Concordia Discors.

Understanding Conflict and Integration Outcomes of Inter-group Relations and Integration Policies in Selected Neighbourhoods of Five European Cities

London Final Report

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This report is based on research carried out during 2011 in Bermondsey and Camberwell in the London Borough of Southwark. It is thus largely based on the experiences of their local area that a wide range of local residents have shared with us, and we are grateful that so many accepted to take part in the interviews. While the majority of participants will remain un-named, we would like to extend our gratitude to the following for facilitating the research project: Russell Dryden, Ilona Marsh, Barbara Pattinson, Jason Vincent, and the D'Eynsford Estate Tenants and Residents Association.

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Preface. Essential features and fundamental assumptions of the Concordia Discors project.

I. The expression "Concordia Discors" comes from the Latin poet Horace's epistles and has become paradigm of a dynamic state of "discordant harmony". A fundamental assumption of this project is that integration is a dynamic achievement and it is not a rigid state nor the conceptual opposite of conflict. Therefore it is necessary to face, thematize and analyze the inter-group tensions associated with integration processes, as a precondition to deal with such tensions proactively and constructively. We have thus investigated different modes of intergroup relations, in particular the various shapes of conflict and cooperation, including intermediate patterns of interactions, seen as developmental dynamics of integration processes.

II. Another assumption concerns the view of intergroup relations. We have adopted the boundary-making perspective proposed by Fredrik Barth as early as the 1960s, according to which ethnic distinctions have a relational nature and they may (or may not) crosscut groups of shared culture or nationality. Therefore, our units of observation are individuals and organised groups, that we have not pre-clustered into ethnic groups since the existence and the configuration of such groups will rather be part of the research findings. Coherently with this approach we have looked not only at ethnic/migration cleavages but also at other relevant cleavages which structure interactions - overlapping, reinforcing or blurring the ones produced by migration - such as the cleavages based on socio-economic status, generation or length of stay in the neighbourhood. The choice of this approach is the reason why we use the term "intergroup relations" and not "interethnic relations".

III. A third assumption inspiring this project is that places matter in shaping relations among groups. Given that contemporary cities are (increasingly) internally fragmented and too heterogeneous to be investigated as undifferentiated places, we focused our study on those specific areas in cities which share urban and social characteristics and are called quarters. We define the quarter as a sub-municipal urban entity, which is not necessarily an autonomous administrative entity, but whose identity is recognisable (although not necessarily with a shared perception of its exact geographical boundaries).

IV. Given these three assumptions, Concordia Discors have investigated intergroup relations at the quarter level, in order to produce a deep, strongly empirically-based and directly policy relevant understanding of integration and conflict processes.

We focused on the quarter specificities, nonetheless adopting a wide perspective and taking factors into account which belong both to the macro and micro levels. In particular, we analysed the role played in shaping intergroup relations by:

- Neighbourhoods as urban and social contexts;
- Everyday experience and relations;
- Information and representation flows of local media concerning the target neighbourhoods;
- Local policies producing their effects on integroup relations in the target neighbourhoods, including political/electoral communication strategies.

V. We have referred to different disciplines and fields of study, using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The main methodological steps of the Concordia Discors project are the following.

- Analysis of social and urban context. The first step consisted in reconstructing the urban and social context of the target quarters and identifying common indicators describing the urban, social and migration contexts;
- Analysis of local policy communities' perceptions. We carried out interviews and focus groups with quarter-level policy communities (policy-makers, street-level bureaucracy, NGOs, etc) investigating policy frames (i.e. the cognitive dimension of policy, in particular the way in which immigration and intergroup relations are framed) and the measures that according to interviewees have influenced intergroup relations;
- Analysis of local media flows. This step of analysis was based on media contents of local and/or local sections of national newspapers depending on the specificities of media landscape of each city. First, we tried to understand how often the target quarters have been mentioned in association with immigration. Then, we analysed the contents of the news identifying the dominant representations of intergroup relations and of policy interventions on immigration and integration issues in the target quarters;
- Ethnographic fieldwork. We tried to catch the experienced intergroup relations through direct observation and interviews that allowed us to single out residents' representations of differences, on the one hand, and investigating everyday practices and daily encounters, on the other hand. In order to carry out an in-depth analysis, the ethnography was focused on a limited number of "interaction zones" for each quarter, which are regarded as significant in terms of intergroup relations and are geographically circumscribed. Furthermore, we reconstructed collective narratives of the neighbourhoods' recent history through the Neighbourhood Forums, half-day events engaging residents from different ethnic and socio-economic groups (local administrators, NGOs, ethnic associations, residents of various ages, shopkeepers, etc). This Forums also represented means of involvement of population of the target neighbourhoods thus enhancing the participatory nature of this research.

VI. The Concordia Discors project has adopted a comparative perspective which has been articulated over two levels:

- Comparison between different quarters within the same city;
- Comparison between quarters located in different cities and countries.

The project's specific focus has been on eleven quarters of five European cities, each of which has been investigated by one research partner: Barcelona by the Migration Research Group of the Autonomous University of Barcelona, Budapest by TARKI, London by COMPAS of the University of Oxford, Nüremberg by efms of the University of Bamberg and Torino by FIERI. A sixth partner, the Brussels-based European Policy Centre (EPC), has been in charge of the dissemination of results and of networking and institutional relations with decision-makers and civil society organizations at EU level.

For each city a Background report and a Final report have been produced, whereas the Synthesis report provides a comparative analysis of all eleven quarters of the five target cities.

1. Structure of the report

This report explores issues related to inter-group relations in the two quarters of Bermondsey and Camberwell in the London Borough of Southwark. After first briefly summarising the methodology, we will explore how socio-spatial dynamics at the local level, in particular processes relating to immigration and integration, should be interpreted within a broader urban context. This includes post-industrial developments as well as changes to social housing regimes. Based on this outline, we will then explore patterns of settlement and integration, with particular emphasis on the black population that comprises the biggest minority groupings in the two quarters. This broader understanding informs the subsequent analysis of localised practices and individual experiences of inter-group relations in three selected 'sites of interaction' in each of the quarters. We will then provide an overview over the policy community as well as the more quarter-specific council-led programmes and local mobilisations that take place, and also explore levels of representation and inclusion. We will finally provide a short overview over how local news media address issues relating to immigration and integration.

1.1 Methodology

This section provides an outline of the fieldwork carried out from March 2011 to January 2012 in the London Borough of Southwark.

Selection of quarters

Bermondsey and Camberwell are inner-city areas located in close spatial proximity in respectively the northern and central part of the London Borough of Southwark[1]. Both quarters are characterised by high levels of population density and increasing numbers of ethnic minority and immigrant populations. But the two areas were selected for the purpose of this research project, because they show significant differences in terms of socio-economic fabric, the nature of the urban landscape and the history of immigration and integration[2]. Given these differences, the analysis was thus expected to provide a wide range of insights into the dynamics of inter-group relations.

[1] Bermondsey and Camberwell were at the time of the fieldwork identical with the Bermondsey Community Council area (comprising the Riverside, Grange and South Bermondsey wards) and the Camberwell Community Council area (Camberwell Green, Brunswick Park, South Camberwell). Due to budget cuts, Bermondsey Community Council has subsequently, in early 2012, been merged with Rotherhithe Community Council. See annex 1 for maps of the London Borough of Southwark, as well as Bermondsey and Camberwell, with the sites of interaction indicated.

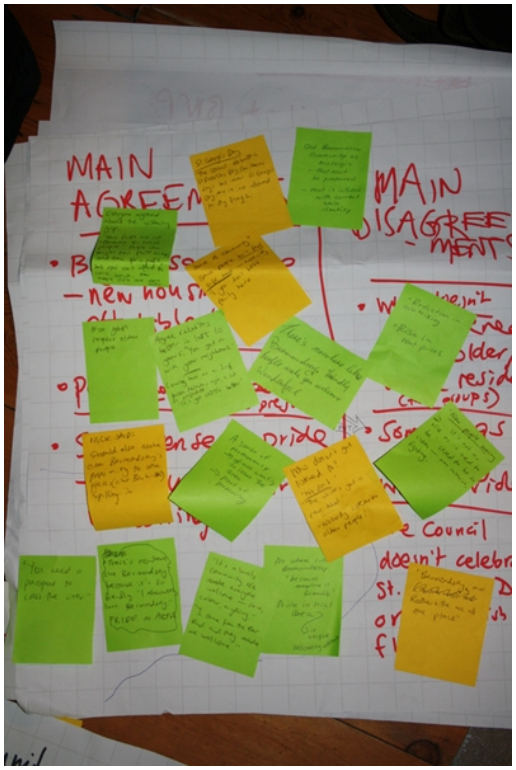
[2] For a much more comprehensive overview over the two areas, please do refer to the background report produced as part of the project (Jayaweera, Jensen and Gidley 2011). The report is available from the Concordia Discors home page, http://www.concordiadiscors.eu/2012/04/10/london-background-report/.

Organisation of fieldwork

The fieldwork was carried out in two stages:

- Stage one comprised interviews with a total of 20 key informants in the two selected quarters. The selected key informants included local stakeholders, trades people and service providers.
- Stage two consisted of 36 semi-structured interviews with individuals residing in, or otherwise related to, a total of six 'sites of interaction', three in each quarter. The sites were selected based on information gathered during stage one. The criteria for selecting interviewees for the semi-structured interviews were two-fold: Residential or occupational relation to the selected site of interaction; inclusion of the White British majority population as well as well-established ethnic minorities and more recent immigrants.

In addition, two neighbourhood forums were staged in Bermondsey and Camberwell towards the end of the fieldwork. The forums provided an opportunity to discuss the data with research participants and other local stakeholders, thus getting early feedback and gaining additional insights. The forums thus constitute the last leg of the fieldwork as well as the first step of the dissemination process[3].



Flip chart with comments from residents, Bermondsey Neighbourhood Forum. See annex 3 for additional photos from the neighbourhood forums.

[3] Please refer to annex 2 for a list of sites of inter-action, a full list of key informants and a break-down of stage two interviewees by ethnicity and country of origin.

2. The quarter as urban and social contexts

Bermondsey and Camberwell are situated in respectively the northern and central part of Southwark. As shown below, in table 2.1, the two quarters share characteristics in terms of the size of the population and population density.[4]

Table 2.1 Comparison of key indicators

	Total population	Population density (inhab./km2)
Bermondsey	36483	11377
Camberwell	36982	11733
Southwark	256700	8898
London	7322400	4663

Source: ONS 2001.

But despite such similarities and close spatial proximity, the two quarters show significant differences in terms of the overall uses of urban space, the long term demographic dynamics and the nature of the built-up urban environment. This section will explore these differences in more detail. This includes a framing of the two quarters according to an open/closed model (below) as well as analysis of how the nature of housing stock has conditioned demographic dynamics. The remaining part of the section will then address the process of immigration and integration in the two quarters.

2.1 Open and closed systems

Sandra Wallman's classification of 'open' and 'closed' local systems is a possible way of framing the contrast between the two quarters and explaining them in a context of broader urban dynamics (Wallman 2003, 1984). In Wallman's work, discourses on identity in industrial society has been dominated by references to ethnic origin, work (in the narrow sense of occupation and employment), and the local community (Wallman 1984: 38). It can be argued that these three identity positions historically have overlapped in Bermondsey. The quarter was a white working class community with Irish immigrants constituting the only significant minority population. Livelihoods were sustained by local employment in the docklands or related industrial areas, and characterised by a strong sense of local belonging, a them-us distinction on territorial grounds that is perhaps most poignantly expressed in the slogan of Millwall FC, the local football club – 'no one likes us, we don't care'[5].

[4] It should be added that there are significant intra-quarter differences. For an examination of such differences at ward level, based on analysis of quantitative data, please see the background report prepared during the first stage of the research project (Jayaweera, Jensen and Gidley 2011).

[5] As Feinstein also argues in his description of Bermondsey: 'Bermondsey was more akin to a typical English village occupied by a group of people closely tied to a particular location through a specific economic history and in marrying links of kinship and residence' (Feinstein 1998).

Bermondsey & Proud

'Mum and dad remember the Bermondsey streets,

Where the front doors were open, no one needed their keys.

Everybody trying to forget the war

But that big pile of bricks was the house next door.

Stevedores and dockers waiting on the quays

For the next big ship full of spices and teas

But the ships are no more and the docks are all flats

Now there's rich people running round instead of the rats.'[6]

Many of the characteristics of local livelihoods and the conviviality of Bermondsey are captured in the text box above, the first verse of a song written by two local artists in 2010, with strong references to hospitality and honesty. The final line – 'now there's rich people running round instead of the rats' – refers to the way the docklands, previously the mainstay of local livelihoods, have been converted into expensive housing on the riverside of the Thames in northern Bermondsey.

While similar characteristics can be identified in parts of northern Camberwell, there is here much less of an overlapping of ethnicity, work and local community. There is a well-established, centuries-old socio-economic divide between northern and southern Camberwell, as expressed in the local topography and the standard of local housing. It is to the south of Camberwell Church Street, in line with a slight incline in the landscape, that the standard of local housing increases markedly.

In contrast to the relative homogeneity that remained a characteristic of Bermondsey until late in the 20th century, Camberwell has been an open system for much longer. In relation to the city of London, Camberwell was a well-known leisure destination, and it became an integrated part of the city as mentioned in this observation from the late 19th century: 'From a straggling suburban parish of about 4,000 inhabitants, Camberwell has become a congeries of streets, part of the great metropolis itself. Bricks and mortar, and universal stucco, has invaded the place'[7]. Simultaneous with this emergence as a residential suburb, Camberwell also became a destination for immigrants from abroad, starting with relatively well-to-do Huguenots and German immigrants in the post-Napoleonic period, who became part of the affluent South Camberwell, leaving their imprints in street names such as in the De Crespigny Park. In contrast, later immigration dynamics in the post-WW2 period were motivated by the characteristics of the inner-city neighbourhood that Camberwell in the meantime had become within the broader metropolitan context.

[6] This is the first verse of 'Bermondsey and proud', a song written by Tony Moorcroft and Nigel of Bermondsey in 2010.

[7] Blanch 1875, in Boast (2000, p33).

A note on class

The distinction between middle class and working class is one of the defining aspects of British society, and it is also, in the present context, central to an understanding of inter-group relations in the two quarters. In the most simplistic manner, the difference between middle class and working class may, in a British context, be boiled down to a distinction characterised by the differentiated command over financial and cultural (often educational) assets. It is a distinction that often has been expressed through references to different types of employment, i.e. blue collar versus white collar with related income disparities, as well as a distinction between middle-class home-owners and working-class tenants. In addition, representations of working-class culture have often focused on the intensely local dimension of working-class social practices, with the work-place, the home and the pub perceived as the pivotal points around which social life is structured. In the context of this research project, Bermondsey is very much an example of such an 'intensely local' working-class neighbourhood, whereas Camberwell, historically and in the present day, is a much more heterogeneous area, characterised by both working-class and middle-class representations.

While the significance of the 'local' to some extent has been diluted as a result of structural changes – most significantly post-industrial developments and changing housing policies – recent research still suggests a very strong sense of territoriality and local attachment, also among young people (Kintrea et al 2008). Directly relevant here is Stahl's fieldwork with white working class boys in Bermondsey. Stahl refers to how his research participants 'maintained a paradoxical view regarding their community. South-east London was not a good place, but their part of it – their house, their street, their section – was the '*nice'*, *'peaceful'* part (Stahl 2011).

The continued local relevance of class distinctions was also highlighted in the neighbourhood forums. In both Bermondsey and Camberwell the divide between working-class and middle-class areas was seen as more significant than divides according to racial and ethnic markers.

In summary, it can thus be suggested that Bermondsey, exhibiting the remains of a closed system, historically has high 'bonding' capital but low 'bridging' capital, making for co-operation within the established communities of Bermondsey combined with apprehension towards 'outsiders'. This is dissimilar to a Camberwell characterised by socio-economic and ethnic diversity. This perspective was supported by one of the few respondents who had lived in both Bermondsey and Camberwell for long periods of time:

> 'Camberwell did not have the feel of being a community, whereas Bermondsey, you feel that you were, that there was a community that you were attempting to move into. Camberwell always, when I was there, felt a bit on the edge of Brixton, the edge of Peckham, rather than having something which would kind of feel like the heart of Camberwell' (L-B-KI-4 -community activist, 50s).

2. 2 Housing pathways

Many aspects concerning the nature and reproduction of the closed and open systems – both at a broader, more general level and in relation to the two quarters – are closely linked to the nature of, and access to, local housing. Changes to the housing pathways need to be understood within the context of broader urban dynamics as well as the policy framework that has served to curtail or open access to specific kinds of housing.

In post WW2 Bermondsey the vast majority of housing stock was social housing, mostly controlled by the Bermondsey Metropolitan Borough. Under a principle informally known as 'sons and daughters', housing units would first and foremost be made available to the offspring of tenants who already lived in the borough[8]. In this manner, the structure of housing allocation would serve to root local belonging in localised kinship links in the immediate neighbourhood, thus reinforcing the properties of a 'closed' system with strong internal bonds. An example of this link between spatial proximity and familiarity was provided by a life-long resident:

> 'I've lived in this particular street for the last 44 years, literally moved in about two minutes from where I was born. I'm one of three, I'm in the middle, I have an older and a younger brother. Older brother is 6 years older than me, younger brother is 3 years younger than me. Both now live in Kent. I was educated locally, went to the school about 30 seconds from where we are sitting [....] parents born minutes away from here. My mother was born on the Dickens estate 80 years ago, my dad was born in a place called New Church Street which in now Llewellyn Street, 84 years ago, in 1927 [....] so we have kind of always been in this tiny little area for a number of years, although we are now the last. [The] family have moved out, aunts and uncles used to live across the road, great uncle used to live locally, cousins you know, but they have now all gone, all dispersed to Kent' (L-B-I-14-resident-aged 47)

These properties of the local community slowly came undone during the second half of the 20th century. This was partly due to the post-industrial remake of the London docklands from sites of trade and industrial production to expensive residential areas, partly due to policies that served to dramatically change the access to social housing. The structural reform of 1965 that saw the metropolitan councils of Bermondsey, Southwark and Camberwell amalgamated into the London Borough of Southwark meant that the social housing stock in Bermondsey became available to residents from other parts of Southwark. The resulting moves of Bermondsey residents into Kent (the county to the southeast of London) – as mentioned in the quote – is a well-established pattern of residential change.

