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Segregated Lives

Social Division, Sectarianism and Everyday Life in Northern Ireland

Jennifer Hamilton, Ulf Hansson, John Bell and Sarah Toucas

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Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary

This report documents the findings of a seventeen-month study funded by the Community Relations Council through the European Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation. The research documents and analyses the ways and means that sectarianism and segregation are sustained and extended through the routine and mundane decisions that people make in their everyday lives.

There are many factors that affect the levels of segregation and people's experiences of sectarianism and which consequently impact upon the daily routines of individuals across Northern Ireland. The literature highlights a diverse range of social and personal factors which affect patterns of behaviour and beliefs along with channels through which patterns can either be perpetuated or overcome as well as an account of the means of reproduction or change in social relations. This previous research provided a baseline from which to explore the current experiences of living in a fragmented and segregated society, but at a time of relative peace and prosperity.

The field research for this study was carried out between May 2007 and March 2008 in six areas of Northern Ireland:

1. Castlederg and Newtownstewart in County Tyrone
2. Kilrea in County Londonderry
3. Dunclug estate in Ballymena
4. Shandon Park estate in Newry
5. Stranmillis in South Belfast
6. New Lodge and Tigers Bay in North Belfast

Before the research commenced a small advisory group was convened with representatives of the Community Relations Council, Belfast City Council, Northern Ireland Mixed Marriage Association and Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

The research utilised a qualitative and anthropological approach and included nearly 170 in-depth, semi-structured interviews and conversations; some people also completed a diary of their daily activities for a week, recording their routine movements and activities, others were asked to map their impressions of segregation in their communities. The researchers also accompanied some people in a walk

around their environment to gain a sense of how subjective perceptions are translated into daily routines of shopping, work and accessing services and other facilities.

The six case study areas highlighted some variety of differences in people's experiences and understandings of these issues, and identified something of the diverse impacts that segregation and sectarianism have on people and which, the research suggests, often depends on factors such as the age, gender, social background, place of residence and the personal experiences of the individual. This variety of both personal and communal factors and individual experiences are used to construct the 'mental maps' that people use to guide and structure their personal routines and practices, while the mental maps are in turn reinforced and at times challenged by routine experiences. The routines of separation and division are thus sustained through practice, but the routines can and do change as people's perceptions of their social environment change. The experience of segregation has thus a degree of fluidity rather than being fixed and unchanging.

The following briefly sets out some of the generalised findings from the research, which serves to highlight the need to look beyond the stark black and white contrast of division and demands that a more nuanced view is taken of how segregation and sectarianism impacts on everyone, while acknowledging that for some the impact is more immediate and intense than for others.

1. **Segregation and division impacts upon all people, but at differing levels and intensities.** In Castlederg and North Belfast people described high levels of segregation and separation; in Kilrea and Newtownstewart people described some degree of mixing but little interaction; in Dunclug and Shandon Park people spoke of higher degrees of mixing and more positive relationships; while residents of Stranmillis considered their area to be largely mixed and fairly well integrated, but with little public recognition of communal identities.

2. **Segregation and sectarianism are a continuing legacy of the Troubles.** The perceived levels of impact of the Troubles had a significant impact on the scale to which segregation and sectarianism were felt to have imposed themselves on daily routines. Kilrea and Castlederg were both badly affected by the Troubles and sectarian attitudes helped to sustain high levels of segregation and inter-communal tensions were heightened during the Marching Season. However through the rest of the year the two communities appeared

to co-exist on a day-to-day basis, although with limited socialising or interacting.

3. **Levels of sectarianism and segregation have changed in recent years.** Residents in Dunclug suggested that relations within the estate were generally positive although it was felt that the levels of segregation and sectarianism in the town were higher now than previously. This contrasted with Newry, where interviewees of Shandon Park felt that the city had progressed enormously since the Troubles and they felt safe and welcomed in the city centre, although as with many areas, some concerns remained about the negative impact of the night-time economy.

4. **Economic regeneration can have a positive impact on segregation.** The economic regeneration of Newry and the opening up of the border has had a positive impact on the ways that members of the Protestant community in Shandon Park engage with and relate to the commercial centre. Similarly the development of spaces like the Odyssey complex have provided a shared social space for people in segregated interface areas of North Belfast, providing of course they can access and afford the facilities. More generally people choose the location for shopping on the basis of price and value for money.

5. **However economic change can also have a negative impact.** In contrast the opening of the border is perceived by some in Castlederg to have a negative impact on the local commercial sector and trade and the prosperity of the town had suffered now that people had a wider choice of facilities and services elsewhere in the vicinity. The absence of violence had also increasingly encouraged people to cross the border for goods or to travel greater distances to larger centres a few miles away.

6. **Mixed or neutral spaces are more available than in the past.** There was an increase in mixed or neutral areas and spaces in many of the locations. In Castlederg, Newry and North Belfast people noted a growing number of spaces that were not defined by the orange and green divide.

7. **But they co-exist with heavily segregated spaces.** Residents in Dunclug stated that while the local estate was reasonably well integrated, access to the centre of Ballymena was increasingly problematic with a growing 'them and us' division. And while the residents of Stranmillis lived in a mixed and shared environment,

they were all too aware of, and adapted their movements to, the territorialism and sectarian divisions beyond the boundaries of Stranmillis.

8. **The direct impact of segregation relates to social class.** While some people believe that their daily routines are not greatly affected by segregation, others understand that segregation has become a 'normal' way of life. The two areas in Belfast typify these contrasts. The residents of the interface communities in the north of the city were only too aware of the highly segregated and divided nature of space and resources and the extent to which they adapted their movements and avoided certain spaces. In contrast residents of Stranmillis believed that sectarian division did not impact upon their lives to any extent. However, subsequent conversation often revealed how far they were aware of segregated areas and adapted their behaviour through acts of avoidance or through forms of caution.

9. **Living in a small community highlights identity and difference, anonymity on the other hand helps dissipate community identity.** In a transient and essentially dormitory community such as Stranmillis, there is a limited degree of contact with neighbours and a strong potential for being 'anonymous', which could be used to reduce any perceived impact from a communal to an individual level. This was in stark contrast to the situation in smaller and more geographically contained communities such as those in rural areas where the majority of interviewees believed that 'everyone knew everyone' and it was easy to 'tell' someone's community background.

10. **The work environment is generally neutral, but dominated by avoidance.** The work environment was regarded as neutral, but few would raise political or religious matters due to reluctance in identifying one's community background. Thus mixing was based on a presumption of avoidance of contentious issues, rather than of integration.

11. **Although accessing work can still be problematic for issues of safety and sectarianism.** Several interviewees were wary of working in an area dominated by the other community, and a number said they would base their decision on where to apply for a job on their community background, as they felt that some businesses would simply refuse to employ them and that the process would be a 'waste of time'.

12. **Education remains largely segregated, but informal integration can be a positive factor.** Most interviewees chose schools based on religious affiliation, however in some areas people noted informal integration of schools, primarily through Catholics attending Protestant schools and in particular those with a good reputation.

13. **However wearing school uniforms in public can create problems for young people.** Schooling remains a contentious issue as school uniforms clearly identified a young person's community background, and some young people avoided areas when they knew pupils of other schools would be around.

14. **Shopping environments are increasingly neutral.** For many people the choice of where to shop was based on value for money, convenience and quality, rather than on allegiance to community. However, some people avoided certain shops and the 'corner shop' was considered as for people within a particular community and not for the other side.

15. **Access to resources and facilities can be limited by time of day and time of year.** Accessing services such as banks and health services varied from area to area with the main issue relating to safety in accessing ATMs at night. Similarly accessing leisure centres became more of an issue after dark, while health facilities were less susceptible to sectarian marking.

16. **Asserting community identity can undermine social cohesion.** Flags, parades and bonfires, which were used to mark territory or display communal strength, were all potential or actual sources of tension, which impacted negatively on community relations. In some areas tensions were only evident during the marching season and required ongoing attempts at management.

17. **Denying opportunities to display community identity can erode a sense of belonging.** In rural areas where demographic change had left one community in a minority there were strong feelings that wider elements of their culture were being eroded and the minority were being 'pushed out'. A border location can contribute to a 'frontier' mentality and flags, parades and murals were seen as indicators that despite the Troubles, the minority community 'are still here' and intend to remain.

18. **Sectarianism and segregation impact most heavily on young males.** Sectarian attitudes appear more deeply entrenched among young males and young males were perceived as more of a threat and generally perceived to be more involved in and affected by violence and sectarian attacks. In Castlederg young males were less inclined to identify areas in the town as mixed but rather saw things in stark orange and green.

19. **People will socialise together if the space is safe and or anonymous.** Socialising was still heavily segregated in some areas, and some people chose to travel some distance to avoid locally divided bars or clubs. But many city centre pubs were now seen as mixed and interviewees feel safer socialising in theses central spaces than they did during the Troubles. Some young people also prefer to travel away from their home area to socialise, in part for safety and in part because it gives a degree of anonymity from their own environment. In smaller centres neutrality disappears after dark as shared or common 'civic' space is claimed or dominated by one community while being largely avoided by the other.

The research highlights how segregation and sectarian attitudes impact on different aspects of everyday life, in differing ways, in different areas. In some areas there are greater levels of mixing, sharing and integrating, while in others the legacy of the past, of hostility, fear and mistrust dominate the wider social environment. In most social environments the process of avoidance still appears to dominate interactions between members of the two main communities. But while segregation and division remain dominant aspects of daily life in areas across Northern Ireland, it is not a completely stark binary division, rather the research illustrates something of the diversity of experiences that are affected by factors of age, gender, class and location. The legacy of the Troubles and recent experiences of violence remain factors in how people act as social beings, but people are not solely constrained by their past and there is some evidence of positive change and greater levels of mixing in some aspects of social life in many areas across the north.

2. Introduction

"The history of Northern Ireland has been dominated by three principal problems which have changed extraordinarily little throughout the entire period of its existence. These are, first, the problem of the triangular relationship with the rest of the United Kingdom and the rest of Ireland, second, the problem of the deep and continuing internal division of the population, and finally the problem not only of developing a viable economy in such a small area but of securing for the people public services and standards of welfare comparable with those in Britain" (Lyons 1971: 695).

"However, the costs of a divided society – whilst recognising, of course, the very real fears of people around safety and security considerations, are abundantly clear: segregated housing and education, security costs, less than efficient public service provision, and deep rooted intolerance that has too often been used to justify violent sectarianism and racism". (A Shared Future 2005: 20).

Northern Ireland is a highly polarised society. The two main indigenous communities are defined by their different religious backgrounds, as Protestants and Catholics, and by their opposing political identities, as Unionists, who identify with Britain and who wish to remain as part of the United Kingdom, or as Nationalists, who identify with Ireland and who want Northern Ireland to be incorporated into a unified Irish Republic. The political conflict and violence that has dominated the past forty years emerged in turn from a history of discrimination, militarisation and colonisation dating back to the seventeenth century and earlier. The history of the north of Ireland is based on the sense of difference and otherness of the two main communities, which has been marked out and affirmed by major events that dot the landscape of history – Cromwell, Siege of Derry, the Boyne, Penal Laws, the 1798 United Irishmen rebellion, the Home Rule campaign, Easter Rising, Battle of the Somme and Partition, to name but a few, that are still cited and commemorated.

The division, the segregation, the polarisation has been maintained, sustained and reaffirmed, not just by the memory of the politicised readings and retellings of history, but by countless lesser events. On one hand this has been done through numerous (uncounted) acts of brutality and violence, perpetrated because the victim is, or is perceived to be, different from the perpetrator, because the victim is a 'representative' of the Other. On another hand it has been done through a politics and a bureaucracy, which has institutionalised the essence of difference and failed to confront the structures of polarisation. On

another it is done through the rituals and popular culture that celebrate 'our' culture and identity, while excluding the other, through song, stories, paintings and parades. The divisions are also reinforced by the numerous decisions that people make on a daily basis, where to live, which school to send the children to, where to shop, which side of the road to walk on. Segregation, sectarian divisions and communal polarisation are maintained and deepened by such myriad activities, even though that is not the intent as many are done through habit, and without a second thought, while some are done through fear or a need to feel safe.

The result is that the two main communities live largely segregated lives, in which the many basic daily routines and practices are structured by the dominant sectarian divisions of Northern Irish society: residency, our neighbours, schooling, sport, festivals and social life are all too often segregated and exclusive. And yet, while such a statement is something of a meaningless truism, we know little of how this segregation is replicated and sustained. Some recent research (Shirlow and Murtagh 2006) has given an indication of the scale of segregation in daily routines, but has been based largely on quantitative data. There has been relatively little qualitative work in recent years that explored the impact of segregation on the way that people structure their daily routines and on the ways that daily routines help to reinforce the structural segregation on many communities. Some of the classical ethnographically based research (eg work by Rosemary Harris, Anthony Buckley, Graham McFarlane, Frank Burton) focussed on the practices of social division and segregation, and looked at how people lived together with minimal interaction and engagement. But more recent anthropological studies have focused more readily on the relationships between identity, conflict and violence than on the minutiae of daily routines. Segregation has increasingly been seen very much as a given fact of life rather than as a social process that needs to be actively maintained and reproduced.

Furthermore, much of our currently assumed understanding of social segregation is based on the social practices of urban areas, and it is perhaps too easy to regard the highly contested and volatile segregated interface areas of parts of Belfast as the norm. For example, it has become commonplace to cite Housing Executive figures of 98 per cent residential segregation in Belfast as the norm for Northern Ireland, whereas the data also indicates much higher rates of mixed residential housing in areas outside of Belfast (Byrne et al 2006). However, we do not know much about life in such mixed areas or whether social life in such communities is really mixed at all to any extent.

In fact we really have little data on how segregation and sectarian division impact on everyday lives outside of situations of conflict and tension. Furthermore we have little hard information on how patterns might vary due to factors such as age, gender, class, ethnicity, nationality and residential location etc. This is an issue of considerable concern to many people working in diverse fields including community relations, community development, health, education, housing, youth work, social services, planning, regeneration, rural development and economic development and others. This report documents the findings of a seventeen-month study funded by the Community Relations Council through the European Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation. The research was a first step in documenting and analysing the ways and means that sectarianism and segregation are sustained and extended through the routine and mundane decisions that people make in their everyday lives. It is one of a number of studies that have been carried out exploring aspects of the issue of division (Bloomer et al 2008; Deloitte 2008; Gaffikin et al 2008) and which are designed to inform future policy development and practice in Northern Ireland.

Policy Context

The main policy framework to respond to issues of segregation, sectarianism and division was set out in *A Shared Future: Policy and Strategic Framework for Good Relations in Northern Ireland,* published in March 2005, which was designed to promote improved relations between Protestants and Catholics through such approaches as: tackling visible manifestations of sectarianism and racism; reclaiming shared space; reducing tensions at interface areas; promoting shared education; shared communities; shared workplaces and shared services; giving voice to the victims of conflict and supporting good relations work. The policy was also designed to be delivered at multiple levels of society including central, regional and local government and at community level. The overall aim of A Shared Future was:

"The overall aim of this policy is to establish, over time, a shared society defined by a culture of tolerance: a normal, civic society in which all individuals are considered as equals, where differences are resolved through dialogue in the public sphere and where all individuals are treated impartially. A society where there is equity, respect for diversity and recognition of our interdependence". (A Shared Future 2005: 12).

In a Conference Speech given on 27 April 2006, Duncan Morrow, Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council,

explained that *A Shared Future* aimed at overcoming the segregating impact of the 'massive social engineering' such as the peace walls, CCTV and youth diversionary schemes put in place. He noted that while such measures may have been needed in an emergency to contain violence, it was time to go forward and overcome the negative impact they produced, including segregation; and the only viable alternative to segregation was to develop means of sharing and living together.

However, the *A Shared Future* policy was developed by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister during the suspension of the Northern Ireland Assembly, and when the devolved administration was restored in May 2007 the new power sharing administration effectively mothballed the policy framework of *A Shared Future*. The new Programme for Government included only very vague references to the aspirations of the previous policy, while it developed an alternative policy. But the alternative policy framework has been slow to appear.

Methodology

The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu noted that we live as social beings in a world of *"structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures"* (1972: 72), that is that the social elements of our world direct, constrain and enable what we do and how we act, but also that what we do and how we act in turn affects our world and the world of other people around us. We are neither automatons nor free agents, but rather, to paraphrase Karl Marx, people make history, but not in circumstances of their own choosing. In Northern Ireland segregation and sectarianism are prominent among the *structuring structures* that shape people's lives and are in turn shaped by people's lives. The research aimed to document and analyse the ways and means that sectarianism and segregation are sustained and extended through routine and mundane decisions that people make in their everyday lives.

Research on segregation and sectarianism in Northern Ireland has taken two main forms: geographical and anthropological. The anthropological school placed emphasis on qualitative data to explore the practices of segregation practices (Burton 1978; Darby 1986; Donnan and McFarlane 1986; Harris 1972). The geographical school had traditionally focused on mapping and quantifying residential segregation, but approaches began to converge with the work of Boal (1969), who brought anthropological methods into the geographical school through using everyday life activity patterns as an indicator of segregation on the Shankill-Falls divide.

The methods adopted in this research project were primarily qualitative and focused on exploring:

1. The breadth and depth of different approaches developed and adopted in response to patterns of segregation and the fundamental sectarian divisions of society;
2. How people have changed or adapted their behaviour over recent times;
3. How patterns of behaviour are replicated through social and family networks; and
4. Changes in policy and practice that might encourage people to move away from more segregated approaches to living.

The research aimed to explore such practices in a variety of settings and locations and to that end six broad locations were identified as sites for field research. These included two villages in rural settings (Castlederg/Newtownstewart, in west Tyrone, and Kilrea in county Londonderry); two estates in urban areas (Dunclug in Ballymena and Shandon Park in Newry); and sites in north and south Belfast, this included two neighbouring interface communities (New Lodge and Tigers Bay) and a middle class area (Stranmillis). These areas were identified to give a diversity of locations including rural-urban settings; geographical diversity across Northern Ireland; a variety of sectarian balances and also an attempt to explore the impact of sectarianism on a middle class environment. A small advisory group was convened with representatives of the Community Relations Council, Belfast City Council, Northern Ireland Mixed Marriage Association and Northern Ireland Housing Executive to provide general advice and guidance on the research approach and methodology.

The field research was carried out between May 2007 and March 2008 in six areas of Northern Ireland. It was primarily carried out through in-depth, semi-structured interviews and conversations with 168 people across the various settings (see Appendix for details). The participants were selected through discussions with community representatives, previous contacts in the area and through snowballing where interviewees asked friends, colleagues and acquaintances to take part. These methods all proved to be successful and ensured a number of people in each area were approached and either took part or were given the opportunity to do so. The research also involved accompanying some interviewees in a walk around their environment to gain a sense of how subjective perceptions are translated into daily routines of shopping, going to work and accessing services and facilities. This also enabled the

researchers to gain familiarity with locations and with landmarks discussed in the interviews.

The methodology also proposed asking participants to complete a short diary of daily activities for a period of a week, and to record routine movements and activities and comment on why certain decisions were made. This was an attempt to replicate a methodology that had been successfully used previously in comparable research. However, it proved difficult to encourage interviewees to participate in this element of the research. Various reasons emerged for this, including a lack of time and an inability to read and write. In Dunclug there was a general apathy to participation in the research in general and an unwillingness to engage in the diary exercise. Samples of the diary that was distributed to participants and a completed diary highlighting the type of information supplied are given below.

As a result of the lack of success with the diaries, a mapping exercise was developed for two areas: Castlederg and Kilrea. This involved interviewees highlighting areas they perceived within the community as either Protestant, Catholic or Mixed, and using this as a opportunity to discuss perception of various locations. This proved to be a more successful method and helped focus participants on some issues that they had not previously discussed.

Sample diary distributed

A Week Diary

What we are after: Notes on what you do on a daily basis

For Example:
Morning - went shopping at Tescos' (walked down Duncairn Gardens, used Brougham Street entrance). Came back by cab (Fona) (see example overleaf)

If you have any problems, contact Ulf or Jennifer at ICR: 028 9074 2682

Example: Monday 6th August 2007

Morning: Drove the kids to school (Antrim Road) then drove to work (Limestone Rd, North Queen Street),

Lunchtime: Got a sandwich from Tesco's (Yorkgate) used North Queen Street entrance. Met my friend from Mervue Street and had a wee chat with her.

Evening: Picked up the children from school (North Queen Street, Limestone). Drove back home. Got butter from corner shop. Had chat with neighbour.

Example of a completed diary

Monday
Morning: Took dog for walk then went to work.
Afternoon: At work
Evening: Came home and got tea sat and watched television

Tuesday
Morning: Took dog for walk then went to work.
Afternoon: At work
Evening: Went to meeting for Housing and Social Network Committee. Discussed issues regarding housing and the need for more Protestant inclusion in other areas.

Structure of the Report

Section two of this report briefly reviews previous research and literature pertaining to segregation and sectarianism in Northern Ireland and provides a basis for the framework of the material in the six case study areas. The findings from the six areas are set out in sections three to six, the first two of these (section three and four) focus on the two rural settings, Castlederg / Newtownstewart and Kilrea, the next two sections explore the experiences of the Dunclug and Shandon Park estates in Ballymena and Newry respectively, while the final two sections provided the findings from Stranmillis, in south Belfast and then New Lodge and Tigers Bay in North Belfast. Section nine concludes the report and highlights the key themes and findings.

3. Segregation and Sectarianism

A sectarian attitude or belief can be defined as one that discriminates against another person or group, or excludes them, on the basis of their actual (or imagined) belonging to a different community. John Brewer (1992: 359) for example, defines sectarianism as:

"The determination of actions, attitudes, and practices about religious difference, which result in them invoked as the boundary marker to represent social stratification and conflict".

In Northern Ireland sectarian divisions are based on the distinction between the two majority groups, the Protestant and Catholic communities. The Northern Ireland census in 2001 (NISRA 2001) indicated that the population of Northern Ireland was 1,685,267 people, of whom 678,462 identified as Catholic (40.26 per cent), and 767,924 as Protestant (45.57 per cent). In Northern Ireland, the religious divide has long been a political division, with the Protestant-Catholic identity tending to mirror the Unionist-Nationalist or Loyalist-Republican ones. The March 2007 Assembly election confirmed the perpetuation of division on a political ground, with the DUP confirmed as the largest party in the area East of the river Bann, and Sinn Féin dominant in the West.

Political and religious belongings are two observable grounds on which the belonging of a person to one or the other community is established. However, the social mechanism that leads to sectarian divisions is far more complex. MacNair (2006: 30) states that sectarian attitudes and beliefs are determined by a whole set of factors, including *"power relationships, competing nationalisms, historical grievances over colonisation, and competition for resources".* What must be understood is that along with the embodied politico-religious divide comes a resilient perception that people from the dominant community will be treated better than people from the 'Other' community. Writing of an earlier time Larsen (1982: 147-148) emphasised that both sides perceive that local councils give preferential treatment to 'their own', that is, the group that elected them and whose support is necessary in order to stay in power and she noted:

"There is a tacit understanding that Nationalists do as they please in areas with a Catholic majority, whilst, equally, Unionists do as they please in areas with a Protestant majority. Favouritism means preferential treatment in the allocation of scarce goods: notably public jobs and council houses".

This type of institutional sectarianism was one of the major problems that was challenged by the civil rights movement in the mid 1960s, and was only confronted in the early 1970s after the eruption of armed violence. Nevertheless the scale, depth and duration of sectarian discrimination retains an influence long after the worst examples were stopped. In fact forms of injustice done to one's own community are often invoked as a justification for sectarian attitudes or beliefs. MacNair (2006) cites previous research (Brewer 1992; Darby 1976; Hepburn 1994; Rose 1971 and Whyte 1990) in arguing that sectarianism in Northern Ireland is experienced at three levels: ideas, individual actions and social structures. Ideas are expressed as negative stereotype notions about members of out-groups, individual actions are expressed through acts of intimidation such as territorial fear and harassment including verbal and physical violence, whilst social structures involve a legacy of spatial and institutional separation involving strategic planning decisions and discrimination in access to employment.

Two types of attitude are thought to contribute to and perpetuate sectarian beliefs. Firstly, there are observable sectarian practices, like the visible affirmation of one's 'identity' through the display of flags or murals and the commission of sectarian crimes and acts of violence, intimidation and harassment; and secondly, there are attitudes influenced by what has been called 'chill factors', which can be defined as the reluctance of individuals from one religion or political conviction to live or be where individuals from the 'Other' religion or political conviction are thought to predominate. A 'chill factor' might determine the choice of the place of residence, the choice of an educational or medical institution, the use of leisure centres and public transport, but it can also influence individuals' discourses on these spaces. Looking at the segregated Ardoyne and Upper Ardoyne communities, Shirlow (2003) found that 86 per cent would choose not to enter an area dominated by the 'other' ethno-sectarian group and 79 per cent would not travel through an area dominated by the 'other' ethno-sectarian group at night, even by car.

This suggests that fear and preconceptions about the 'Other' prevent people from mixing, with fear very often increasing simply by the very absence of any contact. Indeed, Peter Shirlow (2003) found that fear was higher among those who had never established a relationship with the 'other' side. Shirlow also found that sectarianism varies in degree and nature depending on the geographical area and diverse factors including the rural/urban location, class status and degree of mixing or segregation, as well as factors such as gender and age and individuals' collective or

personal experiences of trauma. These factors will be discussed in more detail below.

Segregation

A segregated geographical area or social sector is one in which either the Catholic or the Protestant community is predominantly present. Two main distinctions are useful to understand the concept of segregation. Firstly Poole and Doherty (1996: 10-11) state that segregation is a continuum from 'complete segregation', to 'zero segregation', with the two extremes labelled as segregation and integration. Secondly, the distinction between 'residential segregation', which designates the geographical separation of residential areas according to the majority community background within each area, and 'social segregation', or the concentration of people from the same community background within social sectors like the workspace, educational institutions, or relationships. Harris (1972: 132) identified the implications of social segregation on daily lives in a small rural area, concluding that although Catholics and Protestants lived side by side their relationships with each other were in many contexts both close and friendly but their social spheres still remained quite distinct.

Defining the degree of dominance required for an environment to be considered as segregated has proved difficult. Boal (1976) argued that if the majority community constitutes 90 per cent or more of an area, this area can be considered segregated. Doherty (1990) increased the scale of the minority population and considered an area to be segregated if it had a majority population of over 80 per cent. More recently Murtagh and Carmichael (2005) argued for a minimum of 30 per cent of residents from the minority population to qualify as a mixed community, with any smaller percentage creating effective segregation. This last figure appears to have been broadly accepted within the Charter signed by the twenty families on the Carran Crescent estate in Fermanagh, the first mixed community social housing scheme launched by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (BBC News 30 October 2006).

Quantifying segregation offers only a limited understanding of the mechanisms through which segregation develops and is perpetuated, and it has proved insufficient for grasping the depth or drivers of segregation. For example, a common finding based on quantitative data is that in Belfast, segregated residential areas correspond with working-class estates whilst 'mixed' areas correspond with middle-class estates (Boal 1982; Boal, Murray and Poole 1976). In that sense, interfaces are

commonly understood as *"the intersection of segregated and polarised working class residential zones, in areas with a strong link between territory and ethno-political identity"* (Jarman 2004). However, looking at qualitative data, Jarman (2004) argues that in recent years interface issues have appeared at the border of middle-class/mixed areas. Territorial dispositions are being affected by factors like demographic change, lifestyle shifts and processes of redevelopment and regeneration, and violence occurs in new locations while it is still being addressed in established interface areas.

Link Segregation and Sectarianism

The most obvious link between sectarianism and segregation is that sectarianism appears to be tied to territory, since the conflict focused on who should be entitled to occupy Northern Ireland, both physically (through residence) and politically (through authoritative decision making power). MacNair (2006: 14) expresses this dynamic meaning of territory as *"a source of conflict"* adding that it also reproduces conflict by keeping ethnic groups apart. Even after the Troubles, sectarian beliefs and attitudes are still commonly expected to be more prominent in segregated areas or segregated social sectors of life, and segregation is expected to match and to reinforce sectarianism. Shirlow (2003: 81) noted that a third of the victims of politically motivated violence were murdered within 250 metres of an interface and he concluded that segregation still plays an active role in the perpetuation of sectarian divisions. Similarly, Hughes et al. (2003) argue that a marked deteoriation in community relations and a distinct retreat towards single identity identities among both communities since 1996 may impact on some individuals' tendency to avoid mixing with individuals from the 'other' community, whether at work or in their area of residence. Hughes et al. contend that an increase in expression of sectarianism since the ceasefires, such as intimidation and harassment, may underpin current preferences for residential and workplace segregation, and lack of willingness to engage with the other community.

Shirlow (2003) argued that to reach the point where actual mixing takes place, the place of residence has to be de-linked from the political and religious background, that is from the two major grounds for sectarianism; and he noted that a person living or working in a segregated space does not necessarily adopt sectarian attitudes or beliefs. Although this way of looking at the degree of sectarianism within an area places emphasis on individuality, Shirlow argued that within highly segregated communities there are diverse populations that either reject, partly reject and partly accept or fully accept symbolic representations

and discursive hegemonies that are tied to ethno-sectarianised discourses. He also argued that there is no such thing as a sectarian or non-sectarian identity, and an individual is not imprisoned in their sectarian or non-sectarian tendency but rather attitudes vary through time and depending on personal experiences.

In recent years, more attention has been paid to the process that might be involved in changing the identity of a location and of understanding what we might mean by the terms 'mixing' and 'integrating'. Byrne et al. (2006) defined demographic integration as *"the mixing of groups within urban space"* whilst social integration *"implies a degree of social cooperation between members of different groups".* While a 'mixed' or 'demographically integrated' area suggests individuals from both communities are living in the same space, a 'socially integrated' area is one in which individuals interact with each other more deeply. These various positions suggest that there is a more nuanced diversity of ways of living than the black and white of segregation and integration, that some elements of an individual's life are more segregated than others; that some aspects of segregation may be more welcomed than others; and that spaces between Poole and Doherty's opposing poles of integration and segregation are in fact inhabited by a variety of ways of living.

The Legacy of Conflict

As noted earlier, history and experience have a lasting impact on people's beliefs, perceptions and actions. Over 3,500 people were killed and over 40,000 injured during the Troubles and the effects of this violence on individuals and families are still apparent today both physically and psychologically. The 2001 Census revealed that 73 per cent of people aged 45-64 knew someone who was killed or injured in the Troubles. Memories of violent incidents are usually attached to the place where they have been committed thus one hypothesis is that violence is linked to territory and therefore impacts on patterns of residential segregation. Darby (1986) noted that many families were forced to leave their homes in mixed areas and during the early years of the Troubles some 8,000 families in the Greater Belfast area were forced to move. Such a reciprocal link between the place where sectarian crimes and incidents were committed and religious segregation has been observed all over Northern Ireland (Boal 1969, 1982; Burton 1978; Poole and Doherty 1996).

In Belfast, Burton (1978) found that the fear of being a victim of such attacks meant that many people who live in conflict areas developed a comprehensive knowledge of safe and unsafe places. Many felt unsafe in

areas dominated by the 'other side' and this affected many aspects of their daily lives such as housing, education, shopping and access to service provision. The end of the conflict did not bring an end to sectarian violence, and during 2006-2007 the PSNI recorded 1,695 sectarian incidents across Northern Ireland (PSNI 2007), an indication of the depth and scale of sectarianism and the fact that for some individuals violence becomes accepted and indeed normalised, a fact that Rosellen Roche (2003) observed in the everyday lives of the young people she worked with. Thus the experience of violence and the fear of violence are among the means by which sectarianism and segregation are perpetuated as they feed into the patterns of living that people adopt in their daily lives, in which the security of separate living can offer a comfort against the fear and suspicion of the unknown other.

Factors Underpinning Segregation

A diverse array of factors affects the persistence of segregated living and sectarian views, and although the two terms refer to different aspects of social life, in Northern Ireland they are all too often two sides of the same coin element, one element reinforcing the other. Segregation and sectarianism have been readily observed having an impact in three main sectors: place of residence, work place and education, and may exist despite the denial of informants. Sidsel Larsen (1982), for example, found that while both communities claimed not to be subjected to sectarian attitudes, in reality they were conscious of the geographical partition of the two communities and she concluded that the division into two communities is maintained by *"avoiding interaction in a very systematic and often ritualised fashion"* (Larsen 1982:133). Segregation was thus an extreme way of avoiding forms of contact with the other, and which in turn reinforced perceptions of hostility and otherness through a lack of contact or understanding of the other's interests and concerns.

