

# Values and motivations in Britain's toughest communities

Report for Local Government Leadership



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# Introduction

The original work for this report was conducted by TCC in communities across England during the early part of 2010. The findings are based on analysis of over 125 resident discussion groups, 60 front line staff discussion groups, and around 250 stakeholder interviews among senior staff, across 32 councils and partner organisations throughout England.

The communities studied face significant challenges: typically they suffer from low trust, lack of cohesion, and multiple-deprivation. However, the approach taken for this research can be applied to any community and the organisations that serve them.

Our purpose in writing the report is to contribute to the debate on civic society, however this is framed. We argue that to build a stronger, more cohesive and engaged society – particularly in challenging communities – local government and other service providers need to understand the different motivations and perspectives within their community and between their employees and the residents they serve. No two communities are alike so identikit models or top down assumptions will lead to flawed policy.

For the recruitment of our resident discussion groups and the subsequent analysis we used segmentation derived from the British Values Survey (BVS). The BVS has been conducted since 1973 and every few years asks around 8,000 people 1,000 questions to gain insight into the different motivations, fears and perceptions of the British population.

International work by social psychologists, such as Shalom Schwartz and Ronald Inglehart, suggests that there are common patterns to human values and that by understanding human values we can begin to develop better approaches to behaviour change.

**Chapter 1** gives a brief explanation of the main patterns of human values based on the work of Shalom Schwartz. It goes on to explain the approach taken by Pat Dade and Les Higgins in the British Values Survey, and to explain some of the basic demographic and socio economic relationships to values and why standard socio-economic and geo-demographic classifications are of little relevance to the behaviour change agenda.

**Chapter 2** demonstrates why values explain many of the differences in perspectives between communities, front line staff, and senior management in local councils.

**Chapter 3** begins to explain the possibilities for applying a values approach to behaviour change, including the Big Society.

**Chapter 4** gives more detail on the community perspective, including quotes drawn from the discussion groups

**Chapter 5** gives more detail on the local government perspective.

# Summary findings

In every area studied we found a significant gap between what the statistics told us about the community and the emotional reality for residents. In some cases this was a chasm: for example, the gulf between the recorded crime levels and self identified fear of crime was often very noticeable. Typically many residents also believe that there is far more migration into their community than the statistics suggest – discussion groups sometimes argued that over half the local population are migrants, when the census figures show that it is a few percent at most. By understanding these differences and what underlies them we believe we can create better and more congruent solutions to local problems.

## Low levels of self-efficacy and trust

More often than not the communities studied have low levels of self efficacy. They are more likely to be characterised by fatalism than optimism. Quite often this links to low levels of trust in authority. Residents feel that they have had things done to their community rather than being partners in improving their community, and that well intentioned interventions have been delivered by people who are not from their community, do not understand their community, and often give the impression of looking down on or pitying their community. Of course, even within the most fatalistic communities this is not true of everyone, and Values Modes segmentation helps us identify such residents.

## Back to the future

Many in the communities studied crave not ‘newness’ but a return to the past. There is often nostalgia for the way the community was in a bygone era. Sometimes this is because communities have undergone industrial decline, but more generally it is because of the widespread belief that social change has created uncertainty about the rules by which they live their lives. Many residents talked fondly of the policeman they once knew who worked the local beat, how young people respected the old, how they knew where they stood, knew all their neighbours and knew that their neighbours valued the same things as them. This is often the same for younger residents as well as older ones: the past is defined by the whole community.

## Community spirit

Residents talk warmly of their shared experiences and the places where they could share those experiences. For many the most visible signs of diminishing community spirit are the loss of pubs and social clubs, post offices, and local bakers or butchers, and their replacement with take away outlets, nail painting bars, other shops or outlets that signify social change, or boarded up outlets that no one wants to rent. Of course, it is also true that for most residents life is about making ends meet, so an accessible cheap local supermarket comes high on their list of

wants. It could be said that residents want the nostalgia, service and connectedness of traditional local shops, but the prices of modern budget supermarkets.

## Local identity and community boundaries

No two areas are exactly alike, every area has its own narrative, and the history of an area and the people within it matters; it leaves a powerful imprint on future generations. In many communities there is a strong sense of pride in the area linked to its history: this is important when considering motivations for engagement and building a civic community.

For these communities government and service provider boundaries are artificial and typically of little meaning. For many the self identified boundaries of their community are very compact; two miles away can be another world. Residents will talk about my street or my estate; local really means local. Values Modes segmentation helps us understand that if we want to maximise the contribution of many in these challenging communities to society we may have to change our approach: from one that asks residents to contribute to improving society, to one that asks residents to contribute to improving their neighbourhood, as they define it.

## Immigration and social change

For the majority of the communities we researched, though by no means all, immigration is a salient issue. However, the lazy assumption that attitudes on immigration link directly to attitudes on race was rarely

borne out by our discussion groups. It is often better to understand this as the reaction of socially conservative communities anxious about a change in their community they have no control over. Many of the resident discussion groups had longstanding BME residents in them who expressed exactly the same concerns about new migrants as the white residents present. The dividing line is more typically the length of time that someone has been a resident in a community than their ethnic heritage. In such communities immigration feeds in to wider concerns about social change, including the perceived breakdown of the traditional family, and the growth of cultural diversity.

## Freedom of expression and culture

Many residents feel that not only do they not have a say on social change in their community but that they are unable to express their identity and the pride they have in their heritage. In some communities it is commonly held that they cannot hang out the St George's cross or celebrate the history of 'their' culture because the powers that be will not let them. Just like the physical shared spaces, the space for residents to articulate and celebrate their identity is seen to be shrinking. In some cases, residents believe they are the victims of a deliberate policy to socially engineer the population in their area because the authorities are against 'people like them' and prefer immigrant groups.

## Shared stories and beliefs about favouritism

Low trust in authority combined with anxieties about immigration or social change more generally can lead to stories about favouritism in service provision taking hold in the community. These stories and beliefs resonate powerfully with many in the community – and the greater the anger a community feels the more likely these stories are to seem wildly out of line with the hard facts. In some communities the stories are about favouritism in employment and in many they are about favouritism in housing, particularly around social housing.

They also include the belief that some ethnic minorities get free television licenses; that some get waved through the checkout at local supermarkets, or that certain minorities get paid large amounts of money to come and live in the area. Over time the stories evolve but they never exist in a vacuum: rather they accord with the prevailing view of the community. Understanding them – and why some communities believe them fervently – is vital to our understanding of the community perspective.

## Crime and fear of crime

For the communities we studied there is no such thing as petty crime, only real crime which affects real lives. Of all the issues that came out of the resident discussion groups perceived crime and fear of crime were the most pervasive. This ranges from threatening behaviour with dangerous dogs to burglary, alcohol-induced bad behaviour among young people, intimidation by gangs, or drug dealing. Many of the communities studied had seen significant falls in recorded

crime, but for local residents' fear of crime colours their perspective and even makes them change their behaviour. For example, in some areas older residents avoid going out from as early as 3pm. In the report we discuss our view, backed by other academic work, that fear of crime can be heightened by the uncertainty that comes with social change, particularly rapid social change. We also emphasise the importance of addressing fear of crime as well as actual crime.

## Inter-generational and intra-generational tensions

In many communities residents believe that young people do not respect their elders or care about their community. Some residents, including younger ones, see young people as the main perpetrators of crime. In many cases this is ascribed to them not having enough to do. This often links to wider anxieties about social change, particularly when younger age cohorts are more ethnically diverse than older ones, and especially when gangs appear to divide on racial lines.

Of course, young people point out that they hang around in groups to feel safe. Their behaviour is also driven by a desire to be respected: understanding motivations like the need for safety and respect helps us understand why, for example, there has been an increase in the number of young people who own status dogs in recent years.

## Small things matter

Many communities have benefited from major infrastructure improvements in the last decade: many but not all are positive about

the outcomes. However, even when they are positive they are often unsettled by the process of change. When communities are not engaged adequately in the process of determining priorities they almost invariably fail to engage with the outcome. Quite often what communities want is not the big one off spend but for the things that impact on their environment day in day out to be addressed promptly. They ask why the street has litter on it, the memorial is not clean, or the dog mess is not sorted out far more often than they ask about big new developments or major transport projects.

## Housing

Much has been written about social housing and the problems that come when demand outstrips supply. In the communities studied it is common to find beliefs that immigrants get preferential treatment. However, this is only a small part of the housing narrative. Views that the area is a dumping ground for problem families or that to get a house all you need to do is get pregnant are also commonplace. Concerns about housing are not confined to social housing, with many communities anxious about population churn and lack of responsibility among private tenants.

Residents rarely distinguish between social housing and former social housing and in some communities private landlords are perceived to present as much or more of a challenge to the community than problems around social housing. In other cases the poor upkeep of houses and front gardens seems to send a signal that the community is going downhill.

## People like 'me' not people like 'them'

The residents in the communities we studied are rarely impressed by council literature. Information such as timings for rubbish collections is valued highly, but where people read 'facts' which jar with their beliefs they are more likely to discount the source than to change their minds. This can undermine trust across local service providers. We know too that if they do use the internet (and many people do not) it is not likely to be to find out about how the council is doing. Instead their opinions are formed by conversations with family, friends and neighbours, and by personal experience. People like 'me' shape the community narrative, not people like 'them'.

# The way forward

Throughout the post war years, policy makers have used the prisms of demographics, socio-economics, ethnicity, religious affiliation, and more recently geo-demographics, to make assumptions about the communities they serve. Each of these tells us something about people, and they help local government define certain needs, but if we want to understand what makes people tick, what they care about, and how to motivate them to do certain things or not do certain things the values prism is much more powerful.

Although the use of attitudinal data and analysis is common place in the private sector it is rarely used in the public sector. When it is used it is often one off and ad hoc and does not build on the wealth of analysis and data that is available both in the UK and internationally. The British Values Survey provides over 35 years of data that can be mined to enhance our understanding of the motivational triggers among different groups in society.

Our research finds that communities often have a very different distribution of values from the people who serve them. This typically results in flawed assumptions by those making decisions. For example, the assumption that change is a good thing or that fear of crime is automatically related to rates of crime. In fact values explain much about why there is can be a gulf between perceptions and what the statistics say.

The socio-economic or geo-demographic prism would suggest that we can only engage people with certain jobs or who live in certain houses but not others. In fact civic society can be promoted anywhere, but the form it takes will depend on the distribution of values and the salience of particular issues in a community. Of course, there are real barriers and challenges to making civic society work but with good insight into residents' values and motivations these challenges can be overcome.

Some residents will be more motivated to cut crime, others to improve community spirit, others to make the area greener or help the most vulnerable. Some people will be more likely to participate if the right person asks them, or because of status attached to volunteering, others will be motivated to keep a particular service running, or because they get vouchers redeemable on their local shopping. The list of possibilities is endless.

Local government is now free to decide what insight it needs and how best to engage its population. In 2012 local government will also take on a new public health role, which will require a rich understanding of how residents view their health. We hope this research will help local government embrace the behaviour change agenda and unlock the potential of residents to contribute to civic society in every area of the country.

# 1. Using Values Modes to understand communities

## An explanation of Values Modes

'Empirical studies have demonstrated that, across a very wide range of cultures, people's values are organised in a remarkably consistent and meaningful pattern of different values.' (Schwartz, 1990).

