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COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN

GURNOS AND GALON UCHAF REGENERATION STRATEGY

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INTRODUCTION

This research on development of community involvement was commissioned in April 1998 by Groundwork Merthyr & Rhondda Cynon Taf on behalf of the Gurnos and Galon Uchaf Regeneration Strategy. The 18-month study consisted of two surveys, work with groups, and transfer of skills to local groups.

The two surveys obtained views from samples of households chosen at random within New Gurnos, Old Gurnos or Galon Uchaf in order to achieve roughly equal numbers from each part of the estate. The first survey was conducted in June-July 1998 and was designed to provide baseline data about awareness, use and perceptions of regeneration activities. The second survey was conducted a year later, in July-August 1999, and provided evidence of changes in perception of the work of the regeneration agencies and further information on residents' needs and expectations. Between September 1998 and November 1999, discussion groups were held in order to explore the opinions of two groups who were relatively uninvolved in current consultation and participation exercises (young people and the isolated elderly).

Preliminary reports on the 1998 and 1999 surveys and the first groups have been submitted. A workshop was held in 1999 in order to improve two essential ingredients in community involvement, listening skills and working with groups.

This report is divided into the following sections: in Section 1 we provide a brief history and a preliminary discussion of strengths and weaknesses of community involvement in Gurnos and Galon Uchaf. Sections 2 to 5 cover the aims, methods and results of our investigations through survey and group work. In Section 2, we summarise the aims and objectives of the research. In Section 3 we explain the methods chosen. In Section 4 we present the results from the two surveys and in Section 5 the themes which emerged from the group work. We offer conclusions from the research in Section 6. Where it is judged useful, sections or subsections contain a 'bullet-point' summary. In addition, we have included more detailed evidence in an Appendix: detailed tables from the survey, and examples of mapping from the youth groups.

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- Regeneration emerged from a long process during which community groups were active.

- The first major successful partnership bid for funding was for the purpose of *stabilising* the community through *crime-reduction*.

- Evidence of community involvement and representation were crucial to success of other bids which aimed to *improve* the community *environmentally, economically and socially*.

- Voluntary sector involvement introduced more participatory methods of consultation and organisational working.

Community involvement in Gurnos and Galon Uchaf has been a prominent theme of efforts to improve life in the area from its earliest days. Regeneration emerged from a long process, and has roots going back to the decline of the estate after the recession of the early 1980s. By then community groups and individuals were very active, resulting in, for example, long-standing regular clubs and meeting places for old people (the 'Huts' in Old Gurnos and Galon Uchaf), discos and socials, childcare and other informal exchange networks and, of course, the Gurnos and Martyr's Social Clubs and St Aloysius.

Merthyr Tydfil Borough Council's 1985 bid for Priority Estate Project funding was successful for Galon Uchaf only. This set up two new kinds of involvement: first, through easier access to housing officers on the estate and, second, through a residents' group, Galon Uchaf Residents and Tenants Association (after door-knocking to drum up interest). By the late 1980s tenants' movements and community activism were also being encouraged in Gurnos.

Each area acquired its own Association/Board, each having slightly different bases, resources (later levies collected by, or subsidy from the Council), democratic structure and procedures. Despite such differences, they all evolved similar roles of representing residents and communicating between the community and Council or other organisations.

In 1992, representatives of organisations, including residents', discussed a possible co-ordinated response to the poor quality of life on the estate. The Children's Society carried out a survey of residents' views (Owen and Davies, 1993). A further Council bid in 1992 for funding in New Gurnos included decentralised service provision and recognised voluntary sector 'support and/or grants to the Residents' Board in an effort to encourage and improve tenant participation and resident awareness'. New Gurnos Residents' Board was party to discussions which prioritised concern over the poor environment (housing, caretaking, fencing, lighting, drainage) and its impact on health and safety.

In the early 1990s, the Old Gurnos Tenants and Residents' Association decided that they had 'had enough' of deterioration of safety in their community and forced meetings with the police which in 1994 led to Homesafe and Safer Merthyr (there being the opportunity to gain central government funding under the Safer Cities initiative at that time). This breakthrough in obtaining funding has been an important origin of regeneration and has influenced community involvement in two ways. First, the Residents' Boards or Associations continue to play a pivotal role in representing the community in regeneration; and second, there is a belief that crime reduction, safety and regulatory measures and better quality policing (which aim to stabilise a situation) are also a means to regenerate the area.

In the mid 1990s, the public sector (health, police, education, Merthyr Tydfil BC and Mid Glamorgan CC) and voluntary sector (Groundwork, Safer Cities, Children's Society and NSPCC among them) came together with all three Residents' Boards/Associations and successfully bid for funding from Europe (EDRF) and charitable trusts. It has been said that 'Funding cemented the partnership'; importantly, the presence of residents' representatives at interviews and evidence of consultation were crucial to the success of the bids and the formal Regeneration Partnership's founding in March 1996.

The presence since 1992 of Groundwork is of particular interest because it is widely regarded as an effective model for developing community involvement in environmental projects and partnerships with local public, private and voluntary bodies (see, for example, Carley and Christie 1992, pages 206-15). From 1994, Groundwork managed varied environmental improvements and carried out extensive

consultation in New Gurnos. Participatory ways to consult with the community were introduced in the 1996 'Red Bus' tour of the whole estate. Diagrams and mapping allowed residents to create their own view of the estate and their own priorities.

In summary, the regeneration strategy has resulted from a long process in which Residents' Associations/Boards have been essential representatives of community views and a channel for community involvement in decisions. Voluntary sector involvement has introduced more formal consultation, and the Council has had to change from a more 'top-down' approach (telling the estate what it should have) to being a partner with the residents and the voluntary sector. The structure of regeneration organisation aims at high levels of community involvement (in decision-making, consultations, workshops or training and volunteering).

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF REGENERATION STRATEGY FOR INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY

Based upon documents (various reports, surveys and minutes), our own observations at meetings and discussions with key players, a broad picture of community involvement in Gurnos and Galon Uchaf emerges.

Strengths:

✓ Organisational structure favours community involvement.

✓ Residents' Associations/Boards regularly influence strategy.

✓ Some opportunities exist for less intensive, one-stop involvement.

✓ Consultations on projects take place.

Weaknesses:

✗ Poor spread of communication skills and confidence.

✗ 'Time-famines' disadvantage certain groups of residents.

✗ Opportunities for involvement are not always satisfactory to residents.

✗ Consultation is fact-finding on specific projects and not full or community-wide.

✗ Information flows from the community into projects and does not stimulate participation.

Our brief history suggests that the organisational structure and aims of regeneration in Gurnos and Galon Uchaf strongly favour community involvement. We expect that this has helped to secure funding because, nowadays, most funders require evidence of community involvement. This requirement, on the one hand, gives leverage to the residents' organisations (for example, they are signatories on the bids) and, on the other hand, gives credibility to the strategy when bids are successful. There are, however, problems in trying to 'involve the community' even with a good structure; one recent study of four major regeneration strategies concluded that it 'remains one of the biggest challenges to regeneration' (Carley 1998).

How well does Gurnos and Galon Uchaf regeneration strategy perform on two points that Carley raises? First, has 'top-down' external funding (from governmental, European or trusts' sources which

require professional expertise in bidding), made it easier for paid professionals to forge ahead of the community with a strategy? As we have seen, residents' organisations can regularly influence strategy in Gurnos and Galon Uchaf. This is a strength. However, the burden of attending meetings and representing residents is borne mainly by three individuals. Indeed, during 1998-9, the Residents' Associations/Boards each had only 4-6 active members ('full strength' is 25-30 each). One possible weakness is that skills in dealing with other 'stakeholders' in meetings or with the 'jargon' of regeneration have not become widespread in the community and need to be built up.

Another strength of the Gurnos and Galon Uchaf regeneration is that a matrix is available which transparently accounts for funds and tracks the uses and outcomes of funding. Although understanding the matrix requires some time, members of the Residents Associations/Boards who have learned to 'read' it can follow the record of how decisions made by the regeneration strategy relate to the money and activities. However, here again residents have to learn another form of communication.

Furthermore, finding the time to attend training or meetings is particularly hard for carers without family or other support, marginal or very low-income groups (because it takes time for these groups to 'keep in with' those who might offer help or 'defer' to those with power), and the casually employed (because of shiftwork or frequent job-search). Because many people fall into these groups in Gurnos and Galon Uchaf, involvement is restricted by 'time-famines'.

Second, are there opportunities for residents to become involved in less intensive but long-lasting ways? It is natural for people to become involved in single issues and temporary participation is valuable, but a successful regeneration strategy needs a more democratic and broader approach. Positive efforts exist: 'taster' activities, carnivals and socials, the regeneration strategy's own staffed Information Centre, the Youth Steering Committee and the beginnings of a one-stop participation point in the refurbished Clinic.

Not all residents have found the opportunities to participate satisfactory. During the research, we became aware of several spontaneous resident-led actions. Four stood out (all in Galon Uchaf and New Gurnos): two over traffic calming, and two over demolitions. These valuable, single-issue participative actions have had a mixed reception: hesitation and doubts (Are they destabilising? Are they using correct procedures?), as well as a welcome for increased involvement. Drawing single-issue into life-long participation remains problematic.

Exactly how valuable but thorny the path of participation can be for a focussed single issue group is perhaps better illustrated by a story from another estate of young people who wanted somewhere to kick a ball around and play basketball (rather like many Gurnos and Galon Uchaf young people). The young people, after a summer with two youth workers, made their own model of their estate, which helped them to present a solution and gain respect. The Multi Agency Group drew up bids and got funding for a floodlit all-weather pitch. At this point, luckily, the Multi Agency Group stopped and listened to young people's fears that the pitch was too elaborate and would be used for courses or hired out, thus excluding the very people whose idea it was. Other, more suitable, funders with a better community focus were sought. Meanwhile, the Multi Agency Group took the opportunity to use the young people's ideas as a springboard to attract volunteers and stimulate a Residents' Association. This was not what the young people wanted. Although pleased with their achievements, the young people were frustrated by the slowness of progress with the pitch and by difficulties in making adults accept them in decision-making. Finally, the residents continued to see street youth as a 'problem' or

anti-social and many just wanted them 'moved on'. Some were happy to take young people's ideas on board, but not to involve them in developing solutions.

We have related this story at length because it illustrates the frustrations as well as the growing confidence and expanding skills (awareness, planning, presentation, decision-making) of a focussed group. It also shows the obstacles, such as a long timescale, resistance to letting a new group 'inside' decision-making, and that multi-agency working may see one issue as only a small piece in a 'jigsaw'. A key point, too, is that the young people remained involved and were able to insist that the new facility should be 'right' for them.

The evaluations and reports submitted to the Gurnos and Galon Uchaf regeneration partnership help to show strengths and weaknesses of different types of involvement. They suggest good *use of facilities*, *consultation* with residents on proposed projects and ambitious plans for *volunteering* (eg, Janice Webb Research 1998, 1999; WS Atkins 1998, 1999). Opinions have been sought most often in small fact-finding exercises on single issues. Broader exercises (the Red Bus tour in 1996; Community Development Foundation detached work in 1998) suggest a reservoir of motivated residents interested in participation.

Janice Webb (1999) warns against 'burn-out' because too few people are doing too many tasks, including volunteering. Too many consultations have ceased after getting basic information *from* people (perhaps the same people over and over again). Communities have more to offer in refining projects, implementation and sustaining the results (as WS Atkins, 1998 points out and our example above suggests), but this requires full information *sharing* and involving people in the whole process of change.

SECTION 2: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

The research formed part of the regeneration partnership's ongoing consultation with the local community. This is to ensure that the facilities and services being provided are in line with what local people want, and to develop and plan future bids for funding through involving local people in identifying priorities.

The main aims of the research were:

- to produce as accurate and comprehensive a picture as possible of how Old Gurnos, New Gurnos and Galon Uchaf residents feel about the facilities and services which have been generated by the partnership, and to determine to what extent these are in line with, or changing in line with, what residents want;

- to help the partnership maintain a dialogue about future strategy with groups of local residents, including those who are relatively underinvolved in the current consultation and participation exercises.

In order to achieve these aims, our objectives were:

- to obtain the views of a sample of the whole community, large enough to take into account spatial, age and gender differences;

- to collect both quantitative and qualitative data;

- to focus special attention upon groups which may be 'left out' or reluctant to participate;

- to examine experiences of changes in Gurnos and Galon Uchaf.

SECTION 3: THE METHODS USED IN THE STUDY

- The methods used were house-to-house survey and participatory work with groups.

- The two surveys were random, anonymous, semi-structured interviews conducted house-to-house within each of the three areas of the estate.

- The samples were broadly representative of the whole community's demographic profile. In 1998, 262 interviews were conducted and in 1999, 231.

- There were enough interviews to statistically test for differences of views by area, sex and age.

- The participatory work used group techniques of street interviews, mapping and time-lines to investigate views of the area and change.

- Group formation was difficult, which suggested a need for confidence and skills in working with groups as a basis for involvement.

THE SURVEYS IN 1998 AND 1999: SAMPLE SIZE, STRUCTURE AND STABILITY

We carried out two surveys and two periods of group work in order to capture and monitor changes in views, perceptions and priorities.

In summary, the survey method was that roughly equal numbers of households in each of the three areas were selected on a random basis, researchers calling 'cold' to request an interview with one of the occupants (only one respondent was interviewed in each house, and efforts were made to produce a broadly balanced sample in terms of age and sex). Interviews lasted from 10 minutes to over an hour. Interviews were anonymous and semi-structured (that is, the respondent answered questions in their own words, which were noted). Most people greatly welcomed an opportunity to give their opinions, 'one-to-one', to an independent researcher. A total of 262 valid interviews were conducted for the 1998 survey, and 231 for the 1999 survey (see Table 1).

Table 1: Total numbers of interviews in 1998 and 1999 surveys by area and subgroup

1998				1999			
NEW GURNOS	**OLD GURNOS**	**GALON UCHAF**	**ALL AREAS**	**NEW GURNOS**	**OLD GURNOS**	**GALON UCHAF**	**ALL AREAS**
91	88	83	**262**	74	79	78	**231**
			male 123				male 110
			female 139				female 121
			teenage 28				teenage 42

See Appendix Table A.1 for more detailed breakdown by sex and age of survey samples.

The samples: age, sex and area

All of our respondents were residents of Gurnos or Galon Uchaf. The survey was intended to provide adequate samples for statistically valid tests to be conducted to ascertain if there exist differences between each of the 3 main areas within the regeneration strategy (New Gurnos, Old Gurnos and Galon Uchaf), and between 6 age-sex groups in each area: a total of eighteen groups. The 1998 sample had small differences with the official estimates of age profile: in particular, more young people and fewer very elderly. In the 1999, we purposely sampled more teenagers in order to improve the reliability of the results for this group. The sex ratios were similar to the official estimate (male:female ratio of 47:53 in 1998 and 48:52 in 1999). Therefore, from the 1998 base-line survey we can draw conclusions about the general views of the population, as well as looking at selected groups. This remains broadly true of the 1999 survey, although there is a trade-off of advantages of larger size of certain selected groups against representativeness.

We were particularly interested in the views of young people because young people were one of our focus groups. Within the 1998 sample, 28 (11%) were teenagers, half from Old Gurnos. In 1999, 42 (18%) were teenagers, spread across all three areas. The other proposed focus group, of isolated elderly people, could not be identified from the survey: we know who is old, but not necessarily who is involuntarily isolated.

House tenure and time lived in the area

Residents' perceptions, use or participation in regeneration activities could be influenced by the extent to which they feel they have a 'stake' in the community. We therefore asked about length of residence and house tenure, the latter being recorded as tenancy holder in a rented property, non-tenancy holder or owner. Excluding incomplete or missing answers, in both surveys over half said that they held the

tenancy, about one-third said that someone else in the household held the tenancy, and about one-sixth said that they or their parents were owner-occupiers. Among the non-tenancy holders were the great majority (over 80%) of teenagers. Women were more likely than men to be tenancy holders. In New Gurnos, both surveys included a high proportion of non-tenancy holders (37%) and low proportion of owner-occupiers (7%) compared to Old Gurnos or Galon Uchaf (28% non-tenancy holders and 20% owner-occupiers).

