Faith-based Organisations and Social Exclusion in European Cities

1. Mapping the Activity of National-level FBOs in the UK

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February, 2009
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Section 1:

Introduction

This report forms part of a wider pan-European research project on Faith-Based Organisations and Exclusion in European Cities (FACIT) funded by the European Commission’s Seventh Framework Programme. Researchers from seven European countries are addressing a common research agenda to investigate the role of Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs) in tackling different forms of social exclusion in urban contexts, and are focusing on a number of significant questions. How are FBOs positioned in combating social exclusion and promoting social cohesion? How has this role changed over time? What are the implications of FBO involvement for policy and governance in different nations? The first task of the research teams has been to undertake a mapping of the involvement of national-level FBOs in tackling social exclusion. In this report we present the findings of that mapping exercise for the UK.

This is a fascinating time to be studying the activities of faith-motivated people and organisations. In his book *Exiles*, Michael Frost (2006, 3) notes that “taken as a socio-political reality, Christendom has been in decline for the last 250 years” and Stuart Murray (2004) has indeed defined the current age in the UK as “post-Christendom”. Where once the fabric of British society made sense because of a mutuality of state and religion, the long drawn out processes of Enlightenment and secularisation have relegated religion to a position subservient to the state, paving the way over the last 50 years first for a somewhat collectivist welfare state in which government took responsibility for many aspects of welfare, and then for a somewhat more individualist tide of neoliberalism during which the state started to withdraw from direct welfare provision, contracting out some responsibilities and shifting others onto the shoulders of personal and collective citizenship. At the same time, the UK took on a more multicultural character, with a range of different religious faiths replacing the apparent previous hegemony of Christianity.

However, the age of neoliberal governance has opened up opportunities for something of a resurgence of faith-based activity in the public sphere, one part of a wider cultural-political repositioning recognised by some as a form of postsecularism. As what were previously state-provided services have become contracted out or excised from the palette of public activity, so opportunities have been created for faith-groups to fill the gap, through both voluntary and increasingly professionalised service organisations. On the one hand, these activities can be dismissed as “public services on the cheap” – an incorporation in, and takeover by the values of the
neoliberalised neo-state. On the other hand, FBOs can be regarded as engaging in a form of resistance to neoliberalism, bringing alternative theo-ethics and geographies of care performatively into being in a society where government has lost touch with the practical and emotional needs of local communities.

This report will not resolve the dispute between these two readings of FBOs, but it does begin to demonstrate the scale and scope of FBO activity, which collectively can be increasingly regarded as significant in societal responses to marginalised and socially excluded people – “the least of these”. The overall FACIT project aims to further ascertain the role and extent of faith-based welfare provision through several studies at different spatial scales. As the first of these reports, the overview of national FBOs provides a space to theorise and critique the policy and governance themes found in the wider literature, and structure further investigation of the messy interconnections between local FBOs and ‘actually existing neoliberalism’ (Brenner and Theodore 2002).

**The Religious Context in the UK**

According to the Focus on Religion Report (2004) compiled from 2001 National Census data for Great Britain, Christianity remains the predominant religion in this country, with 72 percent of the population regarding themselves as Christian. This group includes a wide variety of different denominations such as the Church of England, Church of Scotland, Church in Wales, Catholic, Protestant and all other denominations. After Christianity, the largest religious group within the UK is Muslim, comprising 3 percent of the total population in 2001. The second largest non-Christian religious group is the Hindu population that compromises 1 percent of the total population of the UK. In descending order below these three religions are Sikh (0.6 percent), Jewish (0.5 percent) and Buddhist (0.3 percent) populations. 0.3 percent of the population is indicated to be of ‘other’ religion. The remaining 15 percentage of the population indicate that they hold no religious belief. The question on religion within the Census was voluntary, and 8 percent of the total population of the UK chose not to state their religion (see Table 1.1).

While these quantitative figures provide an indication of the population breakdown of the different religions of Great Britain, there is potentially a significant mismatch between statements of religious affiliation and the living out of religious faith in the practices of everyday life. According to the
organisation Christian Research, only around 6 percent of the population of England attend church on an average Sunday, a figure which continues to decline despite the growth of some Pentecostal churches. Therefore although 72 percent of the population regard themselves as Christian for the purposes of answering census forms, active participation in Christian worship and service must be presumed to be a much lower percentage, given that even regular church attendance may not denote a commitment to active service in the community. By contrast religious practice is highest amongst Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, although again it should be noted that there are different cultural norms here about what precisely is implied by “practising” religion. Accordingly the influence of active religion may suggest a more diverse form of multiculturalism than suggested by raw figures on religious affiliation.

Table 1.1: Population of Great Britain: by religion, April 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Total population</th>
<th>Non-Christian religious population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Numbers</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>41,014,811</td>
<td>71.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>1,588,890</td>
<td>2.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>558,342</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikh</td>
<td>336,179</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>267,373</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>149,157</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other religion</td>
<td>159,167</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No religion</td>
<td>8,596,488</td>
<td>15.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion not stated</td>
<td>4,433,520</td>
<td>7.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All non-Christian religious population</td>
<td>3,059,108</td>
<td>5.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All population</td>
<td>57,103,927</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Multiculturalism is significant not least because of its geographical focus. Although adherents of Christian religion are spread fairly evenly across the whole of the country, Census data from 2001 presents a clear indication of the pocketed distribution and density of other major faith groups. Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Jewish and Buddhist groups appear to be centred in the major urban...
conurbations of Great Britain, with Figure 1.1 demonstrating urban spatial concentrations of the Muslim population in England. Local research is required to correlate these patterns with patterns of low income and social exclusion, but it is clear that religion outside of Christianity forms an important part of the urban landscape in many UK cities.

**Figure 1.1 Distribution of Muslim Population, England, 2001**

In many cases, the concentration of religious affiliation reflects patterns of ethnicity. According to the Focus on Religion Report (2004 – see Figure 1.2) 97 percent of Christian people in Britain are white, although the 2 percent of the Christian population made up of black ethnic groups represents 71 percent of those groups. Equally, members of the Jewish religion are white (97 percent) as are the bulk of those people with no religious affiliation. By contrast three-quarters of Muslims are from an Asian ethnic background, predominantly Pakistani (43 percent), Bangladeshi (16 percent) and Indian (6 percent), while the vast majority of Sikhs and Hindus are from an Indian ethnic background. Buddhism appears to be the most ethnically diverse of all the major religions in the UK.
These data present a strong case for investigating FBOs in terms of many different faith-types as well as faith-groups. Although it can still be anticipated that it will be Christian groups who are most significantly represented in activities dealing with the overall population, particularly at the national level, it will be important also to take full account of the activities of other religions, and indeed of interfaith agencies, in dealing with particular client groups or spatially focused needs.

National FBOs: The Parameters of the Study

The EU-7FP FACIT project broadly defines an FBO as *any organisation that refers directly or indirectly to religion or religious values, and that functions as a welfare provider and/or a political actor*. To clarify this further we adopt a more strenuous definition of FBOs from the ‘Religions and Development Research Programme’ (see [http://rad.bham.ac.uk](http://rad.bham.ac.uk)): ‘A faith-based organisation (FBO) is a term used mainly in the United Kingdom and the U.S. to describe a particular niche within the voluntary sector. ‘Faith-based’ is often used as a euphemism for ‘religious’ in this context. Generally, but by no means exclusively, faith-based organisations are philanthropic in nature, constituted as charities or non-profit organisations, and aligned with one of the world’s major religions. FBOs
resemble non-governmental organisations (NGO) as much or more than religious organisations as defined above. For many years, FBOs have played major roles in society, delivering a variety of services to the public, such as caring for the infirm and elderly, advocating justice for the oppressed and playing a major role in humanitarian aid and international development efforts. In this context they are perhaps closer in terms of organisational set up, structure and administration to other 20th century civil society organisations than to more traditional and historic religious organisations.’

Following this definition, the report deals exclusively with those FBOs working at the national level to deal with matters of poverty and social exclusion in UK cities. This inevitably paints an incomplete picture of faith-based social action for three reasons. First, it excludes FBOs working in the international arena, focusing on development, global poverty, conflict resolution and/or emergency relief (for example, a large number of Jewish relief and lobbying organisations), unless they are also engaged in some way in tackling poverty and social exclusion in the UK (as does, for example, Tearfund). Secondly, it can exclude organisations that are active in other areas of welfare such as adoption, environmental conservation, disability, fostering, pro-life campaigns, children services, and elderly care homes. These domains are particularly well represented in the Catholic and Jewish traditions, for example. Some of these areas have clear connections to poverty and social exclusion, and many of the service users or clients of these national organisations are marginalised children and adults, particularly (the growing majority of) pensioners who are below the poverty line. Accordingly, we have included in the report FBOs which may not necessarily present their activities - or be traditionally understood - as tackling poverty, but which are, nevertheless, involved in providing services to impoverished and/or excluded individuals and communities. Thirdly, and very significantly, the report excludes FBOs working at the regional and local level. This is a crucial omission that will be rectified at a later stage in the research. Available evidence suggests that a highly significant aspect of the work of FBOs is on-the-ground in particular localities. This is where the faith-motivation of local leaders and individual volunteers is specifically stimulated, and where the infrastructure of the buildings used as places of worship, and the networks of local social capital are deployed for the purposes of serving socially excluded people. Inevitably, a study of national-level FBOs is likely to be skewed towards umbrella organisations, and those whose principal task is that of lobbying and capacity building.

To some extent, the focus on national-level organisations disinvests the research of a balanced understanding of FBOs outside of the Christian religion, as may be illustrated in the case of Muslim FBOs. The ambiguity of whether a FBO is engaged in ameliorating poverty is an important question
particularly within British Muslim communities. In the UK, poverty is heavily stratified among ethnic and gendered lines, particularly within the Muslim Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities (ONS, 2004; Hussain and Choudhury 2007). Yet there are few, if any, national Muslim organisations directed to tackle poverty-related issues in these communities (with the notable exception of the Muslim Health Network). In response to the problems facing the Muslim community in the UK after 9/11, the vast majority of national British Muslim organisations exist to fight racial discrimination, to counter real and perceived civil exclusion, and to represent the political interests of the British Muslim community (see, for example, the British Muslim Initiative, Campaign Against Criminalising Communities, Muslim Public Affairs Committee Justice Not Vengeance, Islamic Party of Britain, Muslim Council of Britain, Islamic Human Rights Commission). These FBOs serve an important function in political advocacy and are active in anti-poverty coalitions with other faith and secular organisations (such as Make Poverty History, and the Stranger to Citizen Campaign).

Muslims are by no means inactive in the delivery of welfare services in the UK, but their engagement tends to be less through national organisations and more centred on the regional and local levels through networks of independent mosques. The shortage of national Muslim welfare organisations can be explained in part by the geographical distribution and urban clustering of the Muslim population in the UK, particularly in London and some northern urban centres. Within these more local areas there is a plethora of Muslim organisations providing education, employment and counselling services, benefits advice, women’s groups, working with asylum seekers (such as the North London Muslim Housing Association; East London Mosque and Muslim Centre; the Al Ghazali Multi-cultural Centre in Liverpool; the Muslim Welfare House; and the Indian Muslim Federation). Due to the strong nature of bonding social capital between members, mosques act as social and welfare hubs for the British Muslim community, offering a range of personal and social services (see for example the Leeds Islamic Centre; and the Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre Trust).

Moreover, the majority of British Muslims concentrate their anti-poverty efforts through Zakkat, a form of habitual and obligatory tithing by Muslims for distribution to the poor. This can take the form of a tithe paid to the local mosque for redistribution to needy members of the community, making mosques a key actor in social welfare provision for the Muslim community. However, Zakkat also takes form of private remittances to one’s kin abroad, although increasingly among third and fourth generation Muslim immigrants in Britain, such remittances are channelled through Islamic international charities such as Islamic Relief, Muslim Aid and Muslim Hands (van Hear et al, 2004).
Contemporary Understandings of FBOs in the UK

Academic and practitioner literature concerning FBOs in the UK has largely focused on issues relating to policy, management and governance, with particular reference to the challenges and possibilities that arise in public-private partnerships and community regeneration. The literature has grown since the mid 1990s at which time research generally conflated FBOs with a collective and generic ‘voluntary sector’ and habitually ignored faith-based contributions to welfare provision (Kendall & Knapp, 1996). Some notable exceptions during this period include an in-depth policy evaluation and commentaries of the Church Urban Fund (Farnell et al., 1994; Lund et al., 1995; Lawless et al., 1998) and accounts of the extent and type of services offered by FBOs, the challenges they face within partnerships and their vital role shoring up holes in welfare provision in the post-Thatcher era (Billis and Harris, 1992, 1996; Harris, 1995, 1998).

Renewed political attention during 2000-2001 election brought the longstanding contribution of faith-based service provision into the policy limelight. The personal moral and Christian commitments of several members of New Labour, including Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, have played an important part in heightening awareness of faith and politics (Dale, 2001). These theopolitical proclivities chimed with ‘third way’ ideologies of neo-communitarianism, social capital and active citizenship, and especially with some of the pragmatic challenges of enlisting community participation in urban regeneration programmes (Furbey and Macey, 2005). The influence of Olasky’s (2000) critique of the inefficiencies of big government in tackling social problems, and the comparative strengths of faith groups in delivering welfare, also gained particular purchase amongst the opposition Conservative Party (Harris et al., 2003). A further reason for incorporating faith groups around the political table came as part of a strategic positioning in response to the race riots of 2001; faith-involvement was deemed useful in surveying and bringing about social cohesion within marginal religious communities and in harnessing legitimacy and muting critical dissent against the ‘war on terrorism’. The inclusion of faith groups in such consultations is by no means new - historical precursors such as the 1992 Inner Cities Religious Council have helped to pave the way for, and constitute contemporary discourses regarding faith groups as legitimate and valuable partners in delivering welfare and urban regeneration (see Taylor, 2000).

