

A Call for a Community Strategy

My name is Janice Sims. My husband and I have been residents of 3726 T. Street in Burleith for 4 years.

I stand in front of you today in opposition to GU's 2010 campus plan.

The current problems in our neighborhood that are directly linked to the growing number of undergraduate and graduate students living in rentals will be only compounded by the plan GU proposes for the next 10 years.

By submitting such a plan, GU shows its lack of regard and respect for its neighbors in Burleith. The University recognizes that it has issues with its students living off campus by its investment in an array of programs that are intended to address its town and gown problems. However, these programs fall far short of effective and leave a battered and frustrated neighborhood in its wake. Even though the University recognizes unresolved problems in the community, their plan would create a situation where these same problems will continue to multiply exponentially. I can only conclude that 2010 Campus plan demonstrates, without a doubt, that

ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia
CASE NO. 10-321
EXHIBIT NO. 243

the University feels entitled to grow in unsustainable and irresponsible ways.

At one time I believed that these student-related nuisances were the main problem, but have recently come to recognize that they are in fact symptoms of an increasingly unbalanced community. Here I am taking term from a similar situation in the United Kingdom, which is ‘studentification’, or the slow creation of a student neighborhood.

This gradual transformation has created a polarization in the community.

What are we polarized against, what do we oppose? We oppose an unbalanced community. We do not strive for the total eradication of transient group-housed residents, nor their total domination. We strive for a balanced community which “approximates national demographic norms” (6).

This demographic balance can be described in terms of household types compared with population proportions. An example might be “not less than 60% families, not more than 33% one-person households and not

more than 10% group or multi-family households” (6), or a population of “72% in families, 12% single people and 15% in group house occupants”

(6). One form of unbalance occurs when the transient or group-housed occupants exceed 20% of the population [1:5], or in terms of property types, the tipping-point for an unbalanced community occurs when transient group-housing exceeds 10% of the properties.

The most common cause of a group housing tipping-point is demand by students for shared houses. Certainly in Burleigh we have reached and surpassed the tipping-point, we are an unbalanced community. Unbalanced communities can lead to an increase in problematic symptoms such as, crime, high insurance, squalor, dereliction, street blight, distorted retail options, declining amenities, fluctuating housing market, seasonal or part-time local employment, parking issues, overwhelmed public services, decimation of the community through emigration resulting in loss of the community memory of elders, the community activism of older adults and loss of the community’s future of children, loss of social capital, social networks, norms and sanctions, distress through deep and rapid change,

fear of crime, anger and despair over disempowerment and underutilized services resulting in school closures as families depart.

On the other hand, a balanced community is sustainable, it is “a place where people want to live and work, now and in the future. It meets the diverse needs of existing and future residents, is sensitive to its environment and contributes to a high quality of life. It is safe and inclusive, well planned, built and managed, and offers equality of opportunity and good services for all. A balance between diverse groups maximizes the potential social capital of any local community (5)”.

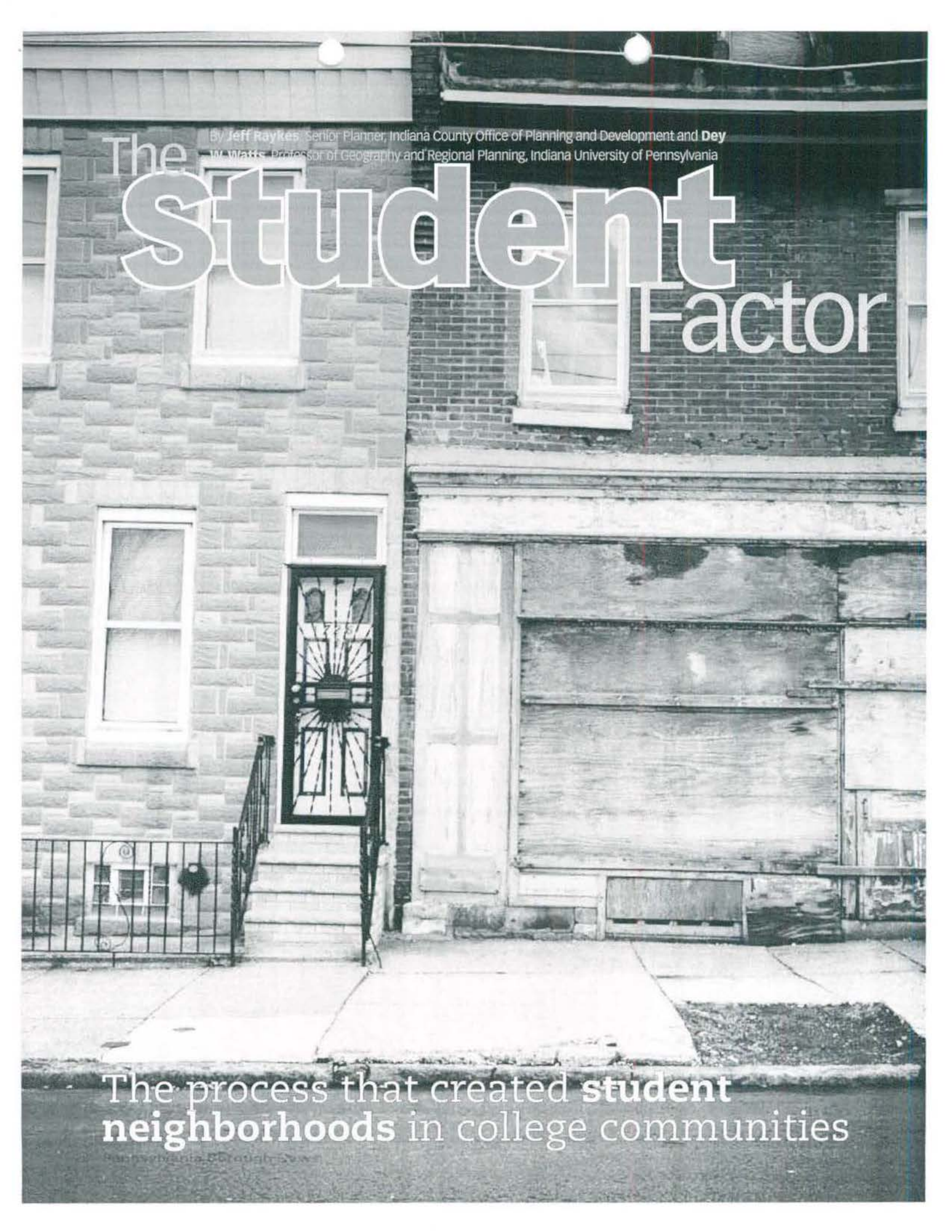
Balance can be restored and maintained by working together with a multitude of stakeholders such as the community associations here, city authorities, student groups, higher education institutions (GU) and the private rent sector.

I will not go into further details here but will propose a that further increases in any GU student population are unacceptable until a comprehensive and coherent Community Strategy is created, similar in

concept to work outlined in documents such as Universities UK,
Studentification: a guide to opportunities, challenges and practice UUK, London,
January 2006; National HMO Lobby, Balanced Communities &
Studentification Problems and Solutions, 2008; or the University of Leeds Inner
North-West Community Strategy 2007-2012.

Thank you.

Quotations with page numbers in (brackets) taken from National HMO Lobby, Balanced
Communities & Studentification, Problems and Solutions, 2008



By Jeff Raykes, Senior Planner, Indiana County Office of Planning and Development and Dey
W. Watts, Professor of Geography and Regional Planning, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

The Student Factor

The process that created **student
neighborhoods** in college communities

Richmond, Virginia: BoroughView

College towns are often portrayed as leafy Arcadias where culture and cosmopolitanism meet the civic virtues of small town life.

However accurate the image, in college towns the life of the college and the life of the town are inseparable. A seasonal, almost resort-like, demographic of young people drives the tempo, tenor and tensions in a college community.

This article, the first in a series, discusses the evolution of campus neighborhoods, some of the perceptions surrounding off-campus housing and the tensions that can arise between established residents and transient students.

"Studentification" is a recent, if rather clumsy, term used to describe a poorly understood process and its associated effects. While the term has yet to arrive in the United States, it is common enough in Canada, Australia and the UK where it has animated a national debate concerning the sustainability of college communities.

First coined in 2002, studentification describes a process whereby a transient population of young people overwhelms an established neighborhood. Studentification results in a seasonally revolving cohort of 18-24 year olds who temporarily inhabit a neighborhood. Like most labels, studentification conceals a great deal. When we move from labels to individual communities, the process becomes uneven, playing itself out locally in various ways.

Though the term studentification is new in the United States, the process has been with us for some time. In outline, the story is familiar to college communities across the nation. During the sixties and seventies, baby boomers fueled a dramatic increase in the demand for higher education. Confronted with rising enrollments and lacking the resources to directly provide student housing, universities relied upon private investors to do that

job for them. The result was student neighborhoods, which continued to expand throughout the 1980s as the "baby boom echo" came of age and a new de-industrialized, knowledge based economy increased college participation rates, but demand for student housing continued.

Part of this demand was filled in residential locations immediately adjacent to campus, where older, convenient and relatively inexpensive single-family homes could readily be converted into multi-tenant structures with high unit densities. A home that at one time probably held a single family of three or four may now hold eight to ten young people. The result was the emergence of a distinct student district. In the 1990s an expanded pool of private investors -both dabblers and developers- with unusually quick and easy access to mortgage lending at very low rates, continued to round out these locations.

As the studentification process

played out and as investors and landlords converted single-family homes into multi-student housing, income value often displaced shelter value causing prices to rise. Price increases coupled with neighborhood frictions created incentives for established residents to sell while limiting affordable units available to first-time buyers and other community members. Owner occupancy declined as permanent residents left and potential new residents looked elsewhere. As income properties expanded, familiar patterns of absenteeism and neglect took hold while student districts became further entrenched.

Some of us have fond memories of our comfortable, if slovenly, lives in these neighborhoods. This was the district of musty old homes with bikes and broken furniture on the porch, sinks piled with dishes and refrigerators holding breakfasts of cold pizza. This was also the district of afternoon boom boxes and street

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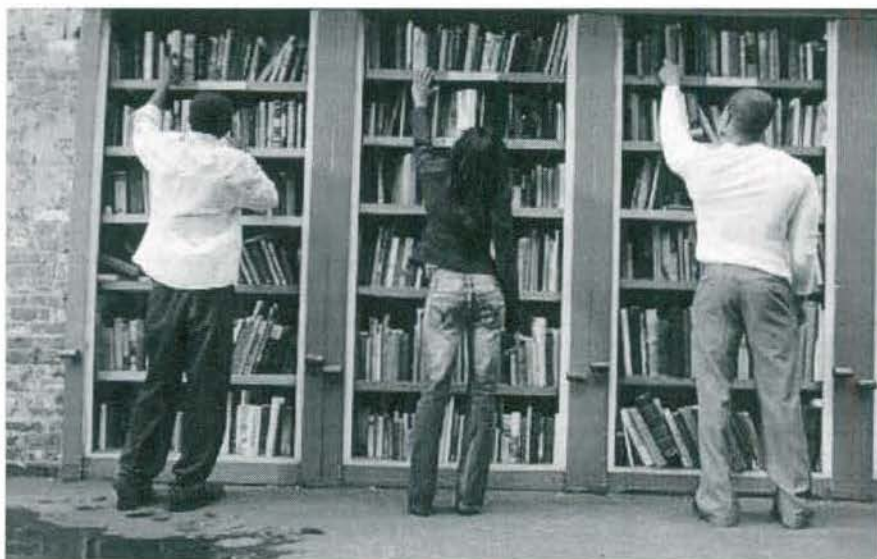
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HERE TO STUDY? Or party? Many college and university communities feel both the positive and negative impacts of having student neighborhoods.

games. For some of us this was the college experience, and for our neighbors, this was the experience of college students. Our two cultures and the tempo of our lives could hardly have been more different.