Values are a motivational construct that underpins emotions, perceptions and behaviours. They are also universal; the trappings, symbols and behaviours may be different across cultures or groups within cultures, but the pattern of motivational constructs that underpin them are the same. Of course, the importance ascribed to various values varies radically between societies, groups and individuals, but the values 'menu' is universal.

Shalom Schwartz, a social psychologist who has overseen or conducted values surveys and research in 64 countries describes values as 'desirable, trans-situational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in people's lives.' He concludes that there are 10 fundamental values common across all cultures<sup>1</sup>:

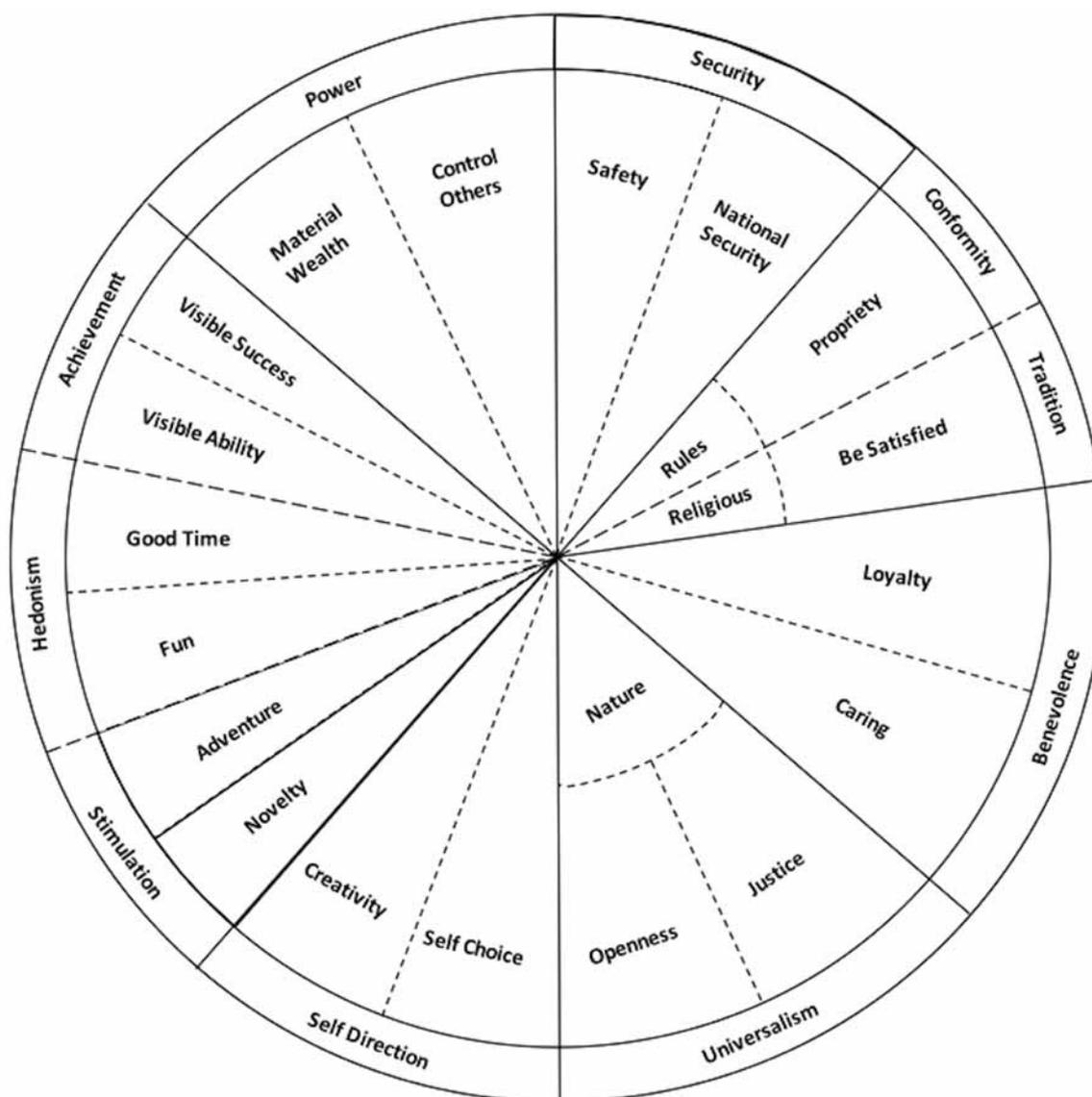
1. **Self-Direction** Independent thought and action; choosing, creating, exploring.
2. **Stimulation** Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life.

3. **Hedonism** Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself.
4. **Achievement** Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards.
5. **Power** Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources.
6. **Security** Safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self.
7. **Conformity** Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms.
8. **Tradition** Respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide the self.
9. **Benevolence** Preserving and enhancing the welfare of those with whom one is in frequent personal contact (the 'in-group').
10. **Universalism** Understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature.

These 10 fundamental values are represented around the circumference of a 'Schwartz Wheel', as below.

<sup>1</sup> Schwartz, S. H. (1994). Are there universal aspects in the content and structure of values? *Journal of Social Issues*, 50, 19-45.

**Diagram 1: The basic values Schwartz Wheel**



This visualisation enables us to begin to understand the basic interaction between different values. The values inside the circumference can be seen as the building blocks for those on the circumference, with two values within each inner segment (in one case three, making a total of 21). For example, 'Power' is made up of 'Material Wealth' and 'Control Others.'

The circular placement of the values helps us understand where values are either in linked

or potentially in conflict. For example, the value 'Universalism' – a belief in tolerance and equality – is in conflict with the value 'Power' – a desire to dominate and be in control. In the Schwartz wheel these are shown on opposite sides. On the other hand proximate values in the wheel are complementary. For example, someone who is very self-directed is also likely to want stimulation.

## The British Values Modes Survey

The British Values Modes Survey (BVMS) is the work of Pat Dade and Les Higgins, and has been conducted every few years for around 37 years. The survey typically asks around 8,000 people over 1,000 questions each. The questions are wide ranging covering everything from respondents views to immigration, DIY, health, and the environment.

Based on the likelihood to agree or disagree with the questions the British Values Modes survey also defines 100 attributes, which are made up of clusters or questions, which have sufficient correlation. For example, the BVMS asks a series of questions to elicit levels of self-efficacy among the population. By looking at the extent to which this attribute is espoused or rejected by individuals or groups, and how this fits with the rejection or espousal of the other attributes we can begin to build up a complete picture of values. Just as the Multiple Deprivation Index helps us better appreciate the wider picture of needs, a 'multiple psychological index' helps us better appreciate the wider picture of motivational triggers.

Over many years Pat Dade and Les Higgins have used multivariate analysis to determine the relationships between an interviewee's different answers. Is someone who believes that locking criminals up and throwing away the key is the right thing to do also more likely binge eat, or watch lots of soap operas? These might seem like big leaps in logic, but by analysing the Values Modes data we can, for example, understand the relationship between authoritarian views and escapism. More particularly, as a result

of this multivariate analysis, a simple 10 question survey has been devised that can be used to map any individual's values to a precise point on the values map.

Of course, every individual's psychological makeup is different but for analytical purposes we can begin by breaking the population down into three main Values Modes segments, which are defined by their dominant needs. They are as follows:

- **Pioneers** (or inner directed people) are driven by ideas, aesthetics and personal development. They are interested in new information and often the initiators of change. They tend to have large social networks, but individuality is more important than following the crowd. Change and diversity are seen as positives.
- **Prospectors** (or outer directed people) are driven by the need for self-esteem and the esteem of others. Job progression, money and social status are important. They tend to score high on self-efficacy and are more concerned with appearance and visible success.
- **Settlers** (or sustenance driven people) are driven by the core needs of safety, security and belonging. Home, family and immediate neighbourhood are important, and the wider world often feels threatening, with crime a particular concern. Change is often seen as negative.

In the diagram below these three main segments are mapped onto a Swartz wheel. From this we can see that, Security, Conformity and Tradition are the fundamentals of a Settler's psychological makeup; whereas Power, Achievement, Hedonism, and Stimulation are those of

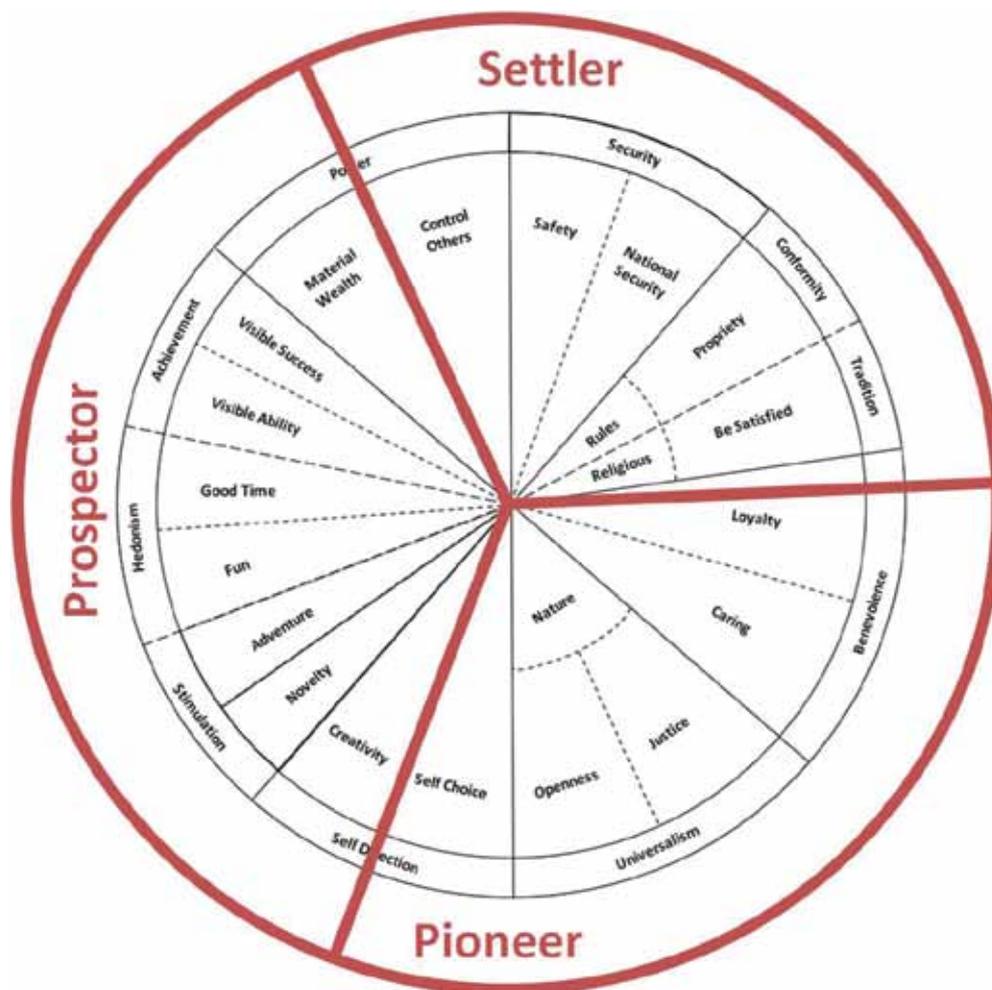
a Prospector's psychological makeup, and Benevolence, Universalism and Self-Direction those of a Pioneer. Of course, in the real world nothing is this neat and someone on the edge of two segments is likely to have values drawn from each.