Furthermore, the allocation of social housing became needs-based, based on an assessment of personal circumstances rather than local family links, and from the early 1970s immigrants and ethnic minorities increasingly gained access to social housing. At the same time the social housing stock started declining from 1980, as the introduction of the contested 'right to buy' by the Thatcher government meant that it became possible for social tenants to buy their housing units at very favourable prices. At the same time local government authorities were barred from building more social housing. As a result, an increasing proportion of social housing was over time sold off, while demand for the decreasing stock increased.

[8] Early ethnographies from London have described this practice in more detail –e.g. Young and Willmott (1957), pp 31-43.

Overall these changing housing regimes have also impacted the demographic profile in Bermondsey. Whereas the older generation of White British residents hold on to their council flats, their children are often unable to find social housing locally, and they move further away from London, into Kent, while an increasing number of ethnic minorities and immigrants are allocated social housing in Bermondsey. There is, accordingly, a demographic imbalance, as social housing estates increasingly are inhabited by an ageing White British population and a younger minority population, as observed by a long-term community activist.

> 'You had the pensioners who lived there, and then you had the equivalent of their grandchildren who were people from all over who had been allocated that housing. So there were younger, kind of black people coming in, whereas there was none of old black generation, you felt, in the area' (L-B-KI-4-community activist-50s).

Riverside, the northernmost and least deprived ward, is also the part of Bermondsey that has seen the most significant, housing-related changes. It is here that the former docklands – traditionally the mainstay of local livelihoods – since the late 1980s have been redeveloped into exclusive residential areas. Furthermore, the extension of the Jubilee Line to Bermondsey meant that access to central London was greatly enhanced. These are gated communities attractively located near the riverfront and close to the city of London, but also adjacent to deprived council estates. This resonates with this recent 'snap-shot' of Bermondsey in a nationwide newspaper: 'A tale of two cities: it is either hyper-gentrified or hyper-ungentrified, and never the twain shall meet. This makes for a peculiar patch of city where poverty and affluence jar' (Guardian 14.01.12). Or as a resident on the Dickens Estate, immediately next to the developments, put it: 'They've got their wine bars – we've got our pubs'.

Overall, housing in Camberwell presents a much more heterogeneous picture, with owner-occupancy as well as private and social renting. Accordingly, incomers have had access to housing in Camberwell for a much longer period of time, so the impact of the policy changes outlined above have not been as dramatic in Camberwell. But here the process of *gentrification* is of particular relevance. As opposed to the re-development of the docklands in Bermondsey, through a transformation of the urban landscape from a productive to a residential capacity, gentrification concerns the ways in which existing residential areas become attractive to a more affluent subset of the population. In relation to Camberwell this is, similar to Bermondsey, explained through an increasing appreciation of the proximity of the quarter to central London as well as the availability of large Georgian and Victorian properties[9].

Furthermore, an increasing number of houses in Camberwell became available due to return migration. As Black Caribbeans who had migrated to Britain in the 1960s and 1970s reached retirement age, many of those who had invested in houses would sell up and return to their countries of origin. The buyers of such houses, typically late 19th century Victorian terraces, would mostly be relatively affluent, self-identifying as middle-class and attracted to Camberwell because of the proximity to central London.

[9] There is here an important distinction to be made between north and south London. A comparison of property prices in terms of travel time to central London would still render southern London considerably cheaper than properties in northern London.

2.3 Patterns of immigration and integration

This section concerns the dynamics of immigration and integration in Bermondsey and Camberwell. While the proportions of ethnic minority populations and immigrants are significant in both quarters, processes of immigration and integration have – as mentioned previously – been ongoing for much longer in Camberwell. In conversation, Greek and Greek-Cypriot shopkeepers in Camberwell would mention how Camberwell Green in the early 1970s was referred to as 'Camberwell Greek' as the majority of local shopkeepers were of Greek, or Greek-Cypriot, origin.

Such a visible display of minority presence contrasts this experience from Bermondsey, also from the early 1970s, as remembered by a Black Caribbean resident:

> 'I'll tell you something. Over the shops, there was a man and his daughter and there was another African woman that moved back to Africa soon after, there was two black people living in Copperfield and myself. There wasn't hardly any black people living round here at all. You go down Tower Bridge Road and you wouldn't see another black person' (L-B-I-11-resident- aged 73).

The memories of early black and Asian immigrants to Bermondsey are hardly affected – surprisingly given Bermondsey's reputation – by experiences of racial harassment. Furthermore, most of the early settlers interviewed had found local work that provided them with a position in the local context. A woman of Indian origin explained how racial harassment, mainly children shouting 'Paki', had stopped once she started work as a teaching assistant: 'Now everyone knows me. 'Hello, Mrs. G', they shout'. But while she herself had felt accepted, she had also experienced how white parents at the school where she worked had staged a protest at the school gate because a black supply teacher from outside Bermondsey had been brought in.

Another key informant, a White British Bermondsey resident of 30 years, explained how attitudes had been:

> 'I remember people saying "we've got a Black family near us, they are almost normal, you know. They are sort of..., their kids seem well-behaved, nice man, she is a nurse, you know" – because they weren't a threat. "Old Sambo", "Blackie" – they [the White British majority population] used these names almost endearingly, you know. They were not a threat' (L-B-KI-6-community activist, aged 69).

While such 'endearing' stereotypes even in the 1980s hardly would be considered appropriate, key here may be that '...they were not a threat'. The number of the immigrants who settled in Bermondsey was still so low at the time that they could be woven into the social fabric of the quarter, as they didn't interfere with the existing patterns of the local scene.

It is in particular in the narratives of Black Caribbean immigrants of the late 1960s and early 1970s that memories of racial harassment and overt discrimination come through, felt even more so on the back of the high expectations held prior to arrival, as in narrated by this Black Caribbean Camberwell resident who arrived from Jamaica in 1972:

> 'Well I've said to you before, Britain or really England to most people was seen as the *mother country*. "Ah, you're going to England" and "England is nice and probably richer than where you are but not as warm but different", and I think in general people look forward to the difference in something else, you know, to be excited about and all the people would be nice and welcoming and you'd just be enjoying yourself [...] But, you know, a lot of people felt as well that their step-mother or the mother country,

> what you felt was your nice mother turned out to be the wicked step-mother (laughs) [....] I remember seeing those signs you know when I came *No Dogs*… you know for renting accommodation *No Dogs, No Blacks*…well *No Coloured* actually, coz that's what they used to call it, and sometimes *No Blacks* as well' (L-C-I-6-resident-aged 56)

While such memories would be shared in a manner that was often amazingly jovial and easy-going, these were often experiences of widespread racial harassment, both in the context of everyday life and when dealing with authorities, in particular the police. The respondents who shared these memories would also generally stress how much these early experiences contrasted with the present state of things. At the same time, the younger generation of UK-born Black Caribbeans were seen to struggle balancing their transnational belongings:

> 'To them Jamaica is Brixton or Peckham because them never left and that's what I think is killing us because you need to start dealing with what you have and where you are instead of talking about some far, far away land that the majority of them you hear who's saying 'Jamaica this Jamaica that' they can't they scared to go back there' (L-C-EI-22 resident, aged 51)

At the same time as younger generations of British-born ethnic minorities thus negotiate these multiple sets of belonging, new immigrants are still arriving. When asked about the most prevalent demographic trends over the past ten years, most respondents would point to the Eastern Europeans as the most recent arrivals. They are also perceived as more motivated to work for less, as explained by a Camberwell resident of Nigerian origin:

> 'There's like there's been a shift in who's getting the jobs. The Eastern Europeans are getting the jobs, milking everything –I think they are the new hungry ones. Once upon a time I thought it was the West Africans or Nigerians who were the hungry ones – they would do any job for any price, get their foot in the working industry, they would rather take something for themselves, 2p to clean this table. They start to go up the ladder and the people that take 2p to clean a table is the Eastern Europeans' (L-C-I-7 - resident-aged 41).

As immigration to the two quarters is a continuing process, this also results in continuous processes of boundary-making. These are not only 'straightforward' distinctions between the majority population and immigrants, but also between different groups of immigrants and ethnic minorities, based on length of residence, immigrant status and/or ethnic, racial and religious markers – as a young Turkish woman had experienced:

> 'Someone from Jamaica was telling me, "go back to your home", (laughs), and I was thinking, what's the difference.' (L-C-EI-20-resident-aged 25).

Herself a Muslim, she had also experienced how 'othering' on religious grounds had increased since 9/11. Other distinctions and tensions involving minority and immigrant groupings may stem from contestations over resources, jobs and entitlements, in particular in situations of relative financial hardship. As observed by a Bermondsey resident who migrated from India in the late 1990s:

> 'Most of the Europeans coming here, everywhere the Europeans are there, everywhere they are working for £2 or £3 and we are working so hard and the government has to think on that one. The Europeans are coming, earning the money and going back! They are not paying the tax; they are not paying the gas bills; they are not paying the insurance; they are not paying the council tax. But we are

not like that we are staying here. We are paying the council bill; we are paying the gas bill, water bill.' (L-B-I-9-resident-aged 36).

In summary, both Bermondsey and Camberwell are today characterised by similar immigration dynamics, as outlined in table 2.2. In both quarters the Black African population is emerging as the biggest minority group, and the Eastern Europeans are seen as the most significant new immigrant group to emerge over the past ten years. But at the same time, processes of immigration and integration have been ongoing for longer in Camberwell, and the proportion of non-white minority populations is, accordingly, significantly higher here.

Table 2.2 2001 Population in Bermondsey and Camberwell community council areas by ethnicity (percentages)

	White British	White Other	Black Caribbean	Black African
Bermondsey	60.0	12.2 (3.4)[1]	3.6	13.8
Camberwell	45.0	9.9 (2.8)	11.5	20.0
Southwark	52.2	10.8 (3.1)	8.0	16.1
London	59.8	11.4 (3.1)	4.8	5.3

Source: ONS 2001

1: Bracketed figures denotes proportion of total population that identifies as White-Irish.

2.4 Black – common ground and contested area

Southwark is, together with the neighbouring boroughs of Lambeth and Lewisham, the London borough where the black population constitutes the highest proportion of the total ethnic minority population (Stillwell and Hussain 2008). Within the borough the concentration of the black population is highest in Camberwell and Peckham, with the black population in Camberwell constituting one-third of the total population in the quarter in 2001. 'Black' is altogether a well-established marker of identity in the local area, commonly expressed through references to 'black literature' in local libraries, or 'black theatre' and 'black dancing' on posters advertising local events. Similarly, 'Black History Month' is an annual event, in 2012 to be observed for the 25th time.

While 'black' thus refers to a collective identity, one of the most significant sources of tension at local level is the interface between Black African and Black Caribbean population groups. Whereas Black Caribbeans, dating back to the Windrush generation of the 1950s, historically constituted the dominating minority population in Camberwell, the Black African population has been growing rapidly since the 1980s, and by 2001 the Black African population in Camberwell was approximately twice the size of the Black Caribbean population. The tensions between the two groups are deep-rooted, as expressed in this interview with a key informant of Nigerian origin.

'You had situations where they claimed that 'you guys sold us' [.....] And these guys would say 'your forefathers were stupid, that's why they were sold'. It goes back, back, way back then, you know.' (L-B-KI-5-entrepreneur-40s).

While such discourses obviously are rooted in memories of colonial history and slave trade, they should not be translated into a stereotypical distinction between Black Caribbean and Black African identity positions. While in particular Black Caribbean respondents who had arrived in Britain in the 1970s would recognise and elaborate on the discourse outlined above, they also adopted religious and/or cultural practices that served to acknowledge an African heritage, such as converting to Rastafarianism, collecting and displaying African artefacts, or wearing West African garments.

It is, however, also important to emphasize that local boundaries and distinctions are experienced differently by younger generations, and local respondents in Camberwell would point to the role of locally specific notions of territoriality and belonging. As explained by a Black Caribbean resident on D'Eynsford Estate:

> 'There was some kind of gang warfare that was in the offing, and one of the women on the estate was going 'oh no', she was crying, you know, and getting worried. There were some youths gathering on the estate, and they were youths from African parents, Caribbean parents, they were linking together because they are from here' (L-C-I-6-resident-aged 56).

So rather than organising according to ethnic origin it was in this instance local belonging to a specific micro-site that temporarily served to structure social organisation. This significance of local territory resonates with popular known ideas of 'turf wars' fought by 'postcode gangs'. There is also, in particular in Camberwell, a strong association between black youths and gang-related activities. A member of the local neighbourhood police team estimated that 99 per cent of all local gang members were black, and he explained that it was difficult to be a black youth in Camberwell and not be a member of a gang – or a grouping of youths perceived as a gang[10].

At the same time there was evidence of an emerging, less local and less 'colour-coordinated' but more inclusive notion of being Londoners on an equal footing, as experienced by this Black British Camberwell resident.

> 'Before there used to be tension between black and black as in, you know, even Nigerians and Ghanaians which are Africans and there was definitely a problem within all the races but now we've come to a common ground of not seeing it as black African, Caribbean, white. It's just 'oh we're Londoners' (L-C-I-21-resident-aged 23).

It is also worth pointing out that this Black British respondent – while born and bred in Camberwell and a resident on the Lettsom Estate throughout her life – had pursued educational and professional trajectories that were different from most of her peer group on the estate. She acknowledged that her university education had impacted the composition of her friendship group, and as a result she was interacting less with her peer group on the estate: 'Not to say that you have to go to uni, but obviously, if I am in uni and you're not, there's not really that much we can talk about.'

The Somali population is, according to local residents, the nationality perceived as having increased the most over the past ten years, in particular in Camberwell and Peckham. While Somalis thus are another black minority, they are also a grouping often perceived as different from other black

[10] This refers to uncertainties about what constitutes a gang in the context of South London (see Alexander 2008). In Bermondsey, a member of the neighbourhood police team distinguished between gangs in Camberwell and 'wannabe gangs' in Bermondsey.

minorities in Camberwell. According to the Somali refugee forum, other Black community groups would make that distinction, saying that 'Somali people – they think they are not Black'. In addition, the period characterised by an increase in the number of Somali immigrants coincided with a general increase in anti-Muslim sentiments – as experienced by a Somali resident in Camberwell:

> 'People look at me and say 'look at that Muslim woman, look at that Somali woman – she's so ugly. Why you here?' – many time [...] one day I'm in a phone box, somebody tried to get to me in a phone box' (L-C-I-8-resident, aged 45).

In summary, while Camberwell by many was seen as a 'black comfort zone', 'black' is also a collective identifier that holds a host of different connotations, as outlined above. But there are also significant similarities between local findings and the broader characteristic of 'Black Britain',provided by Paul Gilroy: 'Happily immigration form the new Commonwealth is no longer at the unstable core of xenophobic Britain's nationalistic anxieties about race, belonging and identity. For the most part, West Indians and their descendants have been grudgingly accepted into the national family portrait. As long as they are not converts to Islam, they have been allowed to pass inside the citadel [...] African settlers whose cultures are less familiar and who may have arrived later are liked less, but they are tolerated for more than late-coming asylum seekers, refugees and illegal denizens whose disruptive demands for inclusion have complicated the old relationship between immigration and colour-coded hierarchy' (Gilroy 2007: 299).

2.5 Conviviality and spaces of encounter

Overall, the streets of both Bermondsey and Camberwell are characterised by a generally unproblematic everyday negotiation of difference. Apart from a few pubs, referred to by respondents as 'racist', there were no parts of the two quarters that were perceived as no go areas on ethnic or racial grounds.

But the everyday sharing of public space cannot be translated into more than passive coexistence based on a level of public familiarity. As a White British Bermondsey resident put it: 'There's no hostility. I think people leave one another to get on with life. It's [a] passive rather than an active community'. Interaction across ethnic and racial boundaries would typically occur in situations where residents shared a purpose. Several, mainly female respondents pointed to the school gate as a meeting place as those who went there to hand over or collect their children shared a purpose – as well as, often, identical problems related to schooling and child care. Given the demographics of the two quarters, however, the school gate is mostly a meeting place of ethnic minority and immigrant parents, as the proportion of white children in local schools is declining sharply (Jayaweera et al 2011: 31, 43). Similarly the libraries in Bermondsey and Camberwell were seen as 'meeting places' – in particular the library in Camberwell where the basement section is reserved for parents with children.

At the same time, the changing urban dynamics in the quarters also affect the patterns and sites of interaction. As explained in a previous section, the redevelopment of the former docklands in Bermondsey has resulted in what some resident considered the most significant local divide, on socio-economic rather than racial grounds. As one resident put it with reference to the affluent

residents in the Riverside developments: 'Bermondsey is a two tier system really, isn't it – them and us'. In Camberwell the increasing popularity of the 'night economy' has meant that an increasing number of restaurants and cafes now target more affluent segments of the customer base. An example was a centrally located pub on Camberwell Green that traditionally had catered for local Irish and Caribbean residents. But following a refurbishment, the pub was now mainly frequented by young, middle class professionals.