Research on FBOs has burgeoned against this political backdrop, with numerous studies commissioned by government, academic and religious bodies. The bulk of this research assesses the tensions and opportunities for faith groups co-opted into government-led community regeneration partnerships (Musgrave, 1999; Farnell et al., 2003; Furbey and Macey, 2005; Lowndes and Chapman, 2005; Furbey et al., 2006), although other studies have provided more in-depth evaluations of faith-
based service providers (Shaftesbury and DETR, 2002), the dynamics of volunteering (Cameron, 1999; Lukka and Locka, 2001; Milligan and Conradson, 2006), social and spiritual capital (Baker and Skinner, 2006), and the establishment of best practice guidance for local authorities and faith groups, with regard to social cohesion (LGA, 2002; Edwards, 2008; Home Office, 2004; DCLG 2008a, 2008b). Another recurrent theme within research on FBOs is the assessment of the capacity-levels of FBO to sustain long-term welfare delivery within partnerships (Finneron and Dinham, 2002; Lukka and Locke, 2003; Harris et al., 2003; Cairns et al., 2005; Davis et al., 2008), but it is worth noting here that relatively little attention has been given to the uneven access to finance, staff, buildings and political influence within non-Anglican denominations and minority faith groups (McLeod et al 2001).

It is important to emphasise that these contributions have largely been based on in-depth case-studies or key informant interviews dealing with a single FBO, notably within the Christian tradition (Simmons 2000; Clark 2000; Sweeny 2001; Finneron et al., 2001; Bacon 2002). Research on the extent and type of services provided by different kinds of FBO remains relatively underdeveloped. Few surveys have been conducted into the scope and scale of faith-based social action, and there is neither a national database of faith-based social action nor at this stage any standardised tools for building one (Dinham et al 2008). Hitherto, understandings of the activities and achievements of FBOs have been based either upon data derived from the Charity Commission and the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), or from aggregations of regional surveys by faith groups and analogous organisations. For the purposes of our study, the Charity Commission databases and the NCVO’s Civil Society Almanac (2008) of voluntary organisations are inadequate for identifying FBOs because of the unreliable classification of religious registered charities. Many FBOs such as Islamic Relief, Church Action on Poverty, Housing Justice, Methodist Homes for the Aged, and St Vincent de Paul Society were not counted as ‘religious’ charities because they do not expressly state ‘advancing religion’ in their objectives, despite their obvious ethos, constituencies and titles (Davis et al., 2008: 52). This leads to a considerable underestimation of faith-based social action.

The most comprehensive survey of FBOs to date comes from the Faith Based Regeneration Network UK, which aggregated nine English regional surveys of faith-based social action to identify what type of services are provided by faith groups (Dinham et al 2008). Whilst this gives some indication of the scale and range of activities, these regional surveys are of limited value for the specific purposes of this report because of an inevitable inconsistency in the parameters used to constitute faith-based social action, and because the definition of social action is more generalised than our specific focus on faith based responses to poverty and social exclusion in urban areas. Although current research into the scope and scale of faith-based welfare provision remains patchy, a great deal is known
about particular faith-sectors; for example research commissioned by the Institute of Jewish Policy Research details the extent and type of Jewish welfare services, their governance structures and their financial capacity (Harris, 1997; Halfpenny and Reid, 2000; Harris and Rochester, 2001; Carlowe et al., 2003).

A Note On Research Methods

After consulting the research literature and acknowledging the limitations of using existing databases, a wider research net was cast to capture the kinds of national-level faith-based services which often fall under the radar in established sources. Recognising that because FBOs - even those operating nationally and within the same faith denomination - are far from consolidated into a unitary database and some organisations are found in particular networks and affiliations whilst others not, the research deployed extensive web-based searches in a multi-pronged network approach. This involved trailing through:

- Religious directories – each religion in the UK has a number of websites listing information, events and services relevant to their faith community. The listings range in coverage and will be useful in further study of local faith based involvement in poverty and social exclusion. Examples of these sites include www.blackburn.anglican.org/yellow_pages; http://www.muslimdirectory.co.uk and www.salaam.co.uk; and www.eden.co.uk.

- National umbrella bodies or networks – scanning the list of affiliates within these organisations provided invaluable source of identifying less prominent national organisations. These sources range from support organisations such as the Evangelical Alliance, Evangelical Coalition for Urban Mission, Caritas and Faithworks; the Muslim Health Network, Muslim Council of Britain, Muslim Public Affairs Committee; and the Jewish Volunteering Network.

- Denominational bodies - such as the Methodist Church, Baptist Union, and Church of England were searched and we were able to follow up affiliated bodies and FBOs not part of other umbrella networks.

- Secular research databases – the recent AHRC funded DANGO project established an archive of Non-Governmental Organisations active since 1945. This was useful to highlight
longstanding FBOs and elucidate how and why in some cases organisations have mutated, merged and secularised over time (see http://www.dango.bham.ac.uk/).

- Charity Commission databases – useful for preliminary sketching of the faith sector (http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/).

- The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (www.ncvo-vol.org.uk) - NCVO Almanac 2008 – comprehensive overview of voluntary sector although according to Davis et al (2008) drastically underestimates faith based services. The Almanac will be essential for later stages of the project to identify established FBOs in our case-study cities.

- Secular volunteering agencies – used to search for affiliated FBOs looking for volunteers. Generally this was less useful than other methods of identification. (Guidestar, Volunteering England, Time Bank, Do-it.org.uk, www.charitablecausesdirectory.co.uk)

- Domain specific databases – in some domains we were able to crosscheck our list of national FBOs with databases specific to particular aspects of welfare services (for example www.homelessuk.org/search)

- Links from secular and religious organisations and protest coalitions – for example, we examined the members and listed affiliates of the Refugee Council or Shelter, and tracing the members of campaign coalitions in the UK such as End Child Poverty, Still Human Still Here and Get Fair, amongst others.

**The Structure of the Report**

The main body of the report’s findings is detailed in Section 2 in which national-level FBO activity is charted under a number of sectoral headings. Different facets of poverty and social exclusion have sometimes met with rather inconsistent and contradictory social policy responses from different UK governments, so rather than attempting to consider the impact of FBOs in an overarching welfare regime, we have chosen to attend to particular “domain-specific” institutions and characteristics (Uunk, 2004, cited in Dewilde, 2006). Therefore our account of faith-based responses to poverty and social exclusion is initially subdivided into particular welfare headings: asylum, homelessness, poverty and debt, children, the elderly, disability and community regeneration. Under each heading
we review recent trends in policy and governance, presenting a critical account of recent changes to the welfare state. We then survey the activities of FBOs in these policy areas, using three broad categories of engagement: *service delivery* (including relational as well as infrastructural service provision); *capacity building* (including resourcing, networking and faith-sector advocacy); and *political campaigning* (including representing marginalised groups, consultation, lobbying and protest). In each of these categorisations we look at FBOs from different religious backgrounds. A comprehensive overview of faith-based involvement in each domain is provided in Appendix 1.

The information in Section 2 is then used to inform more general accounts of how FBOs act and interact in particular arenas – in and around the *welfare state* (Section 3), as enrolled into or resistant to changing forms of *governance* (Section 4), and in shaping, and being shaped by the *urban context* (Section 5). Here we would emphasise again that because this first report deals with the national-level activities of FBOs, we are unable to present a full analysis of their scope and achievements, which are heavily dependent on other scales of performance. As a consequence, the broad *conclusions* (Section 6) drawn at the end of the report should be regarded as tentative pointers towards questions that need to be asked in later stages of the research.
Section 2:
Mapping the Activity of National-level FBOs in the UK
2.1 Asylum seekers and immigration

Introduction

In contradiction to their initial efforts to prioritise measures to tackle racial inequality and discrimination, New Labour policies on immigration, refuge and asylum have shifted to a much harder position over the last decade. The riots in a number of northern towns between May and June 2001 between gangs of white and British Asian youths, the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York, the terrorist attacks on London and Glasgow’s transportation network, and the high profile immigration issues raised by Sangatte – a shelter in northern France for migrants trying to cross to the UK, coalesced to fashion a series of public discourses about race, immigration and asylum that were premised upon the belief that social cohesion and harmony depends on restricting and controlling the migration of certain groups into UK. These sets of discourses grew in prevalence and served to legitimise a significant restructuring of statutory welfare provision for asylum seekers and illegal immigrants.

Prior to 1996, asylum seekers were able to access benefits on the basis of need and were allowed to work to support themselves whilst their status was determined. In 1996 regulations were introduced by the Conservative government that restricted access to social security, allowing eligibility only to those who claimed asylum at a port of entry. Many families fell destitute and subsequently sought help from their local authority. This was provided under the National Assistance Act 1948, which places a duty on local authorities to accommodate and support a person who is in need of care and attention. Unsurprisingly, local authorities began to complain that they were unable to cope and lobbied government for change.

Attempting to ameliorate the pressures on local authorities New Labour introduced the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act to exclude virtually all asylum seekers from access to the social security system and established the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) to provide support, at a significantly lower level than income support, to asylum seekers. The Act sought to deter the levels of entry of asylum seekers through a series of detrimental measures - the provision of welfare vouchers rather than cash benefits, a system of forcible dispersal to places outside of London, and an increase in detentions and deportations. In a separate measure the Home Secretary announced that asylum seekers could no longer legally work in the UK to support themselves or their families.
In response to increased political anxiety about the rise of far-right political parties such as the British National Party, New Labour decided on a more radical and fundamental reform in asylum and immigration policy. The 2002 Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act intensified the struggle to control the entry of asylum seekers, and embedded a shift from multiculturalism to a demanding policy of integration (Schuster and Solomos, 2004). The Act entailed the concentration of asylum seeker families in large detention centres and established ‘special’ education facilities for asylum seeker children. One of the most controversial clauses of the Act, Section 55, withheld support to asylum-seekers who have not applied for asylum at their port of entry, despite the impracticalities of immediate application and the fact that 79% of granted claimants apply in-country not at port of entry (Refugee Council 2004a).

Geographies of Poverty, Asylum and ‘illegal’ immigration

The exclusionary withdrawal of NASS support forced the majority of failed asylum-seekers to sleep rough, with a large number facing imminent homelessness. 70% experienced great difficulty in accessing food on a daily basis (Refugee Council, 2004b; Smart and Fullegar 2008). Research by the Refugee Council illustrates the lengths to which voluntary organisations are going to assist the 9,000 individuals denied the support under Section 55, and also points to the fragility of this work, and its impact on the core activities of these organisations. Their findings reaffirm the notion that it is neighbourhood or citywide refugee community organisations, faith groups, refugee agencies and homeless charities that provide the bulk of much needed welfare services for asylum seekers (ibid: 14).

Even those asylum-seekers who are entitled to NASS support are among the most vulnerable and impoverished groups in the UK. Disqualified from working, unless they have waited over 12 months for an initial decision on their case, they are forced to rely on NASS support, which is set at just 70% of income support and are not entitled to claim benefits through the mainstream welfare system. Asylum-seekers cannot choose where they live and are often arbitrarily placed in ‘detention’ centres whilst their application is processed, which can often take several months (Refugees Council 2008a, 2008b). The majority are dispersed across the country in ‘hard to let’ properties, which other people do not want to live in. Leaving people with limited language skills and little or no support in areas of the UK that are both largely culturally homogeneous and socially deprived results in many asylum-

1 Their survey methodology primarily targeted regional and London-based refugee community organisations and Refugee Council members. As such their survey underestimates the numbers of faith groups and FBOs assisting asylum seekers.
seekers experiencing hostility, suspicion and prejudice on a day to day basis. Dispersal often entails isolation from many diasporic forms of belonging and welfare support. Research by Oxfam and the Refugee Council (2002) highlights the severe financial and social exclusion frequently experienced by asylum-seekers: the delay/non-arrival of cash/vouchers; delays in adjustments to payments (e.g. for a new child); inadequate public services (with considerable distances experienced to the nearest Post Office or to public transport); uninhabitable living conditions (with the accommodation provider often not providing adequate furniture/household equipment); hunger; inability to buy warm winter clothing/shoes etc; inability to afford school uniform or bus fare to school; mothers not able to breastfeed and unable to buy infant formula milk; isolation from friends and family; and so on.