In the last British Values Modes Survey (2008) the UK population broke down as 40 per cent Pioneer, 30 per cent Prospector and 30 per cent Settler. Of course, for individuals, groups in society, and society as a whole values are dynamic and the longevity of The British Values Modes survey makes it possible for us to understand changes in society over time, which segments are growing and which are shrinking. For

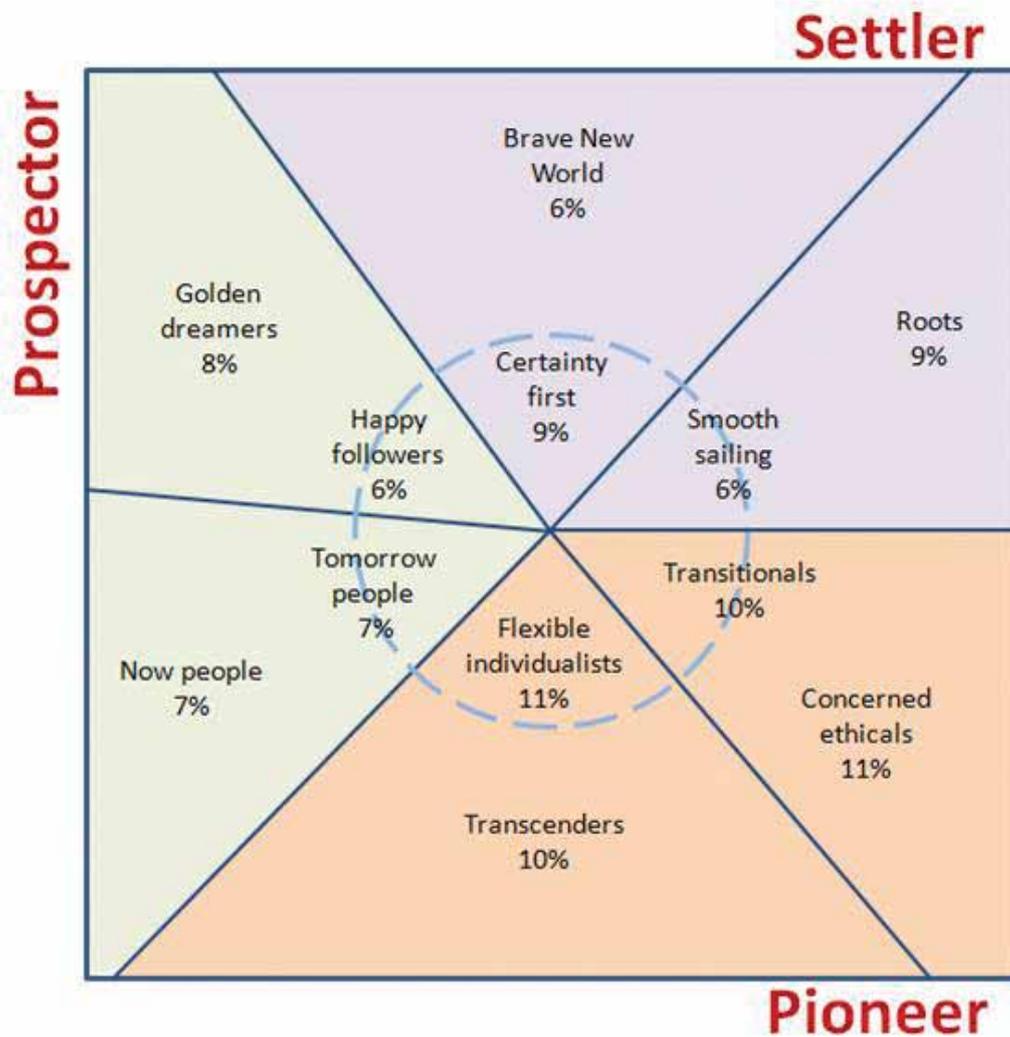
example, 30 years ago only just over 20 per cent of the UK population were Pioneers, but around 50 per cent Settlers. The BVMS therefore enables us to understand the dynamics of values as well as the potential conflicts between values.

The three main segments are useful for helping us get a different perspective, but each segment breaks down into four further segments, making a total of twelve. These twelve segments are mapped as in the diagram below (diagram 3). In the outside segments the values tend to be more deeply held. In the inner six segments the values are less pronounced, so there is a mushy centre where the 'pull' of values is less powerful.

**Diagram 2:** Schwartz wheel with the three main Values Modes groups mapped on



**Diagram 3:** Visualising the 12 Values Modes groups

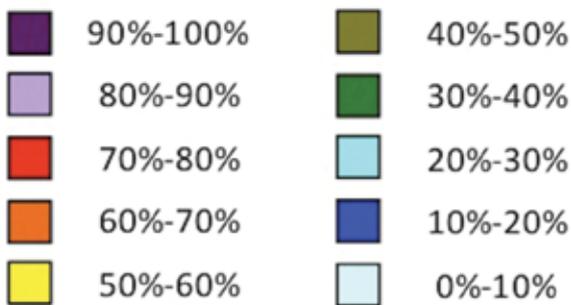
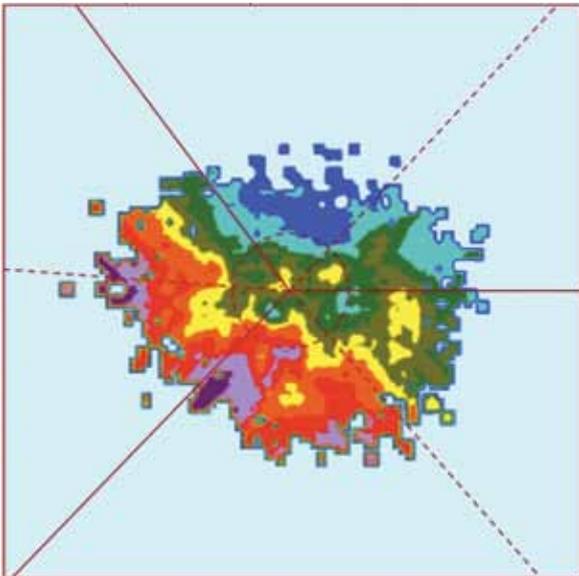


The same values space can be used for a 'territorial' map. We can use this to see the propensity of individuals in the different Values Modes space to agree with either a specific question or an attribute (made up of a cluster of questions – typically 4 or 5 – that correlate strongly with each other).

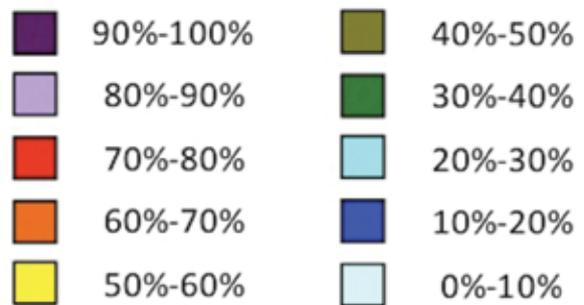
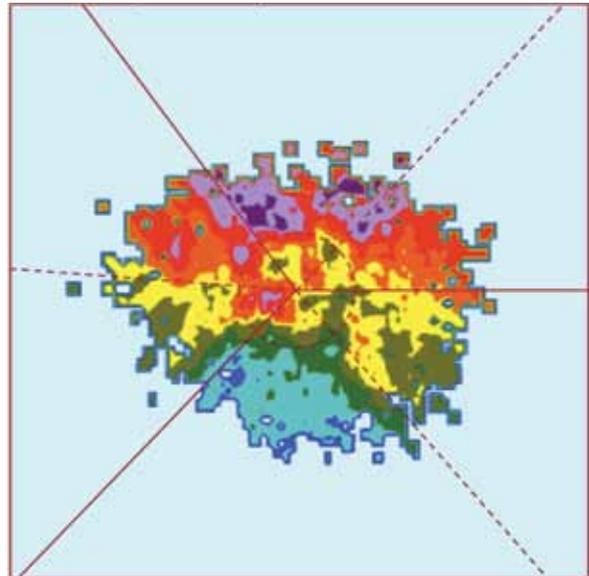
The example below (diagram 4), shows the propensity to agree with a set of questions that make up the Self-Efficacy attribute (scaled by 1.5). We can see that Prospectors and some Pioneers tend to have a high belief that they can achieve their goals. The propensity to espouse this attribute is at its greatest in the Now People and Transcender segments. Settlers are the least likely to be self efficacious.

Another example is set out in the diagram below (5), which shows the propensity to agree with the attribute Indulgent Diet. The axiom for these people is “a little of what you fancy does you good”. They eat what they want, when they want and are sceptical of all the healthy eating reports. We can see from this that the likelihood of espousing this attribute is much higher in the Settler and Prospector segments, and correspondingly lower in the Pioneer segments.

**Diagram 4:** A territorial map of the attribute Self-Efficacy



**Diagram 5:** A territorial map of the attribute Indulgent Diet



## The relationships between values, demographics, class and ethnicity

Although there are relationships between class, demographics, ethnicity and values, they are not always clear cut. It isn't the purpose of this paper to go into all the different patterns, but a couple of observations are useful to further our understanding. In the UK there are some gender differences in values, although for the most part these are relatively small.

### Age

The most pronounced correlation is between values and age. Younger cohorts are more likely to be Prospector, rising to almost 45 per cent among the youngest cohort measured (15-17 year olds), and it is easy to recognise the key attributes of Prospector behaviour in youth culture, including the importance of gaining approval and 'respect' from peers. In the older cohorts, the likelihood of being a Settler is greater, rising to over 40 per cent in the oldest cohort, and we recognise this pattern as some older people have a greater need for security and safety and are more socially conservative. However, as many pensioners are now Pioneers as are Settlers, and the Pioneer group has grown substantially over time, so the assumption of some policy makers that as you get older your values are more likely to be based on security, tradition and conformity is a partial truth. They are just as likely to be based on universalism, benevolence and self-direction.

### Ethnicity and Religion

The BME population as a whole is more Prospector than the rest of the population. There are two clear explanations for this. The

first is that its age profile is much younger than for the UK population as a whole and the second is that first generation economic migrants appear more likely to be motivated by achievement and visible success. Moreover, not only are the values of the BME population diverse, but they are gradually merging with those of the indigenous population.

In our focus groups we consistently found that when it came to discussions on immigration, a subject that polarises on values grounds more than almost any other, the likely predictor of negative views on immigration was not skin colour but length of residency in an area (note that Settlers are far more likely to hold negative views on immigration because it represents a 'threat' to the way of life they know).

A report by the Open Society, which looked at the views of the Muslim community and non Muslim community in Leicester, found that their concerns were remarkably similar.<sup>2</sup> The core values of the Muslim community can be seen as diverse, with many more traditional Muslims holding Settler values, such as conformity and social conservatism, and others seeing their faith slightly differently and holding Prospector or Pioneer values, such as self-direction. Those who define themselves as 'religious' are more likely to be characterised by other Settler attributes, but there are plenty for whom this is not the case, either because they define their religion to fit with the other values they hold, or because religion is simply a smaller part of their values set.

### Class

Socio-economic stratification, typically seen as a proxy for class, has been the main underpinning of polling and opinion gathering

<sup>2</sup> Open Society Initiative, Muslims in Leicester, April 2010

since the 1960s, but as Peter Kellner recently put it ‘Over the long term, two different but related things have happened. Not only have working-class numbers shrunk – today they comprise just 43 per cent of the electorate – but class has largely lost its significance as a determinant of votes.’<sup>3</sup> What is true of voting behaviour is also true of much else.