From Bermondsey Carnival, July 2011. The carnival is staged in Southwark Park (between Bermondsey and Rotherhithe) every summer by local community activists

Public areas such as squares and parks were mostly not identified as areas of everyday social encounters, and some residents – in particular elderly people – would point to concerns over safety as a reason to avoid such areas. But it is also important to stress how such public spaces are perceived and used differently by different groups. An example would be the Bermondsey Carnival, staged in Southwark Park every year. When held in July 2011, the audience reflected the ethnic diversity of the area, there were stall-holders selling Caribbean food and West African garments, and on stage the performing, local artists would include both White British musicians playing rock and folk music and young Black Caribbean rappers. But at the same time as this 'display' of diversity took place in one end of the park, two football teams, consisting entirely of black players, were playing a match in the other end. There were, accordingly, two different, simultaneous narratives of intergroup relations played out in the same place.

3. Sites of interaction

In this section, practices and patterns of inter-group relations will be analysed in relation to the sites of interaction. These are: The Blue, Dickens Estate, and Jacob's Island in Bermondsey; Lettsom Estate, D'Eynsford Estate, and Camberwell Grove-Grove Lane in Camberwell.

The majority of sites identified for this stage of the fieldwork are 'estates'. For that reason it seems pertinent to explain the function of the estate, both as a type of housing and a semi-public space. Defined for this purpose as a piece of land built over with houses, either privately or by a local authority, the estate constitutes a very prominent spatial form in the urban landscape of inner London, typically built in the inter-war and post-WW2 period in response to ever stronger housing demands from the urban industrial working class population. It thus follows that the social housing estate – as a physical and social space – often has been perceived as a working class space (Hanley 2007). The estate thus provides a semi-public space of social interaction which may extend into a site of belonging and identification. This often extends into an organisational form, as an estate typically is represented by a tenants and residents association (TRA). The TRA is an elected body that is instrumental in the staging of social activities on an estate, and it also constitutes a platform for dialogue between residents and service providers.

3.1 Bermondsey

The Bermondsey sites have been selected with an eye to both the defining features of 'old Bermondsey' and the emerging, more affluent residential areas in the old docklands. 'The Blue' (below) is very much the historical hub of southern Bermondsey, whereas Dickens Estate in the northern part of the quarter is the home of both some of 'Old Bermondsey' residents and a range of different ethnic minority groupings. Immediately to the north of Dickens Estate is the third site of interaction, Jacob's Island, consisting of gated communities in the redeveloped docklands.

3.1.1 'The Blue'

'The Blue' is the informal name of a market area located on and around the Blue Anchor Lane in South Bermondsey. The area dates back several hundred years, but it was during the 1800s that it became a central hub of the area, with photos from the early 20th century showing how market stalls would dominate a long stretch of Southwark Park Road. But over time the local significance of The Blue has changed. While the concentration of local shops and trades made the area an obvious focal point of southern Bermondsey up to the 1970s, the challenges surrounding the commercial viability of this mode of trade in a low-income area are under-lined by the frequent sight of shoppers crossing the square carrying shopping bags from 'Iceland', the discount super market situated immediately opposite the square. Another two smaller supermarkets are located less than 2 minutes walk away, and there was by 2011 only five to six traders left on The Blue.

But while the commercial importance of 'The Blue' has dwindled over the years, the square retains its role as a local meeting place, and a venue for local events. In recognition of the importance of 'The Blue' for the local community, the South Bermondsey Partnership has over the past years

invested in facelift of the square[11]. The square has been re-surfaced, and shop-shutters have, in recognition of the historical significance, been imprinted with B/W images depicting historical scenes from The Blue and Southwark Park Road. In addition, a book about the history of The Blue, in particular rich on photographic evidence, was published in 2011 (Gosling 2011). The book was funded by the South Bermondsey Partnership and made available locally, free of charge.

(Part of The Blue, after refurbishment completed in 2011. Photos depicting the history of the Blue are depicted on the shudders of the shops on the square)

The two cafes located on the square are the central points of interaction, used on a daily basis by elderly residents in particular, but also by young families and local lunch-breakers. Similar to many other local shops and cafes, the cafes on The Blue are run by locally well-established Turkish families. The greetings exchanged at arrivals and departures and the relaxed nature of exchanges between staff and customers ('you need a haircut', said the woman behind the counter to one of the regulars) bear evidence to a high level of public familiarity. This aspect of local interaction was also mentioned by a locally born resident:

> 'Yeah, yeah, it is very funny hearing someone with a Turkish accent using a cockney phrase; I love it and it just makes me think it's really great, they really want to fit in and get on with people. I try not to laugh coz it sounds really funny sometimes, but no, it's really nice, it's really sweet' (L-B-I-13-resident-aged 52).

The public library that is situated towards the back of The Blue is probably the most well-used part of the square. Apart from books, DVDs and newspapers, the library provides internet access, it is a meeting place, and it is also used by pupils doing homework. But in line with the overall demographic changes that Bermondsey has experienced over the years, the profile of the library's user group had changed over the past years, becoming increasingly diverse. One of the librarians, who had worked at the library for seven years, had made an informal survey over the nationalities of people he was serving over a 1-2 day periods: 'Did I get 80 countries? Was it in one day or two days?'

So the users of the library did belong to a broad range of nationalities. But the librarian's experience was also that the library increasingly was used as a site of interaction:

> 'There is definitely this coming together again, black and white, again with the homework club. I can remember again, you would have white families interacting with black families. Also on the computers,

[11] Please see section 4.2.2 for a short outline of the partnership.

> you would have white children interacting with black children. There is again a lot of hope for the future, I mean, say, like here, because some would still regard here as a ... maybe a racist thing because it's still, how do I say it ... here is still not like Peckham' (L-B-I-20-librarian-aged 39).

The librarian himself was Black Caribbean and born in Peckham. His own history also testified to a lessening of racially motivated tensions. As a young man in Peckham, he would take care to avoid bus lines that went through Bermondsey and Rotherhithe, because these areas were seen as racist and 'insular'. He nevertheless started working as a librarian in Rotherhithe in 1991, and he has been based at the library in The Blue since 2004. Altogether his experiences resonated with a widely held feeling that racial attitudes and harassment over the past ten years had become less wide-spread and less overt, but also that there was some way to go[12]. As another user of The Blue put it:

> 'I think Bermondsey used to have a very bad sort of racist tag, and time has passed and there has been more integrated marriages, lots of mixed race children growing up, and the majority of people think 'how stupid to ever have thought like that or behaved like that'. But you still get some people walking about, white people, and if they pass a Muslim woman with, I'm not sure what the correct term is [...] I have heard men give them an absolutely vile mouthful, totally insulting them. [I've been] absolutely shocked by it. So there are still, you know, some horribly racist people about' (L-B-I-13-resident, aged 52).

In summary, the nature of The Blue as a commercial and social hub of the community has shifted significantly over the past decades, in tune with the expansion of supermarkets and chains. While the historical significance of The Blue is expressed in the design of the refurbished square, The Blue has, in line with the shifting overall demographics of Bermondsey, become an increasingly multi-cultural site of interaction.

3.1.2 Dickens Estate

The Dickens Estate is located in the northern part of Bermondsey, north of Jamaica Road that cuts through Bermondsey, and opposite the Bermondsey underground station. To the north, the estate borders one of the exclusive gated communities that are part of Jacob's Island. Consisting of free-standing low-rises, the estate was built over several decades in the inter-war and post-WW2 period, and it does, compared to other estates, have less of a uniform look to it. Named after Charles Dickens, each of the blocks of flats on the estate is named after a character in one of Dickens' novels. The estate comprises over 800 properties, with an estimated total population of 1,500-2,000.

More so than most estates in Bermondsey, the Dickens Estate would seem to have the making of a community in its own right, with two primary school (one of them Catholic), shops, two pubs, and a doctor's clinic situated on the estate. Elderly residents how would explain how their entire life span had been organised around the estate. They would typically leave school at the age of 16, find employment locally, and then, when they got married, move from one block to another within the estate.

[12] Please see section 4.2.3 for an account of the role of The Blue in relation to St. George's Day celebrations.

There is a TRA and a tenants hall on the estate. The TRA is run by a group of female residents who have been living on the estate for a long period of time. The 15 members of the TRA committee are all white, and all, apart from one, are women. Events are organised, most notably coffee mornings for old age pensioners and events for children. But it is altogether difficult to mobilise people, and the idea of volunteering is not well understood. As one of the most active members of the committee said: 'a lot of people think they're gonna get paid and they can't understand why people do it for nothing.'

Though there is no break-down of the tenant population by ethnicity, the overall impression is that the estate is becoming more mixed. While there were no examples of clashes between long-term, mainly White British residents and the newcomers, some were aggrieved because they felt that the majority population was being disadvantaged in relation to the access to social housing. There was also a feeling, voiced in informal conversations and also at the neighbourhood forum, that 'political correctness' prevented them from giving voice to their opinions. As one resident put it:

> 'And obviously we're not allowed to say, we've got to be careful what we say because it's classed as racism and most people are not racist. They are, you know…we've had meetings and they say well the lady that lives next door to me and it's or this and you say well describe her and it's well she was black – that's irrelevant, well it's not if you're describing someone and people are so frightened to say anything and they're not going to say anything nasty anyway but you've just got to be so careful [...]And it's when you're angry, when you're having an argument you do pick you know I mean like someone would call me four eyes because I've got glasses on; it's whatever's different isn't it? So if someone is black that word comes out when you're angry with someone' (L-B-I-21-resident-aged 52).

So the frustration was not aimed at immigrants and minority groups, but at council officials. An example referred to at the Bermondsey neighbourhood forum was the sale of alcohol in the tenants hall on the estate. The committee had a license to sell alcohol at the hall, and the sale of alcohol had previously been an integrated part of the social life evolving around the tenants hall. However, the community engagement officer had advised against the sale of alcohol, arguing that it might offend Muslim residents.

The Riverside School is one of the local primary schools, very much an integrated part of the life-stories of the local population. 'I went there, my dad went there, most of my family went there', as one of the residents said. The composition of the pupil population at the local primary school also reflects the changing demography in the area. According to the head teacher 50 per cent of the pupils are 'white working class', as opposed to 80 per cent in the early 1990s when she started working in the school. A total of 24 languages are spoken in the school, with Black African, in particular West African, pupils constituting the biggest group. This racial mix was no longer a source of concern, as the head teacher commented:

> 'When I first came to the school 20 years ago, there was huge amounts of trouble and that was reflected really, when I came here we were just having the big BNP marches down Jamaica Road and those emotions were coming to school, there was a lot of bad feeling. I have to say at school we made the children play lip service to being racially aware but I think it's become the norm now largely. I don't want to sound complacent because I think there are other issues taking their place but Ofsted [the national school standards agency] also agreed and said it's a very racially harmonious community. We very rarely anymore have problems started because someone saying something about someone's race

> or religion, they do for other reasons, I'm not saying… but that isn't the thing that seems to cause the most problems anymore' (L-B-KI-16-head teacher, 50s).

This resonates with the experience of a Spanish woman in her 30s who had lived on Dickens Estate since 1999. As opposed to residents who had spent all their life on the estate – and thus measured the present against a memory of the past – her experience was based on the friendships she had made during her time on the estate as well as the experience of her two children. They went to local schools, and she was generally very positive about the multi-ethnic nature of their everyday life on the estate:

> 'Well, I think a lot of people, well a lot of people are African, and I'm very happy with that. Also, my friends, I think they are the only white ones, but they play around down there because we got a basketball pitch, so sometimes they go there and, yeah, they are always with Africans, and they're fine. I really like them, they go and play with them and they're good. They have a good relationship with them [...] I think my kids are very free from all this racist things, they don't think about black or I think well that's what I teach them no, so that's what I try to do.' (L-B-I-17 (resident, aged 35)

Based on the interviews carried out, it can be argued that the Dickens Estate serves to showcase some of the changes that Bermondsey has undergone over the past decades. For the White British residents, with a memory of a strong community, this is expressed in nostalgia where the present compares unfavourably with the past. This then contrasts the experiences of newer residents who view the present situation more favourably.

3.1.3 Jacob's Island

Jacob's Island refers to the residential part of the Riverside ward in northern Bermondsey that consists of docklands redeveloped in the 1980s and early 1990s. Similar to Dickens Estate – perhaps the only commonality between the two areas – the name Jacob's Island refers back to the time and works of Charles Dickens, with the Jacob's Islands slums referred to as 'A Venice of drains' in late 19th century writing .

Jacob's Island consists of three residential developments: Providence Square, Providence Tower and Springalls Wharf. They are all gated developments located in the immediate vicinity of the Thames, downriver from Tower Bridge – with the well-known landmark also figuring prominently on the website of the Jacob's Island Residents' Association (JIRA).

(The Riverside developments, prominently situated on the banks of the Thames, with Tower Bridge in the background).

The developments were initially advertised heavily in Hong Kong and Singapore, and many of the initial owners were from the Far East, purchasing the flats for investment reasons. The vast majority of home-owners are now white, according to the chairman of the residents association. Some of the residents have second homes outside London. In addition, most flats are relatively small, and the number of families with children is very low. Subsequently, the local schools which many residents in other parts would refer to as a meeting place for 'school gate mums' are not used by Riverside residents. This was also by and large confirmed by the head teacher from the local Riverside primary school.

A central question concerning the Jacob's Island development evolves around the juxtaposition between the affluent gated communities and the relatively deprived estates immediately next to Jacob's Island. This is a question that concerns not only the disparities in terms of wealth but also the well-established stigma concerning council housing – as observed by a Dickens estate resident.

> 'Like I said some are really nice and some I don't know, they just seem to think council people, poor people, you know, no manners. But it works both ways because when they started moving into the area we had a gang of people that lived across the road there – the flats are no longer there – and they were getting children off the estate to go and rob the cars round there coz they thought they were rich people they can afford to lose things so they were encouraging our kids to go and steal from them so you get both sides of it you know' (L-B-I-21 (resident, aged 52).

Issues relating to theft and burglary were also mentioned by the chairman of JIRA, who acknowledged that these problems were linked to the obvious disparities between the gated communities and council estates living 'cheek by jowl', as he put it.

So while living in immediate proximity, there is altogether very limited common ground – in terms of shared spaces and shared interests – in this part of Bermondsey. In contrast to the territorially defined 'closed system' of 'Old Bermondsey', the Jacob's Island residents have been attracted by the proximity to central London. While effectively living in the exclusive, 'closed system' that a gated community is, social networks and cultural practices would make the residents look upriver, towards central London, rather than engage with other parts of Bermondsey.

3.2 Camberwell

All three sites in Camberwell are located centrally in the quarter, respectively to the north and south of Camberwell Church Street, the historical divider between the affluent southern Camberwell located uphill from Camberwell Church Street, and the industrial, working-class part of the quarter, situated to the north. All sites are thus located in close proximity.

3.2.1 Lettsom Estate

Lettsom Estate is located approximately a five minute walk from Denmark Hill Station, in the very north of the Brunswick Park ward. The estate consists of approximately ten four-storey blocks, each holding around 40 flats, a total of 400 flats. Developed in the late 1960s, the estate constitutes a stark contrast to the Georgian buildings on Camberwell Grove immediately adjacent to the estate.

Plan of Lettsom Estate, with the blocks of the estate shaded brown. The road to the left hand side is Camberwell Grove, part of the conservation area. A railway line, connecting the nearby Denmark Hill station to Peckham, runs immediately to the south of the estate.

While the majority population was White British up to the 1990s, most residents on the estate are now black, mainly Black African (in line with the overall demographic profile in the area). In addition, many of the privately owned flats on the estate have been sublet on a room-by-room basis. This is a wide-spread practice, in particular in areas characterised by high demands for housing. It is, however, also a practice that contributes to a high level of population turn-over as well as, frequently, a 'dilution' of neighbourliness as residents no longer know who lives in the immediate vicinity.

Lettsom Estate is, according to the local neighbourhood police team – based in Camberwell Church Street, five minutes away – not known as a 'bad estate', and it is not an area where the police needs to go very often. The football court on the estate has recently been done up as part of a community pay-back scheme with ex-offenders, a project carried out under the auspices of the neighbourhood

team. Another project, implemented with young people on the estate, was carried out in 2008 in order to create a wall mural for the tenants' hall (see photo)[13].

As it is evident from the map of Lettsom Estate, there is much open, shared space between the blocks on the estate. But the experience, built up over numerous visits in the course of the research, was that this space rarely was used for social or recreational purposes. Residents would go straight from their flats to their cars, or they would walk out of the estate, and there was altogether limited evidence of public familiarity, for example people stopping to chat or 'hanging out'. Likewise, the football court, recently refurbished and painted in vivid colours, was never seen in use.

Participants in a youth art project carried out in Lettsom Estate TRA Hall in 2008. The wall painting in the background was the outcome of the project, implemented with youths on the estate.

The estate has got a TRA as well as a tenants' hall that is used for meetings and events on the estate. It is also used as a polling station for the local area. The TRA was established when the estate was first built. At that time the majority of residents on the estate were white, and the TRA and tenants hall was remembered as central to community activities on the estate. As remembered by a resident of 36 years:

> 'It's a lovely estate, it's just that nobody comes together anymore. But it used to, as I said, when we had the bar over there, people used to come and have a drink and meet their neighbours – "where do you live? Oh, I didn't know you lived there, that's where I live" – you know, and they would have a good yarn and play cards, dominos, darts, have the music on, Christmas parties. But that's all gone out the door now' (L-C-I-19-resident, aged 68).