Residence: We have already noted the high levels of residential segregation in Northern Ireland, which Byrne et al (2006) review in some detail. It is worth noting some issues with regard to segregation that cut across common sense assumptions and increase the level of complexity in the social process of division. In general residential segregation tends to be associated with class divisions, with mixed areas identified with more middle-class neighbourhoods, whilst working-class areas are most likely to be segregated. However, there is also a residual class element to segregation, because as Murtagh and Carmichael (2005) note Protestant segregated areas tend to be wealthy, whilst Catholic segregated areas are more deprived:

"Mixed areas, in general score higher on the range of socio-economic variables, but not as high as Protestant segregated wards. Catholic segregated wards seem to be the most disadvantaged and this is especially the case for the welfare benefits and poverty sensitive indicators such as unemployment and economic activity. The latest Noble Index of Deprivation (2005) also shows that Catholic segregated wards are more disadvantaged than the other categories. Owner occupation, high car ownership and low rate of social housing were the highest in mixed wards, although these variables clearly hide a greater complexity even at this spatial grain" (Murtagh and Carmichael 2005: 22).

This class dimension to residential segregation also challenges another perception: that one will encounter less sectarian beliefs and attitudes within mixed (i.e. middle-class) areas and more sectarian beliefs and attitudes within segregated (working-class) areas. But if class is also associated with sectarian division, how does this impact on the assumption that the middle classes are less sectarian? Furthermore, recent research has indicated that living in a mixed area has a positive impact in that it leads to a reduction in fear of the other community, greater freedom of movement, more cross-community participation in a range of activities and reduced exposure to sectarian incidents (Belfast City Council 2008). But the converse will apply to segregated areas, whether they are middle class or working class communities.

The recent transformations in housing patterns renew the validity of social class as a factor in sustaining division. Indeed the ongoing process of gentrification, identified as playing a key role in reshaping the residential landscape (MacNair 2006; Murtagh and Carmichael 2005; NIHE 2001), is based on the social class criteria. Gentrification can be defined as:

"The buying and renovation of houses and stores in deteriorated urban neighbourhoods by upper or middle-income families or individuals, thus improving property values but often displacing low-income families and small business" (Murtagh and Carmichael 2005: 18).

This demographic transformation may lead to a change in ethno-national balance of an area, without leading to greater integration or reducing sectarian attitudes. While not completely calling into question the traditional distinction, Jarman (2004) indicates that it is not only segregated and working-class areas but also mixed and middle-class areas which are subjected to the manifestations of sectarianism. Thus the process of social change and upward mobility may lead to a greater embedding of sectarian segregation in residential areas rather than less.

This is not purely an urban phenomenon, as Murtagh (1999) noted an increase in sectarian practices within rural areas, in which land ownership was a key variable in rural community relations. Finally it is worth recalling Rosemary Harris' observation that if social activities remain segregated social life will divide: thus attending separate schools and churches, belonging to opposing political groups; and practicing different sports and cultural events will all help to perpetuate the divisions (Harris 1972).

Workplace: Research has shown that individuals understand a 'mixed work space' to be one where Catholics and Protestants are present in next to equal numbers, furthermore in a recent survey a large majority of people (88 per cent) said they prefer to work in a mixed environment and almost two thirds defined their workplace as neutral (OFMDFM 2007). However, while Sheehan and Tomlinson (1998) found a willingness amongst both Protestants and Catholics to work on sites where they were in a minority, there was much less satisfaction with this arrangement when the work site was in an area perceived to be the 'territory' of the other religious community. White (2002) also highlighted that fear can also inhibit choice:

"Many West Belfast residents do not even apply for jobs outside their immediate area even though they believe they may be suitably qualified. They believe they will encounter discrimination, intimidation and inequality of opportunity due to their community background or their postal code".

Dickson et al. (2003) noted that there has been little research on cross-community relations in the workplace and therefore there is little information on the scale of sectarian harassment. However, Jarman (2005) noted that sectarian harassment in the workplace remains a problem and previous research by Dickson et al (1999) found that workers tended to report increased sectarian tension at work during times of heightened emotion in society at large over events such as Drumcree. Despite this Hargie et al. (2003) highlighted that the workplace is often one of the few opportunities for a considerable amount of contact between employees from the two main sections of the community, and is perceived as an environment where members of both groups do come together and associate to some degree, in stark contrast to arrangements in the broader community (Hargie et al. 2003: 183).

Another study noted that the majority of employees felt that *"work was regarded as a place where sectarian viewpoints, trappings and influences should not be allowed to intrude"* (Hargie et al. 2006: 215). The authors found

reasonably low levels of tension in the workplace and presented a largely positive picture of inter-group working relations and they believed that significant sectarian tension had decreased over the years. The study also indicated that community relations in the workplace appeared to be relatively good, and have improved over the years due to the equality legislation (Hargie et al. 2006). In fact they argue that perceived neutrality in the workplace which has been promoted by the equality legislation has been important in encouraging young people to venture into other areas to seek work. Hargie et al highlighted how the legislation was felt by employees to have been beneficial in ensuring appropriate action could be taken when any complaints of sectarianism were registered and thus contributed to a culture or *"sanctuary of neutrality"* whereby the vast majority of employees left sectarian divisions outside the factory gate (Hargie et al. 2006: 206)

Education: The education system remains mainly segregated with *A Shared Future* setting out the limited impact of moves to introduce integrated schooling:

"There are now some 55 formally integrated schools with over 17,000 pupils across Northern Ireland. This represents around 5% of the total number of pupils in schools in Northern Ireland. The remainder are educated either in Controlled (largely Protestant) or Maintained (mainly Catholic) schools. In 2001/2002, 5% of pupils in Controlled schools were from a Catholic tradition and 1% of pupils in Maintained schools were from a Protestant background".

Writing in 1990, John Whyte argues that segregation in schools has been even more important in maintaining social divisions than restrictions on intermarriage imposed by churches, while McEwen and Salters (1993) also argued that segregated education was *"one of the many causes of division in the community".* More recently David Russell (2005) has highlighted that *"integrated schools are positive ventures"* but he goes on to state that, *"they have a limited impact on the lives of citizens".* He feels that *"schools cannot be a panacea for division when children leave everyday after lessons and return to divided neighbourhoods".* Madeleine Leonard (2006) notes the similar difficulties facing the schools in the segregated system and suggests that schools located in areas with high social conflict *"may face great difficulties in functioning as safe havens".*

A Shared Future notes that it is 'individual choice' that underpins the decision of which school parents will send their children to and this reflects their identity in society. It recognises that the education system in Northern Ireland is complex and comprises of a range of different school

types that reflect the diversity of society and the range of parental preferences for children. But at the same time the divided system also reflects and sustains the polarisation of society and the power bases of the main faith systems. Although formal segregation breaks down at the level of tertiary education, the location of a Further Education College may impact on the students who attend (ANIC 2005: 31). Potential students may choose one college over another because of its location in a segregated area or because they need to travel through segregated areas to reach it (Collins et al. 2001). University may be the first social space in which informal mixing occurs among people from segregated backgrounds: Farren et al. (1992) found that students undertaking teacher education courses at St. Mary's and Stranmillis Colleges in Belfast and at the University of Ulster, Coleraine, interacted across the divide, but at the same time held on to their own belief and value systems. Similarly, Hargie et al. found that students at a Northern Irish university tended to avoid discussing potentially divisive topics with out-group members and that *"the most common method for dealing with difference is through avoidance"* (Hargie et al. 2003: 100). Thus although students may formally integrate within the tertiary education sector, the impact of a segregated upbringing appears to be slow to break down.

Daily Routines: Although the large social environments, such as place of residence, workplace and place of education have a major impact on structuring attitudes and opportunities for relationships between members of the two communities, the smaller details of daily routines can also have a major impact on sustaining divisions and reinforcing a sense of difference. Harris (1972), Burton (1978), Larsen (1982) and Buckley (1982) all analysed the routines of daily lives as a means to understanding segregation and sectarianism. In a study of a small rural area, Larsen (1982) found that while both communities claim not to be subjected to sectarian attitudes, they are in reality always conscious of the geographical repartition of the two communities. Seeking to explain the perpetuation of segregation she concluded that the division into two communities is maintained by *"avoiding interaction in a very systematic and often ritualised fashion"* (Larsen 1982:133). And while she was primarily talking about the small rituals of daily routines, the larger annual rituals associated with the marching season and the accompanying visual displays are important aspects of reinforcing both similarity with some people and difference from others.

Parades and Visual Displays: Parades have been important element of the political culture in the North of Ireland since the eighteenth century, and Bryan (2000) describes how the Orange parades have developed as

an integral part of a Protestant ethnic identity and are part of the web of complex relationships of power in the region. However, all too often also a source of tension and conflict and Bell (2007) notes that while only a relatively small number of parades have proved contentious and been subjected to organised opposition and protests, the impact of the disputes have been significant and resulted, in *"some of the worst periods of civil unrest and disruption seen in over 30 years of conflict"* (Hughes et al. 2003: 3). In recent years it has been well documented that the tension and violence associated with parades and opposition to parades have served to deepen the sense of difference between the two main communities. The tensions over parades have also been exacerbated by their relationship to territory, and many areas have become more intensely marked out by flags and murals in national colours or celebrating paramilitary organisations. These displays provoke divergent views. On one hand a recent report for Belfast City Council (2008: 9) states that these symbols *"can prompt responses of fear and avoidance within outsiders and can lead to a desire to remain within their 'own' or 'neutral' territory"*. On the other hand people living near the displays have stated that they have become used to flags and murals and do not object to them (Byrne et al. 2006: 116). The differing perspectives suggest that people are prepared to tolerate displays by their own side, while disliking and avoiding displays from the other.

Although we have retained a tendency to talk in terms of communities as the primary locus of identity and of social division, this is only one aspect of the individual's identity and there is some evidence that the processes of social segregation and sectarian division impact differently on males and females and at different ages in people's lives. We may also briefly highlight that families and less formal social networks, which are often structured by the wider communal identities and divisions, help to reinforce the boundaries of the polarised identities.

Gender: Through the Troubles young men were both the primary target and perpetrators of sectarian crime. Fewer than 10 per cent of the total deaths reported were of females. When looking at the frequency of male and female experiences of the Troubles, Fay et al. (1999: 53) found that: *"35.5 per cent of men claimed to have experienced the Troubles 'a lot' or 'quite a lot' compared to 22.3 per cent of women"*. They also found that the nature of the experiences also varied with more direct experiences such as being called sectarian names, getting into physical fights or witnessing a shooting more frequently encountered by men. This is not to underestimate the role of women and girls in sustaining and perpetuating sectarian divisions, but women living in segregated areas

also tend to take the role of reducing the impact of violence within their own community, as was the case during the 2002 interface violence in East Belfast (Byrne 2005). Women in general are also more likely to be perceived as less of a threat which may impact on their freedom of movement, with men tending to stay inside the community whilst women have more freedom, Lysaght and Basten (2003) for example argued that spatial freedom was clearly gendered.

Age: Some recent research has suggested that stronger and more sectarian attitudes are generally found among teenagers and young adults, especially young males, compared with members of the parental generation. Shirlow (2003: 85) highlighted that older people are likely to have a memory of times before the violence erupted and they may also have maintained social relationships that existed prior to the conflict with people from the 'other' community; be more likely than the other age groups to have either Catholic or Protestant relatives within each respective community; be repulsed by paramilitary activities; and be more determined by religious convictions and by the belief that it is immoral to judge whole communities as abnormal and inauspicious.

Inter-Generational Transmission: Between 2003 and 2007, the Young Life and Times Survey reported that the majority of young people identified their family as the most important influence on their views on the wider communal identities, with school and friends as the second and third most important factors of influence. Similarly, Ewart et al. (2004) found that the attitudes within families were the most influential factor in shaping children and young people's attitudes to sectarianism and Lysaght and Basten (2003) found that children reproduce their parents' behaviour and adapted patterns designed to increase personal safety in public space without necessarily knowing what it means. Connolly and Healy (2003) noted that although children have some understanding of the denominational group labels at an early age, it is not until about the age of ten or eleven that the majority of children acquire the specific skills required to discriminate between the two groups. They found that by the age of three, children had begun to assimilate some of the key cultural symbols and cues for distinguishing between Catholics and Protestants. The children develop what Connolly and Healy refer to as a *"limited set of preferences for key cultural symbols and markers that reflect their own community"* (2003: 45). Furthermore, the authors assert that children are not just uncritically repeating what they have been told but are actively involved in constructing an understanding that can help them comprehend what is going on around them. (2003: 50).

Mixed Relationships: In contrast to the majority of indicators of division, mixed marriages and relationships are an obvious sign of inter-communal contact and mixing. Mixed residential areas are often characterised by the presence of mixed couples, and such couples often moved to an area because they felt it was mixed and it would provide a secure environment to live (Byrne et al. 2006). Todd (2006) found that for those 'centrally involved' in a mixed relationship there is a need for the renegotiation of social and symbolic boundaries, which may be resented by the extended family and the wider communal level. Furthermore, as with the case of integrated education, Buckley and Kenney (1995) note the limited impact of mixed marriages that must still exist within a wider divided society: *"The few mixed marriages make only a slight dent in the picture. The children of such marriages will, in the course of time, lean to one side or the other and gain an ethnic identity, usually reinforced in the next generation".* This view highlights the dominant perspective of the wider social community even in situations where people may try to escape from the polarised divisions. Elliot Leyton (1975) highlighted the role of social networks as a mechanism that impacts too readily on social segregation at the communal level while Buckley and Kenney argued that attempts to ensure that members of one's own side occupy influential positions in government and commerce, also results in rivalry between the ethnic groups for prestige, power, and influence at the wider societal level:

"Social segregation also interacts with economic and political competition. Individuals often seek employment, business contacts, and other forms of help through such non-bureaucratic means as family connections, old-boy networks, and friendships" (Buckley and Kenney 1995: 7).

The role of informal social networks in sustaining the communal divide has also been found to influence elements of economic activity in rural areas for example, Kirk (1993:334) found that individuals from both Catholic and Protestant communities preferred to sell their land for a lower price to individuals from within their "own" community than to individuals from the 'other' community.

Discourse: The bottom line of the process of segregation and division might be considered to be through the use of language, and the discourse the people utilise to define, classify, categorise the other. Discourse is a powerful element in the perpetuation of both sectarian divisions and segregation, and can be used both consciously and unconsciously, with differing terminology being adopted in the public and private spheres. Two discursive 'tools' present in Northern Ireland are taboos and

stereotyping. Harris (1972), Larsen (1982) and Darby (1986) all found that issues at the core of the conflict, politics and religion, were taboo subjects, and judged unacceptable for discussion between members of the two communities. Avoidance, which may be no more than an innocent desire not to embarrass, cause offence or provoke, thus becomes a means of sustaining division. Larsen (1982: 145) regarded 'avoidance' as behaviour underpinning life in 'Kilbroney': in the first place, people tried to avoid contact with members of the other community, but if this failed they limited *"the repertoire of issues being raised, thus insulating large parts of the culture from contact and possible modification"*. Larsen thereby makes clear that avoiding certain sensitive issues not only perpetuates preconceptions of the 'other' group, but also reinforces the process of social segregation.

Stereotyping is a process of classifying communities by certain specific, often derogatory characteristics, which contrast negatively to the assumed characteristics of one's own community. Harris (1972), Buckley (1982), Donnan and MacFarlane (1986) and Buckley and Kenney (1995: 194-212) all give accounts of some common stereotypes within each community. Catholics stereotypically described Protestants as prosperous, *'hard-working but money grabbing'*, but also as *'intellectuals'* (Harris 1972: 149-155) and *'narrow-minded'* (Donnan and MacFarlane 1986), whilst Protestants described Catholics as *'lazy, poor, 'mountainy' labourers'* (Harris 1972: 149-155), *'dominated by priests'* (Donnan and MacFarlane 1986). Harris (1972: 149-155) stated: *"More Protestants ascribed the characteristics of the poor, the labourers and the 'mountainy' to Catholics in general; for most Catholics the 'typical' Protestant was the prosperous farmer"*. Harris (1972) and Buckley and Kenney (1995: 194) also pointed out that some of these stereotypes were not surprising as they correspond to the geographical or socio-economical reality, but nevertheless they emphasised the community as the critical basis of difference, rather than class. However, Peter Shirlow (2003) notes that connecting reality and stereotypes is a dangerous practice and he points out that once a truth is constructed, it will contribute to the crystallisation of a segregated situation and to its own perpetuation.

In Conclusion

This brief review of literature on segregation and division has drawn heavily on some of the earlier material by anthropologists and ethnographers working in a variety of locations and settings in Northern Ireland. While some of this material is dated it is instructive in so far as many of the factors that are identified in perpetuating a sense of

difference remain pertinent today. We have variously identified different forms of segregation existing in formal social settings such as place of residence, workplace and educational institutions, and also social practices including daily routines and ritual events. This may include both processes of physical segregation, or more discrete forms of avoidance, as a means of maintaining distance between members of the two communities. We have also highlighted how other personal and social factors such as gender, age, family background, marital status, social networks and use of language, may impact on the nature of segregation, may help to perpetuate divisions or make it difficult for people to cross the multiple barriers that have been erected to segregate people.

Without labouring the point too much we would reiterate that segregation and sectarian difference are social processes that evolve and develop over time and in which individuals and communities are active participants rather than passive victims. As such we would not assume that the patterns of division remain constant in a changing socio-political environment and over the past decade or more Northern Ireland has been undergoing a significant transition across an array of political, social and economic contexts. The cases studies set out in the next six sections explore how these changes have impacted on the routine practices that have for long sustained and reproduced segregation and division.

4. Castlederg and Newtownstewart, County Tyrone

Castlederg and Newtownstewart are two small rural towns located west of the River Bann in County Tyrone. Castlederg is approximately three miles from Northern Ireland's constitutional border with the Republic of Ireland, while Newtownstewart is approximately ten miles east of Castlederg, almost equidistant between Strabane and Omagh. The population of the Castlederg ward according to the 2001 Census was 2,074, with 59 per cent of the population identifying themselves as members of the Catholic community, and 40.5 per cent coming from the 'Protestant and other Christian' community. The research found that it was the view of a number of interviewees that the presence of a number of Union and Northern Ireland flags on the main arterial routes into and out of the town gave the appearance to outsiders that the town was a predominantly Protestant town despite the relatively even demographic split. The population of the Newtownstewart ward in 2001 was 2,133, with 46.8 per cent of the population identifying themselves as from the Catholic community, and 52.1 per cent from a 'Protestant and other Christian' community background. Newtownstewart town centre itself is significantly smaller than Castlederg, however the Newtownstewart ward encompasses a larger hinterland than the Castlederg ward, perhaps explaining the slightly larger population figure. Both Castlederg and Newtownstewart wards are located in the Strabane Local Government District and the West Tyrone Parliamentary Constituency.

In Castlederg, the research highlighted that although in demographic terms at least the town would appear to be mixed, there is a significant amount of segregation and a lack of much meaningful interaction between the two main communities. This level of segregation may be in part attributed to the legacy of the Troubles, as Castlederg has often been referred to as 'the most bombed small town in Northern Ireland', with a significant number of killings taking place in the area, particularly of security forces personnel. Between June 1966 and July 1999, 36 incidents occurred within the area or involved people from the area. Although located only several miles away, Newtownstewart appeared to be much less affected by the worst excesses of the Troubles, with only eight incidents occurring within the area or involving local people within the same time period (McKittrick et al. 1999).

According to the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM 2005[1]), both Castlederg and Newtownstewart are in the top 10 per cent most deprived wards in Northern Ireland, with Castlederg the 43rd most deprived and Newtownstewart the 52nd most deprived of all 582 wards. Again, both wards fair poorly when looking at income and employment statistics, with Castlederg ranked as the 38th and 26th most deprived ward in terms of income and employment respectively. Similarly, Newtownstewart was ranked 77th in terms of income and 48th in terms of employment domain, while 5.9 per cent of the Castlederg and 4.7 per cent of the Newtownstewart population were unemployed compared to the Northern Ireland wide figure of 4.1 per cent. These statistics appear to support the perceptions among interviewees that both towns were weak economically and that trade had taken a downturn in recent years.

In more recent years, Castlederg has become increasingly synonymous in the public eye with disputes over the right to parade within the town. The Parades Commission have documented that between March 12th 2007 and March 12th 2008 there were 39 parades by a number of various groups, 17 of which were deemed by the Commission to be "sensitive". In contrast, Newtownstewart, despite reportedly having a number of issues concerning parades in the past, appeared to have relatively few current difficulties with regards to the marching season. According to the Parades Commission, during the same period in Newtownstewart there were 17 registered parades, just three of which were deemed to be "sensitive"[2]. Indeed a Good Relations Audit carried out by Strabane District Council in 2007 found that 485 respondents felt that parades were the main divisive issue between the communities in their local area (Strabane District Council 2007).

While both towns contained estates and areas which were perceived to be predominantly Catholic or Protestant and both towns exhibited signs of segregation and levels of sectarianism, these appeared to be even higher in Castlederg where the Troubles had a much greater impact. Segregation in terms of socialising was also very apparent within Castlederg, and

1 NIMDM 2005 is a report identifying small area concentrations of multiple deprivations throughout Northern Ireland. Deprivation refers to the amount of unmet needs across multiple domains. The NIMDM 2005 contains seven domains of measurement, which include: Income Deprivation; Employment Deprivation; Health Deprivation and Disability; Education, Skills, and Training Deprivation; Proximity to Services Deprivation; Living Environment Deprivation; and Crime and Disorder.

2 Statistics taken from the Parades Commission's website www.paradescommission.org in March 2008.

slightly less of an issue within Newtownstewart as given its small size and relative lack of night-life, younger people at the weekend tended to travel to the likes of Omagh and Strabane where they were 'anonymous'. However, a key issue common to both areas was the segregation in schooling, with pupils in both Castlederg and Newtownstewart having few opportunities to meet and interact with pupils from a different community background at both primary and secondary school age.

Methodological Issues

The research in Castlederg encountered few difficulties in terms of accessing individuals and groups from a variety of backgrounds to participate. This was in part due to the researchers being able to utilise the extensive existing network of community organisations within the area, who were able to act as gate-keepers, facilitating interviews and focus groups with local residents. In Newtownstewart the researchers faced greater difficulties in accessing individuals to participate in the research. This was firstly due to the smaller number of community organisations and less community infrastructure within the town, and secondly because of a greater reluctance of some residents to participate in the research. A number of potential interviewees were reluctant to participate for fear of 'rocking the boat' in an area which they felt had benefited in the aftermath of the paramilitary ceasefires and subsequent Good Friday Agreement of 1998.

In Newtownstewart there was the added difficulty of accessing Protestant young people to interview, as they did not presently engage at all with the youth forum in the area, despite various attempts by the youth workers to encourage them to do so[3]. No such problems were encountered in Castlederg, where after a long gestation period the youth forum had successfully managed to engage with young people from both Protestant and Catholic community backgrounds.

One methodological difficulty common to both areas was the unwillingness of individuals to take part in the diary process. Several diaries were circulated for completion amongst interviewees in both areas with none being returned. It was at this juncture that the researchers utilised a mapping exercise, whereby at the end of the semi-structured interview the individual would be asked to take a few minutes

3 Several Protestant young people had engaged with the youth forum in the past but had subsequently 'dropped out'. The youth workers in the area highlighted to the researchers the difficulties they had in trying to get local Protestant young people to engage with the forum.

to show on a basic map which areas of their town they perceived to be predominantly Protestant, Catholic, or mixed. This method proved to be very successful and supported a number of the themes emanating from the interviews.

Views and opinions of the areas

There was a general consensus that demographically Castlederg was relatively mixed. A number of interviewees referred to the area as being '50/50' in terms of Catholic and Protestant residents. There was also a sense among several interviewees that the town itself would be slightly more Catholic, with the surrounding areas such as Killen being predominantly more Protestant. All of the interviewees also stated that the town was segregated between the northern 'top' end and the southern 'bottom' part of the town (See maps on pages 38, 39). There was a perception that the northern part of the town, above the Diamond, was predominantly Catholic, while below the Diamond on the main street would be considered predominantly Protestant:

"The town is divided into a Catholic area at the top to a Protestant area at the bottom, a mixed Protestant area sort of further down" (Male, Catholic, 45-59).

The majority of interviewees commented that there was a significant degree of residential segregation within the town and that *"you would know what area was Protestant and what area was Catholic"*. Several residents felt that there were a number of parks or estates within the town which could visibly be identified as being predominantly one community or the other due to the presence of flags, murals, graffiti, kerbstones and other political symbolism. There was a perception amongst a majority of interviewees that Millbrook Gardens in the north of the town past Ferguson Crescent was a predominantly Protestant estate, while estates such as Churchtown and Hillview also in the northern side of the town would be perceived as predominantly Catholic.

"The park I live in would be all Protestants. Churchtown and Hillview would be all Catholic" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

It also became apparent that despite this level of residential segregation, there were also several areas within the town which a number of interviewees felt were relatively mixed, and one interviewee felt that these estates had managed to retain their demographic mix even during the Troubles, and despite the impact that the violence had on the town itself:

"Then you have mixed estates like Young Crescent, where you have about 60/40 Protestant, right? Now, that's an estate that would have been built before the Troubles, it was 50/50 then, and it's pretty much stayed that way. That stayed pretty much the same, and even the likes of Dergview there would have been built during the Troubles but there's a mixture of pensioners' houses and family houses there, and it would be about 50/50" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

The maps completed by interviewees (see page 38, 39) within the town supported these perceptions, as they clearly showed the north/south residential division within the town discussed by the interviewees. The maps also indicated that areas such as Young Crescent were perceived generally to be mixed, while Millbrook Gardens, Churchtown and Hillview were perceived as predominantly single identity communities. However, on closer inspection, it became clear that males, and particularly younger males, who completed the mapping exercise were more inclined than females to mark areas as either predominantly Protestant or Catholic, and were less inclined to highlight the presence of residentially mixed areas within the town. Conversely female interviewees who completed the maps, regardless of their community background, tended to note less territorial segregation than their male counterparts. One interviewee noted that:

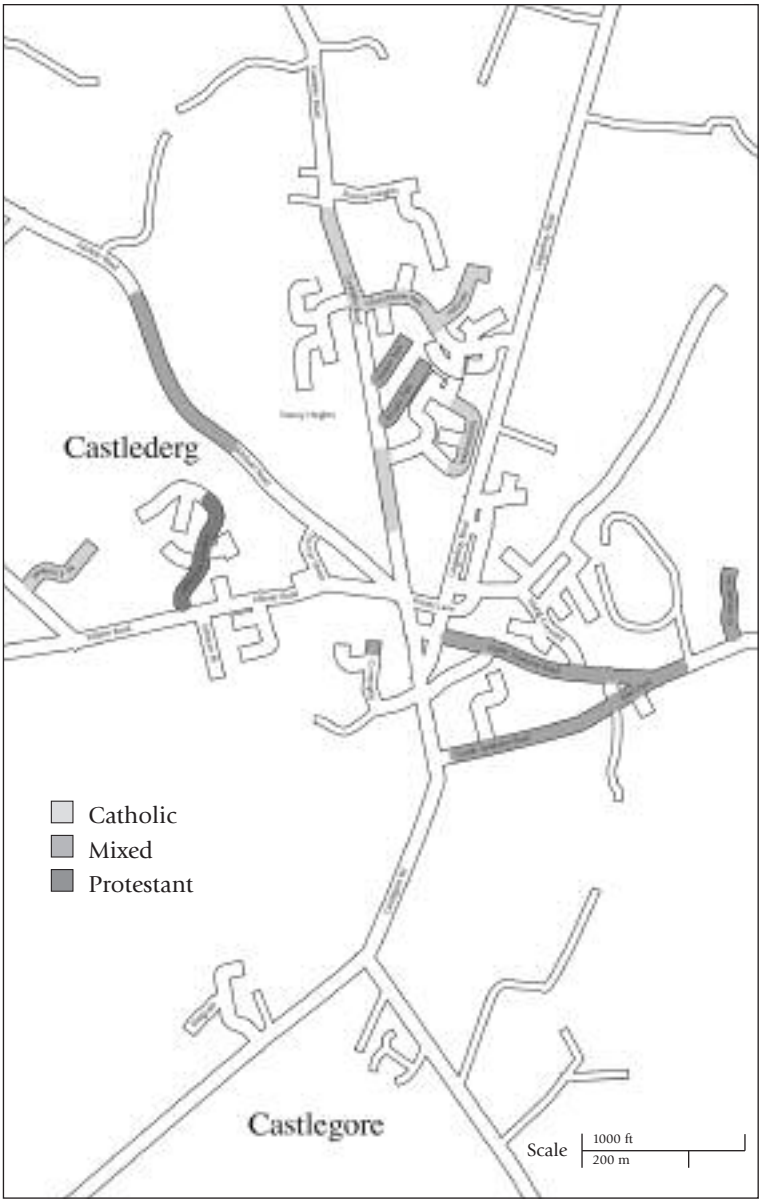
"I would say that girls in general would mix a bit, the guys would still hold firm to their background, whereas girls maybe would be a wee bit more freer" (Male, Catholic, 30-44).

Despite the perceived levels of residential segregation, the majority of interviewees felt safe and comfortable going about their daily lives within the town. However, a key issue noted by a significant number of interviewees was the difference between where they felt they could go safely during the day and where they felt they were able to go to at night. One interviewee from a Protestant background referred to the fact that they lived up at the top end of the town which was perceived to be predominantly more Catholic, and felt that they could not walk about that part of the town freely in the evening in particular:

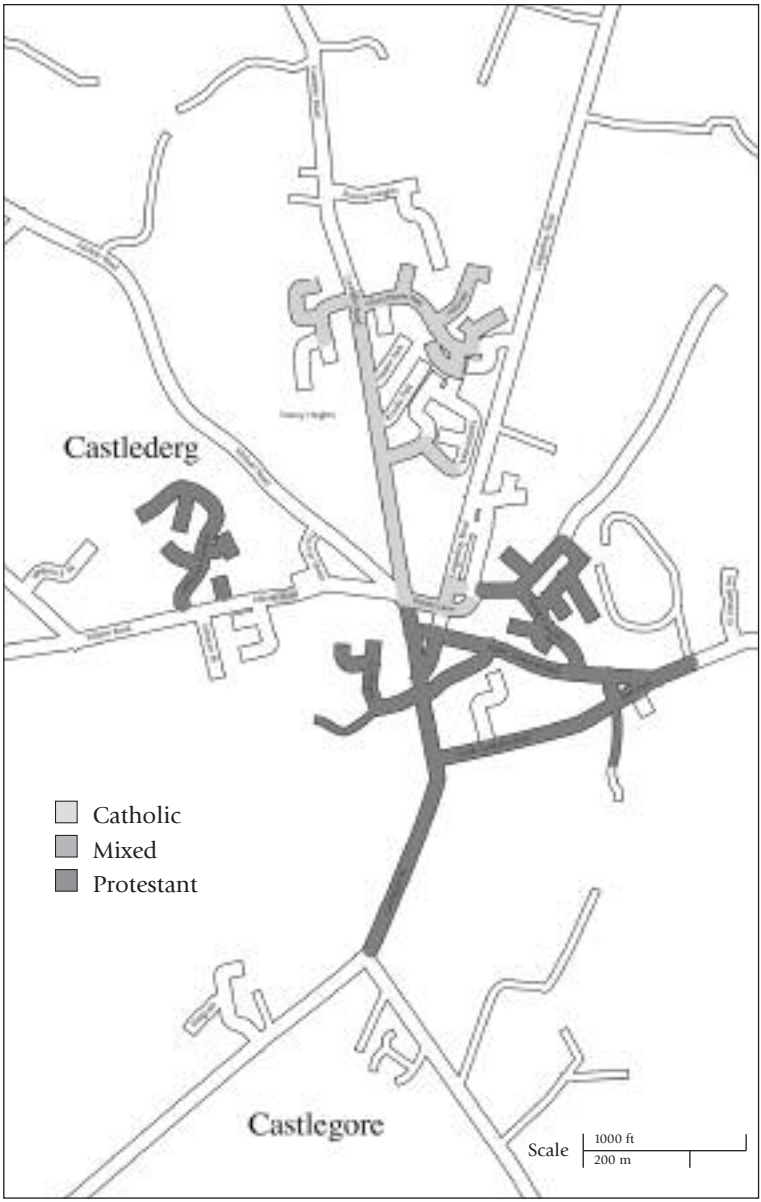
"We can't walk home. We actually, we can't even go for a walk where we live, like we're married and we were out walking one night and we were just shouted at…" (Male, Protestant, 25-29).

There appeared to be a fear that walking around certain areas in the evening would put oneself at the risk of attack from, as one young interviewee commented, *"groups of young lads"*. More than one

Castlederg ~ *Female, Protestant, 30-44*



Castlederg ~ *Male, Protestant, 30-44*



interviewee stated a reluctance to venture into areas which they perceived to be predominantly from the 'other' community background than themselves.

"Daytime yes. I'd have no problem. Apart from if I had to go into Millbrook Gardens, I would be slightly, not wild anxious, but quite conscious of it and night time, I would be more particular about where I'd go" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

"There's definitely a night thing. I would go anywhere in the daytime. There's still definitely a certain sense of you would be wary of where you go at a certain time. Not as much now as in the 70s and 80s, but I would still be wary. I would still be on my guard and certain things, just where I would pull up to at a certain time. Maybe that's normal in any town but I would still feel that way" (Male, Catholic, 30-44).