For example, whilst a higher proportion of the AB socio-economic group (managerial and professional occupations) are Prospectors and Pioneers than for the population as a whole, 20 per cent are Settlers. For the socio-economic group C1 (clerical non-managerial occupations) the Values Modes split almost mirrors the population as a whole. The implication of this is that a C1 discussion group recruited to understand motivational triggers for a behaviour change campaign results in purely random attitudinal findings. Put another way round a recruiter might as well have recruited randomly from the population as a whole. The results of either methodology have an almost equal likelihood of being the same, yet recruiting C1s to understand attitudes is standard practice for many polling organisations.

	Pioneer	Prospector	Settler
UK population	41.0%	28.4%	30.7%
AB	47.9%	31.4%	20.7%
C1	41.6%	29.5%	28.9%
C2	35.4%	30.0%	34.6%
DE	37.4%	22.2%	40.6%

Values Modes and Social Class: 2008 data

## Geo-demographics

Geo-demographics is defined as the ‘analysis of people by where they live.’ The underlying premise is that similar people live in similar places, do similar things and have similar lifestyles, in other words that ‘birds of a feather flock together’. Geo-demographic systems such as ACORN and MOSAIC, therefore appear to simplify a problem, because they lead us to believe that ‘people who live in council houses and have blue collar jobs have the same values.’ However, we know from the Values Modes data that whilst they may have similarities, their values are not uniform. Even though the correlation between social housing and being a Settler is stronger than that between almost any other non-attitudinal variable and Values Modes group, the number of Settlers in social housing rises to only 45 per cent of the social housing population, leaving 55 per cent who are either Prospectors or Pioneer. If we take blue collar (C2s) inhabitants of social housing 53 per cent are Settlers, but the remaining 47 per cent split between Prospectors and Pioneers. Of course geo-demographics might tell us about needs, but incorrectly interpreted it leads to flawed assumptions about motivations. Even where there are high proportions of one values set in a community you could still walk down any street and find people with similar lifestyles but entirely different values. Many large private sector organisations use both behavioural and attitudinal analysis but the public sector often assumes that the behavioural data is sufficient.

3 YouGov poll, 31st August 2010

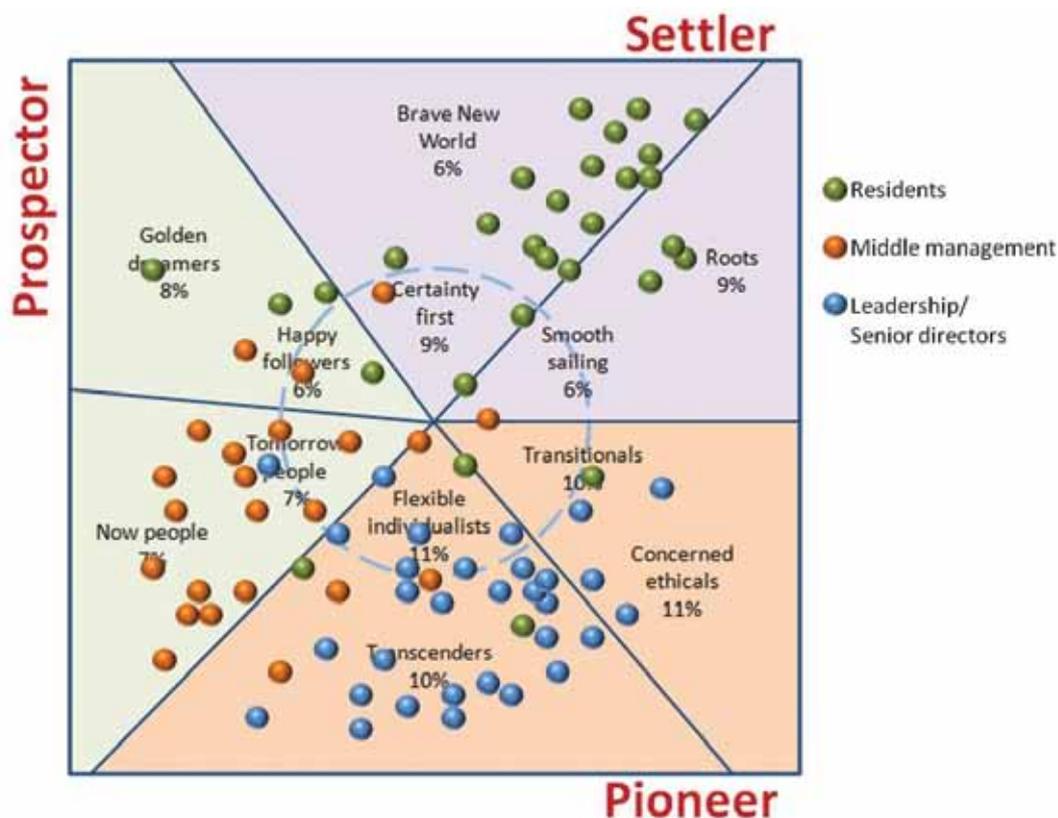
## 2. Why the local government and community perspective differ

In the communities studied for this work we found important and sometimes dramatic differences in how people perceived the same issue. These differences tended to correlate with the values of the participants and therefore meant that different people within the same community held totally different views. However, the starkest contrast was between senior Local Government staff and the majority of residents in the communities they serve.

Diagram 6 below illustrates a real example of the distribution of values we encountered

in one local government area covered by our research (although note that we were focused only on the challenging areas within the community so the distribution of resident values was not reflective of the whole community served). This pattern was not untypical, with senior managers predominantly Pioneers and middle managers more likely to be Prospectors. In this case the part of the community studied was around 70 per cent Settler. This was particularly high, but it was not uncommon to find it over 50 per cent Settler, with only a small proportion of Pioneers.

Diagram 6: Distribution of Values



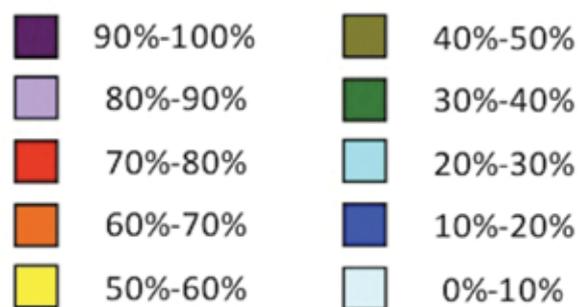
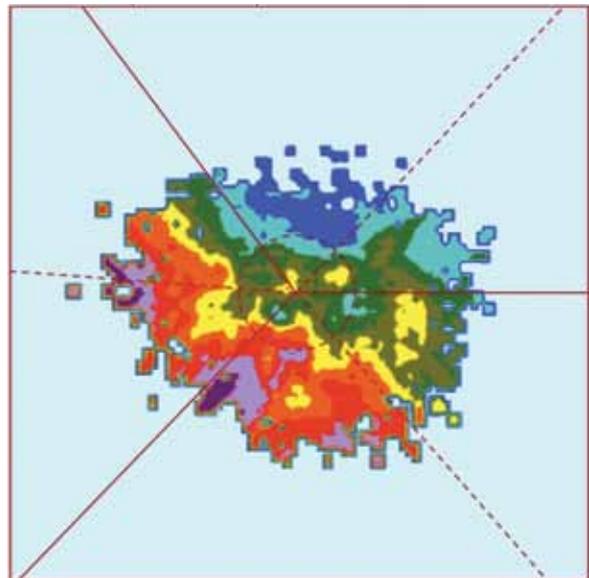
The two subjects which polarised perceptions the most were social change (predominantly but not exclusively immigration) and fear of crime.

Settlers were far more likely to express anxieties about social change. A raft of questions in the British Values Modes Survey helps us identify why this is the case. Settlers are more socially conservative, conformist, and nostalgic about the certainties of the past. For example, Settlers are far more likely to have a strong belief in the traditional family, to prefer things to stay the same, and to believe that ‘there are too many foreigners in my country.’

The latter of these is the most potent question on the Values Modes dataset. Overall, in 2008, 59 per cent of the British population agreed that ‘there are too many foreigners in my country’, but what is particularly striking is the typical reaction engendered by posing the question. Settlers are more likely to express relief at being asked the question, largely because they perceive that ‘political correctness’ prevents them talking about the issue. Prospectors tend to be relaxed about answering the question, but for the most part, less exercised by the issue. Pioneers are less likely to agree that ‘there are too many foreigners in my country’ and some parts of the Pioneer segment are even uncomfortable with the fact that the question is asked.

Fear of crime was also elevated in the minds of many Settlers. In the majority of areas we studied crime had fallen in recent years (based on both the British Crime Survey and Police crime statistics) but perceptions of crime had often diverged significantly from the trend in actual crime.

**Diagram 7:** ‘There are too many foreigners in my country’



From our work it appears that rapid social change triggers anxieties among many Settlers. In many areas we studied it was common for older Settlers to feel that they could not go out in the area, even as early as 3pm in the afternoon. The territorial map below, diagram 8, shows that a far higher proportion of Settlers (particularly the Roots segment) and Prospectors (particularly the Golden Dreamers segment) are more likely to not feel safe in their area than Pioneers. However, the reasons for the fear are distinct. The Prospector group (very heavily Golden Dreamers) are far more likely to be younger and the Settlers are likely to be older (very heavily from the Roots segment). This younger Golden Dreamer group is

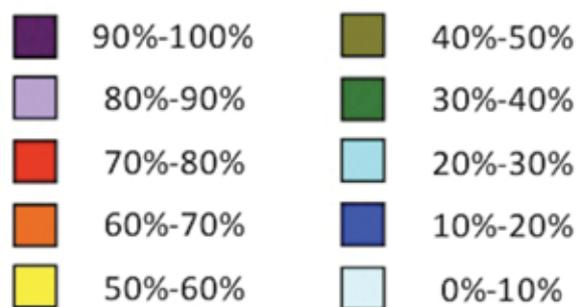
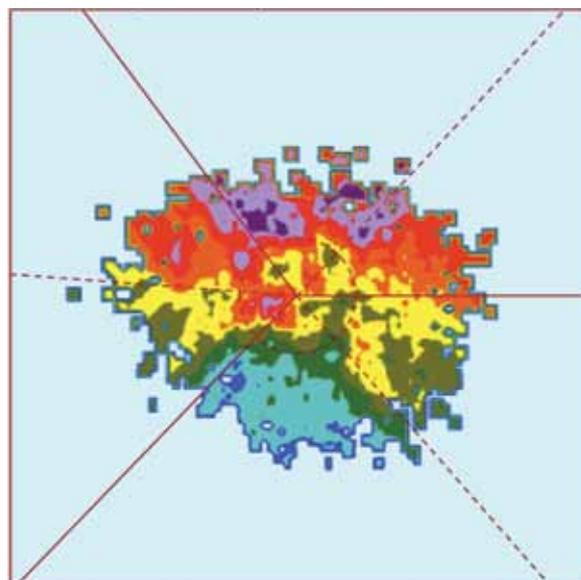
motivated by visible success and control over others. For this younger Prospector group, therefore, fear of crime is correlated with anxiety about losing control and loss of the respect of others. Potential victims of crime (particularly victims of youth violence) in this group perceive that they will be seen as a 'visible failure' to their peers, exactly the opposite of what many Golden Dreamers crave.