**Faith-based response to asylum seekers**

Faith groups have been at the forefront of addressing the plight of asylum seekers, often working collaboratively with local ethnic community centres or refugee agencies. Whilst much of this work occurs on the local or regional level, a number of national FBOs can be identified. Their actions can be broadly classified under the subsections of service-delivery, capacity-building and political advocacy:

**Service Delivery**

Table 2.1.1 lists the variety of services provided by national FBOs. These organisations are exclusively Christian, many of whom cater for multiple beneficiaries but have recently branched out into the area of asylum. The relative recent growth in the prominence of asylum-seekers has meant there are few national FBOs offering dedicated welfare services to asylum seekers, a situation compounded by the ‘hidden’ nature of asylum poverty which largely evades blanket approaches. Some of the more prominent organisations such as the Salvation Army and Cyrenians are funded by local authorities and public bodies to provide residential services to tackle homelessness. It is important to note there is considerable overlap in services provided for the homeless and failed asylum seekers.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Delivery</th>
<th>Asylum and ‘illegal’ immigration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food Provision</strong></td>
<td>Jesuit Refugee Service UK, New Frontiers, The Salvation Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Drop in and day centres</strong></td>
<td>New Frontiers, Jesus Centres, The Salvation Army, The Children’s Society, Alabaré Christian Care Centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legal advice</strong></td>
<td>New Frontiers, The Children’s Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Home visiting</strong></td>
<td>New Frontiers, St Vincent de Paul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Detainee visiting</strong></td>
<td>Enabling Christians in Serving Refugees (ECSR), Churches Together in Britain and Ireland – The Churches Racial Justice Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recognizance</strong></td>
<td>Churches Together in Britain and Ireland – The Churches Racial Justice Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language courses</strong></td>
<td>New Frontiers, Cyrenians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education of children and adults</strong></td>
<td>Cyrenians, New Frontiers, The Children’s Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tenancy support</strong></td>
<td>Cyrenians, New Frontiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emergency Shelter</strong></td>
<td>Cyrenians, The Salvation Army, YMCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supported Housing</strong></td>
<td>Cyrenians, Adullam Housing Association</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FBOs are clearly plugging the gap created by recent draconian legislation that disentitles asylum-seekers to mainstream statutory welfare provision. This is exemplified by the proliferation in day centres and refugee/community agencies across the country. These services entail the provision of drop-in legal advice, assisting with paperwork, writing letters and filling in forms; give out starter packs of the local area showing local supermarkets, bus routes, advice centres and so on. These spaces of care also offer food parcels, furniture and household/kitchen equipment, provide good, clean, second-hand clothing and liaise with relevant local services to ensure fair access to benefits. They are also seeking to counter isolation through befriending activities such as home visiting, organizing social activities like coffee mornings or outings, organising parties or clubs for young children and sports activities like football clubs for young people. FBOs offer a number of language courses in parallel to state programmes. Often asylum seekers or refugees are reluctant to get involved in state-run English courses for a number of reasons, because courses are held some distance away or are at inconvenient times, or because they do not feel that they fit in on the
course. In response, some FBOs who have already built rapport with asylum seekers put on basic English courses. Assessing whether the state is funding these services is ambiguous at this stage and is likely to become clearer with further research.

Capacity Building

Broadly speaking, prominent secular bodies, such as the Refugee Council, Refugee Action and Oxfam, support and work collaboratively with FBOs at the national, regional and local levels. A number of faith-based capacity building organisations work exclusively in the area of asylum including: Enabling Christians in Serving Refugees (ECSR) and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland’s ‘The Churches Racial Justice Network’. These organisations provide training, legislation updates, best practice, funding/grants, databases of legal practitioners, disseminate professional duties of care, deal with media enquiries and assist local FBOs in the collection of evidence for political advocacy or collaborate with expert contacts.

Political Action

Faith groups have been very significant in publicly decrying and politically challenging the poverty experienced by asylum seekers. Table 3.2 gives examples of organisational faith-based political action and the type of activities this entails:

Table 2.1.2: Mapping national Faith based political action on issues relating to poverty, asylum and illegal immigration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Activity</th>
<th>Prominent FBOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Individual representation</td>
<td>1) The Churches Racial Justice Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Bail circle (paying recognizance)</td>
<td>2) Church of England’s ‘Faithful Cities’ (2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Media, campaigning and attitude changing</td>
<td>3) Ekklesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Mobilisation of faith groups</td>
<td>4) Church Action on Poverty’s ‘Living Ghosts’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) High profile protests</td>
<td>5) Housing Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Parliamentary lobbying</td>
<td>6) Methodist Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Evangelical Alliance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Baptist Union</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) National Catholic Refugee Forum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) Churches Commission for Racial Justice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11) The Jewish Council for Racial Equality (JCORE)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12) National Justice and Peace Network</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13) Muslim Council of Britain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14) The Children’s Society</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

This activity can be divided into the areas of free individual advocacy and political representation; policy consultation; and lastly, campaigns, mobilisation and protest. Here we draw out some of the key themes.

Firstly, some FBOs contest the detention of asylum-seekers by providing shrewd alternatives that facilitate the release of asylum-seekers and their families from detention centre. The Bail Circle, run by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland’s ‘Action for Asylum and Refugees’ (part of Churches Racial Justice Network) brings together asylum detainees with volunteers willing to act as ‘sureties’ to enable a detained asylum seeker to obtain bail. A surety is a legal guarantor; who declares that they trust the person seeking bail to keep to the court’s conditions of release from immigration detention. If he or she absconds, the surety's money (the ‘recognizance’ – which usually runs from £200 to £500) will be called in by the authorities. The Bail Circle currently has 180 trained volunteers. Many volunteers are working professionals or retired people. Some were themselves refugees, others are students or unemployed. Volunteers are also involved in visiting the detainees in ‘detention centres’, offering support and befriending asylum-seekers. Since 2001, the Bail Circle has contributed to the release of about 200 asylum detainees, maintained contact with 73 who were removed and supported about 450 detainees whose outcomes were unknown. These practices can be read as an attempt to destabilise the hegemonic imaginaries of asylum-seekers as pathologically deviant which discursively makes possible the incarceration of vulnerable people and their families often escaping severe persecution.

Secondly, coupled with these practices are high profile protests and campaigns which emphatically blame the political structures for the poverty experienced by asylum-seekers. For example, Church Action on Poverty (see Poverty and debt section) launched their ‘Living Ghosts’ campaign aims to mount pressure on the Government to stop making people refused asylum destitute. It was borne
out of a widespread anger in churches over New Labour’s ‘carrot and stick’ approach in asylum policy wherein destitution is used to encourage applicants to return “voluntarily” to the place they fled. CAP founded ‘Living Ghosts’ in collaboration with Enabling Christians Serving Refugees, Churches Refugee Network, Churches Commission for Racial Justice and the National Catholic Refugee Forum. They have been particularly active in mobilising support against Section 55 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

To publicise their condemnation of asylum policy, CAP have launched a series of high profile protests. One of these for example was a demonstration in the heart of Sheffield city centre in support of destitute asylum seekers in June 2006. Several hundred people joined in the demonstration at various times and stewards handed out 1300 leaflets to passing shoppers in an attempt to inform and mobilise public support. Many signed cards to the Home Secretary. Forty five church leaders from different denominations also joined CAPs protest by expressing outrage in a polemic statement over the government system that leaves some asylum seekers totally destitute in the UK. In particular they emphasised many refused asylum seekers have often been rejected because of legal incompetence and may not be able to be returned safely.

The Faithful Cities (2006) report sparked much press attention in unveiling the destitution many asylum seekers face due to the draconian asylum system (BBC News 2006). The Church of England and leaders from other prominent Christian denominations (Evangelical Alliance, Baptist Union, Methodist Church) and think tanks (notably Ekklesia and Theos) have systemically decried the diabolical treatment of asylum-seekers and exploitation of migrants in the UK. These organisations have been involved in a range of individual and cross denominational publications aimed at both policy-makers and popular audiences in hope to challenge the myths in press regarding the threats of asylum-seekers and debunk hegemonic representation of asylum-seekers as undeserving of welfare support (Skinner 2005; c.f. Sales 2002). A key theme here is that denominations are united around issues of asylum and collaboratively work to change public attitudes and lobby MPs in parliament.

Thirdly asylum has also generated a number of interfaith and secular collaborative projects. The Citizen Organising Foundation (COF), for example, a national umbrella organisation of the broad-based organising movement in the UK led the Strangers to Citizens campaign which called for the regularisation of failed asylum seekers and economic migrants making them legitimate, tax-paying citizens. The campaign has received support from the Liberal-Democrat party, and a number of MPs of all parties, including the new mayor of London, Boris Johnson. COF is comprised of the London Citizens network and Birmingham Citizens. Strangers to Citizens represents Christian, Muslim,
Jewish, Buddhist and Hindu faith groups working collaboratively with other local civil society organisations, such as union branches, schools, academic institutions, and local associations.

More evidence of faith-secular collaborative action is the ‘Still Human, Still Here campaign’ which unites prominent Christian and Jewish FBOs (Church Action on Poverty, The Children’s Society, Jewish Council for Racial Equality, and Roman Catholic and Anglican Church Bishops Conferences) with secular organisations such as Amnesty International UK, Asylum Aid, and Refugee Council plus many more. Collectively they mount pressure on government to let asylum seekers work, and call on reforms in the welfare system to provide healthcare and education to failed asylum seekers.
2.2 Housing and homelessness

Introduction

The provision of emergency accommodation and basic support for single homeless people has often been left to the voluntary sector because of the popular and highly mediated social construction that single homeless people are ‘undeserving’ of state assistance (Saunders, 1986; Wolch and Dear, 1993). The post-war welfare state in the UK brought little direct intervention by local or central government in the welfare of single homeless people, and instead favoured the needs of homeless families and children (Pleace and Quilgars, 2003). Over this period, voluntary sector provision of emergency accommodation for homeless people was indirectly subsidised via state benefit transfers but remained largely outside central or local government regulation (Stewart, 1975 in May et al 2006: 716)

During the 1970s and early 1980s several interrelated factors increased the prominence of voluntary welfare providers in the area of homelessness. First, the growing numbers and the changing demographics of homeless people challenged the traditional imaginaries of the idle ‘voyager’ and flamed public concern over homelessness (Cloke et al, 2007; Hutson and Liddiard, 1994). Secondly, these sentiments led to the creation of a number of new advocacy groups and new providers of emergency accommodation, including a significant number of FBOs. As such the quality of services provided by voluntary organisations to homeless people improved greatly as umbrella organisations began disseminating good practice: lobbying traditional providers to embark on a refurbishment of their larger hostels; calling for the use of paid rather than volunteer staff; and providing training and support for hostel managers and workers, for example (CHAR, 1985; Harris et al, 2001; May et al 2006: 713)

The economic restructuring of the 1980s and 1990s, along with the retrenchment of the welfare state through privatisation and residualisation of social housing provision, and reductions in social assistance and employment benefits (Butcher, 1995), all served to exacerbate the problem of homelessness in nearly all parts of the UK (Malpass, 2005). The Conservative government launched a Rough Sleepers Initiative in the early 1990s, but it was largely focused on clearing and containing rough sleepers off the streets into hostels in London, and had little impact outside the capital.

New Labour’s ‘joined-up’ policy approach to governmentality was applied to the question of homelessness through their Rough Sleepers Initiative (RSI) and Homelessness Action Programme
(HAP) funding regimes (designed to reduce numbers of on-street homeless people, and to coordinate local responses to homelessness, respectively). With central government funding, local authorities were designated to take the lead in developing local homelessness strategies, determine the commissioning and regulatory framework through which street-level organisations were to deliver services for homeless people (May et al. 2005; Cloke et al. 2007). In this way, existing and new FBOs drawn by faith-motivation into providing a range of services for homeless people were presented with opportunities to contract into the new joined-up response to homelessness, and those that did opt in encountered the new stricter powers granted to local authorities through the conditions attached to state funding, though the competitive tendering process and through the necessity to position themselves as “fit” partners in governance. More recently, the New Labour government has equipped hostels and day-centres to provide opportunities for homeless people to access training, education and employment (DCLC, 2006, 2007) but as in other areas of welfare, this area of opportunity has been associated with punitive measures (such as the coercive enforcement of anti-begging and anti-social behaviour ordinances) designed to reduce the numbers of “on-street” homeless people. Public policy on homelessness has therefore been driven by targets, and characterised by measures to maintain ‘social cohesion’ by ‘effectively’ managing, or forcefully containing, homeless people off the streets and into emergency and temporary accommodation (Fitzpatrick and Jones, 2005; Fitzpatrick, Kemp and Klinder 2000; May et al, 2005).

These governmental programmes, again emphasising the themes of ‘workability’ and ‘activity’ embody a wider problematisation of the welfare state, prevalent in disparate areas of New Labour social policy; namely, which state benefits should not be simply handed-out as a right to those who are in a condition of dependency on the state (Dean 1999: 173; Rose 1996a: 47-9). Rather, New Labour have conceptualised the problem of homeless people to be their predisposed inability or unwillingness to exercise the self-responsibility necessary to maintain secure accommodation and contribute the society, and have thus placed considerable emphasis on ‘hand-up’ strategies to cultivating the attitudes, skills and behaviour necessary for homeless people to steer themselves independently around modern society. Here lies the harsh edge of neoliberal rationalities of homelessness: those individuals who do not, or cannot, for whatever reason, fulfil the state(d) criteria of ‘human rationality’ are deemed as ‘willingly’ choosing not to receive assistance, and are consequentially demarcated for targeted, often illiberal, programmes that attempt to re-moralise individuals with the desired attitudes and characteristics congruous with governmental objectives of individual employability, social cohesion and economic competitiveness.
Geographies of poverty and homelessness

Research by Paul Cloke, Jon May and Sarah Johnsen (see Cloke et al, 2005; 2007a; 2007b; 2008; May et al, 2005; 2006; 2007; Johnsen et al, 2005a; 2005b) has studied the question of the uneven distribution of services for homeless people in different towns and cities in the UK. For many years it was homelessness in London that dominated the popular and political consciousness, but during the 1980’s and 1990’s it became apparent that homelessness was an endemic issue, present in every city, town and rural area, although the further down the settlement hierarchy the more that problems of homelessness lacked visibility. Amongst the larger urban centres there are considerable differences both in the scale and type of homelessness present, and in the infrastructure of support services that has grown up to deal with the needs of homeless people. Part of the reason why the service landscape differs from place to place relates to different levels and demographics of homeless people in each place. There is, however, a chicken-and-egg effect here. It seems that the presence of substantial numbers of on-street homeless people fires the imagination and compassion of local organisations and volunteers, including faith-based organisations and volunteers in particular places, so it can be argued that homeless people attract services to serve them. However, there is also evidence that migrant homeless people are attracted to places (for example, Brighton and Bristol in the UK) where there is an established homeless “scene”, and that includes an infrastructure of support services. This effect notwithstanding, there do seem to be particular cities where responses to homelessness are more advanced than elsewhere – this may be to do with the presence or absence of a history of compassion in that place (suggesting longstanding tolerance of or compassion for marginalised people, and perhaps a longstanding presence of service organisations such as the Salvation Army), or with a particularly vibrant and innovative voluntary sector in that place (suggesting in the context of FBOs, a culture of community service involving getting faithful hands dirty).

