



The Government's Response to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion



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February 2008

Product Code: 07 CFU 05062

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Foreword



In June 2007, the Commission on Integration and Cohesion delivered a serious and ambitious report to government based on in depth consultation. *Our Shared Future* not only identifies practical ways to build cohesion based on the best of what is already underway, its strong research section also gives us, for the first time, an understanding of cohesion that is no longer intuitive but is based on solid evidence and analysis. Its ideas for renewed local and national collaboration point the way ahead for much of our work in this area.

The Commission's report has already influenced a range of policies across government. It has changed the tone and nature of the debate around how best to bring people of different backgrounds together in local communities and empower them to shape the decisions which affect them. And many local authorities are already using it to refresh and improve their cohesion strategies.

I am delighted to set out my detailed response to the Commission's recommendations and in doing so commit to maintaining the momentum it has created. The Commission identified four principles to frame their report: a sense of shared futures; a model of rights and responsibilities; an emphasis on mutual respect and civility; and a commitment to deliver visible social justice. Alongside this, sat a need for practical action to promote positive relationships between people and turn these principles into reality.

This response sets out how the Government is following up all of the Commission's 57 recommendations – what we have already done, what we will do in the future and how we will further develop the Commission's ideas. It sets out a new clarity on, and commitment to, delivering cohesive and integrated communities, increased investment in cohesion and a new public service agreement for cohesive, empowered and active communities.

At the heart of the Government's approach to cohesion, like the Commission's, is the principle that cohesion is something that can only be understood and built locally. Central Government's role is to set the national framework within which Local Authorities and their partners can deliver improvements to cohesion. Our response also sets out how we will support local delivery of cohesion through six key principles: a move away from a "one size fits all" approach; mainstreaming of cohesion into wider policy areas; a national framework for local support and guidance; integration of new migrants and existing communities; building positive relationships; and a stronger focus on what works.

I am grateful to Darra Singh and his Commissioners for their hard work and energy, and am sure that they will agree that progress on this agenda is visible and sustained.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hazel Blears". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line underneath.

Rt Hon Hazel Blears MP

Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Context

1. The Commission on Integration and Cohesion was a fixed-term advisory body, tasked with developing local and practical solutions to building cohesion at a local level. Between August 2006 and June 2007, the Commission embarked on a significant programme of regional visits, round tables and stakeholder consultations, with the aim of assessing progress in cohesion practice since the 'Cantle Report' in 2001¹ and identifying new opportunities for central and local government to improve their work in this area.
2. The Commission's report *Our Shared Future*² was published in June 2007 and set out practical proposals for building cohesion and integration at a local level. The report contained a number of specific recommendations and practical proposals for local cohesion work.
3. This document is the second of three elements of the Government's response to the Commission's report. In October 2007 the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government provided an initial response to the Chair of the Commission welcoming the report and setting out key actions going forward.
4. This document builds on that initial response and sets out our detailed response to each of the Commission's recommendations, demonstrating the considerable progress already made across government since the Commission reported, and setting out our commitment to an ongoing programme of work.
5. The final element of the response will be to develop a Cohesion Delivery Framework which will provide further advice for local authorities in delivering cohesion. This will build on existing guidance published by Communities and Local Government, other government departments and bodies such as the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA). Pulling it all together will be a single framework which local authorities will be able to use to analyse the issues for cohesion in their area and develop a plan of action. It will be supported by examples of good practice available from a single website. We plan to have put the parts of the framework together by Summer 2008.

¹ Home Office, *Community Cohesion: A Report of the Independent Review Team Chaired by Ted Cantle*, December 2001

² www.integrationandcohesion.org.uk

What has happened since the Commission published their report?

The new **Migration Impacts Forum** met for the first time in June 2007. Jointly chaired by Home Office and Communities and Local Government ministers, the Forum is contributing to the evidence base on the impacts of migration on communities and public services and best practice on how these challenges can best be met.

The **'Governance of Britain' Green Paper** published in July 2007 opened a new debate about the relationship between government and the citizen aimed at enhancing the rights and responsibilities of the citizen. It reflected many of the central ideas of the Commission and suggested that a clearer definition of citizenship could give young British people as well as recent arrivals looking to become British a better sense of their British identity and the rights, responsibilities and values that accompany it. The Green Paper announced **Lord Goldsmith's Citizenship Review** which is taking forward the exploration of these ideas.

In July 2007 the Department for Children, Schools and Families published **Aiming High for Young People: a ten year strategy for positive activities**. The Strategy underlined the important role positive activities have in developing community cohesion, particularly in bridging the gaps between young people from different ethnic and faith groups as well as improving relationships across different generations.

In July 2007 the Department for Children, Schools and Families also published guidance for schools on the **Duty to Promote Cohesion**. The guidance includes further development of the Commission's recommendations on school linking, as well as practical advice for schools considering how best to meet the new duty, which came into effect from September 2007.

Communities and Local Government's guidance on **Negotiating New Local Area Agreements**, published in September 2007, emphasises that that Local Area Agreements outcomes and performance indicators should be linked to a picture of what a 'sustainable, cohesive community' looks like for the area. Local Area Agreements will provide the framework within which Local Authorities and their partners can bring about improvements in cohesion.

Sir Ronnie Flanagan's **Review of Policing in England and Wales** published its Interim report in September 2007. The report emphasised the role that community policing has to play in building cohesive communities.

In October 2007, the Chancellor announced a new cross government **public service agreement** (PSA 21) to build cohesive, empowered and active communities.

In October 2007 Communities and Local Government launched its **Community Empowerment Action Plan**. This brings together the actions that Communities and Local Government is taking to enable more people to play an active role in the decisions that affect their communities; from participatory budgeting and measures to strengthen the role of local councillors, to the empowerment of young people and calls for action through petitions and other forms of participation.

A new **School Linking Programme** was launched in October 2007 by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. The programme will work with local authorities, initially in three pilot areas, to set up and run school linking projects, and will be supported by a central website providing good practice information.

As part of the initial response to the Commission in October 2007, Communities and Local Government announced a **£50m investment** over the next three years to promote community cohesion and support local authorities in preventing and managing community tensions. In December 2007 Communities and Local Government set out proposals for distributing £38.5m of this investment in the provisional **Local Government Settlement for 2008-2011**.

In December 2007 Communities and Local Government published **Guidance on Translation** for local authorities. The aim of this guidance is to spread existing good practice which ensures that translation is only provided where it is necessary and where it acts as a stepping stone to speaking English.

In December 2007, Communities and Local Government opened **consultation on an Inter Faith Strategy**. The consultation is exploring how government can best work in partnership with faith communities, faith and non faith-based organisations, inter faith organisations and wider civil society to increase levels of inter faith dialogue and social action within local communities.

In December 2007 Communities and Local Government and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills held two **Citizen's Juries** to examine how targeted provision of teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) can help build cohesion. And in January 2008 the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills published the consultation document '**Focusing English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) on Community Cohesion**', which sets out the Government's aim that ESOL funding should be more specifically targeted to foster community cohesion in our communities.

Latest data from the **2007 Citizenship Survey** published in January 2008 shows that there has been a small **increase in perceptions of cohesion** in terms of people agreeing that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together, from 80 per cent in 2005 to 82 per cent now. The Survey also shows that the percentage of people feeling a strong sense of belonging to Britain is 84 per cent and the percentage feeling a strong sense of belonging to their neighbourhood is increasing – now reaching 75 per cent.

Section 1:

A new clarity and focus on cohesion

- 1.1 The Commission asked that government set out a clear statement of cohesion policy, one that built on its recommendations, and set out a clear framework for prioritised local action. This document and the programme of work it sets out are intended to do that.
- 1.2 At the heart of government's approach to cohesion, like the Commission's, is the principle that cohesion is something that can only be understood and built locally. Central Government's role is to set the national framework within which local authorities and their partners can deliver. Our Cohesion Delivery Framework which we will publish later this year will, for the first time, bring together existing guidance and research into one document making it easier for local areas to analyse the issues for cohesion in their area and develop a plan of action, drawing on the most up to date research, analysis and guidance.
- 1.3 The Commission argued that we needed a new definition of integration and cohesion which reflected increasing local complexity and changing patterns of migration, and one that goes beyond issues of race and faith. We agree. We have worked with the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) to develop the Commission's proposal. Our new definition sets out our vision of a cohesive and integrated society building on the Commission's recommendations.

A new definition of Community Cohesion

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

Our vision of an integrated and cohesive community is based on **three foundations**:

- People from different backgrounds having similar life opportunities
- People knowing their rights and responsibilities
- People trusting one another and trusting local institutions to act fairly

And **three key ways of living together**:

- A shared future vision and sense of belonging
- A focus on what new and existing communities have in common, alongside a recognition of the value of diversity
- Strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds.

- 1.4 This is different from the old definition of community cohesion in two key ways. First, it reflects a greater emphasis on the importance of citizenship and community empowerment to building cohesion – ranging from rights and responsibility to a shared future vision. Second, in its recognition of the increasing importance of integration to cohesion – how important a sense of having things in common is to building trust and positive relationships between new and existing residents. More detail on these two important and interlinked areas is provided in Section 3.
- 1.5 This new emphasis in the definition on notions of **citizenship** and **integration** reflects the way in which our society is changing and affecting the way in which we live together. Technological change, social change, economic trends and globalisation are making individual identity more complex. In the past, when notions of how to behave were shared across divides such as class and generations, there was less need to define what we meant by citizenship or to think about how different people could interact and adjust to each other. But as new distinctions emerge – for instance between those who are technologically literate and those who are not, or between those who subscribe to the values of a faith and those who do not – as society is becoming more individualistic, there is a greater need for us to define what

needs to be shared in order for us to live together. Our highly inter-connected society makes this both necessary and possible.