It was the experience of the resident, herself white and Camberwell-born and for many years an active member of the TRA committee, that many of the black tenants who over time moved on to the estate didn't want to be part of the existing TRA committee and instead wanted their own committee. A Black Caribbean former resident, who had moved to the estate in 1989, had witnessed how the ethnic mix on the estate had changed. He interpreted the dynamics between white and black residents in terms of a succession rather than a confrontation:

> 'When I first went there, it was a lovely hall. They had a bar there and pool [...] it was basically just whites, and then it was closed down for a while and then blacks take it over now as you can see what it is there now [...] the problem with the estate as well is there is no unity because I mean 'this don't like that', 'that don't like that', everyone keeps themselves to themselves, the Caribbeans are arguing there

[13] YouTube video showing the implementation of the project: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pby0ko11bnw (accessed 01.05.2012).

> are more Africans come, you know, on the estate now, you know, the same old thing. And most of the whites who live there have moved to Essex or Kent' (L-C-I-22 (resident, aged 51).

Accordingly the TRA had over time ceased to operate and had then been taken over by black residents. The present TRA is now run by a committee largely consisting of black residents. The chairman, of Black Caribbean origin, moved to Lettsom Estate in 2008 and was elected chairman in 2009. The staging of a social club every Friday evening in the tenants' hall – with table tennis, pool, and dominos – is the mainstay of community activities.

The generational aspect and the changes to the nature of community relations on the estate were also touched on by a female resident in her early 20s. Of Ghanaian origin but born in Camberwell, she had lived on the estate all her life.

> 'Well, I'm not too sure about the race thing but in terms of the old and the young, it's like a lot of old people, they've been living here, so I can understand their frustration, how things have changed, and it is not as community based as it was. But a lot of people now, because they're not that much into community as much as people were a long time before when they used to do street parties, you know. For me, that's enjoyable, but a lot of people don't see that, a lot of people are into making money as well, so that comes before communities, it's more about individualism' (L-C-I-21-resident, aged 23).

In conclusion, the idea of the Lettsom estate as a social space, shared and reproduced by the residents of the estate, would seem to belong to the memories of elderly, white residents – in a manner that holds similarities with the Dickens Estate in Bermondsey[14]. There is no shared narrative of why community relations on the estate over time have become less dense. But like many other estates in Southwark, Lettsom has become increasingly heterogeneous – in terms of ethnic composition as well as tenure arrangements.

3.2.2 D'Eynsford estate

The D'Eynsford estate is located close to Camberwell Green, immediately north of Camberwell Church Road, one of the main arteries cutting through the area. Built in the 1960s, approximately at the same time as the Lettsom Estate, the estate consists of a total of 360 flats, mainly low-rise blocks, and it also holds sheltered accommodation. Due to its location near the shops on Camberwell Church Road, the estate was in earlier years used as a 'get-away' for petty criminals (for example shoplifters and pickpockets) escaping from the central shopping area of Camberwell. For this reason walls have been built around the estate, reducing the number of access points, and some of the internal pathways have been fenced off.

The estate is represented by an active tenants and residents association (TRA). It is due to a door-to-door survey, designed and implemented by the TRA in January 2011, that a more accurate understanding of the ethnic composition and housing tenures can be established. Around 40 per cent of the households on the estate participated in the survey, and of these approximately one-third self-identified as 'Black African' or 'African', one-third as White British, with the final one-third comprising a very wide range of ethnic identities (including 'human being'). 69 per cent of those taking part in

[14] Indicative of the overall demographic pattern, the elderly White British resident who was interviewed in the early part of the research had by late 2011 moved to Kent.

the survey self-identified as council tenants, with lease-holders constituting 22 per cent, and private tenants the remaining nine per cent. More than 50 per cent had been residents on the estate for more than five years.

The D'Eynsford estate TRA is, as opposed to the TRA on Lettsom Estate, characterised by a mix of long-term and more recent residents, with two of the present committee members – one locally born and bred, and one originating from Jamaica – involved in the TRA for approximately 30 years. One of these members has, since retiring early in the mid-80s, invested most of his time in community work on the estate. This has ensured continuity within the TRA as well as a significant familiarity with local service providers and the broader policy community in Camberwell.

Parts of the D'Eynsford Estate, red-brick low rises built in the late 1960s.

The TRA thus aims to engage with people on the estate. Monthly newsletters are distributed, children's events are organised, for example for Halloween and Christmas, and TRA organises a 'big lunch' on the estate during the summer. The estate is thus, due to the TRA, characterised by a comparatively high level of community activities. At the same time, the composition of the committee does not reflect the mix on the estate, as one of the members observed:

> 'I am quite conscious that our committee is quite white-dominated, which doesn't really reflect our estate. But at the same time, who's going to do it? That's always the tension. I am often chairing a meeting and I'm looking and thinking 'is this really mixed, diverse? Does this really represent our estate?' If not, why not?' (L-C-I-12 (resident, aged 33).

But the composition of the resident population of the estate, as well as the profile of the TRA committee, also reflects wider changes in Camberwell. Whereas council tenants only have limited say as to where they are allocated housing, the estate is – similar to other parts of central Camberwell – becoming a destination of choice for residents who chose to move to Camberwell and who has the means to invest in housing. This residential choice is, for some, also motivated by an intent to be part of the local community. As one woman, a resident of five years, put it:

> 'I went to this conference yesterday, and someone called it 'downwardly mobile' – which is quite an interesting way of putting it! I'm quite a strong believer in trying to live where there are more problems and where I can make a difference. I'm very, very interested in young people and community (L-C-I-12 (resident, aged 33).

The secret garden

The 'secret garden' on D'Eynsford Estate is a narrow strip of land at the very edge of the estate. The woman who masterminded the garden is not a resident of the estate, but lives in a house adjacent to the estate. Having looking down on the empty bit of land for twenty-odd years, in 2008 she contacted the council as well as the chairman of the D'Eynsford TRA in order to take forward the idea of establishing a community garden. A community consultation was then carried out in order to pull together ideas for the design of the garden and also take into account potential objections. Subsequently, funding was secured from different sources, and the garden started taking shape in 2009[15].

Due to reservations voiced by residents in ground-floor flats adjacent to the Secret Garden, it is only open Thursday afternoons, as well as sometimes during the weekends. An estimated 40 residents make use of the garden on a regular basis. In addition, the volunteers who run the garden have also starting doing outreach work on the estate, working in the gardens of elderly residents who live in sheltered accommodation.

The secret garden is altogether less of a secret. It is also open to Camberwell residents who do not live on D'Eynsford estate, and it was part of the 'Open garden' event staged in Camberwell in September 2011.

Despite the continuing efforts of the TRA committee and the successful creation of the 'secret garden' as a very visible community place (see text box), there was nevertheless a rather limited uptake on the estate. As one of them experienced in relation to the staging of a carol-singing event on the estate:

> 'When we did Christmas carols on the estate, [.....] it was almost as though people were too scared to come out…weird, not scared…I sometimes wonder if there can possibly be a kind of cultural, social paranoia. No, not even that, it's not even that, it's that we are so disconnecting from just interacting that people are becoming phobic almost, socially phobic. I wonder if you can have that en mass as a cultural shift, social phobia en mass. We had a couple of people come out onto their balconies and giving us the thumbs up and kind of…you kind of think '...look here's a group of 15 people freezing to death, standing on the fucking estate, singing carols' (L-C-I-10 (resident, aged 55).

[15] For a summary and photos of the 'secret garden' project, see http://deynsfordsecretgarden.blogspot.co.uk/

This notion of withdrawal or 'social phobia en mass' resonates with other experiences, narrated by residents and key informants in both Bermondsey and Camberwell, as well as at the neighbourhood forums. It was generally felt that it was becoming increasingly difficult to mobilise local residents.

Altogether the initiatives undertaken on D'Eynsford Estate both mirrors and bridges some of the divides that characterise Camberwell. The majority of newcomers who play an active role in the TRA are leaseholders, and they can be categorised as white and middle-class. But the move onto a council estate and the active involvement in community building at estate level are practices that are different from the gentrification process that is seen as characteristic of residential change in other parts of Camberwell, as will be explored in the next section.

3.2.3 Camberwell Grove and Grove Lane

Camberwell Grove and Grove Lane are tree-lined roads with well-kept Georgian terraces (built 1770s-1840s) on both sides, and with shops and restaurants dominating the lower part of the roads, near the junctions with Camberwell Church Street. Originally private roads leading to the grand mansions uphill, in the southern part of Camberwell, Camberwell Grove and Grove Lane now link the colourful and vibrant central part of Camberwell with the middle-class, more gentile residential areas in South Camberwell. As the two roads became a designated 'conservation area' in 1970, the local government authorities are committed to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area (Southwark Borough 2003).

Originally built by merchants and traders who made a living in the City of London, it can be argued that the use of the houses has come full circle and, in the words of one of the residents, 'reverted to what it was originally built for in the 1780s' – in other words, the residence of a relatively affluent subset of the local population who had made their money in central London. The present state of the area is, however, also an outcome of an early process of gentrification. Some of the present residents who had moved to the area in the 1960s accounted how many of the Georgian houses at that time were a sorry sight. They were dilapidated, many were used for private letting, often on a room-by-room basis, and very limited attention was given, from Southwark borough or other residents, to the cultural significance of the houses.

This has changed significantly over the past decades, and the Georgian houses on the roads are now highly attractive. As the area thus has become more fashionable, more of the urban landscape is being turned into expensive housing units. For example, a former girl's school that borders both Grove Lane and Camberwell Grove, closed down in 1981 and for many years used by the charity Save the Children, was during the fieldwork period undergoing the last stage of an extensive redevelopment into very expensive housing units, with the last remaining properties – 4-bedroom town-houses – each selling for £1,6 million.

In that manner, the Grove Lane-Camberwell Grove area increasingly contrasts with the nearby estates. Lettsom Estate is situated immediately next to the Camberwell Grove, and one of the access roads to the estate is from Camberwell Grove. While none of the Grove residents interviewed held

any strong views concerning Lettsom Estate, it was not an area they would go to, because, they said, they had no reason to do so.

In comparison to both the adjacent estates and the general mix observed in the central Camberwell, the residents of the Grove area are overwhelmingly white. But the residents of the area were overwhelmingly positive in their view of ethnic diversity of the quarter, and they would engage with the local diversity as part of their everyday practices:

> 'The newsagent is from Sri Lanka, I think he was a Tamil who came out – he runs a very effective business: the green grocer round the corner is a Turkish Cypriot. The baker, when we arrived, was German' [....] on summer's evenings you could hear West Indian steel band music floating in Camberwell, because they ran steel bands' (L-C-I-15-resident-60s).

Accordingly the residents in the conservation area can, in particular in comparison to residents on the nearby estates, be portrayed as gentrifiers, or a 'creative middle class', celebrating the diverse population and the cultural and consumption infrastructure of their neighbourhood. This was both acknowledged and challenged by a long-term resident and member of Camberwell Society[16].

> 'I think we [Camberwell Society] could be criticised for, possibly you know, the gentrification argument. But we have done, as a group, a very wide group of people over the years, have done a lot for the neighbourhood over the years' (L-C-I-15-resident-60s).

This refers to the numerous local campaigns that the residents of Camberwell Grove and Grove Lane over the years have been involved in (see policy section). In this sense the residents here differ from the middle-class residents on the Riverside in Bermondsey. Whereas both sets of people stand out from the neighbouring areas according to both ethnic and economic markers – they are white and well-to-do – the Grove residents have a well-established tradition of civic engagement and campaigning in Camberwell.

[16] Please see the next section for more details on Camberwell Society.

4. Policy

This section consists of three distinct parts: The first part concerns the policy community and it aims to provide an overview over the relevant stakeholders at quarter and site level; the second part concerns the policy packages that are being implemented locally; the third, shorter part is a discussion of the different levels of representation and inclusion, mainly based on interviews with residents and opinions voiced at the neighbourhood forums.

4.1 Policy community

Both Bermondsey and Camberwell were, at the time of the fieldwork, community council areas within Southwark Borough (see below), so the two quarters thus command identical positions in relation to the local government structure. But the two quarters are also characterised by very different policy communities. Due to the strong sense of community in Bermondsey, there are some very well-established local community organisations in the quarter, some dating back to the early part of the 20th century, and with solid roots in the traditional white working-class community. These work independently as well as in partnership with local government authorities. Such organisations, with a quarter-wide remit, are less prominent in Camberwell.

This section by no means provides a full picture of the policy community in the two neighbourhoods. The ambition is, however, to outline the elements of the policy community that are most significant in the context of inter-group relations. These comprise: the community councils that are most public platform for dialogue between local stakeholders, service providers and residents; quarter-specific civil society organisations; churches and religious organisations; tenants and residents organisations.

4.1.1 The community councils

The devolution in 2003 of the local government authority into community council areas sets Southwark Borough apart from most other London boroughs. Following the administrative re-structuring, the borough has been subdivided into a total of eight community councils, each comprising three wards with a total of nine elected councillors. Accordingly Bermondsey community council comprises Riverside, Grange and South Bermondsey wards, and Camberwell community council consists of Camberwell Green, Brunswick Park and South Camberwell wards[17]. Both Bermondsey and Camberwell community council areas are characterised by relative political uniformity; all nine elected counsellors in Bermondsey belong to the Liberal Democrats (Lib Dems), and all elected councillors in Camberwell are from Labour.

The councils are propagated as part of the decision-making process of the borough, and the community council meetings, held eight times per year in different locations of each community council area, constitute a platform for civic engagement and consultation. A designated community council officer organises the event and coordinates with local organisations in order to indentify

[17] As part of an effort to cut expenses, the number of community councils in Southwark Borough was cut down from eight to five in early 2012. As a result, Bermondsey and Rotherhithe community councils were merged.

relevant themes for discussion. The duration of a meeting is typically 2.5 hours, with the agenda consisting of announcements, short presentations and usually a workshop concerning a pre-identified theme – for example traffic management, housing, or youth-related matters.

A number of community council meetings were attended in order to establish an understanding of the range of topics discussed and the nature of community engagement. The majority of elected councillors were present at the meetings, and there would be 40-60 residents in the audience, mostly white and middle-aged. The councillors were on first name terms with many members of the audience, and this contributed to a relaxed atmosphere – but also to a perception of the community council meetings as a gathering of 'the usual suspects', individuals usually engaged in neighbourhood matters. As the community council officer put it:

> 'I think you could, looking at it from that side, feel if not excluded, but it is a bit clique-ish, not intentionally so, but it is – it is one of these unfortunate side effects. The councillors come from those local areas, and they have come to know those movers and shakers, so there is interplay and inter-dependency' (L-B-KI-2 (council officer, 40s).

During the meetings attended as part of the fieldwork, issues relating to integration and inter-group relations within the community council area were hardly raised. The main tensions concerned issues where outside agencies wanted to carry out work in the local area, and such issues were framed as situations where the councillors, representing their local area, aimed to ensure that proper consultations were carried out.

4.1.2 Quarter-specific civil society organisations

In this section some of the most significant civil society organisations in Bermondsey and Camberwell will be outlined.

Settlement houses

Along with other deprived urban areas in the period Bermondsey – as well as the neighbouring quarter of Rotherhithe – was targeted in the late 19th and early 20th centuries by the settlements movement. Motivated by the appalling, slum-like conditions in such parts of London, philanthropists and educational institutions would set up settlement houses providing educational and general welfare facilities for the population in these under-privileged areas. Though their remit has changed over the years, some of these settlements are still around and play a major part in the local associational infrastructure. They include Cambridge House in the northernmost part of Camberwell, Salmon Youth Centre and Bede House in Bermondsey as well as Time and Talents in the neighbouring quarter of Rotherhithe. These organisations are thus well-established local stakeholders that both work with local volunteers and partner with Southwark Borough in the design and implementation of activities, often acting as 'anchor organisations' for local community development work.

Camberwell Society

Established in 1970 from the Camberwell Grove residents association, the Camberwell Society has from the onset been associated with the affluent part of Camberwell, and the majority of present-day board members reside in the 'conservation area'. The Camberwell Society is a civic amenity organisation established in order to '... stimulate public interest in Camberwell, to promote high standards of planning and architecture in Camberwell, and to secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest in Camberwell' (http://www.camberwellsociety.org.uk/about.htm). It stands out as a powerful scrutinizer of planning applications and other developments that may impact the urban landscape of Camberwell. Whereas the Camberwell Society overall can be characterised as largely constituted by white middle-class residents, thus not at all reflecting the ethnic diversity of Camberwell, the organisation has also been involved in campaigns dedicated to the safeguarding of more widely accessible public amenities, for example the Denmark Hill Station and Camberwell Baths.

SE5 Forum

The SE5 Forum was established in 2006 as '... a grassroots, non-political, umbrella organisation that exists to work for the improvement of Camberwell to benefit all members of our diverse community' (http://www.se5forum.org/about-se5-forum.html). SE5 refers to the Camberwell postcode (South East London). The SE5 Forum is thus, in its manifesto, broader and more inclusive than the Camberwell Society. But similar to the latter, it does struggle to move beyond the middle-class resident base that is also a characteristic of the Camberwell Society. This is an aspect that is addressed in more detail in the final part of this section.

Churches and religious organisations

There are both churches and mosques in Bermondsey and Camberwell. But churches are, in line with the general profile of the population, much more significant in the local context, both historically and in the present day.

Some of the early settlement houses and philanthropic organisations that worked in the quarters were based in Christian principles, and some of the volunteers and community activist who worked locally would also refer to their belief as a major motivating factor. As a scout leader stated: 'I am a Christian, and I actually believe that it is important for people to move the inner city and work here'.

Camberwell has been characterised by a significant growth in the number of churches, typically of West African origin. Also known as 'warehouse churches', they are mostly situated in buildings originally designed for other purposes – for example office buildings, cinemas or shops (see photo). It is often only the signboards that reveal the location of the churches.

Two churches, located in converted shops on Camberwell Road.