While housing was easily converted, neighborhood infrastructure designed for in a simpler age, was not. Parking was particularly difficult. Older homes designed to accommodate a single

Late night parties, low-level anti-social behavior, noise and trash are standard complaints in most college communities.

vehicle, could not gracefully handle a half dozen. Yards became parking areas, and tree lawns were paved. Green space—lawns, gardens and street trees—disappeared. Streets were worn down, the neighborhood became grayer and traffic became unruly as well. Narrow residential streets designed for lower traffic volumes, yield travel patterns and on-street parking were converted to one-way couplets. On-street parking disappeared. Ultimately, the traditional neighborhood design could not accommodate the influx of the student population.

Among the many changes brought about by the expansion of student neighborhoods, the most common and most immediate were lifestyle clashes between a younger, temporary population and an older, established population. Intergenerational conflicts became common. These neighborhoods remain the place where the games of youth collided with the domestic tranquility, town & gown relationships fray and where substantial community resources are spent on code and police enforcement.

Late night parties, low-level anti-social behavior, noise and trash are standard complaints in most college communities.

For children and senior citizens, such disturbances may mean something more than mere annoyance; it can mean fear.

By definition, temporary or transient populations are difficult to integrate into existing communities. As transients, students are less likely to participate in the political and associational life of their adopted communities. Students may be young citizens, but they do not represent the most stable source of "social capital" that all communities need to carry out a viable civic life. For most students, "home" is somewhere else.

Clearly the term studentification is a loaded term. For some college communities, the growth and concentration of students may mean reinvestment in declining areas, an increase in cultural amenities, a cosmopolitan atmosphere, increased spending and the continued vitality of traditional commercial cores. Some communities, with or without institutions of higher learning, may conclude, "It may be a problem but it's a nice problem to have."

High school graduations rates in Pennsylvania are likely to flatten or contract in some regions this year. This may signal the slow down in the growth of colleges and the pace of studentification. Now may be a good time to reflect on the long-term effects of this growth and consider the future of campus neighborhoods.

For those intimately involved in the process or interested in learning more, the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association, in cooperation with PSAB, has organized a statewide symposium to be held this fall. This symposium will provide participants with opportunities to learn how "college town" challenges are being addressed by host communities throughout the Commonwealth. Designed in a highly interactive format, this symposium will provide participants with updates on current practices as well as engage them in a lively exchange of ideas, information and lessons learned.

Rehabilitating Campus Neighborhoods: A Statewide Symposium

Wednesday, September 24, 10 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Crimson Event Center, Olive K. Folger Hall, Indiana, PA

Thursday, November 6, 10 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Franklin & Marshall College, Woods Room, Alumni Sports & Fitness Center, Lancaster, PA

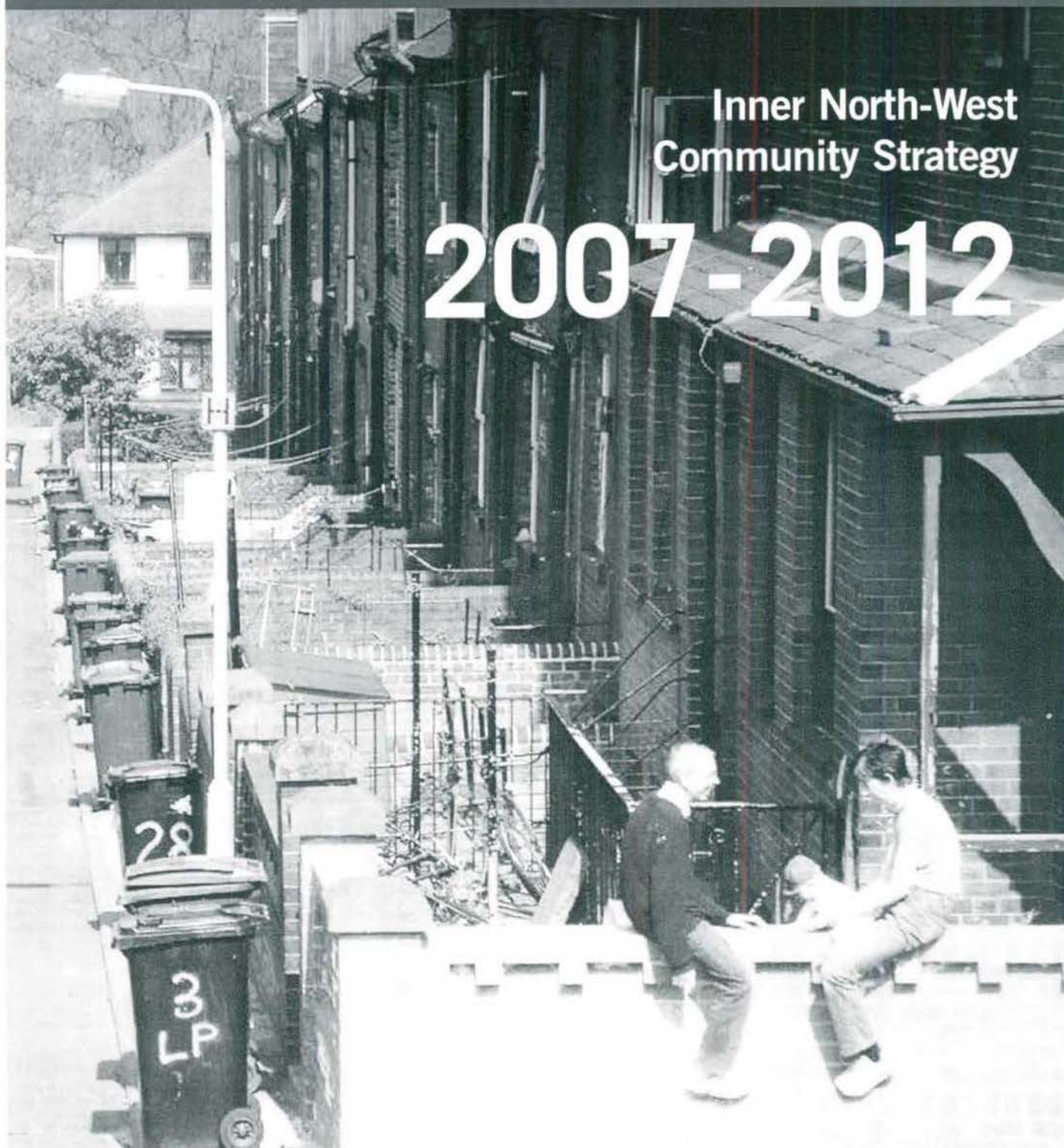
For details and registration information, visit the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Planning Association at www.planningpa.org.



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Inner North-West
Community Strategy

2007-2012





“Our strategy will remain dynamic and will adapt and change through a continuous dialogue with our community partners.”

Foreword

by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Arthur

Welcome to the University of Leeds' Inner North-West Community Strategy which sets out our current work and future plans with our local communities. It has been put together with extensive input from our neighbours and stakeholders in the city, who have helped to shape and define its priorities. Partnership in both the construction and the delivery of this strategy is essential and we at the University look forward working together to enhance our local communities.

We recognise that, as a major employer of 7,800 staff and host to over 32,000 students, we have a marked impact on local communities. Whilst our contribution to the city and region is overwhelmingly positive, well-documented tensions exist in areas of the city most densely populated by students. In response, we were the first higher education institution in 2000 to develop a Community Strategy to manage the University's impact more effectively. Our new strategy aims to build on our position as leader in the field of community relations and sets out our ambition to make a valued and significant contribution to the local community.

Through consultation with our community, three key themes have emerged and under these headings the action plan will deliver a range of programmes, projects and policies. Communication was identified as the top priority and we will facilitate better two-way dialogue with our local communities and improve the way in which we communicate our activities and priorities. The numbers of students living in the city continues to have implications on the social and economic structure of the communities within Inner North-West Leeds (Headingley, Hyde Park, Woodhouse and Burley). In response we will further develop our work to integrate our students as active members of the communities in which they live. Finally, the University has at its disposal a breadth of physical and human resources which are currently available to our neighbouring communities and through this strategy we shall ensure that these resources are publicised and fully utilised by those who can benefit from them.

Whilst our community engagement activity encompasses programmes which make a positive contribution to communities across our city and region, this strategy is primarily focused on Inner North-West Leeds, due to these communities being the home to the majority of our students. The University's commitment to engaging with our local communities is not confined to this strategy alone. Further activity is outlined in the University's Widening Participation, Knowledge Transfer, Transport, Sport and Environmental strategies, which together are making a vital and invaluable contribution to our city and region.

We are very proud that Leeds University Union fully endorse the aims of this strategy and are engaged in the delivery of the action plan. The strategy also complements and adds value to not only the University's strategy but to the broader strategic aims of the city and region.

We have set in place an ambitious vision for the University of Leeds to become one of the world's top 50 universities. This world-class aim is not limited to research and teaching but the very values and ethos of our organisation in which the enrichment of society at the local level is a key theme. Additionally, our commitment to providing an exceptional student experience extends beyond the campus to the social development of our students in the communities in which they live. Through our core values of community, integrity, inclusiveness and professionalism we seek to work with our neighbours in mutually beneficial partnership.

Our strategy will remain dynamic and will adapt and change through a continuous dialogue with our community partners. I wish to thank all of our staff, students and community partners who work to support others. Your valued contributions help define our values and our aspirations as well as providing essential support to many local people.

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Foreword by the Vice-Chancellor

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(left) Stephen Faray Capture the Community photo competition
(right) Snow Bound activities for young carers, Horsfield Regeneration Programme

1 Remit of the Inner North-West Community Strategy

1.1 Key themes of the Strategy

The University of Leeds' Inner North-West Community Strategy sets out our commitment to work effectively and to the mutual benefit of our neighbouring communities. This strategy sets out our ambition to make a sustained and valued contribution to our local communities and will steer the University's engagement for the next five years.

The three key themes which follow form the core of this strategy and include open and transparent communication, actively promoting community cohesion and matching resources to community priorities. These three themes will involve the continuation of existing projects and programmes as well as the development of new initiatives.

1.1.1 Communication

Effective two-way communication emerged from the public consultation as the priority theme. This represents both the dissemination of information from the University to the local community and the inward flow of information from the community. This strategy seeks to close the gaps, improve effectiveness and avoid duplication of communication methods.

1.1.2 Cohesive Communities

Inner North-West Leeds is home to over 17,500 students and in some wards, such as Headingley, students account for over 50% of the population. This demographic change has profound implications on the local economy, community and amenities, including the housing stock. Tensions between the longer term local residents and the student population are well documented. Our goal is to develop programmes, policies and activities to further support the integration of students as active citizens in the communities in which they live.

1.1.3 Matching Resources to Needs

The University of Leeds is a major provider of cultural, educational and sporting facilities and resources many of which are available to the broader community. Through auditing facilities the University will provide a comprehensive guide to accessibility. It is equally important to ensure that the broader community have an opportunity to promote their facilities and resources to the staff and students at the University to further support community interaction. Our goal is to open up access to our campus and enable local people to benefit from the University's resources.



(left) Fashion design project with homeless people, Leeds University Community Initiative
(far left) Edward Adkins, Capture the Community photo competition

Background and Context

The University of Leeds is one of the most popular Higher Education Institutions in the UK. Our size and international reputation enables us to offer one of the widest ranges of academic courses. The City of Leeds is home to two of the country's largest universities, and students represent approximately 7% of the city's total population.

We have produced a strategy map, stating our vision, purpose and values and a clear means of implementation. Our core values of community integrity, inclusiveness and professionalism are embedded in all our community engagement work.