Female interviewees appeared to be slightly less concerned about issues relating to their safety within the area. They were slightly more inclined to traverse areas which they perceived to be neutral, while the mapping exercise highlighted that males tended to see the same areas as predominantly 'Orange' or 'Green', this perhaps helps explain why males appeared to feel their freedom of movement was more restricted than females.

A number of interviewees linked this concern for their own safety with the night time economy and the number of bars in the town, the majority of which would be perceived as being either predominantly Protestant or Catholic. According to several interviewees, there is also the key issue of 'telling' someone's background. Castlederg is a small rural town, and a number of residents spoke of *"a small community here, everybody knows everybody"*. In total contrast to an area such as Stranmillis, which for many was a transient and relatively 'anonymous' community, in Castlederg a person's community background can often be identified from their family name, or the area of the town or surrounding district they came from.

"Everybody knows everybody, it's a small place. It happens all the time in Castlederg, you wouldn't know someone one minute, the next minute you would be naming them" (Male, Catholic, 19-24).

"Yes. Aye, because if I say I am from (name of area), automatically you are a Protestant. If someone says they live in Hillview they are Catholic" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

One interviewee pointed out that although there were still some issues within the area to be addressed and some people would be wary of where they went in the town, the situation had improved from the Troubles, and she felt much safer moving around the area now than in previous times:

"There is still a wee bit of tension. It used to be when I was at school, you just wouldn't go near Hillview but now I could walk through it" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

Similarly to Castlederg, the vast majority of interviewees in Newtownstewart felt that the town would contain a relative demographic balance between the Catholic and Protestant communities, although again it was felt that the town would be slightly more Catholic and the surrounding areas would be perceived to be predominantly Protestant. These perceptions were supported by the mapping exercise with areas such as the Baronscourt Road and Plumbridge Road leading into town from Drumquin marked by several participants as being predominantly Protestant:

"The area would be mixed, it wouldn't be predominantly Catholic or Protestant, there is a good mix" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

Newtownstewart appeared to be less residentially segregated than Castlederg. Discussions and the mapping exercise did however reveal that there were still perceptions amongst interviewees that certain parts of the town were predominantly Protestant or Catholic, and as in Castlederg, individuals tended to highlight the presence of flags, murals and other political symbolism as the justification for these perceptions:

"There would be areas. You could find parts of Orr Park where you could get flags up" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

"Even in the town, up the town they put up red, white and blue banners …" (Female, Catholic, Under 16).

Areas such as Orr Park and Davis Crescent were perceived to be predominantly Protestant and areas such as Mourne Park were perceived to be predominantly Catholic. The mapping exercise in Newtownstewart appeared to be more difficult to complete than for participants in Castlederg, as interviewees in Newtownstewart seemed less sure than their Castlederg counterparts of which parts of the town were predominantly Catholic, Protestant or mixed. This corresponded with the interviewees in

Newtownstewart who for the most part perceived their town to be less segregated than Castlederg, and indicated a higher number of what they perceived to be mixed estates within the town. Young people in Newtownstewart who completed the mapping exercise also perceived more areas in their town to be mixed than young people in Castlederg, but more young people than adults in Newtownstewart felt that there were more areas which were either predominantly Catholic or Protestant.

Within Newtownstewart, as in Castlederg, the majority of interviewees reported that the town was such a small community that it was often the case they could 'tell' someone's community background in the town as they would know someone's family name or which part of the town they came from. However, the fact that Newtownstewart was a smaller town with much less of a night-time economy than Castlederg meant that there was a general perception that interviewees felt safer at night in the area, and there were fewer problems associated with alcohol related violence and fewer instances of *"drunken sectarianism"*.

Relations within the area

The majority of interviewees in Castlederg felt that relations within the town between Protestants and Catholics had improved slightly in recent years. One interviewee from a Catholic community background recalled that although there were tensions between the two communities throughout the Troubles, and these persisted to a degree today, he had been able to maintain friendships with Protestant neighbours throughout the worst of the violence. There was a sense among a number of interviewees that *"things have come along way since the 70s and 80s"*. One interviewee compared the situation today to when she was in secondary school:

"When I was younger it was really, really different to what it is today. When I was younger … 'Catholics were bad and Protestants were good', because this (past events) had happened to our family" (Female, Protestant, 25-29).

Another interviewee from a Catholic background who had returned to the area in the aftermath of the ceasefires felt that the improved relations were highlighted by the fact that in recent years more and more Protestants had approached her workplace for help, when previously this would not have been the case. There was a sense that the ceasefires and subsequent Good Friday Agreement provided an increased sense of security and a slight 'thawing of relations' in the town and that *"times are moving on slowly, a little bit":*

"Well, I think people wouldn't like to admit it, but they realise that everybody is the same at the end of the day, and there would be more communication between Catholics and Protestants in the town, before they probably wouldn't have come into the same room together" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

Several interviewees felt that there were a number of indicators to suggest improvement in community relations within the town. These included a number of mixed bars in the town which would have been less commonplace during the Troubles, the increase in numbers of people from one community background shopping in a store perceived to be of the 'other' community background, and anecdotal evidence of an increased number of mixed relationships in the area among younger people:

"… and sometimes I think as they get older they know there are more opportunities to mix and I do see more of a trend nowadays for Catholics and Protestants going out together at the 14-16 year age group, which would have very rarely happened in my generation" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

Not all interviewees however were of the opinion that relations in Castlederg had improved sufficiently to allow for the development of a significant number of mixed relationships. Indeed, one male interviewee in his mid-20s suggested that he would *"no longer associate"* with someone they knew who dated someone from another community background. It also became apparent that at times parents, peers and friends were against any such relationships:

"Aye, because my friend, he is going out with a Catholic at the minute, and he got a bit of stick just for that. He runs about in our group, but his Protestant friends would give him stick. Nothing bad, just cheeky comments or whatever, nothing serious" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

"A mate of ours is going out with a Protestant girl, and her family disowned her like, kicked her out of the house and she is 17 years of age. They got a house somewhere else like" (Male, Catholic, 19-24).

Although a number of interviewees felt that relations within the area had improved over the years, several interviewees suggested that these relations were at best cordial, with a lack of real and meaningful interaction between the two main communities:

"… there is the two communities in Castlederg and it probably, even at this stage I would say that they are probably quite separated …" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

According to several interviewees sectarianism was still an issue in the town and for the most part people socialised with others from within their own community background. One interviewee stated that *"you stick to your own"*.

More than one interviewee commented that relations between the Protestant and Catholic communities in the town were made even more strained by the issue of parades. Castlederg has perhaps been best known in the public eye in recent years for disputes linked to the marching season, and a number of interviewees were of the opinion that any progress made in community relations during the year were offset when the marching season came around again:

"You have the divisions, you take the parading in Castlederg, I would say if you took parading out of Castlederg, that people would get on a lot better" (Male, Catholic, 30-44).

Indeed, Castlederg had been badly affected by the parading dispute at Drumcree in the mid-1990s, and relations were seriously damaged between the Protestant and Catholic communities within the town. This damage manifested itself in increasing disputes over the right to parade within the town, and also led to a number of Catholic residents boycotting a number of local Protestant shops, some of whose workers at the time it was alleged had taken part in blockading the roads during the Drumcree protest:

"… and after Drumcree and that people just boycotted the Protestant shops because some of the workers were out blockading. Now that was a hairy experience, probably one of the worst experiences in Castlederg, those nights leading up to Drumcree" (Male, Catholic, 30-44).

Although a number of interviewees suggested that there were still difficulties in the town in terms of community relations, several participants mentioned the role played by organisations such as Border Arts and the Castlederg Youth Forum in attempting to improve the situation. Indeed, the Castlederg Youth Forum which was a mixture of local young people, both male and female, from the Catholic and Protestant communities won a Philip Lawrence Award in 2007[4]. It was felt that the youth forum provided the opportunity for young people of school age to meet in a safe and neutral environment in the area and interact with one another. One young person felt that it was the

4 A national awards scheme which celebrates the achievements and outstanding contributions made by young people to their community.

responsibility of the young people in the town to work to improve relations as *"the older people wouldn't encourage you (to mix)".* According to one member of staff the forum afforded the young people the opportunity to discuss issues which the older generation would rather not talk about, and this included the contentious parades issue. Similarly, a number of interviewees felt that the activities organised by the likes of Border Arts helped improve relations in the town. In particular the cross-community carnival held every June with floats, face painting, stilt walking and music was perceived as an attempt to bring people in Castlederg together:

"We would have the carnival in the town and that's both sides together, that's one way of bringing people together" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

In Newtownstewart a common theme in discussions was that *"the two communities live here and appear to mix well".* One Catholic interviewee contrasted the situation in Newtownstewart and Castlederg over the parades issue, noting that during the marching season, members of the Apprentice Boys would socialise in his establishment. Indeed a number of interviewees felt that the fact there were no significant disputes over parades contributed to better relations within the area than in Castlederg:

"We don't have that in Newtownstewart. There seems to be a lot of bother in Castlederg. I don't know what exactly is the cause, you hear about fights over parades and things, but thank God we don't have that here in this town" (Male, Catholic, 45-59).

While there appeared to be a reluctance among many interviewees in Castlederg to venture into certain parts of the town at night, this was not the case in Newtownstewart. A number of interviewees felt the quieter nature of their town and fewer divided social venues with alcohol related violence made this less of an issue. Despite this however, there appeared to be a division between young people of school age, and young interviewees in Newtownstewart tended to be more negative in their perceptions of relations within the area than their adult counterparts.

At the time of the research the Newtownstewart Youth Forum was almost entirely made up of Catholic young people, despite the best efforts of the youth workers to engage with the Protestant community. There had been one or two young Protestants who had been involved with the forum but who had subsequently left, and the youth workers in Newtownstewart found it more difficult than those in Castlederg to engage with young people from both communities.

Impact of the Troubles

One of the principal reasons that Castlederg and Newtownstewart were selected as locations for the research was because of the perceived impact of the Troubles on West Tyrone and the border region. Indeed, the overwhelming consensus in discussions with local residents was that Castlederg itself was seriously impacted upon by the Troubles:

"I know that Castlederg was probably one of the worst towns in Northern Ireland to be affected by the Troubles. You would have heard about it on the news, and your neighbours talking about it and heard about incidents that went on like bombs, and shootings …" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

It became apparent that for a number of interviewees in Castlederg, the Troubles had impacted how they went about their daily lives, where they would go, and at what time and with whom. Many interviewees stated that during the 1970s and 1980s they did not venture into the town centre at night. Several interviewees also noted the difficulties they had in working in the town and the violence had restricted some people's ability to go out into the community:

"There would have been a few cases where you would have been wary of saying your name, you know what I mean? That's the way it was then. I remember some people telling me they were frightened to go into the hospital because their name didn't sound right …" (Female, Protestant, 60+).

In particular in West Tyrone generally, there were a number of shootings of security forces personnel by the IRA. A focus group revealed the impact of the Troubles on their lives even to this day:

"I went through the security forces. I lost seven of my own family to the IRA and I lost seventeen of my best friends around the Castlederg, Newtownstewart, Sion Mills, Strabane area to terrorism" (Male, Protestant, 60+).

A number of former security forces personnel still referred to checking under their car for devices, or of being wary of which route they would take to work, or where they would do their shopping. Indeed, one interviewee stated, *"I'm still on the same alertness as I was when I was serving 20 years ago".* Other interviewees who were formerly with the security forces but who had been less personally affected by the violence appeared less inclined to believe that the Troubles still impacted upon their lives today. Several interviewees felt that a legacy of the violence further entrenched views and increased hostility towards the 'other' side.

For some Catholic and Nationalist interviewees, one of the main issues raised was their belief in a partisan police force who did not treat both communities fairly. A number of young Catholics spoken to were of the belief that the PSNI did not treat the two communities in Castlederg equally, and for them this issue hindered the development of community relations within the town, especially their perception of unfair policing of Loyalist parades:

"The police are very one sided, I think that is the main problem in Castlederg. In December 2006 there was a big scuffle in the town, Protestants and Catholics fighting like, it kind of got out of hand and the police came. They hadn't a notion, they just, well biased like against nationalists, started arresting people" (Male, Catholic, 25-29).

Castlederg was a town which was hugely impacted by the violence of the Troubles, and the personal experience of a number of people in losing friends, relatives and colleagues in a small tight-knit community was said to have contributed to a hardening of attitudes on both sides of the community. But many interviewees also reported that the town had suffered an economic downturn since the ending of the Troubles and the opening up of the border. Shop owners in Castlederg felt that for their town the opening up of the border had actually allowed people to 'escape' elsewhere for the first time, with increasing numbers of local residents now shopping in Ballybofey, Castlefinn and even Letterkenny. It was said this had a detrimental impact on the economy of Castlederg. This is in comparison to Newry, another border location, where trade increased and continues to do so.

"It's made it worse, it's easier to get out of and get across. Years ago the young nationalist people going for a night out had to come to Castlederg before going across the border. Now they can cross the border in about ten different parts you know. Actually the border road opening has done the exact opposite to us than to other places, it wrote us off". (Male, Catholic, 45-59).

Newtownstewart, despite its close proximity to Castlederg, appeared to be much less directly affected by the violence of the Troubles. Interviewees in Newtownstewart noted that the impact of the Troubles had not affected relations within the area as much as in Castlederg and more than one interviewee felt that the impact of the violence in Castlederg may have been greater due to its closer proximity with the Irish border:

"It would have had more of an impact there with it being a border town, that would have caused an awful lot of conflict" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

Issues within the areas

As previously highlighted, one key issue within Castlederg was the disputes over parades within the area, and particularly the disputes over Loyal Order and Loyalist band parades[5]. One interviewee who had lived and worked in the area for over twenty years felt that *"there was always tension"* surrounding parades within the town. A significant number of interviewees from both communities felt that the number of parades within the town throughout the year was detrimental to any efforts to improve community relations. Another issue was the route taken in the past by parades, which was opposed by many local Catholic Nationalist residents who felt that parades were *"essentially triumphalist"*. A number of interviewees from a Catholic background also felt that there were too many bands participating in the parades in such a small town. For members of the Castlederg Young Loyalists flute band, this opposition to their parades within the town was perceived to be a refusal to accept their cultural identity. It was however felt by a number of both Catholic and Protestant interviewees that there were *"too many marches"*:

"Oh, far too many parades, one or two parades would be plenty" (Male, Protestant, 60+).

There was often trouble in the aftermath between rival crowds of younger people. Discussions revealed that alcohol was perceived to be a factor in fuelling violence related to the parades dispute. A number of interviewees also spoke of a feeling that their movement was restricted whenever a parade was on, particularly during the summer months of July and August, and a number of people spoke of leaving the town when they knew a parade was forthcoming:

"I don't feel like I can go into the town when there is a parade on because of fighting" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

"Like any of the marches that come through my park at night I wouldn't leave the house, I mean I just wouldn't, it always causes conflict" (Male, Protestant, Under 16).

5 There are two loyalist bands in the town, the Castlederg Young Loyalists and Pride of the Derg, who formed as an offshoot to the Young Loyalists. There is also an affiliate band, the Castlederg Young Loyalists Old Boys'. At one time there was reportedly a nationalist/republican flute band which had subsequently disappeared due to a perceived lack of support.

It became apparent that a significant number of interviewees felt that Castlederg was behind the situation in other areas of the Province in terms of dialogue on parades. One interviewee noted how the situation *"felt like it's still the mid 1990s"*, at the height of the parades dispute in areas such as the Ormeau Road, Derry Londonderry and Drumcree. Discussions revealed that although there were some disturbances related to parades in Newtownstewart several years ago, at the present time there appeared to be few difficulties with parades in the town. Indeed, the Parades Commission's own statistics deemed only three parades between March 2007 and March 2008 as "sensitive" compared to 17 "sensitive" parades in Castlederg. One interviewee recalled the last trouble associated with any parade in Newtownstewart as *"eight or nine years ago"*, while a Protestant interviewee felt that *"they seem to be received ok, there are never really problems about letting us parade".*

Another issue within Castlederg appeared to be the presence of a number of flags on lamp-posts within the town centre and on several of the arterial routes into the town. A number of interviewees felt that the presence of a number of Union Jacks, Northern Ireland and other flags marked out the town as a loyalist area and possibly dissuaded people from venturing over the border and other surrounding areas to shop within the town. There was also a general feeling that *"there are too many flags"* and that flags *"are up too long"*, particularly on the main arterial routes leading into and out of the town.

"The flags are meant to go up, and you don't mind them going up, but come back down again. They put up those bunting things as well; I have seen them down that evening on the Twelfth of July, that's great. Put up your colours, but know when to take them down again" (Male, Catholic, 45-59).

The presence of a tricolour and GAA colours at Ferguson Crescent at the top end of the town was also noted, and a number of people felt that flags of any description should be taken down quickly after events like the Twelfth or a GAA match as they mark out territory within the town centre. One interviewee felt that the presence of flags in various parts of the town made people more wary of where they felt that they could or could not go.

The flying of flags was also raised by a number of interviewees in Newtownstewart as an issue which had the potential to impact upon relations within the town, but was reportedly less problematic than in Castlederg. In Newtownstewart, both Union flags and Tyrone GAA flags would be flown at certain times during the year along the main street, which appeared in contrast with Castlederg where it was primarily Union

flags that were displayed. In both areas there appeared to be a general consensus that any flags that were flown for commemorations should be taken down again at the earliest available opportunity.

Work

The majority of interviewees in Castlederg worked in the area and reported few difficulties regarding their own community background and employment. It became apparent that several interviewees felt that relations within their workplace had remained relatively good even throughout the Troubles. A number of interviewees compared the situation during the Troubles with today and felt that they were much less restricted today in terms of the areas they could work. In previous years they would have been reluctant to work in areas which they perceived to be predominantly Catholic or Protestant. One or two interviewees noted however that they would still feel slightly anxious working in areas in the town which they perceived to be predominantly Catholic or Protestant:

"I have had to go out to (name of area) to do inductions with New Deal participants and that sort of thing. I would be slightly conscious of … down to the things like my husband obviously would be a Celtic supporter and things like that and wears what do you call those things up on the car and I would take things like that down if I was going into those areas. Now, I have got to the stage where I just don't put them up on the car. What is the point? But, I would be conscious and it is always there in the back of your head" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

A number of interviewees worked outside the town in Omagh, Strabane and Derry Londonderry and further afield. In general, interviewees who worked outside of the town had no difficulties in how they travelled to and from their place of employment. It became apparent that community background could under certain circumstances influence where and which job an individual applied for. A number of interviewees felt that in Castlederg and the surrounding areas such as Strabane there may *"probably be organisations that wouldn't employ me"* on the basis of their community background, and therefore they would not apply for the job because they felt it would be a waste of time:

"Like if you were Catholic you wouldn't apply for a job at (name of organisation), and if you were a Protestant you wouldn't apply for a job at (name of organisation)" (Female, Protestant, 25-29).

The general consensus was that relations within the workplace in Castlederg were good. One female interviewee who was from a Protestant community background but had worked for organisations perceived to be predominantly Catholic suggested that the fact that most workplaces were culturally neutral environments enabled people to *"leave all their baggage at home and get on with it".* Several interviewees who worked in the town centre itself stated how they worked or had previously worked for an organisation which was perceived to be predominantly one community or the other but that this did not impact upon relations or how they felt they were treated in the workplace. Some interviewees were keen to stress that sectarianism was not an issue in the workplace as people just got on with their jobs:

"I work in a totally mixed environment for the (name of workplace), obviously you have to communicate with each other. Our office is all mixed, people would talk about mass, or about church, or about football or Celtic or Rangers, people, they know what you are, but they don't really pay any attention. They seem to get on ok" (Male, Catholic, 25-29).

However, one interviewee was of the opinion that some people within the town would be more inclined to seek employment in an environment with members predominantly from amongst their own community background:

"Maybe she feels more comfortable as she is a Protestant working with Protestants. I am sure she probably wouldn't apply for a job in (name of place)" (Male, Catholic, 19-24).

In Newtownstewart there appeared to be even less difficulties with regards employment, in part due to the fact that the majority of interviewees worked in other areas as *"there isn't too much work in Newtownstewart to tell you the truth".* Discussions revealed that the vast majority of interviewees in the town felt that *"jobs here are mixed"*. Two interviewees who worked together and were of different community backgrounds commented that working in the same environment was one of the few opportunities for contact between people of different community backgrounds in the town. Another female interviewee who used to work in a local shop believed that given the lack of jobs in the area people would take work where they could find it. It appeared that most interviewees felt that relations within the workplace had remained good even during the Troubles, and contrary to Castlederg, there were no interviewees who felt they would not get certain jobs because of their community background:

"I used to work in the (name of workplace) when I was younger and he employs both Catholics and Protestants. One of my best friends from there was a Catholic" (Female, Protestant, 25-29).

The general perception was that the workplace was a mixed and culturally neutral environment in which people felt safe. This appears to support the findings of the local Good Relations Audit, which found that 70 per cent of respondents perceived workplaces in the Strabane District Council area as neutral (Strabane District Council, 2007).

Schooling

One of the main issues in both towns was the segregation of young people during their formative school years. In Castlederg, both primary schools and the two secondary schools within the town were divided between state and Catholic maintained sectors which effectively led to Protestant young people attending Edwards Primary and then Castlederg High and Catholic young people attending St. Patrick's Primary and then St. Eugene's High:

"Well, Protestants went to Castlederg High and Catholics went to St. Eugene's. There was no mixed schools. It was where my sister and brother went to and all my friends" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

A number of young people from Castlederg also attended schools in Omagh or Strabane, but most interviewees felt that the majority of local young people would attend one of the two local high schools. In Newtownstewart there only were two primary schools, Newtownstewart Model and St. Patrick's, young people had to attend secondary school elsewhere. A recurring theme throughout the discussions in both towns was the level of segregation, particularly between the 11-16 age group, and a number of interviewees believed that when they were younger and at school they did not have enough opportunities to meet and interact with other young people from a different community background. Several interviewees noted that there was an element of peer pressure against making friends with pupils from the 'other' school:

"It was just something you didn't want to do. Have your friends see you mixing with the other side. There was just no contact between one side and the other" (Male, Protestant, 30-44).

One female interviewee in Newtownstewart felt that having to go outside of school to different areas led to most Protestant and Catholic young people going to different schools, and subsequently socialising in

different groups with little opportunity for contact with one another. Despite a general feeling among interviewees that the situation *"isn't as bad as it used to be"*, one young person in Castlederg spoke of the difficulties facing young people in attempting to be friends with others from a different school, particularly given the levels of residential segregation within the town itself:

"You can't (hang out). There's another girl from the other religion that I am from obviously and we got on really, really well, but when I was going into her park I couldn't go in my uniform even though I was like her best friend. I was in one day, but I didn't have my uniform on but they knew who I was you know and shouting abuse and all, and then (name of friend) came out and then they were like 'Oh, you are friends with her then', so that was ok. If she hadn't have been there and I was down like…" (Catholic, Female, Under 16).

In both towns school uniforms could easily identify a young person's community background, and this in turn could restrict their movement within the area at particular times during the day. In Castlederg, one young Protestant interviewee felt unsafe walking around the predominantly Catholic top end of the town during the day as *"they know what religion you are by your uniform"*. These difficulties in negotiating one's way around the town were said to have been exacerbated by the fact that the de facto Protestant state school was located in what was perceived by many local young people as a predominantly Catholic area, and similarly the local Catholic maintained secondary school was located past Millbrook, which was perceived to be a predominantly Protestant part of the town:

"We walked by the biggest loyalist estate in the area, Millbrook. Our school was right beside it. There wasn't a problem in the morning, in the evening time it used to be every day. In the end the police had to come and they sat in their jeeps while we walked by" (Male, Catholic, 25-29).

A number of interviewees also noted the difficulties some young people faced in the town centre, and one interviewee believed that some young people would avoid using certain shops in the town during the day if they were still wearing their school uniform. The fact that a young person's community background could be ascertained by their school uniform alone had led to instances of name calling, stone throwing and more serious violent incidents usually between groups of young males from each of the two local schools in Castlederg. One couple recalled having to book a taxi for their son to travel to and from school, as they did not feel his safety could be assured otherwise:

"With our youngest boy we have to get a taxi to take him to school, he used to walk round, we used to live round Millbrook near at the head of the town, he was getting that much hassle in the morning and the evening with other schoolboys up there too like and they know the uniforms as well. We are sick of that like, we book a taxi in the morning and the evening for him now, he's out here now at the high school" (Male, Protestant, 45-59).

Another interviewee spoke of the difficulties facing his children when they were identified as being from a Catholic community background:

"… our children coming from school a couple of years ago they were taunted going out that road where we live. They actually had stones pelted at them too, because of who they were they would have been called fenian so and so …" (Male, Catholic, 30-44).

The locations of the schools and potential for trouble led to a decision some years ago to let the two schools out at different times of the day which, it was felt, slightly improved the situation. Another related issue in Castlederg was the division of school buses within the town. Most interviewees referred to local young people getting on different buses depending on what school they attended. This de facto segregation in buses also appeared to be the case for pupils travelling from Castlederg and Newtownstewart to schools in Omagh. Protestant pupils tended to get on the first bus and Catholic pupils waited for the next bus, otherwise as one young Protestant interviewee suggested, *"you might get a 2p in the back of the head or something".* Another male interviewee recalled the trouble on buses when both schools were present and decided to walk home for fifty minutes to avoid any trouble:

"But, one day I missed the bus and I had to get the St Eugene's bus and I remember I got a bit of stick because I was from the High School and that, although nothing serious happened" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

Similarly, in Newtownstewart a number of interviewees referred to divisions in the buses, and that pupils from the different schools would sit apart from one another on the same bus:

"I really remember the first bus, Protestants at the front and Catholics at the back and you didn't vary it. Even if there was a seat at the back you didn't go down to it, you'd stand" (Female, Protestant, 25-29).

A number of interviewees in Castlederg were keen to stress that the situation regarding the school buses was getting better, and one

interviewee whose brother was now a pupil at St. Eugene's felt that he had few problems in comparison to what it was like several years ago.

Shopping and Facilities

The research highlighted that shopping routines within Castlederg had changed over the years, and were now primarily based on price, choice and convenience, whereas in the past, and particularly during the Troubles, shopping patterns would have been based primarily on community background. However, the change in the type of shops within the town, with a number of larger supermarkets such as Vivo and Spar were perceived to be more neutral than smaller family owned stores, and shops in which anyone could go to regardless of their community background:

"Most of the smaller shops would probably be single identity, it's just the bigger Vivo and Co-op, they have to be more mixed" (Female, Catholic, Under 16).

There were still a number of smaller shops located in certain parts of the town centre which were perceived to be either Protestant or Catholic owned, and there were a number of interviewees who felt that some of these smaller shops would receive most of their custom from members of their 'own' community:

"I think it's because there has always been a stigma attached to it, it was just the done thing that if you are a Protestant that you don't go into that shop. I don't think that's changed, young people are still influenced by their parents and now their peers, and 'we don't go to that shop, we go to the shop on the other side of the road', you know" (Female, Catholic, 19-24).

For some participants in the research there were still issues linked with sectarianism and segregation within Castlederg which impacted upon their shopping patterns. One interviewee felt that he would prefer to shop in Protestant businesses in the town because he felt he was hassled where he lived in the Catholic top end of the town due to his community background. A young female from a Protestant community background indicated that she *"had never been"* into what she perceived was a Catholic shop at the top end of the town. However, a number of interviewees believed that there was now an increased willingness amongst people to base their shopping habits on convenience and the price of goods rather than on community background:

"That would have been the case before the peace, where people would have stuck to the nationalist shops and the unionist shops, Catholic and Protestant shopping. I would think now that people have mixed more in shopping and just go now where the best bargains are and where they can get the best grocery" (Male, Catholic, 30-44).

It appeared to be the case that for a pint of milk, newspaper and smaller items individuals would shop in the town, but that for more choice in the likes of clothes and other shopping, people would go to Strabane, Omagh or even across the border to Ballybofey:

"Well, for the likes of milk and bread, they would go to the town, but for bigger grocery shopping, sometimes they would go to like Omagh or Strabane" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

One interviewee felt that in previous years some local people would have tended to shop outside the town based on community background, and that there was a tendency for Protestants in the past to prefer to shop in Omagh and Catholics in Strabane:

"… my dad, because he is from Castlederg and he is a Protestant, he would have went Omagh direction. So whenever they both came to live in Castlederg together it would have been Omagh. But now I always go to Strabane because I prefer it" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

The opening up of the border, as previously mentioned, had impacted on trade within the town as it gave local people more choice in where they could shop:

"It used to be that we would have stayed sort of local in Castlederg just to shop, just to the North you know. But now we can go down to McElhinney's in Ballybofey, or Letterkenny shopping or going out and many years ago you just wouldn't do that" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

In Newtownstewart the majority of interviewees referred to a shop being Catholic or Protestant owned, but that this would not influence the decision of individuals as to where they would shop in the town. One interviewee felt that shopping patterns in Newtownstewart were not associated with factors relating to community background:

"We use the same shops like, and I have no problem going into (name of shop), even though it is a 'Catholic' shop. I will give them my business" (Female, Protestant, 25-29).

"There is a Catholic grocer up the street and a Protestant grocer up the town. But there would be as many Catholics go to the Protestant as Protestants go to the Catholic" (Male, Protestant, 60+).

A number of interviewees also noted that because Newtownstewart was such a small town, with fewer shops than Castlederg, many locals would travel out of the area to Omagh, Strabane or Castlederg to the likes of Asda, and would only buy milk, newspapers and small amounts of groceries within the town itself:

"You'd go to Omagh or Strabane and you go to Asda and Lidl or whatever is handiest. Then you get your milk and potatoes and whatever from Newtownstewart" (Female, Protestant, 25-29).

One interviewee felt that the geographic location of Newtownstewart meant that more people travelled out of the town to surrounding localities than perhaps would be the case in Castlederg:

"That is the best thing about Newtownstewart. It is ten miles from Omagh, ten miles from Strabane and ten miles from Castlederg, so at least you have the choice" (Female, Protestant, 25-29).

A key issue raised by a number of interviewees was the building of a bypass road several years ago, which a number of interviewees pointed out had affected trade within the town. Previously people would have had to travel the main street in Newtownstewart to access other towns, but now the area could be bypassed completely and a number of interviewees believed that this develoment had significantly reduced the 'foot-fall' within the town particularly at weekends.

In terms of leisure facilities in Newtownstewart, there appeared to be few issues among adults in accessing the Newtownstewart 2000 centre regardless of their community background. Young people however noted that they would schedule football training at different times so as to avoid young people from a different community background:

"There is no mixed football, it is either Prods or Catholics play" (Male, Catholic, Under 16).

In Castlederg, the majority of interviewees perceived the local leisure centre to be a relatively neutral environment which was accessible to all sections of the community. However, one interviewee from a Catholic background referred to difficulties in the past in walking to and from the centre, as they

felt intimidated due to the presence of a number of unionist or loyalist flags and emblems. Several interviewees from a Protestant background also indicated that *"the leisure centre would be more nationalist"*:

"I don't know why but that is what people say to me, Catholics are taking over and that kind of thing" (Male, Protestant, 30-44).

Sporting teams within both towns also appeared to be divided. In Castlederg, GAA was popular among young Catholics and the soccer teams were divided amongst Dergview, perceived as predominantly Protestant, and Churchtown and Barrowfield perceived as the Catholic teams, with one interviewee noting that *"it is hard for the players to come from the other community"*. An annual soccer tournament was highlighted as an attempt to encourage contact between the teams, but had been relatively unsuccessful given the reported unwillingness of some teams to fully participate in the programme. In Newtownstewart, the majority of interviewees felt that sporting teams were divided along community background, with a general perception that Catholics were more likely to play GAA for the local club, while the soccer teams were suggested to have been divided, with Ardstraw perceived as the 'Protestant' team and Douglas Bridge perceived to be the 'Catholic' team.

Community background appeared to be irrelevant in terms of accessing the doctor's surgery in both towns, and the GP's surgery was generally perceived as a mixed environment, and one chosen primarily on family history rather than on any other factors. It was felt that this was slightly different than in the past when community background may have been more of a factor in choosing a GP:

"The doctor now that would have looked after my father that's the doctor I would go to. Generally, I remember (name of doctor) at the time would have been for the Catholic patients and Doctor (name of doctor) for the Protestant patients. Now I would say that at the minute they would take whatever is going" (Male, Catholic, 30-44).