Generally, we found a quite stable population in both surveys. On average, the respondents had lived in the area (that is, Gurnos or Galon Uchaf) for 20 years in the 1998 survey and 22 years in 1999, the range being from a matter of weeks to 63 years. Around three-quarters had lived in the area for over 8 years. One-tenth of those in the more recently built New Gurnos had lived in the area for 30 years or more, and this proportion rose to one-third in the older parts of the estate (Galon Uchaf and Old Gurnos).

THE GROUP WORK: GROUP FORMATION

The participatory work with groups involved two days of 'street' work with young people, 5 'focus' or discussion groups of young people and 3 groups of elderly people. Few of the participants in the discussion groups seemed 'marginalised' or 'isolated'. The street work did include more marginal young people.

The group formation (by Groundwork for the partnership) was intended to include the more marginalised young people and the isolated old. Isolated people were simply reluctant to join a group. There were other difficulties in forming groups which suggested that this method of encouraging participation and empowerment has been little used by the regeneration partnership, and group formation ran into 'procedural' difficulties. Those groups which met were mostly through established community and other agencies.

We conducted 12 'street' groups of young people (contacted in November 1998 and September 1999: a total of 37 young people) and 8 'focus' groups (in June 1999, 2 groups of older people and 2 of young people; in October, 1 group of older people and 3 of young people: a total of 28 older people and 38 young people).

The street interviews were conducted on a cold November Saturday and a very wet Wednesday afternoon and evening in September. The easiest place to meet and talk to young people, especially those who feel unable to go home despite the cold and rain, was by shops or under shelters.

The groups with young people employed mapping. This allows people to visualise and look at the map instead of worrying about how they sound or look to each other. Men's and women's maps often reveal different ways of seeing their physical and social world. The discussion of maps can reveal power relations. We asked our groups to draw their own map of the estate, and then to add 'post-its' in appropriate places to show things they would like.

We used a time-line with the older groups. This enables people to put the history of the estate into the context of their lifetime and to discuss past, present and future changes.

SKILLS WORKSHOP

It had initially been expected that the regeneration partners would continue to work with the groups but this did not happen. Partly as a consequence of the evidence of low confidence and/or use of skills in forming and working with groups, we included in the research a workshop to transfer relevant skills. The purpose of this was to improve confidence and the capacity to utilise groups as part of involving the community. We subcontracted this to Dynamix, a group who have worked across Wales and the Midlands. Partnership staff, rather than residents, made use of this opportunity. The workshop method of skills transfer into the community therefore had limited success.

SECTION 4: RESULTS FROM THE SURVEYS

INTRODUCTION

The objectives of the surveys were to provide:

- baseline data on awareness, use and perceptions of regeneration activities;

- an assessment of how awareness, use and perceptions change;

- an exploration of any differences between areas, age and sex groups;

- further information regarding needs, wishes and expectations, to be explored in more depth in the focus groups.

This section is structured as follows: in section 4.1, we consider awareness about regeneration in broad terms – views about how residents rated the place and their lives, about money coming into the area, and involvement in clubs or groups.   Section 4.2 concentrates on opinions about initiatives undertaken within the Regeneration Strategy or by others – residents' knowledge of an initiative's existence and organisation, opinions of the results, own use of initiatives and what else is needed. In section 4.3, we consider residents' knowledge and views about the Regeneration Strategy, an important partner (the Residents Boards/Associations), and their experiences of consultation.

4.1 GENERAL VIEWS ABOUT CHANGE IN GURNOS AND GALON UCHAF

Residents were first asked for their general views of Gurnos and Galon Uchaf: was the place 'getting better', 'staying the same', 'getting worse', or 'very mixed'; what about their own life; did they expect to be there in 5 years? In 1999, we also asked if tenants had asked for an exchange.

Summary of main points:

- *Opinions about the place are very polarised* between 'getting better' and 'getting worse'. (By 'polarised', we mean that few people think the place is 'staying the same' and those thinking it is getting 'better' do not overwhelmingly outnumber 'worse' or vice versa.) The 'getting better' opinions were higher than in a national survey, and a majority of residents thought that the place was 'getting better', 'staying the same' or mixed in both 1998 and 1999.

- **There was a sharp increase in the percentage of residents, from about a third to over half, who thought the place was 'getting worse' in 1999 in New Gurnos and Galon Uchaf only. This did not occur in Old Gurnos.**

- Thinking that the place is 'getting worse' does not seem to be explained reliably by individual characteristics like age or sex, but is in part associated with being a long-term resident (30 years or more).

- The 1999 increase in opinions that the place is 'getting worse' in New Gurnos is in part explained by the *demolition* there. Indicators that this is important are the high and increasing percentage of residents who expect to move away from New Gurnos and the higher than average percentage of tenants who had asked for an exchange. Furthermore, the negative impact of the demolition is indicated by the opinion of nearly half of residents that money spent on demolition helped no-one or 'not us'.

- The 1999 increase in opinions that the place is 'getting worse' in Galon Uchaf is in part explained by the *low levels of regeneration activity* there and longer decline of community-run activities. An indication of an increasing problem is the higher than average percentage of tenants who expect to leave but have not yet asked for an exchange.

- *Opinions about residents' own lives were much more positive* than about the place. The great majority expect to stay in the area, although there are signs in Galon Uchaf that tenants increasingly want to move.

- We used awareness of 'money being spent' as a simple test of awareness of regeneration activity. *Two-thirds of residents in 1998, and just over half in 1999, were aware of a little or a lot of money being spent. About one-fifth of these residents said that spending had helped them personally.*

- In both surveys, people most often thought that the money was spent on housing repairs, refurbishment or demolition. *The money spent on housing repairs and refurbishment, but not demolition, was often thought to have helped everyone or the community. Almost half thought that demolition had helped no-one or 'not us'.*

- *In 1999, an increased percentage of residents thought that money was spent on regeneration, and a clear majority of these (58%) thought that this helped everyone or the community.*

General views of Gurnos and Galon Uchaf as a place to live.

In the 1998 survey, 25% of residents thought that that the area was 'getting better' as a place to live. A further 41% thought that the area was either 'staying the same' or 'mixed'. On the other hand, 34% thought that the area was 'getting worse'. This view had some interesting associations with opinions and use of regeneration initiatives, and we included this group of residents in our investigation of sub-groups. As Table 2 shows, residents of New Gurnos tended in 1998 to give the most positive answers, those of Old Gurnos the least.

The 1999 survey maintained a similar percentage of respondents who thought the place was 'getting better'. However, there was a sharp increase to 49% for views that the place was 'getting worse'. This change affected replies in New Gurnos and Galon Uchaf, but not Old Gurnos, where the overall pattern was almost identical to 1998.

Such a serious decline in perceptions of two areas requires explanation (sampling error or interviewer interaction alone are unlikely to account for it). In order to explain the decline, it may be useful to compare our replies with answers to a question, how the area was expected to change over the next two years, which was asked in the 1995/96 Survey of English Housing. This survey covered all types of areas, the affluent and the low income, urban and rural. Our interest is in the Council and low income areas, in which the Survey of English Housing found that attitudes tend to be much more polarised than in other areas – by which we mean that a smaller percentage thought that the area would stay the same. Comparing our question (rating the place now) with the 1995/96 SEH (the council/low-income rating of change in the future) we find that a much lower percentage thought that Gurnos and Galon Uchaf was 'staying the same/mixed' than the 1995/96 SEH percentage of 51%. We can therefore conclude that opinions about Gurnos and Galon Uchaf tend to be more polarised than Council/low-income areas in general.

Table 2: Ratings in answer to the question: 'In general, how do you rate Gurnos and Galon Uchaf as a place to live?' by area

		Percentage who said that the place is:			
		'Getting better'	**'Staying the same' or 'very mixed'**	**'Getting worse'**	**TOTAL**
New Gurnos	1998	33	35	32	100

	1999	26	21	54	100
Galon Uchaf	1998	22	48	30	100
	1999	14	29	56	100
Old Gurnos	1998	21	41	39	100
	1999	21	42	37	100
ALL AREAS	1998	25	41	34	100
	1999	20	31	49	100

Notes: There was no statistically important difference between the 3 areas in 1998 but there were some in 1999. Statistically important differences between the two surveys are found in New Gurnos and Galon Uchaf, but not in Old Gurnos.

However, in both 1998 and 1999, a higher proportion in Gurnos and Galon Uchaf than in the 1995/96 SEH Council/low income areas thought it was 'getting better', which is in the direction that a regeneration partnership, and presumably most residents, would wish. The proportion who thought Gurnos and Galon Uchaf was 'getting worse' was the same as the SEH survey in 1998 but drastically higher in 1999. Comparatively, then, we should balance our concern at the decline in two parts of the estate with recognition that, for a more substantial minority than in many other council/low-income areas, the estate is 'getting better'.

We should not underestimate the seriousness of a high, and increasing, proportion of residents for whom the area is 'getting worse'. Smith (1999) suggests that a high 'get worse' proportion may be because 'concentration of difficulties reduces opportunities and standards of service', or because of discrimination or the loss of key stabilising groups. Different researchers have 'tested' various models of area decline, but none is altogether convincing. Our own research suggests that polarisation may go hand in hand with divisiveness, in which the estate becomes divided into many smaller areas or groupings of residents opposing each other. Participation and involvement could be crucial to reducing both polarisation and divisiveness.

Support for this suggestion is found in the comments which residents added to their ratings. These were quite local or applied to a small group. For example, they would remark that *their* street or neighbours were better (or worse) than other streets or people. They often contrasted the 'good' or 'not too bad' with the 'deadly' parts of the estate, or contrasted 'good neighbours' with other people labelled the 'druggies' or 'problem families'. They also characterised one part as 'quiet' or 'tidy', while another was 'terrible', but was situated in the 'other side', 'lower part' or 'other end'. In 1998 these remarks about divisions were spread across the whole estate, but one year later had become more marked in New Gurnos and especially in Galon Uchaf.

Explanations for increased polarisation and the percentage rating the place 'getting worse' can be sought in individual characteristics (sex, age, length of residence or tenure), local changes or non-local changes, and we consider what indicators we might find for each in turn.

Looking at individual characteristics, polarisation of views (decreasing numbers saying the place 'stayed the same/mixed') affected men more than women, and more relative newcomers and longer-term residents. However, these characteristics were not reliable indicators of views about the area over the two surveys. If we isolate the effects of each individual characteristic, only long-term residency (30 years or more) increases the likelihood of thinking the place is 'getting worse'.

Local changes as explanations for the rapid increase in opinions that the place is 'getting worse' were suggested by the partnership. One is the demolition in New Gurnos (perceived as 'A symbol of defeat', or even 'An underhand way of removing the estate'), which happened without preparation for its social impact. A second is that there has been a long-standing lack of regeneration activity in Galon Uchaf. Third, all the estate may have been affected by an increase in planning and organisational exercises relative to activity, resulting in raised expectations that are not currently being met. Indicators that local change is important would be negative views related to the demolition and a low awareness of regeneration activities in Galon Uchaf.

Finally, non-local influence as an explanation is difficult to reconcile with the concentration of 'getting worse' opinions in just two parts of the estate. As we shall see in Section 5, one theme which emerged in groups was a disillusionment with representation and powerlessness to make changes. We also know the results of local government and Assembly elections in 1999, when the South Wales valleys saw some shock results for what is regarded as 'heartlands Labour', and the turn-out in the estate wards, especially in Galon Uchaf, was very low. Our investigation did not extend into non-local influences, but we asked questions about 'fairness' or the social justice of facilities and services which captures an aspect of these.

General views of residents' own lives in Gurnos and Galon Uchaf.

Despite the changing opinions about the place, our two surveys produced very similar opinions about residents' own lives in each area. Overall, nearly one quarter of residents said their own lives were 'getting better' (24% in 1998; 23% in 1999), well over half said their lives were 'staying the same' or 'mixed' (60% in 1998; 57% in 1999) and under one fifth said their lives were 'getting worse' 16% in 1998; 19% in 1999). The only significant change between surveys was in New Gurnos, where the proportion who thought their lives were 'getting worse' rose from 18% in 1998 to 26% in 1999 – this confirms the inconvenience caused by the demolition. For example, once familiar, if badly-lit, footpaths had become dangerous because new hazards like sharp or lumpy objects were left on them, or drainage had collapsed.

A majority of residents were more optimistic about their own lives than about the place. Putting both surveys together, of the 87 residents who thought their lives were getting worse, 75 also thought that the place was getting worse: the alternative way of looking at this is that of the 201 who thought the place was getting worse, 126 thought their own lives were mixed, staying the same, or getting better.

Young people's views about the place and their own lives.

Sample sizes for teenagers' views were too small to test for differences between the surveys (in 1998, most came from Old Gurnos). Adding both surveys together (giving a sample size of 70 with a better spread across the whole community) suggests that young people in Galon Uchaf rate the place 'getting worse' more than in Gurnos (46% in Galon Uchaf, 29% in Gurnos). A consistent gender pattern is also suggested (but may not be reliable). More young men thought that both the place and their lives were 'getting better' (28% of young men, 18% of young women), more young women thought that the place was 'getting worse' (31% of young men, 37% of young women).

Expected residence in the future

The previously noted impression of a stable population was confirmed by the high proportion who expected to be living in the area in 5 years (73% in 1998, 69% in 1999). Although more non-tenancy holders expected to leave (partly reflecting youth) and more owner-occupiers expected to stay than tenancy holders, the expectations of owners and non-tenants remained similar in both surveys. However, in 1999, more tenancy holders expected to leave (see Table 3). Among the tenancy holders, people in Galon Uchaf (see Table 3), men (12% in 1998, 31% in 1999) and older residents (6% in 1998 and 26% in 1999 of over 30 year-olds) were the important area, sex or age groups who increasingly expected to leave.

Table 3: Tenancy holders only: the percentage who do not expect to be living in Gurnos and Galon Uchaf in 5 years (1998, 1999) and the percentage who said they had asked for an exchange (1999).

	Percentage of tenancy holders*:		
	who do not expect to be living in Gurnos & Galon Uchaf in 5 years		who have asked for an exchange
	% 1998	% 1999	% 1999
New Gurnos	23	34	44
Old Gurnos	17	21	17
Galon Uchaf	5	31	15
ALL AREAS	15	29	26

*Numbers of tenancy holders were (1998, 1999): New Gurnos (47, 41); Old Gurnos (44,34); Galon Uchaf (37, 39), excluding those who answered 'Don't know'.

In 1999, we additionally asked respondents in Council houses if they or the tenancy holder had asked for an exchange. The percentage of tenancy holders who said that they had asked for an exchange is shown in the last column of Table 3. The reported percentage of 'asked for exchange' is substantially

larger than 'expect to leave' in New Gurnos. The reverse is true in Galon Uchaf, where tenancy holders may wish to leave but have not yet taken decisive action.

Awareness of 'money being spent' on improving facilities.

As a simple test of awareness of regeneration (and other) activities within Gurnos and Galon Uchaf, we asked general questions about money being spent on facilities. Two-thirds of residents in 1998, and just over half in 1999, were aware of money being spent on improving facilities in Gurnos and Galon Uchaf. In both surveys, about one-fifth of these residents said that it had helped them personally.

Awareness seemed to be affected by age groups and the part of Gurnos/Galon Uchaf, but not by sex, tenure or time lived in the area. The 'middle' and 'older' age groups, and residents of New Gurnos, more commonly agreed that money was being spent.

How much money and where is it from?

Of the 300 residents in both surveys (61% of the total) who were aware of money being spent on facilities, 44% thought that 'a lot' of money was being spent, 46% thought that there was 'a little' money, and 10% 'didn't know' how much. The other 193 residents (39%) were not aware of money being spent on facilities. Awareness was higher in New Gurnos (71%) than Old Gurnos or Galon Uchaf (47%).

Residents thought that the main sources of the money were Government or the Welsh Office (mentioned by 40% of those aware of spending in either survey); Europe (20%); the Council (17%); Charities or Trusts (6%); the Lottery (6%) and local fundraisers (2%). 62 residents did not know the source.

What is it spent on, and whom does it help?