We were also the first University to publish a public-facing Housing Strategy in 2004. The strategy outlined the University's policies and practice on housing and addressed a broad range of issues concerning the University's own student accommodation. The Housing Strategy has recently been reviewed to take into account the views of the community and to clarify the University's position in relation to the Private Rented Sector. The Inner North-West Community Strategy and Housing Strategy have been designed to complement and reinforce

The popularity and growth of the University over the last twenty years is intrinsically linked to the economic growth of the city, West Yorkshire and the broader region. However, we recognise that some residents of Leeds have yet to share in the benefits of this growth. We are committed to our contribution to Leeds Initiative, the strategic partnership for the city, which sets out the long-term plan for Leeds' ongoing economic, cultural, technological and environmental development. We actively support the Vision for Leeds 2004-2020 in both 'Going up a League' and 'Narrowing the Gap'.

The Vision for Leeds 2020 aims are:

- Being a place where all in the city working, living or otherwise enjoy a high quality of life, work and learn with a high quality of life.
- Narrowing the gap - between the most disadvantaged people and communities and the rest of the city.
- Promoting, supporting and leading business, contributing to the national economy as a competitive, successful, supporting and supported by its surroundings, successful region.

They are all going to be a major project or project in the other two areas of Vision for Leeds, and none of the others will be achieved without them. It is a very big challenge, which all residents can share in. Therefore, we cannot succeed in going up a league without narrowing the gap.

(right) Stefan Timphus, Capture the Community photo competition
(far right) Herd Farm challenge, Corporate Social Responsibility Programme



"The strategy made three key recommendations in response to the growth in the number of students living in the areas close to the University."

(left) Jose Closs, Capture the Community photo competition

2.1 The 2000 Community Strategy

The University of Leeds was the first Higher Education Institution to implement a Community Strategy in 2000. The strategy made three key recommendations in response to the growth in the number of students living in the areas close to the University.

Recommendation 1 – Appointing Community Relations Officer

Appointment, in partnership with other agencies, of a full-time Community Relations Officer to help address the problems associated with the high percentage of students resident in the neighbouring communities.

Action

The University of Leeds and Leeds Metropolitan University jointly appointed a Community Relations Officer in 2000. Since 2002 the post has been solely funded by the University of Leeds. The role has evolved to become a broader and more strategic position, encompassing working with the local community and developing University policy and responses relating to community issues ranging from housing, the private rented sector, social engagement and sustainable communities.

Recommendation 2 – Establish a Neighbourhood Helpline

Establishment of a joint Neighbourhood Helpline facility with Leeds City Council to act as a single point of contact for issues raised by members of the community.

Action

The Neighbourhood Helpline was introduced in 2000 as a joint initiative between Leeds City Council and the two Universities and it remains central to our work. The annual reports we produce help to quantify the key issues and trends in community concerns. Between 2002 and 2006 the Helpline was funded solely by the University of Leeds and was only able to address issues pertaining to University of Leeds students, which represented under a third of the calls received. In 2006 Leeds Metropolitan University resumed funding of the Helpline which is currently managed by both institutions.

Recommendation 3 – Strengthening the Complaints Procedure

Strengthening of the existing complaints procedure and making it more widely available.

Action

The debate regarding the roles and responsibilities of universities in relation to student behaviour off-campus continues to be an extremely complex issue in the higher education sector. There is no guide for best practice and each institution tackles the matter differently. The University of Leeds has discussed the issues widely within the sector and has also sought legal advice and guidance in defining the institutional position.

As a result the Neighbourhood Helpline has been re-launched alongside this strategy with clear guidelines and clarity of our position. This also involves diagrammatic representation of the complaints process as well as a code to which all students are obliged, through registration at the University, to adhere to.

2.2 Development since the 2000 Strategy

Over the last seven years the University has continued to expand, diversify and innovate, adapting proactively to the community engagement agenda which is now of significant national interest. We have remained at the forefront of discussions and are still considered leaders in this field, often used as exemplars of best practice and supporting other universities to develop their own strategies. The University has been placed at the forefront of community engagement in a recent Universities UK report 'Studentcitizens'. A guide to opportunities, challenges and practice. The University was recognised as a model of good practice in developing and implementing innovative practice, in partnership with local authorities and communities, to address the issues of concentrated student numbers in towns and cities.

Access and Community Engagement (ACE) was established in 1999 as the City and Regional Office. Although the remit and scope have expanded considerably since its inception, the focus of its work is the City of Leeds and the region. ACE both delivers activity and acts as a broker to help develop partnerships between the tripartite University and the city.

The University's current community engagement programme covers a breadth of activity including volunteering in local schools and the community (involving over 1000 volunteers per year), work to minimise the impact of student changeover, improving student safety and crime rates in Inner North-West Leeds by ensuring students are not victims of crime and instigators in the event of tensions between students and other residents.

The University works closely with our colleagues at Leeds University Union (LUU) on matters which are of key importance to their student members. LUU's endorsement of the content of this Strategy and action plan shows a clear statement of commitment to supporting the University to address issues of concern from the student body and our local communities.

LUU will be publishing its own Community Strategy in 2007 ensuring that students are represented in all key areas of their life at University. This will be underpinned by recognition that a working relationship with the University, through Access and Community Engagement, on all community matters will achieve the best possible outcomes for their student members. A number of the key initiatives will indeed be directly led and supported by LUU, these will also seek broad external stakeholder working and to celebrate the contribution our students can make to the region.



(left) Street Janz community streetball tournament, Harehills Regeneration Programme
(far left) Emma Bohan, Capture the Community photo competition

3 The strategy

The University is committed to maintaining and developing the good relations which we have established with our neighbouring communities. We have a strategic commitment, evidenced by the inclusion within the University's strategy map the key theme "to contribute to the enrichment of society on a local to global scale".

It is of equal importance that the University works at a grassroots level within the community. Through a broad range of projects, events and activities the University wishes to continue to expand and develop its role and profile. Activity will continue to address problems associated with crime, noise and the local environment. Additionally, we will also increasingly develop broader relationships to raise awareness of the opportunities to benefit from the resources, facilities, research and teaching that the University provides.

Community engagement is, therefore, more than just delivering projects aimed at improving perception and reducing the impact of high student numbers. Our community engagement commitment is to enter a genuine two-way dialogue with our local communities to raise awareness of opportunities as well as listening to, and challenging the community to inform the University of priorities and issues as well as innovative new ideas to support, enhance and develop our community engagement programme.

The University of Leeds undertook a major public consultation involving a cross-section of our local communities¹ to identify the key priority issues and aspirations in the local community from which an action plan could be developed. The consultation included a community questionnaire, eight consultation workshops held in venues within Inner North-West Leeds and a photography competition to capture perceptions of the local area. Through our consultation we were able to gather the views of a broad range of our stakeholders including staff, students, faith groups, community organisations, statutory organisations and other education providers.

The action plan which follows, sets out the actions which the University shall undertake under the three key areas of Communication, Cohesive Communities and Matching Resources to Needs. The action plan builds on our existing community engagement programme enhancing and filling any gaps in activity. Partnership is essential in delivering all three of these key themes and the action plan draws upon existing and new partnerships with key stakeholders such as the police, Unipol, Primary Care Trust, the North-West District Partnership and LUU. Of course this strategy cannot be delivered without the community itself and the numerous groups and organisations that strive to protect and enhance our neighbourhoods. The reference numbers which appear in the text that follows refer to the action point within the Action Plan.



(left) Soman Nandy, Capture the Community photo competition
(right) Sam Hilton, Capture the Community photo competition



¹ For the purposes of this consultation the local community was defined as the population of the Inner North-West area of Leeds, in order to align our strategy with the administrative boundary used by Leeds City Council and represents the area which houses the highest student population in the city.

3.1 Communication

Improving communication with our students, staff and external stakeholders is the primary aim of this strategy. The way in which this action plan is implemented, a number of activities which will enable the University to more effectively manage its communications and ensure the University develops its programmes, projects and policies to respond to local priorities and concerns. Central to this is the development of a communications plan (A1). The University will undertake an audit of its communications, both internal and external and develop a communication strategy which focuses on staff and student communication.

The University is currently involved in a number of working partnerships with key stakeholders from across the region. From strategic discussion making open access in Leeds available to local grassroots community groups to affect positive change in Leeds and the wider region.

Leeds Institute is the key in developing vehicle for delivering the city's twin objectives of 'going up a league and narrowing the gap'. A world class University has a critical role to play in both of these intertwined objectives recognising that one cannot be achieved without the other.

The University is represented by the Vice-Chancellor on the Executive Board and other staff ensure our input to all eight strategy groups across health, economy, environment, housing, transport, children, culture and Laminar Leeds.

The University is represented at the local level on the North-West District Partnership and we are a key partner in delivering their strategy. Through partnership the University will continue to support the delivery of activity and policy across the key areas of culture, economy, environment, harmonious communities, health and well-being, transport, learning and living places. The recent appointment of a Community Policy Officer, shall ensure the University will continue to contribute to inner North-West Leeds through representation at local meetings.

such as the Huddersley Forum, Shared Housing Group and Student Challenge Planning Group (A5, A6)

The majority of our students move out of University accommodation to live in the private rented sector in their second year of study. To ensure that our students have access to good quality affordable accommodation and ensure that our students are harmoniously integrated in the local community, the University is represented on both the Shared Housing Group and the Private Rented Sector Strategy Group. The two strategic groups in the city with a remit which includes student housing and student housing-related matters. The University is a key partner - using both groups as a vehicle for two-way communication on housing and community issues. The University is also leading on many of the actions included within the Shared Housing Action Plan. Following the publication of this strategy and the Housing Strategy, the University will also be providing regular updates on the progress at future meetings of both groups.

Communication with our external stakeholders will be achieved primarily through the introduction of an annual Community and Housing Forum (A3) to discuss broader city strategies, community concerns and University policy. The forum will be open to any community group or individual wishing to engage with the University and will help to define new priorities and activities.

Alongside the forum, the University will introduce an Internal Community and Housing Steering Group (A2) to oversee the implementation of both this strategy and the Housing Strategy, develop policy, action new projects and respond to external developments. Representation of the group is drawn from key internal stakeholders including Residential and Commercial Services, Access and Community Engagement and LDU.



"It is of equal importance that the University works at a grassroots level within the community. Through a broad range of projects, events and activities the University wishes to continue to expand and develop its role and profile."

(left) Carnival Cats, Leeds West Indian Carnival Project

3.2 Cohesive Communities

The University works with multi-agency partnerships to support both students and the local community. The University shall build on our existing programme of activity, in partnership, with other key organisations in the city, to further support the integration of our students as active citizens in the communities in which they live. The University's role is to advise, guide and educate our students regarding the impact which they have on their host communities and support their involvement and engagement with the wider community.

The University and LDU collectively support over 1,500 student volunteers to work on a broad range of projects to aid their integration and active participation in the local community, whilst providing an invaluable service to many local people. The range of projects is testimony to the creativity and diversity of the skills of our staff and students who give up their time to support the city and its people.

Volunteering includes the 450 strong educational outreach programme, through which students act as one-to-one mentors, tutors, classroom assistants or out-of-school activity co-ordinators. In 2005/6 the schools programme generated over 27,000 hours of volunteering time. The core programme is continually evolving to respond to the changing requirements of the organisations we support. This is demonstrated by the Refugee Support Network, a project developed in response to the need for English language support in Leeds schools. The project engages international and foreign language student volunteers to support local children to integrate into the classroom. This programme was expanded through support from the Home Office and was awarded the accolade of 5 star beacon status.

The impact of the volunteering programme cannot be overestimated and is perhaps best understood through individual examples. Ben Spiers volunteered at the City of Leeds School working with a young person who had been excluded and was in danger of not sitting his GCSE exams. Through Ben's support he coached and befriended his mentee helping him back to school and through his exams. His mentee went on to study at sixth form. Ben was awarded the outstanding volunteer award.

It is recognised that many local residents may not directly interact with the University and therefore an annual meeting will be held with local councillors to discuss emerging issues and priorities for the local community. As a result new projects will be devised to address the council's key concerns as voiced by the wards they serve (A4).