As suggested in Section 5, there is also a series of geographies of homelessness within the city. The location of prime services for homeless people (night-shelters, hostels, drop-in centres, soup runs and so on) tends towards the marginal spaces of the city, where commercial property prices are affordable, and where the presence of marginalised people has not been socially and culturally “purified”. However, such spaces do not confine the movements of homeless people, who will often travel widely through the city, sometimes incognito, sometimes visibly seeking to beg or simply to rest in prime locations (Knowles, 2000; Wardhaugh, 2000). As a consequence the mapping of the homeless city is more complex than suggested by rough sleeper counts, or perceived containment within marginal spaces. Homeless people leave countless traces of their everyday lives throughout
the spatial divisions of the city and their fluid and flexible life-patterns, although punctuated by habitual use of marginal spaces, can range through many other prime and “secret” spaces of the city (see, Cloke et al, 2008).

**Faith-based response to housing and homelessness**

The highly visible dynamics of homelessness and rough-sleeping has been something of a “natural” arena for faith based social action. There seems to be something about both the visibility and the sensibility of homeless people that inspires faith-motivated people to participate in active responses in their local environment. Research by May et al, 2005, suggests that FBOs provide well over half of the non-statutory responses to homelessness in UK cities, and that such organisations not only enrol faith-motivated people into caring roles, but also attract other volunteers with no faith background into local partnerships of care. The majority of these services run by FBOs lack national coverage and are administrated locally. They range from longstanding and well–resourced facilities such as hostels and alcohol and drug rehabilitation services to smaller-scale operations often run on a shoestring such as emergency night-shelters, soup-runs that provide hot drinks, food, and blankets to people living on the streets and drop-in centres providing advice, training and support.

Table 2.2.1 highlights some the range of services provided at a national level by FBOs with a primary focus on homeless people in the UK. There is considerable diversity in the geographical coverage and intensity of support provided by each FBO.

**Table 2.2.1: Mapping national faith-based service delivery in the area of housing and homelessness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food provision</td>
<td>The Trussell Trust, The Salvation Army, St. Vincent de Paul, Church Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol and substance abuse rehabilitation</td>
<td>The Salvation Army, Langley House Trust, Depaul Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment and life skills training</td>
<td>The Salvation Army, YMCA, Langley House Trust, Depaul Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling</td>
<td>The Salvation Army, YMCA, Alabaré Christian Centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop-in and day centres</td>
<td>The Salvation Army, Jesus Army, Alabaré Christian Centres</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One of the key functions of these national FBOs is to organise the provision of hostels for homeless people in urban centres. The numbers of these hostels have burgeoned over the last twenty years in response both to the ‘rediscovery’ of street homelessness in the late 1980s and 1990s, and to government initiatives which have sought to enrol voluntary providers of emergency accommodation to help clear rough sleepers from urban spaces of consumption.

Under the current New Labour regime, voluntary and faith-based provision of emergency accommodation has become strongly incorporated into centrally directed and funded, and locally administered government schemes. This neo-governmental role has had a number of consequences for the faith-based sector. First, those FBOs which recognised the opportunity to expand service provision through the acceptance of central and local government funding are now under pressure to conform to statutory requirements so as to maintain and enhance that funding. Such requirements include a need to ‘professionalise’ FBOs, entailing both the mandatory accreditation of trained staff (with implications for the use of volunteers), and the mandatory deployment of strategic business plans, benchmarks, audits and performance targets that narrowly measure ‘success’ (with implications for understanding success in terms other than the quantity of beneficiaries moved on into independent accommodation). These implications of becoming an agency that is locked into neo-governmental priorities and practices have had mixed consequences on the quality, flexibility and distinctiveness of faith-based service provision. In order to obtain public funding there has been pressure on FBOs to ‘water down’ more explicit expressions of faith in the delivery of services, and especially a formal discouragement of proselytisation and evangelism in these contexts. Those organisations that fail to adhere to these requirements, or that find it difficult to adopt appropriate market logics which follow governmental criteria for service-quality and value for money can become ostracised from local partnerships of funded action. Indeed some FBOs
choose to eschew the opportunity to engage in state-funded activity, operating instead with
different priorities, at lower levels of funding, and with greater reliance on volunteers.

Secondly, the formal enrolment of some FBOs in government responses to homelessness has
resulted in FBOs gravitating between positions as ‘insiders’ or ‘outsiders’ in the wider service
environment and culture; those working collaboratively according to state objectives (for example
providing referral-only hostels or supported housing) find themselves inside systems of
governmentality and ruled by neoliberal protocols; while other FBOs work either in parallel to the
state by offering an a distinctive alternative version of what statutory agencies are providing (such as
residential communities), or in contestation with the state by providing services that run counter to
governmental priorities. This latter group of FBOs can be understood as ‘plugging a gap’ in welfare
provision by meeting the needs of those (precariously) demarcated as ‘intentionally’ homeless or
having ‘no local connection’, and hence ineligible for statutory assistance.

Outsider FBOs working outside governmental partnerships to provide services such as soup runs,
non-referral emergency night-shelters and drop-in centres have borne much criticism in recent years
for sustaining dependent ‘street’ lifestyles, and enabling people to prioritise their addiction over
food or shelter. In 2007, the London Council failed to pass a parliamentary bill banned soup runs
within the capital after widespread protest coordinated by Housing Justice, churches and prominent
local FBOs (Housing Justice 2007; also see Guardian 2007; Independent, 2007). This is an example of
a networked counter-hegemonic movement contesting the consensus manufactured by government
and secular NGOs focused on homelessness such as Crisis, Homeless Link and Shelter.

Thirdly, partnership with the government and secular agencies has limited the critical or prophetic
voice of organisations such as English Churches Housing Group because few want to speak out in
fear of losing favour with funding bodies, or jeopardise their current political influence. This has in
turn prompted the creation of more radical political advocacy and protest groups like Housing
Justice to coordinate and give voice to critical sentiments form both insider and outsider FBOs in the
homelessness sector.

**Capacity Building**

A key group of secular homeless charities are dominant in policy dissemination to local and national
FBOs. Shelter, Crisis and Homeless-link serve as networked information hubs on latest policy
initiatives, funding and best practice. These organisations have been influential in the formulation of
government policy on homelessness over the last decade, and have set the tone for many insider FBOs working in this sector. Alongside these “big fish” organisations there are a number of faith-based representative and umbrella bodies which play a similar although less high profile role in building capacity in the sector. These FBOs often work in partnership with secular NGOs and with government to boost the quality of the services provided by their affiliates through research, policy consultation, funding and grants and training programmes for housing and homelessness professionals. Capacity building FBOs primarily working in the areas of housing and homelessness include YMCA England, Church Housing Trust, National Network of Jewish Housing Associations (NNJHA) and Housing Justice. Many of these FBOs are affiliated to general faith-based umbrella organisations not exclusively related to homelessness. For example, regional and local Catholic organisations have formed Caritas, an umbrella organisation for charities providing services to marginalised and vulnerable children, adults and families of all faiths and none. Their aim is to represent the Catholic Voluntary Sector to government, provide information, networking opportunities and facilitating collaborative working between its members.

**Political advocacy**

The arena of political campaigning on homelessness issues has similarly been dominated by high-profile secular charities such as Crisis and Shelter which work collaboratively with government and other bodies to inform policy directed from the experiences of homeless people. Yet many of the FBO umbrella organisations listed in Table 2.2.1 are also involved in individual legal representation; media, campaigning and attitude changing; mobilisation of faith groups; high profile protests; participatory-action research; policy consultation, and parliamentary lobbying. Prominent FBOs involved in this area are the Salvation Army, YMCA, Barnardo’s, Housing Justice, and their inter-denominational London network called Unleash.

The form and object of these campaigns is diverse – some offer incisive political economic critiques of the structural capitalism underlying contemporary housing markets resulting in a systematic reduction in the provision of social housing and a lack of affordable housing (Salvation Army, 2005). Others have pioneered the development of government initiatives through research and policy consultation; for example the Salvation Army have recently been contracted by a number of local authorities in London to investigate the housing and health needs of migrant woman working in the sex trade (Salvation Army, 2007). These consultations are capable of achieving impact on government policy. In 1989 the Salvation Army sponsored a major research project into the nature
and extent of homelessness in London. The figure of 2,000 rough sleepers contributed to the launch of the Rough Sleepers Initiative in 1989 with a budget of £96 million. However, there are a number of consistent edges to the political advocacy undertaken by FBOs in this area. First, they emphasise theologies of charity, human dignity and equal worth, arguing that it is these qualities that should permeate faith-based welfare provision rather than any sense that a dichotomy between the deserving and the undeserving should be influential in deciding on eligibility for service provision. Thus, ‘outsider’ FBOs and to a lesser extent ‘insider’ FBOs provide essential food, nourishment, help and advice for those without any rights to mainstream welfare (for example, asylum seekers or people from EU Accession States with no entitlements to benefits).

Secondly, these theologies not only serve as a bulwark for welfare but also highlight the incongruities in neoliberal policies and conceptualisations of homelessness. Faith groups have frequently insisted that neoliberal subjectivisation of homeless people as free, rational and autonomous agents capable of self-government largely fails to recognise the complex situations of people with multiple needs, and gives insufficient attention to the environments and events of risk that structure the conditions within which people act. For example, in response to London Council’s proposed ban on soup runs in the capital, the London Soup Run Forum coordinated by Housing Justice UNLEASH elucidated the failing of similar tactics in US cities and dispensed many myths underpinning the proposition, for instance the idea that addicts faced with the choice of spending money on drink and drugs would rationally choose the former (Chike 2005; Housing Justice, 2007; May 2007). Faith-based practitioners in alliance with FBOs, academics and secular organisations such as Shelter clearly demonstrated the ways in which the social, cultural and economic realities of the lived spaces of homelessness often work against and undermine government programmes as currently formulated.

Thirdly, and following on from the above, FBOs such as Housing Justice have contested the evidence-base upon which government policies are developed. Housing Justice in collaboration with London-based emergency accommodation providers regularly challenge the official street counts of homelessness executed by local authorities on the grounds that they grossly underestimate the level of homelessness present in that locality. To ensure more appropriate policy responses that are both closer to the ‘local realities’ of homelessness, they often carry out their own homeless count using volunteers who are or were homeless and who can therefore reveal the ‘hidden’ spaces where homeless people bed down. These accounts are presented to local authorities and central government to justify propositions to reform to funding priorities and current political and public intervention.
Finally, there are a series of theo-political imaginations of homelessness that inextricably permeate and in many ways constitute ‘practices of care’ within the services provided by FBOs. It is certainly the case that many FBOs in direct or indirect partnership with state have been impregnated with neoliberal problematisations of homelessness that emphasise individual responsibility, moral reformation and other ‘hand-up’ solutions to homeless based on cultivating the right attitudes, skills and behaviour necessary to be steer oneself independently around modern society. However, many FBOs explicitly or implicitly espouse alternative understandings of the causes of homelessness, and within their practices of assistance they seek to contest reductionist accounts by pointing to the multiple and interconnected circumstances at play in the lives of vulnerable individuals. This alternative problematisation often manifests itself in a structural reading of poverty that deals with the socio-economic and political ordering of society. However with increasing coordination and ‘professionalism’ these forms of resistance to neoliberal care-imaginaries are silenced, or at least driven underground, as discourses of welfare dependency, self-help and economic self-sufficiency gain hegemony as the only ‘practical’ way of assisting homeless people (Lyon-Callo, 2002).
2.3 Poverty and debt

Introduction

Through a mixture of ‘carrot and stick’ measures in the tax and benefit systems New Labour have made some genuine progress in reducing income poverty, particularly amongst families with children (Palmer et al., 2008). However, income inequalities between the highest and lowest income groups have increased over since 1997, and only slight improvements have been made in reducing income inequalities for those near the top and near the bottom of income scales (Hills and Stewart, 2008). Particular measures have been deployed to encourage more lone parents into the labour market via a rebalancing of reduced benefit entitlements, additional tax credits and the provision of education and training schemes through the implementation of the National Childcare Strategy which targeted out-of-school and pre-school children and their families to prevent social exclusion in deprived areas. The Sure Start initiative, for instance, overseen by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Department for Work and Pensions, aimed to give children in the most derived wards of the country the best possible start in life by improving childcare, early education, health, family support, skills and employment training for parents.

Three other welfare reforms are equally relevant to the battle against poverty. First, the Labour government’s so-called New Deals for the Unemployed also use a range of methods to encourage people on benefits back into work, including intensive case-management, employability skills, training programmes and work placements. These measures have involved subsidised partnerships with the private and third sectors to employ and train long-term unemployed people on-the-job, although at the same time claimants of long term jobseekers allowance (JSA) have been penalised through strategic reduction and eventual withdrawal of benefits. Secondly, the national minimum wage (NMW) was designed as an incentive to the unemployed to enter low paid employment, thus reducing claims for in-work means-tested benefits (Sutherland, 1998: 13). Finally, Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credits have been used to entice social security benefits–claimants back into paid employment (Lewis, 2004). The centrality of paid work in New Labour’s welfare reforms symbolises a non-egalitarian approach to welfare based on equal opportunity, market-led approaches, stricter conditionality and the individualisation of risk (Walters, 1997; Wainwright, 2000; Dwyer, 2004)
Geographies of poverty and debt

Poverty in the UK is highly stratified along spatial, gender and ethnic lines. The socio-demographic landscape of cities reflects an increasing income polarization between the richest and poorest, the prior opting to bunker themselves in gated communities (physical or imagined residential enclaves carved out both through the excessive prices for homes in ‘trendy’ areas and fortified with CCTV and private policing), while the latter by contrast tend to reside in outer city housing estates in which over half of the population may be considered to experience poverty at a level below-the-breadline (Dorling et al, 2007).