The research highlighted that in the past, individuals from a Catholic background would have been more likely to bank with Bank of Ireland and Protestants with Northern or Ulster Banks, but it was felt that this had changed over the years with people now primarily choosing their banking services on service, convenience and rates of interest:

"The Northern Bank would always have been a mixed bank, Ulster Bank Protestant, Bank of Ireland Catholic, but now Bank of Ireland is offering better

student rates and stuff so if you have sense you open with where you get the best deal" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

Many interviewees in Castlederg however noted that there were difficulties at times in accessing ATM machines, particularly at night and at weekends, as the Bank of Ireland ATM is located at the top of the town and Ulsterbank towards the bottom of the town. This division was again linked to the perceptions of a top/bottom split in the town:

"Myself, if I couldn't get money out of the Bank of Ireland, which is my own account, I would try all the machines at the top of the town before I'd go down the bottom of the town. In God's Truth, I wouldn't walk down" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

In Newtownstewart there is only one bank, the Northern, and no interviewees indicated a difficulty in accessing the facility or the ATM even at night. A number of interviewees would have banked in Omagh or Strabane.

In Castlederg, the post-office was located in one of the larger local superstores which was perceived to be neutral, and all of the interviewees indicated that there were no issues linked to accessing the post office. Similarly in Newtownstewart the post office was located in a larger store, and no interviewees felt that they were restricted in the use of this facility.

Socialising

Discussions with residents in Castlederg revealed that nightlife, and pubs and bars in particular, were segregated to a large degree with most interviewees believing that *"you wouldn't go into certain pubs"*. This perceived segregation in terms of which pubs or bars interviewees felt safe frequenting corresponded with the perception of a predominantly Catholic top end of the town and a predominantly Protestant bottom end of town. Younger males tended to be more negative in their perceptions in terms of which venues they felt safe going to. This corresponded with the mapping exercise which indicated that younger males were more likely than females to map certain parts of the town in which they would not feel safe. Indeed, females were more inclined than males to suggest that some bars in the town were mixed, while males were more inclined to see pubs as *"one or the other"*. The segregation in socialising in Castlederg also appeared to support the day/night division suggested by many interviewees, whereby they would feel safe in the town during the day, but at night given the amount of

segregated bars and possibility for alcohol fuelled violence, *"you wouldn't feel safe"*.

Most interviewees believed that the majority of the ten plus bars in the town centre were relatively segregated in terms of community background and that there were one or two bars in which the clientele would nearly all be from one community. In Castlederg, several interviewees felt that the segregation in pubs was replicated by a division of taxi ranks in terms of community background as some taxis would *"refuse to go into certain areas"*. In contrast, there appeared to be few difficulties with regards to the provision of taxi services in Newtownstewart. It was suggested by more than one interviewee in both towns that a reluctance to venture into a pub which was perceived as predominantly Catholic or Protestant was linked to the fact that the town was small and people tended to know what someone's community background was from their family name or which part of town they came from:

"You wouldn't go to (name of pub) if you were Protestant because that is Catholic …. I have been with my two work colleagues for something to eat and haven't had a problem really I wouldn't go to the (name of pub) if I went with … I would pick a neutral venue" (Female, Protestant, 25-29).

One interviewee felt that unlike some of her friends, she was able to go into several bars because *"they know me now"*, while several interviewees also suggested that they may on occasions go to a bar which they perceived to be frequented by members of a different community background than themselves if they had friends from that community background:

"A friend of mine is Catholic and if you wanted to go into a bar, say the top of the town, I have no bother going in. I know him quite well and he would stick up for me" (Male, Protestant, 30-44).

In Castlederg, people also believed that the presence of a relatively substantial number of bars for such a small town particularly affected relations within the area at weekends, this was in contrast to the situation in Newtownstewart which had fewer bars and less night life. Interviewees in both areas stated that they would also socialise in other places such as Omagh, Strabane or Letterkenny, and this was often seen as reducing trouble in the town at weekends as they could remain relatively anonymous in other areas throughout the town. In Newtownstewart particularly, the majority of interviewees acknowledged that while for the younger generation there would in all likelihood be pubs which would be perceived to be predominantly more Protestant or Catholic, the small

size of the town and quieter night life in the area led to the majority of younger people going out of the area at weekends:

"There really isn't enough going on in this town on a Saturday night to hold young people. Ok, if they want a quiet beer, but if they want music or discos they leave" (Male, Catholic, 45-59).

One interviewee felt it was it as not so much community background, but clientele and reputation which would dissuade her from frequenting certain bars in the town:

"I think people sometimes get scared of one pub, for example the (name of pub) in Newtownstewart, I would never go to it, but I would go to (name of pub) and it is a Catholic pub" (Female, Protestant, 25-29).

Older interviewees in Newtownstewart spoke of the good relations that existed between the pub owners in the town regardless of community background, which appeared to be different to the situation in Castlederg:

"I know the owner of the pub and his daughter comes in here and my son would be in there because they get on very well you know. The man is a gentleman. If I was stuck for something, no problem" (Male, Catholic, 45-59).

The few restaurants in the two towns that were not affiliated with one of the bars were perceived to be mixed environments where anyone could go to regardless of their community background:

"I think because it is very limited in what it has, there's only about three places. So at lunch time that is fine, you would just chose one of those, you know, it wouldn't really cause us anything, we wouldn't stress about it" (Female, Catholic, 19-24).

Summary

Although the Troubles impacted upon the West Tyrone area, the research found that the violence of the Troubles impacted on Castlederg to a much greater extent than in Newtownstewart. The research highlighted a significant amount of residential segregation despite relatively even demographic statistics for the two main communities in both towns. This residential segregation appeared to be even more marked in Castlederg and the mapping exercise indicated that males were more likely than females to perceive each town as containing areas which they felt were 'off-limits' to them.

In Castlederg, a significant number of interviewees referred to feeling that their freedom of movement around the town was restricted at night-time and linked to their community background. The research documented that in both small, rural towns it was often quite easy to 'tell' an individual's religion. This perceived geographic division in Castlederg specifically impacted upon where some interviewees felt they could socialise, shop and use banking facilities in particular. The majority of interviewees in both towns appeared to base their decisions on where to socialise on their community background, although this effect was exacerbated by the busier night-time economy and greater potential for alcohol related disturbances in Castlederg. While some smaller shops were designated as being either predominantly Protestant or Catholic, it was generally felt that shopping patterns were increasingly based on convenience and price rather than any factors linked to community background, sectarianism or segregation. Similarly the workplace tended to be seen as an increasingly safe and culturally neutral environment where people just "got on with it", although some interviewees still based where they would apply for work on their community background and perceptions of potential discrimination.

One of the main issues in both towns was the segregation of young people during their formative school years. A number of interviewees were of the belief that they did not have enough opportunities to meet and interact with young people from a different community background while at school. Several interviewees noted that there was an element of peer pressure against making friends with pupils from the 'other' school. This segregation was linked to the division of schooling between state and Catholic maintained sectors, and the divisions between Catholic and Protestant young people manifested themselves in sectarian abuse and occasional violence linked to the wearing of school uniforms, and the de facto segregation of school buses by the pupils themselves.

Despite all of these factors, it was believed that relations had slightly improved in both towns since the paramilitary ceasefires and subsequent signing of the Good Friday Agreement and there were a number of groups working to improve relations within both areas. However, issues linked to sectarianism and segregation and the lack of neutral space in relatively residentially segregated locations was a difficulty facing both individuals and organisations in both towns.

5. Kilrea, County Londonderry

Kilrea is situated in the Coleraine Borough and is a rural location. Four streets lead from the Diamond in the centre of the town where the war memorial is based. As a rural location the town has a thriving farmers' market. There are a few large specialist stores such as house furnishings and electrical goods but on the whole there are small supermarkets and stores including chemists, bakers, butchers and confectioners. There are a number of small cafes and pubs in the locality. There is one hotel about one mile outside of the town on the road from Belfast. A notable observation was the number of Protestant churches which according to some have declining numbers. The police station is not manned on a regular basis and policing is co-ordinated for the town by Garvagh PSNI. The main street (Coleraine Street) has a number of houses with the front doors leading directly onto the street. The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures (2005) ranked Kilrea 297 out of 582 wards, falling in the 50-60 per cent band on the deprivation measure. The unemployment rate was 4.1 per cent, equivalent to the Northern Ireland average unemployment rate and in terms of housing 65.8 per cent of the households were owner occupied and 34.2 per cent were rented.

The 2001 Census classifies Kilrea as a village with a population of 1,513 and the area has a Catholic majority with 65.3 per cent of the population, compared to 33.7 per cent who were Protestant (NISRA 2005). However, during the course of the interviews many Protestants felt that Protestant numbers were now even lower, although no official figures are available to confirm this. A good relations audit carried out by the Coleraine Borough Council in January-February 2006 indicated that the Protestant minority population in Kilrea believed that their culture was under threat. In addition interviews conducted as part of the audit highlighted that the flying of the Irish Tricolour in Kilrea and the parades issue caused antagonism, especially in the summer months (Coleraine Borough Council Good Relations Strategy 2007-2009). Each of these issues was explored in this research.

Methodological issues in Kilrea

In Kilrea the major issue faced was accessing young people. It became apparent whilst conducting interviews that there was little community youth infrastructure in place in the area. However, in spite of these difficulties young people were accessed through a youth club held in a local church, which both communities attended. It also became apparent

that although there was a Community Forum in place this was only starting to attract local residents and although requests were made for the research to be brought to their attention no interviews materialised. As this was one the last areas where fieldwork was conducted and in light of the lack of success in other areas with the diaries only maps were completed in this area. A total of eight maps were completed with all who were asked willing to carry out the task.

Views and opinions of the area

Kilrea was chosen as it was brought to the attention of the researchers that tensions existed between the two communities. One interviewee stated that as far as she could remember there *"always was tensions or at least I always felt there was tensions"* (Female, Protestant, 30-44). People living in Kilrea from both sides of the community were quick to point out that the area was quiet for the majority of the year with little tension, and that tensions only arose during the marching season. On entering the area there were no visible signs of community symbolism and belonging until Coleraine Street where a large Irish Tricolour flies throughout the year. The flag was mentioned in all the interviews conducted, some interviewees were offended by its presence whilst others either didn't care or were proud that it was flying.

Kilrea is a rural area with a large farmers' market that reportedly brings together both sides of the community and encourages co-operation between them. As a rural community the purchasing and selling of land was an issue raised with some interviewees and in spite of some research indicating a reluctance to sell land to the other side this did not appear to be an issue in Kilrea (Murtagh, 1999). However, one interviewee stated that some political figures in the past suggested that this was the case but as far as he and his neighbours were concerned it was not nor never had been. Another issue discussed was the high numbers of young people who left the area either for further education or employment and who rarely returned. This might in part help explain the difficulty in accessing younger people.

In terms of the maps, Protestants and Catholics highlighted the same areas as being Protestant, Catholic or Mixed, although the demographics of the town mean that there are few predominantly Protestant areas and more Mixed areas. Two areas repeatedly highlighted on the maps were Larchfield Gardens and Woodland Park, all those who completed a map identified Larchfield Gardens as a Catholic area and Woodland Park as either Protestant or Mixed. This perception of Protestant or Mixed (see

maps on pages 66, 67) was not related to the participant's religion. Some Protestants highlighted Coleraine Street as an area which they would be reluctant to walk down due to flying of the Tricolour. This street is predominantly Catholic and leads to the Sports Complex. However not all of the Protestants interviewed were reluctant to walk down this street.

Relations within the area

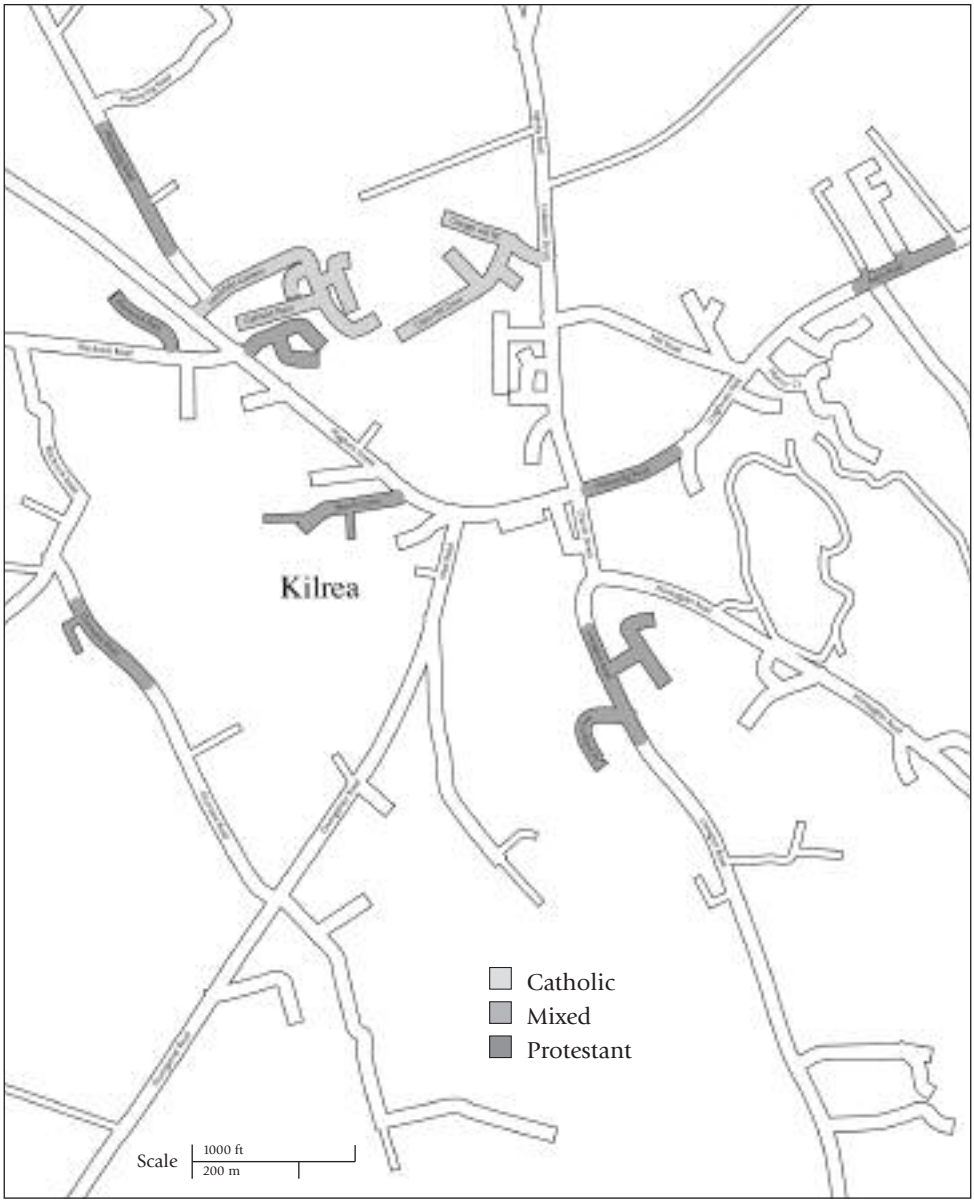
Kilrea town itself is predominantly Catholic although it is surrounded by villages and townlands, which are predominantly Protestant. This was also reflected in the maps completed. One Catholic interviewee described the town as a *'Nationalist enclave'* surrounded by so many Loyalist areas, which the interviewee felt made Catholics feel unsafe and apprehensive about being in Kilrea. The individual also felt that Protestants conveyed the attitude that they *"owned the streets of Kilrea and indeed the country"* which in turn made Nationalists feel unsafe, *"I think that no Nationalist feels safe in Kilrea".* However, some Protestant interviewees indicated that although they felt safe coming into Kilrea during the day this changed at night, especially at weekends. One interviewee said that this impacted mainly on Protestant young people who did not feel that it was safe to frequent the local bars and therefore would travel to other areas such as Magherafelt, Coleraine and Portrush. This feeling further alienated and marginalized the Protestant community who already felt under threat and intimidation. Some Protestant interviewees felt that the demographics within the town led to many Protestants being fearful of speaking out:

"Protestants living in the town would be scared to speak out" (Male, Protestant, 30-44).

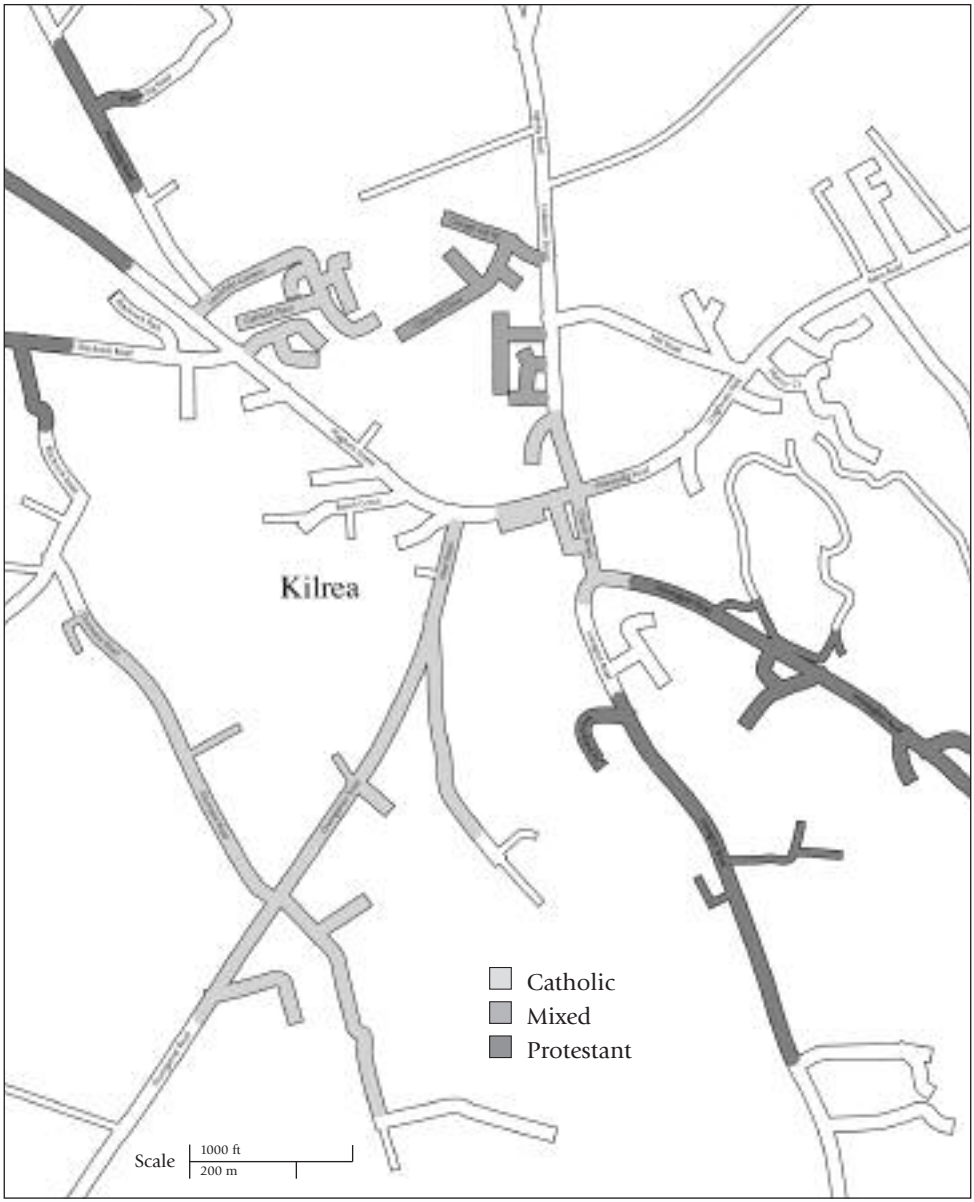
An issue which both communities raised and were eager to see something resolved on was 'boy racers', where young people from both communities raced their cars through the town and round the Diamond. For many living in the town, the majority of whom were of the older generation, these incidents, which mainly occurred at weekends and during the summer with the brighter evenings, were intimidating and some interviewees referred to car accidents and indeed loss of life as a result.

There is only one post primary school in Kilrea, St. Paul's, which mainly attracts Catholic young people, consequently Protestant young people have to go out of the town for their post primary education. The area is fortunate in that a number of schools are easily accessible by public

Kilrea ~ *Male, Protestant, 60+*



Kilrea ~ *Male, Protestant, 30-44*



transport and there is a wide choice. However, this means that many of the young people have little or no opportunity of mixing and does not help to improve social interaction of the two communities. As highlighted in the methodological issue section accessing young people to interview was problematic and this was further compounded by the lack of facilities in place for young people. A number of interviewees highlighted that the North Eastern Education and Library Board (NEELB) were setting up a Youth Forum, but on contacting the NEELB it materialised that this group was not well enough established to take part. The lack of community youth infrastructure does little to improve relations in the town and although one church based club was accessed, which brought young people from the two communities together, this club only involved children under the age of 16 after which nothing seemed to be formally organised.

In the interviews some participants discussed the Community Forum which is made up of local residents, political, statutory and community representatives. The Forum discusses issues such as 'boy racers', anti-social behaviour, parades, flags, policing and housing and while some interviewees who were involved in the forum were keen to see it develop and bring about change, others were not involved and remained hesitant in becoming involved. The reasons for this reluctance included being unsure who was involved and why, as they were not considered to be from Kilrea; and also being unsure of its proposed role and what it hoped to achieve. However, some people indicated that the Forum was becoming more community focused and changes in attitude were apparent within the group. The idea of who 'belongs to Kilrea' was one which was raised in some interviews and some residents felt that unless you lived in Kilrea town you did not belong even though you may live only three to four miles outside of the town:

"Kilrea is a country town so people coming from five miles away, some people perceive them as being from out of the town" (Male, Protestant, 45-59).

This attitude posed problems for those people living outside of the town but yet viewed Kilrea as their nearest town and where they belonged, thus with the right to be involved in organisations such as the Community Forum. On a day-to-day basis relations within Kilrea appeared to be good with no one indicating that there was segregation between the two communities. However, it was felt that in spite of this there was limited social interaction between the two communities. Furthermore during the marching season, from June to August, tensions increased between the two communities, as will be discussed further below.

Impact of the Troubles

Many of those interviewed stated that the area had been badly affected by the Troubles with the town on numerous occasions being bombed and properties destroyed:

"The Troubles affected this area quite a lot, there were a few shootings on both sides" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

Some interviewees discussed specific incidents where their houses were damaged as a result of the bombings, and others highlighted incidents in which people they knew had been murdered. However, in spite of these troubled times some felt that although daily tensions were now less, the tensions around parades and flags had hindered progress in terms of community relations in Kilrea, whilst neighbouring towns and villages had been able to move on:

"Garvagh is quite settled but Kilrea is a totally different ball game … you could cut the atmosphere with a knife sometimes. I don't know if it ever will be a community that totally mixes together … Some people will never change and are still living in the past" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

However, the Community Forum was attempting to bring both communities together and their new mission statement was *"Making Kilrea a Better Place"*. Others however felt that the area wasn't as divided as some perceived it to be and personal experiences suggested that the two communities did get on reasonably well. Some people felt that past experiences had resulted in a *"reluctance to jump on the train and move forward"* whilst others had clearly moved on and were keen to see changes in the area.

Issues within the area

The main issues of concern within the area were related to parades and flags. In terms of parades some within the town felt that they *"couldn't see why a Loyalist band parade had to take part in a 95 per cent Nationalist town"*. One interviewee stated that they held six parades in the town each year yet in Garvagh, a Loyalist town, they only held two. This individual felt that these actions were provocative and fuelled unnecessary tensions in the area. However, some community representatives reported that some Catholics could not see *"why your (Protestant) band parades can't take place in Kilrea"* but were fearful of saying this publicly. One Protestant interviewee stated that he recognised that Catholics were the majority but:

"All we ask for is a Union flag at the war memorial for 24 hours" (Male, Protestant, 30-44).

The Parades Commission has nine parades in the village registered, three of which are Loyalist, with two deemed as 'sensitive', and two registered Nationalist parades. Some Catholics felt that during parades they felt 'hemmed in' and one interviewee felt that this was especially the case during the parade held in June in which the Boveedy Flute Band took part. Indeed the Parades Commission has highlighted this parade as 'sensitive', and the past five years have seen protests by the Nationalist/Republican community on days when parades have taken place:

"A few years ago there were protests by the Catholic community against parades and some of them were quite rough" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

Some interviewees highlighted that a few years ago these tensions reached such a height that police intervention involved the firing of weapons in an attempt to calm the situation:

"A couple of years ago police officers actually had to discharge firearms" (Male, Protestant, 45-59).

Many Protestants were, however, quick to point out that the tensions and evolving protests were mainly fuelled by Nationalist/Republicans from outside of Kilrea and only with the support of a minority from within the town.

"There is only a small element within the town who would orchestrate it (protests)" (Male, Protestant, 45-59).

This involvement of 'outsiders' was also noted in research conducted by the Rural Community Network (2004) both in terms of participation in celebrations and opposition. Many people reported that in the past the Twelfth was seen by both sides as a community festival and that only within the past five years or so have tensions arisen:

"My aunt lived in (name of street) all her life and she used to love going out on the Twelfth seeing all the bands, waving at friends in the bands" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

However, the interviewee continued by saying that this had now changed and her aunt would not watch the bands just in case trouble started and she was seen watching it. One community representative stated:

"A number of nationalist people have approached me and said 'Listen we really have no issues with the flying of flags (at the Twelfth) … They are not causing us any harm' … but these people feel intimidated to come out and stand up and say that" (Male, Protestant, 45-59).

Indeed some Catholics interviewed were sad to see the community spirit being affected and felt that it was only a minority within the town who provoked the tensions and their attitudes and opinions did not necessarily reflect the whole Catholic community. Others however felt that the protests against the parades were justified and supported by the majority of Catholics.

Flags were another contentious issue, and many Protestants highlighted that over the Twelfth the only flags erected are four flags in the Diamond area which are put up on the Eleventh night and taken down on the Twelfth night. However, this has become a source of contention and one year the flags were removed before the Twelfth morning. As a result of this incident the police have had to remain in the area during the period of time the flags are up to ensure that they are not removed which would fuel an already tense situation. One interviewee explained that:

"The problem revolves around the Eleventh night and the Twelfth morning … They (the Orange Men) travel up to the memorial at about 6 o'clock on the Eleventh night, they erect four union flags and then leave. The next morning at about 8 or 9 o'clock they will do a short parade, get on the bus and go away. When they come back they parade from the Orange Hall, at about tea time, and then go and take the flags down" (Male, Protestant, 45-59).

This inability to erect visible displays of their cultural heritage was an issue raised by some interviewees who felt that their 'Protestantism' was being eroded and many Protestants stated: *"Protestant rights are being put down".* One interviewee stated that this opinion was particularly strong within the Orange Order and this was further compounded by the flying of the Irish Tricolour at the bottom of Coleraine Street throughout the year. Some Protestant interviewees stated that:

"They get flying the Tricolour but the Orangemen can't even get their Union Jacks up in the centre of the town for one night in July" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

"It's not fair that they get flying their flag and we can't" (Male, Protestant, under 16).

The visible presence of the flag led to some Protestants feeling intimidated and some stated a reluctance to go down past the flag. Interviewees from both communities indicated that they did not see why the flag had to be flown all year round and would prefer if it was removed. However, some felt certain elements of the community held such power that to remove the flag would cause too much tension and therefore it was best not to antagonise the situation:

"No-one will go down and take it down. So that is why I feel as if the Protestants are being respectful and quite restrained. They also wouldn't go down and take it down no way, because of fear" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

One young Catholic interviewee felt that *"everybody should get a day each to celebrate their culture"* which he felt would be fair for everybody and couldn't understand why this compromise could not be reached.

Work

There were few job opportunities within the area available for either community and as a result many people had to either travel out of the area for work or re-locate out of the area. One Catholic interviewee felt that it was more difficult for Catholics to access employment as they had to travel out of the area and through predominantly Protestant areas to access work:

"They feel intimidated about travelling out of the area … coming home at 6 o'clock in the evening in the winter and as I say they have to come through Loyalist areas" (Male, Catholic, 45-59)

However, no one else voiced this opinion and it appeared to be that many young people from both communities either travelled to their place of work or had moved away from Kilrea. One individual recalled how a Protestant business in the area had been subjected to threats during the Troubles but that these decreased over the years. Such threats were seen as common for many businesses throughout the Troubles as were attacks on workers. The impact of such events put pressure on the owner of the business and when a worker was murdered the pressure was intense. This business, as was the case with most in the town, had a mixed workforce and this was commented upon by a number of individuals who had lived in the area throughout the height of the Troubles.

Schooling

In discussing the issue of schooling it became apparent that there was only one post-primary school in the area, St. Paul's, a Catholic school, while many children, both Protestant and Catholic, had to go outside the town to receive post primary education; for Protestants this was the case for both secondary and grammar places whilst for Catholics this was only the case if they were going to attend a grammar school. The schools that were chosen were located in various areas including Ballymena, Ballymoney, Coleraine and Magherafelt. It was felt that because of this the youth infrastructure within the area was practically non-existent and there was little opportunity for young people to come together and get to know each other. One interviewee did however feel that in spite of this some young people were mixing:

"I see a lot of young ones mixing both Catholic and Protestant young ones from 16-17 year olds actually mixing together which is good. It's the older age group that would hold more grudges" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

A group of young people stated that in their club they got on well together and *"we don't discuss religion, we get on well so what is the point"* (Female, Protestant, Under 16). This youth club provided activities for a number of young people under 16 on a Saturday night and many stated that it was the only thing for them in the area.

The area was fortunate in that it was central to a number of schools so for many this was not an issue. Many indicated that if young people were attending a school in an area like Coleraine or Magherafelt children from both communities would travel together and no problems arose in terms of sectarianism. One mother did however point out that her child was subjected to sectarian abuse after disembarking from the bus and attempting to walk home, consequently she or her husband now had to meet their child off the bus. Interviewees were asked if the schools took part in any cross community work with many stating that this did occur with pupils from St. Paul's and Garvagh High School taking part in events along with a number of other schools in the area:

"The schools work really well together … there is definitely cross community work going on" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

For these events it was stated that uniforms were not worn as this would immediately label the child Protestant or Catholic, which the event

organisers were trying to discourage. This factor was not however highlighted as an issue by the young people interviewed.

Shopping

Within Kilrea there are a number of shops which appear to be accessed by both sections of the community and decisions were not based on the community background of the owner but on the range and quality of products on offer. Many stated that they did not choose where to shop based on any other criteria but convenience and value for money. However, one interviewee felt that some people did choose to shop to support their own side, but the majority of interviewees did not hold this opinion.

Many interviewees stated that if they went out of the area to shop they went to Coleraine, Ballymoney, Ballymena or occasionally Derry Londonderry. Choice again was based on the needs of the shopper at that particular time and no-one appeared to be put off by the route to their destination or the perceived predominant community background of the town they were going to. One young female stated that she went to the town which offered *"the best shops, best clothes shop"*.

In contrast banking appeared to be more frequently based on religion. The town has two banks, the Northern Bank and the Bank of Ireland and many interviewees felt that Protestants were more inclined to use the Northern Bank whilst Catholics were more likely to choose the Bank of Ireland. However, it was felt that this was now changing and people were now more inclined to opt for the 'best deal' available and not on the name of the bank.

Socialising and leisure facilities

In Kilrea the pubs were named and referred to as being segregated along the religious divide:

"There would be certain pubs that ones would go to and others wouldn't based on religion" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

Some interviewees mentioned that they perceived one pub to attract a more mixed clientele whilst others disputed this, thus again perceptions were based upon personal experience, and this produced a diversity of interpretations of the scale of segregation. One interviewee indicated that the pubs had always been divided with only a few that were regarded as mixed. Referring to the past the woman stated:

"The pubs on one side of the street were Catholic and the other side Protestant there would only have been a few for both" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

For many Protestant young people it was felt that Kilrea was not a safe place for them to socialise in so many did not frequent the local pubs but were inclined to go to other locations such as Coleraine, Portrush or Magherafelt. One 16 year old Protestant male stated:

"There is a bit of apprehension among my friends about going into Kilrea at night".

Some older people also felt that this was the case and were apprehensive about entering the town at night, especially during the weekend. One interviewee stated:

"During the day, not a problem, people would go anywhere but at night that is when the trouble starts, especially weekends" (Male, Protestant, 45-59).

One interviewee mentioned that over the past few years some pubs have become more dominated by foreign nationals who have come into the area to seek work. These pubs were now perceived to attract a more 'rowdy' element of customer and therefore avoided by local people. Indeed one young Protestant female stated she was reluctant to go down Coleraine Street not for any sectarian reason but *"because of the Polish".* However, this was not an issue for the majority of interviewees.

Many interviewees made mention of the local sports complex with some describing it as 'fantastic', whilst others felt it was only suitable for the Catholic community due to its location in Coleraine Street, where the Tricolour flies. Thus it was felt that many Protestants, especially young people, did not feel safe walking to the complex:

"When we said about doing sports things and stuff (at the complex) some were reluctant and the street was the issue" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

"I know there's Protestant people will not use it (the complex) because they have to go down Coleraine Street" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

Some interviewees also discussed their involvement in the local churches and the various activities organised along with various women's groups, both church and non-church based. As a rural community the area also had various walking clubs, which attracted members from both sides of the community. Those who were involved in these associations felt that

the events and activities that these groups organised enabled both sides of the community to come together and that they helped to build better relations between the two communities.