When asked what the money was mainly being spent on, people most commonly mentioned 'houses', that is repairs, refurbishment and demolition (see Table 4). Table 4 includes topics common in both surveys; that is, housing (repairs, refurbishment, demolition), regeneration ('improving things as people want', the community) and major projects (such as the family centre, Skills Centre or Johnny Owen Centre). In 1998 but not in 1999, fencing and walls, parks, gardens and play areas, and street security such as CCTV were also common categories. Interestingly, in each of the three areas and in both surveys, a sizeable minority of residents believed that most spending had been elsewhere on the estate and/or helped 'no-one here': this category was particularly large for residents who were not expecting to stay (16%), had asked for an exchange (21%) or thought that the place was 'getting worse' (17%).

Table 4: Selected categories of spending and who has been helped by spending: percentages of residents who were aware of 'money being spent'.

'What was the money mainly spent on?'			*'Who do you think it mainly helped?'*		
	% residents			**% residents**	
Mainly spent on:	**1998**	**1999**	*Mainly helped:*	**1998**	**1999**
Houses	43	52	Everyone, community	31	28
(demolition)		(28)	Specific age groups:	23	15
(refurbishment, repairs)		(24)	(children)	(9)	(12)
Regeneration, community	6	11	(youth)	(4)	(0)
Major projects (centres, etc)	13	8	Council or agents	11	8
'Unknown' categories:			**'Unknown' categories:**		
Not here, not on us	11	12	No-one here, few	28	38
Don't know	8	6	Don't know	11	8

Percentages are of the numbers who replied to questions on where money is spent: 167 (1998), 131 (1999). 2 of the 300 residents aware of spending did not answer these questions.

Many patterns of responses were consistent across the two surveys, and the following observations refer to responses from 1998 and 1999 taken together.

Opinions about how the money is mainly spent differed between New Gurnos, Old Gurnos and Galon Uchaf. Old Gurnos had the lowest percentage who thought spending was mainly on housing (only 33%) and highest percentage who did not know (17%). The impact of major projects tended to be quite localised and was most evident in New Gurnos (16%).

Individual characteristics (sex, age, time lived in the area, tenure) had a mild impact on people's awareness of how money was being spent. The proportion of those who mentioned regeneration tended to fall with age group or length of residence (14% of teenagers aware of spending mentioned regeneration, compared to 7% of those aged 55 years and over) and major projects were mentioned by more non-tenants (16% compared to 8% among others). The proportion of those who mentioned house refurbishment, repairs or demolition rose gently with age and length of time lived in the area.

A majority of residents were positive about whom the spending was helping (Table 4): the most common reply being 'everyone/ community'. The surveys were not very different, and adding them together, more positive responses were everyone/community, children/youth and the Council – at least we think these are positive. In 1999, children were thought to have been helped more frequently but youth less than in 1998. A substantial (and increasing) minority gave negative replies (no-one, few, not here).

Less positive were replies such as 'themselves', 'councillor's pockets' or 'builders' (4%) or 'the undeserving' (1%). Other important categories were the large minority who replied 'nobody I know',

'no-one' or 'the lucky ones' (33%) and 10% who didn't know. A potential division of owners from tenants became apparent in the replies to this question. For example, one resident, who mentioned home improvements, community centres and parks, said 'It's helping all by the Council – nothing private. Not me'; another, a carer, said 'As I bought my house, I have to pay.'

Table 5 cross-tabulates the main categories upon which residents believed money was spent with those whom they believed it helped. Spending on regeneration and housing repairs and refurbishment (but not demolition) were associated with help to everyone or the community. Spending on major projects (especially the Busy Bee) was associated with help to children, but not youth. Of those who said spending was on demolition, only a small minority (16%) said it helped everyone and a near majority (49%) said none/few (or, frequently, that it was 'wasteful').

Table 5: Percentages of residents' opinions about who is mainly helped by selected main categories and all spending, combined surveys.

Who was helped?	Spending is mainly on:				ALL SPENDING
	Housing %	**Demolition only %**	**Regen- eration %**	**Major project %**	
Everyone/ community	41	16	58	16	30
Children	6	8	13	36	10
Youth	2	0	4	3	2
Council	13	11	13	7	10
Other	7	5	0	3	5
Unknown categories:					
No-one/ not us	*27*	*49*	*13*	*23*	*33*
Don't know	*5*	*11*	*0*	*13*	*10*
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

A substantial majority (rising from 65% in 1998 to 78% in 1999; 71% overall) of the aware residents said that the money had not helped them personally. The proportion who said it had helped them fell from 35% (16% a lot and 19% a little) to 22% (9% a lot, 13% a little). Groups with the greatest falls were women (38% to 18%), tenants (40% to 17%), residents of 0-8 years (25% to 10%) and residents of over 30 years (44% to 22%). The opinions of the residents who thought the place was 'getting worse' were not distinctive in either survey.

Nevertheless, the replies were often suggestive of support for a community benefit in the absence of direct personal help, for as one remarked, 'It's going to help us in one way or another'. Other representative comments were:

> A little money, from government, being spent on windows and doors, and the Matchstick Man [Johnny Owen Centre]. It's helping the community. It's not helped me personally. (1998)

> A lot of money I should imagine. I do believe it's from European things, I suppose the Council too. Just - what can I say? – tidying the place up, tree planting, turning the flats into a working environment. It's helping I should imagine, everyone on the Gurnos. Not personally - though in one way, it looks better. (1998)

> A little money, from Council rates, spent on improving houses. It's helping the community. Not personally. (1999)

> A lot of money, from Europe, spent on cameras (surveillance). It's helping the community at large. No help personally. (1999)

However, others were less generous, more than one suggesting that the spending was 'on nothing really', appearances for 'tourists', or, in 1999 especially, being wasted:

> A lot of money, haven't got a clue who from. The top of the street has walls and gates, the bottom of the street has nothing – crap. It's not helping me at all. (1998)

> A lot of money from Europe, spent on doing the houses up after people have vandalised them. I don't know who the hell it's helping. The ones in need do their own repairs. (1998)

> A little money, from the Council. They're doing houses up then knocking them down. It's helping no-one really. No help personally. (1999)

> A lot of money, from the Welsh Office and matched. Spent on drains (not done right the first time), doors, windows. Boilers and stairs are taken out … Someone's having a good screw but we don't know and can't say. (1999)

Membership of clubs or other groups.

147 (30%) of the two samples said that they were members of clubs or groups in the area, with significantly higher membership among residents from Old Gurnos and older residents. Relative newcomers (0-8 years residence) and teenagers are underrepresented among members. There were no important differences between the surveys.

Membership covered many social, political and specialist activities (from martial arts to pigeon flying), the outstanding ones being the Gurnos and Martyrs Social Clubs. They had 90 members (18%), whose opinions in the surveys were similar to other residents. There were no other substantial memberships: members of Church groups (Friends of St Aloysius especially), the Residents Boards/Associations, and

the Labour Party were the main ones. During the course of the interview, other people spontaneously mentioned that they used members' facilities or that their children were 'members' of clubs.

4.1 FACILITIES AND SERVICES: PERCEPTIONS AND USE

The residents were asked about eight different kinds of issues which the regeneration partnership (among others) had been trying to address. These concerned: traffic problems; the environment; young families; older children and youth; the elderly; employment and skills; crime prevention; and leisure (in 1999, leisure and health). For each issue, they were asked if they knew of any activities or new facilities aimed at improving the situation – in 1999, we asked about recent improvements. If they did (either spontaneously or after 'prompts' relating to new or improved facilities and services), we asked six further questions; *what* was being done; *who* was organising it; what they thought of *the results*; if they had *benefited personally*; if it was *'fair'*; what else was *needed*.   In 1999 we asked everyone, including those who were not aware of initiatives, what was *needed*.

Issues and initiatives: residents' own responses and how we treated them

When we refer to 'issues' in this section, we mean the eight issues about which we asked. When we refer to 'initiatives' or to 'facilities and services', we mean the specific facilities and services which the residents spoke about either spontaneously or (if they did not recall any when asked about an issue) in response to prompts. They spoke about these in their own words, and sometimes knew of more than one initiative related to one issue. We have used the residents' own descriptions to draw up classifications of answers – sometimes they were clearly referring to the same thing, and at other times different things had the same purpose or function. The six additional questions were asked about each of the initiatives.   The number of issues each resident could know about is always eight, but the number of initiatives and corresponding answers to the six questions is variable and much larger.

We shall refer to the total of initiatives, or all the facilities and services about which residents knew, as the 'aggregate' when we discuss overall responses to the six questions.

Summary of main points:

- Residents had considerable awareness covering, on average, five of the eight issues. Awareness was highest with respect to issues concerning young families, and also high for crime prevention, the environment, traffic and employment skills. Awareness was lower for young people, the elderly and leisure.

- Awareness of improvements was lower in 1999, possibly as an effect of more planning relative to activity by the regeneration partnership.

What is being done?

- The initiatives which were mentioned most in both surveys included regeneration projects and longer-established facilities: the Skills and Furniture Recycling Centre, the family centre and OAP clubs and bingo. Changes in awareness of other initiatives between the surveys broadly reflected changing levels of activity or a change to simply maintaining the project – home security is mostly completed and reverts to maintenance; there was less activity on barriers and more on street security.

- Fewer initiatives were known in Galon Uchaf.

- Residents who rated the place 'getting worse' tended to be aware of initiatives to meet basic 'needs' like housing, employment, youth facilities or drug support. Conversely, those who rated the place 'getting better' knew more about leisure. Teenagers tended to mention initiatives relevant to public spaces. The carnival was an initiative that crossed these boundaries.

Who organised it?

- Residents did not know who organised one-third of the initiatives and thought that the Council was the organising force behind another quarter. Although a wide range of organisations were suggested, there was little belief that 'partnership' was involved.

What do residents think of the results?

- A majority of the aggregated initiatives were thought 'good' or 'good so far'. Old Gurnos opinion tended to be more unambiguously 'good'; in New Gurnos there was more reserved judgement (especially of demolition); in Galon Uchaf there were more opinions that initiatives were 'not done here' (compounding the impression of low impact in the area).

- There were mostly very favourable (and few poor) opinions of clearing rubbish and cleaning up, grass-cutting and gardening, home security and most social activities.

- Higher levels of criticisms and poor opinions centred around four themes: poor quality (eg, CCTV), failure to solve problems (eg, bike barriers, 'wrecked' parks), inaccessibility (eg waiting lists at Busy Bee and Skills Centre), and unavailability (eg, long waiting periods for housing repairs, walls).

- Residents had divided opinions about youth facilities and their relevance for today's teenagers. Young adults (yesterday's teenagers) held very negative opinions. Residents spoke of the unrecognised prevalence of drugs and difficulty that organisations have in involving teenagers as problems dogging provision for young people.

Personal benefit from initiatives?

- Initiatives had benefited one-third of residents who knew of them. A small minority had tried but failed to get help or been refused, or been caused nuisance. Residents who rated the place 'getting worse' were less likely to be beneficiaries, especially of three 'core' initiatives (housing, employment, family centre), but home security had helped them.

'Fairness' of initiatives?

- Two-fifths of the aggregated initiatives were thought 'fair' (that is, had benefited the many rather than the few, or were in the right places). Nearly half were thought unfair.

- The 'fairest' initiatives were clearing up, paths and crossings, home security, carnivals, traffic calming and OAP clubs – all of which have public or widely available access.

- Reasons for 'unfairness' often related to the result. Poor quality (housing, street security) was linked to discrimination against the estate or to vandalism. Other suggested reasons for 'unfairness' were other users' reputation or behaviour, rigorous selection, strict rules and costs.

- When an initiative had helped a resident, it was more likely to be thought 'fair', but nearly a third of non-beneficiaries also thought so, reinforcing a view that many residents appreciate benefit to others.

- Initiatives were thought 'fair' by far fewer of those who rated the place 'getting worse' than those who rated it 'getting better'. Negative feelings about the place and social injustice of initiatives included housing, childcare, policing and social events.

What else is needed?

- Five 'needs' emerged as priorities among residents (although the 'meaning' which different groups of residents attached to each was subtley different, as the group work reported in Section 5 will show in more detail).
  1. more policing (46 mentions per 100 respondents). This refers especially to 'police on the beat' and a better response to calls, but also to less 'harassing' and more protective attitudes to young people;
  2. traffic calming measures, especially to reduce car speeds through speed ramps (41);
  3. 'proper' jobs and 'properly' paid training with real employment prospects (31);
  4. somewhere for the young people on the street to go (26);
  5. more public parks, playgrounds and play areas (21).

- 'Proper' jobs was spoken of as a completely new initiative and could be interpreted as a 'heartlands Labour' appeal from the Valleys economy. Alternatives – stimulating local skills and enterprise to create 'growth from within' – were either thought to be absent or did not appeal to residents as a valid way to address employment and low pay.

- Most people took the basic view that 'people *have* problems' and therefore the main priority was the provision or improvement of facilities and services. Some, however, felt that 'people *are* the problem'. Among these, the most common suggestion was efforts to change anti-social attitudes, bullying or rough behaviour. A minority wanted to make people 'look after each other'.

- Residents demonstrated detailed knowledge and acute observation in making specific suggestions for initiatives to meet needs. Their suggestions sometimes involved officials as well as residents learning new behaviours by developing current habits in more beneficial ways. Incorporating local knowledge of this kind by involving residents in planning and carrying out a project is not easy, but is sometimes thought to be a key process in successful regeneration.

- The sub-group of teenagers expressed high levels of need for better policing, traffic calming, 'proper' jobs, parks, places for them to go and sports. Teenagers emphasised their own safety – on the street, near speeding cars, with respect to drugs – and that they felt unprotected or even harassed by adults and police. They emphasised the need to change attitudes and behaviour of those in authority.

- The sub-group of those who rated the place 'getting worse' expressed high levels of need for more and better policing, places for street youth to go, tackling the drugs problem and playgroups.

Awareness of facilities and services.

Residents most frequently knew of activity relevant to five of the eight issues. Women tended to know about more of the issues than men. Teenagers, too, were relatively knowledgeable. On average, residents knew of most issues in New Gurnos, then Old Gurnos and finally Galon Uchaf. We should emphasise that awareness could be combined with either positive or negative perceptions of an initiative, which are explored below.

In 1998, awareness of activity was highest with respect to facilities for families with young children: 71% of all respondents knew of such facilities, the best known being the Busy Bee centre. Awareness was also high for the issues of crime prevention (70%, home security being best known), improvements to the environment (66%), traffic measures (63%) and employment and skills (63%), but rather lower in those of youth projects (43%), provision for the elderly (38%) and leisure facilities (24%).

In 1999, awareness was, as expected, lower for all issues except leisure (the recent carnival and the inclusion of health/gym causing an increase to 36%). Awareness of activity remained highest with respect to young families (58%, the Busy Bee still being best known) and crime reduction (58%, but street security becoming best known). Awareness was also quite high regarding environmental improvements (56%, now including demolition), but lower for employment and skills (45%) and, as in 1998, provision for youth (34%) and for the elderly (35%).

What **are facilities and services?**

Residents' knowledge of specific initiatives varied considerably. The most commonly mentioned with respect to the eight issues were: for traffic, bike barriers (115) and speed reduction (80); for environment, refurbishment of houses (119) and walls (101); for young families, family centres (146) and playgroups (89); for older children, youth clubs (96); for the elderly, OAP and bingo clubs (160); for employment, skills centre/ furniture recycling (251); for crime prevention, home security (146); and for leisure – though few initiatives of any kind were mentioned – the carnivals (38). The best-known were those which either had been publicised on television or in the Merthyr Express, such as the furniture recycling or skills centre and (in 1999) the newly formed 3Gs Football Club, or else were longer-established, especially OAP clubs and Bingo, but also Pen-y-dre youth facilities. Table 6 illustrates how the rankings of awareness changed between the two surveys. (The distribution of knowledge is shown in full in Appendix A: Table A.2.)

Between 1998 and 1999, there were some sharp changes in awareness of some facilities and services, which generally reflected the lower levels of new activities which had been remarked to us by the regeneration partnership. The numbers of mentions increased for speed ramps, street security, more police on the beat and the carnival, in addition to new categories of the 3Gs football and health/gym. There was a relative increase in mentions of the Busy Bee. The main decreases in awareness were for barriers and home security (much of which may have been completed) and youth clubs.