Throughout the post-war consensus in the UK, social policy was premised on full (male) employment and traditional gender roles for women. Changing demographics, especially the steady feminisation of the workforce and growing number of lone parent households, have prompted reform to this Keynesian-inspired welfare state. However, despite New Labour’s welfare-to-work and equal opportunities emphases, women are still far more likely than men to receive low incomes from waged work due to occupational segregation into low-paid and casualised employment. The YWCA (recently secularised) launched ‘More than One Rung’ campaign to lobby parliament on the overrepresentation of women in the lowest paid jobs and to highlight the practical and social barriers faced by women to adequate paid work (such as family and community expectations, lack of money or support from home to do training, caring responsibilities at home, low self-esteem or poor health). As such lone mothers and minority ethnic women are less likely to be in paid employment than their peers (Government and Equalities Office, 2008: 1). The implementation of ‘care in the community’ programmes for the elderly and disabled have largely resulted in the delegation of these unpaid care-responsibilities to women who rarely receive support from health, social and voluntary services (Mahler and Green, 2002; ONS, 2006).

Faith-based response to poverty and debt

In response to the ethnic and gendered nature of contemporary poverty a number of local womens’ associations have sprung up in each of the faiths to provide essential support, training and solidarity for women (e.g. Southwark Muslim Women’s Association). These associations often meet around community childcare facilities within places of worship. So once again, it seems to be the case that the bulk of FBO services designed to meet the needs of socially excluded women and ethnic minorities take place on the local level through informal community associations such as the
congregation, temple or mosque. At the national level, there are few faith-based groups exclusively working with women and minority ethnic women, although many umbrella FBOs that serve multiple beneficiaries do seek to address these particular needs. This illustrates the methodological difficulty faced in identifying national-level FBOs whose focus is restricted to the specific. So many FBOs serve many different social groups. For example many people experiencing severe or breadline poverty and/or who are in vulnerable housing often use the services devised for homeless people, such as soup-runs, day-centres, and in some cases emergency accommodation. Here, however, we provide an overview of the organisations involved in adult poverty and social exclusion outside the definitive homelessness sector.

Service Delivery

Table 2.3.1: Mapping national faith-based service delivery in the area of poverty and debt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
<th>Organisation(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poverty and debt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debt, financial and legal advice</td>
<td>Christians Against Poverty, New Frontiers, St. Vincent de Paul Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop-ins centres</td>
<td>St. Vincent de Paul Society, The Salvation Army, Jesus Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants/material assistance</td>
<td>St. Vincent de Paul Society, Barnardo’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment and life skills training</td>
<td>The Salvation Army, YMCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job centres</td>
<td>The Salvation Army’s Employment Plus UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Befriending/visiting</td>
<td>St. Vincent de Paul Society, Salvation Army, Barnardo’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling</td>
<td>St. Vincent de Paul Society, The Salvation Army, YMCA, Barnardo’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Contact</td>
<td>Barnardo’s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FBO involvement in this area ranges from extensive networks of debt advice centres providing free budgeting skills, training and counselling (Christians Against Poverty) to the distribution of free furniture and grants to disadvantaged individuals and families (St. Vincent de Paul Society). Visiting and befriending remains a kept aspect of faith-based action, albeit on a less organised and less prominent scale than the visiting and philanthropic societies in the late nineteenth century that were eventually largely superseded by the establishment of state-run social work.
Yet contemporary faith-based social work and home/street visiting remain a crucial part of ensuring the welfare of people either living in marginal spaces and/or who have fallen through the government’s (increasingly conditional) safety-net. The Salvation Army, St. Vincent de Paul Society and Barnardo’s run home visiting, community centres and drop-in services within ‘hard-to-reach’ areas, often where there is inadequate public service provision or community facilities. Home visiting enables FBOs to liaise with social workers, make referrals to voluntary and statutory agencies and through individual advocacy guarantee that their specific needs are met. Drop-in services entail debt counselling, IT training, basic numeracy and literacy classes, shopping, reading, letter writing, travel vouchers, local minibus service, information and advice, and the provision of clothing and hot food. The drop-in centres aim to provide a place to socialise, ease loneliness and provide opportunities for self-development, acting as a community hub that can offer a wider range of services for children, youth and elderly. Day centre programmes often share the same facilities as the faith community, and local authorities and central government are increasingly funding drop-in centres to develop and adapt their facilities and to encourage more joined up working with other voluntary bodies and statutory agencies.

There are few, if any, national FBOs exclusively offering education and training for adults in poverty, although there are many FBOs providing similar services to children, young offenders, adult ex-offenders, homeless people, asylum seekers and immigrants. However many of these services are perceived to exclude the working poor who have (relatively) secure accommodation and such groups have been targeted instead by state-run and subsidised adult education programmes. Recently New Labour have sought to partner with voluntary and faith-based organisations under the assumption they are better equipped than the state itself to tackle unemployment in ethnically diverse and ‘hard-to-reach’ communities (DWP, 2007). Central government has already delegated some responsibly for the running of job centres to the Salvation Army, under the assumption they can be more effective in helping the long-term unemployed out of welfare dependence and into satisfying and sustainable jobs by overcoming barriers to work and into worth while employment. Salvation Army Employment Plus UK, is an example of an FBO re-colonising territory that was once the complete responsibility of the charitable and voluntary sector prior to the Welfare State. Whilst Employment Plus UK is still in development stage, under its banner of ‘WORK FOR ALL’, it aims to target help to the hardest-to-help such as, the homeless, ex-offenders, sex-workers, drug and alcohol abusers, youth and school drop-outs, over fifties, lone parents and people with disabilities. The programmes include: basic skill training, job search, re-training, social enterprises, voluntary placements, self-employment opportunities. This is evidence of the state offloading service delivery and individualising risk on the service provider and the welfare recipient.
**Capacity Building**

A number of denominational groups have responded to the increased problem of indebtedness in the UK. The Church of England, for instance, launched its ‘Matter of Life and Debt’ campaign in January 2008. This includes an easy-to-use interactive online resource to help people work out a household budget. Other umbrella organisations have disseminated good practice in assisting clients suffering from debt. For example, the Hope 08 initiative (see section 2.7) strongly encouraged churches to take action on debt problems in the local community by setting up full debt advice services, training professionals to provide practical support, to help people develop budgets, to befriend them and if necessary to refer them to local specialist agencies.

Aside from these areas of debt advice, training and grassroots mobilisation, capacity-building FBOs are active in fundraising and allocating grants to local projects. The most prominent of these FBOs is the Church of England’s Church Urban Fund (CUF). Established after the publication of ‘Faith in the City’ report in 1985, the CUF provides support in the form of funding and information support for small faith-based community projects, and acts as a collective voice for such projects at regional and national levels. It only offers grants to FBOs that operate in the poorest 10% of areas in England (as defined by the Index of Multiple Deprivation) and/or those which serving intrinsically deprived communities. The CUF make grants totalling between £1.5 and £3 million per year, with the average annual grant being around £5,000. It aims to be the first-funder of those FBOs that are targeting needs that would otherwise be unmet, or which find difficulties in obtaining other kinds of support. The overall aim is thus to pump-prime community action at the ground level, so that local projects reach a stage of maturity from which further funding can then be sought from other sources.

Public fundraising remains a key source of income for these kinds of organisations. Between 1988 and 1991, over £18 million was raised by a national CUF campaign, £3.2 million of which was awarded to projects in England’s inner cities and outer housing estates in 1990. By 2005 CUF had invested more than £55 million in over 4,400 local faith based projects in the poorest areas of England. It should be noted that the CUF also receives funds from the Cabinet Office in support of its CUF Xchange (CUFX) initiative, aimed at creating a voice for small faith-based social action projects and encouraging them to network together (mostly at national level, but also at regional and local levels). The longer-term aim here is to broaden this network to include all faiths and projects that are not receiving CUF funding but that meet CUF’s funding criteria, as well as the 500 projects that are currently supported. Other support activities offered by CUF and CUFX include ‘conferences, training workshops, tool kits, one to one consultancy, signposting, infrastructure development and advocacy work.’ (Dinham et al, 2008: 54)
There are also a number of umbrella organisations which although are not themselves are not exclusively involved in combating poverty do provide indirect support, policy and funds to support other FBOs working at the local level. For example, The National Christian Alliance on Prostitution (NCAP) aims to be ‘a collaborative network which exists to unite, equip and empower organisations seeking to offer freedom and change to those involved in prostitution’ (http://www.ncapuk.org/), but activities also include direct support for local projects. Another good example of an active umbrella organisation is the Muslim Health Network, whose principle role is promoting, preserving, and protecting health and health education amongst Muslim Communities in the UK. They aim to improve the standard of health through medical information, support, news, advice, events and campaigns through the networked structure of affiliates of mosques, charities, community welfare groups, Islamic book shops, Muslim schools, sports and social groups. Through combating health inequalities within the Muslim community, it can be argued this FBO tackles particular manifestations of poverty (poor physical and mental health) which exacerbate social exclusion (see also the work of the Muslim Council of Britain, discussed in Section 2.7). Another similar example is the Interlink Foundation which provides support, information, training and representation for the Orthodox Jewish voluntary sector, whose main activity is representing to wider bodies the views of and needs of strictly Orthodox Jewish voluntary and community organisations working on the local level.

**Political advocacy**

Faith-based political action in response to poverty and social exclusion can be divided into three broad and interrelating categories: individual advocacy; campaigning/protest; and political representation and lobbying. First, legal representation of vulnerable individuals is still the remit of the state apparatus administered through social workers and the juridical system; although for particular cases FBOs such as Barnardo’s are active in this area. Local FBOs may occasionally meet with statutory bodies to negotiate an individual’s entitlements and provide financial and emotional support people on trial in the judicial system.

Secondly, in conjunction with high profile faith-led global poverty campaigns such as ‘Make Poverty History’ and the ‘Jubilee 2000’ debt movement, faith groups have also been very active in raising awareness of poverty within the UK. For example, Debt on Our Doorstep is a campaign network co-founded by Church Action on Poverty (CAP). Working with a wide range of organisations including the National Housing Federation, Oxfam, Citizens Advice Bureaux, and many local advice services,
credit unions and community groups, the campaign aims to end extortionate lending and ensure universal access to affordable credit and other financial services. The campaign has publicised the extent and impact of extortionate lending on low income groups; lobbied parliament, assemblies and other decision makers to legislate for tighter regulation of extortionate lending; researched and promoted models of affordable credit; and provided a network in which people on low incomes can comment on the impact of debt (http://www.debt-on-our-doorstep.com/). Debt on our Doorstep is part of a growing international movement for responsible credit and fair banking and is represented on the Board of the European Coalition for Responsible Lending, which was founded in Brussels in 2006. With regard to Debt on Our Doorstep, CAP is involved in mobilising and informing churches to work with other bodies raising awareness about debt, financial exclusion and extortionate lending.

More widely CAP provides resources for churches and the general public so as to inform them of UK poverty and allow them to engage as Christians (in worship and in the wider political sphere) in speaking out for the most destitute people in the UK. It also acts as a voice for those in poverty – not only speaking for them but also providing a platform to allow them to speak for themselves (see Section 2.7 on participatory budgeting).

In September 2008 CAP working alongside other organisations such as Oxfam and Save the Children took a leading role in the launch and overseeing of the ‘Get Fair’ campaign to mobilise and coordinate many organisations and networks already working on various aspects of the big problem of ‘poverty’. The general impetus being in order both to secure public support for action to tackle poverty in a difficult economic environment, and to enrol the commitment of all major political parties to deliver on existing commitments to end child poverty by 2020, and to extend this goal by ending poverty across all the generations in the UK by 2020. The campaign draws on fundamental human rights principles of equality, dignity and respect for everyone living in the UK, at all life stages, to ensure that everyone has: a decent, adequate income; the right not to be marginalized or excluded from society; equal opportunities and fair access to services; and the right to live in neighbourhoods that secure health and wellbeing. In addition to their mobilising and campaigning activities, CAP has consistently acted as a founder member of anti-poverty coalitions and political protests. One such protest is the End Child Poverty Campaign which consists of a coalition of interfaith groups, prominent FBOs and secular NGOs working together to ensure that the New Labour government keep their promise to half child poverty by 2010, and eradicate it by 2020. Their latest act saw thousands of people form a protest march in Trafalgar Square, London on the 4th October 2008.
The best example of interfaith and secular collaboration in political and social protests is the ‘Living Wage’ campaign, in which broad-based organisations such as London Citizens collaborated with trade unions and national and local faith groups to campaign for the National Minimum Wage to be based on a scientific analysis of how much an adequate standard of living costs (currently calculated as at least £7.05 an hour). The coalition staged highly visible protests outside a number of hotels in the City of London which paid their employees, many of them migrants, an insufficient wage. At the same time, CAP called for all churches to set an example for other employers in paying their employees a living wage, and attacked the continuing excesses and hypocrisy in boardroom pay levels. In response the Methodist Church, the Baptist Union and the United Reformed Church have all made commitments to pay a Living Wage to their employees. The Church of England’s ‘Faithful Cities’ report, published in May 2006, called for the introduction of a ‘Living Wage’ in place of the inadequate National Minimum Wage, and in December 2007, a coalition of anti-poverty groups in Scotland launched their own Living Wage campaign.