- 1.6 The Commission also asked government to be clearer about the difference between race equality, community cohesion and preventing violent extremism.
- 1.7 We believe that all three are different, all three are important and, if done effectively, all three will support one another. Hence both in central, regional and local government the same person or group of people is often responsible for all three. But to ensure that we deliver success in all three areas we think that it is important that at the national, regional and local level we are clear both about the differences and the synergies between the three agendas.
- 1.8 **Race equality** is about building an equally free and fair society for all people regardless of their racial or ethnic background. It focuses on narrowing gaps - in outcomes - for different groups. This will help promote cohesion and tackle extremism, but it's not enough on its own, and there are other, wider, motivations for promoting race equality.
- 1.9 Building community **cohesion** is about building better relationships between people from different backgrounds including those from new and settled communities. Experience has shown that violent extremism can emerge from even the most cohesive communities, but that extremist messages are less likely to find support in this environment. So work to build cohesion can help prevent violent extremism but will not be enough on its own.
- 1.10 To **prevent violent extremism** we often need a targeted approach which deals with the specific threat, builds resilience to extremist messages at a community level but also works to counter the global terrorist ideology. At the same time a community in which extremism is minimised is likely to be one where people have more confidence to build relationships with one another and so increase community cohesion and racial equality.

Section 2:

Delivering our renewed commitment to building cohesive and integrated communities

2.1 In the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government's initial response to the Chair of the Commission in October 2007, she set out a renewed long-term commitment to build more integrated and cohesive communities in the form of priority actions going forward. The following sections set out progress on these priorities and our future plans.

Increased Investment

2.2 As part of this renewed commitment to build more integrated and cohesive communities, we announced a **£50m investment** by Communities and Local Government over the next three years to promote community cohesion and support local authorities in preventing and managing community tensions. This is an increase from just £2m in 2007-08. On 6 December 2007 the Secretary of State set out proposals for distributing £38.5m of this investment in the provisional Local Government Settlement for 2008-2011.³

2.3 We propose to allocate £34m through Area Based Grant using the community cohesion best value performance indicator⁴ findings from the 2006-07 General Best Value User Survey. Resources will be targeted at those local authorities in greatest need⁵ with:

- £660,000 for those areas where the score⁶ was below 55%;
- £540,000 for those areas where the score was below 60% but at least 55%
- £410,000 for those areas where the score was below 65% but at least 60%
- £280,000 for those areas where the score was below 70% but at least 65%
- £150,000 for those areas where the score was below 75% but at least 70%

³ The table: www.local.communities.gov.uk/finance/0809/specgrant/abg_dclg.xls illustrates how it is proposed that £34m will contribute towards the Area Based Grants for individual local authorities. Whilst the table: www.local.communities.gov.uk/finance/0809/specgrant/abg_dcsf.xls illustrates that £4.5m is included in the £222m Positive Activities for Young People contribution towards the Area Based Grants for individual local authorities, given the underlying community cohesion objectives of the programme.

⁴ The percentage of residents who agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.

⁵ For April - September 2007, the Citizenship Survey found that 82 per cent of people in England and Wales agreed that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.

⁶ The confidence intervals around the scores provided by the Audit Commission were taken into account.

- 2.4 Local authorities will be able to use the money to respond to their own particular challenges – for example some will focus on the impacts of new migration, others may conclude that the priority is to promote interaction between people from different backgrounds, and others to create a sense of shared belonging and pride in an area.
- 2.5 Communities and Local Government also contributes resources to the Department for Children, Schools and Families' programme of **Positive Activities for Young People**⁷ (PAYP). Case study evidence from the evaluation of this programme demonstrates that this investment is effective in promoting local activity that supports cohesion. Therefore we intend to continue our financial commitment to this programme and invest £4.5m over the next three years. The PAYP programme funding is distributed to all local authorities, regardless of their particular cohesion score.
- 2.6 As part of the **National Improvement and Efficiency Strategy**,⁸ we are also proposing to channel £3m to local government led Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships to develop local capacity to tackle community cohesion challenges, and to provide support for improving practice within those areas where cohesion is lower than average.
- 2.7 Decisions about the future use of the remaining £8m (of the £50m investment) which relates to the existing Connecting Communities Plus grant programme (which has community cohesion as one of its four themes and runs till the end of 2008-09) will be taken next year.
- 2.8 And in taking forward our renewed commitment to cohesion, we will in addition be investing in the development of a new web-based one-stop-shop on cohesion; the deployment of teams to support local areas experiencing particularly rapid change; a programme of work to realise the Prime Minister's ambition for increased inter faith dialogue and social action within local communities; and placing our work with key partners on a more strategic footing.
- 2.9 On 31st October the Secretary of State also announced £45m to support local partnerships work to build resilience to violent extremism.⁹

⁷ www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2007_0231

⁸ www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/649026

⁹ www.communities.gov.uk/speeches/communities/preventingextremism

A new PSA with an extended emphasis on cohesion

2.10 The Commission recommended a single national public service agreement (PSA) for community cohesion. In October last year, the Chancellor announced, in the Pre-Budget Report and Comprehensive Spending Review a new cross government PSA **(PSA 21) to build cohesive, empowered and active communities**¹⁰. To capture the breadth of the Government's national ambition with regard to building integrated and cohesive communities, the cohesion and empowerment elements of this PSA will be measured against four national indicators.

- The percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
- The percentage of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood
- The percentage of people who have meaningful interactions with people from different backgrounds
- The percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality

2.11 Three of these are also included within the single set of 198 national indicators as part of the new performance framework for local authorities and local authority partnerships. All local authorities will be required to report performance against these indicators. Furthermore, where local areas decide that improving community cohesion should be a particular priority these indicators can be the basis of priority improvement targets within their new Local Area Agreements. Local areas' success in achieving these targets will have a bearing on whether the PSA is achieved. This performance framework provides real incentives both nationally and locally for a new focus on building cohesive and integrated communities.

¹⁰ www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/E/9/pbr_csr07_psa21.pdf

Section 3:

Supporting local delivery

- 3.1 Analysis of the Citizenship survey, by Laurence and Heath¹¹ which we are publishing alongside this document, shows that how cohesive an area is will depend upon a series of interacting factors: the characteristics and history of the area; residents' personal characteristics; and residents' attitudes. The story of cohesion in each local area will therefore be different, though there will be similarities between areas. This story can also be influenced by perceptions of events nationally or in other communities.
- 3.2 As well as each area having a different story, research by DTZ Consulting¹² for the Commission has shown that in each area there is no single or small group of factors which can explain its level of cohesion – even the strongest influence – the level of deprivation – can only explain a few percentage points of difference. This complexity of influences on cohesion means that improving cohesion is about addressing multiple issues at the same time. This section sets out what the Government is doing to support local areas in addressing those issues.
- 3.3 Local Area Agreements (LAA) are the critical vehicle for enabling local authorities and their partners to help bring about improvements in cohesion. At the heart of the LAA process is the principle that different areas face different challenges, requiring different and often multiple solutions; and that these will need to be delivered in a way which addresses cross cutting issues; and brings together local partners and services to work towards common goals. Communities and Local Government guidance **Negotiating New Local Area Agreements**¹³ published in September 2007, emphasises that that LAA outcomes and performance indicators should be linked to a picture of what a sustainable, cohesive community looks like for the area.
- 3.4 Building on the Commission's findings, the Government's programme of work to support the local delivery of cohesion is based around six key principles.

¹¹ www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/communitycohesion

¹² www.integrationandcohesion.org.uk/Our_final_report/Research_documents.aspx

¹³ www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/negotiatingnewlaas

Key principle 1

A move away from a "one size fits all" approach

- 3.5 The Commission argued that as different areas were experiencing different types of challenges, national policy should not be applied on a "one size fits all" basis. They did not believe that the problems which each area faced were unique, but recommended that similarities should be recognised through a set of "cohesion family groups or types", and asked that these should be further developed in order to "reposition central government's engagement with local areas".
- 3.6 We agree that given local complexity, a one size fits all strategy is no longer appropriate, and our guidance in the past may have wrongly taken this approach. We therefore welcome the Commission's "family groups". We will not use these to label, straight-jacket or pigeon-hole areas (particularly given the diversity of wards that can exist within local authority boundaries); nor to allocate funding; nor be prescriptive about approaches to cohesion. We will use the family groups so that engagement with local areas is based on local circumstances and as a way of thinking through likely cohesion challenges and solutions, to help local government in mapping and understanding the communities in their areas. Following discussions with the LGA and IDeA, we have also agreed that we will use the typology to inform our new Cohesion Delivery Framework (see key principle 3 below) and as a basis for learning, sharing good practice and peer support.

Key principle 2

Mainstreaming of cohesion into wider policy areas

- 3.7 We know that cohesion is not just built by specifically aimed policies, but also by ensuring other policies take account of the impact they can have on cohesion. For example a regeneration project needs to include places for people to meet and undertake shared activities, if it is to build communities as well as bricks and mortar.
- 3.8 We will continue to work closely with other colleagues across Whitehall to ensure that cohesion is being considered by national policy makers and reflected in their approach to local delivery. Good progress has already been made in mainstreaming cohesion into government policies at the national level in many areas. Here we highlight progress in three key areas; citizenship, schools and housing.