The University will also develop its key communications media to improve the flow of information to a wider section of our stakeholders. The University will produce a quarterly e-zine and develop its community web pages to provide concise information regarding University policy and strategy. (A7, A8) opportunities for staff and students to engage and integrate in neighbouring communities as well as promote University events, resources and facilities accessible to the public.

Public engagement (A10) is a key development that is central to current thinking by both the Government and the Higher Education Sector. There is a growing demand for research, teaching and outreach activity by universities to be informed through consultation with the broader public. The University of Leeds has embraced this agenda and is seeking to formalise the structures that support staff in sharing their work with the public as well as seeking public opinion in the formulation of new research to answer key societal problems. From National Science Week in which leading academics deliver exciting experiments to young people to enthuse them about science to people who suffer from health problems helping to define the future of the Health Sector services, the public are increasingly engaging with the University. Public engagement over the coming months will become a strategy in itself.

Communication necessitates a genuine two-way dialogue and our local communities will have a voice and steer in the continual development and improvement of our partnership work. Through raising concerns, offering solutions, identifying opportunities and partnerships we will seek to utilise the skills and expertise of our local community to affect positive change.

(left) Ross Coulson, Capture the Community photo competition (far left) Clive Griffin, 1st prize Capture the Community photo competition



In 2005-6 won the Higher Education Active Community Fund

Over 500 students also volunteer through Action at LUU and engage in a diverse programme of activities supporting newly hard to reach groups. From day trips for young disabled children through to attending local care homes to befriend the elderly, students provide a vital community service. It is also well known that RAG, LUU's official fundraising body, raise over £100,000 every year through student-led charity events, street collections and projects to support local charities.

To better support our students' integration and active participation in the communities in which they live, the University introduced a community grants scheme, Leeds University Community Initiative (LUCI), in 2003 to provide students and staff with the opportunity to develop their own open-ended volunteering projects in partnership with and to benefit the local community (B11).

To date the LUCI has supported 594 schemes to engage with over 2,100 beneficiaries in a range of experiential and fundraising ventures and encourages the applicant to put innovative ideas into practice. Grants of up to £500 are awarded to projects that will benefit deprived communities or have an emphasis on promoting and developing good community relations in inner North-West Leeds. The scheme recognises that students, staff and the local community have untapped skills, hobbies and ideas and through providing training, advice and financial support LUCI has helped 30 schemes/projects come to fruition.

Outdoor weekends, DJ workshops, youth theatre, fashion design with the homeless and a community café represent just a flavour of the breadth and innovation of the projects. The scheme has supported activities across culture and the arts, environment, health, sport and education. The range of beneficiaries includes homeless, refugees, elderly, young people and minority ethnic groups.

LUCI is now well known, both within the University and in the local community. A buscon project, Street Vibes, exemplifies the unique skills and enthusiasm applied by the volunteers, Leeds Student Radio and Community

Action volunteers worked with a group of young people referred by Social Services. A course of radio and media workshops introduced young people to the technical skills required to work in broadcasting. They aired a live radio show and were all given a CD of their work. Projects like this not only equip young people with skills but also help to break down social barriers and perceptions of higher education.

Whilst the majority of the volunteering activity takes place in the areas in which students live the University has increasingly sought to play a larger role in supporting the regeneration of the more deprived wards of the city. For example, Culture Kids is a hard-fitting collaborative project between West Yorkshire Police, the University and other businesses in the city tackling the harsh reality of race/hate crime. The initiative is aimed at Year 6 pupils attending primary schools in hot-spot areas across Leeds, with the aim of reducing incidences of race/hate crime. Workshops led by volunteers from the University aim to challenge stereotypes and give the young people a greater awareness of other cultures. Volunteers from a variety of cultural backgrounds have participated in the project, delivering interactive activities including: sushi making and tasting, decorating a model house for Chinese New Year, origami and jewellery making. Although the project tackles a very serious issue, volunteers and pupils alike spend their time exploring the subject matter in a thoroughly enjoyable and memorable way (B13).

Clean, visually attractive, safe and healthy neighbouring communities are of importance to the University, our students and local residents alike. The University is involved in a number of initiatives which are essential in planning for student arrival and departure and cover a spectrum of issues including crime reduction, safety, health and well-being, minimising environmental impact and integration into new communities.

The Lip Your Street (LVS) environmental programme was set up in 2002 in response to students' desire to improve the environment of inner North-West Leeds and build safe and attractive spaces for both local residents and students alike. LVS is a collaborative project delivered by the University of Leeds, LUU and Community Action Leeds Ltd. It involves a diverse range of environmental projects such as clean ups, graffiti

removal, legal graffiti walls, recycling and the annual 'Bargain Hunt' in which students sell or donate clothes, books and other goods at a public fair in Hyde Park. Up Your Street is jointly funded by the University of Leeds and Inner North-West District Partnership and has won numerous civic pride awards and is now integrated in the North-West District Action Plan (B12).

The University is underpinning an assessment of charitable giving which aims to improve co-ordination and impact of fundraising activity across the institution (B2). The aim of this initiative would be to provide an institutional charitable purpose to bring together staff, students and the local communities to work together to support selected good causes.

The city and region has been at the forefront of interfaith interest following the tragedy of the London bombings. The University is well positioned to lead a debate and dialogue between different faiths and cultures and is considering the viability and benefit of implementing an interfaith steering group to promote understanding and tolerance both within the University as well as through engaging with local communities (B1).

Changeover in September and June brings many challenges to the city. The University is actively involved with the Student Changeover Planning Group formed in spring 2006 to manage this process and minimise the impact on the communities within Inner North-West Leeds. The University together with key statutory organisations, local residents and landlords are tackling issues including: refuse collection, noise, fly-posting and leafleting, irresponsible drinking and nuisance promotional vehicles (B10).

High levels of crime, particularly burglary and theft, are synonymous with areas of high student density. These are crimes perpetrated against the community and students rather than by students themselves. The University is a key partner on the Leeds Universities Crime Reduction Partnership, working to improve students' personal safety, reduce burglaries, encourage safer drinking and reduce anti-social behaviour and ultimately reduce crime rates in inner North-West Leeds. The partnership works collaboratively to deliver and support a number of crime reduction and safety

initiatives throughout the year (B7).

A number of initiatives are tied into the arrival of our first-year students, many of whom are newcomers to the city and have limited knowledge about crime or safety. The 'Walksafe' initiative involves patrols by mounted officers on the A660 Otley Road to create a safe corridor for students travelling from the University and their homes.

Campus Watch was launched in January 2005 with the aim of promoting awareness of crime prevention and personal safety amongst students living in University accommodation. The initiative has been extremely useful as a tool for promoting awareness of topical issues such as burglary, vehicle crime and robbery.

Staff from across the University were engaged and gave their support to Leeds Primary Care Trust in the development and production of the Leeds Student Health Needs Assessment. The report identifies a range of specific health issues relating to our students and the communities of North-West Leeds more broadly. The health issues highlighted as a priority for the PCT include access to health services, mental health, sexual health, smoking, alcohol and drugs and physical activity and nutrition. The University shall continue to support Leeds Primary Care Trust through delivering and supporting a number of the recommendations in the report to promote student and the local community's health and well-being (B8).

The University recognises that we have a marked impact on local communities and that tensions inevitably exist in those areas of the city most densely populated by our students. To resolve any tensions which may occur, the University, in partnership with Leeds Metropolitan University, operates a Neighbourhood Helpline service to mediate and provide information on the agencies available to tackle individual problems. The Helpline is a 24-hour dedicated voicemail and email service (0113 3431064 or neighbourhood.helpline@leeds.ac.uk) and is available to both students and local residents, to raise issues of concern or to simply make contact with both institutions regarding their surrounding environment and the communities in which they live (B5).

The Neighbourhood Helpline is neither an emergency service nor a replacement for the support provided by

(right) Joshua King, Capture the Community photo competition

NEIGHBOURHOOD HELPLINE

24 hour voicemail service:
0113 343 1064
neighbourhood.helpline@leeds.ac.uk

For more information about the service go to: www.leeds.ac.uk/helpline



(left) Shin-Yuw Lu, Capture the Community photo competition
(right) Street Vibes radio and media skills workshops, University of Leeds Community Initiative (LUCI)



Leeds City Council Environmental Services and West Yorkshire Police. However, Helpline staff give their full co-operation and work alongside these statutory organisations as and when required, to resolve any matters arising.

The Neighbourhood Helpline seeks to mediate and resolve issues including: uncollected refuse, neglected gardens, noisy neighbours, illegal parking and other environmental problems. The University takes these matters very seriously and will continue working towards alleviating these in Inner North-West Leeds.

To clarify the University's role and responsibilities with regards to students living in non-University accommodation the University has produced a Neighbourhood Helpline Code. The Code outlines the University's procedure in the event of receiving a complaint to the Helpline and as a University Code of Practice students are required to engage in the process as a condition of their admission as part of their Student Contract.

The University, in partnership with LUU, will continue to seek out and implement initiatives to support and encourage students' integration and active citizenship. Two publications which will be developed with this aim are a Community Guide (B3) and a Community Directory (B4). The guide will provide students with all of the necessary information to aid their transition to the Private Rented Sector and live harmoniously within their host communities. The guide shall inform students of the diverse communities in which they live, what they should consider when living in the wider community and ways in which they can interact and get involved i.e. community events and facilities. The Community Directory will provide students with key information on all areas of the city, including social and recreational facilities, crime statistics and transport links to encourage more informed decisions on the diverse areas of the city. In addition the University shall investigate the potential to offer all first year students the opportunity to participate in a module on citizenship (B6).

It is increasingly understood that organisations cannot act in isolation when dealing with the many issues regarding students living in the community. The University shall work in partnership with, among others,

the police, Primary Care Trust, and the District Partnership to tackle issues which not only affect our students but the wider communities of Inner North-West Leeds (B8/9/11). Our work with the Universities' Crime Reduction Partnership will not only protect our students from being victims of crime but reduce the overall crime rates within Inner North-West Leeds, our work with the PCT will not only ensure that students health and welfare is catered for but that the wider community have access to the health resources they require and our work with Area Management shall ensure that student changeover is managed more effectively to lessen the impact on the community and to ensure our students feel welcomed to the city.

3.3 Matching Resources to Needs

The University occupies a site covering approximately 98 acres in the City Centre and has a wealth of cultural, educational and sporting facilities. To quantify this further, the Roger Stevens Building includes 25 lecture theatres, our library houses 2.782m books, 9,500 printed and online periodicals and is home to internationally significant collections including a first folio edition of Shakespeare's work, the campus has 9,000 personal computers, state-of-the-art sports and fitness facilities, the Refectory has been a major music venue in the city since the 1960s and the University has one of the finest chamber music venues in our region (Clothworkers' Centenary Concert Hall).

The University of Leeds has a proud cultural heritage from its historic buildings, museums, galleries and performances to its extensive sports and leisure facilities. The University is represented strategically on the Leeds Cultural Partnership Board to promote and support the cultural development of the city. Many partnership projects have been developed with amongst others Leeds Museum and Galleries, Opera North and Royal Armouries.

The University has numerous cultural and sporting assets which are open freely to the public to take advantage of. Our indoor and outdoor sporting facilities including a state-of-the-art fitness suite, climbing wall,



(left) Bargain Hunt table top sale, Up Your Street
(right) Edward Aitken, Capture the Community photo competition



5-a-side and squash courts and playing fields to mention only a few. The University's cultural assets include music, concerts, plays, art collections and special book collections. In addition the University hosts many public lectures and seminars on a broad range of subjects and interests. All are frequently accessed and utilised by local schools, individuals and community groups.