Thirdly, FBOs have been heavily involved in parliamentary lobbying and consultation. Many minority ethnic, particularly Muslim umbrella groups, have focused on tackling racial discrimination, attacks on civil liberties and the ‘criminalisation’ of ethnic communities; although these activities may seem unrelated to issues of poverty and social exclusion, they indirectly highlight some of the asymmetrical cultural and political processes that perpetuate the uneven socio-economic relations that (re)produce marginality within disadvantaged black and minority ethnic groups. For example, The Network of Sikh Organisations is working with government and other national bodies on issues of equal opportunities and combating employment discrimination. They also are active in campaigns aiming to counter bias in the education system towards non-Christian faiths (for example campaigns for teaching Sikhism as part of the religious curriculum, to allow the wearing of Sikh symbols in schools, to revise compulsory collective (Christian) worship in state schools and to ensure that Sikh children are given appropriate school meals).

The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) is another example of political lobbying in representation of the interests of the British Muslim community. The MCB is the main representative body of British Muslims with a membership based of over 380 grass-roots community organisations, mosques, professional bodies and cultural associations. This network provides an outreach to 70% of the 1.6 million Muslims in England, Wales and Scotland. With regard to poverty, it hosts fringe events in party and trade union conferences, writes and reviews policy proposals, and holds a formal
membership of government and other consultative committees. Wider examples of the MCB’s work can be found in Table 2.3.2:

Table 2.3.2 Examples of the work of the Muslim Council of Britain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campaign work, lobbying, representation at the political level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lobbying efforts for changes to legislation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• for inclusion of the religion question in the 2001 Census</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• for promotion of family values in debates relating to family life (Section 28 etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• for addressing religious discrimination, incitement to religious hatred and vilification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal responses to White Papers and consultation documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Commission for Racial Equality’s Third Review of the Race Relations Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Submission to Home Affairs Select Committee on anti-terrorism (2001) – the MCB was opposed to the hasty compilation of the list of proscribed bodies; evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on Religious Offences (2002), participation in the independent review group on coroner services and death certification (2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Financial bonds for visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement in the political process through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• preparation of the policy paper ‘Electing to Listen’ and a ‘Muslim Vote Card’ in the run-up to the 2001 General Election</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ‘round table’ meetings with policy makers of the major parties to convey issues of concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• statistical analysis of Muslim electoral strength in marginal constituencies and the provision of this information to local Muslim bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting the Muslim viewpoint heard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• using opportunities to express to appropriate ministers and senior civil servants the community’s views on issues of the day – including opposition to the war on Iraq, the illegal detention in Guantanamo Bay, bombings in Afghanistan, and domestic policy issues such as youth alienation and community deprivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• receptions for leading political figures in order to convey the contribution British Muslims make to society and their concerns - PM Blair (1999), Home Secretary Straw (1998), Foreign office minister Hain (1999), Opposition leader Hague (March 2001); seminars for senior civil servants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• issuing press releases on matters affecting the British Muslim community – 37 press releases have been prepared since January 2002, covering a range of topics from faith schools and the BSE scare to international crises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media action and representation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responding to misrepresentations of Muslims and Islam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the MCB has extracted apologies and retractions from the BBC, Sky News, book publishers for inappropriate and inaccurate statements and use of terminology such as ‘Islamic terrorism’ – 34 letters to editors or producers have been sent since January 2002.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing contact with the media and related bodies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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2 This includes; ‘Review of Government’s Interface with faith communities’, chaired by Fiona McTaggart MP, Home Office Minister responsible for Race Equality, Community Policy, and Civil Renewal; Race Equality Advisory Panel; Inner Cities Religious Council; ‘Safe Communities Initiative’ of the Commission for Racial Equality; ‘Connecting Muslims’ consultation with the Chair, Equal Opportunities Unit; the Foreign & Commonwealth Office Hajj Advisory Group; the Bank of England working party on Islamic home finance.
• regular meetings with editors – recent meetings with the BBC, The Times, The Independent – raising issues of media misrepresentation and the harm done from crude stereotyping
• participation in media seminars and workshops with other journalists and line of contact with the Press Complaints Commission and the Broadcasting Standards Commission

**Responding to media enquiries – the MCB at all times seeks to**

• ensure that the Muslim representation at interviews and panel discussions is competent and well-informed
• support good practice initiatives – the MCB supported the BBC Islam UK season 2002 and the production of the accompanying official BBC booklet

**Community services**

**Representation on working parties relating to**

• burial facilities, post mortems and coroners' procedures
• hospital chaplaincy
• welfare of Muslim prisoners

**Promoting capacity building and growth of community bodies through**

• advice and consultancy for access to regeneration funding – through this work MCB affiliates have secured over £300,000 for local initiatives
• providing letters of support & backing to Islamic projects facing planning obstacles e.g. Southall, Oxford, East London

**Increasing community awareness and networking through**

• publication of a fortnightly e-newsletter and the periodic printed newsletter ‘The Common’
• annual general meetings attended by affiliates that debate issues of concern. The 2003 AGM will focus on the role of mosques
• poster campaigns on issues of concern - Hajj health issues, Census 2001 participation
• Maintenance of a web site (www.mcb.org.uk) that is now a widely used resource not just by students and journalists for information on the community but also by Government departments seeking statistical data

**Providing services to the community through**

• acting as a referral point to large number of public enquiries on issues ranging from Muslim adoption to fiqh questions
• financial support and medical expertise to the British Hajj delegation

**September 11 & aftermath**

• Prompt and effective representation of the views of the majority of the community through press releases, press conferences and meetings
• The MCB convened a meeting of ulema so that they may provide advice and guidance to the community
• Preparation of guidelines for the community on issues relating to post-September 11 Islamophobia
• Publication of ‘The Quest for Sanity – Reflections on September 11 and the aftermath’ in September 2002 to present Islam’s positive message of peace and justice

**Research**

• Collection of a range of Muslim community statistics published on the MCB web site for use by researchers
• Collaboration with the University of Bristol on a research project on the religion question on the 2001 Census; a conference on Muslim demographics convened
2.4 Children and Youth

Introduction

In 1997, when New Labour was first elected, poverty and inequality had reached levels unprecedented in post-war history. In response the Government set a series of high-profile targets for cutting child poverty and ensuring ‘over 10 to 20 years’ that no one will be seriously disadvantaged by the place where they live (Hills et al, 2005). Evaluating the changing landscapes of poverty and policy is no easy task; too often tied up in hyperbole and strategic silences. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation and New Policy Institute annually monitor what is happening to poverty and social exclusion in the UK. It uses 50 statistical indicators covering all aspects of the subject, from income and work to health and education. Broadly speaking, their research shows that New Labour has made genuine progress in reducing disadvantage, especially among families with children. The results of tax and benefit changes (particularly child tax credits) meant the number of children living in relative poverty fell by a quarter of its 1998/9 level by 2004/5. Since 1999, when the current Government pledged to end child poverty, 600,000 children have been lifted out of poverty.

However, despite a number of flagship programmes, and tax credit and benefit reforms aiming at parental employment (see Millar and Ridge, 2002), New Labour’s child poverty strategies seem to have stagnated, and according to the New Policy Institute (Palmer et al, 2007) there are still 3.9 million children, approximately one in five, living in poverty in the UK (as calculated after housing costs). The UK still has one of the worst rates of child poverty in the industrialised world. The majority of poor children live in a household where at least one adult works and in a household headed by a couple (Sharma, 2007).

Geographies of child and youth poverty

In the heavily mediated popular imagination, children in poverty are thought to occupy marginal inner city areas and “sink” housing estates. In these areas of widespread socio-economic disadvantage, the New Labour government have initiated a punitive crack down on ‘anti-social behaviour’ (ASB) exclusively among young people. Mille et al (2005:3) defines ASB as behaviour that ‘causes harassment, alarm or distress to individuals not of the same household as the perpetrator, such that it requires intervention from the relevant authorities; but criminal prosecution and
punishment may be inappropriate because the individual components of the behaviour are not prohibited by the criminal law or, in isolation constitutes relatively minor offences.” However the Government’s own definition blurs criminal and non-criminal conduct and places considerable discretion in enforcement. The construction of ASB labels some children and young people as ‘outside’ groups whose conduct is conceived as being out with the constructed norms and values of ‘ordinary people’. Children and youth in these ‘dangerous places’ are regularly conceived as deviant, exacerbating an already significant level of socio-spatial exclusion, and legitimising stringent legal measures ranging from Anti Social Behaviour Orders (that impose conditions on the subject’s future conduct - which when breached constitute a criminal offence that can result in imprisonment) to, legal action to evict the household (Flint, 2006; Pawson and McKenzie, 2006). These measures serve to reinforce the idea that the problems of children and youth in society are focused on problem areas, a limiting assumption that serves to “hide” poverty amongst youth and children in other areas of the city.

New Labour’s social policy towards children and young people can therefore be described as Janus-faced. Measures have been put in place to criminalise young people from disadvantaged backgrounds at the same time as other measures that set grand targets to cut child poverty through the social security system, encouraging lone-parents to work and provision community provision like Sure Start to improve the provision of childcare, early education, health and family support, with an emphasis on outreach and community development.

Faith-based response to child and youth poverty

From the days of the 19th Century philanthropists in Britain, children and youth have been the primary sphere of activity for faith-based responses to poverty, although the arrival of the post-war welfare state curtailed some of these activities. In the contemporary arena of governmentality,

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3 Sure Start is a New Labour initiative overseen by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Department for Work and Pensions. It aims to give children in the most derived wards of the country the best possible start in life by improving childcare, early education, health and family support. Services include 1) early years provision: drop-in activity sessions for children, such as stay and play sessions; 2) Family Support, including support and advice on parenting, information about services available in the area and access to specialist, targeted services; and Parental Outreach; 3) Child and Family Health Services, such as antenatal and postnatal support, information and guidance on breastfeeding, health and nutrition, smoking cessation support, and speech and language therapy and other specialist support; 4) Links with Jobcentre Plus to encourage and support parents and carers who wish to consider training and employment; and 5) Quick and easy access to wider services.
however, many FBOs are re-emerging to work either collaboratively with statutory agencies or as public-funded service providers on behalf of the state. Generally, FBOs seem to be operating in parallel to state provision, stepping in to supplement areas where state service provision is inadequate or inappropriate to the requirements of the local community. Whilst much of the faith-based involvement occurs on the local or regional level, a number of national FBOs can be identified, and their actions can be broadly classified under the subsections of service-delivery, capacity-building and political advocacy.

Service Delivery

Table 2.4.1 provides an overview of national services provided for children and youth by FBOs:

Table 2.4.1: Mapping national faith based service delivery in the area of child and youth poverty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Service Providers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Holidays</strong></td>
<td>St Vincent de Paul Society, YMCA, Youth for Christ (YFC), Da’watul Islam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education and Schools</strong></td>
<td>Oasis Trust, The Lighthouse Group, Frank Buttle Trust, Da’watul Islam, The Children’s Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grants/financial assistance</strong></td>
<td>Frank Buttle Trust, The Children’s Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legal /benefits advice</strong></td>
<td>Project Caleb, The Children’s Society, Catholic Children’s Rescue Society, Church of England’s Welcare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employment and vocational training</strong></td>
<td>Oasis Trust Academies, Da’watul Islam, The Children’s Society, Frank Buttle Trust, Action for Children (formerly NCH Action for Children)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Counselling</strong></td>
<td>The Lighthouse Group, Project Caleb, Norwood Ravenswood, The Children’s Society, The Salvation Army, Teen Challenge UK, Catholic Children’s Rescue Society, Church of England’s Welcare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emergency shelter / safe houses</strong></td>
<td>Depaul Trust, The Children’s Society, The Salvation Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Respite care</strong></td>
<td>Norwood Ravenswood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supported Housing</strong></td>
<td>Norwood Ravenswood, Catholic Children’s Rescue Society, Teen Challenge UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role models</strong></td>
<td>Da’watul Islam, Muslim Council of Britain’s (MCB), The Message Trust’s Eden project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Drop-in centres and youth clubs</strong></td>
<td>Oasis Trust, Youth for Christ (YFC), Catholic Children’s Rescue Society, Church of England’s Welcare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This listing illustrates significant diversity in the type of services offered by FBOs, and the extent to which different faiths are active in the area of children and youth poverty. The categorisation of FBO service domain adopted here is rudimentary, as each FBO is likely to be involved in a number of generic services (such as advice and counselling). Nevertheless we can still gain a good picture of faith based involvement by grouping FBOs by their specialist or substantial service activity, and a number of important themes emerge concerning the role and scope of FBOs in addressing child and youth poverty and social exclusion.