While the churches are situated locally, and church affiliation was seen in particular by Black African respondents as important and structuring aspects of everyday life and social organisation, their catchment areas often go far beyond the local quarters. Accordingly, the emerging churches were not seen as active local stakeholders.

Tenants and residents associations

Tenants and residents associations (TRA) constitute an organisational form that is a characteristic of the urban landscape not just in Bermondsey and Camberwell, but throughout urban England. A TRA is typically set up and owned by the tenants and leaseholders living on a specific estate. The TRA thus constitutes a vehicle for the planning and execution of site-based community activities at estate level as well as a platform for communication with service providers, typically housing officers, and locally elected councillors. At borough level, TRAs in Southwark are organised in the Southwark Group of Tenants Organisations, an independent, voluntary organisation representing and promoting the rights of a total 151 TRAs within the borough[18].

While the TRAs thus are an ever-present element of social organisation at local level, the role of TRAs has generally been diminished over the past decades. This is generally attributed to a declining support from local residents. This was also the general experience among residents who lived on estates in Bermondsey and Camberwell. There was in particular among older residents a nostalgic memory of a past characterised by strong community relations which strongly contrasted with the present day. This development was attributed to both a stronger sense of individualism among residents, the changing ethnic profile of the estates, and a generally more rapid population turn-over combined with increasing subletting. Furthermore, there was evidence of an increasing expectation, in particular among younger residents, that those who volunteered for TRA-related activities should receive financial remuneration.

[18] http://www.sgto.org.uk/

4.2 Policy frameworks and quarter-specific initiatives

In this section we outline some of the most relevant policy frameworks and local initiatives. Accordingly this includes both the overarching legislative frameworks and the quarter-specific programmes, initiated by the Southwark Borough Council but adapted to the local social, cultural and economic context.

4.2.1 Overarching legislative frameworks

All policy initiatives at national and local level are subject to overarching equality legislation. Existing anti-discrimination laws were in 2010 replaced by the 2010 Equality Act which brings together in one piece of legislation the law on race, gender, disability etc. The equality act thus replaced previous legislation, most importantly the Race Relations Act from 1976[19]. Accordingly, all locally implemented policy programmes and interventions are inclusive in the sense that they do not differentiate on the basis of race or ethnicity, and the mandate of borough staff is to promote communities borough-wide. This is done through a range of different initiatives developed and implemented by community development and community inclusion officers, often in cooperation with local organisations working at quarter-level. Borough-wide initiatives include support to The Safer Communities Programme; Communities of Interest Forums (including Southwark Multifaith Forum); Cohesion support for schools and young people; Celebration of identity and belonging. It was in recognition of the quality of its community cohesion work that Southwark Council and its partners in 2009 were awarded 'beacon status', a prestigious national award.

Another aspect of the overarching policy framework is the area-specific focus that is motivated by the aim to combat poverty and disadvantage. This has, since the late 1990s, resulted in a range of different, locally managed neighbourhood renewal programmes, with initiatives developed in partnership with local stakeholders. The geographical areas eligible for such programmes are usually selected on the basis of indicators of socio-economic deprivation, the so-called index of multiple deprivation.

4.2.2 Quarter-specific programmes

Within the parameters set out by the overarching equality legislation and the area-based focus on deprived neighbourhoods, a range of quarter-specific programmes have been implemented in both Bermondsey and Camberwell.

[19] The act covers nine characteristics which cannot be used to treat people unfairly. These are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation http://homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/equality-act/ (accessed 23.04.2012).

South Bermondsey Partnership

Most significant among the local programmes carried out in Bermondsey community council area is the South Bermondsey Partnership (SBP), implemented in the period 2004-2011. Set up within the framework of the Neighbourhood Management Programme, SBP was part of an the initiative specifically targeting super output areas falling within the 3 per cent most deprived according to the 2004 Index of Deprivation (Winchurch 2009: 8).

Illustration from the news-letter of the South Bermondsey Partnership

Headed up by a neighbourhood manager, a small locally based team would, in cooperation with local partners, develop activities according to local needs. This included the establishment of local organisational platforms – for example Bermondsey Youth Forum and Bermondsey Business Association – as well as activities aimed at improving inter-group relations on specific estates. Most locally visible was the work in 2009-11 to renovate The Blue, designed and carried out in consultation with local residents and stall holders on market square.

In order to ensure that the local population was aware of the ongoing SBP activities, neighbourhood magazines were published and distributed on a regular basis, and e-bulletins were published on the SBP website[20]. Despite such efforts to increase visibility and awareness, however, many of the residents interviewed were not aware of the SBP.

The seven-year government funding came to an end in March 2011, and the Southwark Council team that had serviced and coordinated the partnership came to an end. But funds from the 'Big Lottery Fund' - £1 million – had been secured in order to continue the partnership under the auspices of two local organisations, Bede House and Time and Talents[21].

[20] http://www.southbermondseypartnership.org.uk/

[21] South Bermondsey Partnership: Annual Review 2011, http://www.southbermondseypartnership.org.uk/30-publication-archive/ (accessed 18.04.2012).

After the riots

In response to the widespread disturbances in early August 2011 (see text box), the leader of Southwark Council and Cabinet members initiated a series of 'community conversations' throughout the borough in order to engage directly with stakeholders and local residents. A total of 10 public events took place from August to October 2011, mainly in parts of the borough that had been directly affected. The conversations were complemented by a questionnaire-based survey completed by 766 residents.

'The riots'

Parts of London as well as other English cities were in the period 6th-11th August 2012 marked by a 'wildfire' of criminal episodes that in media coverage and emerging analyses have been characterised as 'the riots'. Initially triggered by reactions to the police shooting of a Black Caribbean man in the North London neighbourhood of Tottenham, the unrest rapidly spread to other parts of London as well as cities in the midlands. According to the Home Office, a total of 5,112 riot-related crimes were committed in the five-day period, 88 per cent of these in London. Half of all riot-related crimes were classified as 'burglary/robbery/theft', while 'arson/criminal damage') constituted 36 per cent (p27).

As Southwark is the London Borough with the second-highest number of recorded riot-related crimes (314 as compared to 430 in Croydon) (p26), it is remarkable that neither Camberwell nor Bermondsey were affected by the riots. Whereas Camberwell was on the list of affected areas as of the afternoon of Sunday 8th August, there were no reports of specific incidents – as opposed to nearby Peckham where shops '...were looted by a crowd of up to 400 people' (21).

When asked, residents in Bermondsey and Camberwell would first and foremost attribute the 'non-looting' to the type of shops typically found in the two quarters. As a resident on D'Eynsford estate observed:

> 'The thing is, I even came into the shop when they were doing the looting. They were just down the road (in Peckham), the people doing the looting, and I was asking the guy 'aren't you going to close your shop?' and he was like 'no, no one is gonna touch the shop'. But it is true, he is *that* confident that he knows, he literally said it, and they were like 'we're not gonna close. Who's gonna come inside coz we built relationships with them'. This shop has been here, it's been here for .... since I was born.' (L-C-EI-21 (resident, aged 23)).

In addition, many local shops were locally owned and managed, and thus perceived more as a part of the local community. As a Camberwell resident observed in relation to her local corner-shop:

> 'If you notice where stuff happened, it's like mostly High Streets – rows of shops for rioting, so many to choose from. Maybe a lot of alley ways. When you look at Camberwell there's not much. I think it didn't happen in Camberwell because it's a bit dry, in Peckham it's a bit wet compared to Camberwell. When I say wet I mean economically. More shops. The front line in Peckham is bigger than the front line in Camberwell. It's just my take on things, I might be wrong' (L-C-EI-7 (resident, aged 41).

The overall findings suggested that there is not one simple explanation as to why disturbances occurred in Southwark, a number of key issues were identified: *A lack of personal responsibility* as those involved believed there would be no negative consequences; wider societal problems, in particular young people feeling increasingly marginalised and disempowered; in addition, the general state of the economy increased the likelihood of disorder. Significantly, there was only very limited inclination among respondents to categorise the disturbance as a race issue (Southwark Council 2012).

4.2.3 Quarter-specific annual events

A range of annually re-occurring community events are initiated and/or funded by Southwark Borough, with the aim to raise inter-cultural awareness and improve community relations.

Black History Month

While originating in USA in 1976, Black History Month was first observed in Britain as part of the African Jubilee Year in 1987. Subsequently the Association of London Authorities decided to make the Black History Month an annual event, celebrated every year during the month of October.

In Southwark, Black History Month has been observed since 1993 in order to '...recognise the rich cultural diversity and heritage of our communities and help to celebrate the huge achievements of black people and their lives in Southwark over the centuries'[22]. During the month a wide range of events take place all over the borough, raising awareness about the nature and contribution of the black population in Southwark. In addition, schools in the borough work on relevant themes relating to aspects of Black History – for example black achievements in sports at a primary school visited as part of the fieldwork. Whereas most residents interviewed were in favour of the Black History Month, some argued that there should be a broader, more inclusive celebration of Southwark history:

> 'Black History Month – why does there have to be a Black History Month? Why does there have to be a Black History Month? Why don't you have a Southwark History Month where you celebrate all history whether you're black, white, Turkish, Greek, whatever. In some cases those in power create the barrier – that's the way I see it.' (L-B-I-14).

This opinion, from a White British resident in Bermondsey, would seem related to a perception – surfacing both during interviews and at the neighbourhood forums – that the authorities were instrumental in creating divides between the majority and minority populations. There was, in particular among the white working-class population in Bermondsey, a feeling that, in the midst of a generally increasing awareness of ethnic and cultural diversity, they were the ones who were being forgotten.

[22] http://www.southwark.gov.uk/info/200157/festivals_and_events/1114/black_history_month/6

St George's Day

Events to celebrate St. George's Day have been staged in different parts of northern Southwark since 2006. The celebrations have, in particular in South Bermondsey, been framed as part of an effort to 'reclaim' St George (the English flag) from the British National Party and the National Front, both of which have used the area around The Blue to stage marches[23] (see text box).

Poster announcing St George's Day celebrations at a local school in Peckham.

As suggested in the poster announcing St George's Day celebrations at a local school, the celebrations of the English flag are framed as inclusive events – as observed by a resident:

> 'I think it is quite interesting, because there is a sense that people want to reclaim the cross of St George as something we can be proud of, being English, and not being racist in that. So certainly, in The Blue you've got Millwall, the cross of St George, and you'll have things for royal weddings piled on to one particular stall. This is what makes England great, or whatever' (L-B-KI-4-community activist, 50s).

In that sense the initiative has been a success. St. George's Day is celebrated in many parts of Bermondsey, involving schools and local organisations, and local stakeholders argue that the English flag has been re-claimed and is associated with celebration and inclusion (see text box). But there are questions concerning the wider impact, as a community activist argued: 'It is sort of cosmetic in a way. It happens, and it doesn't do any harm, but how much does it really change?'

As suggested by the experiences quoted in the text box it would, however, appear that Southwark Borough has been successful in re-claiming St. George's Day as a community celebration rather than a stage for BNP demonstrations.

The Blue as a stage

The situation of The Blue as the central place of the Bermondsey community is also expressed in the use of the square for nostalgic and personal manifestations. Local funerals procession would pass would stop at The Blue, thus making a final gesture of belonging to the local community. Furthermore, local community events were staged on the square, for example celebration of St. George's Day, the royal wedding in April 2011, and Christmas celebrations.

[23] See the following thread with views from local residents concerning BNP and different experiences concerning racism and multiculture in Bermondsey: http://www.london-se1.co.uk/forum/read/1/61972 (accessed 18.04.2012).

But due to the central position of The Blue in South Bermondsey, it is also an area that historically has been used by outsiders for political manifestations. Bermondsey was one of the white working class areas targeted by British Fascist Party demonstrations in the 1930s, and during the 1990s and early 2000s, the British National Party (BNP) and the National Front staged marches through Bermondsey.

This use of Bermondsey, and in particular The Blue, for the staging of BNP and NF demonstrations has – together with the notorious reputation of the fan base of Millwall, the local football club – contributed to a long-lived perception of Bermondsey as a racist area. But while there is local support to the BNP, with the BNP gaining 3.7per cent of the popular vote in the 2010 local elections, a BNP councillor has never been elected locally.

The view that Bermondsey was being used by outsiders as a platform for rightwing manifestations came across strongly at the neighbourhood forums[24]. Here some participants argued that the marches were instigated by outsiders, and that the local population by and large was opposed to them. One of the forum participants narrated how he had been involved in physical fights with BNP sympathisers. This experience of the BNP mobilisations as events orchestrated from the outside was shared by other residents.

> 'I remember one of the BNP marches, there was kind of churches and Lib Dem held a protest on the corner here, 'united, not divided', things like that. And you know, the feeling was that the majority of those coming on those marches were from the outside, although there was support locally. And definitely some of the flats which had their Union Jacks up and were cheering' (L-B-KI-4-community activist- 50s).

Similarly, the limited but stable support for BNP at local elections would seem to suggest that there is some local backing. But in line with a broadly held experience of racist attitudes and manifestations as decreasing, the magnitude and impact of BNP/NF marches would also seem to be on the decline. This is perhaps most clearly expressed through the comparison made by the librarian based at The Blue:

> 'During the 90s every now and then the BNP would have a march [...] and when there was this march we end up being moved from Rotherhithe and here to work at other libraries in the borough for our safety, because colleagues and librarians and senior people were genuinely concerned for our safety' (L-B-I-20-libraria- aged 39).

This very much contrasts his more recent experience:

> 'I think there was a march, was it a year or two ago? [...] What happened is that you maybe had half a dozen or a dozen people just walking along the street [...] In fact, I didn't actually realise there was a march, and it wasn't until I looked that I thought "oh, this is supposed to be a march"' (L-B-I-20-librarian- aged 39).

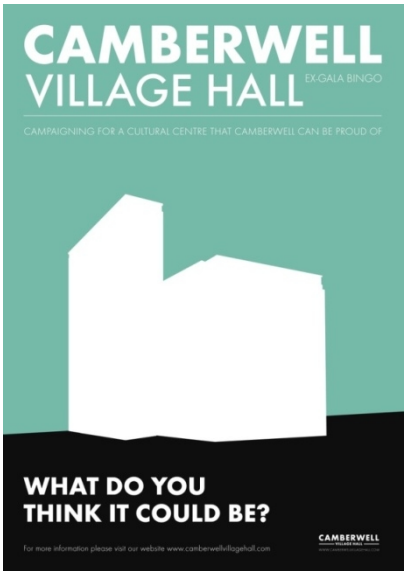
[24] Similar sentiments are expressed in this memory of Bermondsey opposition to the fascist marches of the 1930s: 'Oh, and there was the march by the Fascist, Sir Oswald Mosley, and his black shirts through Bermondsey [...] It was a Sunday morning and we didn't enjoy others trespassing on what was ours so we decided to do something about it. Bermondsey people are good-hearted and generous; but if we have to fight, we fight tooth and nail. I was 13 and me and my mates ran up and pelted their mob http://www.pomsinoz.com/forum/poms-sun/24625-cockney-speaks-out.html (accessed 25.04.2012).

4.3 Issue-based civil society mobilisations

Another type of local mobilisation evolves in response to specific issues, typically proposed changes to existing levels of service-provision. As such mobilisations thus are triggered by specific 'conflicts', they are often short-lived and may come to a logical conclusion once the conflict has been resolved. Such campaigns may be led by some of the existing civil society organisations, or they may lead to the establishment of a new organisation. Examples include the successful Camberwell Society-led campaign in 2009 to preserve 'Camberwell baths', public baths in an old building situated just of Camberwell Church Street. The baths reopened in early 2011 after extensive refurbishment.

An example of an ongoing campaign is the 'Save your Riverside campaign' in northern Bermondsey that gained momentum in late 2011. Here the residents in the re-developed docklands have mobilised in order to oppose the Thames Water's plans to situate a sewage plant on Chambers Wharf, an empty plot immediately next to the gated communities in Riverside[25]. The mobilisation has included a range of initiatives – including an internet-generated petition, consultations in parliament, and joint public meetings with residents from the nearby Dickens Estate.

Another issue-based initiative emerged as a response to the take-over in 2009 of a bingo hall, originally built as a cinema, near Camberwell Green by one of the locally expanding West African churches, House of Praise. A campaign was launched by local residents in order to protest the sale of the bingo hall and propagate in favour of a conversion of the building into a 'village hall' (see photo). Though the campaign gained some momentum, and a number of planning permissions from House of Praise were rejected by Southwark Borough, the bingo hall was, in late 2011, in use as a church.



Poster designed in 2010 as part of the campaign against the proposed take-over of Camberwell bingo-hall.

Furthermore, the changes to the use and ownership of the building also contribute to a broader understanding of the spatial dynamics in the quarter. Whereas bingo typically could be characterised a white working-class leisure activity, the conversion of the bingo hall into a church thus signifies a

[25] The website designed for the purpose of the campaign provides an overview over the proposed project. But it also showcases how campaigns increasingly are run, making extensive use of social media (http://www.saveyourriverside.org/).

loss of white working-class 'territory'. It is, however, a loss that is in line with the changing ethnic and demographic profile of the quarter.

4.4 Inclusion and representation

This final section comprises a discussion of how local residents engage in and experience political processes.

Overall there was among residents in Bermondsey and Camberwell relatively limited awareness of locally implemented programmes. So while for example the South Bermondsey Partnership had been based locally, most respondents remained unaware of the programme – even though they were perfectly familiar with outcomes like the refurbishment of The Blue.