Our local communities will also be able to take advantage of two major new facilities currently being developed on campus. A brand new, state-of-the-art, public-licensed theatre complex, featuring a 180-seat main auditorium - Stage One and an 80-seat 'black box' - the Alec Clegg Studio is currently being constructed to mark the School of Performance and Cultural Industries return to the main campus in the summer of 2007 within a landmark £5 million building. City residents will also have access to the University's new £9.7 million swimming pool, health and fitness complex, which will be completed in 2009. The University will be working with local schools, community groups and the council's swimming development team to make sure the new pool is accessible for all.

To ensure that the University's resources are maximised and utilised by our local communities we shall undertake an audit of all facilities and resources and publicise a comprehensive availability guide and how they can be accessed (C1).

2007 marks the 800th anniversary of the City of Leeds. As part of the city-wide celebrations, the University of Leeds is involved in a programme of cultural activities including, talks, an awards ceremony celebrating the achievements of individuals and organisations in the city and a day of medieval themed events.

We are also looking to support and enhance the city's key cultural resources. We have entered into a ground-breaking partnership with Opera North to build, challenge and forge connections between the arts and contemporary society. Over the next four years, the collaboration will comprise a broad range of activities including: research, new projects, productions, conferences, educational outreach programmes, internships and student placements.

The University also has a significant human resource. We are the third largest employer in West Yorkshire with over 7,500 members of staff and we are one of the most popular Higher Education Institutions with over 32,000 students. Whilst our staff and students contribute over 100,000 volunteering hours per annum to the city on many worthwhile projects, there are opportunities for the University to make further contributions. Through our work with our city-wide partners the University and LUU shall develop and support further initiatives which respond to emerging local priorities (C2, C3).

Many staff at the University give their time freely to participate in a range of worthwhile volunteering projects. Arranging collections for local charities, mentoring local young people and working as school governors are just some of the many activities they are involved with. To ensure that all staff have the opportunity to participate in volunteering projects the University will develop a clear framework on how to get involved as well as providing volunteering opportunities (C6).

It is also essential that our community partners are able to communicate with our staff and students to raise awareness of the facilities and resources which are available for them to access and engage with the local community (C4).

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is increasingly playing a major role within large companies. In recognition the University has introduced a Corporate Social Responsibility Programme to give students first-hand knowledge about the theory and business benefits of CSR and applies them through working alongside business volunteers supporting the local community. It was also devised to actively encourage students to address employability and transferable skills through volunteering. The programme incorporates workshops from major businesses in the city, followed by a day of volunteering for student and employee visitors and finishing with presentations from the students on what they have learnt from their volunteering experience. The University will further expand the programme to give students across all faculties the opportunity to take part with a long-term view to offering a final year module which will incorporate practical volunteering experience (C7).



(far left) Jeremy Tordjman, Capture the Community photo competition
(left) Secret Santa charity appeal

Review, Monitoring and Reporting

The University will monitor and review the implementation of the Inner North-West Community Strategy against its objectives and ensure that the results are readily available to all stakeholders. Formal reports will be made to the University via the Community and Housing Steering Group.

Specifically the University will:

- Hold an annual Community and Housing Forum to report and discuss work with key stakeholders, including local community groups, on progress against objectives.
- Provide oral reports on progress against objectives at meetings of the Private Rented Sector Strategic Working Group, the Shared Housing Group and North-West District Partnership.
- Provide an annual report on the University's website showing specific progress against all actions set out in the Action Plan.
- Publish the Inner North-West Community Strategy on its website and update the report annually.

This strategy is a dynamic document and subject to change in line with community priorities. Resources and funding will be allocated on a University and community defined priority basis. We will utilise data from the Helpline, feedback from students, staff and the local community to ensure that over the coming years the University and community develop a genuine mutually beneficial dialogue delivering real benefits to our valued communities.

The action plan sets out the activities under the three key themes. Many of these schemes were devised through the consultation and drew upon the ideas of our community.

5 Action Plan

A Communication

	Actions	Outcomes/added value	Timescale	Partnership (*lead partner)
1	Develop a communications plan	■ Effective communications internally and externally ■ Target broader and new audience ■ Create links between internal and external media ■ Avoid duplication	June 2008	UoL*, LUU
2	Establish an internal community and housing steering group	■ To monitor and respond to community and housing issues on behalf of the University ■ To develop University policy in response to community and housing issues ■ Oversees the implementation of the strategy and action plan ■ To steer and guide the work of the Community Policy Officer ■ To promote and support community engagement at the University	June 2007	UoL*, LUU
3	Establish an annual community and housing forum	■ Actively promote the University's community engagement activity ■ To ensure stakeholders within North-West Leeds are involved in dialogue with the University on community and housing issues ■ Report on the progress of the strategy	June 2007	UoL*, LUU
4	Hold an annual meeting with local councils to discuss emerging issues and priorities for the local community and steer the development of new projects to address these	■ To develop University policy in response to community and housing issues ■ To ensure stakeholders within North-West Leeds are involved in dialogue with the University on community and housing issues	Annual (Sept)	
5	Ensure staff and student representation and contribution to key stakeholder groups (e.g. North-West District Partnership, Headingley Forum, Leeds Universities Crime Reduction Partnership)	■ Contribute to social, economic and cultural development of the city ■ Sustained and ongoing dialogue with University stakeholders ■ Collectively address issues and negative perceptions of students ■ Improved student integration into the community ■ Increased student engagement in local democratic processes ■ Potential to match resources for broader community projects	Ongoing	UoL*, LUU
6	Share best practice with other HEIs through existing Networks (e.g. Student Volunteering England, Russell Group, West Yorkshire HEIs, Yorkshire Universities, Universities UK)	■ Build on and develop projects with proven success	Ongoing	UoL*, LUU
7	Develop the University's community webpage	■ Improve flow of information and awareness internally and externally ■ Increase awareness of volunteering opportunities and ways to engage with the University ■ Increased public awareness and attendance at events, concerts, lectures and seminars, exhibitions, discussion and reading groups	Ongoing	UoL*, LUU
8	Publish a community e-zine (4 circulations per annum)	■ Improve flow of information and awareness internally and externally ■ Promote achievements and opportunities	Ongoing	UoL*, LUU
9	Annual web-based update on the University's community engagement and progress of strategy	■ Improve flow of information and awareness internally and externally ■ Report on the progress of the strategy ■ Promote achievements and opportunities	Annual (June)	UoL*, LUU
10	Develop a Public Engagement Strategy to steer the University's research, teaching and outreach activity through consultation with the broader public	■ High quality research development through a genuine dialogue with hard to reach communities ■ Respond to societal issues through locally applied research	Ongoing	UoL*,



(far left) University of Leeds Volunteering Awards winners.
(left) Wykebeck Primary School, Wild Africa Project

B Cohesive Communities

	Actions	Outcomes added value	Timescale	Partnership ("lead partner")
1	Operational development of a University website allowing groups to provide understanding and resources	- Proactively set up interfaith projects - Promote and support interfaith projects at the University - Collectively respond to local, regional and national concerns - Increased links within the community	June 2007	UoL*, LUU
2	Develop a University policy on charitable giving and fundraising	- Coordinated approach to charitable giving - Improved sense of community amongst staff - Increased support to charitable causes	June 2007	UoL*, LUU
3	Work with LUU to develop a community guide to provide advice and guidance to students about living in the community	- Proactive and positive message informing students of the diverse communities in which they live - Support active citizenship	Sept 2008	UoL*, LUU
4	Support Greater Leeds City Council's graduation of a community strategy to enable support to make informed decisions about where to live in the private sector (e.g. social housing and rent levels)	- Express of students living in other areas of the city - Increased student awareness of locality - Increased student engagement in community activities - Support active citizenship - Proactive and positive message informing students of the diverse communities in which they live	Sept 2008	LUU, Arden Centre*, Unipol, Resident Association groups, UoL*, and students
5	Monitor and report awareness of the neighbourhood scheme, including the involvement of a team of students to work during the University's term and research only with students in students living in non-university accommodation	- Simple and easy operation framework - Open access to the service - More inclusive service - Clarity of roles and responsibilities	Sept 2007	UoL*, LUU, LCC, Environmental Health Services, Anti Social Behaviour Unit, Police
6	Develop the potential to take first year students into the city on a voluntary basis	- Support active citizenship - Increased student awareness of locality - Proactive and positive message informing students of the diverse communities in which they live	Sept 2008	UoL*, LUU
7	Work with other organisations (e.g. other local authorities) to support crime and safety initiatives, which include the Leeds Partnership Crime Reduction Programme	- Reduce crime rates in inner city areas - Cooperatively address crime and students safety - Develop and support awareness campaigns to reduce incidence of crime	Ongoing	West Yorkshire Police*, UoL*, LUU, other HEIs in Leeds, Unipol
8	Work with Leeds Housing Care Trust to provide student health and well-being	- Directly address student health and well-being issues - Develop and support awareness campaigns to reduce (student) needs	Ongoing	Leeds NW PC*, UoL*, LUU
9	Work with other organisations to support engagement in local cultural activities (e.g. art, music, etc.)	- Increased student engagement in local cultural activities - Increased student integration - Support active citizenship	Ongoing	UoL*, LUU
10	Work with local and non-local organisations to support the growth and development of students in the city	- Maximise impact of increased traffic and skills within inner city areas - Provide supporting environment for students	Ongoing	North West Area Management*, UoL*, LUU, Unipol, LMC
11	Work with other organisations to support the growth and development of students in the city	- Develop opportunities for students and staff to get involved with the local community - Increased student engagement in community activities - Increased student engagement in community activities	Ongoing	UoL*, LUU
12	Work with other organisations to support the growth and development of students in the city	- Apply to all needs - Contribute to local student experience and active citizenship - Increased student engagement in community activities	Ongoing	UoL* and CQM
13	Work with other organisations to support the growth and development of students in the city	- Develop opportunities for students and staff to get involved with the local community - Increased student engagement in community activities	Ongoing	UoL*

C Matching Resources to Needs

	Actions	Outcomes added value	Timescale	Partnership ("lead partner")
1	Conduct an audit of facilities and resources available to the public and make details available on the University's website, (e.g. sports venues and services, libraries, lecture and surplus equipment)	- Assessment of University's facilities and resources available to public use - Increased public access to facilities - Ensure surplus equipment is being re-used or recycled wherever possible - Open and transparent access to University/ Students Union facilities and resources - Information about facilities and resources available to the community	August 08	UoL*, LUU
2	Work with LUU to support student activities in the local community	- Sport clubs and societies encouraged to set up community projects - Community groups and individuals involved in University/ Students Union activities	Ongoing	UoL*, LUU
3	Produce a list of local facilities and resources available to University staff and students (e.g. community resources and events)	- Raise awareness of community facilities and events to support community engagement - Increased staff and student engagement in community activities	Ongoing	North-West Area Management Team*, UoL*
4	Work with the University's stakeholders to identify and support initiatives which respond to emerging local priorities	- Responsive to changing needs - Avoid duplication - Participation of University in city partnership activities	Ongoing	UoL*, LUU, Police, Leeds Cares, LCC
5	Work with facilities to link student research modules to research needs in the city	- Research directed towards local needs and requirements - Increased links within the community and voluntary sector	Ongoing	UoL*
6	Work with Director of Well-being, Safety and Health to enhance the opportunities for staff to further engage in volunteering activity within the community	- Development of skills in a wide range of staff - Increased staff engagement in community activities	Ongoing	UoL*
7	Work with facilities to create links with businesses in the city and give students first-hand knowledge of the Corporate Social Responsibility agenda	- Increased student engagement in community activities - Increased student employability skills - Improved links to the city and increased interaction with city-wide partners	Ongoing	UoL*, Leeds Cares



(far left) The new building at the heart of the Innovation Hub
(left) Connel Goundry, Capture the Community photo competition

Broader University Engagement

Environmental Engagement

The University was ranked the top university in 2007's Business in the Environment regional index for our environmental management and performance.

We are committed to sustainable development and conduct our activities to reflect environmental best practice. From international environmental research to local environmental initiatives, the University is expanding its environmental agenda.