For the Settler cluster the fear is very different. Rapid social change appears to make this group anxious about new people in the area or new attitudes to living. They fear that the clear rules that guide life or used to guide life are no longer being observed. Fear of 'the other', the people who are not like them magnifies anxieties to the point that merely seeing different skin colours, dress styles, or symbols of religious diversity, triggers a belief that the area is 'going downhill', 'not like it used to be', 'no longer certain and safe.'

What is also clear is that anxiety about change leads to different psychological reactions. A cluster among the Golden Dreamers and Brave New World groups (where the Settler and Prospector groups meet), are more likely to want to 'get even', whereas most Settlers are more likely to want to lock the door, keep the alien world at bay, and use escapism, such as soap operas, to avoid thinking about it. For some anger energises them and makes them want to get back at someone, and for others it merely leads to alienation.

The fact that Pioneers dominate the most senior posts in councils leads to instinctive decisions that often challenge large parts of their community, such as celebrating change.

**Diagram 8:** 'I no longer feel safe living in this area'



# 3. Values and behaviour change

Values tell us something more profound than the behaviour alone because the same values can lead to different behaviours, and different values can lead to the same behaviour. To understand this it is worth exploring a couple of examples.

Even if three people buy the same car the motivations for the purchase might vary. It is likely that a Prospector will be more motivated to purchase the car because they believe it confers status on them. A Settler is more likely to be motivated by the fact that the car is fuel efficient and therefore cheap to run. On the other hand a Pioneer might be more motivated by the apparent environmental benefits. One car might have all these perceived attributes, and therefore even if three people in the street have the same car this does not mean that they have the same values.

Another example is voting behaviour, with mainstream political parties gaining votes from all Values Modes groups but for different reasons, as each voter is focused on a distinct part of a political party's appeal or at least a distinct interpretation of their appeal. As such, two people from the same Values Modes group may vote for different political parties. A Settler may vote Conservative because they believe the Conservative Party will be strong on law and order, and defence, and respect traditions, but they could also vote Labour because they believe that a vote for the Labour Party will mean a return to more certain and conformist 'paternalistic' socialism that helps them make ends meet.

Of course, certain values are more likely to lead to certain behaviours. For example, recycling is more likely to be adopted by Pioneers, but that does not mean that others will not recycle, only that the motivational triggers for recycling will be different.

## Values and social networks

Pioneers tend to have much larger social networks than the other Values Modes groups. Their networks tend to be more complex, and their friends are less likely to know each other. They have more of what Granovetter describes as 'weak ties', which form links between one network and another.<sup>4</sup>

Being at the centre of a group of friends or network is often important to Prospectors, but their networks tend to be smaller and less complex than those of Pioneers.

Settlers typically have the smallest social networks, and their friends are more likely to know each other. They often have few weak ties - limiting opportunity - and immediate family is magnified in importance. Their networks are also more likely to be based on face to face contact and geographically more compact. This, combined with an 'us and them' attitude, often makes it harder to reach Settlers.

<sup>4</sup> Granovetter, M. (1973) 'The Strength of Weak Ties', *The American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 78, Issue 6, May 1973, pp. 1360-1380.

These differences in the types of networks have important implications for behaviour change campaigns because Pioneers are more likely to start and spread new behaviours.

## Behaviour change and the Big Society

The British Values Modes Survey offers a significant amount of data on how and why people chose to contribute to society. We know that there are certain people who are more willing to volunteer their time, there are different motivations for volunteering time, and there are different issues that might motivate people to volunteer their time. Of course, there are also real issues about ability to volunteer time, including financial means because of loss of income and availability of time (although perceptions of financial means and availability of time can vary wildly from actual financial means and availability of time).

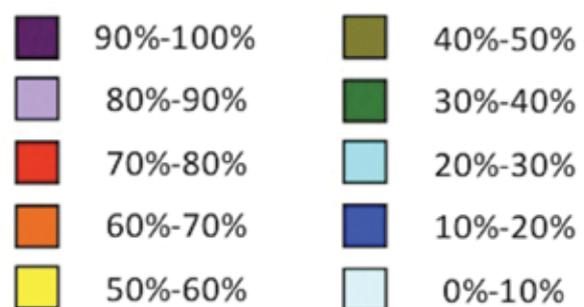
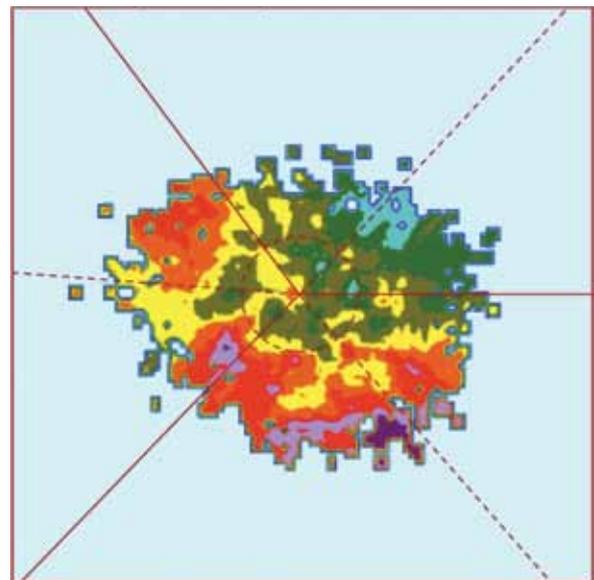
One of the questions from the British Values Modes Survey is 'I would be prepared to spend my free time helping my local community.' Only 8 per cent of the population say this is very true and the demographics are skewed, with the cohort 55-64 being the most likely to say this is very true. However, there are distinct clusters with one cluster among younger Prospectors and another among middle aged and older Pioneers.

Further analysis begins to break down why people might volunteer and for what. For example, Settlers are more likely to volunteer if the 'ask' is clearly local, specific and modest. Prospectors may be more motivated if status is attached to the act of volunteering, and if it is the right thing to be seen to do. Both the issues

that motivate and the best approach to get a commitment also vary. For example, Settlers are more likely to be motivated if the issue is tackling crime, whereas Pioneers are more likely to be motivated by causes. The channel used will also impact on success. For example, a very small tangible ask, made face to face, by 'someone like me' is more likely to be successful with a Settler, whereas for a Pioneer a bigger picture 'do the right thing for society' ask may be more likely to work, and it may make little difference if the ask is face to face.

Of course, in every community there are people with different values. This makes it important for local government to test hypothesis but using local qualitative insight.

**Diagram 9:** 'I would be prepared to spend my free time helping my local community'



In the areas we worked there are examples of councils motivating their residents to do many different things for their community with very different ‘asks’ or incentives. These ranged from getting people to clear the hedges (motivated by a desire to stop drug dealers using them as cover) to running local shops (motivated by a desire to keep them open), to planting trees. Councils like Windsor and Maidenhead are exploring the possibility of using reward points redeemable

in certain shops, but there are plenty of other incentives that could be explored.

The table below provides a template for thinking about behaviour change. It is drawn from the Cabinet Office publication *MindSpace*, but we have added a third column with examples of differences among the three main segments from the Values Modes segments.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Institute for Government, *MindSpace: Influencing Behaviour Through Public Policy*, March 2010

<b>Messenger</b>	We are heavily influenced by who communicates the information	Settler audiences are far more likely to trust local people who are seen as like them and prefer face to face contact
<b>Incentives</b>	Our responses to incentives are shaped by predictable mental shortcuts such as strongly avoiding losses	Prospector audiences are more likely to respond to incentives that associate with status and trend
<b>Norms</b>	We are strongly influenced by what others do	This is less the case for Pioneers, or at least Pioneers are less obviously influenced by norms but are more likely to start new norms
<b>Defaults</b>	We go with the flow of present options	Settler audiences prefer clear rules without complications, whereas Pioneers tend to see things as more nuanced
<b>Salience</b>	Our attention is drawn to what is novel and seems relevant to us	The new has more appeal to Prospector audiences and can be a negative for Settlers
<b>Priming</b>	Our acts are often influence by sub-conscious cues	The subconscious cues that are likely to influence vary across the segments. For example, Pioneers are more likely to be influenced by cues that suggest the possibility of self-actualisation
<b>Affect</b>	Our emotional associations can powerfully shape our actions	Emotional associations are likely to be more nostalgic for those who are Settler and more futuristic for those who are Prospector
<b>Commitments</b>	We seek to be consistent with our public promises, and reciprocate acts	Each segment is more likely to commit to different ‘asks.’ For example, those who are Settler are more likely to commit to smaller promises at a neighbourhood level because their self-efficacy levels tend to be lower and they perceive their neighbourhood as geographically smaller than those in the other segments
<b>Ego</b>	We act in ways that make us feel better about ourselves	What makes us feel better differs among the segments. For example, buying the latest fashion is more likely to appeal to a Prospector

# 4. Research: the community perspective

## Low levels of self-efficacy and trust

Many of the people we spoke to have low levels of self-efficacy – they do not feel that they are able to control the decisions that are made about their lives, and are often fatalistic about the prospects for themselves and their area. People often feel that things are done to them rather than with them. Because they do not see the rationale for council decisions, they often appear random and disconnected, and they cannot see why councils do not act on what they see as obvious problems.

“My daughter – they re-roofed the street across from hers. She asked them why the other street was done, and you know what they said? The post code comes up.”

**Settler, Jarrow**

“The amount of times I’ve been [to the park] with my dogs and kids, and my kids spot the [drug] needles. Not just the bit next to the Centre, the whole length of the park. The council don’t do anything. They sit on their backsides and say we’ll look into it.”

**Settler, Darlington**

In many cases, this means that people feel disconnected from the council and other service providers, and do not trust the information that comes from them. This is often interpreted by service providers as apathy or hostility – but residents rarely told

us they didn’t care about their areas, simply that they didn’t feel listened to or didn’t feel that decisions were made by people like them.

“They treat us like mushrooms, fed bull muck and then kept in the dark.”

**Settler, Nottingham**

“We live in a bed and breakfast. By law we’re supposed to get breakfast but we don’t ... and the fridge doesn’t work, and there’s no cooking facilities, only a microwave. We haven’t told the council because we don’t know how.”

**Settler, Stockton**

“We don’t know [what the council are doing]. The money goes somewhere.”

**Settler, Margate**

Although we found that views like this are more common in deprived communities, it is important to remember that there is a spectrum of views on ability to influence in each area. Values Modes segmentation helps us to understand this. These three quotes are taken from the same set of focus groups in Wallsend, a relatively deprived town in North Tyneside.

**Pioneer:** “The council does send things out but if you really want to know stuff you have to delve in to it, go to meetings or groups for example.”

**Prospector:** “Wallsend looks run down generally. We don’t have flowers on the corners like they do in other areas”.

**Settler:** “They have taken the benches out of the Forum in Wallsend. That used to be a place where people could sit and meet each other and talk to one another. Not anymore. They have new benches in North Shields”.

This reflects a general picture across the country – Pioneers are more likely to feel positive about their ability to change their area, and settlers are more likely to feel fatalistic and disconnected, ascribing decisions to a generalised ‘them’. Levels of perceived self-efficacy among prospectors tended to be higher than settlers and lower than pioneers, with a particular emphasis on improving the look and feel of the area.

## Back to the future

In almost all the communities we studied, people told us that their area was better in the past. There is acute nostalgia for a bygone era – sometimes connected to local industrial decline (particularly in the North East and on the Thames Gateway), but more often about a general sense that social change has created a deep uncertainty about the ways people live their lives.

