic Minority Partnership Agency
Joshua Odongo, Director, Widows and Orphans International
Major Nigel Schultz, Chair, Faith Forum
Ken Jones, Head of Housing Strategy, Barking and Dagenham Council

Alan Lazell, Head of Skills, Learning & Enterprise, Barking and Dagenham Council
Heather Wills, Head of Community Services Libraries and Heritage, Barking and
Dagenham Council
Zulfikar Somji, Manager, McDonalds

The Committee was informed that the borough had experienced the fastest rate of change in its demography in the country. One of the major strategic issues for the council was providing services with insufficient funding from central government. The main cause of the funding shortage was deficiencies in the official population statistics, which inaccurately record Barking and Dagenham's population as declining, despite local evidence to the contrary. The system for recording statistics and informing funding decisions could not cope with the pace of change. The Committee was also told that the highly centralised finance system for local government meant that local people did not see the economic benefits of inward migration.

Two of the major challenges for the council were tackling social exclusion—particularly of the white working class—and delivering increased social and affordable housing to meet required need. The borough has one of the lowest skills levels in the country. The area also has an acute need for social housing, exacerbated by the right to buy policy under which 20,000 council properties had been sold. House prices had risen such that local people were unable to buy these homes when they were resold.

It was explained that the council had a long-term strategy to reduce social exclusion. In the short term the council was focusing on developing new community facilities, myth-busting on immigration issues and implementing a neighbourhood management approach. All of these actions would promote community cohesion.

One participant stated that the perception of local people was that the council did not listen to their views. This was partially a result of historical neglect; in recent years consultation had improved. Another participant stated that the council frequently consulted local residents.

One attendee put forward the view that regeneration should not be viewed as merely about the hard infrastructure but equally about the soft. He supported the neighbourhood approach which assisted in developing localised responses. He explained that often people's perceptions of what occurs do not match the reality. For example, there has been a reduction in crime in the borough yet people still perceive crime to be high.

Another participant pointed out that improvements and regeneration takes a long time, up to 10 years for any visible effects, so people do not see any immediate benefits from consultation that they have been involved in. There was a need to ensure tangible benefits to the local community. One attendee argued that there was an urgent need to increase the specialist support for black and minority ethnic communities who are facing difficulties and disadvantage.

One attendee stressed the importance of leadership in achieving regeneration in the borough as well as responding to the needs of local residents. For example, the council had a clear strategy to raise the skills levels in the borough; however, this was not a demand from local residents, but a result of local leadership.

Another attendee stated that trust needed to be built up over time between the council and residents. One of the best ways to achieve this was through a 'quick wins' approach on the seemingly small things that matter to local people. For example, if a group of residents want teenagers to stop hanging around their neighbourhood late at night playing basketball, a simple solution was to turn the lights off at 10 pm on the basketball pitch. If the council was seen to be taking action on these things, trust with the local community would be gained.

The Committee was informed that affordable housing was being built in the borough. 50 per cent of new properties were affordable, and half of these were properties with at least three bedrooms. The council was working on increasing the supply of larger properties and in future 35 per cent of social housing would be at least three-bedroom properties. The majority of the new social housing would go to local residents but some (40 per cent) would go to people from other London boroughs.

One of the housing problems was seen to be the negative impact of right to buy. Another was the problem of inner-London boroughs placing homeless people in private rented accommodation in Barking and Dagenham. A London-wide protocol had been developed that recommended that a maximum of 200 properties be used to house homeless people from other London boroughs, yet currently it is estimated that 700 properties in Barking and Dagenham are being used to house the homeless from other London boroughs.

One participant said that the new developments were placing pressures on community infrastructure and argued that there was a particular need for new places of worship. Some new places of worship were being developed but this was not viewed as being enough owing to the high demand for worship facilities from the growing black and minority ethnic population. He argued that the planning process should take into account the need for places of worship.

Participants noted that the Thames Gateway growth presented positive opportunities for the borough to regenerate.

The rate of rapid change was causing pressure on schools. The rate of change was also causing tensions over competition for social and affordable housing. Many white residents believed that black and minority ethnic families were getting priority access to social housing. However, the reality was that many black and minority families had bought ex-council properties (sold off as a consequence of the right to buy policy).