The nature of the issue-based initiatives discussed above also provides insights into how the contours of societal stratification in the quarters provide a template for civil society activism. Those who are involved in such mobilisation processes are the residents who are aware of the 'rules of engagement' with service providers and other stakeholders. They are mostly well-educated white middle class residents, as one Camberwell Grove resident, and leading member of the Camberwell Society, observed in relation to the Save our Baths campaign:

> 'On our committee we had two Queen's Council barristers, one of whom was a planning expert, we had an Army Colonel who looked after all the money we got, I [a script writer] was writing a lot of the documents with the support of someone else and was the co-ordinator. We had an artist who'd do artist's impressions – we were a pretty formidable group' (L-C-I-15 (resident, aged 65).

This 'skewed' representation is also a characteristic of the SE5 Forum. When organised in its present state in 2006, on the basis of some well-attended public meetings, a very diverse board was elected. However, as the chairperson experienced:

> 'Little by little, the ethnic minorities dropped away, dropped away, dropped away. I think it is because – again, I am the wrong one to judge this – it is because it doesn't fit the model they are used to. For the Africans, basically, it is church. And with the West Indians, it is basically, if they are organised at all, it is through the church'(L-C-KI-1 (community activist, aged 70).

Similarly, the community council meetings in both Bermondsey and Camberwell were characterised by a 'diversity deficit'. This was also recognised by the community council officer:

> 'That is a big issue. We are not reaching them (ethnic minorities) nearly as much as we should. But we are making lots of efforts, so by talking to groups and members, trying to find out what it is that they want from it. I don't know, there are lots of issues, about language, about culture, you know [...] It is a very slow process.

The neighbourhood forums staged in Bermondsey and Camberwell served to emphasize these concerns about representation. Accordingly the majority of the participants in the neighbourhood forum staged in Bermondsey shared the memory of a close-knit white working class community, whereas present day multicultural Bermondsey not really was represented. Similarly, the majority of participants at the Camberwell neighbourhood forum were white, middle-class and middle-aged. In both Bermondsey and Camberwell, many of the participants would also belong to the 'usual suspects' category, with long histories of local activism and volunteering.

Turning to the MP

Interestingly, residents who had queries or complaints would often look towards their Member of Parliament (MP). Apart from locally elected councillors, each of the two quarters is also represented by an MP[26]. In both Bermondsey and Camberwell the locally elected MPs have been representing the local areas for long periods of time, as well as having a national political profile. Harriet Harman (Labour) was first elected in Camberwell in 1982, and Simon Hughes (Liberal Democrat) was elected in Bermondsey in 1983 – and he also lives locally. As a result of this continuity, local residents were often more aware of their MPs than of their locally elected councillors. This was in particular the case in Bermondsey where a number of respondents would mention 'Simon' or 'Simon Hughes' and refer to situations where they had contacted him in order to ask for help.

[26] It should be added that the MP constituencies are larger than the community council areas.

5. Media analysis

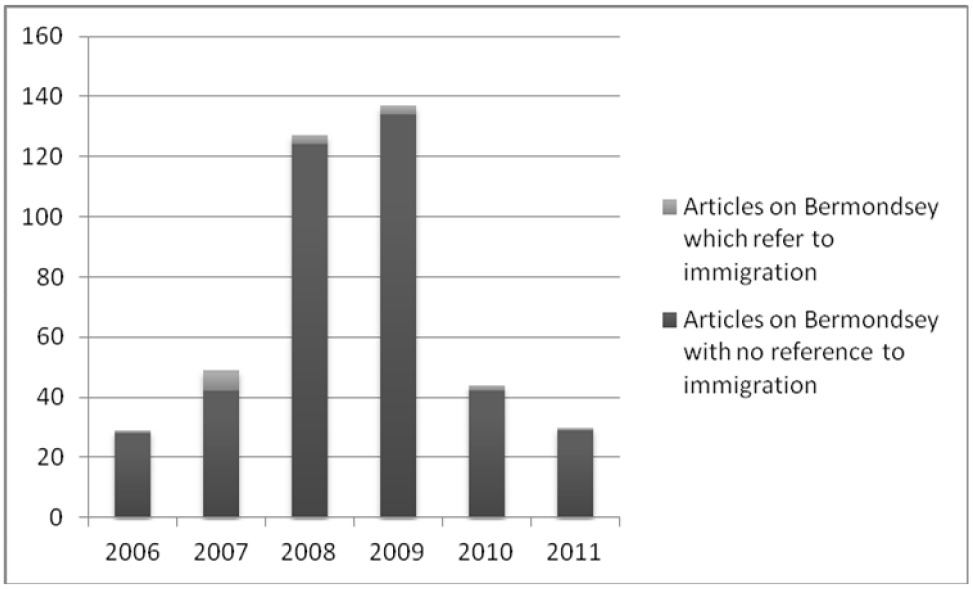
In the UK, local newspapers make up just 14 per cent of newspaper circulation, a lower level than in some other European countries. Whereas the national press is characterised by strongly partisan political positions, local newspapers tend to be much more neutral. For example, local newspapers rarely mention the ethnicity of individuals in stories, and do not editorialise on immigration issues.

The newspapers used for the media analysis were selected on the basis of local relevance and accessible digitalised archives. Accordingly, we worked with the *South London Press*, a bi-weekly newspaper covering Southwark along with the other boroughs of South London, and the *London Evening Standard*, which comes out every weekday evening and is a regional rather than local newspaper, with a London-wide focus. An additional weekly newspaper, Southwark News, was not included in the systematic media analysis as the archives were not available for online research. We have, however, read Southwark News on a regular basis as part of the ethnographic fieldwork, and we have included a note summarising our impressions of the coverage of Southwark News.

***South London Press*, 2006-2011**

There were in total 939 news stories relating to Bermondsey and Camberwell in some way, in the newspaper *South London Press* (*SLP*) between 1st January 2006 and 31st October 2011.[27] There were 50 stories (5.3%) in this time period in the two quarters that matched the inclusion criteria for media analysis in the project – i.e. how inter-group relations with reference to ethnicity/immigration in the quarters are represented in local news.

Fig. 5.1: Frequency of articles in SLP about Bermondsey (with and without reference to immigrants)



[27] South London Press is 'an independent family owned' daily newspaper distributed across the South London area. The online archives cover newspapers published from January 2006 onwards.

Fig. 5.2: Frequency of articles in SLP about Camberwell (with and without reference to immigrants)

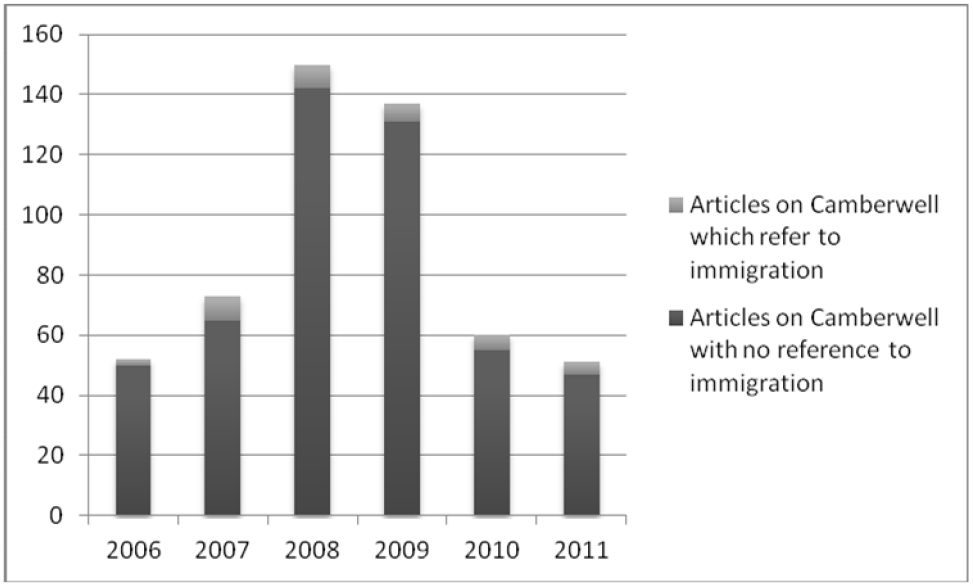
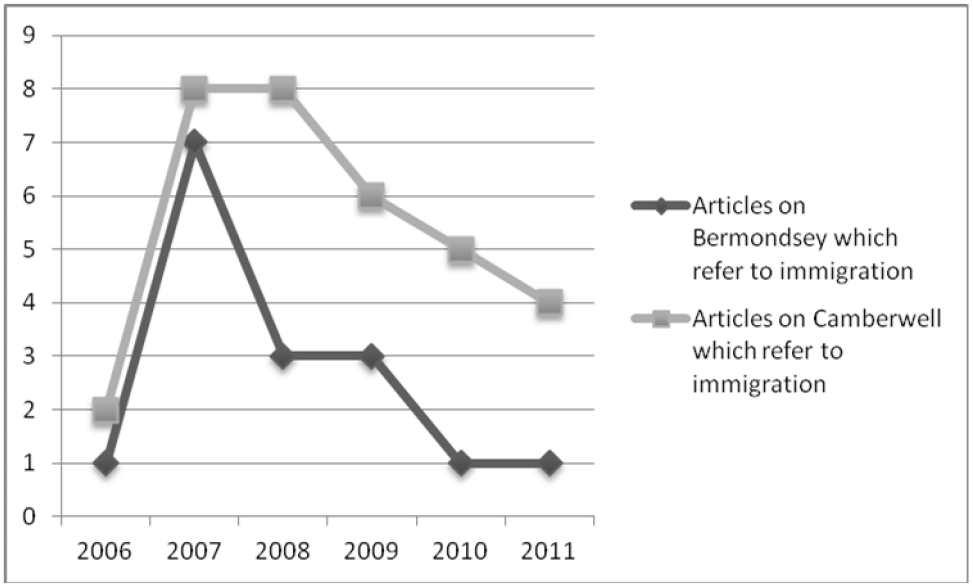


Fig. 5.1 and 5.2 give yearly breakdowns of the number of SLP articles mentioning Bermondsey and Camberwell respectively, as well as the proportion of these articles which referred to ethnicity/immigration issues. Among all news stories in Bermondsey, 4.1 per cent related to this theme; in Camberwell the proportion was 6.3 per cent. The graph (Fig. 5.3) below compares the number of SLP articles covering ethnicity/immigration issues in the two neighbourhoods.

Fig. 5.3: Comparison between quarters of SLP articles that refer to ethnicity/immigration



Due to the unwritten code of conduct in local area newspapers in Britain that discourages news reporting involving direct mention of ethnicities of individuals, the number of news stories in the *SLP*

that fulfil the inclusion criteria is extremely small. Most of the relevant news stories were about conflict (often including violence) between different individuals or groups of people in the quarters. Reference to individual/group characteristics varied, and sometimes specific nationalities were identified, such as 'Nigerian', 'Albanian', 'Spanish', but the generic ethnic term 'black' was used more often. 'Black' was used mainly in reference to the widespread and frequently occurring phenomenon of gang-based conflict in the quarters: the term 'black on black' frequently cropped up in news stories reporting acts of violence, including murder, involving rival gangs.

It was more difficult to identify the extent to which conflict was reported between 'White British' and people of other ethnicities, including migrants. Immigration was very rarely directly mentioned –it was arguably implicit in news stories encompassing ethnic diversity, but needs to be viewed in the context of long established communities of immigrants in the local area. Where it was explicit, it related to concerns that migrants who had no legal 'right' to live in the area (visa over stayers, refused asylum seekers) were committing crimes when they should have been deported – for example 'A SEX beast who struck twice years after he should have been kicked out of the country is facing jail' (Camberwell, 27 July 2009 – capitals in original).

Overall there were relatively few news stories involving social/economic/cultural cooperation between groups or individuals, or mentioning positive policies of integration. Most of these stories that were about local people working together to improve social relations did not explicitly mention ethnic or migration backgrounds of those involved. The charts below (Fig. 5.4 and 5.5) outline the distribution of articles referring to different social, cultural, and political issues in the two quarters.

Fig. 5.4: Mentions of social, cultural, and political issues in SLP articles on ethnicity/immigration inBermondsey

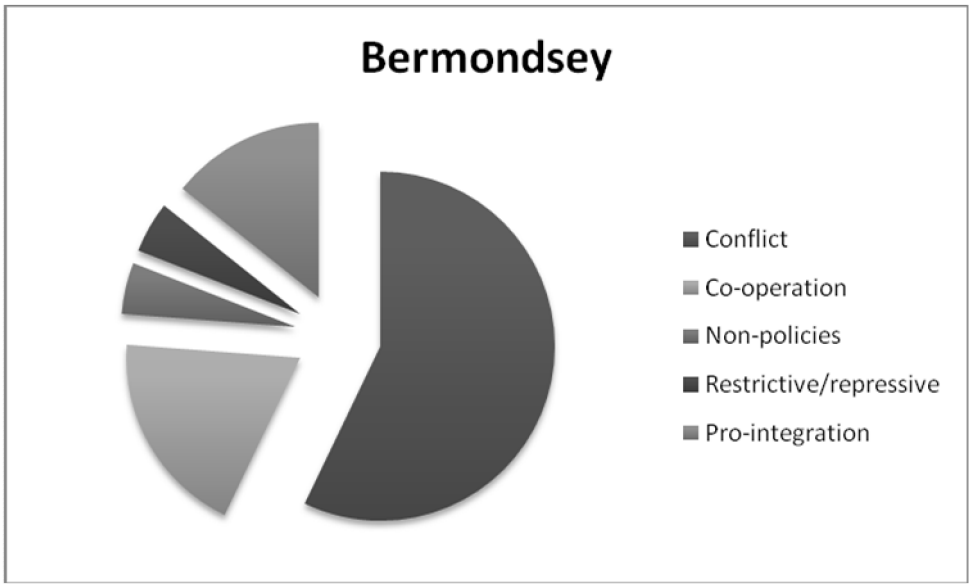
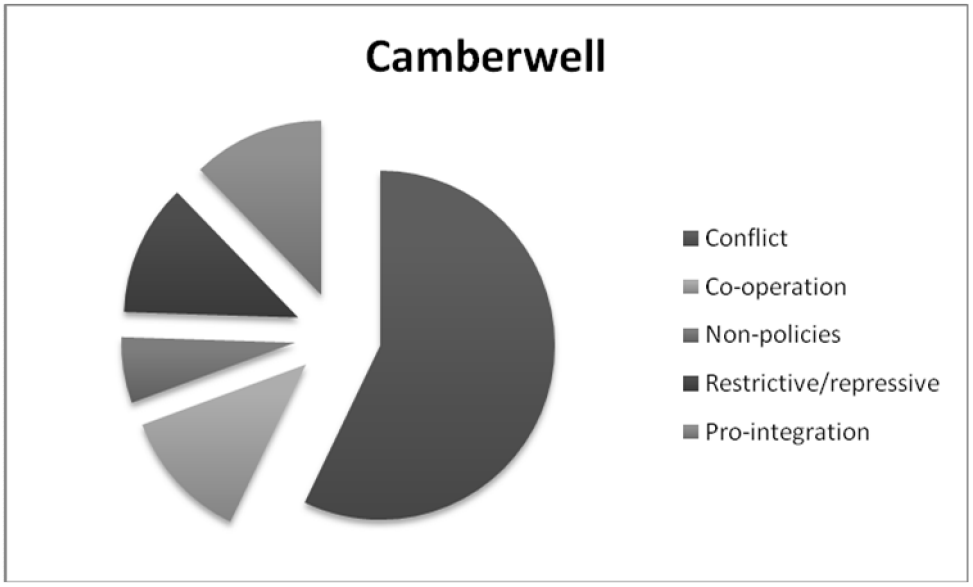


Fig. 5.5: Mentions of social, cultural, and political issues in SLP articles on ethnicity/immigration in Camberwell.



***Evening standard*, 2006-2011**

There were a total of 745 articles in the *Evening Standard* (ES) in the period between 1st January 2006 and 31st October 2011 that concerned the two quarters. The charts below (Fig. 5.6 and 5.7) give yearly breakdowns of the number of ES articles mentioning Bermondsey and Camberwell respectively, as well as the proportion of these articles which referred to ethnicity/immigration issues.