Awareness differed across the estate except with respect to the Skills/recycling Centre, the most widely-known facility. In both New and Old Gurnos awareness reflected local regeneration activity (e.g., the Busy Bee in New Gurnos; street and home security in Old Gurnos) but in Galon Uchaf it reflected longer-standing community-based facilities and services (the Residents Centre, OAP clubs and

playgroups). This tends to confirm that regeneration has had relatively low impact in Galon Uchaf.

On the whole, the knowledge of teenagers, and of people who thought the place was 'getting worse' or 'getting better' was little different from that of other residents. More teenagers mentioned youth clubs (but not afterschool clubs), footpaths, barriers (which affected their bike-riding) and (in 1999) street security – which emphasise the importance of public spaces to them. In the case of residents who thought the place was 'getting better', there was consistently more mention of leisure activities such as social events (discos, trips or so on), sports, volunteering and using the countryside. The pattern of knowledge of residents who thought that the place was 'getting worse' tended to emphasise 'needs' (house repairs, employment and training, the family or residents centres, youth clubs and drug support). However, two leisure activities, which are deliberately accessible to people who may otherwise feel 'left out', were well-known to those thinking the place was 'getting worse': the carnival and 3Gs Football.

Table 6. Aggregated initiatives: awareness of facilities and services: the five top ranked (combined surveys and by each survey)

Facility or service (number of mentions in brackets)		
Combined 1998 and 1999 surveys	**1998 survey**	**1999 survey**
1. Skills centre/ Furniture recycling (251)	1. Skills centre/ Furniture recycling (153)	1. Skills centre/ Furniture recycling (98)
2. OAP clubs, bingo (160)	2. Home security (110)	2. Family Centre, Busy Bee (67)
3= Home security (146)	3. Barriers, fences, bollards (108)	3. OAP clubs, bingo (66)
3= Family Centre, Busy Bee (146)	4. OAP clubs, bingo (94)	4. Street security (65)
5. Barriers, fences, bollards (115)	5. Family Centre, Busy Bee (79)	5. Speed ramps, traffic calming (60)

Overall, men and women displayed similar knowledge (a split of 45:55, close to the sample sex ratios), including knowledge of many of the best known facilities. Strongly pro-male ratios were shown with respect to trees and other planting (61:39); street security (55:45); and low tolerance (56:44). Strongly pro-female ratios were shown with respect to afterschool clubs (35:65), volunteering (26:74), social events (discos, trips, etc) (28:72) and health activities or the gym (33:67).

Who organised it?

We asked residents who were aware of an initiative who they thought organised it. Their replies suggested little knowledge of partnership arrangements for carrying out initiatives. In fact, for nearly a third of the initiatives, the organisers were not known (see Table 7). Otherwise, the only other common view was that the Council was the organiser. (Therefore, Council stands to gain in reputation from successful initiatives.) Amongst sole organisers mentioned, higher profile was given to the Busy Bee and to individuals in the second survey. Only 3% of initiatives were thought to be organised by the 3Gs partnership (for which people used other terms like 'community development') and a few others mentioned joint organisers (the most important pairing being Council-Residents Board/Association (1%)). Table 7 lists the main suggestions for the aggregated initiatives.

Table 7. Percentages of replies about who organised the aggregated initiatives in each survey.

Organisers involved (alone or with others)	1998 %	1999 %	Also called …
Council	27	25	PEP, New Deal
Residents Boards/Associations	9	7	Crabapple, Community House
Safer Merthyr	5	4	Homesafe, Safer Homes/Cities
Busy Bee	5	9	NSPCC, Barnadoes, Children's Society
Police	4	5	Crime Prevention Officer
Groundwork	4	4	Ground Trust, Green something, ETF
Education establishments	4	6	School, TEC, college
Local people, individuals	4	9	Petition, women, volunteers, (or name)
Regeneration	2	3	Community Development/Trust, money for Gurnos estate, Steering Committee
Private firm	2	0	
Don't know	32	31	

Columns do not add up to 100% because more than one organiser was occasionally suggested for some initiatives. Other organisers were: Probation or Community Service, Age Concern, doctors or midwives, Citizens Advice Bureau, Victim Support, drug support and the church.

Results: opinions of facilities and services.

Where respondents knew of specific facilities or services, they were asked what they thought of them. The range of views is shown in Table 8 (see Appendix Table A.3 for the ratings by facility or service).

The pattern of views changed little between the surveys, and Table 8 shows the distribution of opinions about the results of the aggregated initiatives for the combined surveys. Overall, nearly half of ratings were 'good'. In New Gurnos, more people than in other areas tended to reserve judgement ('good so far' or pointing out that things were not done 'as promised'). This was very evident with respect to refurbishment and demolition. In 1998, residents in New Gurnos often complained about 'wrecking' of refurbished properties or lack of repairs and maintenance. In 1999, no-one in New Gurnos said that no work was being done, but many residents reserved judgement on the demolition which had 'left a mess'. In Old Gurnos, residents tended to give unequivocally 'good' opinions, especially in 1999. In Galon Uchaf, people tended to say that the service or facility was 'not done here' – as, indeed, the low number of facilities mentioned by residents of Galon Uchaf emphasises.

Table 8. Aggregated facilities and services: Distribution of views about results of initiatives known in each area (combined surveys).

RESULT	All ratings %	New Gurnos %	Old Gurnos %	Galon Uchaf %
Good, OK, marvellous	48	46	50	47
Good 'so far', 'not as promised'	14	15	12	14
Good but 'wrecked', not maintained	4	4	3	3
Poor, not solved problem, 'rough'	15	15	17	13
Not done at all, not done here	8	7	7	12
Cliquey	1	1	1	1
Don't know/ cannot say	11	12	10	11
(Total number = 100%)	*(2105)*	*(805)*	*(704)*	*(596)*

As Table 8 shows, about one-tenth of all residents who knew of a facility or service did not give an opinion. Usually this was a genuine 'don't know' (for example, playgroups might be thought irrelevant by the elderly). In some of these cases it simply indicated that a resident had not been attracted to the facility in order to find out. In other cases it was clear that the resident did not feel 'worthy' of giving an opinion – in extreme cases through fear of offending influential organisations or individuals – and therefore 'could not say'.

We also wanted to take into account that a service which is both favourably regarded by many but also unfavourably regarded by many others may have a divisive impact. Bearing this in mind, we have categorised opinions about facilities and services by their positive ratings ('good' or 'good so far') and their negative ratings ('poor') and this cross-tabulation is shown in Table 9. The more divisive services are those which result in average or above average 'good/ good so far' ratings but also receive high 'poor' ratings of the results.

Table 9. Ranking of facilities and services within broad bands based on opinions about results (combined surveys)

Opinion band	Facilities and services with few 'poor' results	Facilities and services with high 'poor' results
Very high 'good/ good so far' rating of results	Clearing rubbish, cleaning up Grass cutting, gardening Home security (Tackling bullies/roughness) (Other places for youth to go) (Sheltered housing for old)	
High 'good/ good so far' results	Social events, adult sports Carnival Volunteer courses	Paths, crossings More police presence (Health/gym)
Average results	3Gs football Playgroups OAP clubs, bingo Afterschool clubs (Drug support)	Refurbishment/ demolition Walls Speed traps Busy Bee family centre
Low 'good/ good so far' results	Residents centres (for young)	Skills/recycling centre Victim Support (Low tolerance policing)
Very low 'good/ good so far' results		Barriers Street security Youth clubs Trees, planting Parks (Artwork) (Other job creation) (Other crime prevention)

Note. Facilities and services which were mentioned by very few residents are in brackets and their ratings are indicative only and not reliable.

Very favourable opinions and low 'divisiveness' were given for: clearing rubbish; grass cutting and gardening; home security; and most social activities. Some new initiatives to involve young people, for example, in 1998, a non-alcoholic pub, and in 1999, the 3Gs Football, were very favourably regarded by teenagers themselves. Positive opinions were higher in 1999 than in 1998 for most traffic measures, facilities for young families and training.

By contrast, several other initiatives drew relatively high levels of criticism. Indeed, poor opinions remained common or became even more frequent in 1999 for most youth facilities and street security. In the main, poor opinion was either because a project had not entirely solved problems, or because

facilities or services were not available to all. For example, CCTV had very high negative ratings, often because it was believed that the cameras were not working. Several residents remarked that a camera had been pointing at an incident, such as vandalism or assault, but had failed to record anything. One camera was said 'to point south for months. The house next door was on fire and the camera was facing the mountains'.

The idea of bike barriers was generally popular, but in practice they were sometimes seen as ineffective, and furthermore caused difficulties for the disabled and people with buggies. Likewise, the creation of parks and tree-planting were appreciated, but many people said that the parks were soon 'wrecked', and the trees pulled up. Examples of dissatisfaction about access included the waiting lists at the Busy Bee and Skills Centre/Community Workshops, lack of transport to OAP clubs, the absence of health/gym facilities on the estate and 'having to be burgled before getting locks fitted'. Examples of dissatisfaction about lack of availability are walls or fencing to improve privacy and especially housing repairs: these involved long waiting periods, often because 'money ran out'.

More positive opinions of activities were found among those holding the view that the place is 'getting better', of whom 69% said that results were 'good' or 'good so far', compared to 57% of those who thought the place was 'getting worse' (see Table 10). The latter were relatively less informed or perhaps did not wish to give their opinion.

Table 10. Aggregated facilities and services: Opinions about the results of all initiatives known to selected groups

RESULT	All ratings %	Teenagers %	'Getting better' %	'Getting worse' %
Good, OK, marvellous	48	49	56	42
Good 'so far', 'not as promised'	14	13	13	15
Good but 'wrecked', not maintained	4	2	3	5
Poor, not solved problem, 'rough'	15	16	12	16
Not done at all, not done here	8	10	7	8
Cliquey	1	1	1	1
Don't know/ cannot say	11	9	8	12
(Total number = 100%)	*(2105)*	*(575)*	*(528)*	*(818)*

Overall, teenagers' opinions were similar to other residents. Although the numbers are too small to be reliable, the teenagers in owned houses seemed very favourable. In 1998 results were quite unfavourable, 24% finding facilities 'poor'. However, there were differences among teenagers between

the two surveys. The more favourable teenage opinions in 1999 may be because of the popularity of the carnival and 3Gs football – no teenager thought these 'poor'. With respect to initiatives for young people (mainly youth clubs, Community Centre, afterschool clubs, the 3Gs football) teenagers were more positive than young adults (yesterday's teenagers) who held very negative opinions of youth facilities.

As we have already noted, youth initiatives received relatively little mention. There was general agreement that young people 'hanging out' are a problem ('They're just on the streets frightening people and burning cars').   Many residents also said that there is little for them: for example, 'People moan at kids as they have nowhere to go' or '[Young people] are picked on to go there, and there. They go for it if they can, but there's no facilities'.

Residents were divided about the quality of those youth facilities of which they knew and their relevance for today's teenagers. For some, the youth club is 'OK, kids enjoy it, ' or 'When it's on it's very good for them'. For others 'the school environment puts the kids off' or 'There are bullies and [my kids] get chased'. Residents remarked on two phenomena: the prevalence of drugs (and organisational blindness to it) and the difficulty that organisations have in attracting young people to get involved with initiatives. For example:

> The youth groups are open to all … There's more than when I was 13, but there's a massive drugs problem – 12 year-old heroin addicts. People turn their backs and say 'it's not happening'. (1998)

> They [children] pick the pins up. (1999)

> I've heard of a youth club in the school. If it was any good, kids wouldn't be hanging out on the street. (1998)

Young people sometimes felt that organisations failed them:

> The NSPCC are all rules and regulations. They were supposed to have a woman to supervise the older kids: she came once but couldn't hack it. (1998)

> We went and told [a survey/consultation on young people] – we told them but nothing. They ask, you tell them but they don't do anything about it. (1999)

Personal benefit from facilities and services

Residents were asked if they had benefited or been involved with any facility or service of which they knew. Residents had personally benefited from, or been involved with, 32% of aggregated facilities or activities.

As Table 11 shows, although failed attempts to get help or become involved, or nuisance, were a minority problem (5%), they were spatially concentrated (attempts in New Gurnos and Galon Uchaf; nuisance in New Gurnos).

Table 11. Aggregated initiatives: Personal benefit from initiatives known in each area (combined surveys)

PERSONAL BENEFIT	All ratings %	New Gurnos %	Old Gurnos %	Galon Uchaf %
Yes (including indirect through relations)	32	31	35	29
No (including preference for independence)	61	60	61	63
Tried but failed/ waiting	3	5	1	4
Nuisance	2	3	1	1
Don't know/ can't say	2	1	1	3
(Total number = 100%)	*(2079)*	*(795)*	*(693)*	*(591)*

There were very few failed attempts, and none among older residents, in Old Gurnos, but it might be thought a particular concern that older residents from New Gurnos and Galon Uchaf were among those who tried but failed to get help, or found the initiatives a nuisance. Failed attempts, waiting and nuisance were associated with negative comment about quality and 'cliques'. They also created clusters or networks, for example when residents told us that they did not expect help because a neighbour or friend had been refused. Refusal by a facility or service becomes known through families which extend across the estate. A refusal could also be divisive if it applies to a group. Examples are houseowners who understood that the Residents Association would not help after being told, 'You're not a resident if you own your house,' or a teenager who thought that 'youth clubs are only for those in school – I'm not.' Clusters and divisiveness could be emerging where well-known facilities have relatively few beneficiaries or involvement at present: for example, although half of respondents knew of the Skills/Community Workshop, only 35 (14% of those who knew about it) said that they were beneficiaries and a further 14 (7%) had tried but failed to get help.

Teenagers were more likely to have been beneficiaries in Galon Uchaf – but they knew of fewer facilities there. 36% of Galon Uchaf facilities known to teenagers, 31% of those in New Gurnos and 30% in Old Gurnos, benefited or involved them personally. Involvement with both the carnival and 3Gs

football by young women in 1999 eliminated part of a 'pro-male' bias in the smaller 1998 teenage sample (creditable in an area with traditional gender roles).

Among residents who thought the place was 'getting worse', which area they lived in did not affect personal benefit. Wherever they lived, they were less likely to have benefited from the services and facilities of which they knew than those who rated the place 'getting better'. Furthermore, if we look only at three regeneration initiatives which address 'core' needs (housing, Skills Centre and Busy Bee: see Table 12), they were even less likely to have been beneficiaries than others (only 18%, compared with 35% of those who thought the place was 'getting better'). Very high personal benefit from home security, another initiative for a 'core' need, is a good counter-example.

Table 12. Three major regeneration initiatives (housing, Skills Centre and Busy Bee): Personal benefit where these initiatives were known to those who rated the place 'getting better' and 'getting worse' (combined surveys)

PERSONAL BENEFIT (housing, Skills centre, Busy Bee only)	'Getting better' %	'Getting worse' %
Yes (including indirect through relations)	35	18
No (including preference for independence)	55	73
Tried but failed/ waiting	9	5
Nuisence	0	1
Don't know/ can't say	1	3
(Total number = 100%)	*(116)*	*(196)*

There was a strong association in both surveys between personal benefit and opinions about results. Among beneficiaries, overall opinions about results tended to be favourable more often than among non-beneficiaries (who included those who had tried and failed to benefit or become involved, had found the facility a 'nuisance'). 87% of the aggregated facilities which had helped a respondent, were also said to be 'good' or 'good so far', but only 55% of those which had not helped; conversely, only 11% of facilities which helped were said to be 'wrecked', poor, 'not done' or 'cliquey', but 41% of those which had not helped were so described.

The *'fairness'* of facilities and services.

The indicator of 'fairness' was a question about whether a known facility or service benefited the many rather than the few, or was in the right places. Overall, two-fifths of the aggregated facilities and

services were believed to be 'fair', nearly half (49%) were thought 'unfair', and residents 'didn't know' about the 'fairness' of 11% (the two surveys are shown separately in Table 13). The proportion of facilities and services which were thought unfair was significantly higher in the 1999 survey than in 1998 (rising from 47% to 52%). This rise was most marked in Galon Uchaf, and was associated mainly with a reduction in 'don't know/cannot say' replies. As we have noted, a rise in perceived 'unfairness' could signal a disillusionment with regeneration and other initiatives locally or with the wider policy, and it is interesting that the main shift has come from fewer people being indecisive – that is, increased polarisation.