Citizenship

- 3.9 Citizenship is about much more than a legal status and a set of legal rights. It is also about what society and the state expect of us as individuals; how each of us can get involved in making Britain better and feel that we can influence our society. And it is about feeling that a sense of belonging both to the UK and the part of the country in which we live. At the individual level, citizenship is about how we behave to one another, how we develop the skills to cope with a rapidly changing world and continue to trust one another.
- 3.10 Responsibility for promoting and building citizenship runs across government. The Ministry of Justice has responsibility for our constitutional arrangements, the Home office has responsibility for the legal status of citizenship, the Department for Schools, Children and Families has responsibility for citizenship education, the Department of Culture Media and Sport supports ways in which we can come together and express our shared identity.
- 3.11 The Border and Immigration Agency is reviewing how the process of becoming a citizen can enhance the integration of individual migrants into UK society. This includes consideration of issues such as what are the values that newcomers should be committed to, and how we help them learn about them. And how do we want newcomers to demonstrate their commitment to British values and the British way of life? This ongoing debate supports the Commission's approach.
- 3.12 At Communities and Local Government, as part of our contribution to promoting citizenship we want to encourage local authorities to build a sense of belonging; help people cope with change and encourage them to play a part in improving their communities. In doing this, we will build both community cohesion and community empowerment.
- 3.13 To support local areas in promoting interaction and encouraging the development of a culture of active, engaged, effective citizenship based around a set of shared citizenship values, we commissioned the Citizenship Foundation to produce the **Citizens' Day Framework**, published in November 2007¹⁴. It provides an opportunity to celebrate local achievements, to build and renew community cohesion and to develop greater local engagement.
- 3.14 In partnership with the LGA, government set out plans to increase participation, collective action and engagement in democracy; change attitudes towards community empowerment; and improve the performance of public services and people's quality of life, in **An Action Plan for Community Empowerment: Building on success**¹⁵, published in October 2007.

¹⁴ www.citizenshipfoundation.org.uk/main/resource.php?s367

¹⁵ www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/actionplan

- 3.15 Looking forward, government will build on the commitment within the **'Governance of Britain' green paper**¹⁶ to take forward an inclusive process of debate with the British people to develop a British statement of values. An announcement on the way ahead will be made early this year.
- 3.16 As part of the 'Governance of Britain' green paper the Prime Minister asked Lord Goldsmith QC to carry out a **review of citizenship**. The review will report by March 2008 with recommendations for how to promote a greater sense of shared belonging. One of the proposals being looked at is possible citizenship ceremonies for when young people reach adulthood - one of the Commission's key recommendations.

Schools

- 3.17 Schools and colleges have a key contribution to make to cohesion by giving young people the skills to adapt to change and deal with difference, alongside giving them a sense of belonging. Schools also provide an environment which brings together people from different backgrounds.
- 3.18 **The Education and Inspections Act 2006** placed a new duty on the governing body of schools in England to promote community cohesion. The duty came into effect from 1 September 2007. It is planned that Ofsted will report on the contribution made by the school to community cohesion from September 2008, to give schools time to embed the duty within their institution. **Guidance for schools**¹⁷ on the duty was published in July 2007. The guidance includes further development of the Commission's recommendations on school linking, as well as practical advice for schools considering how best to meet the duty.
- 3.19 The **Diversity and Citizenship Curriculum Review**¹⁸, an independent review (published in January 2007), led by Sir Keith Ajegbo, made a series of recommendations aimed at promoting diversity across the schools curriculum and the content of the curriculum for Citizenship Education. The Government has accepted the recommendations in Sir Keith's report and is working with its partners to implement them. In particular, this includes the introduction of the revised secondary curriculum for citizenship including a new identity and diversity strand from September 2008; establishing a new agency to support school linking (see below for further details) and in June 2008 a 'Who do we think we are week?' involving all schools in an exploration of identities, diversity and citizenship.

¹⁶ www.justice.gov.uk/publications/governanceofbritain.htm

¹⁷ www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/communitycohesion/

¹⁸ www.publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDown/DfES_Diversity_&_Citizenship.pdf

3.20 The **Schools Linking Network** (SLN) is a new agency that will support schools and local authorities to develop linking partnerships between schools, one way they can fulfil the duty to promote cohesion. Paid for by £2million government funding, the SLN will:

- promote and run a website for schools to find partners online. The website, developed in partnership with the British Council, has been available for all schools since October 2007. It includes training and materials and other useful resources for teachers looking to set up linking projects
- work with local authorities, initially in three pilot areas, to set up and run school linking projects; and
- provide support, guidance and training for teachers and Local Authorities on school linking.

3.21 Local Authorities can also consider how they can improve community cohesion and support schools in their duty to promote community cohesion through the renewal of school buildings under the **Building Schools for the Future programme**¹⁹ and the **Primary Capital programme**²⁰.

3.22 Finally, **Aiming High for Young People: a ten year Strategy for positive activities**²¹, was published in July 2007. This underlined the important role positive activities have in developing community cohesion, particularly in bridging the gaps between young people from different ethnic and faith groups as well as improving relationships across different generations. Commitments outlined in the strategy include;

- establishing pilots to explore how young people can be supported to design and organise events to celebrate their transition to adulthood and their achievements
- more residential opportunities that bring young people from different backgrounds together – this could include Do it 4Real summer camps
- and investing in the expansion of established schemes such as the Positive Activities for Young People programme, to increase the availability of intensive year-round activity-based support, which is successful in engaging the most disaffected young people. Therefore Communities and Local Government intend to continue the financial commitment to this programme and invest £4.5m over the next three years.

¹⁹ www.bsf.gov.uk

²⁰ www.dfes.gov.uk/localauthorities/_documents/contents/2310070001_DELIVERING%20THE%20PRIMARY%20CAPITAL%20PROGRAMMEFINAL.doc

²¹ www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/2/6/cyp_tenyearstrategy_260707.pdf

Housing

- 3.23 Housing is a key component of the cohesive and sustainable communities which are a central aim of Communities and Local Government's policies and programmes. If cohesion is to be promoted successfully in every community, it will have to be taken into account across the full range of housing provision – through the market for private housing to all forms of social housing. From bricks and mortar buildings to pitches for Gypsies and Travellers. This means considering how large regeneration schemes such as Thames Gateway, as well as how local allocations schemes can support community cohesion. This complexity demands a strategic approach which can be achieved only by mainstreaming cohesion across all aspects of housing.
- 3.24 In response to this challenge Communities and Local Government, with the Chartered Institute of Housing, IDeA and local government practitioners, plans to revise guidance to local authorities about the importance of the strategic housing role and the preparation of housing strategies in the late Spring. This is intended to encourage local authorities and partners to ensure that housing fully contributes to other local objectives, such as community cohesion, economic development and improved public services. To help deliver a joined-up approach, local authorities are encouraged to incorporate housing strategies within Sustainable Community Strategies.
- 3.25 Housing strategies that effectively take account of cohesion issues need to look at the current and future impact of migration across all tenures – foreign nationals living in England are significantly more likely to own or privately rent their home than live in social housing. Housing strategies also need to be accompanied by effective local campaigns, based on good quality data, which counter misconceptions about who is receiving social housing and unfairness in the allocation system, and explain the drivers of housing demand.
- 3.26 Allocation of social housing is based upon a household's housing need – with those in greatest housing need receiving the highest priority for an allocation. Local authorities are required to publish an allocations scheme that clearly sets out how they allocate housing in their area. Local allocations policies, local lettings policies and nomination agreements must not discriminate on racial or equality grounds and should contribute towards creating mixed, cohesive and integrated communities. And local authorities should allow applicants to choose their home through Choice Based Lettings (CBL). CBL schemes offer applicants greater choice and control about where they want to live, provide greater transparency and research has shown that CBL tends to reduce ethnic segregation and so can lead to greater integration. All local authorities should offer CBL schemes by 2010.

- 3.27 Around 90 per cent of people who arrived in the UK in the last two years, and are currently living in England, are in the private rented sector. The impact of this has been particularly felt at the 'lower end' of the market. The poor quality accommodation in which some migrants are housed may be a rubbing point not only for them but also for others living in the neighbourhood. Communities and Local Government has recently announced a review of the Private Rented Sector. That will include a consideration of how the sector can provide quality homes for all groups in all communities and the impact of demographic and social change on supply and demand within the market.
- 3.28 It is not only housing for new arrivals that may have implications for community cohesion. Around one in four Gypsy and Traveller householders living in caravans currently have no authorised pitch on which to stop. This shortage of accommodation results inevitably in unauthorised encampments, in turn presenting real challenges to community cohesion. Local authorities are now required to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers in their areas, and to identify land to meet those needs in their Local Development Plan Documents. In December 2007, Communities and Local Government announced a further £97million for the provision of new Gypsy and Traveller sites and the refurbishment of existing sites. We will continue to work with IDeA and the LGA to raise awareness and share good practice on addressing the needs of Gypsies and Travellers.

Key principle 3

A national framework for local support and guidance

- 3.29 As we have already said, cohesion is something that must be built at the local level, central government's role is to set the national framework within which local authorities can deliver. Our role needs to be supportive, not prescriptive, and provide good practice which can inspire local solutions, rather than rigidly set out solutions. Alongside this we will however continue to provide targeted local support for those areas facing specific cohesion challenges.

At the national level

- 3.30 Inclusion of cohesion as a national priority outcome in the new local government performance framework indicator set, signals a renewed emphasis on local delivery of cohesion. The framework introduces a co-ordinated approach to support and intervention in local areas. The National Improvement and Efficiency Strategy aims to provide a stronger focus on supporting local authorities and their partners in achieving priorities agreed through LAAs. Agreed by both central and local government, it will support a devolved approach with a stronger role for local government in supporting and challenging performance, with greater levels of resource being channelled through Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships. This includes £3m for community cohesion over the next three years.