Fig. 5.6: Frequency of articles in ES about Bermondsey (with and without reference to immigrants)

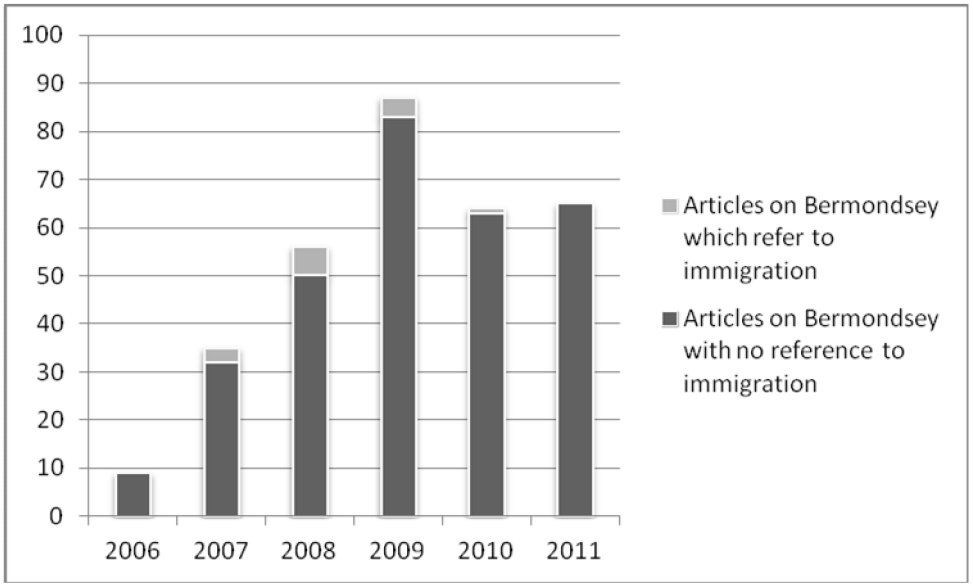
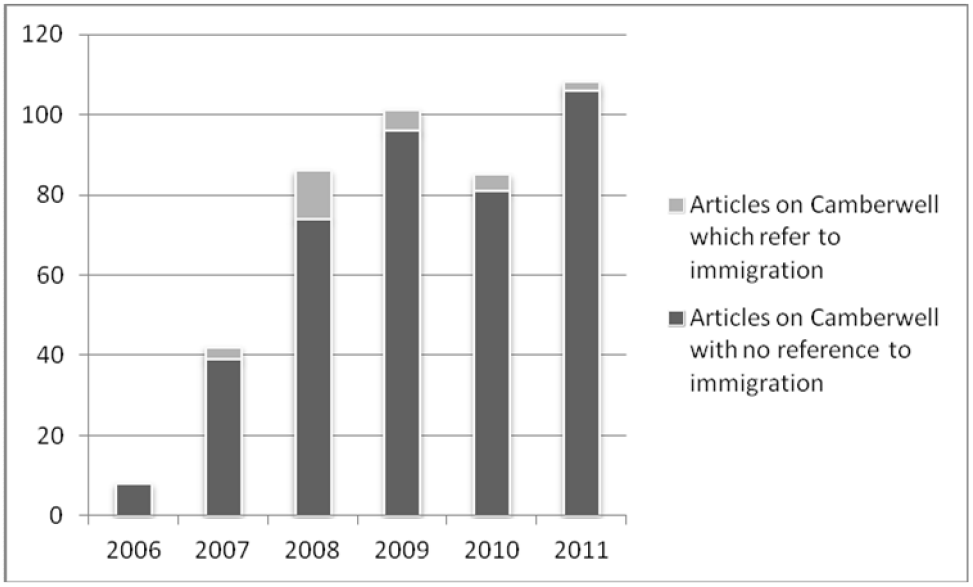
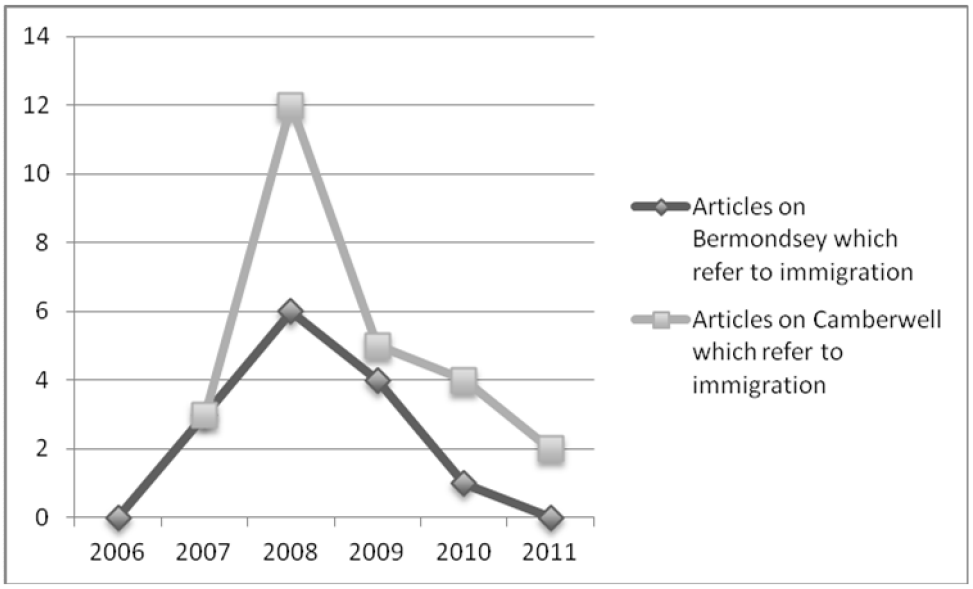


Fig. 5.7: Frequency of articles in ES about Camberwell (with and without reference to immigrants)



In the case of Bermondsey, this search generated a list of 316 articles, of which only 14, or 4.4 per cent, were seen as relevant to the *Concordia Discors* project. A similar picture could be identified in relation to Camberwell. Here the search generated a total of 430 articles, of which only 26 (6.0 per cent) were relevant to the project. The graph (Fig. 5.8) below compares the number of ES articles covering ethnicity/immigration issues in the two neighbourhoods.

Fig. 5.8: Comparison between quarters of ES articles that refer to ethnicity/immigration



Similar to the SLP articles, references were made to specific nationalities, most specifically Nigeria and Eritrea. Stories referring to individuals of specific nationalities would mostly be referring to social conflicts and repressive policies. Most of the relevant articles in both quarters made explicit

references to immigration issues, but this was not the prevailing subject of the articles. The number of articles that addressed immigration issues specifically was, however, higher in Bermondsey. The charts below (Fig. 5.9 and 5.10) outline the distribution of articles referring to different social, cultural, and political issues in the two quarters.

Fig. 5.9: Mentions of social, cultural, and political issues in ES articles on ethnicity/immigration in Bermondsey

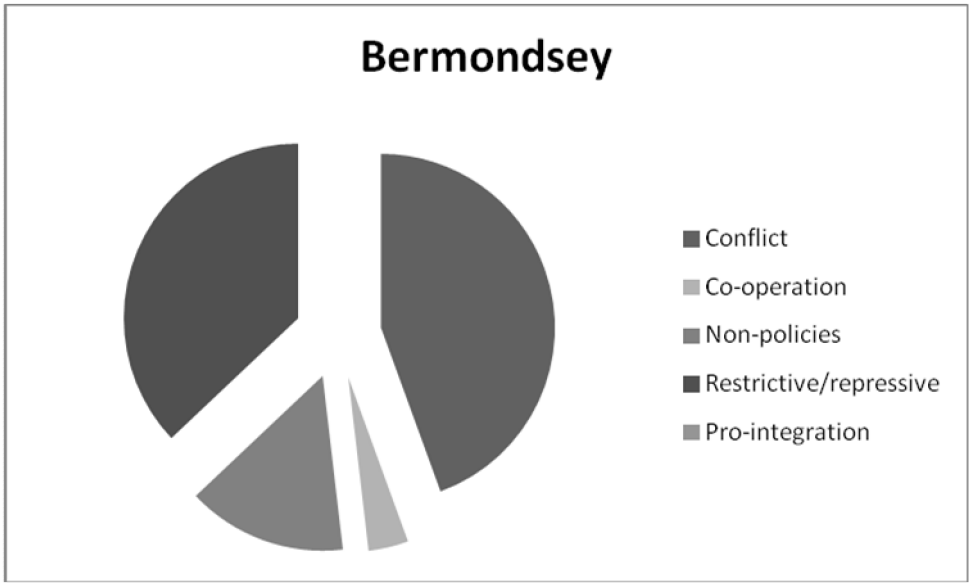
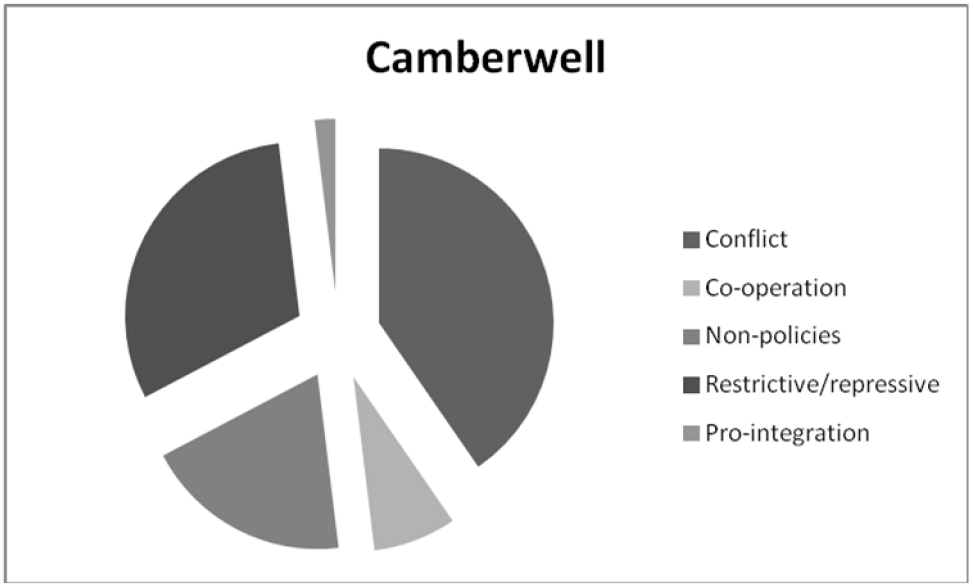


Fig. 5.10: Mentions of social, cultural, and political issues in ES articles on ethnicity/immigration in Camberwell



A note on *Southwark News*

As the name of the paper suggests, Southwark News is a newspaper that focuses specifically on news items relating to Southwark Borough. The paper is published on a weekly basis with a circulation of 11,000 copies, and it is widely available at news agents throughout the borough. *Southwark News* was first published in 1987 under the title *Bermondsey News*, but the name changed to *Southwark News* in 2002, and the newspaper now covers the entire borough.

Similar to the *South London Press*, themes linked to immigration and integration are hardly ever brought forward. An example is a series of six articles focusing on gangs and gang-related activities in the borough, a relevant issue as there are extensive gang-related activities in particular in the south of the borough. Whereas each article addressed a specific theme – for example guns, girls or crime – the potential significance of ethnic and racial identification for gang membership was never brought up.

While thus generally abstaining from references to ethnic, racial and national markers, *Southwark News* often names individuals, and the paper may also publish photos of named individuals. Subsequently, if it is a negatively charged context, for example relating to criminal activities, this would amount to 'naming and shaming'.

Being a local newspaper, *Southwark News* also covers local events. These include the Bermondsey Carnival, St. George's Day, the Elephant and Nun Festival and so on. The coverage often consists of extensive photo series where the diversity of Southwark is depicted.

In general, then, detailed analysis of the content of the paper would most likely reveal similar patterns to the *SLP.*

The readers' view

Most respondents would confirm the picture of media coverage of immigration and integration that was established as a result of the systematic media analysis and confirmed by the reading of *Southwark News*:

> I've never really read anything in it about immigrants. It's not something that I see or read. In the *South London Press* there's always about what happens around here, so is the *Southwark News* – about what happens in the area, in Southwark – I've never really read anything about immigrants really, praising them or criticizing them' (L-B-I-11-resident, aged 73).

> 'If you get the local *Southwark News*, the *South London Press*, whatever it's called, it's all very much about gangs, killings. I'd say the Southwark papers push the positive side of immigration. They are very balanced about the type of people they have in there – it's a mix of people which is good' (L-C-I-12-resident, aged 33).

With the London riots of August 2011 as a recent memory, the media coverage of these events was also discussed in some of the interviews. The general feeling was that the coverage had been fair, in part because the riots were documented in so many ways, as one respondent observed:

> 'The media? I think they've been very fair. I think what they've done physically, it's like a mirror, this is what's happening, flash the mirror, let the world see. That's my take on watching TV. I think it's getting slightly harder for the media to report certain things, at certain angles at certain times. That's a good example, the riots. So many people were reporters. All I had to do was stand there with my iPhone or Blackberry and just film what's happening and just tweet that. If there's a difference in reporting, it's probably very, very slight. It makes it harder for the media to twist' (L-C-I-7 (resident, aged 41).

Some residents were also concerned about the way their place was being represented by the media. This had in particular come out in relation to the death and funeral of Jade Goody, a reality TV personality who died from cancer in 2010. Jade Goody had lived in Bermondsey most of her life, and in the coverage of her funeral some of the media portrayed the area very negatively. At the neighbourhood forum, the participant quoted a headline as stating: 'This is the sewage that Jade pulled herself from'.

Similarly, some Camberwell residents felt that their quarter became tarnished by associations with South London and gang-related activities:

> 'Sometimes Ben and I have shouted at the TV "it's not Camberwell', that's not Camberwell". I think there was a shooting and it got attributed to Camberwell, it was kind of like, well, no, it's not Camberwell or South London and actually it's almost outside – somewhere like Eltham, you know, that is miles away from here, and we wouldn't see it as London (L-C-I-10-resident, aged 55).'

In summary, the picture of local as 'much more neutral' than national media in their coverage of issues related to intergroup-relations, integration and immigration was largely substantiated though the media analyses of the two relevant local newspapers – as well as the much less systematic reading of another local weekly. This picture was also, by and large confirmed in interviews with local residents, some of whom would readily refer to episodes where they felt that their entire quarter had been treated unfairly in media coverage.

6. Conclusions

In this final section we will summarise and discuss some of the main, cross-cutting themes that emerged during the fieldwork.

Urban fabric

Overall, the research in the London quarters found some evidence for the hypotheses that integration is a spatial as well as social property and that the texture of urban space is one of the factors shaping the social fabric against which intergroup relations occur. Camberwell, as we have described it in the report, is a place of flows, a crossroads of major transport routes, with large numbers of people coming in and out of the area every day; the landscape is varied, with a mixture of land uses, styles of housing and forms of tenure. Bermondsey, in contrast, despite its proximity to the heart of London, is shaped almost like an island, more inward-facing, isolated from its neighbouring quarters. It is dominated by large single-use urban forms, principally social housing estates. These features of the urban fabric do not directly produce or determine different sorts of intergroup relations, but they do correlate with the degree of openness of the local urban system, which in turn is a key factor in *shaping* intergroup relations.

Our findings suggest that there are some limited ways in which the features of the urban fabric might have a direct bearing on intergroup relations. The absence of public spaces which could operate as sites of interaction for the whole population in Camberwell limits the possibility of intercultural or cohesive intergroup relations. The example of a shared public space in which positive interactions occur in Camberwell, D'Eynsford estate's community garden, is a resource only for the small residential area around the garden, rather than for the quarter as a whole; thus D'Eynsford's relative cohesion makes it exceptional to Camberwell's more typical feel of "separate together". In contrast, Bermondsey's significant public spaces, most notably the Blue market, act as sites of interaction for strong in-group bonding, which frames the possibility of intergroup relations in the quarter.

The open and closed urban system

The framing of Bermondsey and Camberwell according to Wallman's concept of open and closed urban systems would seem to provide a useful contribution to the understanding of both the history of inter-group relations and the nature of present day urban dynamics in the two quarters. As described in the report, this open/closed distinction can be seen in the urban fabric, in the social fabric and in the magnitude and stability of flows of population. Camberwell has historically been an 'open system', since the 18th century impacted by different drivers of settlement, ranging from the suburban growth of the early 19th century to different waves of post-WW2 immigration. This has resulted in a heterogeneous urban landscape characterised, historically as well as in the present day, by high levels of socio-economic and ethnic diversity. In contrast, Bermondsey stands out historically as a homogeneous and white 'closed system' rooted in extensive local kinship relations as well as livelihoods based on local employment in the docklands and related industries. This 'closedness' has – historically and to a lesser extent in the present day - been expressed in a strong quarter narrative

and identity with an explicit *them versus us* distinction according to territorial markers, but also with racial, and at times racist, connotations.

The structure of diversity

These diverse histories of Bermondsey and Camberwell also contribute to an explanation of some of the structures of present day inter-group dynamics in the two quarters. The idea and memory of Bermondsey as a community is still dominated by a core of white working class residents (however ageing and declining in numbers). Accordingly, narratives and practices around cohesion and integration remain anchored in a distinction between a white, locally rooted Bermondsey population and immigrants from abroad. In contrast, Camberwell's history as an 'open system' can be translated into a present day perception of the neighbourhood as super-diverse, characterised by a socio-economically and ethnically differentiated population and without a well-established resident core with a claim to the history and identity of the quarter. Accordingly the nature of diversity is much more fluid in Camberwell.

Socio-economic differentiation

Both Bermondsey and Camberwell are characterised by increasing levels of socio-economic diversity, and this was seen by many as the biggest impediment to inter-group relations. This was most pronounced in Bermondsey where the post-industrial redevelopment since the 1980s of the former docklands into expensive housing, attractive due to their proximity to central London, has resulted in a very distinct physical, social and economic delineation between, on one hand, gated communities and, on the other, housing estates in the northern part of Bermondsey. In Camberwell, the socio-economic differentiation between the industrial working classes in northern Camberwell and the middle-classes in southern Camberwell is a characteristic that historically has defined the urban landscape, with well-maintained Georgian terraces contrasting deprived housing estates. But the socio-economic disparities in Camberwell has been accentuated over the past decades, as larger parts of the quarter have been gentrified, with the majority of new residents being white middle class. The socio-economic differentiation can in both Bermondsey and Camberwell be translated into an overlaying of class with race/ethnicity, as the majority of incomers can be categorised as white and middle-class. However, this is inflected differently in the two quarters, with two different middle class formations moving in: typically young professionals in the finance sector in Bermondsey, with a more cultural middle class in Camberwell, for whom diversity is one of the appeals of the area. In Camberwell, gentrification, like ethnic diversity, is long-established, and the earlier waves of gentrifiers are committed to the quarter, bringing stability to the fluid system.

Access to housing

The availability of housing and the nature of the housing stock in Bermondsey and Camberwell are closely related to the mobility dynamics and intergroup relations. The housing market shapes the socio-spatial dynamics of the areas, providing opportunities and barriers for the mobility of different groups within them, but housing is one of the fundamental urban social goods over which conflict

can be staged. Both Bermondsey and Camberwell are small parts of a London housing market that works regionally – characterised by a scarcity of affordable housing, a massive reduction in social housing stock since the 1980s and exponential rises in land values and private rents since the late 1990s – but they have very different patterns of residence and tenure.