Table 13. Aggregated initiatives: Distribution of opinions about the perceived 'fairness' of initiatives in each survey (all areas and Galon Uchaf alone)

'FAIRNESS'	1998 all areas %	1999 all areas %	Galon Uchaf only	
			1998 %	1999 %
Yes (benefited many, in right places)	41	39	34	35
No (benefited few, in wrong places)	47	52	46	53
Don't know/ can't say	12	8	20	12
(Total number = 100%)	*(1238)*	*(841)*	*(361)*	*(230)*

'Fairness' ratings of the aggregated initiatives in the two surveys, and in Galon Uchaf only, were significantly different. Those in New Gurnos and Old Gurnos were not significantly different.

The highest percentages of 'fair' opinions (including 'don't know/cannot say') were for cleaning and clearing up (75%), paths and crossings (70%), home security (64%), carnivals (57%), speed ramps (53%) and OAP clubs/bingo (52%) – all facilities with public or deliberately open access, or widely available. The highest percentages of 'unfair' opinions were for street security (80%), trees and planting (72%), parks (66%), non-vocational and volunteer training (64%), and youth clubs and 3Gs football (63%). The reasons were mixed: other users' behaviour or reputation (vandalism, 'rough') affected some and reputation was difficult to shake off; rigorous selection or strict rules were also thought 'unfair' by others; costs prevented low-income groups and young people from being included. Importantly, a majority of those who knew of facilities and services which address two 'core' needs (the Skills Centre and housing) thought them 'unfair'.

'Fairness' was strongly associated with the pattern of results and personal benefit (as we would expect). Indeed, residents spoke of poor quality of work carried out as an important reason for 'unfairness' of street security and housing repairs, refurbishment or demolition: CCTV that 'didn't work', a failure to carry out repairs or to check for asbestos before demolition, or a perception of organised stripping of

void properties' resources. Some residents linked this to discrimination against the estate, whilst others blamed vandals or 'druggies'. 'Unfairness' was associated strongly with the negative opinion that results were 'poor'. 'Poor' was the recorded result for 25% of facilities rated 'unfair' compared with 15% of all facilities and only 4% of those rated 'fair'.

Residents who had personally benefited from facilities and services, tended to believe that they were 'fair'. A large majority (64%) of facilities which had helped the individual were thought 'fair', and only 31% were thought 'unfair'. However, even when facilities had not helped the individual, a substantial minority (30%) nevertheless thought them 'fair', reinforcing a view that in Gurnos and Galon Uchaf benefits to others are often appreciated.

Table 14. 'Fairness' of selected facilities and services according to those who rated the place 'getting better' and 'getting worse', ranked by the difference between 'fair' ratings.

Facility or service	Percentage rating the facility 'fair' who had rated the place:		
	'Getting better' %	'Getting worse' %	Difference (worse-better)
Non-vocational training, volunteering	56	0	-56
More police presence, better quality policing	62	*20	-42
Housing repairs, refurbishment, demolition	61	19	-42
Playgroups, schemes, creches	71	35	-36
Residents' centres (young children)	64	29	-35
Social activities (discos, jazz, trips, adult sport)	61	27	-34
Walls, house fences	55	24	-31
Cleaning, clearing up	*88	60	-28
Skills/recycling Centre	43	19	-24
Street security	30	6	-24
Youth clubs	40	18	-22
OAP clubs, bingo	61	47	-14

Barriers, fences, bollards	43	33	-10
Parks, play areas, trees, planting	25	15	-10
Family Centre, Busy Bee	56	50	-6
3Gs football	*29	31	2
Speed traps	53	56	3
Home security	63	68	5
Carnival	*50	60	10
Paths, crossings	62	74	12
Victim Support	27	39	12
All known facilities *(number in brackets =100%)*	**51** *(524)*	**34** *(810)*	**-17**

* Mentioned less than 10 times by this group and 'Difference' is therefore not reliable.

'Fairness' was also strongly associated with opinions about the place. Table 14 shows the percentage ratings for the fairness of selected facilities and services. Overall, the aggregated initiatives were thought 'fair' less often by those thinking the place was 'getting worse' (34%) than by those who had said it was 'getting better' (51%).

Indeed, as Table 14 illustrates, some facilities thought overwhelmingly to benefit the few according to those who rated the place 'getting worse' (including housing, childcare, policing and social events), were thought overwhelmingly to benefit the many according to those who rated the place 'getting better'. It is possible that improving the operations of facilities and services ranked high in Table 14 could redress feeling of social injustice associated with negative experiences of the place.

Suggestions about what else is needed.

Respondents were asked for, or volunteered, suggestions about what was needed. In 1998, respondents were asked what else was needed when they knew of an initiative relevant to an issue; in 1999, they were asked what was needed about each of the eight issues, whether or not they were aware of initiatives. We therefore do not make comparisons *between* the surveys, but we can add them together. We refer to all the needs that were suggested as the 'aggregated needs' and the number of these for each resident varied. Respondents could, and did, suggest the same need for more than one issue (for example, that more police presence was needed with respect to both traffic and crime), or they mentioned more than one need for a single issue (for example, the need for both speed ramps and more policing to curb dangerous traffic). 33 respondents of the 493 did not suggest any need at all and 49 volunteered at least one need against every issue.

The numbers of mentions of needs are shown in Table 15. Among these, five were mentioned most frequently (ranked by number of mentions):

❖ **more policing (46 mentions per 100 respondents):**
   this included especially 'police on the beat',
   a better response to calls,
   and less 'harrassing' and more protective attitudes to young people;

❖ **traffic calming measures, especially to reduce car speeds through speed ramps (41);**

❖ **'proper' jobs and 'properly' paid training with real employment prospects (31);**

❖ **somewhere for the young people on the street to go (26);**

❖ **more public parks, playgrounds and play areas (21).**

Table 15. Replies to 'What is needed?': total number of mentions of facilities and services relevant to each issue and number of mentions per 100 respondents.

Facilities or services needed	Number of mentions	Mentions per 100 respondents
Traffic and pedestrian	**335**	**68**
Speed ramps or traps to slow or calm traffic	200	41
Footpaths, lighting, crossings	63	13
Barriers, railings, bollards	39	8
Other (parking, driveways, buses)		
Environmental	**388**	**79**
Parks, playgrounds, play areas	103	21
Housing: repairs, demolish properties, fill voids	74	15
Clearing, cleaning up rubbish and environment	66	13
Walls on houses, privacy	44	9
Grass-cutting and gardening service	37	8
Other (trees, landscaping, use countryside, general maintenance, drainage, artwork)		
Families with babies, small children	**145**	**29**

Playgroups, creches, safe play	73	15
Family centre, more places in Busy Bee	32	6
Other (baby clinic, other supervised childcare)		
Older children and youth	**250**	**51**
Youth, places for street youth to go, drop-in	126	26
Youth clubs	80	16
Afterschool clubs, football facilities, parental guidance		
Elderly	**144**	**29**
OAP clubs or centres, more places to go	63	13
Caring, better design of ramps etc, peaceful atmosphere	34	7
Other (transport, sheltered housing)		
Employment and training	**235**	**48**
'Proper' jobs, 'real' training with adequate pay and hope	151	31
Employment skills and training, New Deal	58	12
Other (non-vocational & volunteer training, retailing, building, non-sexist training, adult illiteracy)		
Crime reduction and prevention	**422**	**86**
More police presence and better quality policing	229	46
Drug support	71	14
Street security, CCTV	48	10
Low tolerance policing, curfews, exclude 'bad' people	36	7
Other (home security, Victim Support, CAB, NW)		
Leisure, healthy lifestyle and image	**250**	**51**
Social activities (chat, discos, music, trips, entertainment)	64	13
Sport	65	13
Healthy lifestyle, keep fit, gym	41	8
Other (design for disabled, shops, carnival, publicity, volunteering)		
Changing attitudes and behaviour	**199**	**40**
Wreckers, joyriding etc	107	22
Fear, roughness	62	13
Mutuality, looking after each other, encouragement	30	6
Nothing at all	**57**	**12**
TOTAL	**2425**	492

Categories of facilities and services mentioned less than 30 times are not shown separately: these

suggestions make up the difference between the total needs within one kind of issue (in bold) and the sum of the relevant main categories of need.

Mentions per 100 residents is not exactly the same as a percentage of residents, because a resident could mention a need as a solution to more than one issue, or more than one need as a solution to one issue.

Most residents spoke of these top five needed initiatives as new rather than improvements to existing ones, but even if we subtract any replies which were for better policing, traffic calming, somewhere for street youth and parks, it did not affect the ranking of needs that received the most mentions.

Among the needs expressed, the residents' widespread and unprompted introduction of 'proper' jobs at this point of the interview stands out. 'Proper' jobs were not perceived as part of a current initiative, and this raises some difficult problems about the labour market and limits of area regeneration strategy in general. It could be interpreted as very much a 'heartlands Labour' appeal from the Valleys economy – that is, a non-local problem. Alternative ideas for local initiatives to stimulate 'growth from within' and enterprises on the estate, such as micro-finance or small business support, were absent or unrecognised by many residents as valid ways to address employment.

As Table 15 shows, some residents responded to the question of 'what is needed?' with suggestions that it is residents, rather than facilities or services, which need to change. The most frequently mentioned were changing people with either anti-social attitudes and behaviour, especially to joy-riding and drug-taking, or bullying, 'rough' behaviour which caused isolation of victims. However, especially in 1999, an alternative minority view was expressed, that what was needed was encouragement and mutuality ('people looking after each other').

Table 16. Most frequently mentioned needs by area, ranked by the number of mentions that each need received per 100 residents in each area.

Top ten needs ranked by mentions/100 residents: (number of mentions per 100 residents in brackets)			
New Gurnos n = 165	**Old Gurnos** n = 167	**Galon Uchaf** n = 161	**All areas** n = 493
More/better policing (42)	More/better policing (53)	Traffic calming (47)	More/better policing (46)
Traffic calming (39)	Traffic calming (35) 'Proper' jobs (35)	More/better policing (44)	Traffic calming (41)
'Proper' jobs (34)		Places for street youth (27)	'Proper' jobs (31)

Parks, play areas (28)	Places for street youth (26)	'Proper' jobs (23)	Places for street youth (26)
Drug support (25)	Parks, play areas (18)	Playgroups, creches, safe play (19)	Parks, play areas (21)
Places for street youth (24)	Youth clubs (16)	Youth clubs (18)	Youth clubs (16)
OAP clubs, things to do (20)	Footpaths, lighting, crossings (15) Playgroups, creches, safe play (15)	Parks, play areas (17)	Housing repairs, demolition, voids (15) Playgroups, play areas (15)
Housing repairs, demolition (18)		Social activities (16)	
Clearing, cleaning up (17)	Clearing, cleaning up (14) Sport, football (14)	Housing repairs, refurbishment, voids (14) Grass-cutting, gardening service (14)	Drug support (14)
Youth clubs (15) Social activities (15)			Paths, crossings (13) Clearing up (13) OAPs, more to do (13) Social activities (13) Sports (13)

'n' is the number of residents interviewed. Mentions per 100 residents is equal to total mentions divided by the number of residents in each area (n). This is not exactly the same as a percentage of residents, because a resident could mention a need as a solution to more than one issue, or more than one need as a solution to one issue.

The needs expressed were slightly different in each area, partly due to local perceptions as well as different problems. The need for traffic calming was most often expressed in New Gurnos and Galon Uchaf, and the need for more policing in Old Gurnos. Table 16 shows the most frequently expressed needs and area differences.

There were also some very specific suggestions, each made by a few people: e.g. training in car mechanics (at times to fit with shifts); gardening for the elderly; 'walls for kids to kick a ball against'; a BMX cycling track; a place to 'trash' old bangers for a fiver; an explanation of why a one-way system

won't work. Often people used their detailed local knowledge and were innovative because they knew and understood details. The BMX track was suggested precisely because a young man had noticed the keenness of young people with the bikes. Some residents thought that police were afraid to patrol. Old Gurnos residents had seen police walking from their cars to the bakery to buy pies, and one wondered if this might give them the confidence to leave their cars and patrol (thus including a training element in 'police should get off their fat arses and patrol more'). The point here is that the carefully observed habits of other residents or officials can become the basis for new activities that also solve community problems. Incorporating local knowledge of this kind by involving residents in project planning and implementation is not easy, but is sometimes thought to be a key process in successful regeneration.

Other specific suggestions related to more effective use of resources: for example, a visit to each new resident to give information about facilities and services; computer training for parents as well as young people; utility tokens at all Post Offices; shorter housing repair times and better supervision and inspection of all housing work; free skips.

Table 17 draws attention to needs expressed by subgroups of teenagers and those who rated the place as 'getting worse'. Teenagers expressed more needs for traffic calming, 'proper' jobs or training, parks and sports facilities than others. There was relatively more teenage than older residents' articulation of needs, especially for policing and 'proper' jobs, in New and Old Gurnos than in Galon Uchaf. Teenagers in New Gurnos also often suggested the need for more drug support. It is interesting that initiatives for teenagers had as widespread support among adults as among teenagers themselves. Also, teenagers emphasised their own safety – on the street, with respect to speeding cars or to drugs – and this is in part because they feel unprotected, or even harrassed, by adults and the police. Teenagers were as likely as others to mention a need to change anti-social attitudes and behaviour, and this frequently included the attitudes and behaviour of those in authority.

Those who rated the place as 'getting worse' expressed more need than others for more or better policing, places for street youth to go, to tackle the drug problem and playgroups (see Table 17).

Table 17.   Most frequently mentioned needs by sub-groups of teenagers and residents who rated the place 'getting worse' (combined surveys)

Top ranked needs:	
(mentions per 100 sub-group in brackets)	
Teenagers	**'Getting worse'**

n = 70	n = 201
Traffic calming (56)	More/better policing (57)
More/better policing (47)	Traffic calming (45)
'Proper'jobs (46)	'Proper' jobs (33)
Parks, playgrounds, play areas (37)	Places for street youth (33)
Places for street youth (36)	Drug support (24)
Sports facilities (31)	Playgroups, creches, safe play (20)

'n' is the number of residents interviewed. Mentions per 100 residents is equal to total mentions divided by the number of residents in each area (n). This is not exactly the same as a percentage of residents, because a resident could mention a need as a solution to more than one issue, or more than one need as a solution to one issue.

Voluntary and involuntary isolation

A sizeable minority of the residents interviewed either knew very little about, or did not use facilities in the area. About 4% specifically mentioned bullying, roughness at youth clubs, or fear of leaving their house as reasons for this, while about 15% said that they 'don't bother', 'keep themselves to themselves' or rarely go out because they are carers.

Although it was not recorded systematically in the survey, we interviewed disabled residents who were totally housebound because wider doorways had not been installed.   A more invisible form of isolation of some people, again not systematically recorded, was institutional exclusion of illiterate people or official inaction in apparently dangerous situations (excessive, stinking damp; gas leaks; water and electricity mixing). In these cases relations with officials were fraught with anger and fear.

Differences between areas.

The answers to questions about initiatives often revealed differences between the three areas, as well as specific local concerns. Some of the differences can be traced back to the separate histories of the areas (Section 1).

'There's nothing here' was a common remark in *Galon Uchaf*: residents said that popular facilities had been discontinued (for example, discos and the work of Safer Cities); other well-liked facilities were said to be in poor condition (for example The Hut in 1998); and the Residents Board was seen as having once been exceptionally active, but now seemed to have run out of steam apart from running activities for the elderly. In 1999, two youth workers were appointed and work was done in the

Residents Centre but without much short-term impact on this view.

We did hear of resident-led actions, although none seemed to have been successful, and the potential 'energy points' of active residents had sometimes become resentful.

Two obstacles to regeneration – people's fear of going out, and children's 'liking' for anti-social behaviour – were also referred to more often in Galon Uchaf .