Summary

On the whole many residents in Kilrea highlighted that on a daily basis their lives were relatively untouched by segregation and sectarian attitudes. However, for some people tensions around parades and flags meant that the summer months brought a very different atmosphere to the town, although some felt that the tensions were always there but just more visible at these times. Some residents appeared to live along side their neighbours from the other community without any problem and therefore were quick to dismiss any suggestion that Kilrea was segregated.

Many, from both sides of the community, felt that the tensions associated with these issues were fuelled mainly by outsiders and problems involved only a minority who actually lived in the town, but in spite of this many were hesitant to speak out. For example, some Catholics who in the past had watched the parades now felt that they could not do so, and while some Catholics felt the parades were unnecessary in a Nationalist town, local Protestants felt that it was part of their culture and their 'Protestant rights' were being eroded. One interviewee felt that these attitudes were preventing Kilrea from moving on and that it was *"stuck in the past"*. In contrast the Community Forum's vision of *"Making Kilrea a Better Place"* requires both sides of the community to work together and start to move forward if the town was to move on from the past, unfortunately it was stated that *"some people will never change and that is holding Kilrea back"*.

6. Dunclug, Ballymena

The population of Ballymena according to the 2001 Census was 28,717 with 72.2 per cent of the population from a Protestant background and 24.2 per cent from a Catholic one. The Dunclug ward is located in the Ballymena Local Government District and North Antrim Parliamentary Constituency areas and the Dunclug estate is made up of four smaller areas namely, Dunclug Park, Dunclug Gardens, Dunvale and Millfield. The estate has as its boundaries the Doury Road, the Grove Road, the Cushendall Road and both Dunclug Primary and Secondary schools along with a cemetery. The estate is on the outskirts of the town and is made up of rows of terrace houses and some blocks of flats. Some properties especially in Dunclug Park and Gardens are vacant and have been subjected to vandalism. There is a small shopping complex in the Dunvale area comprising of a shop, off licence and community centre. This area also has 'Fold Sheltered Housing' for the elderly with well-kept grounds and gardens.

The resident population of the estate in 2001 was 2,611 according to the Census and this consisted of 48.9 per cent of people from a Catholic community background and 46.1 per cent from a Protestant or other Christian background. However the estate has seen a rapid change in population over the past five to ten years with many Protestants moving out of the area. The estate is now viewed to be predominantly Catholic and this has reportedly caused tensions among the local Protestant and Catholic communities. However, in the course of the field research it became apparent that many people identified as being in a mixed marriage or the child of a mixed marriage, so the divisions may not be so hard and distinct.

Dunclug was the 4th placed ward in the Nobel indicators for crime in Northern Ireland, teen pregnancies, drug misuse, permissiveness, dysfunctional families and anti-social behaviour. Interviewees highlighted some of these as problems, but mainly drug misuse and anti-social behaviour. The area was ranked 118 out of 890 wards on the 2005 Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure, placing it within the most deprived 20-30 per cent band. A selection of other figures indicates the levels of poverty in the area. The unemployment rate in Dunclug is 5.5 per cent compared to 3.1 per cent in Ballymena and 4.1 per cent in Northern Ireland; 48.1 per cent of households are owner occupied and 51.9 per cent are rented, while 20 per cent of households are lone parent households with dependent children, compared to 8.1 per cent for

Northern Ireland. In 2004, 63.3 per cent of births were to unmarried mothers compared to 34.5 per cent for Northern Ireland, and just 7.8 per cent of the population has a degree level or higher qualification, compared to 15.8 per cent for Northern Ireland. In August 2006 David Hanson MP, then Minister responsible for Social Development, visited the estate and saw what he described as *"a community in crisis"*, consequently it was decided to:

"Establish a high level taskforce to look at the needs of the estate and develop actions that could be taken to address those needs" (DSDNI 2007).

A total of £4.75 million was allocated to the area for street lighting, demolishing, refurbishing and rebuilding homes, CCTV, cleanup, youth work and community projects. The taskforce's Action Plan for Dunclug covers a four-year period and has 21 actions in three key areas. These areas include the physical condition of the estate, crime and anti-social behaviour and community cohesion and youth issues. The Housing Executive commenced work in the area by April 2008. In terms of the physical condition of the estate the DSD report highlights how the design of the estate helped to create problems: the estate has no access for cars between the different areas and there are parking courts at the rear of houses that have high fences as boundaries. It is felt that this creates a feeling of neglect which is;

"Exacerbated by litter, debris, vacant and derelict properties, evidence of vandalism and graffiti" (DSDNI, 2007).

The physical conditions of the estate have been blamed for fuelling the crime and anti-social behaviour problems in the area. In recent years there have been a number of sectarian incidents reported in the area with the most widely publicised being the death of Michael McIlveen, a fifteen year old boy who died after a sectarian attack in Ballymena in May 2006. This incident highlighted the extent of the sectarian hatred in Ballymena and saw an outpouring of grief from the residents of the Dunclug estate, especially among young people. This incident had a profound effect on some of the young people interviewed who were at the time angry about the nature of the death.

Methodological Issues

Despite having previously worked in the estate and establishing a series of contacts, obtaining people willing to be interviewed proved to be difficult. Many potential interviewees also failed to turn up at the agreed

time and venue with some people agreeing to re-arrange times, whilst others proved uncontactable. The apathy towards participation in the research was discussed with some community leaders and it was suggested that this merely reflected a general apathy within the estate. In addition to these difficulties none of those who did participate were willing to take part in the diary exercise, even after spending time explaining and discussing the process. This issue was also discussed with some community representatives in Dunclug who felt that many, especially adults in the area, have poor reading and writing skills, and indeed throughout the course of the interviews some participants stated that they suffered from dyslexia. This may help explain the lack of participation for this activity and needs to be borne in mind when conducting research in similar areas.

Views and opinions of the area

Dunclug, according to some interviewees, had changed considerably over the last seven to ten years with many people moving out of the estate. The reasons given for moving varied with some choosing to move to perceived 'better' areas whilst others were forced out for either sectarian or anti-social behaviour. Properties owned by the Housing Executive were not always let again due to lack of demand to move to the estate, and some of these were eventually vandalised adding to the physical deterioration of the estate. One interviewee who moved out of the area three years ago felt that the estate was now depressing both socially and physically and it was because of this deterioration that he decided to move his family away:

"Everyday became frustrating, leaving and coming back again. It was nearly a pleasure to be out of it, given the deterioration of the estate and seeing it everyday … the physical deterioration and seeing the local people moving out" (Male, Catholic, 30-44).

One interviewee who lived just outside the estate felt that the physical deterioration prevented people from wanting to live in the area:

"I wouldn't want to live here … so many run down houses for a start … the general appearance would put me off completely" (Female, Protestant, 60+).

The physical deterioration of the estate is visible and was widely commented upon by interviewees of all ages. The young people also commented on the lack of facilities in the area for them, even the small play park in the estate had been vandalised and has been removed. One

young interviewee bluntly stated: *"it is a hole, I hate it"* (Male Catholic aged 16-18), when probed further the young person revealed that there was nothing for young people to do and he found the area depressing. The lack of facilities also had implications for parents with young children and one mother commented that she now had to use a park across the main road, which was dangerous for children to get to. For many the physical deterioration of the estate brought with it a poor reputation with many feeling that 'outsiders' viewed Dunclug as being 'rough' and an area where the residents had no pride in their property. These opinions were expressed by some people who were interviewed and lived in some of the private developments near Dunclug:

"The area is so run down … when you look out and see all those windows shut up … that would put me off … the general appearance of the place is poor" (Female, Protestant, 60+).

The general impression of the area was one of neglect and residents indicated frustration that their area was now in such a poor state. This was having an impact on the social well-being of some residents and indeed was felt by community representatives to contribute towards the overall apathy within the estate with many holding the opinion of 'what is the point'. The physical deterioration also encouraged further physical damage and anti-social behaviour to occur. One group of young people indicated that young people would often damage property both empty and inhabited after consuming alcohol. The lack of pride was something many older residents commented upon and found difficult to accept. One local paper reported in October 2007 that a number of attacks had recently taken place on property and vehicles in the estate and a local Sinn Féin representative stated that the damage to one property included:

"…fencing … torn off and six of the house's windows were smashed with bricks and bottles" (*Ballymena Times* 16 October 2007).

According to some interviewees, such incidents were becoming more common and were not viewed as sectarian related but a 'social activity'. Whilst conducting the interviews one such incident of an attack on property occurred. Some of the young people said the incident was exacerbated by alcohol consumption and boredom and was carried out by a group of young people who *"had nothing else to do"*, however, others felt that it was sectarian related, and indeed it was suggested that the owner of the residence also felt this and the young people were making excuses for their behaviour and attitudes.

Relations within the estate

Although the estate was now viewed as predominantly Catholic, in the past it was considered as mixed, and many felt that relations between the two communities had been good. It was also felt that the Protestants who remained in the estate got on well with their Catholic friends and neighbours:

"There's a right few (Protestants) … They're all good neighbours" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

However, a distinction was made by some interviewees between the Protestants living in Dunclug and those living in the rest of Ballymena. One young Catholic male stated:

"All right, I'd say the ones that would be living here now are all well known and have made friends over the years, there's no real badness in them…it's just the ones from the bottom of the town" (Male, Catholic, 16-18).

A young Protestant female echoed these views:

"At this end of the town the Protestants and Catholics do get along but it's just Protestants from the bottom end of the town that don't get on with Catholics from the top" (Female, Protestant, 16-18).

Many of the young people interviewed from both communities indicated that they were friendly with each other and *"hung out together"*. However one interviewee who was in a mixed marriage indicated that her husband who was Protestant had noted a changing attitude after the death of Michael McIlveen in May 2006. The interviewee commented that Catholic neighbours snubbed her husband as he was a Protestant and they were blaming Protestants in general for the death of Michael:

"Catholic people that he thought were his friends won't speak to him … and I have been shunned by people" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

Indeed other interviewees commented that there was tension after the murder:

"After Michael McIlveen was killed a lot of Protestants were put out … they just didn't want Protestants living here" (Male, Catholic, 16-18).

Some Protestant young people indicated that this was a difficult time for them as their Catholic friends were bitter about Protestants and their Protestant acquaintances saw them as supporting Catholics. One young Protestant male said that he knew that fellow pupils referred to him as the *"Fenian Lover"*. He went on to say that he found Catholics to be "more dead on" and had more affinity with them than some Protestants. It was also obvious that it was after the murder that many young people began to feel unsafe in the community and that bitterness and sectarian hatred started to impact upon their lives more so than among the older generation. Some young Protestant males who were interviewed discussed how they were at times under attack either verbally or physically from fellow Protestants who disapproved of their friendships with Catholics. The mother of one young Protestant male indicated that fellow Protestants bullied her son for his friendships.

One young male aged 16-18 listed what he perceived to be wrong with the estate, opinions that were voiced by others of a similar age:

"Drug dealers, drug addicts, alcoholics, perverts, rapists and sectarianism … oh aye there's sectarianism all the time. There's UDA boys come up here in cars and would give you chase and things like that … There's also some people (within the estate) who like to pretend they're in the IRA or they're doing stuff for the IRA" (Male, Catholic, 16-18).

Many older residents felt that the sectarian element was relatively recent and indeed believed that throughout the Troubles Ballymena and Dunclug were areas which had not seen much sectarianism and violence.

Relations within Ballymena

Being a predominantly Catholic estate in a predominantly Protestant town led many residents to feel a certain degree of fear when outside the estate and in other parts of the town. This was especially evident among the younger generation:

"I couldn't walk down through or near Harryville because I would be known as being from here … every time I go to the cinema I would have to get a taxi to the door and a taxi home" (Male, Catholic, 16-18).

The location of many of the leisure and social facilities led to the overriding feeling among residents, and especially young people, that: *"their end of the town did not get as much as the other end of the town"*. This was exemplified through the fact that the leisure centre, cinema, ten-pin

bowling alley and fast food chains such as McDonalds and Pizza Hut were all at the Protestant end of the town near the Ballykeel and Harryville estates. For older residents Sainsbury's supermarket and the new Tesco store were also located in this area. Many people indicated that they would prefer to travel to Antrim than shop in these supermarkets.

Some Catholic residents stated that they had in the past lived in either Ballykeel or Harryville:

"We originally lived in Ballykeel but because we were Catholics we kind of weren't allowed to live there anymore so we had to move …" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

Her family had been forced out of the area during the height of the Troubles and this did not encourage her to return to the area for any reason. Incidents like this did not contribute to building community relations in Ballymena and the memories of such incidents live on today. Protestant young people also highlighted that they had difficulties if they revealed that they lived in the Dunclug estate as it was automatically assumed that they were Catholic. One young Protestant male whose family were planning to move stated clearly he did not want to move to the *"Protestant end of the town"* as he would hate it. When asked why he answered:

"I wouldn't get on with anybody down there" (Male, Protestant, 16-18).

This highlighted that within Dunclug many Protestant and Catholic young people found it difficult to form relationships with those outside of the estate, because of the perceptions of other people as to their actual or perceived religion because of where they lived.

Issues within the estate

The main issues of concern to interviewees in Dunclug were: drugs; alcohol; crime and sectarianism. During the course of the interviews in Dunclug two suspected drugs related deaths occurred highlighting the seriousness of the problem, in addition to this many interviewees made reference to houses being attacked and at times these were perceived by the media and those outside the community as sectarian. However, the residents who were interviewed maintained that some of the attacks were drugs related and not sectarian:

"Two nights ago a house was petrol bombed … he (the occupant) says it's sectarian, it's not, it's drugs related" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

Another interviewee felt that although the drugs problem has been around for a few years it was now *"more open"*. Issues concerning alcohol were also noted especially among younger people aged between 14 and 16. Both males and females within this age group freely admitted that they regularly consumed alcohol and that this fuelled the petty crime in the area. One young female indicated that many of the attacks and the anti-social behaviour element within the estate were directly linked to the consumption of alcohol. This alcohol intake was encouraged by boredom and the lack of things for young people to do in the area.

Many older residents stated that during the Troubles, Ballymena and Dunclug had been relatively untouched and it was felt the area was now suffering more from sectarianism than at any other period:

"(During the Troubles) it wasn't really in Ballymena, it was all in Belfast" (Female, Protestant, 60+).

"The earlier Troubles didn't affect us but with recent events it's been badly affected … Michael's murder" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

One 18 year old male felt that sectarian attitudes had become more apparent within the last 5-6 years:

"When I was younger there was none of that (sectarianism) we were friends and ran about the whole time. When it came up to the Twelfth we helped build their bonfire, when it came up the 17th they helped build ours … it was just when I was 12 or 13 things started to go wrong" (Male, Catholic, 18).

However this appeared to affect younger residents more than older people:

"Young people are more sectarian now since Michael's death" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

Some interviewees also made reference to issues around flags being put up and then taken down by Protestants which caused tensions:

"Protestants come up … on the Eleventh they brought down tri-colours … there were more flags put up in retaliation" (Male, Catholic, 16-18).

However, one individual emphasised that many of the flags were erected by 'outsiders' and not from the estate. However, the interviews suggested that the issue of flags was less of a problem in this area than in other areas studied for this research.

Work

Most of those interviewed either worked in Ballymena, were unemployed, retired or had chosen not to work. One Catholic interviewee discussed how he had been subjected to sectarian abuse from Protestant colleagues at work and although he had reported it to management he felt it had never been totally resolved. The situation highlighted to him that sectarianism was an issue in Ballymena in all walks of life but had become more apparent in recent years:

"I knew there was always a bit of sectarianism in Ballymena …" (Male, Catholic, 30-44).

However, others felt that sectarianism and segregation did not affect them in their workplace and felt that people just got on with their daily activities whilst at work. It was perceived that the work place was a more neutral space and that people were inclined to leave their attitudes and beliefs outside of this environment.

Schooling

Young people living in Dunclug mainly attend Dunclug High or St Patrick's College. The reasons for attending these schools were based on religion, with Dunclug High mainly Protestant and St Patrick's mainly Catholic, and their proximity to the estate. According to community representatives the schools often engage in cross community activities and indeed the young people interviewed also indicated that they were or had been involved in various programmes involving other schools in the area. Some of the young Protestants who attended Dunclug High said that at times their experiences were difficult, as they would be seen 'hanging out' with Catholics outside of school. This created problems for them and their relationship with their friends in school who did not associate with Catholics and therefore saw them as what they termed "Fenian lovers".

None of the interviewees felt that their school uniforms put them to be at risk whilst in the estate. However, this was not always the case outside of the estate and especially if they walked down into the town

and into either shopping centre. This highlighted the view that the estate offered a 'safe space' for the young people and compares with the experiences of people who attend or attended school elsewhere in the town. One older Catholic interviewee who was brought up in a Protestant area of Ballymena recalled that when he attended St Patrick's College he:

"Had to hide the crest on the uniform walking up from (place of residence) to the school" (Male, Catholic, 45-59).

Another older Catholic female recalled getting the bus from her Protestant area to the Catholic school and being told to *"hurry up you wee Fenian"* by the bus drivers. Her uniform revealed her community background and made her subject to sectarian taunts; another young female who did not attend either of the local schools in Dunclug felt that some of her peers *"looked down at her"* because of where she lived. While such experiences were noted they were not reported by the young people, rather they were accepted as part of daily routine.

Shopping

Accessing shopping facilities appeared to be the most significant issue in terms of sectarianism affecting daily routines. However, it became apparent throughout the interviews that this was only an issue for the younger generation, many young Catholics highlighted that they felt unsafe or couldn't go to the Tower Shopping Centre for fear of the repercussions that may occur:

"I wouldn't go to the Tower Centre just the Fairhill" (Male, Catholic, 16-18).

"I got jumped down in the Tower Centre a few times" (Male, Catholic, 16-18).

Protestants who were friendly with Catholics highlighted the same fear and it emerged that they perceived the Tower Shopping Centre to be for Protestants and the Fairhill Shopping Centre for Catholics:

"Protestants have the Tower Centre, and there's like a line where the Grouse (a local bar) is, anything up this way and the Fairhill is Catholic … It's like a big divide" (Male, Catholic, 16-18).

Older residents indicated that they were aware of the shopping centre issue but none of them had experienced this:

"I hear that the Tower Centre is the Protestant Centre and the Fairhill is the Catholic Centre … not me but my young boy would be wary" (Male, Catholic, 30-44).

In addition there also seemed to be a difference between the experiences of young males and young females, with many young females reporting that they were able to go into both shopping centres without any trouble. A focus group held with Catholic females aged between 15 and 17 revealed that some felt safe entering either shopping centre whilst others did not. The discussions revealed that this depended upon the reputation of family and friends and if you were known to be associated with them. One 17-year-old female stated: *"You know anything can happen"*, this had become even more real to them after Michael McIlveen's murder.

The issue of safety in the shopping centres was discussed with community representatives and the PSNI who were aware that for some, especially young males, there was a safety issue in entering shopping centres depending on community background. Meetings with shopping centre management and both the PSNI and community leaders have taken place to prevent these issues and although many felt it was improving young people themselves were less sure that safety was better. Discussions also focused on ways to minimise risk and thus improve safety, many of the young people were reluctant to take steps such as not wearing football tops that may antagonise others, as they did not see why they should have to change their ways. Also it was highlighted that once you were known as being a *"Catholic from that end of the town"* it didn't matter what you wore.

As noted the adult generation had less experience of problems associated with accessing shops in the town, and there were no evident problems related to accessing other services such as banking or health care facilities, and it was apparent that decisions were based principally on 'handiness' and what parents or partners had done. No-one indicated that choices were based on religious or sectarian lines.

Socialising and leisure facilities

For many interviewees socialising in venues in Ballymena was restricted to pubs and many indicated that they would go outside the area for a night out. For those who did go to the pubs these were chosen based on acceptance and safety and it was clear that pubs were divided according to community background:

"William Street it's mainly Catholic although Protestants will go into it" (Catholic, Male, 16-18).

"There are places you wouldn't go as you are from Dunclug … automatically you are a Fenian" (Catholic, Male, 30-44).

Many of the young people referred to going to venues outside Ballymena and the lack of things to do in Ballymena, especially in areas where they felt safe. One mother said her son would go to Belfast as he *"feels safer"* going to venues there rather than staying in Ballymena. Many older interviewees felt that the lack of things to do in Ballymena contributed to the increasing drug problems, alcohol consumption and violence in the area:

"There's nothing for them to do or go at night so they hang about the estate … and this is when problems start" (Male, Catholic, 30-44).

Both young people and parents felt that due to fear of safety they were prevented in accessing some facilities in Ballymena. As previously highlighted many of the leisure facilities and fast food establishments are located near predominantly Protestant areas such as Harryville and Ballykeel thus many did not feel safe going to these venues. This fear was heightened as the route many used to walk to these venues was the one that Michael McIlveen had taken on the night he was murdered. Parents also highlighted that they were reluctant to let their children walk to these venues now, but to get a taxi increased the cost of a night out. Some parents said that they would now take their children to the cinema, as one young male stated:

"If they go (to the cinema or leisure centre) they end up getting their mums and dads to take them". (Male, Catholic, 16-18).

This highlights the extent of the fear that underpinned the lives of young people in Dunclug, however in discussions with young people they were reluctant to admit to this and instead they presented a brave face and a sense of bravado about the risks they faced.

Summary

The interviewees generally felt that the Ballymena area was relatively untouched by the Troubles, but all interviewees felt that things had changed recently, especially since Michael McIlveen's death. Attitudes had changed and sectarianism was more of an issue. Segregation within

the estate itself was not evident, with both Protestants and Catholics mixing well, but these relations did not extend beyond Dunclug into other areas of Ballymena, where the barriers divided those from Dunclug and those from the rest of town.

Sectarian attitudes seemed to impact more on the younger generation, and affected the places they felt safe socialising and shopping in. Parents and the older interviewees were aware of these issues and emphasised that the fears were impacting on daily routines for these young people, and also at times for their parents, some of whom expressed fears over safety.

In addition to increasing sectarian tensions many expressed their concerns about the increasing drugs problem in the area. This became a focus in some interviews as during the course of the fieldwork two suspected drugs related deaths occurred in the estate. There was also some frustration that attacks on some properties were being reported as sectarian when in fact some interviewees felt these were drugs related.

The physical deprivation within the estate impacted on people's attitudes and during the course of the research a high degree of apathy was detected among residents, which in the view of some reflected the general attitudes currently within the estate. The physical deterioration of the area served to further divide the estate from the rest of Ballymena, thus increasing the exclusion and marginalisation both perceived and experienced of the residents of the Dunclug estate.

7. Shandon Park, Newry

Newry is located 34 miles south of Belfast in Newry and Mourne District Council. The area has a population of 87,058 with 80.6 per cent from a Catholic community background and 18.5 per cent from a Protestant and Other Christian community background (2001 Census). Newry and Mourne district was badly affected by the Troubles and Fay et al. (1999) refer to the district as having the fourth largest number of incidents in which someone died and also one of the highest numbers of absolute deaths. The area was also seen as typifying the 'rural war' and where Republican paramilitaries inflicted the highest number of deaths on the security forces.

Newry City has a population of 27,433 with 89.6 per cent from a Catholic community background and 9.4 per cent from a Protestant and Other Christian background (2001 Census). The Shandon Park area falls under the Windsor Hill ward and has 494 households and 1,398 persons 55.8 per cent are Catholic and 41.4 per cent are Protestant. These statistics are consistent with the findings from the empirical research in which Shandon Park was perceived as predominantly Protestant and in the *"Protestant end of Newry"* by people living outside of the area, although not necessarily by residents themselves. This perception was strengthened by the presence of Union and Northern Ireland flags and a bonfire, which will be discussed below. The field research also revealed that residents felt that there had been an increase in the Catholic population particularly over recent years and highlighted the presence of significant numbers of mixed relationships or mixed marriages in the area.

Shandon Park is a residential area of semi-detached and detached housing on the outskirts of Newry, close to the A1 and the Belfast Road. The area has one corner shop and there is also a row of shops nearby on the Belfast Road and the adjacent Mourne Country Hotel. Residents therefore have to go out of their area to access leisure facilities, cinemas and other shops. Shandon Park area can be divided into the 'older' Shandon Park and the Da Molly area, residents made no distinction between the two areas apart from the fact that the 'older' Shandon Park area is mainly made up of semi-detached and detached houses built in the late 1940s and 1950s. This area appeared to have more long-term residents, in some cases people who had lived there since the area was built. The Da Molly area was built in the 1970s, though there was a row of terraced houses originating from the early twentieth century.

Methodological issues in Newry

As in some of the other areas many were reluctant to complete the diary exercise. Diaries were distributed in Newry but the feedback was limited and there was a feeling among residents and interviewees that they would add little or anything to the general discourse. In total, two diaries were completed and returned but did not add significantly to the findings from the interviews.

Views and opinions of the area

The overall impression of Shandon Park was that it was a quiet area and residents very much kept 'themselves to themselves'. One long-term resident referred to the area as a *"pleasant place to live"* and *"close to all amenities"*. Another resident stated:

"I am here 25 years, and I would never have had any problems living out here. A good community, and it's quiet enough compared to other areas of the town. You know we wouldn't have the level of anti-social behaviour, we do have anti-social behaviour but not to the level maybe that most areas in the town would have, you know, big areas you know" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

In spite of this, some residents voiced concern that issues such as underage drinking were on the increase in the area which contributed to the level of anti-social behaviour. The majority of interviewees felt that the area was mainly mixed whilst some felt it was more Protestant with 'pockets' of Catholics:

"It is predominantly Protestant, I wouldn't say it is solely Protestant, there are Roman Catholics living within the estate but it is predominantly a Protestant area. There are areas around it, like the Da Molly area would be perceived to be mixed, fairly mixed" (Male, Protestant, 25-29).

One interviewee who had moved to the area from a Republican estate perceived the estate to be Protestant until he came to live in it, when he was surprised to find that it was a mixed area. Similar sentiments were echoed by other interviewees, both Catholic and Protestant, who noted that the area was more mixed that might be expecetd and that the demographics in the area were changing with more Catholics moving into the area:

"Before I moved out here, Shandon Park was the Protestant end of Newry and I just didn't think about it. You see the flags, that's all you see as you are passing" (Male Catholic, 45-59).

Interviewees also raised the issue of the arrival of foreign nationals into the area and the perceived impact of this, although many commented that the new migrants mainly kept 'themselves to themselves':

"To be honest with you, there's a few houses which have been occupied by maybe, I am not sure what country they come from, but they are ethnic minorities. They tend to keep themselves to themselves in terms of work" (Male, Protestant, 25-29).

"There has been quite a few Lithuanians in the area, and a few Polish and that. Never had any bother and never anything, they kind of keep themselves to themselves" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

Some interviewees highlighted that negative attitudes did exist in terms of new migrants coming to the area, views which can be found throughout Northern Ireland:

"People feel that they are coming in and taking jobs away from us and to a certain extent you can see that. They will work for a lot cheaper than us and some people feel that the younger ones coming up will not get any jobs but they are only here for a short time, they are not here for ever and ever" (Male, Catholic, 45-59).

Some interviewees felt that people from other countries may find it difficult to integrate into Northern Ireland due to its history and the lack of integration between Protestants and Catholics:

"They are on the sidelines looking in on us to a certain extent, there is some mixing but it's a little bit of a sort of slight mixing … I think there is, they'll just have their community and friends and workmates, who they would socialise with they maybe get out to the hotel with friends from work but otherwise you might never see them from one week to the next part from going and coming from work" (Male, Catholic, 30-44).

In talks with migrants themselves, no one referred to having experienced any problems either in Shandon Park or in the greater Newry area. One interviewee who had moved into the area with her family referred to her experiences living in Shandon Park:

"We have friends who are Catholic and we have friends who are Protestants and we never had any problem. I thought it will be a problem because we are from Eastern Europe but no" (Female, Slovakian, 25-29).

The only negative experience referred to was the feeling that all foreign nationals were inclined to be grouped together:

"I am not saying that all of them are like that but, as one of them said to me, 'I don't believe you are from the same part of Europe', Yes, I said, we are, but we are completely different … Slovenia and Slovakia, they don't know the difference at all" (Female, Slovakian, 25-29).

The impact of the Troubles on Newry and Shandon Park

Participants were asked how they felt Newry and also Shandon Park had been affected by the Troubles. One interviewee highlighted that the Troubles had had a severe impact on the area where he grew up:

"Where I lived it was like West Belfast. It was bad. A lot of rioting, hijacking, the R.U.C. used to just come up for a riot, everyday they would come up" (Male, Catholic, 45-59).

This interviewee also referred to friends having been shot by security forces whilst other interviewees referred to various incidents, such as the bombings and explosions. Another interviewee spoke of an incident which had occurred near her home:

"Well, where we used to live there were two pubs I remember, I was not that old, I was maybe 10 or 11 and the pubs across the street were actually blown up … and my grandfather had been in it, fair enough, he got out of it ok" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

Many respondents felt that the Troubles and the various incidents that occurred in Newry had affected everyday routines and everyday life. Some interviewees recalled their experiences and how they felt:

"It was bad, but in a sense you were used to it in that, walking down the street and sort of seeing all the signs that something is happening here maybe there's police about maybe there's tape across the road, what's going on? There's a bomb scare … move back, whatever, you know, and then, and then you hear that maybe there's a bomb or there has been a bomb and it has exploded somewhere along the line or someone shot down the street …" (Male, Catholic, 30-44).

"I noticed it (the Troubles) when I was working, I used to work in the middle of the town and there were bomb scares frequently and we had to get out of work and out of the offices and that was a quite frequent happening" (Female, Protestant, 60+).

The legacy of the Troubles was felt for many today to be limited and was only now referred to in discussions with children or other family members:

"They [the children] … might say, 'mummy, tell us about this and tell us about that', they love to hear the stories but they don't fully understand. My two boys are 23 and 20 and they would understand a wee bit" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

How the Troubles had affected Shandon Park specifically was also discussed with reference being made to the bombings of Mourne Country Hotel and killings in the area:

"Mourne Country (hotel) beside me was bombed several times and our house and other houses within the area would have been severely damaged cause of that there and it would have had an impact on people in the area, they would have been fearful and would have seen that as an attack on their community cause it was right beside them" (Male, Protestant, 25-29).

"There were a couple of incidents, a person got shot, he was a UDR man who lived around the corner from me, that was at the beginning of the Troubles, but apart from that there would not have been any sectarianism that I am aware of, in terms of just the ordinary people of Shandon Park, the working people of Shandon Park, I don't think there have been any" (Female, Protestant, 60+).

The interviewee highlighted that on the whole the area was not badly affected by sectarian violence, however others talked about incidents associated with parades and marches rasing tensions in the area:

"There would have been in periods, such like Drumcree and that type of thing, you know what I mean, obviously it had an impact across the whole province, you know there would have been, say, incidents where there would have been tensions" (Male, Protestant, 25-29).

The overall impression of Shandon Park was an area which had been spared from major incidents and was characterised as 'quiet' compared to Newry itself. One interviewee recalled her experience after moving from Newry town to Shandon Park:

"I moved out here in the June 1982, and coming up to the 9th August when you lived in the town you didn't put milk bottles out, you didn't put your bin out you kept it away locked in the shed, because they would have come round and stole your bin lid. … we would have had a driveway, we didn't have a garage, but he would have chained the double gates at the top of the drive so as

they wouldn't take his (father's) car and hijack it. When we moved out here I found it very strange, I thought we should put the bin in the shed and lock the shed, not putting any milk bottles out, wondering whether to put the car in the garage, and I remember that first year being up at 4 am cause that is the time we would all get up to put your light on and let them know you are listening, if you hadn't have had a light on they'd have kicked your door in. But I remember standing at that landing window there in the dead of the night you could hear the bin lids away over like Derrybeg and all round the town" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

Relations within the estate

Overall the residents of Shandon Park felt positively about living in the area and they also felt that community relations within the area were good:

"It's fine, it's quiet … the community and everyone seems to get on very well with each other" (Male, Protestant, 30-44).

"You really have no bother, I mean, everybody mixes and you can keep yourself to yourself if you want to but everybody mixes and you don't get any riots that you can see in Belfast like, particularly between Catholic and Protestant, you don't get that, not even up and around the Twelfth, so you don't, not unless you have someone who is not content and maybe will come out of the area, that will not be from Shandon Park but it will come from elsewhere in Newry" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

Some residents also commented that both Celtic and Rangers football shirts were worn in the estate and accepted:

"You would see one with a Celtic shirt and one with a Rangers shirt, it's really funny, probably the only place it happens" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

It was also indicated by some interviewees that both communities socialised together and took part in sporting activities:

"You have the boys and girls hanging around with one another now, on Saturday night we were up in the band hall, all saying they were all coming from the Coach (a bar) and they were all mixing also meeting up afterwards" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

"Yeah, you only have to look on the football pitch you would see sometimes, the diversification … both Rangers and Celtic tops …" (Male, Protestant, 25-29).

Young people interviewed from both communities also indicated that they were friendly with each other within the area and 'hung out together' and that community background or religion made 'no difference'. Young people as well as adults also referred to the increase in the number of mixed relationships and marriages in Shandon Park as an indication of the level of mixing and the quality of relationships between the two communities.