Camberwell is characterised by a very mixed housing stock that includes owner-occupation as well as different types of private and social letting, and the availability of relatively inexpensive housing is one of the factors that have attracted immigrants to Camberwell in the post-WW2 period. The contrast to Bermondsey is striking in that almost the entire housing stock here until the 1980s consisted of social housing. As access to social housing was controlled by the local authorities and Bermondsey up to 1965 was an administrative unit in its own right, local residents would be given priority when allocating social housing. Accordingly the nature of the housing allocation thus contributed to Bermondsey's continuity as a 'closed system'. When Bermondsey became part of Southwark Borough, the social housing stock became available to residents from the entire borough, over time also to immigrants and residents of ethnic minority background. The post-industrial re-development of the former docklands into expensive private housing units also served to re-position the social and territorial markers of Bermondsey. The new, typically affluent residents were attracted to the quarter due to its proximity to central London, and there is only little inter-action between them and 'traditional' Bermondsey residents.

Generational divides

It is in part the access to local housing that can be seen as attributing to generational divides along ethnic lines that are experienced in both quarters. In Bermondsey this is expressed in a 'skewed' demography. The majority of the White British population here are elderly residents. But often their families have moved away, typically into Kent, mainly due to the shortage of affordable housing but often also to avoid inner city schools for the children. This elderly population segment is contrasted by a younger population of immigrants and ethnic minorities, often with children. School census figures, for example, reveal a generational shift from one of inner London's least ethnically diverse population to a recent picture with White British children in the minority at the bottom of the age scale. In Camberwell, an immigrant destination for much longer than Bermondsey, the proportionate change is much smaller, but the same generational trend has intensified super-diversity to some of the highest levels in Europe.

Community and participation

The relevance of the quarters and more localised sites as areas of interaction is also subjected to considerable variation, again along ethnic, class and generational lines, structuring the extent to which bottom-up quarter narratives find stakeholders. The diversity of both Bermondsey and Camberwell is reflected neither in the local policy community nor in the profile of participants in local community meetings and events. The majority of Bermondsey residents who get involved in activities at the local level are middle-aged and elderly White British residents, typically of working-class background. This concerns events and meetings staged locally as well participation in TRAs at estate level. This is similar to Camberwell though a higher proportion of participating residents in

Camberwell are likely to be long-term middle-class residents. In both Bermondsey and Camberwell, residents of immigrant and ethnic minority background were less likely to get involved in civil society platforms at quarter level. For some, in particular residents of West African origin, the church constitutes a much more significant focal point. Though many West African churches are situated in particular in Camberwell, they are not seen as having any particular stake in the local quarter.

On conflicts

In relation to the dichotomy between conflict and harmony that has informed the design of the research project, it might be useful to elaborate a bit on how local conflicts play out and are experienced. When examining narratives of conflict and tension in both quarters, it may be a useful point of departure to distinguish broadly between two kinds of conflict – but also recognise that there may be situations where there is an overlap between the two kinds of conflict.

One type is the sequence, or episode, of conflicting interests that is clearly demarcated in time and space. The conflict may concern local amenities or entitlements, for example access to council housing, or it may be over territory. It will involve different local groupings, or it may evolve around a spontaneous mobilisation of local residents in response to a real or perceived intervention of an outside agency. There was, in particular in Camberwell, several examples of such mobilisations.

The other kind of conflict relates to the evolving fault lines between two or more population groups in an urban landscape, typically but not exclusively defined according to ethnic/racial or socio-economic markers. Such distinctions may define the local area in the long term, such as the persistent, low-key tensions between Black African and Black Caribbean populations groups in Camberwell, the very clear-cut territorial and socio-economic divide characterising northern Bermondsey, or youth gang rivalries that striate Camberwell. Such fault-lines may in turn result in more immediate conflict episodes, but they are also subjected to continuous transformation, for example as younger Black African and Black Caribbean generations re-interpret the distinction between their two groupings.

In conclusion

The distinction between Bermondsey's brittle closed system, under pressure from new forms of socio-economic and migration-related diversity, and Camberwell's supple open system is instructive. Neither quarter could be described as characterised by conflict *or* by cohesion, but rather by distinct patterns that combine both. The spatial fabric of the quarters, including the fundamentally important housing infrastructure, helps shapes these distinct patterns, making particular narratives and identities possible but also acting as both a stage and stake for conflict and co-operation. We did not find evidence of a state of conflict between 'natives' and 'migrants' in either quarter, but rather a more complex pattern in which long-established residents (both white British and minority ethnic) defined themselves in particular contexts against a varied gallery of incomers and outsiders, including gentrifiers as well as new migrants.

(Photos from left to right: 'The Blue' in Bermondsey, 1970s; Bermondsey Carnival 2011; Camberwell Green 1950s)[28]

[28] The two B/W photos are from the archives of Southwark Local History Library, John Harvard Library.

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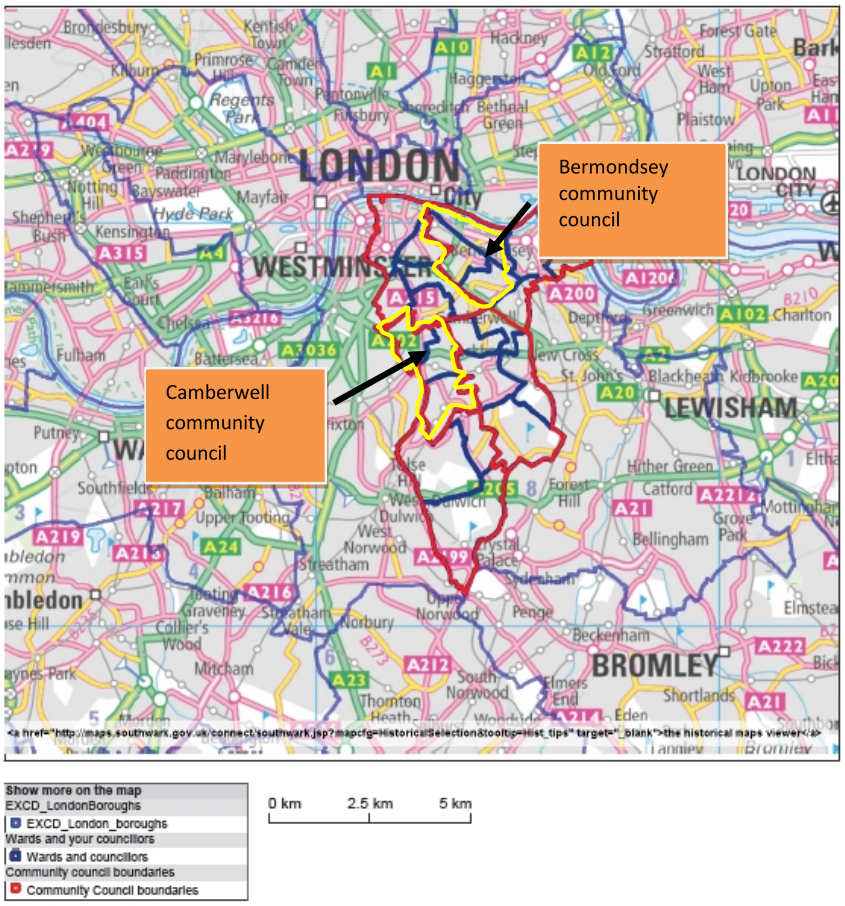
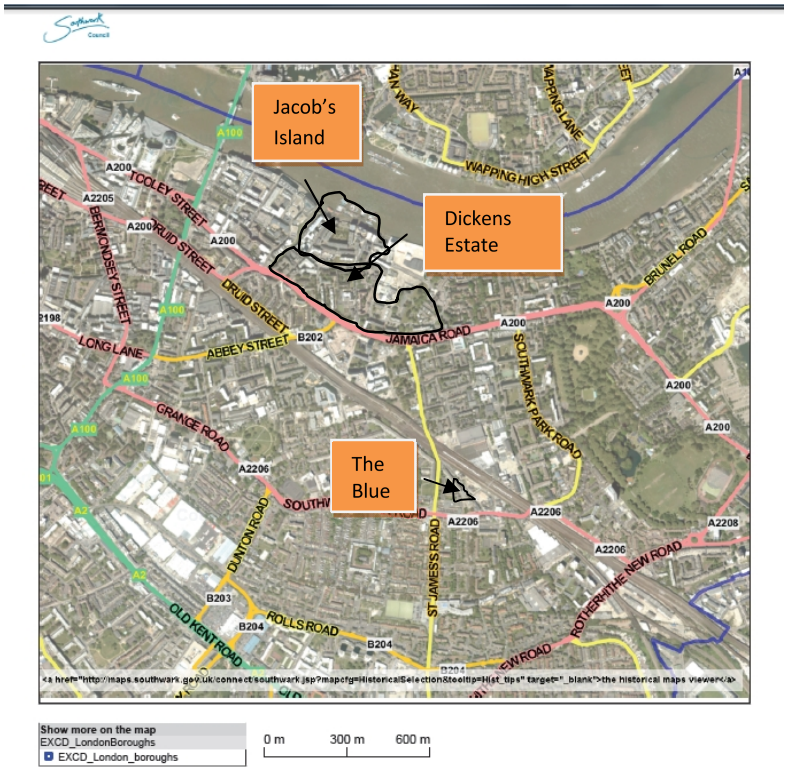
Annex 1

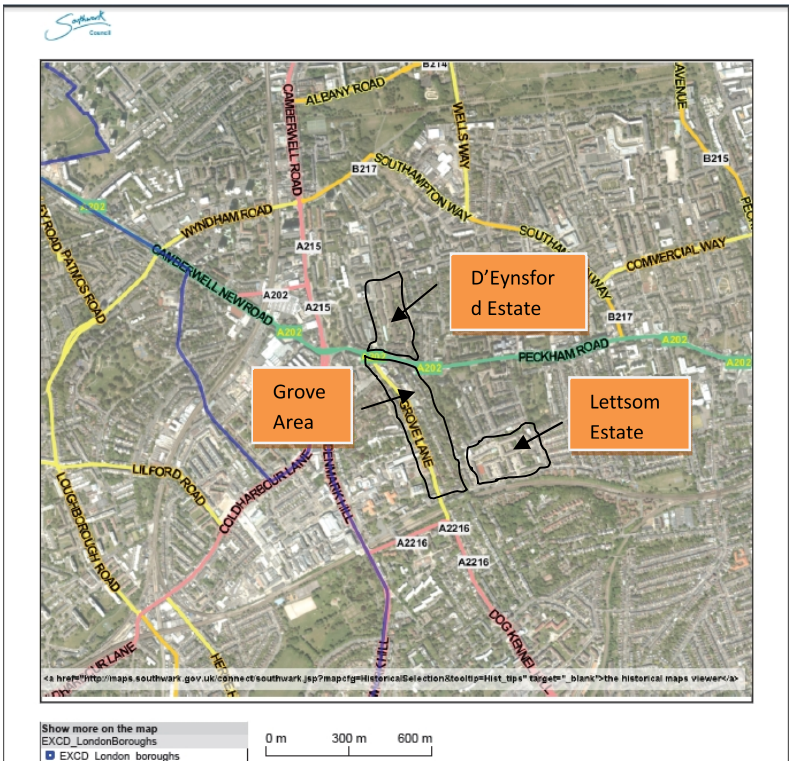
Maps of London Borough of Southwark, with sites of interaction by quarter.



Sites of interaction, Bermondsey.



Sites of Interaction, Camberwell



Annex 2 Fieldwork particulars

The tables in this annex provide a breakdown of research participants according to relevant categories, a list of the 'sites of interaction', and finally a table listing the events and meetings that were attended as part of the fieldwork.

Table 1 Key informants by type of involvement

Type of involvement	**#**
Service providers (Southwark borough employees, Councillor, local police teams)	8
Civil society organisations (charities, refugee forum, community activists)	5
Entrepreneurs (shopkeeper, publican, hotel-owner)	4
Residents	3
Total	20

Table 2 Respondents for semi-structured interviews, by ethnicity and country of origin[1].

Respondents by ethnicity[1]							**Country of origin**		
White British	White other	Black Caribbean	Black African	South Asian	Mixed	Total	UK nationals	Other EU countries	3rd country nationals
17	5	5	4	3	3	37	23	3	11

1 It is worth noting that there is no direct relationship between the two categories 'ethnicity' and 'country of origin'. Accordingly, 'UK nationals' is, for example, a category that goes beyond White British. Furthermore, each category may hold a wealth of different migrant trajectories and integration experiences. So of the Black Caribbean and Black African respondents, all nine were UK nationals. Three were born in Britain, five had immigrated to Britain in the late 1960s or early 1970s, and one was a Somali refugee who had moved to Britain in the late 1990s.

Table 3 Sites of interaction

Quarter	Site of interaction	Number of respondents
Bermondsey	The Blue	7
	Dickens Estate	6
	Jacob's Island	4
Camberwell	Lettsom Estate	6
	D'Eynsford Estate	8
	Camberwell Grove-Grove Lane	6

Table 4 Events and meetings

Quarter	Type of event
Bermondsey	• 2 community council meetings • Bermondsey Carnival • Funeral
Camberwell	• 1 community council meeting • Annual general meeting of Lettsom Estate tenants and residents association • AGM of SE5 forum • Elephant and Nun Festival • D'Eynsford estate community garden

Annex 3 Neighbourhood forums

The neighbourhood forums carried out in Bermondsey and Camberwell in March 2012 served two purposes: To discuss findings from the fieldwork with research participants and other stakeholders and thus get additional feedback that could benefit the data analysis; to engage the audience in a discussion of how neighbourhood relations could be improved locally.

Both events were initially structured identically, lasting 2.5 to 3 hours. An initial presentation of research findings triggered a discussion carried out in groups of 5-6 participants. This discussion would then be concluded in a joint discussion, highlighting some of the key issues. In order to make the process transparent and visually appealing, participants were encouraged to write comments on stick-it notes, colour-coded according to whether the participants agreed with the findings. The notes were subsequently arranged on flip charts (see photos). The second part of the forums consisted of a brain-storm, again carried out in small groups, around areas of potential future activities.

As the first neighbourhood forum, carried out in Bermondsey, consisted of a highly dynamic and constructive first session, followed by a much more 'muted' second session, it was subsequently decided to modify the format somewhat in Camberwell and focus solely on discussion of themes relating to the research findings.

In addition to the power presentation, there was a display of photos taken in the two quarters during the fieldwork period, supplemented by quotes from interviews carried out during the fieldwork. There was also a map of Southwark Borough, and participants were encouraged to identify areas of their quarters where they felt safe/unsafe.

Bermondsey:

The neighbourhood forum was carried out 6th March 2012 in the Beormund Community Centre in northern Bermondsey, in close proximity to two of the sites of interaction – Dickens Estate and Jacob's Island. The total of 20 participants included local residents as well as two officers from the London Borough of Southwark. The vast majority of local residents were White British, they had typically been living in Bermondsey for a long time, and many were actively involved in the local community. The audience composition did, in other words, not reflect the ethnically diverse nature of the population in Bermondsey. It should be added that this lack of representation also is a characteristic of community council meetings in Bermondsey.

The discussion of the research findings was very lively and testified to a high level of commitment to Bermondsey among those present. In summary, the main points raised during the discussions were:

- The economic divide in the area was stronger than any divides based on ethnicity or other groupings
- That there was a strong and proud identity with the area despite (and perhaps in reaction to) negative perceptions about the area. In particular people reacted to the notion of associations with the far right.

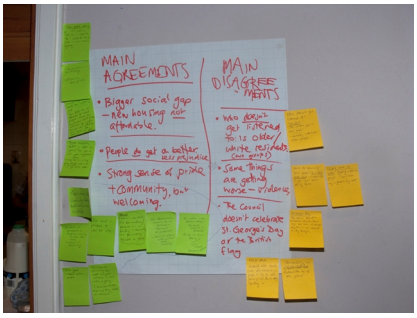
- That the sense and experience of community is being eroded. While there were lots of reasons for this historically, the main reason cited was to do with housing. This was the direct result of Council Housing policies and private developers.
- Parking affects the movement and connectivity of the local community
- Positive examples of local people mobilizing over issues were well known and lauded
- That integration is best served by local people finding ways to communicate and that the Council approach of enforcing particular behaviours or attitudes is actually more divisive.
- People want to see Councillors and Council Officers being responsive to local people and being genuinely committed to the area
- That groups of people coming together and effecting positive change has an effect that ripples out more widely.

Camberwell

The neighbourhood forum in Camberwell was held on 14th March 2012, the week after the event in Bermondsey. The venue was Cambridge House, a settlement in the northern-most part of Camberwell. Located some distance away from the sites of interaction where the bulk of the fieldwork had taken place (though no more than a 15 minute walk away), the choice of Cambridge House also reflected a lack of community facilities in central Camberwell. The number of participants was approximately half the size of the Bermondsey event, and the problems in relation to representation were similar to those experienced in Bermondsey, with White British residents comprising the majority of the participants. The main points raised during the discussion:

- It doesn't always work to ask people to join structures/projects that already exist.
- Some people are just not interested in being involved in the local community – and that is fine.
- Residents of African origin may be 'unheard' locally. They are seen as 'dealing' through their churches, so they may have a strong voice, but not necessarily about local/regeneration issues.
- A class divide has always existed in Camberwell, and it is more significant than divides according to race and ethnicity.
- Very different views on Camberwell as a community. Some felt that Camberwell consisted of many small communities, others that the geography, the roads, served to hinder a joining up of Camberwell.
- Whereas the council was doing consultations, the feeling was that the borough authorities did not listen to local opinions and the community council.

Photos from Bermondsey Neighbourhood Forum, 6th March 2012



Photos from Camberwell Neighbourhood Forum, 14th March 2012