In *New Gurnos,* residents often spoke in 1998 of their concerns about properties standing empty, especially after refurbishment. The 1999 demolition seemed popular but very badly planned and executed. There were also more expressed wishes for youth facilities, training, 'proper' jobs and drug support. There seemed to be mixed feelings about the Matchstick Man in 1998 – some gloomily predicting it would become offices, others enthusing about 'a place for everyone'. In 1999, as the Johnny Owen Centre, it has been the scene for meetings but not a social centre. By 1999, New Gurnos had experienced resident-led success in getting speed humps.

New Gurnos had the most 'energy points' of active individuals and groups operating independently. These had been brought about by concerns over children's safety, drugs and, of course, the demolition.

In *Old Gurnos,* residents were, as in Galon Uchaf, worried about activities being discontinued. Another theme was dislike of charges for facilities or services: for example, people in every age group remarked that 50p for a game of pool was too much for children and young people. The highest priority need was for more and better quality policing, and a faith in crime reduction measures was evidenced in 1999 by the increasing use of steel fencing and barbed wire to enclose areas. More positively, the school's lead in improving pupils' behaviour had been noticed.

The Social Club by the Old Gurnos shops had a continuing important social role as a place for residents from all over the estate. It was somewhere that some otherwise isolated widowers mentioned that they went. Old Gurnos also had 'energy points' of active residents, in 1999 in initiating the new 3Gs football club, but also in insisting on standards in how projects are carried out.

4.1 THE REGENERATION PARTNERSHIP AND CONSULTATION

Summary of main points:

Regeneration partnership.

- Knowledge of the regeneration partnership itself was very low – about one third of residents had heard of it. This was despite the interviewers' use of prompts, a recent distribution of the newsletter in 1998 or the recent carnival in 1999.

- Of those who had heard of it, 40% or two-fifths (but fewer teenagers or residents who had rated the place 'getting worse') thought the regeneration partnership was doing an 'excellent' or 'good' job.

- Residents in 1999 most often thought that the partnership should 'make the place better, 'push things' 'listen more' or 'deliver, not promise'.

Residents Associations/ Boards.

- At least three-quarters of residents in each survey had heard of the Residents Associatons or Boards, and of these, one fifth had been helped by them.

- Just under half of residents who knew of the RA/Bs thought they were doing positive things like improving the community, dealing with complaints, organising activities or campaigns. Old Gurnos residents were least critical. About one-third, falling in 1999 to one-quarter, thought they were doing an 'excellent' or 'good' job (far fewer among teenagers or those who rated the place 'getting worse').

- Criticisms by residents (and some committee members) reflected real problems of their role. Different residents suggested both over-control by the RA/Bs and, paradoxically, their powerlessness to effect change as residents want.

Consultation.

- The majority of residents did not recall ever being asked their views, or hearing of meetings – except for the upsurge in meetings in New Gurnos.

- In 1999 only, we explored this further by asking how people find out about improvements to facilities and services. Two-thirds of residents said they talked and asked (especially families, friends, trusted individuals, or organisations like the Council) rather than reading or going and seeing. In New Gurnos, fewer people read, and more talked or went to meetings. In Galon Uchaf, there was more reliance on asking the Council and reading leaflets. Women were more likely to read, and men to go and see.

- Curiously, those who rated the place 'getting worse' were more likely to use several methods to get information, including a reliance on the Council.

- Meetings were probably not well-regarded as sources of information (among their uses) – even fewer said that they find out about improvements in meetings than said that they attended meetings.

Knowledge and views about the Partnership

In both 1998 and 1999 one-third of residents, when prompted, said that they had heard of 'a group of organisations working together to improve facilities and services'. Knowledge of the name of the partnership was low. In 1998, fewer than one in ten named it correctly (or even nearly correctly). Equally, only 30% remembered seeing a newsletter, despite a recent distribution. In 1999, the 3Gs name was most often known through the football team (and its weekly report in the Merthyr Express). The 'ratings' of the partnership (among those who had heard of it) were similar in 1998 and 1999, with two-fifths 'good/excellent' (see Table 18).

Table 18. Percentage of residents who knew of regeneration organisation and ratings, by survey and by sub-group

	% residents	% residents	% all	% all

	in 1998	in 1999	teenagers	'getting worse'
Heard of regeneration organisation	33	33	23	39
Ratings:				
Doing an excellent/good job	41	40	27	25
Not doing a bad job	32	21	32	25
Doing a bad job	23	23	35	36
Don't know	5	16	5	13
Total*	100	100	100	100

* Ratings only from those who had heard of regeneration organisations.
In 1998 only, 'don't know' answers were discouraged.
Differences between the surveys are not statistically important.

Table 18 also shows the ratings given by teenagers and residents who rated the place as 'getting worse'. These ratings were much lower for 'good/excellent' – indeed no teenager who knew of the partnership said it was 'excellent' in either survey – and significantly higher for 'bad'. Neither tenancy or sex affected knowledge of the regeneration partnership. More tenants and residents in owned properties rated the regeneration partnership 'excellent' or 'good' (45% compared to 30% of non-tenants). We also got more favourable ratings from women, who tend to be tenancy-holders.

Asked what the regeneration organisations are doing, people in both surveys most often said 'making the place better' or general improvements. It was sometimes implied that there was more effort than achievement – 'They try …', for example when a young person said 'They try to do things to keep us out of trouble'. An increased percentage in 1999 mentioned helping an age group or the unemployed, or organising activities; fewer said that they do 'not a lot', 'nothing here' or 'don't know'. In 1999 only, we also asked what the regeneration organisations 'should be doing': the most common replies were that they should 'make the place better, 'push things', 'listen more' or 'deliver, not promise' (29%) and provide facilities for young people (12%) or for children (8%). Minorities, concentrated mainly in New Gurnos and, to a lesser extent, in Galon Uchaf, thought they should 'get rid of bad people' or 'get rid of druggies' (4%) or even 'knock it down' or 'put a bomb under it' (3%).

The Residents Boards/Associations.

The Residents Associations or Boards were better known then the regeneration partnership. In both 1998 and in 1999, at least three-quarters of residents had heard of the Residents' Boards/ Associations. Among residents who had heard of them, the rating of 'good/excellent' fell between 1998 and 1999 roughly from a third to a quarter, as shown in the first two columns of Table 19. One fifth (20%) of residents that they had been helped personally by them.

Table 19. Percentages of residents who knew about Residents' Boards/Associations and their ratings, by survey and by sub-groups .

	% residents in 1998	% residents in 1999	% all teenagers	% all 'getting worse'
Heard of Residents' Ass/Board	75	78	56	80
Ratings:				
Doing an excellent/good job	32	24	8	22
Not doing a bad job	32	31	47	25
Doing a bad job	31	30	32	41
Don't know	6	15	13	10
Total*	100	100	100	100

* Ratings only from those who had heard of RA/Bs.
In 1998 only, 'don't know' answers were discouraged.
Differences between the surveys were statistically important.

Table 19 also shows, in the third column, that the percentage of teenagers who had heard of the Residents' Associations/Boards was much lower than for other residents. Teenagers were less complimentary in their ratings, far fewer rating RA/Bs 'good' (as with the regeneration partnership, none rated them 'excellent'), but a similar proportion rated them 'bad'. Only 6% of teenagers said that they had been helped by the RA/Bs. Among residents who rated the place 'getting worse' (last column in Table 19) many more rated them as doing a 'bad' job, but a similar proportion had been helped by them than other residents.

Non-tenants were less likely to know of the RA/Bs, but of those that did, more (24%) had benefited personally than others (19%). Nevertheless, it was the residents in owned homes who gave more favourable ratings and fewer 'bad' ones.

Asked what the RA/Bs do, similar percentages in 1998 and 1999 (47% and 44%) named positive things (improve the community, deal with complaints, organise activities or campaigns etc), the same percentage (10%) suggested positive things which were not properly carried out, and similar

percentages (33% and 29%) were highly critical ('used to do a lot', 'cliquey', 'just talk', 'sit and drink tea', 'for themselves'). People in Old Gurnos were least critical.

Although we did not ask, some respondents volunteered during the interviews that they were on the committees of their RA/B. Among these were some of the RA/Bs harshest critics, often in similar terms to other residents. In Galon Uchaf, they knew that they used to do more and want volunteers. In New Gurnos, one questioned their role, even feeling 'bitter' after seeing what an RA in England had been able to achieve. More than one suggested that they lacked confidence to speak in regeneration meetings.

Two opposing critical views of the RA/Bs' role in representation emerged from a minority of comments. On the one hand, it was felt by some that they control the flow of information and demands from residents in order to gain power and advantage over others. On the other hand, it was felt by some others that they are powerless to effect changes as residents want because they have to screen demands and select only the ones 'acceptable' to officials or funders.

Consultation.

The majority of interviewees did not recall ever previously being asked their views, or attending any meetings, about the development of facilities in the area. Around a third in 1998 and two-fifths in 1999 had heard about consultative meetings, but only 8% in 1998 and 19% in 1999 recalled that they had been to one. Similarly, while 17% had seen the 'Big Red Bus' participative exercise in 1996, only 3% recalled having gone on to it. Table 17 shows the proportions of residents who recalled having heard of and/or been to meetings by area.

Table 20. Percentages of residents who had ever previously heard of and/or attended meetings about what is, or should be, done

Participation:	1998: % of residents in			1999: % of residents in		
	NG	OG	GU	NG	OG	GU
Heard and been	7	8	11	41	6	12
Heard and not been	30	37	36	34	19	32
Not heard	63	55	53	24	75	56

Different answers in 1999 to questions about hearing of or attending meetings are almost entirely due to activity in New Gurnos. These meetings resulted from actions over the lack of information or preparation for the demolitions.   Apart from the problems caused by the rubble, poor lighting and vandalism, we also came across four separate group or individual campaigns about issues raised by the demolition. Over two-fifths of New Gurnos respondents said they had actually been to a meeting in 1999. Comments on the New Gurnos meetings were mixed: from 'It cleared the air' to 'It's a waste of

time giving them any ideas'. However, these energetic involvements were confined to New Gurnos and increased majorities of residents in both Old Gurnos and Galon Uchaf had not even heard of any meetings. Just after the 1999 survey, resident-led action over the disposal and demolition of the Iron Horse pub probably altered the profile in Galon Uchaf.

More on finding out about improved facilities and meetings

In 1999 only, we asked detailed questions about how people come to know about improved facilities. The most common replies were that people talk to family or friends, read a newspaper, read a leaflet or ask the Council. 'Word of mouth' or 'gossip' were most people's main source. Men were more likely than women to 'go and look' or ask the Council; women were more likely to read a newspaper, leaflet or shop notice or to get information from a meeting. New Gurnos residents differed in that 14% found out from meetings (less than 1% elsewhere and none in Old Gurnos), 12% from non-Council organisations (3% elsewhere) and fewer read. The percentages of residents who used the various sources are shown in Table 21.

Table 21. Finding out about improved facilities: percentages of residents who found out by different methods by area and sub-group (1999 survey only)

	% New Gurnos	% Old Gurnos	% Galon Uchaf	% teenagers	% 'getting worse'	% All residents
Find out by (main methods):						
Talking or asking	74	57	64	57	65	65
Reading	39	51	53	43	52	45
Seeing (go and see, TV)	16	16	12	17	18	15
Never find out/ no source	1	6	5	2	4	4
Selected examples from main methods						
Talk/ ask family, friends, gossip	46	43	47	57	46	46
Talk/ask Council	9	9	17	0	14	12
Talk/ ask other organisation /	21	7	7	6	9	11

someone I trust						
Through meetings	14	0	1	0	5	5
Read newspaper	20	37	32	33	35	30
Read leaflet	18	18	26	17	22	20
(Numbers of residents)	(74)	(79)	(78)	(42)	(113)	(231)

Columns add up to more than 100% because residents named more than one source of information.

One problem in finding out about, and using, facilities is when residents have poor reading skills. Adult illiteracy was suggested to be more widespread a problem than is admitted – 'You'd be surprised' - and a volunteer had been turned away because she was illiterate. Nevertheless, the regeneration strategy relies heavily on written materials – leaflets, posters and newsletter – to make itself known.

Table 21 also highlights that more residents ask the Council about facilities and services in Galon Uchaf (where a PEP office was first set up) and among those who thought that the place was 'getting worse'. No teenager said they found out through asking the Council or a meeting.

Comparing the difference between the proportion who said they had ever heard of or been to meetings (Table 20) with the proportion who said that they found out about improvements through meetings (Table 21), it appears that meetings are not regarded as a good source of information, whatever other useful functions are served by them.

One curious matter concerned people who found out through more than one source – this applied to 42% of residents. These people could have been either 'well-informed' or 'well-networked'. However, the sub-group of those thinking the place was 'getting worse' were more likely to have more than one source of information (49% did so), suggesting that seeking or obtaining more information (especially where it involves the Council) may not be associated with residents' better perception of the place.

SECTION 5: THE GROUP WORK

The research project's participatory work with groups of residents was described in Section 3. We conducted two days of 'street' interviewing with young people (November 1998 and September 1999), 5 focus groups of young people and 3 focus groups of elderly people. All but one youth group and one elderly group were single sex.

The aim in each group was to examine experiences of changes in Gurnos and Galon Uchaf, and identify possible solutions to problems. Themes emerged from the groups and they were encouraged to make some practical, feasible recommendations.

Although, as pointed out in Section 3, getting focus groups together did not always go smoothly, several of the groups expressed the view that this kind of small meeting, of 4-8 people, should be encouraged.

This needs to be set in the context of few existing skills in facilitating groups within the regeneration partnership and evidence from the survey that some people felt that they had given their opinions but were ignored.

The elderly residents were able to construct time-lines which illustrated how they perceived change in the estate from the 1950s. A summary of these is in Appendix C – the main changes which they identified as important were to community values, values of child upbringing, provision of facilities (housing and for young people), Council responses and policing. Although the early history of the estate was perhaps rosily tinged as a 'golden age', there was a consensus that a decline began in the late 1970s or early 1980s. This had involved a fragmentation of community and its values, loss of Council responsiveness except to 'hassle', fewer facilities and poor quality policing.

The two days of street interviewing included meeting more excluded young people, and confirmed an impression from the survey interviews that there are some young people who are homeless or barely tolerated. For these young people, empty buildings are shelter.

Summary of main points:

- Four themes emerged about changes in the estate from the street work with young people, youth and elderly focus groups. These concerned:
  1. *'Safety', being 'safe' and 'safe' places*: eg, speeding cars (boys) and violence (boys and girls); feeling safe at home (elderly). A sub-theme, for the old <u>and</u> the young, was a criticism that local *policing* does not address their concerns about safety.
  2. The *state of the environment and civic pride*: rubbish disposal, issues of health and safety (rubble after demolition, drainage, vermin).
  3. The *power to change and influence change*: lack of power to change things themselves; council/police/regeneration lack of responsiveness to residents.
  4. *Divisions and boundaries among residents*. Within each group there were different views of the same phenomenon – eg, some said 'people <u>have</u> problems', others said 'people <u>are</u> the problem'; streets and movement were important to boys, facilities and people's needs were important to girls. Perception of physical or social boundaries restricted access of young people to facilities.

- The work with groups helped to make sense of the priorities and opinions expressed in the surveys.

- The groups all emphasised their powerlessness to influence changes.

- The groups worked well after preliminary hesitations, and they concluded that small group discussions and opportunities to lobby regeneration partners could be useful.

- Group discussion is more useful if small but significant responses can be made to the group exercises: the people who we met had strong informal networks through which news travels fast. Therefore, a rapid response could increase the credibility of the 3Gs regeneration strategy and contribute to empowerment.

5.1 The themes which emerged from the focus groups.

We shall look in turn at the groups' views on each of the four themes which emerged. Where it is useful to do so, we shall relate these to the opinions expressed through the survey. The maps to which we refer are in Appendix C. The four themes were:

❖ *'Safety', being 'safe' and 'safe' places*.

❖ The *state of the environment and civic pride*.

❖ The *power to change and influence change*.

❖ *Divisions and boundaries among residents*.