First, this area remains the citadel of faith-based social action, with the majority of national, regional and local FBOs represented in this field (Dinham, 2008). This involvement reflects the rich history of Christian philanthropy in providing for needy children through training, education, and accommodation (Whelan, 1996); a history which in some ways might be assumed to have ended in the mid 1900s. The gradual provision of education by the state in the late nineteenth century and the emergence of the post-war welfare state superseded many of the traditional areas of faith-based service provision, particularly in the areas of education, training and supported accommodation for neglected children. During this time, however, FBOs that had found their client group taken over by new statutory laws went through a process of finding a new niche in non-statutory welfare provision. Organisations such as Barnardo’s, for example, found innovative ways of supporting children in need. Their previous modus operandi – using institutionalised care homes to house children with familial difficulties – was overtaken by new responsibilities granted to local authorities to care for such children, and in any case such institutionalised responses were already becoming the subject of widespread critique. So Barnardo’s began to explore other means of helping disadvantaged children, for example by grant-aiding families in difficulty due to the breadwinner suffering illness or accident. The establishment of the welfare state led FBOs such as Barnardo’s and
the Children’s Society to sell off their homes in order to prioritise work such as fostering and/or helping children to stay with their own families. Other FBOs concentrated on the provision of youth clubs, day centres, advocacy services, holidays, financial grants, childcare and counselling for children and families. During the 1980s a number of prominent faith-based children’s charities such as Barnardo’s and The Children’s Society expanded into political lobbying in order to argue for change to legislation and welfare provision for children and young people. More recently these FBOs have been involved in working alongside government street homeless outreach teams and the provision of emergency night accommodation in response to increased numbers of young homeless people. FBOs have also been active in shoring up the holes in the state provision of alcohol and drug rehabilitation facilities, which are frequently in short supply in many parts of the country.

Secondly the majority of Christian children charities have watered down their religious image or silenced their proselytizing spirit (Whelan 1996; Prochaska, 2006). The pressures of securing and maintaining state funding (the definitive source of funding for the majority of the FBOs in Table 2.4.1) and mobilising public opinion have been major factors in a complex process of secularisation. There is great diversity in the secularisation of FBOs, ranging from a mere change of name, often for public relations purposes, (for example The Church of England’s Children’s Society became the Children’s Society in 1982), to changes to organisational practices in staff selection and in the praxis of caring. For example Barnardo’s described itself in 1990 as a Christian childcare organisation, but welcomed recruits from all world faiths. Today they opaquely claim that their work draws upon Christian teachings for aspiration in their basis and values, without explaining what these mean and how they work in practice. Interestingly this description is mostly hidden in their website but is presented at point of employment application. The erosion of Christian ethos has led to much conflict within The Children’s Society and Barnardo’s, with many staff resigning over controversial care practices, for example when equal opportunities legislation demanded that FBOs should not discriminate against homosexual carers in areas of fostering and adoption (Whelan, 1996: 76).

Thirdly, in recent years a number of FBOs from beyond the traditional Christian faith-arena have sprung up to support their young people. For example, a number of Jewish FBOs and other diaspora-related organisations aim to preserve a particular cultural identity within the future generation and ensure the welfare of their faith members. For example Norwood Ravenswood, one of the largest Jewish child and family service in the UK, works with over 6,000 people every year. They provide: counselling and support to children and their families; community services for people with learning disabilities and their families; residential services including an adolescent unit; semi-independent
bed-sits; a respite care house; and a network of community homes including an entire community in Ravenswood Village.

Minority faith-groups tend to provide welfare exclusively for their membership, despite remaining open to meeting the needs of people of other faiths and none. In addition to welfare provision, some such groups, especially Muslim FBOs, are very active in tackling racial and employment discrimination. For example, Da'watul Islam was established in 1978 and works nationwide with young Muslim men and women through a process of informal education and participation in Islamic activities and experiences. With particular relevance to poverty, Da'watul Islam is developing work that raises young people’s awareness of inequality, in order to challenge racism and other oppressive behaviour. They work with those who are not included or engaged in their communities, or who are at risk of social exclusion by offering them opportunities and experiences that develop their confidence, skills and self-esteem, and by encouraging and supporting their re-engagement through a programme of Islamic activities. Similarly the Muslim Council of Britain’s (MCB) “Footsteps” programme identifies role models for young persons, especially those living in communities characterised by hardship, to inspire and uplift the morale and educational aspiration of young persons.

Fourthly many local Christian and Muslim FBOs have partnered with the state to deliver community schools and academies in deprived communities. New Labour’s academies programme saw the creation of 200 new, all-ability schools to challenge under-attainment and transform educational standards in England and Wales. On the national level, organisations such as The Oasis Trust and the Varley Trust have taken the opportunity to partner with the state and replace underperforming schools located in some of the most deprived communities in the country with new Academies. These publicly funded independent schools have aimed to break the cycle of underachievement by raising aspirations and opportunities for students. Oasis Academies have also provided many other services for the wider community such as adult learning programmes, creative arts studios fitness suites, sports courts and out-of-hours youth activities, healthy living centres and even skate parks. The Oasis Trust is also active in providing residential and support services to young homeless people in the UK, as well as tailor-made mentoring programmes for primary and secondary school students that cover issues such as behaviour management, interpersonal skills, raising self-awareness, self-esteem and familial difficulties.

Finally, a number of FBOs are increasingly active in prisons and young offenders’ institutes. They offer holistic one-to-one approaches to training programmes, counselling, advice and after prison care with the aim of reducing re-offending amongst prisoners. Grassroots and national FBOs are also
applauded by local authorities for their work with young people in tough socio-economically deprived areas with high levels of ASB. This activity often takes the form of detached youth work, and the provision of day centres and evening spaces in which to ‘hang out’. A radical expression of this is The Message Trust’s Eden project, launched in 1997, which works with youth on the streets of outer estates in Manchester and other northern towns. The Eden model is a becoming an influential approach to urban youthwork and community transformation, receiving endorsements from MPs, local statutory bodies, education authorities, and the police, and it has been replicated by many churches across the country. Eden’s unique characteristic is the way that young adult volunteers choose to live in the most difficult areas, sharing the problems of those growing up there, and ministering to their needs. Faith-based social action is defined in these terms as a sacrificial lifestyle choice for volunteers, a way of working that runs counter to the prevailing culture which conceptualises social behaviour and life choices along economic lines relating to the enhancement of portfolios and marketable human capital for future career progression. To a certain extent the prophetically-inspired life choices represented by Eden resist these neoliberal discourses and processes of subjectification by providing an alternative discursive repertoire to live the ‘good life’. These alternative processes of “making subjects” within the overall context of neoliberalism’s individuation and entrepreneurism are an exciting area to explore in future research.

Since 1997 Eden has partnered with local statutory agencies which have recognised that the grassroots presence of Eden teams in difficult urban environments enables successful outreach to young people who otherwise might be difficult to reach. As residents in the community, Eden teams gain genuine first-hand insights into local issues and build long term relationships that not only provide valuable information to statutory agencies seeking to provide services to the community, but also act as a bridge enabling young people to access services offered to them.

Eden also works collaboratively with the local business community to run apprentice schemes for young people, assisting them into work and helping them develop the life-skills necessary to keep a job. The Eden Team also offer personal development programmes and one-to-one mentoring to encourage young people’s emotional, intellectual and spiritual development. Alongside relational development programmes many Eden projects develop specific skills through workshops and clubs at which young people can receive instruction in IT, sports and music in addition to developing their skills and raising their confidence and aspirations.
Capacity Building

Some prominent faith-based organisations focusing on children and youth are also active in capacity building, although here there is considerable overlap with secular and other faith-based umbrella capacity-building organisations that are active in other domains of poverty and social exclusion. This activity usually takes the form of training courses for childcare professionals and advocates; legislation updates; assisting FBOs in local needs and risks assessments; best practice dissemination; funding and grants and legal advice. Examples within this domain include Barnardo’s, The Shaftesbury Society, The Children’s Society; and The Oasis Trust.

Political advocacy

Political advocacy in the area of children and youth takes three broad forms. First, FBOs provide independent advocacy services for children and youth who are in need of assistance in decision-making and legal representation. For example, Barnardo’s partner with local authorities and other charities to assist vulnerable children and young people, and families to make decisions in the best interests of the child.

Secondly, FBOs are active in research and policy consultation on behalf of the government, and are involved in giving evidence to parliamentary committees and responding to Government proposals. For example, The Children’s Society’s work with young people on the streets fed into a campaign to decriminalise prostitution for under-18s, arguing that child prostitution should be seen as a child protection issue and that police and other agencies should protect children and young people from exploitation. In response to a series of publications and conferences from The Children’s Society, the New Labour government legislated to ensure that the police treat child sex-workers as victims of abuse rather than as perpetrators of crime.

Thirdly, FBOs campaign to raise awareness of child and youth poverty and of other issues that perpetuate the vulnerability of these social groups. Faith groups have worked together to call on the government to keep their promise to end child poverty by 2020, and on the 4th October 2008 a protest march organised by FBOs led to over ten thousand people demonstrating on these issues in the centre of London. The Children’s Society is also involved in parliamentary lobbying including on the Criminal Justice and Immigration Bill and Children and Young Persons Bill. Barnardo’s is a regular coalition member of child poverty campaigning including: ‘Believe in Children’ (2008) ‘It doesn’t happen here: the reality of child poverty in the UK’ (2007-08), Young Carers (2006), New Life (2005),
Child Poverty campaign (2003), Stolen Childhood (2002), Emotional Death (2001), Giving Children Back Their Future (1999-2000) These campaigns have attempted to expose the varied ways in which children are marginalised in UK society and focus their attention on changing public attitudes on poverty.
2.5 Elderly

Introduction

Concern for the provision and welfare of the elderly within the United Kingdom has as its backdrop the prominent fact that demographically, as in many western European countries, the UK has an ageing population that is tending to live longer and therefore creating a need for new scales and forms of care. These demographics, along with economic conditions reflecting rising inflation and a rising cost of living, are creating considerable pressures both on statutory mechanisms of care for the elderly and on the abilities of elderly people and their families to provide care outside of the statutory sector. As Pain et al (2001) demonstrate, the elderly are often seen as a huge financial burden upon the welfare state and the wage earners whose taxes pay for state welfare; so much so that these issue have been formulated in recent times into somewhat of a crisis, raising important questions about both the ability of government to sustain state-sector welfare services for the elderly, and about the recasting of the elderly subject into a more neoliberal mould, with increasing responsibility being given to elderly individuals and their families to become self-sufficient in the provision of care. Similar to wider public debate and concern over welfare, the elderly have been affected by a long series of reforms in what many may argue as a shift from a welfare state to an increasingly neoliberal welfare state (Armingeon and Bonoli, 2006; Johnson and Falkingham, 1992). However, these changes have led to some very specific and significant manifestations in terms of the exclusion, marginalisation and impoverishment of particular sub-groups of elderly people, and these concerns have become embedded in discourses of pensioner poverty, fuel poverty, the retrenchment of public elderly care and a continuation of the social and geographical isolation of the elderly.

Geographies of poverty and exclusion among the elderly

Research by the Institute of Fiscal Studies (Brewer et al, 2007) claims that although pensioner living standards in the UK are likely to be raised over the next decade, these increases will still lag significantly behind those experienced by other social groups behind other quartiles of Britain’s population, resulting in the prospect that one in five of people aged over 65 will remain in relative poverty. Indeed, a recent statement by the Department for Work and Pensions (Hopkins, 2008) claims that 2.5 million pensioners are currently living in poverty. So, although it can be argued that
pension reforms instituted by the New Labour government, and the concurrent diversification of pensioner saving schemes, have brought about a significant overall reduction in pensioner poverty over the last decade, there are signs that particular groups of elderly people are beginning to experience particular problems in gaining access to the resources necessary to ensure their welfare and care.

**Welfare provision and pensioner poverty**

One of the cornerstones built into the birth of the British welfare state was the National Insurance Act of 1946. This led to the first contributory pensions act for all, which was later backed up with a secondary tier of state-related pensions under the Social Security Pensions Act and the implementation of State Earnings Related Pension Scheme (SERPS). The conservative government under Thatcher’s premiership ruling introduced a restructuring of pension schemes which began the process of turning pension welfare provision into a market-oriented device. Such neoliberal manoeuvres appear to be part of the rolling back of the welfare safety net (Peck and Tickell, 2002), as the conservative government encouraged the contracting out of SERPS into partially–funded personal pensions run by private sector firms under the Social Security Act of 1986. What became evident in the 1980s under such welfare pluralism (May et al, 2005) was a shift from state provision to “light touch” regulation, so as not to dissuade employers from creating or maintaining private pension schemes which in turn served to reduce public expenditure. Two of the major concerns that erupted out of this private pension reform, and decentralising of responsibility were the failure to cover blue collar workers who were employed outside the public sector, and the effective penalisation of those who regularly changed jobs (Whiteside, 2006).

Following what is by now a well established pattern, the New Labour government of 1997 introduced pension reforms, this time in the form of the 2004 Finance Act and Pensions Act, alongside the recent Pensions Bill of 2007 further increasing regulation of private pensions, requiring employers to enrol jobholders automatically into, and to contribute to, a qualifying pension scheme. These changes have reduced some insecurity and economic vulnerability amongst the elderly, but what they have not yet achieved, especially under the economic conditions faced by the elderly under increased inflation, is to provide for a satisfactory standard of living amongst lowest income of pensioners. For although state pensions are now fixed alongside the annual September Retail Price Index (RPI), pensioners still face spiralling costs of living (especially in terms of energy costs), which
has in turn led to an increase in numbers experiencing pensioner poverty and fuel poverty. This is due to pensioners spending a higher proportion of their income on energy and food (Gilmore, 2008).

Although it could be argued that the New Labour has introduced a series of reforms to target lower income earners with the introduction of low-cost pension schemes in the forms of the stakeholder pension scheme (2001), the introduction of pension credits (2002) and the Minimum Income Guarantee (1999) to encourage savings at the lower income level. Significant inequalities still exist, not least in the form of a pronounced gender gap, as women have been less able to enter into new pension arrangements than men. In consideration of such a gender gap it has been highlighted that women; especially single parents, widows and the divorced - retire with less savings and a greater likelihood of falling into pensioner poverty as a result of limited lifetime pension acquisition due to lower earnings, employer contributions and access in their lifetime to full time work (Hussain, 2007).