- 3.31 We also plan to develop a **Cohesion Delivery Framework** which will provide further advice for local authorities in delivering cohesion. This will build on existing guidance published by us, other government departments and other bodies such as IDeA. Pulling it all together will be a single document which will provide advice to local authorities on how to analyse the issues for cohesion in their area and develop a plan of action. We plan to have put the parts of the framework together by Summer 2008. We will work with local policy makers and practitioners in developing the framework to ensure that it adds real value to the body of advice and good practice already available.
- 3.32 Communities and Local Government is working to develop a **single portal for cohesion guidance**, which will be an important resource for local authorities and partners facing cohesion challenges. It is planned that the portal will provide a continuously updated bank of guidance, including toolkits, good practice examples and briefings on key issues. This will be searchable on the basis of the typologies proposed by the Commission and will be a key way of accessing the cohesion delivery framework.
- 3.33 In addition 'Cohesive and Resilient Communities' will be one of the themes in Round 10 of the **Beacon Scheme**, which will be launched in March 2008. The Beacon Scheme was set up to disseminate best practice in service delivery across local government and Beacon status is granted to those authorities who can demonstrate a clear vision, excellent services and a willingness to innovate within a theme. The Scheme is open to all Best Value Authorities²² and the selection of this theme for Round 10 will enable authorities to gain recognition for - and disseminate - the work they are doing to take forward the Commission's recommendations.
- 3.34 The Commission recommended that as part of work to map communities, local areas should develop an understanding of where tensions or challenges to cohesion exist so that action can be taken to address these at the earliest opportunity. To support this we will shortly be publishing **cohesion contingency planning guidance** aimed at helping local authorities to develop local tension monitoring arrangements and cohesion contingency plans.

²² Best Value Authorities as designated under the Local Government Act 1999: Local Authorities (Metropolitan Authorities, County Councils, Unitary Authorities, London Boroughs, District Councils), National Park Authorities, National Broads Authorities, Fire Authorities, Waste Disposal Authorities, Greater London Authority, Transport for London, Passenger Transport Authorities, London Development Agency)

- 3.35 We are also publishing alongside this report the **Cohesion Impact Assessment**²³ toolkit for local authorities to test if activities they are planning will have a positive impact on Community Cohesion. The interactive tool can be used when deciding on an alteration to spend, service or allocation of local funds; when embarking on a new project or introducing a new activity in an area; when deciding what policies and activities to support, or how to engage with the public or media or when planning community celebrations or sports activities.

“The (Cohesion Impact Assessment) tool will be useful for major events and policies effecting large numbers of people and/or costing lots of money and fills a gap in our existing Equality Impact Assessment procedures.”

London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

At the local level

- 3.36 The Commission recognised the need for “tailored and bespoke local activity to build integration and cohesion”. We agree and that is why alongside providing guidance at a national level we are developing a basket of measures which local areas can draw on to support their work on cohesion. Elements of these are described in the case study from Barking and Dagenham below. We will be developing these in consultation with the local government sector and in parallel with our Cohesion Delivery Framework which can be tailored to meet specific cohesion needs in a local area.
- 3.37 We will be piloting **specialist cohesion teams** to support local authorities facing cohesion challenges, particularly those areas facing rapid change for example from new patterns of migration. We propose to use Communities and Local Government’s Neighbourhood Renewal Advisers as the nucleus of these teams, expanding the cadre where appropriate for example to ensure they have the most relevant experience of migration and that they are able to bring the local third sector. We will be consulting with local government on these proposals over the next few months.
- 3.38 We have also have funded the Institute of Community Cohesion (iCoCo) over the last three years to assist and offer local authorities facing cohesion challenges to meet and learn from each other. Much of the work has focused on how best to use communications to promote leadership and vision. Over this period at least 25 local authorities including Bradford, Kirklees, Sunderland, Liverpool, Blackburn with Darwen, Stoke on Trent, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Boston, Peterborough and Southampton have participated. Each area had the opportunity to learn from the others as to what works best; eg areas not familiar with new migrants were able to get best practice advice from areas with similar issues or those with long standing experience of migrant communities. Similarly, a number of areas including Waltham

²³ www.communities.gov.uk

Forest and Stoke on Trent were keen to learn from Blackburn with Darwen's successful 'Belonging Campaign'.

Barking and Dagenham Case Study

'We are proud of our innovative work in the field of community cohesion, and greatly appreciate the timely and targeted support of government in sharing best practice and ensuring that all opportunities are pursued'

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

Barking and Dagenham has experienced a rapid increase in diversity, and together with the response of existing residents this has impacted on cohesion in the borough. The Council faced various challenges including communicating positive and factual messages in an impartial way as well as building relations between diverse communities.

What Communities and Local Government offered

Sustaining Cohesion

A specialist Neighbourhood Renewal Advisor (NRA) provided support to the development of Barking and Dagenham's Neighbourhood Management Strategy and the long-term sustainability of cohesion in the area.

Building relations

Linked Barking and Dagenham with Burnley Borough Council who have had similar cohesion challenges for support and advice.

Communications

Supported the participation of Barking and Dagenham in a communication/ leadership seminar hosted by the Institute of Community Cohesion which looked at how a local authority can use communications to promote leadership and vision.

Combating misinformation

Provided Barking and Dagenham with series of fact cards to assist communications; in particular to promote positive factual messages in an impartial way and promote good race relations to the local public.

Conflict resolution

Communities and Local Government provided two NRAs to deliver conflict resolution workshop for the local authority and third sector.

Key principle 4

Integration of new migrants and existing communities

- 3.39 We know that migration brings significant benefits to the UK, particularly to our economy. Most recent migrants are self sufficient, privately housed and contribute to the local economy. Studies show that most migrant workers are young and few bring dependants, so their need for public services is low.²⁴ Nevertheless we are aware in that some places migration is presenting challenges to cohesion for both new migrants and existing communities.
- 3.40 The link between migration and cohesion is not a simple one. And it is not just about the number of migrants. Research using the Citizenship Survey data has found that in many cases increased diversity is a positive predictor of cohesion once levels of deprivation and other factors have been accounted for.²⁵
- 3.41 The Commission recognised in its typology that the greatest challenges to cohesion were in deprived areas experiencing migration for the first time. It also recognised that in some places past migration had not fully bedded down – usually where it was to areas which have since suffered deprivation.
- 3.42 So cohesion is not about numbers, but specific local issues – specifically how comfortable existing residents are with change and churn in their community and the issues this change and churn raise for service provision. Deprivation promotes competition for limited public resources and creates divides where people perceive someone from a different group is getting special treatment.
- 3.43 To help communities cope with this, the Commission wanted cohesion policy to include both an emphasis on mutual respect and civility (needed to cope with the pace of change across the country which reconfigures local communities rapidly); and a commitment to visible social justice (to prioritise transparency and fairness, and build trust in the institutions that arbitrate between groups). This is reflected in our new definition and our programme of work at the national and local level.

²⁴ *Crossing borders, responding to the local challenges of migrant workers*. Audit Commission 2007.

²⁵ *Predictors of community cohesion: multi-level modelling of the 2005 Citizenship Survey*, Communities and Local Government, 2007.

At the national level

- 3.44 Communities and Local Government has established a **new migration directorate** to co-ordinate the efforts of departments across government in dealing with the impacts of migration. The new directorate is currently working on a cross-government action-plan on the impacts migration to draw together different strands of work across government and ensure a co-ordinated approach to migration policy. It will also consider the business case for setting up a national body to manage the integration of new migrants in response to the Commission's recommendation and in the context of forthcoming decisions regarding the future of the Advisory Board on Naturalisation and Integration (ABNI) which currently provides independent advice to government and officials on how best to integrate migrants wishing to become British citizens. Lord Goldsmith's Citizenship Review is also looking at ways in which new migrants can be integrated into a shared sense of belonging in the UK.
- 3.45 In addition to this Communities and Local Government and the Home Office have established the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) and the Migration Impacts Forum (MIF). The MAC is a non-statutory advisory non-Departmental Public Body which provides independent and evidence-based advice to government on specific sectors and occupations in the labour market where shortages exist which can sensibly be filled by migration. The purpose of the MIF is to provide a forum for proper, regular and organised dialogue with interested parties outside government, focussed on the wider impacts associated with migration experienced by local areas.
- 3.46 To provide support effectively, central government also recognises that its understanding of local populations needs to be enhanced. The Office for National Statistics (ONS), responsible for population data, has made some improvements in the way that international migration is estimated. These fed into the projections used in the recent three year local government finance settlement. This used the best and latest data available on a consistent basis across all local authorities at the time. ONS is continuing further work to improve population and migration statistics, following the recommendations of the **Inter Departmental Task Force on Migration Statistics in 2006**²⁶. It is recognised that there is no single, simple, or swift solution to the challenges, and improvements are sought in time for the next three year local government finance settlement.

²⁶ www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=14731

- 3.47 ONS is working with central and local government on implementing ways to improve survey data and make greater use of administrative data. Governance arrangements are being developed involving central government departments and local government representation. Communities and Local Government is also engaging with local government through work with the LGA to enable local authorities to make full use of migration-related data at a local level. The new migration directorate will collaborate on further work to understand the local implications and impacts of migration and the pressures that local authorities face.

At the local level

- 3.48 The Commission recognised that integration is about both new residents and existing residents adjusting to one another. All too often work focuses only on the former. This may mean new residents adjust, but are not welcomed; that new residents are supported in such a way that they do not adjust; or that existing residents think new residents are getting special treatment.
- 3.49 We recognise that these are among the complex issues that local authorities with changing populations are experiencing. Local authorities themselves have an important leadership role in managing the local impacts of migration and in supporting greater integration of new migrants and existing communities. Central government and other agencies need to support local authorities in fulfilling this role.
- 3.50 Therefore in August we issued in partnership with IDeA, **“New European migration: good practice guide for local authorities”**²⁷ which provides case studies, self-assessment questions and other information to help local authorities manage the local impacts of migration from EU Accession states. We are also working with IDeA to produce guidance on a model **information pack for new migrants**.
- 3.51 We also want to address where well intentioned attempts have led to differences becoming more entrenched or perceptions of special treatment. Our guidance on translation and funding of community groups discussed later in this document are examples of this.