Issues within the estate

Residents referred to the types of issues, particularly associated with bonfires and erecting flags, that did occur within the area and which did at times raise tensions, if not in Shandon Park itself, then certainly within the wider community. One resident described the bonfire around the Twelfth as being a new 'phenomenon':

"It's a new phenomena for the last, say, twenty years, certainly when I went there first, there wasn't one, there was a Halloween bonfire. But this, the Twelfth one, you see, I think what happened was that traditionally there was always a bonfire in the town up Talbot Street, that was the traditional bonfire and then a lot of the Protestants moved away from there some of them out to Shandon Park, so they took their bonfire with them and that's how it came out to Shandon Park" (Female, Protestant, 60+).

However, other residents referred to the bonfires as something which had happened more widely in Newry for a number of years, but that Shandon Park was the last one to be organised in the Newry area, as this process reflected the decline in the Protestant community generally in the area. It was also felt that Catholics were involved in the event by collecting materials and attending on the night:

"To be honest, you get all the Catholics down to watch it, they are all out watching it so they are, if there is any wood they give it to be burned" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

One Catholic interviewee who had attended the bonfire felt that it was a social event and did no harm:

"I don't mind, it turned out to be a social event, there was a bouncy castle, there was a disco at it, there was a few drinks at it, fireworks, social event, does no harm" (Male, Catholic, 45-59).

But, many residents felt that the bonfires had changed over time and there was now no burning of tyres or of Irish Tricolours, this meant that

the event was now more community orientated and accessible to all residents:

"They have started to make it more a community thing, the last two years, they have started, and there is more, you would see more Catholics down, I don't go down that often myself, but you know, they have tried to incorporate …" (Male, Protestant, 30-44).

Some residents however felt that the bonfire should not be held in the estate but moved to nearby fields. One resident felt that the bonfire did not belong in what was perceived as a mixed area:

"Yeah, but it is in a mixed community, it's in the middle and it's opposite houses and it wasn't so bad this year I suppose because they didn't put the tyres on it, but it used to be an awful health hazard apart from anything else … people come from outside the area to build the bonfire as well, it's not people from Shandon Park. A lot of people who are building are coming from all parts of the town, certainly if it is was only for Shandon Park, but I feel, why should Shandon Park be the catalyst for everybody round the town?" (Female, Protestant, 60+).

Interviewees were also asked about how they felt about the prevalence of flags in the Shandon Park area. Respondents differed in their views, some felt that there should not be any flags as the area was perceived as mixed and some residents felt that the erection of flags gave people the wrong impression of the area:

"To me that's a slight bone of contention that this area is perceived as a very Loyalist area … when you drive past it and see the predominance of flags and Loyalist graffiti and signs … wow … I explain to them it is not like that, it's not like Mount Vernon or the Shankill, even though the symbols would make it like that" (Male, Protestant, 30-44).

Another issue raised was that the flags hung all year round and were not taken down within a given time period:

"I don't like them, I think, I don't like any flags at all, but I especially don't like the ones down here, I am a Protestant myself but I don't like the flags, I think, maybe if they put them up during July whatever and, I think they should take them down again, … they just leave them up, I don't like the flags, I don't like the painting or anything like that, I don't agree with anything like that" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

"Well, I don't mind in the park but they should take them down after the parade

on Friday night, if they come and take them down and put them up again next July" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

However, others felt that the flags acted as a symbol of Shandon Park as being the 'last stand' and the last Protestant estate in Newry:

"It would be a fair point I think, it's the last estate, the community has suffered a lot over the years and they were dispatched from a lot of areas in the town, and residents within the area would see that as the last stand if you want to call it that, you know" (Male, Protestant, 25-29).

Many interviewees made knowing comments about the people who put the flags up in the area, implying that they were either not representative of the local community, or not from the immediate area. However, no one was willing to specifically state who they believed was responsible for the flags.

Issues within Newry

Interviewees were asked about how they felt the town of Newry had changed over the years and one interviewee stated:

"I find it a lot different now, because when I first, I am only here 16 years and when I first came here it was a lot slower and wasn't as big, so it's starting to get really big now compared to what it was like sixteen years ago, but I do like it, I don't have any bother and enjoy where I live, it's quiet" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

There was a general feeling that Newry had changed for the better:

"It has changed for the better, it's developing, people are taking pride in their town. I take a pride in Newry. For a start, I won't let anyone say anything about Newry" (Male, Catholic, 45-59).

Overall residents, regardless of their community background, referred to the positve changes in Newry, such as the low levels of unemployment, and construction of a number of new shopping centres and other retail outlets. Interviewees also referred to Newry experiencing an economic boom at the present time[6]. References were also made to the proximity to

6 The Observer, Sunday October 29 2006. 'Border battleground turns to boom town'. Speech by Peter Robinson at Newry Chamber of Commerce and Trade business lunch, April 3 2008, 'Newry can show us how regeneration is done' see www.dfpni.gov.uk/index/regenration-in-newry.htm. Other references were also made to the number of employee jobs increase by 68% compared to 40% in the rest of Northern Ireland, see Newry Chamber of Commerce and Trade, www.newrychanber.com, downloaded 25 April 2008.

the Irish border and the 'Celtic Tiger' economy in the Republic of Ireland, and it was generally felt that trade in Newry had increased over the last few years given its close proximity to the Irish border. A number of interviewees also cited the increasing house prices as an indicator of the economic growth in the town and statistics show that there has been an increase of 371 per cent in house prices in some parts of the town of since 1996[7].

In previous research, such as that by Altnaveigh House (2004), Newry was depicted as a a place with a high 'chill factor' for Protestants[8]. The research highlighted the fact that Protestants and non-Protestants tended to socialise in different venues in Newry City and that Protestants felt that they were excluded from social life in the area. The research also highlighted the limited contact between individuals from the two community backgrounds and the low number of Protestants who felt comfortable participating in cross-community events. Protestants also referred to using more facilities outside of Newry, such as those in Armagh and Banbridge, compared to non-Protestants. When this was put to the interviewees the overall response was that while this may have been the situation in town in the past, things were changing:

"I don't think that's the case now, I think there is probably still a stigma, you kind of still watch where you were going at nights, but I don't think it's like what it was years ago, I think people have adjusted and learned to live with each other a bit more, I am sure you always have the odd one or two that would [not go into town or socialise in town]" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

"I think, there was a situation over the years, when people didn't feel part of the community and were left, you know, left out of the community and parading issues played a big part in that there, you know, in terms of, they saw their culture being probably attacked, and because of that there they saw their community in general being attacked ..." (Male, Protestant, 25-29).

Some Catholic interviewees indicated they could see how Protestants would hold these views:

"I can see how that could be and how they can feel that … I think, it's just a fact of, it's in your head that right, you are going into a 90 percent Catholic

7 BBC on-line October 27 2006, 'UK House prices 'nearly tripled'. News.bbc.co.uk Downloaded 25 April 2008.

8 This involved the circulation of 1468 questionnaires to Protestant households with 337 returned. 187 questionnaires were circulated to non-Protestant households and 48 returned.

area whatever, and an awful lot of it is perceptions in your head …" (Male, Catholic, 30-44).

Some Catholic respondents acknowledged that in the past things had tended to be somewhat 'one-sided' in Newry but they felt that this was no longer the case:

"It would have been a lot one-sided like just all Catholics out but now like, it's, things have changed like, really, not one-sided no more …" (Male, Catholic, 19-24).

However, one interviewee felt that for many views and opinions were due to individual experiences rather than based on community background:

"I think if you are a group of Protestants and you were nasty to people who were Catholic and then turn up in a club somewhere and then the fella is there with his mates, that could be problematic" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

There was however a feeling among interviewees that the wearing of Glasgow Rangers tops or band uniforms might lead to problems. One interviewee stated that although in general he felt safe he would have concerns in case someone less tolerant noticed him:

"I would feel safe, yes, but then there's always the chance that someone is bitter against you, there's always that chance" (Male, Protestant, 16-18).

It also became apparent that young people from both communities found relations with the other side more strained if they did not know the individuals. Many stated that they communicated well with those of the other community background if relationships had been previously established.

Work

Most of the interviewees worked in the greater Newry area and the majority of respondents had no issues regarding their community background and employment. Most workplaces were regarded as mixed:

"… there would be a substantial number of both communities employed there and even now ethnic minority background communities would be there" (Male, Catholic, 45-59).

None of the respondents referred to making decisions about

employment based on their community background or taking particular precautions when travelling to and from work. One respondent highlighted that their route was based on ease:

"I would just have taken whatever way I needed to go" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

Another interviewee who was currently seeking employment stated:

"I would take a job anywhere, money is money" (Male, Protestant, 16-18).

Interviewees also discussed that 'work social events' were also held at venues which both sides of the community would attend. In general it was felt that accessing employment for both communities had improved over the years.

Schooling

The young people in Shandon Park mainly attended Newry High School, which is within walking distance and which, even though it is a controlled school, attracted Catholic pupils. This was highlighted by interviewees some of whom felt that the school was now *"an integrated school in all but name":*

"It's a mixed school, so I think they learn from each other … they just haven't got the integrated in there" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

"… nowadays you got more 50/50 in Newry High and I have been told now, that people you would have never had thought would send their children to a Protestant school are the ones who are having their children at it right now, people, I remember my own mummy saying their own parent would have been really Republican its their grandchildren who are now at Newry High, it has changed a lot" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

Participants were asked whether they or their children had been attacked or experienced problems walking to and from school, but on the whole no-one had experienced any difficulties or problems, with some interviewees feeling that the changing demographics in the school had contributed to this. One interviewee felt that the mix within the school meant people could no longer be sure of an individual's community background:

"It is hard to tell, that's why I think people don't pass any remarks on school uniforms, they can't be a 100 percent sure of what religion they are" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

Interviewees also referred to cross community work within the school and pupils mixing well from both community backgrounds:

"Everybody hangs out together, religion is not even a matter up there" (Female, Protestant, 16-18).

None of the young people referred to having experienced problems walking to and from school whilst wearing the Newry High School uniform which they were also happy to wear travelling into the city centre:

"In Newry, everybody knows that Newry High is a mixed religion school because you see boys walking down around the town and they would be Catholics and then they would see us coming down the town and they wouldn't think of religion because they probably have mates going to the school" (Female, Protestant, 19-24).

One interviewee referred to not feeling safe when travelling to the Southern Regional College, which is situated in the city centre, especially at lunch time. The interviewee also referred to other schools in the area and pupils who would cause them hassle:

"There's people from everywhere like girls from (name of school) and they would be very bitter girls and all and there are people from different places that go there" (Female, Unknown, 16-18).

Shopping

Sectarianism did not seem to affect activities such as shopping to any great extent. Most interviewees shopped in Newry and shops were not chosen based on community background. One interviewee stated:

"Before they probably would have gone to certain shops or whatever, but I think now people go where it is handiest and cheapest" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

None of the interviewees referred to feeling unsafe when accessing the shops in Newry and none referred to taking a particular route or road to increase levels of safety but rather based their route on the easiest and most convenient way. However, some interviewees did refer to shopping in Banbridge and using the Tescos there as it was easier to park:

"It is nearly easier to get to Banbridge than it is to get to the shopping centre … because of the traffic … my daughter was home from Scotland last Christmas, she said 'I am just going to go to Banbridge, it is easier than trying

to fight your way through traffic'" (Female, Protestant, 60+).

None of the people who consented to be interviewed referred to having experienced any problems in relation to accessing banks or post-offices as a result of their community background. Similarly, none of the interviewees referred to having experienced problems when accessing their GP or health centre.

Socialising and leisure facilities

For many, particularly Protestants, socialising in Newry was still somewhat restricted. One interviewee highlighted that safety issues influenced his decision on where to go socialising:

"I think there are maybe issues of safety there too. You know, you might meet 99 people out of 100 and they are great and it only takes one person to sort of, and a bit of drink in them, they might try to make an issue of something you know, … I wouldn't exclude myself from the town at all, but there are places where you just have to be conscious of the fact, but things are getting better you know" (Male, Protestant, 25-29).

Consequently this interviewee often chose to socialise in Banbridge where he felt safer:

"If we are going out to a nightclub, we would start in Newry and then go down to a nightclub in Banbridge" (Male, Protestant, 25-29).

Another interviewee felt that decisions as to where to go were often based on individual experiences. Gender was also felt to impact with young women finding socialising in Newry easier than young men. It was felt by some that this attiude also prevailed throughout the Troubles as young men were perceived as being more of a threat. There was a feeling however among some interviewees that Protestants had started 'to come back' to Newry even to socialise and that places such as the Canal Court Hotel would now be seen as a mixed venue. However, both Protestants and Catholics referred to an increased sense of not feeling safe in the town after the pubs and nightclubs closed and they were aware that attacks could happen regardless of community background. Some interviewees therefore used a taxi rather than walking back to the area:

"It's not a sectarian thing it's just someone might just pounce on you for whatever reason" (Female, Protestant, 60+).

"I would, to be honest with you take a taxi home now, not necessarily because of a religious thing … just think now with trouble nowadays and stuff … there's gangs of youths roaming about and basically, it's not a religious thing it's more like wrong place at the wrong time … why risk it"? (Male, Protestant, 30-44).

However some younger interviewees did not appear to be as concerned about safety issues and were happy to walk back home after a night out:

"Oh yeah, would always walk home now, all the time like" (Male, Catholic, 19-24).

Some interviewees did highlight that they were less likely to walk home during the dark winter nights and during the marching season in the summer. As well as the nightlife many leisure facilities were also mainly situated in the city centre and appeared to be used by both Protestants and Catholics, although it was felt that the leisure centre was not widely used by members of either community. However those who had used the facility said that they had never experienced any problems in terms of sectarianism. Interviewees also referred to using the swimming pools in Banbridge and Lisburn, but this was because they were regarded as more exciting and fun, rather than because of any concerns about using facilities closer to home.

Summary

Newry was badly affected by the Troubles and sectarianism impacted significantly on residents. One manifestation of this was the feeling among Protestants that Newry was a 'cold house' and a place where they did not feel welcome and therefore were reluctant to socialise in. Even though most of the interviewees felt that things had changed for the better, some Protestant individuals felt more comfortable 'going out' in neighbouring areas, than in the town centre. However interviewees, regardless of community background, felt that sectarian attitudes and segregation had no real impact on their daily routines such as shopping, banking and working in the town.

There seemed to be no major issues regarding sectarianism and segregation within Shandon Park and our interviewees referred to the area as having experienced limited problems in recent times. It was felt that Protestants and Catholics mixed well, regardless of age and gender, but that these relations perhaps did not always extend beyond Shandon Park and into the wider Newry area. However, there were ongoing

discussions within Shandon Park about the presence of flags and the bonfire, which takes place around the Twelfth. Views and opinions on these issues varied but some felt that the flags should not be erected and if they were should be taken down within a given time period, while some people felt the bonfire should no longer take place because of the changing demographic profile of the area. Others viewed these issues as attempts to hold on to the Protestant culture and were reluctant that they should stop or be stopped.

Despite these concerns over symbolic displays and cultural activities the area is now widely perceived to be more mixed in terms of the two main communities, Protestant and Catholic, and there was also acknowledgement of the growing minority ethnic and migrant communities. There was also growing evidence of integration and the development of a sense of a shared identity among people living in Shandon Park.

8. Stranmillis, South Belfast

The population of the Stranmillis ward, according to the 2001 Census, was 7,635, with 48.3 per cent of the population identifying themselves as members of the Catholic community, and 43.9 per cent coming from the Protestant community. Stranmillis ward is located in the Belfast Local Government District and Belfast South Parliamentary Constituency. The field research revealed that longer-term residents who had lived in the area for over twenty years felt that although the area had to a certain degree been mixed, there had been an increase in the Catholic population particularly over more recent years. The research also appeared to highlight the presence of a significant number of individuals in mixed relationships or mixed marriages within the area.

According to the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service statistics (NISRA 2001), Stranmillis ward is comprised of four super output areas. This research focused primarily on what is sometimes referred to as 'Old' Stranmillis which corresponds with super output areas one and four, with boundaries beginning at Stranmillis College along Loughview Road and the Lagan Embankment, and stretching back to include the streets around the YMCA including Knightsbridge and Deramore Park. This section of Stranmillis south of Stranmillis College towards the Malone Road and south Belfast is centred around the local primary school and is perceived as being more residential and with more longer-term residents, compared with the area of Stranmillis Road commonly referred to as Stranmillis 'village', closer to Queens University and which has a more transient and predominantly student population. This would appear to be supported by NISRA statistics which highlight that 20.3 per cent of residents in super output area one of 'Old' Stranmillis were aged 60 and above compared to just 5.9 per cent in super output area two, which is the closest to Queens University[9]. The Stranmillis 'village' area contains a mixture of cafés, bars, restaurants and shops to cater for the primarily student population, and would be perceived to be a much busier part of the area than the quieter and more residential 'Old' Stranmillis. Statistics would also appear to support common perceptions that 'Old' Stranmillis is a mixed area in demographic terms. These two super output areas combined have a population of 3,788, with 44 per cent of residents coming from a Catholic background and 47 per cent from a Protestant background.

9 It should also be noted that according to NISRA statistics from April 2001, the average age of residents of super output area two in Stranmillis was 25.2 compared to 38.4 in super output area one.

According to the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure, Stranmillis is the 554th least deprived ward in Northern Ireland out of 582 wards in total. Regarding education levels, 42.1 per cent of the population in the Stranmillis ward have degree level or higher qualifications compared to 15.8 per cent for Northern Ireland in general. In keeping with the picture of the Stranmillis ward generally as a more affluent area than most in Northern Ireland, the unemployment rate is 1.4 per cent compared to a Northern Ireland wide figure of 4.1 per cent. With regards to housing in the area, almost three-quarters (74.8 per cent) of properties are owner-occupied, with the remainder (25.2 per cent) rented. Of these households, only 2.6 per cent are lone parent households with dependent children compared to 8.1 per cent for Northern Ireland as a whole.

South Belfast is often perceived in general as the most mixed and cosmopolitan area in Belfast in terms of community background and ethnicity. The cross-community Alliance Party have traditionally maintained a degree of support in the area over the years, while in the 1998 Northern Ireland Assembly election, Monica McWilliams of the Women's Coalition won one of the party's two Assembly seats. The election of Anna Lo of the Alliance Party in March 2007 to the Assembly as *"the first Chinese politician elected to any UK Assembly or parliament"* (Belfast Telegraph 8 March 2007) appears to further the perception held that some residents of south Belfast are more willing to vote for the middle ground and bridge the sectarian divide in voting patterns.

In contrast to several of the other research areas, the issues of most importance to local residents concerned factors linked to house-prices, development and houses of multiple occupancy (HMOs) and gentrification rather than concerns linked to sectarianism and segregation.

Methodological Issues in Stranmillis

There were several key issues which made it difficult to acquire contacts for interview within the Stranmillis area. One of the two residents groups within the general Stranmillis area declined to take part in the research, while a common perception amongst many individuals approached was that Northern Ireland had moved on from the 'dark days' and individuals were unwilling to talk about what they felt was in the past, and of limited relevance to Stranmillis. This apathy within the community was also experienced by ICR researchers on the doorstep when conducting a leaflet drop to invite local residents to take part in the research. Indeed,

discussions with some local residents before the leaflet drop revealed that the focus of the research on sectarianism and segregation would alienate many residents who would not like to discuss these sensitive issues. Therefore, part of the focus of the research in the area was directed towards assessing what it was like to live in Stranmillis, which involved addressing issues related to sectarianism and segregation in a more subtle manner.

It became apparent that many individuals felt that as Stranmillis was a mixed area the Troubles had little impact on their lives and they felt that they therefore had nothing to contribute to the research. Some interviewees also appeared to be reticent to talk about the Troubles, although again similar to other contentious issues, once settled in discussions comfortably interviewees were more willing to discuss these issues. A further difficulty was the general lack of community groups to act as gatekeepers and facilitators of interviews, or indeed any real form of community infrastructure in an area where many residents spoke of a lack of community spirit and a preference among people to 'keep themselves to themselves'. In addition, no interviewees were willing to take part in the diary exercise as it was felt that sectarianism and segregation did not affect individuals' daily routines and therefore diaries would be of limited use.

Views and opinions of the area

Most interviewees believed that there were marked differences between 'Old' Stranmillis and Stranmillis 'village'. The majority of interviewees referred to the roundabout at Stranmillis College as denoting the boundary in the area, with 'Old' Stranmillis south of Stranmillis College seen as a more family orientated, *"middle-class, professional, residential area"*, while Stranmillis 'village' closer to Queens University was felt to contain a predominantly transient student population:

"… basically, from the roundabout up, will be all rented accommodation like, where we are now, to just down beside the primary school is pretty much all residential …" (Female, Catholic, 19-24).

The general consensus was that 'Old' Stranmillis was quite mixed in terms of community background, race and ethnicity. One interviewee felt that Stranmillis had *"always been a mixed area"*, while several others attributed the area's mixed character to the high number of mixed relationship couples living within Stranmillis. It was also felt by some participants that the area's lack of symbolism identifying it one way or

the other in terms of community background provided a neutral and safe environment for mixed relationship couples to live in:

"I would say that Stranmillis probably would have been the first place to see I suppose mixed marriages coming in and probably for the reason that there was a great sense of respect for one another, for peace, you know there was no tribalism, so yeah I would regard it as a place, yeah, for mixed couples to settle" (Male, Protestant, 19-24).

The general consensus among longer-term residents was that while the area had always contained an element of a demographic mix, it had originally been predominantly Protestant, with the Catholic population in the area steadily increasing over the years. One interviewee referred to the fact that there was an increased amount of canvassing by nationalist parties within the area in recent years, which highlighted the changing demographics within the area:

"But even now, say in the last five years, we get Sinn Féin coming round here. You wouldn't have got that say fifteen years ago. Now I would say Stranmillis is about half and half now and it used to be nearly all Protestant" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

Interviewees also felt that there was a significant ethnic minority population in the area, which several linked to the proximity of Stranmillis to Queens University and local hospitals. The area's reputation as a quiet, middle-class and mixed area also meant that it was a location where individuals not originally from Northern Ireland could feel safe in:

"… in terms of different cultures … I think that people of different races feel quite safe within the area too, a lot of Chinese live in the area too" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

"… the last five years you have more Chinese, Indian, now some Eastern Europeans, since the opening of the EU borders there, coming in to live in the area … so it is mixed in more general terms than Protestant-Catholic" (Male, Protestant, 19-24).

Despite a general feeling among the interviewees that the area was mixed, some of the participants were unsure as to the nature of the mix as they felt it was *"difficult to tell, it's pretty neutral"*. This sense of neutrality was shared by some of the young people who came into the area to use the local leisure facilities at the YMCA and this was in part attributed to

the lack of any visible flags or emblems. It was suggested by one local resident, who had lived in the area for over three decades, that although there had been some flags in the area prior to the Troubles, there had not been any in the area for many years. Another resident who had lived in the area for almost twenty years could not recall seeing any flags or emblems in the area. Several interviewees referred to the closest flags as those in the Annadale Estate across the River Lagan and on the other side of the embankment. One young person felt that the lack of flags and murals in the area was welcoming as *"it doesn't make you feel intimidated"*, while another young interviewee suggested that the lack of graffiti and slogans in the area led to a feeling of being safe and more secure in the environment than elsewhere.

Several interviewees who worked in the area noticed a difference between where they lived in other parts of Belfast and Stranmillis. It was felt that it was easy to tell the community background of where they lived given the plethora of flags and murals denoting community background, but it was much more difficult to do the same in Stranmillis when there were no clear markers of identity. There was almost a sense that although Stranmillis was in Belfast it was detached from the rest of the city:

"When you get to here (Stranmillis), it's almost like it can't get any more normal, just becomes here, race, diversity, religion, it's not a way of life here, it's just a family orientated place" (Male, Protestant, 16-18).

The general impression of the area was that it was a settled, mixed, middle-class and culturally neutral area given the lack of flags, emblems and other political symbolism.

Relations within the area

The majority of interviewees felt that people had always got on well with each other within the area, regardless of their background or beliefs. Several of those interviewed believed that the fact that people had made a conscious decision to move into a mixed area meant that they regarded community background as irrelevant with one interviewee suggesting that the subject of someone's religion or background *"has no relevance in the sense of how people will treat each other in Stranmillis"*. Another interviewee in his early 20s who grew up in the area contrasted the situation in Stranmillis with other areas in Northern Ireland, where a young person might be asked what their background was from an early age. Indeed, one interviewee, who was in a mixed marriage, referred to the fact that she never discussed religion with her children to the point

that they were not sure what their community background was themselves. There was a sense among interviewees that despite 'knowing' that they lived in a mixed area, they were relatively unsure to what extent the area was indeed mixed, and several interviewees attributed the *"lack of emphasis put on race or religion here"* down to the fact that they were often unaware of their neighbours' community background:

"I mean you never sort of ask your next door neighbours what they are or anything else. I mean people maybe know …" (Female, Unknown, 60+).

This difficulty in being able to 'tell' led to one interviewee noting that *"we never discussed politics"* as it was a mixed community and it was felt that it may damage relations between Catholics and Protestants in the area. Other interviewees referred to the fact that because the area was primarily residential most people had to leave the area to work and access shops and services and therefore had little opportunity to come into contact with one another, tending to *"keep themselves to themselves"*. This contributed to a sense of being friendly with one's neighbours without knowing them all that well, and the area seemed to confer a sense of 'being anonymous', where people got on with their own lives:

"Well you are anonymous. You only put your head above the parapet. Since we are a mixed marriage we go to either church and you see some neighbours at either church, so some of them might well be your near neighbours but you can only figure out what they are at that stage. Nobody cares" (Male, Protestant, 60+).

One young interviewee in his 20s spoke of wishing to remain anonymous in a mixed area for fear of identifying himself and his family by their community background:

"I don't think there's too many people in Stranmillis that would jump you, but at the same time I don't want to wear a Republic (of Ireland) top about so therefore my family gets labelled Catholics or whatever, you never know what can happen down the line. You don't really want people to know your business. I'd rather, its just more a sort of privacy thing like, keep yourself to yourself rather than put yourself on show and wear a sign saying 'I'm a Catholic' basically" (Male, Catholic, 25-29).

Other interviewees referred to noticing the occasional football and GAA jersey within the area during the day and at night, and felt that Stranmillis was an area where individuals could feel safe and secure in displaying their own identity without causing offence to others:

"Here, I have to say it is not an issue because they are brought up in such a varied community that they can accept what other people wear. In the summer scheme you see kids coming in with Gaelic tops, and kids coming in with Linfield tops" (Male, Protestant, 16-18).

"Yeah, I have seen Northern Ireland tops, Republic of Ireland tops, Celtic tops, Rangers tops, Cliftonville tops. I have seen everything and it doesn't matter, they don't flinch, you know" (Male, Catholic, 19-24).

Younger people in their teens in particular appeared to get on well with one another regardless of community background. There appeared to be few problems even when young people wore football and Gaelic jerseys to the youth club, according to one interviewee who works in the area, *"they come in here and they just mix".* It was felt that the YMCA provided a safe environment for the young people, and indeed several of the young people who attended the Friday night youth club in the YMCA travelled from outside the area to use the facilities partly because the area was seen as safer than some of the areas in which they lived.

The fact that on the surface neighbourly relations were perceived to be good did not disguise the fact that within the privacy of one's own home different views may be expressed than those conveyed in public. Several interviewees suggested that good neighbourliness among residents from different community backgrounds did not necessarily indicate a lack of sectarianism, but that it was perhaps *"kept around the dinner table".* One interviewee in particular felt that although the area had always been relatively free from sectarian *"hassle"*, individuals would still have remained quite staunch in their opinions in private:

"I can remember some point between 1966 and 1969 Terence O'Neill coming to the street to canvass in an election in Stranmillis, and me being quite excited at the thought of the Prime Minister being in the street. I had to go out and meet him, and my mother just refusing to let me go out and meet him because he was compromising and selling us out and all the rest of it, and that wasn't all that unusual an attitude there" (Male, Protestant, 45-59).

Despite most interviewees believing that relations in the area were good, one interviewee, originally from outside Northern Ireland, felt that people would tend to be closer friends with neighbours from the same community background:

"People do stick in their same friendship groups. Coming from (name of area) I noticed immediately friendship groups are based on which of the sides you

belong to, the Catholic side or the Protestant side. If you have got church allegiances, your friends are through the churches. I don't think that changes. There is a young family down there that are … I don't think they would have a lot of Catholic friends. I could be wrong" (Female, Protestant, 60+).

Despite this perception that church attendance could be one way of underpinning elements of division, other interviewees referred to the strength of the churches and the ecumenical movement within the area as providing some leadership in promoting good relations between members of the various congregations.

Impact of the Troubles

The overwhelming consensus in discussions with local residents was that the Troubles had very little direct impact on the area of Stranmillis itself. There were very few recorded incidents of violence occurring directly within the area[10]. Discussions with a number of residents however indicated a reluctance to talk about the past which they felt they had *"put behind them"*. Interviewees who were willing to discuss the Troubles tended to feel a sense of detachment from the violence that occurred elsewhere, and there was a general feeling when one returned home to Stranmillis from a days work that the Troubles were something that were going on *"somewhere else"*:

"I can also remember spending a good time one summer me and another boy got out the books and stood out on the Stranmillis road to count the amount of army vehicles that passed by. It was actually 1969 when the troops came in, we thought it was fantastic of course. But again there wasn't any fear, they were going to deal with something that was happening 'out there'" (Male, Protestant, 45-59).

Although many interviewees felt that everyone in Northern Ireland was affected by the Troubles, in Stranmillis this was more related to hearing news of violence occurring elsewhere through the media:

"No, I have to say it didn't (have an impact). Other than watching the news and feeling the tragedy, like the Omagh bombing that sort of thing. Oh there's been a bomb, where? But to be honest for our kids it could have been in New York because they have never been to Omagh, so it didn't impact on their wee lives. But you saw the tragedy and the heartache, absolutely dreadful" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

10 This would appear to support the chronology of events during the Troubles in Lost Lives, which contains just eight entries in total relating to Stranmillis up to July 1999.

Individuals often struggled to recount specific incidents that had occurred within the area, although the two main events that were referred to were the bombing at the forensic lab at Belvoir, near the Forestside shopping centre, in the early 1990s and the shooting of a man at the Northern Ireland Electricity Board in 1994. Most interviewees felt that they had not been as personally affected by the violence as people in areas such as North Belfast or the border regions. Longer-term residents felt that there was a sense that life continued as normal in Stranmillis, and it was not until one went out of the area into the centre of Belfast and other areas that one encountered problems. One interviewee referred to his mother's family from Fermanagh having suffered as a result of the violence, but felt *"that was a different world, a completely different world".* Indeed discussions revealed that it tended to be individual's experiences outside of the area in terms of their working lives that first brought them into contact with the Troubles:

"I mean I didn't really get opened up to the Troubles until I was ordained and went to North Belfast, Somerton Road, it was my first charge. There within a couple of years, it was a sharp learning curve in terms of people being affected by the Troubles, sectarian hassle, agitation and that. But that was a different world" (Male, Protestant, 45-59).

Several interviewees felt that the biggest impact that the Troubles had on Stranmillis was that it placed restrictions on people in terms of trips into and out of the town centre, and going to and from work. Individuals were acutely aware of issues relating to sectarianism and segregation, but they felt that these were issues outside of Stranmillis and not within the area itself:

"Well I was working right in the centre of Belfast and my office was bombed twice. So, I mean going in and out to work, at times I have gone through terribly troubled situations" (Female, Unknown, 60+).

It also became apparent that the Troubles meant that people had limited opportunities to go out to pubs to socialise and several interviewees referred to preferring to stay within the area or go to friends' houses instead of going into town:

"All the Troubles did in areas like this was that instead of meeting people in the pub they gathered in each others' houses. It sort of brought back the dinner party. That came back with a vengeance!" (Male, Protestant, 60+).

In several conversations with residents, the river Lagan and Stranmillis Embankment appeared to act as a natural barrier, one which the Troubles rarely penetrated:

"The only occasions I would ever have had issues was when I was a kid in Botanic Gardens you know because that would be close to the Ormeau Road and that … but … you never really got the spill over, it'd never come across the river, … would be very lucky that way" (Male, Catholic, 19-24).

"It used to be lovely to take clients (to Cutters Wharf) on a good night and sit upstairs and look out along the river, and by that stage they were shooting the hell out of each other in some other part of Belfast, and these poor visitors would sit there and say to us, 'Where is riot torn Belfast?' It's in certain locations. But it's the same if you go to New York or wherever" (Male, Protestant, 60+).

All of the interviewees indicated that the Troubles did not impact on the area directly, and felt that they were not nearly as badly affected by the violence as areas such as North Belfast. The area's location in South Belfast and presence of the River Lagan acted as somewhat of a 'buffer' zone against some of the worst incidents of violence. The main impact of the Troubles on the area had been in restricting peoples' ability to go into and out of the city centre in terms of their working lives and also in terms of socialising.