This belief is not confined to older people – a sense of collective memory often means that there is a shared vision of the past which cuts across the generations. It is, however, much stronger among settlers and some prospectors: the pioneers we spoke to, whether residents or stakeholders, were much more likely to believe that their area was changing for the better.

“It’s going down – there’s a national trend and the local reflects that trend.”

**Prospector, Greenwich**

“Up to 30 years ago this was a hive of industry. Three quarters of the biggest employers in the locality. Now there is nothing for young people to look forward to.”

**Settler, Amber Valley**

“I think the community now is not what it was. When we were kids we used to come to visit and it was brilliant. It’s a forgotten area – it’s gone down the pan in the last ten years.”

**Settler, Hartlepool**

People feel nostalgic about a time when there was a stronger sense of community, with people’s relationships to each other more clearly defined. Higher levels anti-social behaviour, and a lack of respect are seen as symptoms of this breakdown of social order. People feel that their area no longer lives by the same set of rules, or that there is no way of enforcing the rules that do exist.

“You see mothers and fathers coming to school with pyjamas on.”

**Settler, Jarrow**

“I can remember I started smoking when I was fourteen. And I can remember being stopped by the policeman and not only did I have my cigarettes taken away, and there was the threat that he either took away my cigarettes or he went and told my mum! Can you imagine the police even having the time to do that now?”

**Settler, Hounslow**



In particular, people often told that they feel less safe than they did – both because there is more crime and because the police are less able to deal with it

“I was born and bred here, and now just anyone from anywhere [is moving in]. One time you could leave your door open and go round to your neighbours. But now you can't leave your door open and go into your back garden.”

**Settler, Stockton**

“Do any of you remember the old copper Tug Wilson, six foot tall and with a black handlebar moustache, and if he caught you doing anything you'd get a good clip round the earhole.”

**Settler, Nottingham**

This nostalgia is generally not tied to specific era or particular event, but it is very real nonetheless. It is often linked to a sense that the area has been ‘forgotten’ by the authorities and allowed to decline – particularly for rural neighbourhoods and those on the outskirts of large towns or cities. This in turn is often linked to low trust in authority – discussed in more detail elsewhere in this report.

## Community spirit, shopping and socialising

Residents in many of the ‘deprived’ areas we studied told us that community spirit was strong in their area. We heard numerous stories of keys left with neighbours, of people looking after each others’ pets, and of friendships which began with conversations over garden fences.

However, people in the majority of our discussion groups told us that community spirit was declining in their area, and even the most positive tended to feel that the strength of ties in their community is not as strong as it was.

‘I think people tend to keep themselves to themselves now. Where before you had about twenty people in the street who were your friends, now you have about two.’

**Prospector, Jarrow**

‘Ten years ago people used to talk to each other. They'd have tea and a natter over the garden fence. But now they won't talk to each other.’

**Settler, Leicester**

‘You don't see the neighbours anymore because they are always working. We used to be out on the street but it doesn't happen anymore.’

**Settler, North Tyneside**

Many people ascribed this decline to a lack of shared spaces for everyday encounters – pubs that are closing or dominated by anti-social drunks, social clubs or working men's clubs that are closing down with de-industrialisation.

“I think it is a tragedy that all the pubs have closed down. They used to be community meeting places but they have gone now.”

**Pioneer, Amber Valley**

“There used to be 27 pubs and now there are 27 takeaways.”

**Durham, unsegmented group**

What would you change? “The nightlife? Used to be really good but now there are no pubs. It splits people apart.”

**Prospector, Nottingham**

People told us that their ‘useful’ high street shops were closing down, replaced by pound shops, takeaways, nail bars and charity shops – and that this stopped them from being able to shop in their local area, forcing them to use out-of-town supermarkets.

“When you get a lot of pound shops, you get people coming for those shops. It lowers the tone.”

**Pioneer, Greenwich**

“There’s no shops, no market. We used to have the best market in the northeast ... over 200 stalls. It is totally rubbish now. Half the shops are empty.”

**Prospector, Stockton**

“Places in Queen’s Mead [shopping centre] are all empty – all charity shops because rent is too expensive.”

**Prospector, Farnborough**

This is not to say that people in these areas do not use and want to use supermarkets – their value and convenience is particularly appreciated in areas where people have little money and little spare time. Several of the areas we studied had supermarkets due to open in the next few months: although these always divided opinion, many welcomed them as bringing both shopping opportunities and new jobs. What most people really want is the value of the supermarket with the social aspect of the high street.

## Immigration and change to the community

For the majority of the areas we studied, although by no means all of them, immigration was a salient issue. People frequently told us that the types of people living in their area have changed. However, this is not usually because of systematic and deliberate racism – although of course this does exist to some extent in many areas. In most cases, the issue is concern about change in socially conservative communities where the population has remained relatively static until the last five or ten years.

People told us that the change to the population of their area meant that community spirit was declining, or that they no longer felt at home in their area. In these cases, immigration forms part of a wider matrix of concerns about social change, including religious diversity, the break-down of ‘family values’ and increased residential mobility.

“My wife can’t collect her pension because of the queue of Eastern Europeans sending money home, and none of them can speak English.”

**Settler, Greenwich**

“You walk down the high street and there’s all these different nationalities and you feel you shouldn’t be there and you feel scared, because there’s not many of you.”

**Settler, Thurrock**

“There are people ... from different countries, from different environments, and personally I feel like a stranger. People are genuinely up in arms about it, because it’s happened so fast, not because people are against it.”

**Settler, Stockton**

This is not a straightforward white/BME divide – people from longstanding BME communities often have the same concerns about new groups as their white neighbours, and people from ‘host’ areas often draw distinctions between the behaviour of different immigrant groups.

“The Asians have been here for years but they didn’t come over here and take the piss. At least [they] will talk to you and are polite.”

**Settler, North Lincolnshire**

People were often careful to point out that they were ‘not racist’ and that they had friends from ethnic minorities – as they saw it, the issue was that there were now too many new people, that resources were overstretched, or that the character of their area was changing, rather than that there were problems with particular individuals.

“I’m not nasty, but I think there’s too many people in the country. It’s going to become Muslim, the north east, shortly.”

**Settler, Gateshead**

“I’ve got a black family both sides of me and they’re very nice people, they all talk to me, but as regards the place itself and the people coming into the place, it’s gone down, it’s steadily got worse.”

**Settler, Nottingham**

Although people from all Values Modes groups told us about the effects immigration was having on their area, it was settlers – the group to whom stability is most important – who were most likely to be negative. Prospectors’ views on immigration and social change tended to be mixed, and Pioneers the most positive. Even among this last group, however, there were sometimes

strong opinions expressed where people believed that immigration was leading to worse outcomes for other vulnerable groups.

## Freedom of expression and culture

Many residents feel that not only do they not control the social and cultural changes being made to their community, they are unable to express their feelings about this change. It is commonly held that ‘the powers that be’ or ‘the liberal elite’ are controlling the terms of people’s conversations, and stopping them from expressing their opinions by branding them as racist or discriminatory.

“You hear stories where these refugees come and they say you can’t do that, say that, otherwise we’re being racist. And we think, as white people, we’ll be frightened to say something because otherwise we’ll be classed as racist.”

**Settler, Gateshead**

“Most of us just keep ourselves to ourselves, because we’re classed as racists if we say anything.”

**Settler, Hounslow**

“There was a Kurdish cafe that had a sign on the door saying No English Allowed. That is disgusting. I went to the council and they did nothing about it. They say we are racist.”

**Settler North Lincolnshire**

Some people told us that the rules about expression which applied to them as white or English people were stricter than those which apply to incomers – that the authorities ‘turn a blind eye’ to transgressions by these groups. This creates a deep sense of unfairness.

“I took my daughter out of [her previous school] because she saw kids pull a knife out in the corridor. Because they are Nepalese, if you do anything you are discriminating, but if a white child does that they can be expelled.”

**Settler, Aldershot**

“One of the ladies [at college] called us “silly little white girls” in her language ... We went to the teacher and said “this is a racist remark” .... She said “I’m sure it wasn’t meant in a racist way” but all hell would have broken loose if it was the other way round.”

**Prospector, Hounslow**

“We need our own pubs, not the Polish ones. They don’t let us in. If we open a club and don’t let them in we’d be called a racist.”

**Settler, Margate**

Because of this constraint on what they can say, some people told us they are unable to express their pride in their culture. For many people in the areas we studied (often but not exclusively white working class people), ‘Englishness’ is a central part of their identity – and they feel that they are being prevented from expressing this. In some cases, this belief extends to rumours about the council deliberately preventing people from expressing their Englishness.

“Last year some guys organised a St George’s Day parade but were told by the police not to pass the Mosque in case it upsets them.”

**Settler, Sutton**

“I heard they was going to fine people if they fly the St George’s flag outside their house. It wasn’t like that before”.

**Settler, Havering<sup>6</sup>**

These stories are exaggerations. But they may reflect a general reluctance from service providers to get involved with ideas of ‘Englishness’ because they are worried about negative associations. The majority of service providers are more comfortable with the idea of ‘Britishness’, but this had hardly any traction in our discussion groups.

## Shared stories and beliefs about favouritism

Where low trust in authority combines with anxieties about social change and immigration, we often find myths about favouritism taking hold within the community. These stories and beliefs often resonate strongly with the community, even if they seem outlandish to outsiders. Indeed, the angrier the community feels, the further these stories tend to be from the hard facts. In many of our focus groups, there was no dissent from even the most extreme stories of unfairness.

Such myths are particularly common in regards to favouritism in social housing provision – social housing shortages are a key issue in many of the areas we studied, with waiting lists up to fifteen years. Residents are understandably angry that they cannot get a house, and when they see ‘newcomers’ moving into the area they assume there is deliberate favouritism. This belief probably has its roots in councils’ obligations to

<sup>6</sup> These quotes are taken from TCC’s Capital Ambition research in autumn/winter 2009/10. During the period of this research, the World Cup meant that these issues were less pronounced than usual.

house asylum seekers – however rarely this happens in each community. It is also sometimes down to the right to buy: people do not realise that the ‘immigrants’ moving into ex-council homes are buying or privately renting their properties.

‘Why do they keep giving houses to foreigners? I know for a fact that there’s a sixteen year waiting list [here], but any house that comes empty goes to foreigners, and they haven’t been here sixteen years.’

**Settler, Nottingham**

‘Seems to be a lot of emphasis given to immigrants. And I’m not being racist. It seems that they are favoured over local people, a lot of them. Although the council would say “no, they’re not”. It just seems that a lot of the housing is given to them’.

**Settler, Farnborough**

‘A Brit goes down to the council and says I need a house: “oh well, we haven’t got one’. An Asian gentleman goes down and bang! Top of the waiting list, same with the immigrants. I’m sorry; I just think it’s too much.’

**Settler, Darlington**

‘Our children can’t get a council house, no way can they get a council house, because the immigrants have got them.’

**Settler, Grays**

In the Thames Gateway (East London and Essex) we have seen a specific rumour that immigrants are being paid to move from inner London to suburban areas by their local councils, and that they are using this money to buy houses. This myth seems to have its origin in compulsory purchases because of regeneration and Olympic building projects in Stratford, Newham, but it has developed significantly in the last few years, as shown below:

**Evolving stories: councils, housing and immigration in the Thames Gateway**

**Dagenham –Becontree, September 2008**  
‘Eastern Europeans are being paid to come to the borough when people from Dagenham can’t get houses’

**Havering – Elm Park, August 2009**  
They’re offering immigrants £40 000 to come here, my nephew saw it on the internet.