Integration and English Language

- 3.52 We agree with the Commission that speaking English is vital to integrating into British society. Language skills help people get on in the workplace and make a contribution to their local community. The Commission added that “English ... binds us together as a single group in a way that a multiplicity of languages cannot”. As well as giving us all something in common, English language also increases equality of opportunity by opening up a wider range of jobs for people whose English is currently poor. And mixing at work is one of the key ways many of us get to meet

²⁷ www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageld=6949778

different people and so promotes positive relationships. As the Prime Minister said recently “English does not make us all the same – nor should it, for we honour who we distinctly are. But it makes it possible for us to speak to each other, to better understand each other. And so it is a powerful force...for mutual respect and progress”.

- 3.53 In December 2007, we published **Guidance on Translation**²⁸ for local authorities. The aim of this guidance was to spread existing good practice, which ensured that translation was only provided where it was necessary and acted as a stepping stone to speaking English.
- 3.54 Also in December 2007, the Home Office published a consultation on whether people seeking entry to the UK as a spouse should be expected to speak English.²⁹ This reflects a move over recent years to emphasise the importance of speaking English as part of gaining settled status and British citizenship. The new Points Based System will also reflect this approach by specifying levels of language competence that migrant workers will need in order to gain entry to the UK³⁰.
- 3.55 In January 2008 the Prime Minister announced that the British Council working with partners from both public and private sectors, will set up a new website offering learners and teachers of English around the world ready access to the material, resources and qualifications they need to develop their skills in English.
- 3.56 On 4 January 2008 The Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) published the consultation document **‘Focusing English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) on Community Cohesion’**,³¹ which sets out the Government’s aim that ESOL funding should be more specifically targeted to foster community cohesion in our communities. As with work to build cohesion more generally, we believe local authorities and their partners are best placed to determine how ESOL funding allocations are best aligned against community need and national priorities; and are considered as part of wider local planning arrangements such as L AAs. The consultation follows two joint Communities and Local Government /DIUS **Citizens’ Juries on ESOL** in December 2007. These juries, which were held in London and Hull, made a number of suggestions about how to prioritize ESOL provision, and make it support cohesion. These included building a specific cohesion element into ESOL provision, and providing ESOL in workplaces. The juries’ suggestions will be taken into account alongside the public consultation in deciding how ESOL should be provided in future.

²⁸ www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/translationguidance

²⁹ www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/consultations/preentryenglishrequirement

³⁰ www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/planstomanagemigration

³¹ www.esolconsultation.org.uk

Key principle 5

Building positive relationships

- 3.57 The Commission wanted to see practical action to encourage interaction to break down prejudice and barriers. They also wanted to see a strong focus on encouraging activities that would provide bridges between different groups.
- 3.58 In the past, there has been a focus on promoting contact between different groups, but the concept of interaction goes further than this in suggesting that simple contact is not enough. It needs to be sustained, in depth and recognise difference. This is a new concept for cohesion, and the Commission recommended further research on what works. The National Community Forum is undertaking research to look at this and their report will be produced in Summer 2008.
- 3.59 To create an environment where positive relationships between different communities can develop, one of the most important things local authorities can do is to communicate with existing communities about how their area is changing and what this means for them. This should include explanations of how public resources are allocated, which will help tackle perceptions of special treatment, and address the myths which can cause divisions.
- 3.60 iCoCo has already produced a great deal of work and existing guidance in this area. The LGA and IDeA are about to begin research on what works locally to bust myths, and the National Community Forum is carrying out another piece of research into the experiences of white poor communities compared to other groups which will unpick the dynamics of resentments arising from disengagement and disenchantment of white poor communities (due to report in July 2008).
- 3.61 We will use existing guidance and these new pieces of research to develop the material on local communication and myth-busting as part of our new Cohesion Delivery Framework

Boston Borough Council Case Study

Communities and Local Government was approached by Boston Borough Council for advice on how best to deal with the negative perceptions of the town in the media. Communities and Local Government put them in touch via Leicester City Council with the *Leicester Mercury* who has a sound relationship with the local authority. The aims of the project were to work with public sector agencies (principally the local authority and the LSP) to critically examine their engagement with local media and to consider ways in which supportive coverage can be fostered and community cohesion promoted. The initial pilot resulted in one action plan for the local authority, its partners and local media and this additional material was added to ICoCo's Cohesion Communications toolkit, the lessons learnt were disseminated to other local authorities.

3.62 We also need to ensure that we are not discouraging bridging in the way we fund community groups. That is why alongside this we have published a **Consultation on Cohesion Guidance for Funders**³² – on how they can promote cohesion in their role as funders. We have taken what the Commission's annex on the question of what it called "Single Group Funding" said, but have developed the messages to propose clear guidance on what we feel local areas should be aiming for – given that although funding of community activities is an important way of making the rest of the Commission's findings tangible, the thinking behind it has in some areas been misunderstood. The paper:

- Identifies the opportunity that funders have to promote cohesion, as well as the difficulties to be avoided, when supporting a wide range of different activities for all sections of communities
- Explains the evidenced link between building relationships between people from different backgrounds and higher cohesion and suggests ways funders can support activity to help deliver this 'bridging'
- Suggests questions that funders can consider to help them make funding decisions in line with these points.

³² www.communities.gov.uk/corporate/publications/consultations.

- 3.63 The Commission said that the way in which relations between people of different faiths and beliefs develop in the coming years would be very important to cohesion and saw inter faith activity as having an important role to play in strengthening these relationships. They recognised that much effective work was already being taken forward by a wide range of partners but that more needed to be done – not only to strengthen relationships between people of different faiths, but also to develop more constructive conversations between those who are religious and those who are not.
- 3.64 The Government agrees that inter faith activity has an important role to play as part of wider efforts to build cohesion and in October 2007 made a specific commitment to developing an inter faith strategy. Public consultation on **“Face-to-Face and Side-by-Side”**: **A framework for inter faith dialogue and social action** is now underway and will close on 7th March 2008³³. The strategy aims to:
- facilitate inter faith dialogue which builds understanding and celebrates the values held in common such as integrity in public life, care, compassion and respect
 - increase the level of collaborative social action involving different faith communities and wider civil society where people work together to bring about positive and concrete change within their local communities
 - maintain and further develop good relations between faith communities and between faith communities and wider civil society
 - overcome the perceived and actual barriers faced by young people and women in participating in inter faith dialogue and activity.
- 3.65 We have already covered schools, housing and regeneration and the role that a Citizens Day and Community Empowerment can play above in bringing people together with a shared goal. Sport and culture also have a key role to play in bringing people together and promoting cohesion. Indeed our new PSA is to build Cohesive, Empowered and Active Communities and includes increasing the number of people participating in sport and culture.
- 3.66 2008 has been designated by the European Union as the **European Year of Intercultural Dialogue**. Its goal is to strengthen respect for cultural diversity and the coexistence of different cultural identities and beliefs; celebrating the diversity of our different cultures and religions and encouraging dialogue between them all. The year will be launched in Manchester in early 2008 and a Conference on Intercultural Cities held in Liverpool on 1-2 May. The European Union is co-funding the 2008 Liverpool Intercultural City Project, which will involve 500-1500 young people networking with others from 18 British and 22 European cities. In addition the European Youth Parliament will meet for a ten day session in July 2008.

³³ www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/interfaithdialogue

- 3.67 From the closing ceremony of the Beijing 2008 Olympics, the UK will commence its **Cultural Olympiad**, a four-year period of cultural activity designed to celebrate the Olympic spirit throughout the UK. The London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games is developing a programme which will: celebrate London and the whole of the UK welcoming the world – our unique internationalism, cultural diversity, sharing and understanding; inspire and involve young people; and generate a positive legacy – including for example through urban regeneration and cohesion.

Key principle 6

A stronger focus on what works

- 3.68 The Commission's recommendations were based firmly on the research they gathered, and their report represents a strong new evidence base that has significantly improved our understanding of what works in building integrated and cohesive communities at a local level.
- 3.69 The Citizenship Survey is the main tool used to measure cohesion and provides rich data on cohesion, integration, empowerment and participation. Since the Commission's report, the Citizenship Survey has changed from being carried out every two years to providing data on a quarterly basis, ensuring that our work is underpinned by the very latest intelligence on people's attitudes and experiences.
- 3.70 Cohesion is measured in the Citizenship survey by asking people "to what extent do you agree or disagree that this local area (within 15/20 minutes walk) is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together?". In the 2003 and 2005 Citizenship Surveys, 80 per cent of people in England and Wales agreed that their local area was cohesive. The most recent findings from the survey (April – September 2007) show a small increase in cohesion, with 82 per cent of people agreeing.³⁴
- 3.71 Furthermore, indicators on cohesion and belonging have also been added to the new Places Survey, which will be carried out in every local authority in England. The findings from this survey will complement those from the Citizenship Survey and will provide us with more information on cohesion at a local level than ever before.
- 3.72 We agree with the Commission that it is vital this evidence base should continue to be developed, and that in particular the work to identify the drivers and influences of cohesion should be considered further. We are therefore publishing alongside this document a new piece of research on the drivers of cohesion: **Predictors of community cohesion: multi-level modelling of the 2005 Citizenship Survey**,³⁵ commissioned by Communities and Local Government and carried out by James Laurence and Anthony Heath from the University of Oxford.

³⁴ www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/citizenshipsurveyaprsep07

³⁵ www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/communitycohesion

- 3.73 We asked Laurence and Heath to address some limitations to the previous evidence base on cohesion. In particular, they used sophisticated multi-level modelling techniques to take account of the fact that an individual's sense of cohesion is likely to be a produce of both their individual characteristics and the characteristics of the community in which they live. Some of the key findings from this work are shown below.