Issues within the area

Perhaps partly as a result of the lack of impact of the violence during the Troubles in Stranmillis, the main issues in the area were not linked to sectarianism and/or segregation. The main concerns of local residents appeared to focus on over-development and Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs), burglaries, car parking and house prices:

"It's changing a little bit. I think there are a lot of multi-using houses being let out now to a lot of students moving into the area which isn't always a plus. But it hasn't changed too much except for a lot of over-development" (Female, Unknown, 60+).

Several residents suggested that the increase in rental properties in the area over the years reduced any sense of community or attachment to the area:

"Generally I see the bad changes happening more so than better things, because I think we're finding now that with an increase in the rental market, an increase generally with rental housing a lot of people will just come and go. They keep themselves to themselves and don't hold any sense of community. That has a detrimental effect on the area" (Male, Protestant, 19-24).

It was felt that although there was an element of anti-social behaviour and a number of burglaries within the area, the main concerns of the

majority of interviewees were related to everyday issues, such as house prices and car parking space, as opposed to factors relating to sectarianism and segregation.

Work

Stranmillis is primarily a residential area, and the majority of interviewees who were currently in employment worked elsewhere, particularly in Belfast city centre. None of the local residents referred to making a decision on where to work related to their community background. With many interviewees working in the city centre, no one had to alter their route to work to travel through areas in which they would feel safer, as the route along the Stranmillis Road past Queens University and into the city centre was perceived to be neutral. One interviewee specifically referred to the fact that it is possible to make your way on foot from Stranmillis to the city centre without traversing areas dominated by one particular background. Although interviewees generally felt that sectarianism and segregation did not impact upon Stranmillis as an area, several interviewees indicated an awareness of the sectarian geography of other parts of Belfast and would make decisions on where to go or where to possibly avoid accordingly. One interviewee contrasted walking past an area where one may feel uncomfortable as opposed to walking through such an area:

"No, if you just go straight through the town, there's nowhere to avoid. I would just walk past Donegal Pass, it's not like you are walking through the areas, you are walking past" (Female, Catholic, 19-24).

Most of those interviewed reported that they worked in a mixed environment, and that relations between employees from different community backgrounds were generally good and one interviewee noted that *"we had Catholics and Protestants and it was grand most times"*. Relations were perceived to have remained reasonable throughout the Troubles, although one interviewee felt that relations had improved over the years as the violence ended, as particular incidents during the Troubles had the ability to raise tensions within the workplace:

"Well, they did (improve). But we purposefully avoided people, you know we had to. But for instance I can remember going into work at the time of the Enniskillen bombing, I had to go to work on the Monday morning and it was a desperate time. The Protestants were uptight and the Catholics were in tears, middle-class professionals, I mean the Catholics were trying to apologise and explain how it had happened. So there was tension. There was this great

tension, so there was tension around incidents like that, yeah" (Female, Protestant, 60+).

Another interviewee who had recently worked in the city centre for a local company reported that relations between workers were good, and sectarianism and segregation did not influence his decision on where to work, or how to get to and from work:

"But I come from a Catholic background like and I worked for (name of company) for basically half a year so I would have been in the minority and that there, but you would never have felt that you were in the minority. Och, people were fine, people were fine. I never actually got close to anybody except one or two people who I would still be in contact with, I keep really friendly with them" (Male, Catholic, 19-24).

The interviewee in question would have taken the quickest route to get to work, even passing the predominantly loyalist Tates Avenue in South Belfast:

"Yeah, I mean the walk from work was fine. My route would have been, down Stranmillis, down Chlorine Gardens, then down Eglantine Avenue, then down Tates Avenue. Or sometimes go via the Lisburn Road and go over the bridge and down Apollo Road and then down into the Boucher Road" (Male, Catholic, 19-24).

The interviewee did however refer to altering his route to work during a relatively recent period of trouble:

"The only time that I didn't take the Tates Avenue route there was riots on or something, this would have been say two years ago, the Whiterock riots, I didn't particularly want to walk round there then" (Male, Catholic, 19-24).

Several interviewees who worked in Stranmillis itself spoke of how much they enjoyed working in the area and contrasted working there to the areas in which they lived. One interviewee referred to the area as being neutral which made her feel safer, as *"nobody up here knows me"*.

"Yeah I worked in North Belfast, in the town. But I love being up here, I love being out of the way, away from North Belfast" (Female, Catholic, 19-24).

Despite a number of interviewees having been retired for some years or having worked from home, the general experience of interviewees who were currently in employment was that the workplace was a mixed

environment in which they felt comfortable and in a location in which they felt safe.

Schooling

One of the main reasons given by interviewees for wanting to live in the area was the number of schools with a history of good academic performance situated within South Belfast. It was suggested that schools were a major 'pull' factor in encouraging young families to settle in the area:

"I think it does, I mean you have a lot more younger people moving into the area now. People move here because they are near Stranmillis Primary School, or try to move here …" (Female, Catholic, 19-24).

Stranmillis Primary School in particular had a good reputation among most interviewees, and was perceived as being *"a mixed community, Protestant and Catholics"*. Several interviewees also felt that the school was mixed in terms of culture and ethnicity as well, holding specific days for the many different cultures within the school. The school was also believed to be an important focal point for the local community, with many local groups holding events and meetings within school premises:

"Yes, Stranmillis Primary, it is a fantastic school, it is very, very mixed. It doesn't matter what religion, what race, you are accepted into it. There is no problem, but to be fair I would think there is a lot of younger families coming in, if they are mixed race or religion, they would do like multi-culture things which is great. The kids go in their national costume, the parents do their national dishes, its fabulous" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

The main secondary schools attended were Methodist College (Methody), Wellington College, Lagan College, Royal Belfast Academical Institution and Rathmore in Dunmurry. There was a perception among several of the interviewees that schools such as Methodist College were almost becoming de facto integrated schools as there was felt to be a rapidly increasing Catholic population in attendance. This led one interviewee to believe that many of the schools in south Belfast had become *"very mixed"*, and contrasted it with his experience at Methodist College in the 1970's when it was suggested that the school *"would have been 98 per cent Protestant really"*. One interviewee whose children were mixed race deliberately sent them to Methodist College as she felt it was the most ethnically mixed school in Belfast. It was felt by some that the increasing Catholic student numbers at schools such as Methodist

College may lead to local Protestants feeling that spaces for Protestants at 'their' schools were being filled up:

"Whether that is right or wrong I don't know, but that's a feeling that's out there, that they are taking up 'our' spaces and they should be going to their 'own' schools. Now, again when they are speaking with their Catholic neighbours, folk wouldn't dream of expressing themselves so bluntly, but that's what some people would feel" (Male, Protestant, 45-59).

A number of young people from Stranmillis attended Lagan College, which was established in 1981 as Northern Ireland's first integrated school. A number of parents in mixed relationships sent their children to this school and one mixed marriage couple felt that an integrated school made sense as they were an 'integrated family'.

There appeared to be few issues relating to sectarianism and segregation affecting pupils' travel and daily routines to and from school. The location of Stranmillis to the local schools meant that pupils travelling to the primary school could walk there within minutes with no difficulties. The fact that Methodist College is situated beside Queens University meant that it was also within walking distance or a short car journey through a primarily commercial area:

"I mean my husband would drop (name of child) up to school and then the other two to the corner of Methody and they would walk home" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

There were reports of one or two instances of some buses being stoned or some verbal abuse of pupils whose schools were easily identifiable by their uniforms, but these incidents occurred outside Stranmillis, in areas such as the Ormeau Park on the other side of the Annadale Embankment. One couple whose children attended Lagan College suggested that pupils of Lagan College would occasionally be picked on specifically because they were an integrated school and not associated with one community or another. However, the parents whose children attended Lagan College felt that this ambiguity in terms of community background helped the pupils if faced with any difficulties from pupils from other schools. One young person referred to the fact that there were so many different schools in South Belfast, both state and Catholic Maintained schools, leading to occasional disputes between pupils:

"The Ormeau Road there are so many different schools, like there is Aquinas,

Lagan, St. Joes, St. Pats and all. I was on the bus the other day and they were slagging us off at Lagan College" (Male, under 16).

Any occasional difficulties experienced by pupils of Lagan College occurred outside of Stranmillis itself, and there were no reported issues affecting pupils when they were in their school uniforms in Stranmillis. Some pupils had experienced occasional difficulties in relation to bus journeys, but these problems were usually limited:

"Yes, because they didn't go through any interface areas. The Lagan bus that came up from central station in the mornings, then through Short Strand, I mean the police used to have to escort it through. And that is common, and the same in west Belfast, the Lagan buses got stoned as well" (Male, Protestant, 60+).

One interviewee who lived in Stranmillis but went to school in North Belfast felt that any difficulties arising from being recognised in a school uniform did not occur within Stranmillis itself but in other areas:

"The odd time when you would maybe walk from the school down to the train station, instead of getting the bus to the train station. If you ever walked through that part of the New Lodge or Duncairn Gardens you might get the odd comment like, but there was never any full on fights or never got clouted with stones, it was mainly just the odd comment like" (Male, Catholic, 25-29).

Another interviewee contrasted the situation facing pupils in North Belfast as completely different to that in Stranmillis:

"When I was in North Belfast I was conscious that people avoided areas … places people didn't go. The kids who went to Castle High didn't go up on the Antrim Road and walk down, they headed down the Shore Road, that sort of thing, a lot of that happened. But it doesn't really happen here, it's not really an issue at all" (Male, Protestant, 45-59).

Shopping and Facilities

The research highlighted that within Stranmillis shopping routines were for the most part unaffected by issues relating to sectarianism and segregation. The main concerns of interviewees in relation to where to shop were based on convenience, price and access to car parking. The area's location to what was perceived as an increasingly neutral Belfast city centre, as well as proximity to shopping areas such as the Lisburn Road, Forestside shopping centre, and the Ormeau Road meant that

individuals based their shopping routines on where they perceived to be the most convenient location, and which shops had the best prices. A recurring theme was that shopping patterns were based on "handiness":

"Well, depending on where I am. This morning I did my weekly shopping over at Forestside, some days I go to the Lisburn Road, some days I go down to Loughview. Handiness, and just where I am. I know where I am and I know where the shops are, I don't frequent one particular store all the time, it depends" (Female, Unknown, 60+).

"I would do my shopping now round at Sainsburys, Forestside. It would be, you have everything in a sense that you need there. It's either there or town kind of thing. It's handy, it's convenient" (Male, Protestant, 19-24).

The fact that there were a number of shops within walking distance in the area itself (including a greengrocers and newsagent) meant that the area was well catered for in terms of shopping facilities. Several interviewees referred to individuals within the area being keen to use these local shops at Loughview given their quality and a perceived need to support smaller businesses as opposed to larger superstores. It became apparent that this support for the 'local shops' transcended issues relating to community background. One couple from a Catholic background spoke of how they had always shopped with the butchers in the predominantly Loyalist area of Sandy Row because they had the best meat at the best prices, and community background was not perceived as an issue, nor was safety travelling into and out of that particular area:

"Handiness, and they had the best of bacon, very good bacon, and if you wanted chicken or anything. They still have it and I have been every week for years. I was just there the other day. They are very reasonably priced, no dearer than anybody else" (Female, Catholic, 60+).

Although the majority of interviewees believed that sectarianism and segregation were not issues which impacted upon Stranmillis itself, it became apparent that most interviewees were very much aware of the sectarian geography of other areas of Belfast, and may alter their routes or routines accordingly. Only one young person identified a specific problem in the local area and spoke of a reluctance to use Dunnes Stores on the Ormeau Road near the Annadale Embankment as he had been called a 'Fenian' by some local young people on his last trip there:

"I won't use that store because I went over and got called a 'Fenian bastard'. I'm not even Catholic. They just assume that" (Male, Protestant, Under 16).

Another interviewee contrasted her belief that people in Stranmillis would *"shop anywhere, it's a different kind of place"*, with where she lived in North Belfast:

"Well, whenever I was going to the Asda on the Shore Road I got really paranoid, it was right smack bang in the middle of it and there was crowds outside it, you know, wee fellas and all having drinks. I was ok, but you could have told by my face that I was the only Catholic" (Female, Catholic, 19-24).

Interviewees' daily routines in terms of shopping did not appear to be affected by issues related to sectarianism and segregation, but residents were aware of sectarian divisions beyond their immediate area and could avoid them if they chose.

None of the interviewees noted any difficulties when accessing their GP or banking facilities. GPs had often been the family doctor for years and tended to remain so even when individuals had moved to different areas:

"But I think a doctors actually is the odd thing because people will stick with a doctor, even should they live far away they will still go to it, because it is the family trait". (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

Community background or location of a doctor's surgery geographically appeared to be irrelevant as a factor in choosing a doctor, as the GP's surgery was generally perceived to be a mixed environment. Similarly, interviewees tended to bank with whom they had banked with all of their life, and access to banking facilities was not perceived to be problematic given the area's proximity to Queens University and Belfast city centre.

There are a number of leisure centres, tennis courts and gyms in the wider area, notably the Queens Physical Education Centre and the YMCA, and these were felt to be safe spaces which anyone could go to regardless of their community background. However, one individual from a Protestant background was reluctant to use the gym across the Annadale Embankment on the Lower Ormeau Road as he felt the area had come to be synonymous as the *"No Orange feet district"*. This appeared to be in line with other comments from interviewees who were very much aware of issues relating to sectarianism and the segregated geography of Belfast in other areas, but felt that Stranmillis was relatively insulated from the worst excesses of either.

Socialising

The location of Stranmillis ensured relatively easy access to many social facilities such as restaurants, bars and other entertainment, the area has a plethora of restaurants in particular *"right on your doorstep"* which meant that people did not have to travel too far, or even go out of the area, if they did not wish to:

"Always sort of stay near the area, there's everything, such a selection, Thai, Indian, Chinese, European you name it, it's here. Same with the Chinese as well up there, we are very spoilt for things here" (Female, Protestant, 30-44).

The one local bar in the area was perceived by all of the interviewees to be mixed in terms of community background and a safe venue for individuals from a diverse range of backgrounds. The bar was seen to attract a significant number of individuals who lived further away, and some interviewees put this down to the more relaxed atmosphere in Stranmillis when compared to certain other venues in Belfast:

"You feel comfortable enough in Stranmillis anywhere. I don't see, I have never had any real trouble. You can go out there in Stranmillis in the early hours and it's quiet down here. (Name of bar) is up here, and it attracts the kind of clientele where you never get any trouble from them, you know people who are making a lot of money would go to (name of bar), but you know, you wouldn't get anything there" (Male, Catholic, 19-24).

Younger interviewees stated that they felt safe in Stranmillis itself even at night time and at the weekends, with most feeling able to go anywhere within the area. On occasions, some interviewees were more reluctant to go to pubs in predominantly single identity areas, with one interviewee from a Catholic background avoiding a bar because:

"It's a real Protestant bar … That's one pub I wouldn't go to. Even the look of it from outside makes me go no" (Female, Catholic, 19-24).

Similarly, another interviewee from a Protestant background would not cross the Annadale Embankment to socialise in pubs on the predominantly nationalist Lower Ormeau Road as he did not feel it would be safe to do so:

"No I wouldn't feel safe going to a pub there. I wouldn't. I mean I had a friend who did live off the Lower Ormeau Road, but it was in closed apartments. I wouldn't have any problem going to anyone's house in a sense, but I wouldn't

go to a pub there. There is one pub on that street and I know who it's associated with, it's a place you do not go" (Male, Protestant, 19-24).

However, the same interviewee was similarly reluctant to go to pubs on the upper stretch of the nearby Ormeau Road which he perceived to have in the past been associated with Loyalist elements:

"Yeah, places probably I would feel more comfortable but in the early days I wouldn't have gone to would have been … on the kind of upper kind of the Ormeau Road, that was associated with Loyalist paramilitaries for many years" (Male, Protestant, 19-24).

Several interviewees highlighted that they based their decisions on where to socialise on a variety of factors which usually focused on atmosphere, type of music, and the type of crowd. There was a sense that some bars in Belfast may be avoided more so because they were associated with anti-social behaviour and drink related violence rather than sectarian related issues. It was felt that the type of clientele was an important factor in choosing where to go, while another interviewee noted that *"hallians on the street"* would deter him from going somewhere rather than any other factor. Shaftesbury Square, in particular, appeared to be an area many interviewees appeared keen to avoid due to its association with anti-social behaviour and violence:

"It is full of troublemakers, and young fellas with a couple of drinks in them, Donegal Pass, Shaftsbury Square" (Female, Catholic, 19-24).

"I don't like going to places kind of down around Shaftesbury Square like" (Male, Catholic, 25-29).

The city centre in general was now seen as a more neutral venue where everyone could go without fear of being 'known' to come from a particular area:

"I just like places like the Bot, the Duke of York, Whites Tavern, where no-one cares, places like that" (Female, Catholic, 19-24).

Several interviewees reported having no difficulties walking home to Stranmillis from the Queens University area or from further in the town centre even at night, and there were no issues related to certain taxi firms refusing to operate in the area.

Summary

Stranmillis is an area which, in geographic terms, experienced a limited impact of the Troubles. Despite this, however, a number of interviewees displayed an unwillingness to discuss the Troubles directly as they believed that it was now something in the past, although interviewees often made more subtle reference to the Troubles throughout the discussions. The area was perceived as one which had always been relatively mixed with little or no segregation of the two main communities, and was perceived as a culturally neutral area without visible displays of identity such as flags, murals or bonfires. This demographic mix in terms of community background and ethnicity led to many interviewees believing it to be one of the more religiously and ethnically diverse areas in Belfast. Relations in the area appeared to be relatively harmonious even throughout the Troubles, with most interviewees suggesting that community background played little or no role in how people would treat one another.

There appeared to be no real issues concerning segregation and sectarianism within Stranmillis itself, although younger interviewees of school age reported some occasional difficulties related to the wearing of uniforms when travelling outside of the area in other parts of Belfast. Any decisions to avoid certain establishments when socialising were generally based on concerns related to anti-social behaviour and drink-fuelled fighting as opposed to the possibility of sectarianism. Interviewees rarely gave much thought to which route to take or where to go or where to shop, and the area in this sense was aided by its relatively close proximity to what was perceived as an increasingly culturally neutral Belfast city centre. There was a general belief that one could go about one's daily life without giving much thought to sectarianism or the effects of segregation, although interviewees were aware of the sectarian geography of other areas neighbouring Stranmillis, however they generally perceived Stranmillis to be far removed from the worst excesses of sectarianism and segregation.

9. New Lodge and Tigers Bay, North Belfast

North Belfast is an area characterised by high levels of social and economic deprivation and one where the population has been decreasing, with numbers dropping from 95,683 in 1992 to 81,944 in 2006. The area has been heavily affected by the Troubles and remains a highly segregated area, with a large number of sectarian incidents recorded by the police. There was an increase in the total number of incidents with a sectarian motivation in North Belfast from 316 in 2005-2006 to 487 in 2006-2007, an increase of 54.1 per cent (PSNI 2007). North Belfast has been described as:

"A large number of distinct communities most of which … are regarded either as exclusively Protestant/Unionist or Catholic/Nationalist territory … The boundaries, or interfaces, between these oppositional communities are the fracture zones where hostility and antipathy are maintained and renewed through violence and disorder" (Belfast City Council, 2008).

This research focused on two neighbouring areas within North Belfast, less that a mile from the city centre, New Lodge and Tigers Bay, which extend either side of Duncairn Gardens and between Antrim Road and York Street. Duncairn Gardens was formerly a main shopping street for local people but was badly affected by the Troubles and for many years effectively served as the interface between the two communities. The numerous defensive barriers have started to be removed in recent years as the road has been subject to extensive regeneration through the development of a business centre and numerous community projects and organisations. The numerous shops and small businesses on the Antrim Road appear to be flourishing and there is evidence of some regeneration on York Street. The main resource in the immediate vicinity is the Yorkgate complex, the site of an old tobacco factory, which has been extensively re-developed in recent years and now contains a supermarket, multi-screen cinema, swimming pool and fitness suite, and a number of shops and fast food outlets.

In 2007, the total population living in the New Lodge was 5,224. The total population in the Duncairn ward was 4,007. Statistics on the area do not show Tigers Bay as a ward in itself but as part of the Duncairn ward, therefore the data given here for Tigers Bay covers in reality a larger area than the one studied. In terms of community background, more than 90 per cent of the New Lodge population is from a Catholic community background whilst more than 90 per cent of the Tigers Bay population is from a Protestant background. The New Lodge is ranked

amongst the top 1 per cent most deprived Super Output Areas in Northern Ireland in both categories of multiple deprivation and deprivation affecting children (PPR 2007:3).

Previous research in North Belfast has shown the impact that sectarianism and issues linked to segregation have had on young people within the area. A 2005 survey of 2,486 young people between 14-17 years of age documented that 26 per cent of young people had felt intimidated travelling to and from their schools in North Belfast, and the largest number of respondents who had experienced violence and disorder (47 per cent) indicated that young people wearing school uniforms were the main protagonists in these incidents (Byrne, Conway and Ostermeyer, 2005). The area remains an interface area, with tensions rising during the marching season and the cross road junction of Duncairn Gardens and North Queen Street having been the site of numerous incidents of disorder and rioting in recent years.

Methodological issues in North Belfast

There were few methodological problems in North Belfast apart from being able to get participants to agree to complete the diaries, with many viewing it as too time consuming. However, this area was the only area where agreement and successful completion was gained from four interviewees. The diary information is incorporated into the findings. The research was conducted throughout the summer, which posed problems in accessing young people either due to holidays or participation in summer schemes. The research team were also aware that this area of North Belfast has been heavily researched in the past, an issue raised by some people who were approached, and this contributed to some reluctance in participating in the project.

Views and opinions of the area

Some interviewees were able to recall what North Belfast was like before the Troubles, and everyone agreed that while it was mixed residentially, it was not always mixed socially. The social segregation was already apparent especially within schools and churches. This segregation meant for some there was little interaction with the other side:

"I used to live in the other side, a long time ago before … Hillman Street, which is near the New Lodge, in them days we lived closer to the you know, closer to them … but then I don't remember any Catholics when I was a kid, not even in my day" (Male, Protestant, 60+).

However, other interviewees felt that there was a greater degree of mixing due to living in a residentially mixed neighbourhood. One interviewee felt that this had given people more opportunity to interact with the other side but that this changed after the Troubles commenced:

"When I was younger we did have Roman Catholic people living in the street and I was friendly with Roman Catholic people. We didn't realise there was any difference between Catholics and Protestants, so once the Troubles got quite bad … there wouldn't be any Roman Catholics left in that part of North Belfast now at all …" (Female, Protestant, 45-59).

Many spoke positively about neighbours who were from the other religion:

"They were good neighbours, I had good neighbours live beside me, and there were Protestant families on both sides of me" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

Furthermore, those from the minority religious background in an area talked about taking part in cultural events like parades or festivals around the Twelfth which was welcomed and enjoyed by both communities:

"… see on the Twelfth, whenever you were kids, I mean we used to join the bands, we used to think it was great, you know we used to follow them everywhere, so we did because we were so young I mean naïve … and I used to carry my wee Union Jack with me and thought nothing of it!" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

"There was Protestant families and Catholics living next door to each other … you know and those families went to see the parade, I mean I don't think you would ever get that happening now, and she helped us to arrange a barbecue on the Eleventh night …" (Female, Protestant, 45-59).

Duncairn Gardens was highlighted as being one area where both communities lived side by side and both sides would come and shop. Many commented on how different the street was today, acting as an interface between Tigers Bay and New Lodge:

"On a Saturday, our routine was my aunt came up, she lived in Whiteabbey, and my mum and her and my sisters, we walked along and went up Duncairn Gardens, that's where we did our shopping, and down Brougham Street … and then there was a chippy on the right hand side … and I mean that's where everybody went …" (Female, Protestant, 45-59).

Interviewees described how they perceived the area today with most people mentioning that North Belfast was a working-class, segregated area, which had been badly affected by the Troubles. However, many felt that the area was slowly recovering from this impact. It was however felt that clear divisions remain and people from both Tigers Bay and the New Lodge were able to identify very clearly the borders of the two areas:

"Well, from Duncairn Gardens to Skegoneill Avenue is nearly a hundred percent Protestant. Go to the other side, a hundred yards from here and you're in a mainly Catholic area. Nearly enough a hundred percent Catholic" (Male, Protestant, 45-59).

Other changes observed by some interviewees included the changing demographics on the Antrim Road. This area in the past was perceived as predominantly Protestant but is now seen as either mixed or mainly Catholic, and also as middle to upper class. These changes were felt to have occurred during the Troubles as the Catholic population had entered education whilst the Protestant population worked and obtained jobs due to their network of relationships enabling them to access employment. This resulted in the Catholics entering higher paid professions and being able to purchase property on the Antrim Road according to some interviewees:

"When I was a boy, from Carlisle Circus to Glengormley, it was totally, well, with wee enclaves but very few, it was totally Unionist dominated. Now it's totally reversed. From Carlisle Circus to Glengormley you could walk up with a Tricolour round you and you wouldn't get touched … there's a theory … when I was a boy you couldn't get work … so most of them (Catholics) went into education … Now the upshot of it is that most of the Catholic population of the middle class-upper class have an education …" (Male, Catholic, 45-59).

"Historically the Protestant male used to be able to walk into a job because his father had that job. He did not need to have an education or a qualification for it. That all changed in the beginning of the Troubles" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

Some also saw boundaries of areas change especially Tigers Bay, which people now felt incorporated a wider area:

"Tigers Bay was only three streets, Hallidays Road, Robina Court and part of Mackey Street. Now they class it all Tigers Bay" (Male, Protestant, 45-59).

Some felt that this had come about due to people wanting to say that they were from the area even if they lived slightly outside it and due to the media classifying the whole area as Tigers Bay:

"You see this is a media thing. The media has classed Tigers Bay now running from Duncairn Gardens to Fortwilliam. For us Tigers Bay is originally two streets … that was Mackey Street and Lawther Street" (Male, Protestant, 45-59).

Thus people were aware of some considerable change in the area over the course of their lifetimes, particularly in terms of an increase in levels of residential and social segregation, and of a change overall demographics, which in turn has led to changes in peoples perception of their social environment.

Impact of the Troubles

One of the major issues discussed was the violence that North Belfast had experienced both during and after the Troubles and the effects of this violence on the community. Throughout the history of the Troubles Belfast was severely impacted with North and West Belfast being particularly affected. From the beginning of the Troubles until 1998, there were 58 fatal incidents in the New Lodge and 62 victims killed who lived in the New Lodge area, whilst there were 56 fatal incidents in the Duncairn Ward and 24 victims killed who lived in the Duncairn Ward (Fay et al., 1999:144-5). Most of the people interviewed had experienced loss either within their family or among their neighbours or friends. Many incidents were recounted by interviewees, with one incident involving a young man who was killed during rioting whilst handling a pipe bomb in 2001 being widely discussed. Many people referred to the incident and more notably the memorial to the young person which was regularly vandalised:

"He has a memorial in there … When we riot we just go in and wreck it. It's not just cause it's his memorial, it's just to hurt them because he was a Protestant as well" (Male, Catholic, 17-18).

The impact of such incidents both in the past and recently was still obvious in the community:

"It (the impact of these incidents) is very raw, it's very raw you know in these families, it's very raw in our lives as well … for the very fact that my husband and my daughter had witnessed it that morning you know" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

Although violent incidents are still remembered, their impact on daily routines seems to have lessened. During the Troubles, loss and violence impacted on daily life in multiple ways:

"Because my father was killed, in 1980 he was killed as a result of the Troubles, so that we then became a one parent family and that, the impact it had on my mum and how our lives changed, so yes definitely it had an impact on us, lots of things changed … everything changed, our whole social life changed, our economic well being changed, emotionally everything changed too, it was constant worry and upset and dread … not really knowing why, what's gonna happen and then the fear of it happening again and again and again …" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

Individuals from both communities were able to name locations where violent incidents had taken place either within their community or at the borders of 'their' area. Although walking past the actual place of the incident no longer bothered people, they would still think about the incident as they walked past:

"Very much so, I walk past some corners and I would say remember such and such was killed there, it's just a passing comment and away you go … if you think too much of things like that you go into a hospital. Blank it" (Male, Catholic, 60+).

Issues within the area

People identified four main areas of activity or recurrent issues that create problems and raise tensions in the area. These are interface violence between the two communities; feuds within the loyalist community; residential and social segregation and the displays of flags and emblems. People also cited more recent problems associated with anti-social behaviour as a source of concern. Each of these issues will be discussed in some detail.

Interface violence still occurs in the area although people said that it now mostly involves children and takes place over the summer months. It also occurred to a lesser degree than in previous years. It was felt by some interviewees that the parade and marching season along with the weather contribute to the extent of the violence. Males were felt to be still more actively involved in rioting on interfaces than females. Several interviewees mentioned that older teenagers and men would sometimes join the rioting:

"It didn't start sectarian, it would have been children fighting with children, probably too young to even know what the Troubles were about … but would have started throwing stones and the next thing … it would have escalated out of all proportion and adults were involved in it …" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

Although rioting now occurs to a lesser degree, it still happens regularly during the summer. Talking with young people and youth workers it was quite clear that rioting on the interface had become a common occurrence during the summer months:

"It's Friday, so (rioting on the interface) might happen, cause everyone drinks tonight … they talk to each other on their computer to say what time they're rioting …" (Male, Catholic, 16-18).

Although all interviewees wished to see the interface walls and fences come down at some point, they felt that they were still needed for the time being. At present, most of the people who live in the Tigers Bay and the New Lodge still feel more comfortable within their own community than anywhere else. If they have to go through the other area, most of the interviewees would still prefer to travel by car or to get on a bus than to walk. People stated that they still did not feel completely at ease along the Duncairn Gardens - North Queen Street interface, although this fear had declined since the end of the Troubles. One mother recounted how during the Troubles:

"I would never have allowed my son to come down Duncairn Gardens" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

This woman explained that her fear was not linked to the Troubles or to sectarian behaviour but to ordinary crime in the area:

"It's nothing to do with the Troubles anymore, it's got to do with … just ordinary crime … there is no housing here now … if there were housing here now, you would say yes, there's always somewhere they can run. There's nowhere they can run now for safety so the only way you travel Duncairn Gardens at night is car" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

This concern over the changing nature of violence and insecurity in part links to the experiences of feuding which has erupted on a number of occasions within Loyalist areas. Over the period of time when interviews were being conducted in North Belfast a car was petrol bombed and according to some interviewees this was related to feuding between the UDA and UVF. The feud seems to be affecting young people, in particular, both in terms of being victims and perpetrators:

"… they would say there are certain areas they wouldn't go to and there's certain places they wouldn't go … because they wouldn't feel safe, but not only

because of Roman Catholics they won't. They go to other parts of the area like for example Mount Vernon they wouldn't go down there because that's part of that feud" (Female, Protestant, 45-59).

Some of the young people highlighted the continued rumbling tensions associated with a feud within the UDA, which impacted especially between people in Tigers Bay and Rathcoole, in Newtownabbey:

"There was one (feud) the other day between Rathcoole and Tigers Bay … Aye and South Antrim, the shooting in Carrick and all … there's been four feuds in the last three years. It's always between UDA and UDA, or UDA and UVF" (Male, Protestant, under 16).

This persistent feuding has had an impact on safety and has increased fragmentation and segregation within the Loyalist community, although the divisions between Protestants and Catholics remain the main line of fracture.

During the Troubles the trend was established for people to move out of an area where their own community background was in the minority, and relocate to areas where they were in the majority. In addition some people were forced out of areas in which they were in the minority. Some interviewees recounted their families' experiences of living in an area where they were in the minority:

"When we lived on the interface, you just couldn't have slept, you couldn't go to bed at night … your home was getting attacked … you know you just didn't know what a night, a good night's sleep was … and it was very, very nerve wrecking for the whole family … you know I've grandchildren and they couldn't come down to visit me they couldn't come to my house it was too dangerous" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

"… they gradually took over our streets and I had to sell my house and move to this side, you know, for peace … there was a bit more trouble so there was, you were too close to it … you had to get among your own people! If you understand me you had to get among your Protestant people and they had to stick to their Catholic people" (Male, Protestant, 60+).

Through this process North Belfast became more formally and completely residentially segregated and people began to feel safer living amongst people from their own community, and the residential areas were protected by the community itself:

"When the children were growing up in the 70s and the 80s, … you had to keep them in the community. They had to stay in their own community because it was too dangerous for them to go out … You were safer in your own area" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

"We stopped cars coming into the area, we would then ask them what they were doing in the area, because the police weren't about … the police didn't help much in our time, we had to look after ourselves more then … helping to protect" (Male, Protestant, 60+).