5.2 'Safety', being 'safe' and 'safe' places

As we have seen in the survey, individual residents were likely to have concerns over safety. In fact, they gave top priority to the need to improve the quality of policing on the estate and tackle speeding cars. Results of home security through lock-fitting and other measures (one of the first regeneration initiatives) had one of the highest ratings. However, many initiatives to improve public spaces, such as tree-planting, parks and play areas, received very poor ratings because of vandalism. Street security in the form of CCTV also got very poor ratings because it doesn't operate. In fact, with the notable exception of home security, initiatives to improve safety and security have not yet got any rosettes from the Gurnos and Galon Uchaf public.

The youth focus groups explored the issue of safety and 'being safe' by discussing or marking on their maps where they felt safe or unsafe. One definition of 'safety' for the young people was in terms of where they go (safe) or do not go (unsafe or uninteresting). The places where most groups agreed that they felt safe were each other's homes, the shops area in Old Gurnos and around the Busy Bee. (The street interviews also suggested that the chip shop in Galon Uchaf is 'safe'.) Many other public spaces, such as parks, were seen as safe by some groups but not others – this seemed to be related to 'boundaries' about where one or another group should or should not go, and to seasonality because the parks can be cold and wet for hanging out in winter. Young people's activity is restricted by bad weather because they have few places to hang out where there is any cover.

Safety was also defined by 'dangerousness'. Dangerous areas were those in which there were fast cars and road accidents, lack of lighting, isolated spots like parks, incidents of crime, where known drug dealers live. The estate itself was potentially dangerous because it is large, with poor lighting, fairly high levels of crime and a network of dark paths and unsafe roads (many of which are dead ends). Of course, some young people liked danger: one street group of young women liked Old Gurnos, enjoyed the danger and thought it more interesting. For most young people, there was also a link between unsafe areas and crime: the young people were aware of vandalism, car thefts, fires, drugs and house thefts.

Violence, too, defined lack of safety for young men and young women. Young women expressed fears of sexual violence, while young men were more concerned about physical assault and threats from unsafe driving – some indicated this could occur outside the estate and in other areas of Merthyr.

Both the youth and elderly groups discussed safety and policing. The young men's maps were dominated by roads and their experiences with the police (especially among more marginal young men) were frequently negative and linked to traffic. Nevertheless, they wanted more surveillance cameras, police visibility and a station, speed ramps and a lower speed limit on the state. As in the survey, the young people emphasised protection as an aim of policing. The elderly groups were very concerned about the perceived decline in policing quality, in particular the lack of police on the beat, and the lack of response.

5.3 The state of the environment and civic pride

Young people were critical of the poor state of many aspects of their environment: the hospital is 'manking', their swimming pool and school toilets disgusting and they want the whole estate to be cleaner. Young women wanted their environment to have inclusive facilities: more shops, a centre for the disabled, a market for clothes and food. They wanted a place where old and young could meet. One elderly group conveyed their feelings about a 'problem culture' characterised by drug dealing, loud music, out of control children, accumulating rubbish, empty houses, gangs, roaming dogs and speeding cars. They urged a renewal of community spirit – part of which would (as the young people suggested) be meeting places for the old and young – another inclusive idea. Another elderly group highlighted the lack of pride on the estate, evidenced by the lack of facilities and charges introduced by the Council for removing rubbish. Rubbish dumping had, they said, led to infestations of ants and vermin.

5.4 Power to change and power to influence change

None of the focus groups of elderly or young people felt that they had the power to make or influence changes. This is in spite of the fact that the elderly groups all seemed close-knit and with strong links going back some time, and some of the youth groups were rapidly gaining self-confidence.

Lacking the power to change things was perhaps the reason that one group seized the opportunity to pursue its own agenda in the group, sticking over 50 post-its marked 'Clubhouse' on their map. Other groups suggested small meetings between young and older participants and a police representative or councillor in order to discuss but, more importantly, to lobby for better local policing, and for better clearing and cleaning of the estate.

The only power the elderly groups felt they had was to report matters to the Council or police, and to vote. Galon Uchaf and New Gurnos groups seemed to have more experience of this, but felt a growing sense of powerlessness against what they perceived as an inadequate and inactive Council. No group identified the regeneration partnership as a way to channel their views.

The youth groups all gave a sense that change was happening beyond their control. One group of more excluded young people felt there was nowhere to go in order to express concerns. Nevertheless, the young people seemed very well-informed and had a well-developed grapevine about what was happening on the ground.

5.5 Divisions and boundaries among residents

While looking at the results of the survey, we found many divisions among residents of the estate. The young people in the focus groups had a very clear sense of both physical and social boundaries which affected their perceptions and access to facilities as well as restricted their movement. First there were the divisions into Gurnos, the New Estate and Galon Uchaf, but within these there were 'safe' and 'unsafe' areas. In terms of accessing facilities, these boundaries appear to define who belongs where. Age boundaries were also very important. So, for example, a facility in New Gurnos is 'out of bounds' to most Old Gurnos and Galon Uchaf youth. It is also 'out of bounds' to New Gurnos youth of certain ages. Partly as a result of these boundaries, young people grow up with myths and misconceptions about 'other' young people or 'other' areas – although young people everywhere agreed that New Gurnos was 'getting worse'.

The maps drawn by the young men and women also illustrated gender divisions in how the estate is perceived. The young men's maps were dominated by routes and roads, drawn with great accuracy, and community facilities were fewer and had little functional meaning. The young women's maps focused on places and facilities and the ways between were drawn as single lines. The proposal to link the facilities with better footpaths fits more with 'young women's' way of perceiving the estate, but their design might usefully incorporate 'young men's' perceptions.

Another important division concerned opinions about the same phenomenon: some residents said that 'people *have* problems' while others said that 'people *are* the problem'. One elderly group discussed the interlinked issues of the expansion of the estate (overcrowding) and the people who moved into the estate in the early 1980s. This discussion veered towards people being the problem rather than 'overcrowding'. A similar division between residents from the survey was over drugs – whether they should be tackled with drug support or were the 'druggies' the problem.

5.6 Conclusions from the group work

The groups helped to make more sense of the priorities and opinions expressed in the survey, and also opened up problems on the estate which the survey was not designed to address, such as power and representation of residents or how the environment affects civic pride.

As with the survey, the focus groups extracted information from participants without providing a 'return' on their generously given time. Group discussion is more useful if small but significant responses can be made to the group exercises: the people who we met had strong informal networks through which news travels fast. Therefore, a rapid response could increase the credibility of the 3Gs regeneration strategy and contribute to empowerment. Examples could be:

- The partnership should organise a small meeting for invited group participants (old and young) with a police representative to discuss local policing.

- The partnership should organise a small meeting for invited group participants (old and young) with councillors to lobby for better rubbish collection.

Overall, we would emphasise the value of conducting exercises with several small groups and following through with the same people as part of consulting and involving residents in the process of change. Their continuing involvement would, however, require significant and rapid responses.

SECTION 6: CONCLUSIONS

The '3Gs' Regeneration Strategy in Gurnos and Galon Uchaf has tried to involve the community: in decision-making and the choice of issues to tackle, in consultations on projects and through canvassing opinions and communicating information. The community is also involved by using or working in the facilities and services brought about through the 3Gs. We have explored the views of residents and found that, from the residents' perspectives, these efforts have had success in some ways, but only limited success in others.

There are several themes which run through our conclusions on community involvement. One is a dependency on 'representation' by others which has led to an excessive burden of responsibility on a few people. Second, there is a problem in reaching a consensus. The 'community' is made up of different groups and small localities. Some are 'left out' of all or some aspects of involvement. Social and physical boundaries also affect how people can get involved. Third, the partnership itself experiences difficulties when people really want to become involved and the reactions of the various partners in the 3Gs are crucial.

All of these themes carry a 'history'. In Section 1, we briefly reviewed historical events which shaped community involvement on the estate. The important point here is that 'new' ideas such as 'regeneration' do not enter a vacuum. New ideas are always going to be reshaped by the community until they 'belong', or else may be resisted or rejected.

'Regeneration' is a policy which emphasises involving the community as participants. This break with history in Merthyr Tydfil, where Council was traditional planner and provider of facilities and services, is still being reshaped. The introduction of more participatory methods of consultation and organisational working appears to have put down rather shallow roots. Both the community and 3Gs have been taken by surprise by turns of events which could have been anticipated by more participative planning. This is evidenced by the failure of the regeneration partnership to prepare for the social impact of demolition or to adequately respond to resident-led activity in New Gurnos, and a long-standing neglect of Galon Uchaf.

We shall now discuss each of the six aspects of community involvement already mentioned: first, involvement in decision-making forums; second, involvement on broader strategic issues about regeneration; third, the canvassing of residents' opinions and attitudes; fourth, consultation by the regeneration partnership on projects (before, during and afterwards); fifth, involvement by using the facilities and services created within the regeneration area; and sixth, communications (flows of information to residents and from them).

Decision-making and involvement of the community

On paper at least, the community has been encouraged to take part in decision-making. As in many other regeneration strategies, young people or children are not involved in actual decision-making. The most important involvement in decision-making is through representatives of the three Residents' Boards/Associations.

The Residents' Boards/Associations were very well-known, but few residents spoke of their role as decision-makers. The main community involvement in decision-making is therefore quite unknown. Those who did know (including some residents who identified themselves as members of the RA/Bs) spoke of the difficulties and frustrations of screening and fashioning residents' demands in order to take them forward to the decision stage.

Decision-making is still perceived as an 'expert' or professional activity and responsibility. A majority of residents either did not know who, or thought that the Council, was responsible for organising improvements. The link between who decides on, and who provides, facilities and service was not widely understood.

Residents did have strong views that both the 3Gs and RA/Bs should be more active decision-makers. Perhaps because they are not involved, they are impatient. Lower level decisions specifically to ensure small rapid responses would need more decision-makers. Wider involvement of residents in decision-making could encourage more community responsibility, and lessen the burden of the RA/Bs' representative role.

Community involvement on broader strategic issues

Despite a low awareness of the aims and processes of regeneration, we found support for the general strategy. Many residents appreciated that the efforts were being made (by the 3Gs and the RA/Bs), and over half of those who thought that money was being spent on regeneration believed that it benefited everyone. We also found that a substantial minority of residents really do not want to become involved and this view should be respected.

When people were asked what was being done, their replies often indicated support for the strategy. Thus, the best-known facilities (except for OAP clubs) were actually initiatives of the regeneration partnership. Furthermore, people expressed concern for others which is a basis for consensus on development in Gurnos and Galon Uchaf. Taking the idea of 'concern for others' a little further, in our focus groups, young women and the elderly separately made recommendations which were deliberately socially inclusive.

Nevertheless, this is not direct evidence of community awareness or involvement on strategic issues. In fact, even though we gave residents every opportunity to think about the eight issues which the regeneration partnership has been trying to tackle before asking them if they knew of the partnership, surprisingly few residents made a connection between the issues and the partnership. Without making this connection, it is unlikely that residents will be able to contribute on the strategic issues.

In addition to the information from the surveys, the youth and elderly focus groups allowed residents to develop ideas about how they see and think about change on the estate. Four themes emerged: being 'safe' and 'safe' places; the environment and civic pride; residents' power to influence change; and divisions and boundaries between residents. These themes offer a different means to develop strategy through discussions of how the themes are being affected by the way that projects are designed and carried out.

Residents are represented on committees which consider strategic issues. There is community awareness of a shortfall of people to fill the committees of the Residents' Associations/Boards (the main

channel for involvement), but we do not know if the shortfall is because potential candidates lack confidence, skills or time. The regeneration partnership itself was found to have a shortage of useful skills, such as listening, facilitating small groups and techniques to reach out to under-involved groups, and therefore may have difficulty in attracting people. This may also make it unintentionally defensive about sharing its control of strategy beyond the residents already involved through the RA/Bs.

A real difficulty for strategic thinking in Gurnos and Galon Uchaf is what we called 'polarisation': that is, where many residents felt positive but many others felt negative, rather than either neutrality or a strong bias towards one side. The surveys provide many instances of polarised opinions, which we suggested might reflect 'divisiveness'. On the one hand, we found associations between opinions that the results of initiatives were good, personal benefit and a 'fair' initiative. On the other hand, we found associations between opinions that the results of initiatives were 'poor', no personal benefit and an 'unfair' initiative. The existence of polarisation does not suggest a community in which people can easily agree, because some feel like 'winners' and others like 'losers'.

Another aspect of polarisation was the increased and very high percentage of people in New Gurnos and Galon Uchaf who rated the place as 'getting worse' in contrast to Old Gurnos where opinions stayed similar. Either local or non-local factors could have caused this change in views in one year. In New Gurnos, the indicators tended to support the importance of local factors, in large part the demolition. In addition the survey highlighted the drugs problem there, its under-recognition by organisations and the need to tackle it as a particular area factor.

In Galon Uchaf, there was greater importance of non-local factors as well as the area's local low awareness of and the perceived low impact of regeneration. The residents in Galon Uchaf were much less likely to think regeneration and other initiatives were 'fair' or socially just. This could signal wider disillusionment with the overall strategy or policy.

The existence of polarisation and its different forms complicate the idea of an estate consensus and make a powerful argument that the 3Gs strategy should make more effort to reach out and include residents who feel 'losers' or 'neglected'.

Canvassing of residents' opinions and attitudes

Documentation and discussion with key players showed that the opinions of residents have been canvassed on an irregular basis, through surveys and occasionally through participatory exercises. Most frequently opinions and attitudes have been collected through informal discussion between committee members of the Residents' Associations/Boards or regeneration staff who live or have lived locally, and residents whom they know or visit. The Bingo and Social clubs are also venues where opinions are formed, again informally.

Canvassing of opinions and attitudes does involve residents at an informal level, through talking, and therefore uses the same types of communication that residents themselves habitually use in order to find out about improvements to facilities and services. However, it is unsystematic and not necessarily representative of all groups in the community. Indeed, some residents were critical of the 3Gs and Residents' Associations/Boards because they believed that they involved only 'friends' or 'favourites' rather than a representative cross-section of the community. Furthermore, very few respondents

recalled being asked their opinions, although the response to meetings about the demolition in New Gurnos suggested that they had opinions to give.

Indeed, the willingness of residents to give their opinions one-to-one in the survey and recommendations from the groups that more group work should be done lead us to conclude that canvassing through a variety of methods would meet with residents' approval. More imaginative methods of canvassing opinions and exploring attitudes would, as we have remarked, need a greater development of skills in listening, using visualisation and group work among regeneration staff and residents, but the case for carrying out frequent surveys is much weaker. Repeated survey design, interviewing and analysis can be prohibitively costly relative to the benefits.

One test of how well the 3Gs has canvassed opinions is when residents were asked about what was needed. The five most frequently mentioned needs were generally in line with the problems which the 3Gs is trying to address: more policing, traffic calming, employment and training, somewhere for street youth and more play areas. Our survey was broadly representative of the community, and this was an advantage in allowing some less involved groups to have a voice. These 'voices' changed the nature and content of needs like 'more policing' or 'more training'. Thus, we noted that young people wanted policing to be more protective of them and less harassing on the street, and we also noted that the 3Gs delivery of the New Deal and other government initiatives did not match the residents' aspirations for 'proper' jobs and paid training with real employment prospects.

The surveys have therefore served a purpose in canvassing opinions and attitudes from less-involved groups like young people and indicate where attitudes may have been misjudged. Most residents had opinions about initiatives, including the benefits, shortcomings and improvements. It remains a concern that many 'could not' or 'would not' give opinions about initiatives. Our main conclusions on canvassing opinions and attitudes are that existing canvassing would be improved by emphasis on inclusiveness, and that this could be achieved by more imaginative methods.

Consultation processes of the regeneration partnership

Our conclusions about canvassing of opinions are also applicable to consultation with residents – that consultation has taken place but involved few residents. In addition, consultation is a process which, at its best, involves residents before, during and after projects – in planning and 'getting the project right'; in identifying changes in what, or how, the project is carried out; in evaluating what is good, and the problems which arise, as a result of the project. The aim of the consultation process is not only to get improvements and projects right, but also to build up a sense that they are 'belonging to' the community. (Reports already had advised the 3Gs that consultation should be a process, involving residents throughout the projects and not only at the planning stage.)