**Havering – Mawneys, January 2010**  
They have to move out here because of the Olympics, they get £68,000 above the price of their property to go. That is why you see them all driving around in new Jaguars and other flash cars.

**Thurrock – Stifford Clays, March 2010**  
‘They are given an incentive to move [out of central London], between £30 000 and £80 000. One got £72 000, a lady next to my friend got £68 000 to move in and then went back to central London and rented the place as a cannabis factory. She’d moved from Stoke Newington.’



In some areas, we were told that immigrants were given free televisions, cars, or driving lessons, or that they are given free food from supermarkets. We also heard beliefs that immigrants were not punished as harshly for serious crimes – this is related to the belief, discussed above, that councils consciously allow different standards of behaviour for different social groups.

“I don’t want to be racist, but it was a black woman, and she was a refugee, and she had a trolley full of stuff, it was £170, and she had no money. And they said ‘how are you going to pay?’ And she said ‘I get it for free, you ring this number’. And she got it for free. I was gobsmacked.”

**Settler, Gateshead**

“They get videos and televisions and computers, and we have to buy our own.”

**Settler, South Tyneside**

“There have been a couple of rapes: immigrants only get a slap on the wrist”.

**Settler, Margate**

These stories evolve over time but they never exist in a vacuum. They are believed and transmitted if they accord with the way people see the world. Well-meaning but ill-informed rebuttals often make the problem worse, by entrenching people’s belief that the council is lying to them.

## Crime and fear of crime

Across England in all our discussion groups, issues of crime and anti-social behaviour were among the most pervasive. Much of this was the sort of crime which police and local authorities tend to categorise as ‘low level’: ranging from threatening behaviour

with dangerous dogs to alcohol fuelled anti-social behaviour and intimidation by gangs.

“I’m scared of teenagers. Every time I see them they’re swearing at me or swearing at my children. So if I’m working late hours, I think they might do something to me.”

**Settler, Stockton**

“If you walk down the street you see kids with dangerous dogs drinking cans of strong drink and the police do nothing.”

**Settler, Margate**

We know that recorded crime rates have fallen significantly in the last ten years. But many residents do not believe this – fear of crime is a strong emotional reality linked to how people feel about their area as a whole, so statistics which show that it is falling are discounted and disbelieved.

“I don’t think crime’s gone down. I think it’s stayed about the same. They’re just trying to make us feel better about the area.”

**Prospector, Gateshead**

“I don’t believe the crime figures. They just give you any figures. They don’t tell you about anything.”

**Settler, South Tyneside**

In many cases, fear of crime means that people significantly change their behaviour: not going out at night, or even not going out once schools have closed and there are young people on the streets and using public transport. Although we found that this was most commonly expressed by middle-aged and older women, it exists across society, including among many of the teenagers we spoke to.

“I wouldn’t walk around here after dark. I came here this morning and there was glass all over the pavement.”

**Pioneer, Amber Valley**

“It’s dirty and there are not enough police to control the kids. You’re frightened to go out after 7pm.”

**Prospector, Thurrock**

These issues are closely linked to people’s perceptions of decline in their communities – that people no longer obey the social rules and that the old sanctions do not work. People often told us that the police presence in their area is not what it used to be, particularly the presence of named officers – even where we know that neighbourhood policing initiatives have in fact led to more visibility of police on the streets. Although there was some praise for PCSOs, many people felt they were a poor substitute for ‘real police’.

“[Policemen] used to have to be six foot. Now that’s a demon figure. You see a six foot man; you do as you’re told. Now they’re just tiny lads. The community people [PCSOs], they’ve got no authority, no spine, and the policemen, their hats are bigger than their shoulders”.

**Settler, Hounslow**

“We used to have a named police officer in Dinnington, Fraser Gardner, but I couldn’t tell you who the police officer is now ... You saw him walk through the village and that was his job, it made people feel better to see him”.

**Pioneer, Rotherham**

These fears are often out of proportion with ‘real’ crime rates in the area. This is because what drives them is often not people’s experiences as victims of crime – it is their sense that their area is declining, and that society is changing in ways they do not control.

## Intergenerational tensions

In most of the communities we worked in, people blamed the majority of crime and anti-social behaviour on young people in the area. This was often seen as connected to a general decline in respect and discipline – again, there is a feeling that social norms have changed and that neither parents nor teachers or police can control children’s behaviour. There is also a link with perceptions of social change, especially where younger age groups are more ethnically diverse than older ones or where gangs appear to divide along racial lines.

“A lot of the youngsters’ troubles stem from all these rules that have come out recently, health and safety this and you can’t do that, and they know they can get away with what they like”.

**Settler, Nottingham**

“I think some of them are rotten because the teachers can’t be too hard on them anymore. When I was young, the teachers were as hard as hell. But what can you do now? The teachers can’t even hit back now.”

**Settler, Gateshead**

When we asked residents what causes this crime, many told us that there was not enough for young people to do in the area. Some added that young people should not be criticised for hanging around on

the streets if they were not doing anything wrong – this view was fairly common among pioneers and prospectors, but much less so among settlers.

“I think it is boredom – there is nothing for them to do so they resort to vandalism and anti-social behaviour.”

**Pioneer, Amber Valley**

“A group of youths aren’t necessarily doing bad things, they’re just meeting and chatting and socialising. But people are sometimes intimidated by the fact that they’re in a group when they forget that fifty years ago they were hanging around doing the same thing.”

**Prospector, North Lincolnshire**

“I’ve not been here long but there is nothing for young people to do. They have to go to Bromley or Greenwich town centre. I’m not surprised they get into trouble.”

**Settler, Greenwich**

The young people we spoke to often echoed these views, often ascribing anti-social behaviour to particular groups within the community, but they also pointed out that they are not the only perpetrators of anti-social behaviour, and that ‘hanging around’ is not a criminal offence. Where people do hang around in groups, this is often driven by a need to feel safe or to feel that they are respected.

“Saying kids have no respect for older, there’s a lot of older people who have no respect for kids, so it’s a vicious circle.”

**Settler, Rotherham**

“As much as they say it’s the kids I get scared because of the old men drunk outside the pubs. They’re quite aggressive. It makes you feel really uncomfortable.”

**Settler, Feltham**

“Some people see tracksuits and gold chains and think there’s trouble but they’re just kids at the end of the day. At the other end of Nottingham people where suits and stuff, but I tend to find most of them are stuck up and won’t say hi to you.”

**Prospector, Nottingham**

This values-based segmentation helps us understand that intergenerational tension is often driven by fear on both sides, rather than by individual interactions. Settlers were significantly more likely to see young people in general as a threat, whereas pioneers and prospectors tended to comment on the behaviour of particular groups.

## Housing: tenure patterns and social change

Much has been written about the shortage of social housing and the problems that occur when demand outstrips supply. As noted above, this often leads to a belief that immigrants are given preferential treatment in housing allocation. However, this is only part of the overall housing narrative: housing provision was an issue in all the areas we studied, but the nature of people’s concerns varied.

In many areas, people told us that the types of people living in their area were changing because their community was becoming a ‘dumping ground’ – either where local authorities or social landlords move ‘problem’

tenants into their area, or where private rented housing is let to vulnerable and difficult residents.

“Langley Mill seems to be to be a dumping ground for Amber Valley. Several anti-social people are on my street. The housing associations are responsible.”

**Settler, Amber Valley**

“Private landlords put scum in. We had two in and it ruined our street in the space of a year. The kids were running amuck; my partner had the works van and they were writing on it. My partner came out and spoke to the lady and asked her to stop messing with the van. Their attitude was unbelievable. She shouted and screamed at about fifteen people.”

**Prospector, Sunderland**

“People who are moving to this borough, sometimes they are moving away from trouble, but trouble follows them.”

**Prospector, Thurrock**

“Now Jarrow is a hole itself. It’s a dumping ground. People from all over the shop. They’re all strangers.”

**Prospector, South Tyneside**

Because private tenants tend to stay in an area for less time than either social tenants or owner-occupiers, people often told us that they do not care about the area or its upkeep. This leads to concerns about untidy gardens, fly-tipping or general poor maintenance – seemingly minor issues which nonetheless have a major impact on people’s perceptions of their area and how safe or ‘at home’ they feel.

“There’s a possibility that they [the council] dump certain families in the area that other areas don’t want. This causes a problem and it’s not fair to the people on that estate, the majority of whom are lovely people who look after their properties and they’re great.”

**Settler, North Lincolnshire**

“It was lads from my own [ethnic] minority that grew up here and started buying up all the properties in the area and they’ve turned them into bedsits. And they’ve just let them go to anybody and to be honest, I feel that has let it down. And I hate that feeling, because I don’t even let my kids out in Northcote Park any more, and it used to be lovely”.

**Settler, Darlington**

This is sometimes linked to a feeling that new arrivals (and particularly immigrants from outside the UK) do not understand the rules in their new areas, creating initial tensions which are then difficult to dispel. These are particularly common around rubbish disposal and use of recycling facilities.

## Keeping it local: small things matter

Many of the communities we studied have seen major infrastructure projects or steep increases in public sector investment in the last decade. In most cases, residents are happy with the outcomes. However, even when they are positive they are often unhappy about the process of change, and in particular the extent to which local people have been involved in the decision making process.

“The tunnel is a good thing, but if they’d done it properly in the first place they wouldn’t have had problems. It’s cost millions.”

**Settler, Jarrow**

“The only bad thing about the redesign of town is that the high street is now a bottleneck— there used to be roundabouts and through roads.”

**Prospector, Feltham**

In most of the communities we studied, even the ones which have been undergoing major change, the issues that people most wanted to discuss were the small things: litter in the park, dog mess on the pavements, war memorials not being kept clean. These seem like minor issues compared to the big one-off projects which professional stakeholders tended to tell us about, but it is only when people feel that the council is paying attention to these things that they are prepared to trust them on the larger points.

“I live near a public footpath and I have to keep onto the council all the time to keep it clean. They always say they’re looking into it but they never do it. I have to keep going on after them to do it, but they don’t do it.”

**Settler, Farnborough**

“It needs cleaning up – too much dog mess. Dogs dirty on my path and gardens. I asked the patrol people to bring a bag or fine them. These people won’t do it, I’ve asked them.”

**Settler, Lancaster**

The official ward or authority boundaries used by public bodies often bore little relation to the ways people define their own communities. This is particularly true of newer or composite authorities: for example, people rarely say that they live in South Tyneside, and if they say they live in Hounslow this means a much smaller area than that defined by the borough boundaries.

“I think it’s a place of its own. I don’t feel part of Gateshead, but I do feel part of Dunston.”

**Pioneer, Gateshead**

“My problem is that we don’t have a local paper here. We get the paper from Heanor but we don’t have a Langley Mill one. We don’t even have a Langley Mill page in any of the other papers.”

**Pioneer, Amber Valley**

“We get [a newsletter] from the council sometimes – it tells you about the flower arranging and stuff for posh folk – there is nothing to do with Crosby.”

**Settler, North Lincolnshire**

As a result of this disconnect between the self-identified boundaries of communities and those used by official bodies, people sometimes don’t feel that communications from the council are relevant to their particular neighbourhood – particularly if their neighbourhood is less wealthy than the ones around it.



## People like me, not people like them

The residents in the areas we studied are often unimpressed by the literature they receive from the council. Although people tend to value information about rubbish collections or telephone numbers, they were much less keen on the ‘news’ and ‘facts’ parts of the publications. Where these jarred with their beliefs, they were far more likely to dismiss them than to change their minds – this can significantly undermine trust in service providers.