Key findings from Predictors of Community Cohesion report

This research uncovered numerous useful findings. Many support previous understandings around cohesion, while others appear counter intuitive at first glance. Some of the key findings are that:

- Both individual and community-level factors influence cohesion
- Ethnic diversity is, in most cases, positively associated with community cohesion once other factors are accounted for
- Deprivation – both at the individual and the community level – consistently undermines cohesion
- Crime and fear of crime both are both strong negative predictors of community cohesion.
- Community empowerment (feeling able to influence local decisions) and formal volunteering are important predictors of cohesion
- Vulnerable groups have more negative perceptions of cohesion
- The predictors of cohesion vary across ethnic groups

- 3.74 This analysis of the Citizenship Survey is supported by further research by Communities and Local Government looking at cohesion in a number of case study areas using a combination of local surveys, in depth interviews and focus groups. Qualitative research in six case study areas published in 2007³⁶ into **What Works** in community cohesion identified best practice in relation to:

- the types of initiatives that are most effective in supporting community cohesion
- how cohesion-related work is organised in a local authority area.

- 3.75 The study identified key approaches that were considered to be most efficient at improving community cohesion in the six case study areas. These included:

- initiatives supporting the socio-economic well being of individuals and communities

³⁶ www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/whatworks

- providing English language training or interpreting, bilingual or translation services
- generating a sense of commonality and positive relationships
- engaging and involving all sectors of the community
- conveying 'myth busting' communications and
- responding to major events that present risks to cohesion.

3.76 Study participants highlighted the importance of community led policy and initiatives that:

- ensure services are managed and delivered by local people (for example an emphasis on councillors coming from within the local community, and on recruiting staff from local communities to reflect the local demographic profile)
- maximise the role of the third sector and faith groups in leading or delivering cohesion-related initiatives as these organisations are best placed to understand key issues, and engage communities, especially where trust in mainstream institutions is lower
- ensure involvement of local communities – and all key sections of communities – in developing policy to ensure that all needs are met and no groups disadvantaged or alienated by particular policies.

What next

This is a summary of the key pieces of work government is now taking forward which will sustain the momentum on cohesion that the Commission has set and further develop and deliver the Commission's ideas and recommendations.

We will be **promoting and disseminating** key elements of the suite of documents we are publishing today, in particular

- Our new definition of Cohesion
- A consultation on Cohesion Guidance for Funders
- Community Cohesion Impact Assessment toolkit

We will be developing our **Cohesion Delivery Framework** with partners, this will:

- Sit alongside our new web based One Stop Shop
- Pick our latest research on how to promote positive relationships between people
- Incorporate our cohesion guidance for funders
- Incorporate further work on housing and cohesion

We will be **supporting local authorities** in promoting cohesion by

- Working with those who select a cohesion improvement target in their Local Area Agreement
- Developing specialist cohesion teams to support those areas experiencing rapid change and other cohesion challenges
- Developing a template for migrant information packs
- Promoting best practice in cohesion through Round 10 of the Beacon Scheme
- Rolling out our community empowerment action plan
- Providing guidance on tension monitoring and cohesion contingency planning

We will be **responding to**

- Lord Goldsmith's Review of Citizenship
- The Independent Review of Policing by Sir Ronnie Flanagan, which will include recommendations on Neighbourhood Policing
- The Councillors' Commission

We will **support schools** in implementing

- Their Duty to Promote Cohesion
- The new secondary curriculum for citizenship
- A 'Who do we think we are week?'
- And through the new Schools Linking Network

We will work with **faith communities** to:

- Agree a Framework to increase inter faith dialogue and social action
- Develop a programme of work to increase faith literacy amongst public bodies
- Develop a Charter for excellence in public service delivery by faith communities.

We will deepen our understanding of and response to the **impacts of migration** through

- The Migration Impacts Forum and Migration Advisory Committee
- A cross-government action plan on the impacts of migration
- Work with local government and ONS to enhance our understanding of local populations.

We will use the **2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue** and the **Cultural Olympiad** to enable people from different backgrounds to come together.

Section 4:

Summary of our response to each of the Commission's recommendations

Working with Local Authorities and other partners, the Government is following up all of the Commission's recommendations. This section summarises what's been done so far and what we plan to do next.

1. We recommend the adoption of a new definition of integration and cohesion.

We outline our new definition on page 10.

2. We recommend that central government sets out a clear statement of integration and cohesion policy.

This document sets out the Government's sustained strategy to build cohesion and its relationship with other policy objectives.

3. We recommend government invest in a national shared futures programme from 2008-2012, leading from the European Year of Intercultural Education up to the Olympics and using the themes of both to underpin key messages.

We agree that a shared sense of belonging is an important driver of cohesion and there are a range of programmes being developed that will promote this. A range of events will be held in the UK as part of the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue which aims to encourage dialogue between different cultures; and the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games is developing a programme for the Cultural Olympiad which will celebrate London and the whole of the UK welcoming the world – our unique internationalism, cultural diversity, sharing and understanding. The Goldsmith Review of Citizenship will also include recommendations for how to promote a greater sense of shared belonging.

We also want to promote a sense of belonging locally. Last year we funded the Citizenship Foundation to produce the Citizens' Day Framework and guidance on building a local sense of belonging will form part of our Cohesion Delivery Framework.

4. We recommend that every local area should:

- **Map their communities**
- **Use that map as one important way to identify tensions and opportunities**

- **Monitor their BVPI performance on cohesion**
- **Mainstream integration and cohesion into their Sustainable Community Strategies, LSP management and wider service delivery, particularly for youth provision.**

We agree that, to best serve its community, local government needs to understand the communities it serves. The development of LAAs is at the heart of that process. The development and delivery of LAAs will also provide the focus for mainstreaming cohesion across all local services. The inclusion of two cohesion indicators within the set of 198 measures in the National Indicator Set for local authorities will help local authorities monitor their performance. In addition we will shortly publish guidance for local authorities on tension monitoring.

5. We recommend that there should be a single national PSA target for community cohesion.

Our new Cohesion PSA 21 is set out on page 14.

6. We recommend that local areas should be encouraged to develop their own local indicators of integration and cohesion.

We have enabled local areas to do this through the LAA process. LAA operational guidance sets out how targets can be focused on particular local (spatial) levels or particular groups.

7. We recommend that the Audit Commission should ensure that locally determined integration and cohesion measures are clearly incorporated into the Comprehensive Area Assessment regime.

The new CAA arrangements will focus on cohesion where it is identified as a local priority and cohesion will form an important part of the annual joint risk assessment which will be published by inspectorates for each area covered by a LAA.

8. We recommend that Communities and Local Government's forthcoming guidance on LSPs and Sustainable Community Strategies should make explicit reference to the need to address the cross-cutting issues of integration and cohesion.

The draft statutory guidance *Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities* which is currently out for consultation emphasises that local government needs to respond to demographic change and that Sustainable Community Strategies must address difficult and cross cutting issues such as cohesion.

9. a) We reaffirm the proposal that local authorities should have workforce strategies in place that have clear action plans for targeted recruitment – and recognise the need for flexible working for women in particular.

The Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) would encourage local authorities to produce clear action plans for targeted recruitment, building on the existing framework of equalities legislation, using the public duties as a lever of change. The EHRC will continue the work of the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality and the Disability Rights Commission in enforcing the duties, developing an integrated equality duty across race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief.

9. b) And that political parties consider again how they can ensure their candidates better reflect the communities they serve – whether through positive measures, or more targeted recruitment.

The independent Councillors Commission examined how a wider range of people, especially from under-represented groups like women and ethnic minorities, could be encouraged to become councillors. Its final report, published in December 2007 made several recommendations as to how political parties might ensure candidates better reflect their communities

The Government is currently examining the recommendations before publishing a response in the Spring. Communities and Local Government will be consulting stakeholders to gauge their views about how recommendations can be taken forward, and will be taking account of a wide range of issues concerning affordability, legal implications, consistency with existing policies, and potential public and stakeholder reactions.

10. We recommend that the Electoral Commission, working with the new CEHR, should seek a voluntary agreement on the part of political parties to behave as if they are bound by the positive duty in the Race Relations Amendment Act, and the forthcoming duty to promote good relations enforceable by the CEHR.

This recommendation was mirrored by the Councillors Commission, who also recommended that political parties sign up to a voluntary agreement to behave as if they are bound by equalities legislation. The Electoral Commission has no power to compel compliance with any of its advice or guidance, and so it is doubtful whether any 'agreement' which went beyond what the law regards as permissible would be practically enforceable. We will therefore work with EHRC to see how the spirit of this recommendation can be taken forward and keep the Electoral Commission in touch with this work.

11. We recommend that LGA, IDeA and central government should consider these family groups when providing guidance to areas on integration and cohesion.

We will use the family groups so that engagement with local areas is based on local circumstances, as a way of thinking through likely cohesion challenges and solutions and to help local government in mapping and understanding the communities in their areas. So it will inform our new Cohesion Delivery Framework and act as a basis for learning, sharing good practice and peer support.

12. We recommend that LGA, IDeA and central government support should move away from static guidance to particular areas towards workshops, ongoing training groups, and partnerships between those local areas who would not normally meet each other as part of existing local and regional structures.

We are keen to develop effective support for local partners facing cohesion challenges, as part of the National improvement and Efficiency Strategy being taken forward following the Local Government White Paper. We will work with partners to ensure that the support offered is as innovative and flexible as the Commission recommends.

13. We recommend an ambitious response to the Ajegbo report on Citizenship Education.

The Government has accepted the recommendations in Sir Keith Ajegbo's report and is working with its partners to implement them. See page 18.

14. We recommend consideration of how existing citizenship ceremonies for people from abroad becoming new citizens can be strengthened.

The Goldsmith Citizenship Review is looking at the role and format of citizenship ceremonies. In October 2007, Lord Goldsmith published *The Future of Citizenship Ceremonies*. This was one of a series of pamphlets containing the views of leading experts and commentators intended to stimulate debate.

15. We recommend consideration of an expansion of citizenship ceremonies to include all young people.

This is being considered further as part of Lord Goldsmith's Citizenship Review.