The University understands that through its size and location it has a significant environmental impact on the local community. The issue of greatest concern to the local community is the volume of traffic and associated problems of parking and congestion generated by staff and students.

The University has a comprehensive Transport Plan, to manage the growth in numbers accessing the campus, by offering a range of alternative travel initiatives. The plan aims to reduce congestion, demand for car parking spaces, environmental pollution and visual intrusion caused by parked vehicles. This creates a better local environment for people working and studying at the University or living close by. Since 2003 students have not been permitted to park on the main campus and they are actively discouraged from bringing cars to Leeds. Information on alternative methods of travel to the University is provided in the annual University Travel Guide.

Discounts are combined with incentives and schemes such as car sharing, Wizz-Go (hire car scheme), secure cycling facilities and staff and student public transport

discounts to encourage staff and students to consider alternative methods of travel.

As part of the University's commitment to implementing the Transport Plan, an annual survey is conducted to identify the travel patterns of staff and students. This helps us develop new initiatives to enable staff and students to make choices about how they travel to and from the University and reduce our environmental impact.

Economic Engagement

The University of Leeds remains at the forefront of Higher Education's promotion of innovations and partnership activities. Such enterprises are commonly referred to as the University's "Knowledge Transfer" activities, and reflect additional opportunities and developments arising from the expansion of the knowledge economy. This work ensures that local businesses are able to tap into the research expertise of the University.

Outreach and Aspiration Raising Engagement

Educational outreach activities are delivered by our nine faculties in schools and colleges across the region. Activities are delivered by staff and students and, annually, over 20,000 young people and more than 200 schools in the region receive support from the University.

Many people face considerable disadvantage and disincentive to pursue a course of study and the

University delivers an extensive programme of financial and non-financial support to university age students. We offer a comprehensive range of bursaries and scholarships to support young people throughout their studies. To support our potential and existing undergraduates the University has generated a total of £2m of external donor sponsorship to support scholarships. In addition to this, the University has committed over £2m in 2006-7 to bursaries and scholarships, rising to over £8m per year in 2010.

The University also supports adult learners through its Lifelong Learning Centre which offers tailored programmes to support local people to access Higher Education, Preparation for Higher Education, Open Study, part-time degrees and certificates as well as foundation degrees have all been developed to enable adults to study in a suitable and manageable way. Specialist programmes to support lone parents, long-term unemployed older men and those on incapacity benefit have also been developed to directly address the regions priorities. These programmes have received national and international interest demonstrating the ways in which a university can directly contribute to the region and its people.



(far left) Kleos Cesar, Capture the Community photo competition
(left) Shirley Yeadon, Capture the Community photo competition





UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Access and Community Engagement
University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT, UK
t +44 (0)113 343 3378
f +44 (0)113 343 4053
e community@leeds.ac.uk
w www.leeds.ac.uk/ace

National HMO Lobby

Balanced Communities & STUDENTIFICATION *Problems and Solutions*



2008

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Note HMOs are defined as in housing legislation throughout the UK (see the National HMO Lobby's Briefing Bulletin [What is a HMO?](#))

Foreword

THE NATIONAL HMO LOBBY is a network of local community associations trying to redress the impact on their communities of concentrations of shared houses or houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). Begun in 2000, the Lobby now comprises some fifty groups in over thirty towns, in all the countries and regions of the UK. Information on the Lobby and its lobbying is available on the website at www.hmolobby.org.uk.

Over the years, the Lobby has provided support for its members. It has circulated information on HMOs in Briefing Bulletins, and it has enabled debate through its Discussion Documents. And the Lobby of course has lobbied - for recognition of the problem of HMOs, and for national legislation to tackle this, especially in housing and planning - specifically for licensing of HMOs and for planning controls in the UK's Use Classes Orders. In this, we are supported by our elected representatives.

Nationally, last year, many of our MPs joined forces to set up the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Balanced & Sustainable Communities, and in Parliament, members of this Group have raised the issue of HMOs.

Locally, also last year, many of our local councillors joined forces to set up the Councillors Campaign for Balanced Communities. Meanwhile, councils have sent delegations to Westminster, and have adopted motions calling for national action on the issue of HMOs.

In fact, national government has acknowledged that concentrations of HMOs cause problems for communities. Three recent reports have identified different aspects of these problems - CLG Housing Research *Summary 228 Dealing with 'Problem' Private Rented Housing* (2006), House of Commons, CLG Committee *Coastal Towns* (2007) and CLG, *Evaluating the impact of HMO and Selective Licensing: the baseline before licensing in April 2006*. (2007).

Local government has recognised the problems caused by concentrations of HMOs in very practical ways. In their planning policies, some have sought to resist concentrations (like Leeds), or have proposed thresholds (like Loughborough) or again have promoted purpose-built developments as an alternative to student HMOs (like Newcastle).

There is after all no question that the major market for HMOs is student demand, or studentification - hence the emphasis of *Balanced Communities & Studentification*

Universities have admitted that there is an issue. In 2006, Universities UK published *Studentification: a guide to opportunities, challenges and practice*. Unfortunately, this guide fudged the real issue, and offered answers only to the superficial effects of studentification.

In 2007, the National Union of Students published *Students in the Community: Working together to achieve harmony*. Unfortunately, this denied the existence of the problem altogether.

Balanced Communities & Studentification for the first time publishes the perspective of those at the sharp end, the community. But that is not the only way it is innovative. For the first time, it suggests a workable idea of 'balanced community'. For the first time, it provides a systematic analysis of 'studentification'. And for the first time, it proposes a programme of action which tackles the root cause of the problem (rather than tinkering with its effects). In a gesture of collegiality, *Balanced Communities & Studentification* is launched at the Conference of the Councillors Campaign for Balanced Communities in Nottingham on 13 March 2008.

Dr Richard Tyler, Co-ordinator, National HMO Lobby

1 Introduction

01 Community *BALANCED COMMUNITIES & STUDENTIFICATION* is essentially about community, its loss and restoration, what it should be, why it goes wrong, how it can be put right. But what is a community, what is meant by the word? A quick search of a language corpus shows that the term 'community' is used in numerous contexts, and in many ways. And the reason for this is that it has a long history of positive 'warmly persuasive' associations. Consequently, the term is frequently appropriated for polemical purposes, to give a positive gloss to a measure which has nothing to do with community in any meaningful sense. A prime example was the infamous Community Charge - immediately recognised for what it was, and re-christened the Poll Tax. In cases like this, 'community' is used simply as a synonym for 'people', implying that a random group of people has something in common, when in fact it does not. This is the *meaningless* sense of 'community'.

02 Spirit Any *meaningful* use of the term 'community' must go beyond the sense simply of 'population'. The origin of the word indicates what this is - it derives from the term 'common'. A *community* then is in fact a group of people with *something in common*. The word implies *many* acting 'as one'. This commonality is sustained by what social scientists call social capital - which includes things like social networks (simple contacts between people, companionship) and social norms (ways of behaving - like neighbours looking after each others' children, pets, gardens, taking in parcels, holding keys, keeping the neighbourhood clean and quiet and safe) and social sanctions (penalties for mis-behaviour) - otherwise known as *community spirit*.

03 Categories Of course, there are many kinds of communities. And most people belong to several at once. But they tend to fall into three main groups.

There are *original communities*, and what they have in common (looking back) is their origins. The main examples are ethnic communities.

There are those which look around, *local communities* - what they have in common is a concern for the neighbourhood in which they find themselves.

Looking forward, there are *vocational communities*, groups of people with common goals - such as a religious vocation or an occupational vocation (like being a student).

04 Policy With the new millennium, the idea of 'community' figured large in government policy. A key principle in the Housing Green Paper *Quality & Choice* (DETR, 2000) was 'Promoting sustainable development that supports thriving, balanced communities.' When the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister succeeded the DETR in 2002, it adopted the motto *Creating Sustainable Communities*, and in 2006, it was succeeded in turn by the Department for Communities & Local Government. Local authority plans frequently refer to 'balanced communities'. The idea of the 'balanced community' therefore is prominent in national and local policy, frequently combined with 'sustainable community'. But has government given adequate consideration to the concept of community?

See for instance, Belfast: *Issues Paper on HMOs: 3 Balanced Communities*; Coleraine: *Balanced Communities Review Group*; Durham: *Planning for Housing: '8 Provision of Balanced Communities*'; Loughborough: *Student Housing Provision: 'In search of a balanced community*'; Nottingham: *Building Balanced Communities*.

② Balanced Communities

05 Sustainability ALL LOCAL COMMUNITIES, as communities, want to be sustainable. The Department for Communities & Local Government explains ‘sustainable communities’ as ‘places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.’ CLG identifies eight components – sustainable communities are active, inclusive & safe, well run, environmentally sensitive, well designed & built, well connected, thriving, well served, and fair for everyone. But this definition entirely overlooks the obvious fact that what’s necessary for a sustainable community is a resident population willing and able to sustain that community.

06 Polarisation Local populations can be disabled in a number of ways, all of which are types of polarisation. Polarisation can mean *opposition* – where the neighbourhood becomes a place of contest between competing factions. Or polarisation can mean *one-sidedness*. Again, this can take a variety of forms – exclusive communities (dominated by gated enclaves of the privileged) or excluded communities (dominated by ghettos of the deprived). Another is domination by *transience*. A transient population lacks the *ability* to be sustainable (community campaigns often take years of concerted action). It also lacks the *will* (clearly, members of the population are only briefly committed to the neighbourhood). Of course, one type of polarisation can easily slide into the other.

07 Balance Localities certainly need balanced communities. There is no possibility of a sustainable community without an appropriate balance between settled residents and a transient population. But balance is also needed for social justice. All forms of polarisation are based on exclusion – the voluntary segregation of an exclusive group, or the disadvantaged, excluded involuntarily. And balance is also needed for the common welfare. Every social grouping has its strengths and weaknesses, whether this arises from age or gender or culture. A balance between diverse groups maximises the potential social capital of any local community. But government makes no attempt to define what is meant by ‘a balanced community’. It is nowhere defined in national policies, and rarely in local policies.

The Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan *Issues Paper on HMOs* (2005) defined a balanced community as ‘one that is not dominated by one particular household type, size or tenure.’ This would imply a community made up, for instance, of equal shares of the three main housing tenures – owner-occupation, social renting and private renting. But this would be a very odd community, quite at odds with normal experience, where owner-occupation dominates.

08 Definition The key problem identified by the members of the Lobby is *demographic imbalance* in their neighbourhoods, which leads to rising problems and declining community, in short, to unsustainability. The imbalance arises from concentrations of HMOs, whose distinctive demographic (typically, young, high-density, transient, and unstructured) destabilises the local community. The members of the Lobby seek to restore *balance* to their communities, in order to restore their *sustainability*. Belfast’s effort shows that *equal* proportions in the mix are not the answer. As an alternative, the Lobby proposes reference to *normal* proportions, that is, the mix or balance which is experienced by most people.

A balanced community is a **community which approximates national demographic norms**. A number of points must be made.

- First of all, this definition is not *prescriptive*: it is not intended to specify that all communities should match these norms (rather, it provides guidance to those communities who feel that they have become imbalanced).
- Secondly, it is *descriptive*: that is, it is based on the norms as they are, here and now (they were different in the past and will change in the future, they are different in other countries) – the point being that they reflect contemporary experience.
- Thirdly, the reference is to *approximations*, not tight criteria.
- Finally, the definition is *variable* – different norms will be relevant in different circumstances.