“I flick through [the council magazine]. When I get to the statistics bit, I lose it, I’m not interested. Whether these percentages are right, I don’t know. I’m taking their word for it. I’ve got no context.”

**Prospector, Stockton**

“Don’t trust newspapers – well, I trust information about the library opening times.”

**Prospector, Greenwich**

“You get a calendar through to tell you when your bins will be collected. That works well, I find it useful. That’s pretty much all you get from them.”

**Settler, Lancaster**

“The newsletter is just full of this rubbish. They give you these figures but they just pluck them out of the air. They did an interview with a caretaker and said he was wonderful, but he’s the laziest and most useless caretaker ever!”

**North Kensington, unsegmented group**

Many of the people we spoke to did not use the internet – and if they did use it for email and recreation, they were still unlikely to use it to find information from or interact with

service providers. A lot of the councils we worked with are beginning to experiment with web-based communications, applications or bill payments – but in the relatively deprived communities we worked in, this appears to be having little impact as yet.

Rather than these formal communication channels, we saw that people’s knowledge and opinions of their area were being formed by their personal experience and by informal communication with friends, neighbours and families. It is not the council that shapes the community narrative; it is ‘people like me’.

“My mother tells me everything I need to know! She reads all the papers and speaks to loads of people. When the pubs were open, that’s where you used to go to find stuff out.”

**Prospector, Nottingham**

“I just ask everyone. It’s a big gossip town – gossip flies around this place so if there’s something going on you soon know about it.”

**Prospector, Lincoln**

“Malc’s barbers is the best place to get info. He’s the oracle, he knows everything.”

**Settler, Amber Valley**

These informal communications networks are enormously powerful in many communities, particularly those which are relatively stable and tight knit. They play an important part in the dissemination of myths about unfair resource allocation: this is discussed in more detail above.

# 5. Research: the local government perspective

## ‘Change is good’

Local government employees tend to be positive about new things. They see it as their job to improve their area – and at senior levels, they tend to be focused on high level, strategic change. On both a formal and informal level, people’s success is measured by the amount of change they achieve.

This has many advantages. However, it can mean that local authority staff – and especially senior staff – think in very different ways to their residents. In particular, they sometimes underestimate or dismiss the extent to which their ‘average’ residents are uncomfortable with change, or are focused on what the authority sees as minor local issues rather than big and important infrastructure projects.

Values Modes segmentation shows us the extent of the difference between local authority staff and their residents. There is more detail on these differences in section 1.5. In summary, compared to their local residents, the people who are developing communications for local authorities tend to be:

- More optimistic about their area
- More positive about change
- Less worried about crime and safety
- More concerned by the ‘big picture’ than by small details

- More interested in global issues: the environment, climate change, international politics

This can create a culture gap, where officers create materials which they believe will be appealing to residents, explaining in rational terms why the area is getting better, and then feel disillusioned when they do not have the effect they want, or when residents continue to be negative or apathetic in spite of positive change.

“Objectively it is a good place to live, I like it here. But clearly a lot of people don’t think so. You hear people saying it is a shit place. This is disappointing, people are clearly dissatisfied.”

“People want to talk about the small issues like dog muck but as soon as you have dealt with one issue another comes up. They are frightened of committees and don’t understand the big concepts.”

When residents continue to be negative about their area to an extent that officers see as irrational, they tend to react by producing increasingly positive communications, trying to rebut poor perceptions with materials that tell people about their area’s advantages.

“Crime is falling – the facts are posted everywhere, outside the station and so on. We push out the message about this being a happy, safe area.”

“The Place Survey showed us that people generally liked living here – the issues were the town centre, crime and anti-social behaviour. The headline we used when reporting back to residents was “[this town] is a great place to live.”

“For those people who don’t engage, we should be using glossy leaflet techniques like estate agents to sell what we have to say. We should have a glossy magazine for each estate showing these wonderful places and what they have to offer.”

Unfortunately, this sort of communication often has the opposite effect to what the authors intend: ‘I don’t believe the crime figures. They just give you any figures. They don’t tell you about anything.’ Positive communications which do not understand the values that underpin resident’s emotions tend to be dismissed out of hand, eroding trust in service providers.

## Working with staff

Local authority staff, and particularly those working directly with the community, provide one of the most important communications channels for local authorities. Many people who do not read a magazine or look at the council website will speak to staff as they are doing their jobs. Many of the staff we spoke to, at all levels of their organisations, were happy with this form of contact and wanted to tell people about the good work their organisation was doing.

In some cases, however, frontline staff are significantly less positive than their managers. This is partly because they are frequently at the sharp end of dealing with angry residents. It is also because they are often residents themselves, so they share frustrations about service delivery. In areas where myths about unfair resource allocation were widespread, we often found that staff believed the same myths and were even involved in spreading them.

“There’s nothing for local people any more – foreigners have taken over six of the streets already, it’s really becoming a ghetto. People living there don’t have to play by our rules – there’s fly-tipping constantly and they throw rubbish out of their windows. When they’re pulled up about it they just say “we don’t understand English” and nothing is done.”

“I know a Lithuanian couple who were given a house and then they went and bought a £12 000 Mercedes.”

One resident reported that when she called the council to enquire about the housing waiting list, she was told that would not be able to get a house as ‘all the immigrants’ were getting them.

Senior staff are often unaware of these dynamics because they do not live locally and they do not have direct contact with staff working on the frontline. Consistently asking staff about their views – and not just on the satisfaction measures used on staff surveys – is key to both organisational effectiveness and to finding out the key issues for the communities they serve.

## Data or insight?

Local authorities have a lot of data on their areas: population figures, Place Survey indicators, service use statistics, and health and crime figures. Most of local authorities' performance management is based on this data. Even with the abolition of the Place Survey and the Audit Commission, authorities will still have access to huge amounts of information, and many will choose to commission their own quantitative research.

This information is invaluable to councils and to their partners. However, as the Big Society places increasing demands on local authorities, and as behaviour change becomes more central to their work, this information will not be enough. Our work with key stakeholders in thirty-one local authorities found that many had little access to qualitative data about the scale and nature of residents' concerns. Although this information is often gathered by frontline staff in their day to day jobs, it rarely reaches the top table. This issue is often compounded by staff residence patterns: although more junior offices tend to live in their local areas, directors often do not.

This reliance on statistical data as opposed to local insight can lead to councils making and communicating decisions which miss the key issues for local residents. Sometimes people dismissed residents' concerns because the issues were less severe than in comparable areas. The problem is that people very rarely see their lives in terms of comparisons: if littering is a problem for them, it is irrelevant that it is worse in the next ward.

This quote is typical of our discussions with senior officers.

"[This ward] is described as a deprived urban area. However, hard statistics from MORI show that even the most deprived parts of [this authority] are better to live in than other deprived wards."

"We are on target compared to the national picture, but others may be doing better in London."

Such reliance on 'hard' performance data which does not capture resident concerns can create a real mismatch between council and resident views. As mentioned above, this can mean that councils produce communications which deny the reality of resident concerns, thus eroding trust.

If local authorities are to build and support the Big Society in their area, they need to know more about their residents' differing motivations – not just where they live or how many bedrooms there are in their house. Chapter 1 above gives more detail on the use of Values Modes segmentation to support civic involvement across the community.

## People or structures?<sup>7</sup>

Most local authorities have an engagement team, with a remit to ensure that local people are involved in making the decisions which affect their lives. In the majority of the authorities which we spoke to, this team is seen as the key channel for two-way communication between residents and the authority.

<sup>7</sup> As well as our work for the Leadership Centre, this chapter is based on TCC's Beyond the Usual Suspects: Real Influence Matters research for the London Civic Forum. This used qualitative research in four London boroughs to investigate how people preferred to influence decision making in their local area.

Set-piece events and formal consultative structures – local forums or residents’ panels – tend to be seen as central to this work. This can cause problems when the people involved in these groups are not representative of the views of their local area: we often found that the ‘resident view’ as put forward in formal ward meetings and citizens’ panels was very different to that expressed in randomly recruited focus groups.

When we speak to residents who are not already involved in formal structures, we find a very different view of engagement and involvement. If asked, most people describe ‘engagement’ as all the contact they have with local public bodies: the great majority of this is through service delivery rather than specific events or processes. This is not to say that such events do not have a value, but that the boundary between engagement activity and service provision is artificial for most local people. As the Big Society asks more people to get involved in their area, and as budgets get tougher, it will be ever more important to keep resident involvement out of the silo of engagement departments.

“The council aren’t wonderful at communicating what they do, and people aren’t able to easily differentiate between departments. There is tenant involvement but it is limited; some don’t have any representation.”

Of course, provision of local services goes beyond councils. Residents often do not distinguish between services provided by the council, the police and the NHS. In spite of the fact that many of the questions being asked of residents about these areas are fairly similar, consultation and engagement are rarely co-ordinated between providers.

There has been some recent progress in this area, but there is still a long way to go.

“Partnership working could be co-ordinated better. People feel as if they are over-consulted. We go out separately to consult and give feedback – this could be better.”

“There is a lot of duplication of work going on and not enough joined up work between different partners.”

As budgets get tighter, most authorities know that they need to do better at partnership working. For most areas, however, services are not yet joined up at more than a superficial level – getting beyond this will be the key challenge for the next few years.



# Appendix 1

## Methodology and areas studied

The report is based on quantitative research carried out as part of the Connecting Communities programme between January and March 2010. Research was conducted in 31 local authorities. In each area, we conducted:

- Stakeholder interviews with senior local authority and other public sector managers
- Two staff focus groups with frontline local authority staff
- Three or four resident discussion groups in selected wards – chosen as areas where community cohesion and engagement are comparatively low. These were segmented by Values Mode. Where we worked in one ward, we conducted groups with Pioneers, Prospectors and Settlers. Where we worked in two wards, we conducted groups with Prospectors and Settlers. Groups were randomly recruited using street interviewing. We did not select for specific demographic characteristics.

Areas studied			
Local Authority	Ward(s)	Local Authority	Ward(s)
Amber Valley	Aldercar and Langley Mill	North East Lincolnshire	Heneage, East Marsh and Sidney Sussex
Blackburn	Meadowhead, Furnhurst, Shadsworth with Whitebirk, Little Harwood	North Lincolnshire	Winterton, Crosby and Park
Darlington	Northgate, Central	North Tyneside	Wallsend
Durham	Spennymoor	Northumberland	Berwick
Gateshead	Teams	Nottingham	St Ann's, Bullwell
Greenwich	Eltham West	Redcar	Southbank
Hartlepool	Dyke House, Stranton, Grange	Rotherham	Dinnington, East Maltby
Hounslow	Chiswick, Feltham	Rushmoor	Mayfield, Grange, Wellington
Kensington and Chelsea	Golborne	South Holland	Long Sutton, Sutton Bridge, Holbeach
Kings Lynn	Snettisham, North Lynn	South Tyneside	Primrose, Bede
Knowsley	Page Moss	Stockton	Newtown, Town Centre
Lancaster	Skerton East, Skerton West	Stoke	Burselm, Shelton, Bentilee, Blurton
Leicester	Eyres Monsell	Sunderland	St Anne's, Southwick
Lincoln	Abbey, Birchwood	Thanet	Margate Central, Cliftonville West
Middlesbrough	Thorntree	Thurrock	Grays, Stifford Clays
Newcastle	Elswick		





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