16. We recommend a new programme of voluntary service for young people expressly linked to local citizenship.

In November 2007, the charity V announced details of its new National Youth Volunteering Programme (NYVP), which aimed to:

- Expand the vteams network across England to support youth volunteering
- Create 500,000 new volunteering opportunities
- Recruit at least 500,000 more young volunteers
- Train, support and build the capacity of 6,000 organisations, enabling them to involve young volunteers more effectively in their work.

We will work with V to explore how their plans support our cohesion objectives.

The Government's new PSA 21 on building more cohesive, empowered and active communities gives us the opportunity to make the strongest possible links between cohesion and volunteering and we will work across government to achieve this.

17. We recommend a national body to manage the integration of new migrants, sponsored by Communities and Local Government, but independent of government.

Communities and Local Government has established a new migration directorate to co-ordinate the efforts of departments across government in dealing with the impacts of migration. The new directorate will consider the business case for setting up a national body to manage the integration of new migrants in the context of forthcoming decisions regarding the future of the Advisory Board on Naturalisation and Integration (ABNI).

18. We recommend that Communities and Local Government develops a sample welcome pack based on current good practice, and works with the local areas in family group a) in particular to ensure that it is implemented.

LDa are developing a model for a new migrants information pack. This will bring together examples of material used by local authorities in existing welcome packs, and will be a rich source of expertise and ideas for local authorities reviewing their welcome packs or considering producing one for the first time.

19. We recommend that along with joint development of welcome packs, these partnerships between Local Government, the voluntary and community sector and faith communities are formalised in a way that suits existing LSP structures – potentially through local service level agreements or contracts.

The third sector and faith groups make a vital contribution to intergrated and cohesive communities and should be key and respected partners of the local authority and other local public bodies and the private sector. The draft statutory guidance *Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities* which is out to consultation until 12 February suggests ways in which local authorities should think about involving the third sector as part of the new statutory duty on them to involve *representatives of local persons* in the exercise of any of their functions, to be introduced in April 2009. The discussion paper, *Principles of representation: A framework for effective third sector participation in Local Strategic Partnerships* addresses this issue in more detail. It is also out to consultation until 12 February.

20. We recommend that:

- **Employers should recognise that they have a responsibility – jointly with other parties – to deal with the integration and cohesion issues arising from the growing number of migrant workers they employ (whether employed directly or through an agency).**

- **In particular, they should offer English classes for new migrants (focused at first on the vocabulary they will need on the job), and should promote understanding of different cultures and groups by providing cultural training in the workplace.**

In October 2007 DIUS launched a new suite of ESOL for work qualifications. The new qualifications are shorter and more work-focused than traditional ESOL qualifications, giving learners practical English skills in essential workplace matters, such as health & safety and customer service. They are aimed at people who have come to the country for work and who need skills to function in work, as well as those seeking work at the end of often short periods of employment. The cost of the new ESOL for work courses will continue to be funded by government but a contribution of approximately £330 will be required from employers, who directly benefit from the provision. DIUS are engaging with employers to promote this qualification.

21. We recognise that finite resources means that we need to be creative in how we deliver ESOL support, but we recommend that it is reviewed in four ways:

- **DIUS to continue to review its allocation of resource for ESOL**
- **Local areas should be encouraged to use their money for English language provision more flexibly. (eg partnership with third sector orgs)**
- **Areas should use the money they save on translating written materials to add to the pot available for English lessons.**
- **increasing recognition that learning English is not just about formal ESOL classes, it's about how community groups, places of worship, schools and family learning can be part of a set of pathways that lead to a standard exam.**

DIUS issued a consultation paper on ESOL addressing these issues in January. Communities and Local Government with DIUS also held two Citizen's Juries on the issue of ESOL provision in December 2007. The consultation closes on 4 April. The Government will publish a "next steps" document once the results of the consultation have been analysed.

22. We recommend that the outcomes of the youth strand of the DfES/HM Treasury Children and Young People's Review take integration and cohesion into account, and consider ways of spreading good practice about how to work with young people on integration and cohesion.

The Government's ten year youth strategy, *Aiming High* was published in July 2007 and set out how better relations between generations as well as different ethnic and faith groups could be built. See page 19.

23. We recommend that in the current review of government strategy, incentives to encourage adult participation with young people should also be considered.

The final report of the Government's review of the future of the third sector in social and economic regeneration was published in July 2007. The review included an undertaking by the Office of the Third Sector to create a programme that will include funding to build capacity in inter generational volunteering. The programme will be launched in 2009-10.

24. We recommend that Faith communities should be encouraged to work with government, the LGA, and other relevant agencies to develop a programme to help increase 'religious literacy' on the part of public agencies

We think such a programme could be valuable but believe that it will be best achieved if faith communities themselves take the lead on this and develop a programme of training which builds on their existing resources in the area. We are currently working with faith stakeholders on a specific project which may have the potential to deliver such a programme.

25. We recommend that a set of clear guidelines should be developed to enable Local Authorities and others to be able to award public service contracts to faith based bodies without fear that there will be issues over whether this will lead to proselytising or pressure on users of services to accept the religious beliefs of the providers.

We will convene a panel of experts to consider this question, including representatives from faith communities, the LGA, and Charity Commission. We hope this will lead, in 2009, to publication of a standardised version of a Charter for excellence in public service delivery by faith communities building on the Faithworks model that already exists.

26. We recommend that community development values, methods and outcomes should be promoted at a local level, with explicit recognition of its importance in enabling integration and cohesion and an integral component in the delivery of good public services and local governance.

We agree that local authorities and their partners should have the flexibility to draw up a much more comprehensive engagement strategy. The statutory duty to involve, which comes into force in April 2009, will provide a spur to local authorities and their partners to develop a comprehensive community engagement strategy. An approach to this is being developed within the scope of the Community Empowerment Action Plan. Communities and Local Government is working with the sector to develop tools to support local authorities' implementation of the duty to involve. It will be for local authorities and their partners to prioritise funding for community development and capacity building.

27. We recommend that the sustainable community strategy and Local Area Agreement in each local area should include a strategic approach to community capacity-building, based on the Firm Foundations framework, and funded adequately through co-ordinated channels.

The draft statutory guidance *Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities* which is out to consultation until 12 February says that in deciding how best to engage their local community local authorities should ensure that activities to inform, consult and involve *representatives of local persons* do not take place in isolation, but as part of an integrated approach across the area.

28. We recommend that a community-based 'community cohesion audit resource' should be developed for use by local agencies such as neighbourhood management teams and community groups which allows tension monitoring and offers suggestions and ideas for conflict resolution and meaningful interaction.

We are publishing a Community Cohesion Impact Assessment toolkit in parallel with this document. The toolkit tests if activities, change in spend or policy planned in a local area will have a positive impact on community cohesion and community conflict. In addition, we will shortly be publishing guidance aimed at helping local authorities to develop local tension monitoring arrangements and cohesion contingency plans.

29. We recommend that the current Review of Policing in England and Wales by Sir Ronnie Flanagan underlines the importance of Neighbourhood Policing to integration and cohesion and links back to the key principles outlined in our report.

The interim report of Sir Ronnie Flanagan's independent review of policing in England and Wales was published in September 2007. It made explicit reference to the potential that Neighbourhood Policing can play in building community cohesion. We hope the final report builds on this.

30. We recommend that the CEHR is represented locally, through a network of teams similar to the existing Race Equality Councils – and that this local network is designed as a delivery arm that is sensitive to the different challenges being experienced by the integration and cohesion family groups outlined in this report.

EHRC is already represented at a local level through a number of regional hubs. They will continue to consider the best way to support stakeholders locally.

31. We recommend that every local authority maintains a communication plan to ensure that all communities are kept abreast of changes and the reasons for them, not just those minority communities that have typically been seen as "hard to reach".

32. We recommend that local areas consider how best to engage their local media in local structures.

33. We recommend that:

- **local authorities should develop myth busting strategies aimed specifically at established communities.**
- **That local authorities should work with the media to actively rebut myths and misinformation, in between and during election periods.**

The Institute for Community Cohesion already publishes guidance on these issues and they intend to update it shortly on the basis of recent work. We hope to incorporate this into our Cohesion Delivery Framework. See page 29.

34. We recommend that a rapid rebuttal unit should be established jointly with partners including the CEHR, Communities and Local Government, LGA, LGiU.

We don't at present see the case for a single rapid rebuttal unit but will look at this recommendation again in light of forthcoming research and in developing our Cohesion Delivery Framework.

35. We recommend that ONS urgently reinvigorate their work on co-ordinating migration statistics at a national level, and begin to report directly to the new Migration Impacts Forum.

36. We recommend that Communities and Local Government and ONS urgently provide support to local authorities in developing tailored systems for calculating population change between censuses, using data most appropriate for meeting their local needs.

ONS is working with central and local government on implementing ways to improve survey data and make greater use of administrative data. Communities and Local Government is also engaging with local government through work with the LGA to enable local authorities to make full use of migration-related data at a local level.

37. We recommend that local authorities and LSPs conduct a brief 'audit' of opportunities for cross-cultural and inter-faith engagement in their areas.

There are currently over 200 local inter faith bodies in existence (Source: Interfaith Network for the United Kingdom). Our ambition is to increase levels of inter faith dialogue and social action, and, as a first step towards developing an inter faith strategy; we published a consultation document in December 2007. Research is being carried out by the LGA in partnership with the Interfaith Network for the United Kingdom into the role that local authorities play in local inter faith activity. We will use these findings, as well as consultation responses, to inform the development of the strategy which will be published later this year.

38. We recommend that Communities and Local Government should clearly set out what their strategy is in funding intercultural dialogue.

In December 2007 we opened consultation on an Inter Faith Strategy. The final strategy will include a Framework for Inter Faith Dialogue and Social Action which will provide a basis for considering how we fund the development of inter faith and intercultural dialogue.

39. We recommend that local areas consider how shared activities can be used as the driving force for the interaction projects that they fund.