09 Norm A whole range of norms might be invoked in different situations. The latest *Census* provides a variety of statistics, such as the five main age bands of the population – children (up to 15 years) comprise 20%, ‘young adults’ (16-29) comprise 17.5%, adults (30-44 and 45-59) comprise 41.5% together, and older people (60 plus) comprise 21%. The current *Survey of English Housing* provides the proportions of different forms of housing, such as – *Housing Tenure*: 70% are owner-occupied, 18% social rented, and 12% private rented (Table 1); *Household Type*: 64% are families, 29% one-person, and 7% HMO (Table 5) [previous year, *Accommodation Type*: 82% are houses, and 17% flats (1% other)]. The Lobby’s concern is with the sustainability of communities – the most relevant *balance* therefore is between household types (since families in general have a stronger commitment to permanence than single people or multiple households [indeed, private rented housing which includes HMOs has an average tenancy of only eighteen months]). Allowing for a degree of deviation from the norm [see para 10 below] the Lobby’s particular criteria for a *balanced community* are (a) *not less than 60% families*, (b) *not more than 33% one-person households*, and (c) *not more than 10% HMOs*. (It is important to note that household proportions and population proportions are not the same, as households vary in size. One-person households are single of course, while the average family household comprises about two-and-a-half persons, and the average HMO at least five persons. On this basis, the normal population balance is 72% in families, 12% single people and 15% in HMOs.)

10 Approximation What degree of deviation from the norm remains acceptable? A standard deviation could be adopted (10%, 20%, 25%, 33%, 50%). But a low figure is clearly inappropriate if the norm is low (for instance, a 10% deviation from a 7% norm allows for a range of 6-8% only) – while a high figure is equally inappropriate for a high norm (a 50% deviation from 66% allows for a range from 33-99%!). The answer evidently is a variable deviation – that is, a deviation which varies from low for a high norm, rising to a high deviation for a low norm. (Thus, the Lobby’s criteria in para 09 above are based on a 10% deviation for family households [norm 66%], a 20% deviation for single persons [norm 28%] and a 50% deviation for HMOs [norm 7%]. As a rule of thumb, the deviation [Y] from a norm [X] can be calculated as $Y = (100 - X) \div 2$.)

11 Application How large should the area covered be? There is a range of possibilities. (a) *Street* or block (which is the basis for *Glasgow’s* policy on HMOs – not more than 5% per street generally, or 10% in certain areas). (b) *Neighbourhood*, comprising several streets (the basis for *Loughborough’s* ‘Threshold Approach’ to student housing – using Small Output Areas from the Census, a neighbourhood is understood as the Home Output Area plus all other Small Output Areas sharing a boundary with that area). (c) *Community*, comprising several neighbourhoods (Leeds City Council defines Community Areas for the purpose of allocating Section 106 funds – they correspond to areas recognised as communities by local residents [for a variation, based on Output Areas, see R Unsworth & J Stillwell, *Twenty-First Century Leeds*, University of Leeds, 2004, pp18-20]).

12 Tipping Point The tipping-point is the threshold at which a deviation departs so far from the norm that a community tips from balance to un-balance. With regard to HMOs, the tipping-point can be expressed in terms both of population (20%) and of properties (10%).

(1) The HMO tipping-point occurs *when HMO occupants exceed 20% of the population*. Normally, HMO occupants account for about 15% of the population – the tipping-point represents a 33% deviation. It also significantly exceeds the whole of the ‘young adult’ band of the population (16-29 year-olds are 17.5%). (Any community begins to seem unbalanced when any of the five main age-bands exceeds one-in-five of the population.)

(2) The HMO tipping-point also occurs *when HMOs exceed 10% of the properties*. Normally, HMOs account for 7% of households – the tipping-point represents a 50% deviation. At the same time, given the comparatively large numbers in HMO households, if HMOs are 10% of households, then their occupants account for about 20% of the whole population (depending on the local balance of families and one-person households).

The most common cause of a tipping-point for HMOs is demand by students for shared houses - or studentification.

③ Studentification

13 Concept STUDENTIFICATION is a term coined (by Darren Smith in 2002) to identify the process and the product of concentrated student settlement in university towns in the UK. It may be defined as **the substitution of a local community by a student community**. Here, ♦ ‘substitute’ means displacement of one community, and replacement by another, ♦ ‘community’ means a group of people with a common ground and continuity through time (para 02), ♦ ‘local community’ means one whose ground is their locality, and ♦ ‘student community’ means one with a vocational ground (para 03).

14 Structural problems Studentification comprises different sorts of problem. The principal, *structural problem* is demographic: studentification entails demographic imbalance. Until the last decade, high concentrations of students were unusual. But now, in the new millennium, it is common in university towns for a core of several (or many) streets to be dominated by a student population, with three particular characteristics – this population is transient (moving annually, leaving after three years), it is seasonal (resident for two-thirds of the year) and it is young (late teens, early twenties). The demographic pattern varies: Leeds, for instance, is a large city, with a large student population concentrated in a very compact area (though proportionately small in the city as a whole) [the redbrick model]; Loughborough by contrast is a small town with a proportionately very high student population [the smalltown model].

15 Functional problems The secondary, *functional problems* (effects) arise directly and indirectly from the primary problem, the cause. At least fifteen ‘symptoms of studentification’ may be identified (para 20). On the one hand, these include a *rise* in a range of problems, social, environmental, economic (especially crime, squalor and a resort economy). On the other hand, secondary problems consist of *decline* of local social capital (or community spirit).

16 Experiential problems Studentification is also an *experience*, which produces a sense of alienation among residents. This feeling arises from a number of factors. The structural problems (the demographic imbalance) lead to a sense of oppression in public places (the crowding), and by contrast a sense of isolation at home (the loss of networks). The functional problems lead to fear of crime, to a revulsion from the squalor of the environment, and a sense of rejection by the resort economy. Underlying these, residents feel anger at the self-interest of universities & landlords, and despair at their neglect by government.

17 Cause Many parties bear responsibility for the development of studentification.

- *National government* has expanded HE, but has failed to provide the resources and powers necessary to manage the accommodation implications.
- *Universities* have left the accommodation of their students to an unregulated market.
- *Students* have usually congregated in what are perceived to be ‘student areas’.
- *Landlords* and their agents have exploited the demand for student housing.
- *Local government* has neglected the management of local housing developments.
- *Communities* have sometimes panicked and fled areas perceived as being invaded.

18 Course Typical stages may be identified in the process of studentification.

(1) The *Ivory Tower* stage: the university establishes a campus to accommodate its core business (classrooms, libs, labs, offices, etc)

(2) The *Cloister* stage: the university provides purpose-built accommodation for non-local students, usually close to the Ivory Tower, and cloistered from the host community.

(3) The *Settlement* stage: student overspill from the Cloister settles in private accommodation in the neighbouring host community.

(4) The *Studentification* stage: expansion of student numbers leads to further pressure from, and domination by, students of the areas already settled around the Cloisters: this is the moment of *studentification*. If the proportion remains at (or below) one in five, it is readily accommodated (and indeed has been for many years in many university towns). But one-in-five is the 'tipping-point' (para 12). When it exceeds this proportion, stresses appear. When students number *one in four*, this impacts on the character of the area, and challenges social cohesion. If students number *one in three*, the disproportion is marked, the student community achieves autonomy and becomes the dominant social group (being larger than any other segment), and cohesion is lost. In some cases, imbalance may increase, and students equal (or even outnumber) the rest of the population combined.

(5) The *Destudentification* stage: in the aftermath of *studentification* (already experienced by some communities), evacuation of the neighbourhood (to new 'Cloisters' or purpose-built housing) leads to loss of demand, and collapse of the local housing market.

19 Consequence Studentification includes a number of *effects* of demographic imbalance (para 20). In particular, it also generates difficult relationships between the two communities at the sharp end – local residents and students themselves. And different perspectives on those relationships have developed.

Residents adopt a range of stances.

- *Militants*: some residents (especially local youth) develop strong antipathy to students.
- *Passivists*: the majority of residents maintain a low profile, and respond to circumstances; eventually, pushed by declining amenity, and pulled by rising property prices, many emigrate.
- *Idealists*: some residents empathise with, support and defend students.
- *Realists*: some resident activists attempt to analyse studentification as a problem, and to address its causes.

Students also manifest a range of stances (in parallel with residents).

- *Colonists*: some students assert territorial claims to 'student areas'.
- *Camp-followers*: the majority of students follow their predecessors into 'student areas', and pursue their own interests, oblivious of their circumstances.
- *Idealists*: some students identify with the local community, and try 'to put something back'.
- *Realists*: some students recognise studentification as a problem.

The Groundhog Effect: relations between residents and students are complicated by the range of different reactions (and their inter-relations). But on-going dialogue is made almost impossible by the 'groundhog effect' of studentification. ● As temporary residents, students are unaware of the *past* of an area, and have no knowledge that it was ever otherwise. ● Similarly, as temporary residents without a *future* in the area, many students are unable to engage in long-term strategies. ● Relations between residents and students therefore remain in an eternal *present*, and have to be renewed every year, with each new cohort of students.

Despite the aspirations of the Idealists on both sides, residents and students remain distinct communities. The only possible relation between Colonists and Militants is confrontation (like the Belfast Incident of 23 Nov 2004). Camp-followers and Passivists remain largely oblivious of each other. But even Idealists follow parallel paths: in Leeds 6, for instance, there are many local community associations addressing neighbourhood issues (Headingley Network, Far Headingley Village Society, South Headingley Community Association, etc, etc); but nevertheless, students (in good faith) have independently established the 'LS6 Project' to do exactly the same. A Realist approach is the only viable option.

4 Problems

20 Symptoms of Studentification FIFTEEN SYMPTOMS may be identified. They arise directly and indirectly from the primary problem of demographic imbalance. On the one hand, they include a *rise* in a range of problems (especially crime, squalor and a resort economy): some problems are social, some problems are environmental, and some are economic; affecting all these are traffic problems, and overwhelming pressure on public services. On the other hand, secondary problems include *decline* of local social capital (or community spirit), and loss of services.

INCREASE OF PROBLEMS

Social Problems

(1) Anti-Social Behaviour: endemic low-level ASB, including noise nuisance, minor vandalism, public drunkenness, evacuation.

(2) Crime: high rates, especially burglary.

(3) Insurance: owners pay top premiums for house, contents, vehicle insurance.

Environmental Problems

(4) Squalor: surrounded by litter, rubbish, flytipping.

(5) Dereliction: neglect of houses and gardens, over-development of houses and gardens.

(6) Street Blight: letting boards, flyposting, security grilles.

Economic Problems

(7) Distorted Retail: orientation towards a very specific market, manifest in the particular range of lines in shops, and the range of retail outlets (especially increased numbers of pubs, take-aways and letting agencies).

(8) Fluctuating Market: from high demand (term-time) to low demand (in vacations).

(9) Casualised Employment: local employment becomes increasingly seasonal (term) and part-time (evening).

Generic Problems

(10) Carparking: obstructs pavements for pedestrians, and access by emergency vehicles, cleansing, buses, and residents.

(11) Services Overwhelmed: not only disproportionate demands on public services like cleansing and policing, housing and planning, but also indirectly the drain of resources away from provision in other areas [and neither students nor landlords pay Council Tax or Business Tax].

DECLINE OF COMMUNITY

(12) Decimation: student demand gives rise to high property prices and low amenity, encouraging emigration and making immigration almost impossible, with the result that there are fewer elders (retaining past memories), fewer adults (present activists) and fewer children (the community's future).

(13) Disruption: most owners and occupiers are absentees (hence disengaged), the young and the old especially are isolated (losing their peers), and the neighbourhood loses its social capital or 'community spirit' (its social networks, social norms and social sanctions).

(14) Distress: deep and rapid changes are felt acutely: the population imbalance itself is stressful (public oppression, private isolation), the declining amenity is alienating (fear of crime, revulsion from squalor, exclusion from the economy), and residents feel anger and despair at their disempowerment.

(15) Services Underwhelmed: school closures as families depart (ironically, reducing education).