Information from discussions in the community does feed into regeneration planning, but few residents recalled formal consultation. The consultation process could be improved if it were more inclusive and imaginative, involving a wider range of residents: young and old, men and women, long-term and newer residents, tenants, non-tenants and owners, as well as other important sub-groups which we did not

research, such as the disabled, carers or involuntarily isolated. Some of these groups need to be consulted one-to-one.

Unfortunately, being involved in consultation can become very time-consuming and burdensome, especially if few residents participate. The difference between the low recall of consultation and that documented suggests that either the same people are involved in consultation again and again, or the consultations are perhaps too uninteresting to remember. People got put off when giving ideas was thought a 'waste of time', perhaps reflecting the crushing of raised expectations from earlier consultations (or promises). They can also be put off by wanting things to be 'pushed' and frustration at the slowness of the consultative process.

In order to encourage participation beyond the planning stage of projects, more one-to-one or small group discussion and regular newspaper reports could be used, for example to follow up public meetings. This could also improve a situation in which we know from our research that under-involved youth and elderly groups felt powerless to influence change – the same may be true of other sub-groups.

We have already mentioned the aim of creating projects that 'belong to' the community through the consultation process. There was a small but growing awareness that 'regeneration' (or named individuals within the 3Gs partnership) organise facilities, but there is also a strong attachment to the view that the Council is the organiser and that 'everything is belonging to the council' on the estate. The dissatisfactions that welled up into resident-led protests in New Gurnos and Galon Uchaf suggest that residents are willing to become involved in the consultation process during projects in quite a major way. Current policy for regeneration could cause symbolic 'ownership' to be forced on the estate or its representatives by being written into the structure. It is urgent that involvement through consultation or decision-making allows residents to develop a sense that the improvements are 'belonging to' or are owned by them.

Involvement of the community as users of facilities and services

The use of the facilities and services developed by the 3Gs and others involves far more of the community than decision-making, strategic issues, canvassing or consultation. Indeed, regeneration partners have demonstrated an ability to create highly regarded, high usage, widely accessible and 'fair' services such as home security or lower usage but popular events like the carnival. The 3Gs' achievements are less for other facilities and services for a mixture of reasons. Involvements as a user or potential user are varied experiences, ranging from excellence to disillusionment.

There are three important points about involvement by using facilities and services on the estate. First, users are 'customers' who are not necessarily interested in, and do not categorise facilities and services into, 'regeneration' and 'non-regeneration'. Residents who 'like to keep themselves to themselves' prefer involvement to end at this point. It is therefore difficult to judge involvement with regeneration simply from usage.

Second, whether an individual uses or does not use a facility is affected both by the characteristics of the facility or service (accessibility, selection rules, quality, cost) and by his or her own understanding of physical or social 'suitability' (for his or her age, gender, safety or area of origin). Usage can hide systematic bias against involvement of certain groups or towards the involvement of others. For

example, we found that residents who thought that the place was 'getting worse' were lower users than those who thought the place was 'getting better', especially of certain 'core' facilities which addressed needs like housing, training and child-care.

The physical and social boundaries which affect use of facilities varied from the broad (such as perceived discrimination against anyone from the estate), through more specific (such as the perceived availability of a facility to residents from only one area), to the individual (perception that one's own age, friends or family, address or reputation excludes one from being a user). The work with groups showed ways in which these could be explored and, where the effect is negative, renegotiated or reduced.

An intractable problem about these limits on use concerns vandalism or 'wreckers.' Enjoyment of public spaces like parks and planting were most affected and does not appear to have been protected by the ubiquitous steel fencing or derided CCTV which aimed to limit 'wreckers.'

The third point about users concerns opinions about 'fairness' or social justice. Those residents who were lower users also tended to have stronger feelings of social injustice. Facilities were generally rated 'fairer' when they had open access or were deliberately widely available.

Communications between the regeneration partnership and the community

Communication channels within the community operate effectively. 'Word-by-mouth' is the main channel, and the Residents' Associations/Boards sometimes spread information through 'seeding', or telling one person who has a wide network of friends and family. The 3Gs tends to rely on written communications, including posters, newsletters and leaflets. When we asked about how people found out about improvements to facilities and services in the second survey, the most common source was talking and gossip with families and friends, reading newspapers being the next. Interestingly, in 1999 the 3Gs name was often known through the new football team which is reported in the Merthyr Express.

Communications between the 3Gs and the community tend, like canvassing and consultation, to be sporadic flows of information from the 3Gs into the community, rather than an open two-way flow. There was a feeling within the estate that communications and their control were used by some to manage power and relations within the community – this includes not only communication but also its neglect, or not listening.

Implications of the research

In our conclusions, we have discussed different aspects of community involvement in regeneration on the estate. Despite the many positive efforts made by the 3Gs, the regeneration strategy has not always fully recognised the difficulties of involving residents from across the whole estate and across all groups. The attractiveness of involvement and existence of consensus have been overestimated. On the community side, awareness of the regeneration strategy is low and opportunities for involvement are either not developed or are even resisted by many residents.

Resistance to involvement can be understood as a legacy of the past. First, there is caution over raising expectations (the legacy of decline in the 1980s); second, people rely on 'what used to work' (a legacy

of Council domination of provision, but also of past success of some voluntary groups); third, people are reluctant to be involved (a legacy of 'reputation' and community divisions). It is not surprising that we have found doubts and criticisms as well as a genuine wish to be involved and participate in change.

It is important that the 3Gs recognises that it shares difficulties of involving residents with all other regeneration strategies and looks for constructive ways to address these very common problems.

Although the purpose of this study has been to discover residents' views rather than to make concrete recommendations, the results of the research do suggest possible ways of involving residents in regeneration more than is currently the case.

1. The 3Gs could insist on increasing the number of residents in decision-making, however capable and willing the present few appear to be. Short-term, this could cause problems, for example because of current representatives' familiarity with structures, procedures and 'regeneration jargon', but the long-term advantages for involvement and attitudes to the 3Gs are considerable.

2. The 3Gs might seek more imaginative ways of canvassing and consulting residents, especially under-involved groups. There are many visual or group exercises, some available in 'how to' booklets or on the internet, which could make involvement more attractive and help both the 3Gs staff and residents to listen or to present their ideas. A relaxed and informal approach to using such resources ('Here's an idea. How can we make it work for us?') could help give residents control over novel approaches.

3. The 3Gs could make single-issue involvement easier and more welcome; it could better anticipate discontent, encourage open flows of information and help residents to find solutions (or, possibly, the next set of problems).

4. The 3Gs could attempt to make more rapid, tangible responses to resident demands, for example through small groups meeting to lobby representatives of authorities. This would only work if the groups were numerous enough to draw on the diversity of the estate.

5. Our final suggestion counters the reputation and discrimination which the estate experiences. Unlike some other regeneration partnerships, Gurnos and Galon Uchaf has not, to our knowledge, celebrated its origins or larger-than-life characters, or the self-taught artists, photographers or poets of whom we became aware during the research. This local culture was unlike the resented 'images' which residents believe are held by the media, police or council. Informally, the estate's rich past gets retold and pictures and stories are passed on through families and other networks. The 3Gs could make more use of the many good things in the estate's rich variety of culture.

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APPENDIX A:

Table A.1: Numbers of residents in the age and sex groups in each survey and area

	1998					1999				
AGE GROUPS	N G	O G	G U		ALL AREAS	N G	O G	G U		ALL AREAS
30 years and under	33	31	25	Male 40	**89**	27	33	26	Male	**86**
				Female 49					Female	
31 to 55 years	36	32	26	Male 43	**94**	26	18	23	Male	**67**
				Female 51					Female	
Over 55 years	22	25	32	Male 40	**79**	21	28	29	Male	**78**
				Female 39					Female	
TOTAL	**91**	**88**	**83**	**Male 123**	**262**	**74**	**79**	**78**	**Male**	**231**
				Female139					**Female**	

NG New Gurnos
OG Old Gurnos
GU Galon Uchaf

Table A.2: Distribution of knowledge of a facility or service as a percentage of all knowledge of facilities or services, by area

FACILITY OR SERVICE	New Gurnos		Old Gurnos		Galon Uchaf		All areas	
	% 1998	*% 1999*	*% 1998*	*% 1999*	*% 1998*	*% 1999*	*% 1998 (number)*	*% 1999 (number)*
Traffic								
Barriers, fences, bollards	11	1	9	1	6	1	9 (108)	1 (7)
Paths, crossings	6	3	4	5	2	1	4 (48)	3 (26)
Speed ramps, traffic calming	2	11	2	5	1	3	2 (20)	7 (60)
Environment								
Refurbish, repairs, demolition	4	7	6	3	8	8	6 (70)	6 (49)
Walls, house fences	8	7	4	7	1	1	5 (56)	5 (45)
Parks, play areas	1	--	2	1	4	5	2 (26)	2 (15)
Trees, other planting	3	1	2	1	1	1	2 (26)	1 (10)
Grass-cutting, gardens	1	0	2	2	2	1	2 (21)	1 (9)
Young families								
Family centre, Busy Bee	11	13	5	4	2	5	6 (79)	8 (67)
Playgroups/ schemes, creches	2	2	5	4	8	6	4 (55)	4 (34)
Residents centres	1	1	3	3	8	9	4 (48)	3 (30)
Older children and youth								
Youth clubs	4	1	7	3	7	3	6 (74)	3 (22)
Afterschool club	1	1	2	1	1	--	1 (18)	1 (5)
Football 3Gs	--	4	--	5	--	4	--	4 (36)
Elderly								
OAP clubs, Hut,	5	3	8	11	11	10	8	8

Church, Bingo							(94)	(66)

Table A.2 continued

FACILITY OR SERVICE	New Gurnos		Old Gurnos		Galon Uchaf		All areas	
Employment and training								
Training & employment (skills centre/ furniture recycling)	15	15	11	8	10	10	12 (153)	11 (98)
Courses, volunteer training	1	2	1	1	2	1	1 (16)	1 (12)
Crime prevention								
Home security	9	4	11	5	7	4	9 (110)	4 (36)
Street security	3	7	3	11	--	3	2 (23)	7 (65)
Victim Support, help	2	1	3	1	4	4	3 (33)	2 (17)
More police	1	3	1	2	--	1	1 (8)	2 (20)
Leisure								
Discos, jazz, trips	1	0	1	4	2	2	1 (17)	2 (17)
Carnival	0	3	0	4	1	4	0 (5)	4 (33)
Health/ gym	--	1	--	1	--	4	--	2 (15)
Total number ***Percent (column)*** ***Percent (survey)***	***470*** ***100*** ***38***	*336* *100* *39*	***408*** ***100*** ***33***	*296* *100* *34*	***361*** ***100*** ***29***	*235* *100* *27*	***1239*** ***100*** ***100***	*867 100* *100*

Other categories (omitted): Cleaning & clearing up, Art work, Afterschool clubs, Other places for young people to go, Sheltered housing, Drug support, 'Low tolerance' policing, Sports, Volunteering, Fields & countryside.

Notes: Percentages are given as 0 when less than .5. '—' means that no mention was made (3Gs and Health/ gym in 1998)

Columns do not add up to 100 because categories with less than 15 mentions in at least one survey, and unspecified facilities have been omitted.

Table A.3: Ratings of facilities and services (1998 and 1999 surveys combined)

FACILITY OR SERVICE	Good %	Good, so far %	Good but wrecked %	Poor %	Not done %	For clique only %	Don't know or cannot say %	Total (number)
Traffic								
Barriers, fences, bollards	34	14	1	40	9	0	3	*(115)*
Paths, crossings	64	11	4	12	7	0	3	*(74)*
Speed ramps	40	27	0	20	10	0	3	*(80)*
Environment								
Refurbish, repairs, demolition	50	18	7	16	5	2	2	*(119)*
Walls, house fences	44	25	4	14	11	1	1	*(101)*
Parks, play areas	22	7	51	12	5	0	2	*(41)*
Trees, other planting	33	8	50	6	3	0	0	*(36)*
Grass-cutting, gardens	67	20	3	7	0	0	3	*(30)*
Young families								
Family centre, Busy Bee	54	7	3	8	14	0	14	*(146)*
Playgroups/ schemes, creches	55	8	0	7	6	1	24	*(89)*
Residents centres	44	14	0	10	8	0	23	*(78)*
Older children and youth								
Youth clubs	32	12	3	26	13	3	12	*(96)*
Afterschool club	39	22	0	9	4	0	26	*(23)*
Football 3Gs	58	8	3	8	6	3	14	*(36)*
Elderly								
OAP clubs, Hut, Church, Bingo	56	8	1	3	13	0	19	*(158)*
Employment and training								
Training & employment (skills centre/ furniture recycling)	47	10	1	10	14	1	16	*(250)*
Courses, volunteer training	54	18	0	4	7	0	18	*(28)*

Table A.3 continued

FACILITY OR SERVICE	*Good* *%*	*Good, so far* *%*	*Good but wrecked* *%*	*Poor* *%*	*Not done* *%*	*For clique only* *%*	*Don't know or cannot say %*	*Total (number)*
Crime prevention								
Home security	70	14	1	10	2	1	1	*(146)*
Street security	26	17	0	48	3	0	6	*(88)*
Victim Support	38	16	0	34	0	0	14	*(50)*
More police	48	22	0	26	0	0	4	*(28)*
Leisure								
Discos, jazz, trips sport, other fun	59	15	0	6	6	0	15	*(54)*
Carnival	73	5	0	0	3	0	19	*(38)*
Health/ gym	33	13	0	27	27	0	0	*(15)*
Total number								*2088*
Percent	*48*	*14*	*4*	*15*	*8*	*1*	*11*	*100*
Percent (1998)	*46*	*13*	*3*	*14*	*11*	*1*	*11*	*100*
Percent (1999)	*50*	*15*	*4*	*15*	*5*	*0*	*9*	*100*

The total number of replies were 1236 (1998) and 852 (1999). Missing opinions are excluded: opinions were not given by respondents for 3 facilities in 1998 and 15 facilities in 1999.

APPENDIX B

SOME EXAMPLES OF SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS FOR WHAT IS NEEDED.

Recycling

More care for old/disabled

Better design for disabled/ old.

Post Offices to sell gas tokens

Sleeping policemen (and for residents to be allowed to supply labour for these)

Free skips

Supervisors who can 'hack' the kids

Recognition that young kids are on drugs

Better training – computing, electronics, car mechanics

Park, shops, chemist

Car maintenance

Pubs

Bins to clear up after dogs

Young people on committees, including real decision-making

Speed bumps by the school

Repairs to be done

Swimming pool

Good affordable youth club

Gathering place for kids

Walls built so kids can kick a football

Clearing waste ground and manage community gardens

Free gardening for elderly

A playbus

Safe place off street for kids to play (overlooked by houses/close to home)

Shops

Inspection of house repairs

Clinic for baby milk

BMX cycling track

Place to trash old cars for £5 a go

Supervision for swimming in river

APPENDIX C

GROUP WORK

C.1 RECONSTRUCTED TIME-LINE ON HOW CHANGE HAS OCCURRED (FROM GROUPS WITH OLDER RESIDENTS)

Time	Decades	Characteristics of community, values, Council, Policing
'Golden age'	1950s	Community moved in from other areas 'street-by-street'.
		Shared values, integrated.
	1960s	Shared values of child upbringing.
		Houses/ facilities excellent: activities for youth.
	Early 1970s	Council: helpful, responsive, community-led.
		Police: on the beat, small station.
		Established: social club, health clinic, church.
The decline begins	Late 1970s	Some original families move away, fragmenting community.
		Houses: 'overcrowding' of estate.
	Early 1980s	Values: no longer shared – intimidation.
		Family values: become 'pursuit of money'.
		'Latch-key' children, less discipline.
		Council: less helpful and not community-driven.
		Police: lose respect for residents

Gets worse	1990s	Community: shame, notoriety, no pride.
		Houses emptying, facilities closed.
		Accumulating rubbish.
		Gangs, roaming dogs, speeding cars.
		Council: irresponsible, responds only to hassle.
		Police: bad policing
	2000s	Renewal of community spirit

C2: EXAMPLES OF MAPS FROM YOUTH GROUPS

The hand-drawn maps are omitted from the website. Copies can be requested.