One attendee stated that the problem of inward migration was not just the volume but also the fractionalised nature of the different groups moving into the borough. It was difficult to respond effectively to the needs of so many diverse groups. For example, there were not enough resources to provide community space for every new group; therefore integration was needed. The council did a lot of work in myth-busting and developing community participation through its neighbourhood management approach.

In response to a question about the extent of community cohesion in the borough, it was suggested that yes, there was friction between communities, but there always would be. The most significant race issue at present was white-on-white crime between different nationalities and ethnic groups.

Following consultation the council had decided upon a definition of community cohesion which stressed fair and equal access to services as well as more traditional issues such as respect and communities coming together. People wanted to come together, but often did not know how. The council was working to support groups in developing their own capacity. People related to small-scale activity: it was hard to engage people at a strategic level. What was most successful was getting individuals or small groups of people to come together to address local issues.

In response to the question of what more Government could do to assist the council, the answer came back that it should "let go". Improvements would take place through local innovation. Resources should be granted without strings attached.

Formal Minutes

Monday 30 June 2008

Members present:

Dr Phyllis Starkey, in the Chair

Sir Paul Beresford	Anne Main
Mr Clive Betts	Dr John Pugh
John Cummings	Emily Thornberry
Andrew George	

Community Cohesion and Migration

Draft Report (*Community Cohesion and Migration),* proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 130 read and agreed to.

Annex agreed to.

Summary agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Tenth Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chairman make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That written evidence received in connection with the inquiry be reported to the House for printing with the Report.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

[Adjourned till Monday 7 July at 4.20 pm

Witnesses

List of written evidence

List of unprinted evidence

The following memoranda have been reported to the House and placed on the Committee's Internet pages, but to save printing costs they have not been printed. Copies have been placed in the House of Commons Library, where they may be inspected by Members. Other copies are in the Parliamentary Archives, and are available to the public for inspection. Requests for inspection should be addressed to The Parliamentary Archives, Houses of Parliament, London SW1A 0PW (tel. 020 7219 3074). Opening hours are from 9.30 am to 5.00 pm on Mondays to Fridays.

The Rayne Foundation

MigrationwatchUK

The West Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership

Sport England

Academy for Sustainable Communities

Living Places Partnership

Birmingham City Council

National Secular Society

Commission for Rural Communities

Cllr Anjana Patel, Harrow Council

Louise Heinemann

Volunteer Centre Westminster

African Caribbean Forum of Peterborough

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

The reference number of the Government's response to each Report is printed in brackets after the HC printing number.

Session 2007–08

First Report	Coastal Towns: the Government's Second Response	HC 70
Second Report	DCLG Annual Report 2007	HC 170 (*Cm 7335)*
Third Report	Local Government Finance—Supplementary Business Rate: the Government's Response	HC 210
Fourth Report	Work of the Committee in 2007	HC 211
Fifth Report	Ordnance Survey	HC 268
Sixth Report	Refuse Collection: Waste Reduction Pilots	HC 195
Seventh Report	Existing Housing and Climate Change	HC 432
Eighth Report	The Supply of Rented Housing	HC 457-I HC 457-II
Ninth Report	New Towns Follow-Up	HC 889
Tenth Report	Community Cohesion and Migration	HC 369-I HC 369-II
First Special Report	Ordnance Survey: Government's Response to the Committee's Fifth Report of Session 2007–08	HC 516
Second Special Report	Refuse Collection: Waste Reduction Pilots— Government Response to the Committee's Sixth Report of Session 2007–08	HC 541

Session 2006–07

First Report	The Work of the Committee in 2005–06	HC 198
Second Report	Coastal Towns	HC 351 (*Cm 7126*)
Third Report	DCLG Annual Report 2006	HC 106 (*Cm 7125*)
Fourth Report	Is there a Future for Regional Government?	HC 352-I (*Cm 7119*)
Fifth Report	Refuse Collection	HC 536-I
Sixth Report	Equality	HC 468 (*Cm 7246*)
Seventh Report	Local Government Finance–Supplementary Business Rate	HC 719
Eighth Report	Local Government Finance–Council Tax Benefit	HC 718
First Special Report	Local Government Finance–Council Tax Benefit: Government's Response to the Committee's Eighth Report of Session 2006–07	HC 1037
Second Special Report	Refuse Collection: Government's Response to the Committee's Fifth Report of Session 2006–07	HC 1095