Some interviewees stated that during this time there were strong community bonds with extended family and neighbours helping each other to get through every day life. For some this was the main reason for staying in the area:

"It was a very close knit community where everyone looked after one another, so you always had your friends and your family around you, so that's why you stayed …" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

"Family was always very, very important … we shared out whatever money and whatever you had in the fridge was given out all those sort of things. There would have been closer contact with neighbours over things like childminding and that could have been very much right, mummies were going to work, next door minded you and got the dinner, started the diner and vice versa, the next week mummy would have did it for them and brought us to school and collected us from school … a lot of that went on" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

However, it was notable that the feelings of communal solidarity and family support was not so evident in today's society, and a number of people indicated that they felt they received less support from both families and neighbours than they had in the past. At the same time people from both Tigers Bay and the New Lodge mentioned the persistent presence of murals and flags which immediately identified the area as associated with one of the two main communities and was used to make a political statement or to mark out the territory:

"If you were outside the area and walking into the New Lodge you knew right away you were in a Nationalist, Republican area. There was much flags, murals on the wall, even things like posters going up you know and the graffiti on the wall, very much sort of … knew where you came from and knew what you were, from a very young age" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

"To me there's a difference between a Catholic area and a Republican area. And

it's defined probably by the flags and the activities that go on within an area, and maybe even the clubs and the pubs and the bars within an area, it would be like … my friend lives in a Catholic area, I would say, there's no marching bands, there's no Sinn Féin posters up, there's no Tricolours up, there's no gable walls painted, whereas the New Lodge would be seen as Republican area because it has got these things" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

Most interviewees felt that these signs and symbols had become neutral to them because they were so used to seeing them on a daily basis and had become oblivious to their presence and to their message:

"Well, you have grown up with it, so it has always been there, so it doesn't feel abnormal to you, it just feels like it should be there so it does" (Female, Protestant, 31).

However, it was felt that this would not be the case for outsiders and the visible signs marking areas could be intimidating, interviewees from both the New Lodge and Tigers Bay felt that this would especially be the case for some of the murals in Tigers Bay, which still displayed images of armed paramilitaries.

Many of the interviewees raised concerns about a number of other issues that they felt were currently affecting the area. These were mainly associated with drugs, anti-social behaviour and inter-communal rioting. Young people were identified as causing trouble at night, and at times even during the day, sitting in the streets drinking and taking drugs. Some of the young people we spoke to admitted that when they got drunk they would be more likely be involved in rioting on interfaces.

Other more general social issues that people were aware of included an increase in the number of teenage single mothers, many of whose children were being raised by their grandparents, while depression and abuse of prescription drugs was also mentioned as a factor affecting many people in North Belfast:

"We have a lot of chronic anxiety and depression stemming from the beginning of the Troubles, and hasn't really eased as much … now we have a high suicide rate, a lot of young males, young females … we don't have the Troubles anymore causing the problems but we do have the drug addictions, the drug use, which is causing family problems …" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

These findings indicate that the recent history of North Belfast is having a residual impact on people's lives in a number of ways. On one hand

there is the legacy of the Troubles, which includes segregation, sectarian tensions, social distance, inter-communal rioting and intra-communal feuding. On the other hand there are more personal issues associated with a sense of loss, including drug misuse and depression. Finally there are a range of issues associated with young people's involvement in anti-social behaviour, and the abuse of drugs and alcohol and a sense of disaffection and alienation from the adult society.

Work

While the residential communities were almost totally segregated, most interviewees who were in work felt that their workplace was mixed, and for some people this was the first time they were in close contact with someone from a different community background. The general consensus was that relations were fine and it was rare for any issues to arise:

"Through work you know (interaction would occur), as I say it was never an issue when I was working, that you wouldn't work here or you wouldn't work there" (Female, Protestant, 45-59).

The business centre in Duncairn Gardens was referred to by some participants as being a positive venture with both sides of the community working and sharing the complex:

"I happen to know a lot of people that have the units in it and it's both communities who are using it you know, so that in itself is good" (Female, Catholic, 45-59).

Some people commented that although there was some mixing and socialising with people from the other community at or after work, the barriers needed to be maintained between the work and the home environment, for safety's sake if nothing else:

"We went out and had social drink, it was the town, not down here, I never brought them down here! You couldn't walk into a Protestant pub with them! But up the town, yes, I've been up the town with a Catholic, yes" (Male, Protestant, 60+)

Some young people made a clear distinction between people from the other community background that they met through work and with whom they happily socialised, and people who lived on 'the other side' in North Belfast who they felt they couldn't get to know or indeed

wouldn't want to get to know. Several young males felt that they "got on" better with the Protestants they worked with in other areas, but they did not get on with young Protestants from Tigers Bay.

"(names young Protestant) from Glengormley, loads of them. All snouts like, but they are all sound as fuck …" (Male, Catholic, 16-18).

Some interviewees highlighted that although work posed no problems travelling to and from work could raise issues. One interviewee remembered how he used to change his route everyday on his way to work during the height of the Troubles:

"I used to work down across the road but further on … in the docks, but in the area, and I had to be very careful, a couple of people were shot dead going and coming from the same place, so you weren't getting up jumping for joy and saying I'm going to work this morning, you were getting up with dread and deciding which way am I going to go to work? … so that's the way everybody done it, you just took a different route home and back, so as nobody could turn round and say: He does the same thing every day!" (Male, Catholic, 60+).

This was especially common for young males who felt that going into or near to certain areas still posed a danger for them. A mother stated that she would not change her routes to and from work but would advise her son to do so. However, while others did not feel the need to change their everyday routines, they still felt the need to display vigilance in their travels outside their home environment.

Schooling

The majority of young people in North Belfast attended school according to their community background. Little Flower, St. Patrick's, Fortwilliam, St. Malachy's, and Edmund Rice are perceived as the Catholic schools in the area whilst Currie Primary, Belfast Royal Academy and Castle High are perceived as the Protestant schools. There is one integrated school in North Belfast, Hazelwood Primary School and Integrated College, which was created in 1985. However, only a small minority of the children in North Belfast attend the school. Several reasons have been put forward to explain this including the limited number of places available, parents sending their children to the school they themselves attended, the proximity of schools to home, and children wanting to go to the same schools as their friends. Some members of the Catholic community also believed that Catholic schools had better standards:

"It was well recognised that the Catholic schools provided a better education" (Female, Catholic, 45-59)

During the Troubles many recalled being subjected to trouble as they travelled to and from school. The amount of trouble experienced usually depended on the route that they took to go to school. All interviewees recalled memories of school buses being stoned on the way to or from school and indeed some mentioned incidents which had only occurred in the last few years. One mother recalled her experiences:

"We were lucky in that the route to the school was a mixed area, so you're talking Antrim Road, and both communities used it … and they were very safe, reasonably safe … you would always get someone who decides … or some child who decides: 'There's a Catholic bus! Stone it!' or 'There's a Protestant bus! Stone it!'. That is not the rule, that is the rarity … you will always get it … it used to be more frequent. But it's random, it's not organised or it's not something that you'd expect on a daily basis" (Female, Catholic, 45-59)

Many interviewees commented that school uniforms were an obvious way to identify a child's community background. However, others also stated that they now tended to use football tops and sports wear as a way of identifying community background which also affected young people in their social lives:

"Getting off the bus this morning my son was: will I cover my top? And I'm like: yes, do, cover your top … there's still a tension there I don't feel at all safe and he obviously didn't feel safe" (Female, Catholic, 30-44).

Another female interviewee recalled having to alter her route home from school a number of years ago to avoid pupils getting out from the nearby Protestant school. The general impression emanating from interviews was that the situation regarding safety going to and from school had improved over recent years, although there was still an element of caution among a number of interviewees in avoiding certain parts of North Belfast when they wore their school uniform.

All young people in the area seemed to have been involved in cross-community programmes at some stage through school or youth clubs. Most interviewees found the experience positive and they got to interact with people from the other community. However, sustained relations did not appear to happen:

"We took a group from here and East Belfast up to Sweden for three weeks and the boys and girls got on brilliant for the three weeks … but it's just they are back in their areas and they can't … they have to put barriers up again, that they don't like Catholics and just in case other people in their area see them go on like that and then they get a hard time from people in the area" (Male, Catholic, 30-44).

An additional problem for those who wanted to try to maintain relationships with people on the other side was that finding a 'neutral space' to meet often proved too difficult, while the alternative of entering one or the other's area was deemed too unsafe. One Catholic female interviewee recalled the difficulties facing her son in meeting some friends in a predominantly loyalist part of North Belfast when the cross-community group were attacked by a number of other local youths. The majority of interviewees felt that while cross-community programmes were a good idea, they were not sustained for long enough to make a significant improvement in relations, and that even when there was progress the lack of neutral space in North Belfast made it difficult for young people from all community backgrounds to attend programmes and develop relationships with people from a different background.

Shopping

Most people shopped for small everyday items such as milk and bread in local corner shops, which were perceived as belonging to that community and which are numerous throughout both areas. Larger weekly shopping would be carried out in the bigger supermarkets, this meant that residents from the two areas would 'mix' in the shopping environment albeit at a superficial level. There are a number of large shops in the vicinity of New Lodge and Tigers Bay, including Tesco at the Yorkgate centre and Iceland, both of which are within walking distance, Lidl and Asda a short distance along the Shore Road or the larger Abbeycentre complex a bit further away.

In our interviews it emerged that people who shopped at the Yorkgate centre used separate entrances according to their community background, with people from New Lodge using the entrance on North Queen Street and those from Tigers Bay preferring the entrance on Brougham Street:

"So anybody going in that way is very much seen as: you go in that way, you're Catholic, you go in over that way, you're Protestant" (Female, Catholic, 30-44)

Some younger male interviewees revealed that they would not go to the centre due to concerns over safety, this appeared to be more of a concern for young men, and it is worth remembering that a young man was stabbed at a bus stop in front of Yorkgate not so long ago, for being from the 'wrong' community. The safety fears did not appear to be an issue for younger females:

"His girl would probably go to Yorkgate and all more than him, cos she's a girl and she wouldn't get beat compared to a boy" (Male, Protestant, under 16).

It also emerged that some of the young males would use the Yorkgate area to 'hang out', due to lack of alternative spaces, and that this has resulted in rioting starting on occasion, especially at night-time. As a result some of the young people from Tigers Bay indicated that they would not go near the centre as they felt that there were too many Catholics and thus they felt unsafe. Instead we were told that *"You feel safer going to Abbeycentre … cos it's all Prods"* (Male, Protestant, under 16), this was despite the fact that the Abbeycentre is much further away.

Services

When choosing other services such as post offices and banks people were inclined to use the most convenient one. The choice of bank depended mainly on using the same one that their parents used, or the one that their employer was with. However, in spite of this general assertion, a number of people we interviewed in New Lodge tended to bank with the Bank of Ireland whilst people from Tigers Bay banked with the Ulster Bank.

There are a number of GPs surgeries in North Belfast, most of which are found to be situated on interfaces, eg at the corner of North Queen Street and Brougham Street, on Duncairn Gardens and at Carlisle Circus. None of the interviewees ever personally experienced any trouble going to their GP, but some however recalled incidents that had happened during the Troubles, such as a woman and her child who allegedly were attacked at the surgery on North Queen Street. It also emerged that whenever an incident occurred at the interface access to the GPs was restricted. One interviewee recalled the situation after a young male was killed at the North Queen Street and Brougham Street interface:

"A big crowd of girls standing outside the doctor's and all that was going on and really really dirty looks and all and I was petrified, it was awful, and even now I would be a bit … if I had to go to the doctor's tomorrow I wouldn't be nervous or anything but through July and through August whenever there was tension I

wouldn't walk over to there if there was a big crowd standing, definitely not, no" (Female, Catholic, 28).

While in principle the preference is for people to access shops and services nearby, the reality is different with people making decisions based on a range of factors, but with safety prominent among them. Even so interpreting safety differed for young and old, for males and females, while everybody was more aware of safety issues at times of generally heightened tensions, such as after an incident or during the marching season.

Socialising and leisure facilities

We have already noted that some young people use the local shopping centres as a space to hang out due to the limited range of local facilities, and the risks this might have for young men. Similarly many of the females we spoke to were reluctant to socialise in any of the local pubs, in either area, as they were perceived to be paramilitary 'hang-outs' and therefore not particularly attractive. For many people there has been a greater willingness to socialise in Belfast city centre, largely due to a feeling that it is now a safer space. Within the city centre many areas are now perceived as being neutral, although some interviewees were still able to identify spaces that they termed 'Catholic bars' and 'Protestant bars'. A small percentage of the interviewees said they felt uncomfortable going into a bar where the 'other' religious tradition was perceived to be dominant. The Odyssey is another location was that was generally perceived as a neutral space and people from both communities in North Belfast said that they felt very at ease going to socialise at this venue.

The city centre was however also highlighted as an area which could be unsafe at night, but this was not specifically in relation to concern for sectarian attacks but rather it was more generally linked to a perceived increase in anti-social behaviour, a phenomenon found in many city centres.

We also discussed people's willingness to access council leisure facilities, with the Grove and Falls Leisure Centres being the two that were visited most often. Catholic people that we interviewed expressed some fear about accessing the Grove whilst Protestants felt comfortable with this venue:

"The Grove is alright if you are going with a couple of people but if you are sort of going on your own you still have those thoughts from the past. This could be

very dangerous, someone might recognise you or know you from somewhere" (Male, Catholic, 30-44).

Some interviewees highlighted positive changes in the area including the two new playgrounds in North Queen Street on different sides of the interface. However, there was still the feeling that 'the other side' got more and better facilities, an attitude expressed by both sides:

"Here there's nothing … whatever there is, it's all on their side. Aye they've all sorts like!" (Male, Catholic, 16-18).

This perception was found to be common throughout segregated residential communities across Northern Ireland, with each side believing that the other community had or were getting more or better resources and facilities. The problem becomes particularly acute in highly fragmented social environments such as North Belfast, where choosing which leisure centre to use is more a matter of safety than the quality of the facilities available.

Summary

North Belfast was heavily affected by the Troubles and the impact of the conflict exists today with inter-communal tensions, fear and concerns for safety still a prominent part of everyday life. Interface areas are still sensitive zones and violence can escalate at any time especially during the summer. Tigers Bay and New Lodge are almost entirely segregated, although in both areas there were indications that visible signs of community background were decreasing and a sense that the greater North Belfast area was becoming less segregated.

Mixing was noted to occur through the workplace and socialising in the city centre, which were both seen as neutral spaces. However, schools were still effectively segregated with children attending schools affiliated to their community background. Cross community programmes and activities did exist between the schools but it was felt that relationships did not continue outside of the school setting. Leisure facilities similarly were viewed as being divided on the basis of community background with some interviewees indicating a degree of fear in accessing certain areas to make use of the facilities.

Overall many felt that the wider local area was now safer than in the recent past but a reluctance to travel into areas identified with the other was still strong. However the level of safety people felt depended upon

age, gender and past involvement in rioting. Young males and older men who had been involved in rioting mainly stayed in their own areas or used a 'safer' route to travel to the city centre. Consequently, even when not involved in rioting or disorder, other males were usually still seen as a threat.

More recently issues around depression, drugs and anti-social behaviour have come more to the fore and many interviewees commented on the negative impacts these issues had on the whole community. Many people saw the building or refurbishment of playgrounds in each area as a positive benefit, but there was still much that needed to be done. Some interviewees felt that the interface barriers should be removed, however more feared for the consequences of such an act and felt the time was still not right for taking such drastic steps with segregation and tension still such real issues for members of both communities.

10. Themes and Conclusions

The aim of this research was to explore how far, and to what extent people's daily routines were affected by the social divisions within Northern Ireland, by the often extensive segregation of Catholic and Protestant communities, by sectarianism and the legacy of the conflict, how far people's routines help to reinforce and thus help to sustain these patterns of segregation and division and to identify any positive changes in the levels of segregation and division.

The six case study areas highlight some variety of differences in people's experiences and understandings of these issues, and identified something of the diverse impacts that segregation and sectarianism have on people and which, the research suggests, often depends on factors such as the age, gender, social background, place of residence and the personal experiences of the individual. This variety of both personal and communal factors, and individual experiences are used to construct the 'mental maps' that are used to guide and structure personal routines and practices, and the mental maps are in turn reinforced and at times challenged by routine experiences. The routines of separation and division are thus sustained through practice, but the routines can and do change as people's perceptions of their social environment change. The experience of segregation thus always has a degree of fluidity rather than being rigid, fixed, unchanging and outside the experiences of individuals.

The following outlines a number of generalised findings from the research. These do not all apply to each area and there are some apparently contradictory findings, but this serves to highlight the need to look beyond the stark contrasts of division and demands that a more nuanced view is taken of how segregation and sectarianism impacts on everyone, while acknowledging that for some the impact is more immediate and intense than for others. Furthermore the research suggests that although some people believe that in some contexts the situation may be improving, for others the scale, extent and intensity of segregation is increasing.

Segregation and division impacts upon all, but at differing levels and intensities.

People offered diverse interpretations of the levels of segregation and the quality of relationships between members of the two communities in different areas. In Castlederg and North Belfast, people described high

levels of segregation and separation; those in Kilrea and Newtownstewart described some degree of mixing but little genuinely warm interaction between the two communities; in Dunclug and Shandon Park people spoke of higher degrees of mixing and more positive relationships; finally residents of Stranmillis considered their area to be largely mixed and fairly well integrated, but with little public recognition of communal identities. There are thus a variety of experiences on a continuum between highly segregated and divided areas with little positive interaction among members of the two main communities, to areas where there were much higher levels of integration.

Furthermore, people in mixed areas identified two distinct ways of integrating. This could take place through recognition and acknowledgement of communal background and ethno-national identity, or by avoidance and disinterest of the same. In smaller or more rural communities, where people were long established residents, communal identity was always a factor in personal identity and status in the community. In urban areas the larger scale and relative transience of the population made a level of communal anonymity a real possibility.

Segregation and sectarianism are a continuing legacy of the Troubles.

The impact of the Troubles on the areas in Belfast were very different and had a significant impact on the scale to which segregation and sectarianism were felt to impose themselves on daily routines. Many people in Stranmillis felt that they had scarcely been affected by the Troubles and struggled to name any specific Troubles related incidents in the area, this was in stark contrast to New Lodge and Tigers Bay, which remain divided by an interface and whose residents had experienced extensive violence and trauma throughout the Troubles and during the peace process.

It is difficult to state categorically the nature of the legacy of the Troubles on segregation and sectarianism in any area. Two of the rural areas, Kilrea and Castlederg, were both badly affected by the Troubles and some people and interactions displayed sectarian attitudes, and these helped sustain high levels of segregation, while inter-communal tension and antagonism were recurrently renewed during the Marching Season when local parades and visual displays further polarised relations. However, through the rest of the year the two communities appeared to co-exist on a day-to-day basis, although with limited socialising or interacting. Thus while the experiences of the Troubles had created a degree of mutual suspicion and hostility, it was the ongoing annual cycle of

commemorations that ensured that tensions remained raw and unresolved.

Levels of sectarianism and segregation have changed in recent years.

Residents in Dunclug suggested that in general Ballymena had been relatively untouched by the Troubles, and relations within the estate were generally positive. However, the levels of segregation and sectarianism in the wider town were felt to be higher than previously and people highlighted the murder of Michael McIlveen as a defining event that had had a serious impact on relations, particularly among younger age groups. This deterioration in relationships in Ballymena contrasts with Newry, an area badly affected by the Troubles but which appears to have 'moved on'. Interviewees in Shandon Park felt that the city of Newry was 'on a high' and had progressed enormously since the end of the conflict. In contrast to residents of Dunclug, residents of Shandon Park increasingly felt safe and welcomed in the city centre, although as with many areas, concerns remained about the negative impact of the night-time economy.

Economic regeneration can have a positive impact on segregation.

Economic regeneration across Northern Ireland has been a positive factor in the ending of the conflict and an important foundation of the wider process of peacebuilding. Less consideration has been given to exactly how economic regeneration may contribute to breaking down divisions and levels of segregation, but there is some indication from these case studies that economic regeneration can impact on a personal level. We have noted the perceived positive impact that the economic regeneration of the city of Newry and the opening up of the border has had on the ways that members of the Protestant community in Shandon Park engage with and relate to the commercial centre. Similarly the development of spaces like the Odyssey complex have provided a shared social space for people in segregated interface areas of North Belfast, providing of course they can access and afford the facilities. More generally people appear to be increasingly choosing their location for shopping on the basis of price and value for money, and are prepared to cross sectarian boundaries in the process.

However economic change can also have a negative impact.

In contrast to Newry, the opening of the border is perceived by some people in Castlederg to have a negative impact on the local commercial

sector and many interviewees perceived that trade and the prosperity of the town had suffered now that people had a wider choice of facilities and services elsewhere in the vicinity. The absence of violence encouraged people to cross the border for goods or to travel greater distances to larger centres a few miles away.

Mixed or neutral spaces are more available than in the past.

There was a recognition that there had been an increase in mixed or neutral areas and spaces in many locations. In Castlederg for example, people noted the growing number of mixed social spaces and shared resources, while in North Belfast people noted a growing number of spaces that were not defined by the orange and green divide – even though some of these were further removed in the city centre or spaces like the Odyssey complex. Similarly residents of Shandon Park felt that the centre of Newry was increasingly accessible, particularly during the day, and residents of Newtownstewart accessed shopping facilities in a wide range of locations.

But they co-exist with heavily segregated spaces.

Residents in Dunclug stated that the local estate was reasonably well integrated, but access to resources in the centre of Ballymena was increasingly problematic with a growing division between 'them and us'. Similarly the residents of Stranmillis felt that they lived in a mixed and shared environment, but they were only too aware of, and adapted their movements to, the territorialism and sectarian divisions beyond the boundaries of Stranmillis. In Castlederg the mixed bars coexisted with the established segregated patterns of socialising and drinking and in Kilrea shops that were shared by both communities were interspersed with bars that only one section of the community would use.

Thus the bold stark divisions of orange and green spaces were being broken down into a more fractured mosaic of resources, facilities and spaces, some of which could be accessed by all, while others were avoided by sections of the community. Individuals thus draw on an ever more complex series of mental maps that guide and inform them where to go and where to avoid, and while these mental maps are in part learned from practice and experience, they are also social maps which are sustained or extended through interaction, discussion and experience with members of their peer and identity groups.

The direct impact of segregation relates to social class.

While some people believe that their daily routines are not greatly affected by segregation, others understand that segregation has become such a way of life that it is viewed as 'normal'. The two areas in Belfast typify this contrast in experiences and perspectives. The residents of the interface communities in the north of the city were only too aware of the highly segregated and divided nature of space and resources and the extent to which they adapted their movements and avoided certain spaces. This can be considered as an example of **the direct impact of sectarian division.**

In contrast residents of Stranmillis who lived in a more mixed area believed that sectarian division did not impact upon their lives to any extent. However, subsequent conversations often revealed how far they were aware of segregated areas and adapted their behaviour through acts of avoidance or through forms of caution. This is evidence of the **indirect impact that segregation and division** can have on people's lives. In very different ways people in Stranmillis and Dunclug had moved beyond the naked divisions, but only in their two small areas, once they move beyond the confines of their communities they were forced to interact with the realities of a highly divided and sectarian society.

Living in a small community highlights identity and difference, anonymity on the other hand helps dissipate community identity.

The ability to ignore, avoid or escape from a personal collective identity impacts on social division. In a transient and essentially dormitory community such as Stranmillis, there appears to be a limited degree of contact with neighbours and a strong potential for being 'anonymous', which facilitates the reduction of any negative impact of identity politics at a communal and individual level. This was in stark contrast to the situation in smaller and more geographically contained communities in rural areas (Castlederg and Kilrea) or on an interface (North Belfast), where the majority of interviewees believed that 'everyone knew everyone' and it was relatively easy to 'tell' someone's community background, from their family name, which part of the area they came from, or from the school they attended. This sense of being 'known' resulted in interviewees restricting their movements in and around the area that they lived in.

However, once again the degree of impact was uneven, spaces that were considered safe and neutral during the daytime could be unsafe and territorial at night, while spaces that were safe most of the year might be

unsafe at times of political tension. This had an impact on how and where people socialised, when they might use a leisure facility, access a doctor, or obtain money from an ATM. Mental mapping also reveals that division can have a gendered perspective, and in Castlederg for example the research highlighted that males were more likely than females to perceive the town to be heavily segregated, and they were therefore more inclined to alter their routes or limit their movements accordingly.

The work environment is generally neutral, but dominated by avoidance.

In general interviewees felt that the work environment was a neutral space, although some recounted that during the Troubles few would give their opinion on an incident and even today few would raise political or religious matters due to reluctance in identifying one's community background. Thus while mixing within the workplace was largely accepted, it was also based on a presumption of avoidance of contentious issues, rather than any strong sense of integration. The recognition of the workplace as 'neutral' also highlights and reinforces the emphasis on avoidance and exclusion of symbols of identity and activities that raise tensions or mark out communal difference.

Although accessing work can raise issues of safety and sectarianism.

Nevertheless some interviewees were wary of working in an area dominated by people from the other community background, and a number said they would base their decision on where to apply for a job on their community background, as they felt that some businesses would simply refuse to employ them and that the process would be a 'waste of time'. This was another aspect of segregation, which was regarded as self-evident and 'normal'. Furthermore some interviewees in North Belfast and Kilrea cited a 'fear' of travelling outside the area due to the areas they would have to pass through, most people in Belfast felt this was now less of an issue than during the Troubles and only one interviewee in Kilrea felt that it was still an issue. Even in Stranmillis people noted the potential trouble spots that they avoided or monitored on their way to work.

Education remains largely segregated, but informal integration is occurring.

Many interviewees chose their children's schools based on their religious affiliation and thus education was still highly segregated, and some cited

this as a factor in furthering social divisions. However, in some areas people noted that informal integration had developed through schools: in Stranmillis many Catholics chose one of the perceived Protestant schools (in particular those with a good reputation), in Newry both Protestants and Catholics attend Newry High, and even in Kilrea some Catholics attend Protestant grammar schools outside of the village. It is worth noting however, that each of these examples is of Catholic children attending 'Protestant' schools, and for some people this reinforced a sense of being pushed out or excluded from their traditional social spaces.

However wearing school uniforms in public can create problems for young people.

School uniforms were cited as a problematic issue in Castlederg and Dunclug as they identified a young person's community background, and a number of young people avoided certain areas when they knew pupils of the other school in town would be around. Some young interviewees also felt that wearing their school uniform during the day meant that they could not venture into certain shops or shopping centres within their towns. However, while there were cases, in Belfast and Castlederg, where young people referred to segregated school transport or attacks on school buses based on community background, the overall impression is one of a general improvement in safety and security in travelling to and from schools.

Shopping environments are increasingly neutral.

Increasingly people consider main shopping areas as 'neutral space', and for many people the choice of where to shop was based on value for money, convenience and quality, rather than on allegiance to community. Research conducted by the Rural Community Network (2004) also found that choice of where to shop was based more on variety, options and price than on religion or perceived religion of the owner of the shop. There were differences in different areas however, in North Belfast some people avoided certain shops which were perceived to be used more by the other community and 'corner shops' in particular were regarded as servicing people within the community and not for the other side.

However, while the central areas of Belfast and Newry were generally considered accessible to both communities, in Ballymena some young people felt unsafe in accessing one or other of the main shopping centres

because of their community background. In smaller centres like Castlederg and Newtownstewart, smaller shops were readily identified as being either predominantly Protestant or Catholic, and although most interviewees said this would not affect where they shopped, some preferred to avoid shopping in stores owned by the 'other' community.

Access to resources and facilities can be limited by time of day or year.

Accessing services such as banks and health services varied from area to area. While there was a pattern of Catholics using the Bank of Ireland and Protestants banking at the Northern or Ulster Banks, the main issue was having safe access to ATMs at night or after dark and was associated with segregation in the locality. Similarly accessing leisure centres could be problematic in a segregated area, but became more of an issue after dark, while health facilities were less susceptible to sectarian marking, except in North Belfast, where duplication of facilities was still noted due to seasonal tensions.

Asserting community identity can undermine social cohesion.

Visible displays of belonging, such as flags, were an issue in all areas apart from Stranmillis. Flags, parades and bonfires, which were used to mark territory or display communal strength, were all potential or actual sources of tension, which impacted negatively on community relations. In Castlederg and Shandon Park tensions were mainly problematic during the marching season and there were ongoing attempts to 'manage' the situations, while in Kilrea the flying of a Tricolour sustained a persistent undercurrent of tension throughout the year.
One factor to be considered in relation to communal displays and cultural events is the relative population balance, both Castlederg and North Belfast contain a relatively even balance in numbers and there appears to be an element of vying for 'control' or territorial dominance within the area. In contrast in Newry city the Protestant community make up less than ten per cent of the population and are perceived to lack the 'critical mass' to threaten the majority Catholic community, although the need to assert identity can still serve to disrupt relations in the short term.

But denying opportunities to display identity can erode a sense of belonging.

In rural areas where demographic change had left one community in a minority there were strong feelings that wider elements of their culture

were being eroded. This was noted to varying degrees in Castlederg, Kilrea and Newry where Protestants felt that their culture and rights were being taken away and they were being 'pushed out'. While some residents viewed Shandon Park as a positive example of the two communities sharing and mixing, others regarded it as something of 'a last stand' and thus it was important to assert cultural identity, even it this was initiated by people from outside the estate. In the case of both Castlederg and Newry the location near the border appears to contribute to a 'frontier' mentality amongst some interviewees, and the presence of visual displays of cultural and community background such as flags, parades and murals were seen as indicators that despite the Troubles, the minority community 'are still here' and they intended to remain.

Sectarianism and segregation impacts most heavily on young males.

In many of the areas sectarian attitudes appeared to be more deeply entrenched among young males (a finding also noted by Shirlow, 2003). Some interviewees in North Belfast highlighted that young males were perceived to be more of a threat to other people than any other group, and young males were also generally perceived to be the ones most involved in violence and sectarian attacks in Dunclug and thus as more threatening. Lysaght and Basten (2003) found that spatial freedoms were gendered with men more reluctant to travel between areas as they were perceived as more at risk and this was replicated in Castlederg where the mapping exercise indicated that young males were less inclined to identify areas in the town as mixed but rather as predominantly belonging exclusively to one community or the other.

People will socialise together if the space is safe and or anonymous.

Socialising was still heavily segregated in some areas, and some people chose to travel some distance to avoid locally divided bars or clubs. In Belfast city centre many pubs were now seen as mixed and interviewees in North Belfast felt safer socialising in the city centre than they did during the Troubles. Some young people from Ballymena also preferred to travel to Belfast rather than go out in Ballymena, in part for safety and in part because it gave them a degree of anonymity away from their own environment. In Kilrea and Newry young Protestants reported some fear of using the town at night because of safety concerns and in Castlederg the large number of segregated pubs were believed to fuel alcohol related violence, but in neighbouring Newtownstewart this had not been the case. One factor may be that young people from Newtownstewart often socialised elsewhere because the town was perceived as too quiet.

Although the central areas of towns may be theoretically neutral, this may also be partly related to the scale of a town and the degree of anonymity people can experience. In smaller centres any neutrality appears to disappear after dark as shared or common 'civic' space is claimed or dominated by one community while being largely avoided by the other.

In Conclusion

The research highlights how segregation and sectarian attitudes impact on different aspects of everyday life, in differing ways, in different areas. In some areas there are greater levels of mixing, sharing and integrating, while in others the legacy of the past, of hostility, fear and mistrust dominate the wider social environment. In most social environments the process of avoidance still appears to dominate interactions between members of the two main communities. But while segregation and division remain dominant aspects of daily life in areas across Northern Ireland, it is not a completely stark binary division, rather the research illustrates something of the diversity of experiences that are affected by factors of age, gender, class and location. The legacy of the Troubles and recent experiences of violence remain factors in how people act as social beings, but people are not solely constrained by their past and there is some evidence of positive change and greater levels of mixing in some aspects of social life in many areas across the north.

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Appendix: Interviewees by Location

Area	Community Background	Sub Total	Total
Castlederg & Newtownstewart			**48**
	Catholic	21	
	Protestant	27	
Dunclug, Ballymena			**18**
	Catholic	12	
	Protestant	6	
Kilrea			**31**
	Catholic	11	
	Protestant	20	
New Lodge & Tigers Bay			**26**
	Catholic	14	
	Protestant	12	
Shandon Park, Newry			**20**
	Catholic	6	
	Protestant	14	
Stranmillis			**25**
	Catholic	8	
	Protestant	8	
	Unknown	9	
Total Interviewees			**168**

There are many factors that affect levels of segregation and people's experiences of sectarianism and which consequently impact upon the daily routines of individuals across Northern Ireland, these include housing, work, schooling, shopping, leisure and social activities. This report documents the findings of a seventeen-month study funded by the Community Relations Council through the European Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation into the ways and means that sectarianism and segregation are sustained and extended through the routine and mundane decisions that people make in their everyday lives. It explores how such divisions are played out in different geographical environments and how they impact on men and women, young and old as well as how patterns of segregation and division vary by time of day and at different times of the year. The report is thus a contribution to a broader discussion concerned with peacebuilding and the development of a sustainable and shared future in Northern Ireland.

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