We will include guidance on this in the Cohesion Delivery Framework. This will be based on research undertaken under recommendation 41.

40. We recommend that a nationally sponsored 'Community Week' with a focus on celebrating all communities and inter-community engagement should start early in 2008. Preparations for this week should also be seen in the context of recent calls for a national Community Day.

In November 2007, we launched a Citizens' Day Framework jointly with the Citizenship Foundation. This explores how local authorities can celebrate local achievements, build and renew community cohesion, and develop local engagement. A number of local authorities are already making use of this guidance to plan citizens' days. We welcome this and will build on those ideas in our Cohesion Delivery Framework.

41. We recommend that Communities and Local Government should commission a programme of research to explore more closely what works in different neighbourhoods and why, building on contact theory and the initial evidence from our work.

National Community Forum is producing a research report on what works to promote interaction. This will be available in Summer 2008. We will use this to inform the development of our Cohesion Delivery Framework.

42. We recommend that there should be a national school twinning programme, with support from the centre delivered by a new website of good practice run by DfES.

In October 2007, DCSF launched a new Schools Linking Network to provide support to schools through:

- A web-based approach: an extension of the existing Global Gateway website (which already allows schools to form links with schools around the world – www.globalgateway.org.uk) which will offer an ICT route for schools to link nationally

- A local authority lead model: piloted programmes at local authority level to link schools in local areas with one another, based on a successful model developed in Bradford local authority
- £3m funding for the school linking network will be spread over three years - £1m in each financial year from 2008-09 to 2010-11.

43. We recommend that the recommendations outlined in Sir Keith Ajegbo's report on Citizenship Education should be taken forward as a matter of urgency by DfES – with a particular focus on Continuous Professional Development for teachers.

As part of implementing the Ajegbo report DCSF has:

- 200 new specialist citizenship teachers every year through initial teacher training
- A programme of continuing professional development (CPD) launched in 2006 on teaching citizenship in schools, which is free for teachers to access. There are 600 places a year in 2006-07 and 2007-08
- Published a CPD handbook for citizenship education entitled *Making Sense of Citizenship* and provided two free copies to all secondary schools in England. It has also published a self-evaluation tool for citizenship in secondary schools and for PSHE and Citizenship in Primary Schools.

44. We recommend that schools should consider buying in support or training on conflict resolution and mediation to ensure they are able to manage the consequences of increased dialogue.

Many schools already use conflict resolution as part of their citizenship provision as it is specifically mentioned in the national curriculum. Schools can buy in support and or training and organisations such as the Association for Citizenship Teaching provide information on the best sources of support for schools. In addition, DCSF is supporting the Ministry of Justice in a new education programme for schools, due to be piloted this year, which will support teaching about the justice system including conflict resolution and mediation.

45. We recommend that the CEHR, in partnership with the CBI, be tasked with convening regular forums where representatives of employers and employees (from both the public and private sectors) meet to set out clear action plans for how employment issues can contribute integration and cohesion.

EHRC will convene a regular forum from Summer 2008 bringing together existing employer networks (for example, Race For Opportunity and the Employers Forum on Age) with the CBI and employee representatives such as the TUC, to formulate clear action plans that contribute to cohesion.

46. We recommend that large employers consider allowing employees three days paid leave a year for participation in defined activities.

We would encourage all employers to think carefully about how they can best enable their employees to contribute to their community through voluntary work.

Employees already have a statutory right to reasonable unpaid time off work to carry out specified public duties such as those of a magistrate or a local councillor. The legislation is designed to strike a balance between protecting employees and avoiding unnecessary regulatory burdens on employers. Whether to allow time off more generally is a matter for individual employers, but we would always encourage them to treat such requests sympathetically.

47. We recommend that Communities England, and funding partnerships developed to deliver regeneration programmes, should demonstrate that they have mainstreamed integration and cohesion how their funding is being directed, and that local communities have been engaged in regeneration plans from the start.

Once the Homes and Communities Agency is established in April 2009, subject to Parliamentary approval, it will seek to promote community cohesion, breaking down the physical and social barriers between groups, by creating better physical connections, more choice of high quality homes, better community facilities and more economic opportunities.

This is shown through its objectives on the face of the Bill which include 'to support in other ways the creation, regeneration or development of communities in England or their continued wellbeing, ...with a view to meeting the needs of people living in England.'

48. We recommend that the Academy for Sustainable Communities is better linked into mainstream integration and cohesion policies, and builds on its recent work with the Institute for Community Cohesion by upskilling planning and housing practitioners in key integration and cohesion themes.

We agree that the ASC has a valuable role to play in the cohesion agenda, and it is particularly well placed to improve awareness and practice amongst local authorities and practitioners to drive local action on community cohesion. We will work with the ASC to ensure that they continue to build on existing programmes around cohesion and consider how their future work programme might play into this agenda.

49. We recommend that Regional Development Agencies should be encouraged to award contracts to businesses that have a clear corporate commitment to employment diversity and equality policies. And that in the development of their lifelong learning strategies, they should commit to delivering tailored courses that upskill particular parts of the local workforce – responding to the needs of settled communities, for example, who may be unable to compete in the face of cheaper labour – while making the most of the new skills brought by new communities.

RDAs are already required to promote equality (Race, Disability and Gender) through all their functions, including procurement.

RDAs are not currently required to produce 'lifelong learning strategies'. However we will consider how this recommendation can be taken forward in the context of RDAs' role in working with partners to overcome the barriers to economic participation facing both new and settled communities.

50. Aligned with our guidelines on single community funding, we recommend that when buildings and assets are transferred to communities, it is with the express intention that they will normally be resources for all groups and individuals within the local community.

It will be for individual bodies transferring assets to set specific criteria in individual cases, but the Quirk review of community management and ownership of public assets identified that there was a risk of damage to cohesion as assets were transferred if they were not accessible to all, and recommended that this be addressed by insistence that an owning organisation's governing instrument and other policy documents have a strong commitment to working with the 'whole community', to equal opportunities and to open, accountable and transparent governance procedures.

Practical guidance on how this can best be achieved will be included in the Risk Management Toolkit for asset transfer, which is being developed for publication in the Spring.

51. We recommend all public agencies involved in the funding of affordable housing and area based regeneration, including major Regional Development Agency programmes, should ensure that equality impact assessments on policy are extended to include assessment of the impact of the policy upon cohesion and integration.

Public bodies such as the Housing Corporation routinely conduct equality impact assessments of policy. The Housing Corporations National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP) 2008-11, requires all Investment Partners to provide a 'Method Statement' that details how they intend to meet the needs of diverse communities.

52. We recommend all affordable housing providers receiving investment funding should demonstrate how this funding will assist in promoting cohesion and delivering mixed communities.

The Housing Corporation is responsible for the funding affordable housing providers and their community cohesion strategy, Shared Places sets out how affordable housing providers investment should consider the impact on cohesion in local areas. Local people should also be involved in helping to determine investment priorities so that residents know that decisions are open and transparent.

The Corporation intends to produce an assessment methodology for determining the impact of affordable housing investment decisions on community cohesion, which affordable housing providers should use when considering investment decisions.

53. We recommend that in drafting their community lettings plans, local authorities should explicitly consider the dynamics of cohesion and integration locally. And in particular:

- **Local authorities and funders of new social housing should make clear the criteria used and judgements between need and choice that inform allocations policies in both new homes and older properties that become available, and how this relates to the considerations of integration and cohesion.**
- **All agencies, including local authorities and affordable housing providers, should operate inclusive allocations and lettings policies. Unless there is a clear business and equalities case, single group funding should not be promoted. In exceptional cases, where such funding is awarded, the provider should demonstrate clearly how its policies will promote community cohesion and integration.**

Access to social housing is based upon a household's housing need and a local authority's allocations scheme must clearly set out how they allocate housing. Local authorities should provide common housing registers and Choice Based Lettings schemes for housing applicants as both offer greater transparency on how housing is allocated which can help increase cohesion and integration. The EHRC and the LGA are currently undertaking a review of social housing allocation which will look at which households access social housing and we will consider any report recommendations.

Where there is a clear business and equality case it can be appropriate for single issue funding to be made. For example, where there is a gap in service provision or for specialist housing provision.

We recognise the importance of providing good quality information nationally on migrants and housing, for local government to take ownership of this locally and use it to dispel myths and misinformation. We will continue to develop the evidence base and consider how this can be made available regionally and locally.

54. We recommend that local authorities should be encouraged to identify areas that are experiencing particular issues with unscrupulous landlords that relate to integration and cohesion, and use fully the powers available to them to address these issues.

With the Chartered Institute of Housing, IDeA and local government practitioners we plan to revise guidance to local authorities about the importance of the strategic housing role and the preparation of housing strategies. This is expected to encourage local authorities and partners to ensure that housing fully contributes to other local objectives, such as community cohesion, economic development and improved public services. To help deliver a joined-up approach, local authorities are encouraged to incorporate housing strategies within Sustainable Community.

Communities and Local Government has also announced a policy review of the private rented sector and whether it is fit for purpose, provides quality homes for all groups in all communities and the impacts of supply and demand within the market.

55. We recommend:

- **That nationally, cultural development agencies, including the Arts Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund, should require applicants for funding to demonstrate their commitment to integration and cohesion outcomes and part of its funding criteria.**
- **That this same principle should apply to local public agencies when considering the potential for “bridging” activities across communities when funding sports and arts projects.**

In parallel with this document we are publishing, for consultation, cohesion guidance for funders. The guidance is to help funders understand how they can use their funding role to promote cohesion and integration.

56. We recommend the adoption of our guidance on Annex C single community funding

The draft guidance mentioned at recommendation 55 builds substantially on the draft proposed by the Commission.

57. We recommend the adoption of our guidance Annex D on translation

We published guidance for local authorities on translation in December 2007. This builds substantially on the draft proposed by the Commission.