5 Solution

21 Ten Point Plan IS THERE A SOLUTION? In many communities, the damage has been done, and there will be no return to the previous balance. Also, there is no single solution - numerous measures are necessary. Dealing with the problems of polarisation, and restoring sustainability, requires concerted action. No one policy will resolve polarisation, nor will one party. All concerned must act together, council and community, universities and students, and landlords. Since polarisation in general, and studentification especially, involve a particular pattern of land-use, *planning* measures are crucial. At the same time, the actual land use is residential, so *housing* measures have a vital bearing. Finally, if cumulative action is necessary, it needs to be co-ordinated – so *management* measures are needed. In all, ten key actions need to be taken. (NB the measures considered here could be applied to any form of polarisation caused by high turnover.)

22 First, Accommodation Audit The first requirement is to establish the breadth and depth of the problem – where is the transient population located, and to what degree of penetration? How does it change, year by year? The local university is the key actor here, as it knows where its students live (of course, collective not individual data on distribution is what is needed). Students of course provide their university with this information. If necessary, the council and the community may need to lobby the university to provide it.

The University of Leeds provides annual data on the distribution throughout the city of its students.

Leeds and Nottingham have established a Shared Housing Group and a Student Strategy Leadership Group respectively, comprising representatives of all local stakeholders.

23 Second, Co-ordination In order to work together, stakeholders need some form of forum. All are responsible for actively engaging, but it is up to the local authority to set up such a forum.

24 Third, Action Plan Each stakeholder will need its own strategy (see Section 6). But these will be ineffective without coordination. Again, the local authority needs to take the initiative, but other stakeholders must support the council.

Leeds and Nottingham have both adopted Student Housing Action Plans.

The National HMO Lobby has produced a *Notification Form* for licensable HMOs. See also *'What is a HMO?'*

25 Fourth, Mandatory HMO Licensing Through the Housing Act 2004, the government has introduced licensing of HMOs in England & Wales. With regard to polarisation, licensing's most useful role is in identifying the location of HMOs, hence where the transient population is located. By law, local authorities now have to issue licences, and the landlords have to apply for them. (HEIs are also required to adopt codes of practice for their properties.) Communities and students have a shared interest in supporting licensing – for instance, by reporting licensable HMOs to the council. (In Scotland, all HMOs are already subject to licensing. In Northern Ireland, all are in selected areas, and very large HMOs elsewhere.)

26 Fifth, Additional HMO Licensing Mandatory licensing applies only to larger HMOs. But the Housing Act provides also for the licensing of all additional HMOs in designated areas, in England & Wales. Additional HMO licensing is essential, to take full advantage of licensing (and to remove an escape route for any landlords trying to avoid mandatory licensing). The local authority has to apply to government to introduce additional licensing. Responsible members of the private rented sector (PRS) can support the council. The community, students and universities have a shared interest in lobbying the authority to take action. And the government should support the authority's application.

Southampton is committed to applying for additional HMO licensing throughout the city.

Headingley Development Trust in Leeds is reviving local amenity, and planning a Community Land Trust to intervene in the local housing market.

27 Sixth, Restoration of Balance A destabilised neighbourhood will not easily re-balance itself. Studentification makes this very difficult. In due course, 'de-studentification' may provide opportunities. Only the resident population itself can restore sustainability to a community. Above all, it needs commitment, in order to do so. But all stakeholders can lobby for, and provide support to, the re-introduction of long-term residents, especially families (whether partners only, or partners with dependants, or single people with dependants), especially within policy frameworks set by local and national government.

28 Seventh, Areas of Restraint Local planning authorities around the country are adopting a range of local HMO plans to deal with the problems of concentrations of HMOs or student accommodation (the new planning regime of Local Development Frameworks gives opportunities to do this). One of these plans is the idea of an 'Area of Restraint', in order to resist further development where there are already high concentrations. The council is of course the lead actor here. Community associations can lobby for some form of restraint, while universities, students and the PRS can offer their support. National government too, through the Planning Inspectorate, can support such policy initiatives.

The best-known such policy is Leeds ASHORE (Area of Student Housing Restraint), which has been supported by Planning Inspectors, though redesignated an 'Area of Housing Mix'.

Glasgow has set ceilings for the proportion of HMOs in a neighbourhood. Loughborough is adopting a series of thresholds which will govern planning permission.

29 Eighth, Threshold Policy Another measure that has been proposed by local councils is the idea of some sort of threshold, beyond which further development of HMOs or student accommodation will be resisted. This is meant to prevent concentrations developing in the first place. Again, the council takes the lead. Universities, students and the PRS can support the council by encouraging the dispersal of student accommodation. The community can lobby for both. And the Planning Inspectorate can support such a policy initiative.

30 Ninth, Purpose Built Development Some councils also support the development of purpose-built housing for students. Such housing takes the pressure off conversion of family homes into HMOs (and in a time of housing shortage, this is far better than the conversion of family homes into seasonally-occupied second homes). At the same time, the siting of purpose-built development has to be carefully handled, so that it does not in fact increase polarisation. Universities, student unions and developers can take initiatives, independently or together. The council can suggest locations, and communities can lobby for this sort of development. The Planning Inspectorate can be supportive of developments endorsed locally.

There are many joint HEI/PRS ventures of this sort. Of particular interest was NUS's plan for purpose-built co-operative student housing. Newcastle has published guidance on purpose-built sites.

The National HMO Lobby has been lobbying for years. In Northern Ireland, the Dept of the Environment has in fact changed its own Use Classes Order. On 15 January, Planning Minister Iain Wright reported to Parliament that the Use Classes Order in England & Wales in relation to HMOs was to be subject to consultation.

31 Tenth, Use Classes Order Many council ideas are hamstrung by national planning legislation. They can control only developments which need planning permission. Restraint and threshold policies in particular are undermined by the limitations of the current Use Classes Order – which allows family homes to be converted to HMOs without planning permission. A change of the Use Classes Order (redefining HMOs, and subjecting them to planning permission) would make an enormous difference to the power of local councils. Here, it is up to government to take action – and all local stakeholders should lobby the government on this issue.

6 Conclusion

32 Stakeholders WHAT THEN CAN WE DO? Five local stakeholders are involved in studentification, and one national. The local stakeholders include both sides of Higher Education, the universities and their students, they include both local councils and the communities they represent, and they include the private rented sector (PRS), which dominates studentified housing. The national stakeholder is of course the government. All stakeholders supporting the Ten Point Plan need to adopt a strategy towards the polarisation which arises from concentrations of student housing.

33 Community Associations (CAs) The local community has the strongest motive to adopt a strategy, as its very survival depends on resisting polarisation – yet at the same time, it is the weakest of the stakeholders. The community's first job therefore is to build its capacity – organisation is essential (and in a large town, where more than one community association may be involved, co-ordinated action is invaluable - Leeds HMO Lobby and the Nottingham Action Group are examples of umbrella community organisations.). The community may look for outside help – it may even consider setting up a local Development Trust. Otherwise, the local community depends on lobbying – for local housing and planning policies especially – and community associations can support their council's initiatives (especially the introduction of a local Student Housing Strategy). It is important therefore to adopt a clear guiding strategy.

35 Student Unions (SUs) Regrettably, NUS remains in denial over the issue of studentification, though it is students who are at its sharp end (see NUS, *Students in the Community: Working together to achieve harmony*; unfortunately, despite its subtitle, this libels the Lobby). This is not always the case however with local student unions (and not at all with many individual students). Student unions can support housing and planning initiatives by their local councils, and there are some issues where they share an interest with the local community (like additional HMO licensing). Certainly, they too have an interest and an obligation in preparing a strategy for the accommodation of their members.

34 Local Authorities (LAs) The council is the local ringmaster. It has a responsibility to its communities (not to mention a self-interest) to maintain their sustainability. It also has many powers and resources (though not as many as it needs). So, the local council has to take the initiative – in setting up a management structure, in licensing HMOs, and in introducing planning policies. It can support initiatives by other local stakeholders, and it can lobby local universities and national government for supportive action. All councils have a housing strategy – this should include a specific *Student Housing Strategy*, so that developments take place to benefit both students and communities.

36 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) For too long, universities kept aloof from their effect on their host communities (and their government department, the DIUS, still does). But their organisation, Universities UK, has now acknowledged the problems, in their report *Studentification: a guide to opportunities, challenges and practices* (2006): “it is incontrovertible that the negative effects of studentification are evident in several towns and cities across the UK” (para 3.12). Universities can of course provide accommodation for their students, and indeed most do – though rarely for more than a minority. So universities should also support initiatives taken by their local councils to deal with the problems raised by their students living in the private rented sector – ‘in the community’. Indeed, since it is universities which recruit students, they have an obligation to develop a strategy for housing them (see for instance, Leeds University's *Housing Strategy*).

37 Private Rented Sector (PRS) It is both practically and logically difficult for the PRS to develop a strategy. Logically, the PRS is the main agent in developing studentification, and it has the least interest in doing anything about it (in fact, many landlords vigorously oppose local housing and planning strategies). At the same time, practically, the PRS is the least co-ordinated stakeholder – it is made up not only of landlords in competition with each other, but also increasingly with the developers of large-scale purpose-built housing (it also includes letting and managing agents). Nevertheless, responsible landlords and developers can act on and support local council strategies, such as local accreditation and licensing schemes. (A unique organisation grounded in the PRS is Unipol, the student housing charity based in Leeds, which has now organised several national conferences on the issue of studentification.)

38 Her Majesty's Government (HMG) The ultimate responsibility for the mess of studentification however lies with the government, and its incoherent policy development. On the one hand, the government has (laudably) promoted access to higher education – but without a moment's thought to its housing implications, still less to the local effects these will have. On the other hand, national government has steadfastly resisted giving local government the powers it needs to pick up the pieces. Government has turned a deaf ear to lobbying over studentification, and a blind eye to its consequences. (Indeed, ODPM commissioned Universities UK's *Studentification* Guide – but specifically excluded any attention to changes in legislation from its terms of reference.) Stakeholders around the country badly need a coherent strategy for student accommodation from the government.

39 Restoration Since its inception, the National HMO Lobby has lobbied for legislation, both housing and planning, to enable regulation of HMOs. All parts of the UK now have some form of licensing. Northern Ireland has shown the way with planning legislation. The Lobby trusts that the other national authorities will follow suit. With adequate powers, local authorities throughout the UK will be able to address the problem of concentrations of HMOs – whether student HMOs in university towns, or claimant HMOs in seaside towns, or migrant worker HMOs in market towns. Not only may local communities be saved from further erosion – but maybe also, they can begin to see a restoration of their balance and cohesion, and hence their sustainability.

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Local Some members of the National HMO Lobby:

[Broomhill Action & Neighbourhood Group](#) Sheffield

[De Havilland Resident's Association](#) Hatfield

[Egham Residents Association](#) Surrey

[Highfield Residents Association](#) Southampton

[Hillhead Community Council](#) Glasgow

[Jesmond Residents Association](#) Newcastle-upon-Tyne

[Leeds HMO Lobby](#) Leeds

[Nottingham Action Group](#) Nottingham

[Redland & Cotham Amenities Society](#) Bristol

[Spon End & Chapelfields Community Forum](#) Coventry

[Talbot Village Residents Association](#) Poole

[Winton Community Forum](#) Bournemouth

National

[National HMO Lobby](#) an association of community groups concerned to ameliorate the impact of concentrations of HMOs on their communities

[National HMO Network](#) aims to promote a wider understanding of all aspects of HMOs

International

[Town Gown World](#) on town and gown planning from around the world

Other Organisations

[Department for Communities & Local Government](#) responsible for housing and planning in England & Wales

[The Scottish Government](#) responsible for housing & planning in Scotland

[Northern Ireland Executive](#) responsible for housing & planning in Northern Ireland

[Local Government Association](#) representing local authorities

[Universities UK](#) representing Higher Education Institutions

[National Union of Students](#) representing students

[Landlords UK](#) providing links to landlord associations

Balanced Communities and Studentification



National HMO Lobby
Cardigan Centre, 145-147 Cardigan Road, Leeds LS6 1LJ
2008