Alongside these changing circumstances in terms of pensions and benefits, there have also been radical changes in the provision of institutional care for elderly people who are no longer able to maintain their own independent homes. The post-war welfare state in the UK accepted that responsibility for these elderly groups should be assumed by local authorities who were required to provide accommodation in what were commonly termed “old folks homes”. Prior to this, some FBOs had been providing institutional care for the elderly, but their activities had to change as the local state began to provide statutory provision. This direct provision of care proved to be both expensive and a source of unsatisfactory institutionalisation. As the costs of welfare provision were driven down in order to reduce public expenditure, council-run homes became under-funded and were only able to provide a very basic level of care. During the 1980’s the political reforms of contracting out public services impacted significantly on the idea of public sector provision of homes for the elderly, and there was switch to a strategy of local authorities providing per capita funding for private and third sector care homes for the elderly. Incidentally, in other areas of the world such as Australia and New Zealand there has been a continuing tradition of FBO involvement in the direct provision of housing for the elderly, such that this sector constitutes the most significant contribution of the faith-sector to welfare services in those nations (Conradson, 2008).

The New Labour government expressed concern that the privatisation and deregulation of care for the elderly had gone too far, with the spectre of the elderly poor ending up in inappropriate accommodation. They introduced a series of regulatory measures ensuring minimum standards of care and built environment in the private sector, but given that local authority funds to support residents were not significantly increased, there are now fears of a crisis in the sector because of the
spiralling costs of providing accommodation that meets regulatory standards. As a result, a survey by the Which? organisation in the UK indicated not only that the number of available long-term care home beds was shrinking significantly, but also that many operators were raising prices such that more than of the homes surveyed quoted prices that were 50% higher than the maximum level published by the equivalent local authority (Counsel + Care, 2007). Care in the Community policies pointed towards the provision of intensive home care to help elderly people live in their home for longer, and to greater use of sheltered and assisted housing in which care is on hand, but some independence is maintained by the elderly householder. Here again, issues have arisen in terms of how elderly people meet the cost of these services, which are rarely fully subsidised. Once again, the reliance on private and third sector agencies to provide care for elderly people has opened the door for potential FBO involvement in this area of welfare.

**FBOs and the Elderly**

At the forefront of national-scale third sector care and support structures for the elderly in the United Kingdom are “big fish” secular NGOs such as Age Concern and Help the Aged. This fact should not obscure, however, either the presence of national-level FBOs working in this area or, perhaps more significantly, the importance of faith-based activities to support the elderly in local contexts. For the purposes of this report we focus on the national level, where there do appear to be a number of key FBOs working to provide services, assist and stand alongside the elderly with political engagement and support.

**Service Provision**

Faith based organisations at the national level provide a wide variety of services for the elderly as seen in Table 2.5.1. These organisations appear to be predominantly Christian and Jewish at the national level, although this is not to suggest that other faith groups do not play an important role in such provision, especially in geographical areas where there is a density of representation of these faiths (Muslim, Hindu, Sheik) in particular parts of London and other major conurbations across the country. Service provision outside of Christian and Jewish religion appears to be much more heavily focused around the local and regional level, where the immediate surrounding area of the Mosque or Temple and the local community are the geographic and logistical priority. This localisation of effort raises interesting questions with regards to the local and regional aspects of different FBOs.
and reiterates the need for further study at the local level to give further insight into the plethora of local and regional work that appears absent within such a national-level report such as this.

FBOs are clearly working both in partnership with, and parallel to statutory welfare provision. For example there is a series of services provided by both Jewish and Christian faith groups that on the national scale give evidence for parallel provision, such as the partnerships established with local authorities in areas such as meals-on-wheels, home care, befriending schemes and resource provision by organisations such as the English Churches Housing Group, Salvation Army, United Synagogue and the umbrella organisation: Jewish Care. This latter organisation is the largest social services umbrella organisation in the UK with over 1,200 employees and 3,000 volunteers. Spread throughout London and South-East England, with over fifty centres, it offers care through an extensive network of services for the elderly, mentally ill, physically disabled and visually impaired people as well as those who are unemployed and survivors of the Holocaust.

The privatisation of many care homes and expansion of the privatised elderly care services during the mid 1980s (Butcher, 1995) has increased the need and reliance upon third sector service provision, and many FBOs have been drawn into the vacuum left by retreating local state involvement in the direct provision of housing for the elderly. The provision of residential care homes, supported housing and home care support form a significant part of the work carried out by the Salvation Army, English Churches Housing Group, Keychange Residential Homes and Jewish Care. These FBOs all work in partnership with local and central government in different forms, and receive government funding and support for their activities.

Table 2.5.1: Mapping national faith based service-delivery in the area of the elderly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elderly Service Provision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential homes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish Care, Keychange, English Churches Housing Group (ECHG), Methodist Homes for the Aged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop-in centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish Care, The Salvation Army, The Church Army, Jesus Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish Care, The Salvation Army, United Synagogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Befriending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish Care, Salvation Army, United Synagogue, St Vincent de Paul Society,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meals-on-wheels / food parcels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supported housing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Resources (laundry, assisted baths/showers) | Jewish Care, United Synagogue, The Salvation Army |}

**Capacity Building**

The main thrust of capacity building undertaken by FBOs on a national scale within the UK appears to be through networking and legislation updates. Advice, best practice and general support is disseminated through faith-based newsletters, magazines and websites by FBOS such as The Methodist Church of Great Britain, The Salvation Army, Church Action on Poverty, The Baptist Union of Great Britain and The Church of England. Similarly, organisations within the Jewish sector of FBOS, particularly Jewish care and United Synagogue, are also working to build upon the capacity of their affiliates through pursuing funding and grants from both local and national government.

**Political Advocacy**

The main representational bodies for the elderly in facilitating political campaigns, raising awareness of current issues and responding to government reforms on pension supports and so forth, is undertaken by secular organisations such as Age Concern and Help the Aged. This said however, although the majority of faith based-response to elderly poverty and exclusion is through service provision and daily care, there are a number of faith-based organisations working both in collaboration with wider poverty campaigns such as Get Fair, also independently publicise injustices and to give a public voice to elderly people.

Examples of FBOs working at the national level to combat poverty through political advocacy among the elderly are: The Methodist Church of Great Britain, The Church of England, Muslim Council of Britain, Church Action on Poverty and the Baptist Union of Great Britain all who have joined the Get Fair coalition to end poverty in Britain by 2020.
Other measures have been taken by national level Christian faith-based groups, being played out at the local level, such as the public demonstration in Roehampton, SW London, 2004 were members of a weekly lunch club affiliated with the Methodist Church of Britain took to the streets and protested by setting up their lunch club, including tables and chairs outside the local town hall after having had their funding cut by local government. (Commission on Urban Life and Faith, 2006). Such individual cases point to very significant discourses and activities of caring for elderly people that remains to be uncovered by taking the examination to the local level.
2.6 Disability

Introduction

The post-war Welfare State signified a sea-change in social policy regarding disabled people. The longstanding practices of segregating and institutionalising people with a range of physical and psychological disabilities was overturned by a series of measures reflecting a growing belief that disabled people should be ‘cared for’ by society and within society (Pain et al, 2001: 171). Accordingly, a number of parliamentary acts provided a legislative framework to integrate disabled people in the workplace, education and wider social care. Initially, the new education policies continued policies of spatial segregation through the establishment of ‘specialist schools’, and it was not until the 1976 Education Act that selectivity was removed from the state secondary sector and for the needs of all children (including disabled children) were provided within the mainstream school environment (Barnes, 1991). In some ways however, these policy changes might be regarded as reproducing the widespread (medical and functional) conceptualisations of disabled people as ‘objects’ to be treated, modified and made ‘normal’.

The welfare restructuring of the 1980s and 1990s in the UK prompted a move away from blanket provision of welfare services for disabled people in an attempt to reduce costs and improve ‘value for money’ (Butcher 1995; Gleeson 1999). ‘Care in the community’ programmes aimed to integrate disabled people requiring support into the wider community through supported housing and day centres, which would normally charge (varying amounts) for their services. However this de-institutionalisation has tended to occur without simultaneous development of adequate, public-funded, infrastructure of community care (ibid in Pain et al, 2001: 173), with the paradoxical result that these policies have tended to lead to an increased dependency on families (notably women) and on inadequately funded informal carers, or in some cases socio-spatial exclusion in residual social housing in stigmatised problem neighbourhoods (Pain et al, 2001: 173). Given this legislative environment, voluntary and for-profit agencies became increasingly involved in the delivery of community care support for people with disabilities. Some of these agencies (such as Jewish Care) were directly faith-based, springing up to cater for the needs within their religious community.

New Labour, keen to distance itself from the neoliberal reforms of social welfare policy introduced by its Conservative predecessors, embarked on a New Deal for Disabled People, notably by introducing a number of schemes designed to help disabled people into work through tax credits and other incentives. However, this period has also been characterised by the mantra of welfare-to-
work, and public discourses relating to benefit fraud have resulted in a tightening up of the procedures for determining entitlement for Incapacity Benefit and the Disability Living Allowance, thus offering minimum security for those that cannot work (Pain et al, 2001: 174; Drake, 2000).

**Geographies of disability and poverty**

Poverty and disability are often closely interlinked because discrimination against disabled people in the employment sector has led to a high level of dependence on state benefits (Grove, 1988). Many disabled people in paid work cannot achieve the income required to meet their needs. Moreover, many disabled people require care by another person, who is often a family member, and many carers are themselves severely restricted in the labour market and consequently have low levels of income (Baldwin and Parker, 1991, in Pain et al, 2001: 272). According to Christophides (2006: 3), 29% of people with a disabled child in the household live in poverty. Furthermore, mothers of disabled children are seven times less likely than mothers with non-disabled children to be able to get work, largely due to the lack of appropriate and flexible childcare options. Benefits are mean-tested and even the maximum benefit levels fall far short of meeting the true costs of disability. Not only does the cost of private care provision take up the bulk of state benefits, but disability raises the costs of many activities and of access to them in often disabling built environments.

**Faith based responses to disability and poverty**

The establishment of a post-war welfare state changed the role and responsibilities of faith-based responses to disability in the UK. The previous institutionalised provision (for example in what now seems to be the strangely named Grooms Cripplage) was transformed into different forms of partnership with local authorises in the operation of local hospices and health services for disabled children and adults. The 1960s and 1970s witnessed a burgeoning in the numbers and vocality of organisations advocating disability rights, and the emergence of policy initiatives under the rubric of Care in the Community prompted a re-emergence of FBO activity in service-delivery of supported housing, respite care, and financial grants, embodying a clear emphasis on the social rights of disabled persons. At the national level, however, FBO involvement in the arena of disability is less significant than that of secular NGOs who in partnership with government programmes are the dominant service providers for disabled people. Their services range from ensuring access to leisure facilities, technology, culture and the arts, to providing support to disabled parents. A number of
prominent organisations in this area assist in independent living, employment training and equipment provision. A few exclusively provide employment for disabled adults (e.g. REMPLOY). The national FBOs working with disabled people are identified in Table 2.6.1:

Service Delivery

Table 2.6.1: Mapping national faith based service-delivery in area of disability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education and schools</td>
<td>Barnardo’s, Livability (Grooms-Shaftesbury), The Children’s Society, Jewish Care, The Frank Buttle Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential homes / support units</td>
<td>L’Arche, Livability (Grooms-Shaftesbury), The Children’s Society, Jewish Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home care</td>
<td>Livability (Grooms-Shaftesbury), Jewish Care, Barnardo’s, The Children’s Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>L’Arche</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training and skills courses</td>
<td>Livability (Grooms-Shaftesbury), Jewish Care, Barnardo’s, The Salvation Army, The Children’s Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supported housing</td>
<td>Livability (Grooms-Shaftesbury), Jewish Care, The Children’s Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants and Resources (ranging from wheelchairs to incubators)</td>
<td>The Children’s Society, Livability (Grooms-Shaftesbury), Barnardo’s, Jewish Care, Jewish Childs Day (JCD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holidays</td>
<td>The Children’s Society, Livability (Grooms-Shaftesbury), St Vincent de Paul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice and advocacy</td>
<td>The Children’s Society, Livability (Grooms-Shaftesbury), Jewish Care, Barnardo’s, The Salvation Army</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the organisations in Table 2.6.1 are Christian FBOs which work in close partnership with local authorities to provide wide-ranging services geared towards the independence and employment of disabled people. FBOs outside of Christian religion tend to cater for the members of their faith community. FBOs generally focus on advocacy, training, education services, homecare and supported housing. These range significantly in the type and intensity of support given to disabled people. A number of FBOs provide grants and resources that help support disabled people; these grants are particularly relevant in situations where local authorities impose ceilings on the cost of care packages for individuals with relatively high levels of need (Christophides 2006). FBOs also remain vital suppliers of residential care for disabled people across the spectrum of needs because
local authority financial pressures have resulted in truncated assistance only to the most severely or vulnerable disabled people (ibid: 5). Thus FBOs can be interpreted as ‘plugging a gap’ in the welfare provision for disabled people, a gap that widened during the transformation into ‘care in the community’ during the 1980s and 1990s, and is only now slowly decreasing under New Labour’s ‘welfare-to-work’ reforms to tax and benefits, and the moves towards more ‘joined-up’ working between the statutory, private and voluntary sectors.

Capacity Building

Major national disability FBOs (Jewish Childs Day, Livability (Grooms-Shaftesbury), Barnardo’s, The Children’s Society, and Jewish Care) act in various ways to build the capacity of other FBOs and secular bodies. Research and policy consultation are a key aspect of this work, mobilising support and understanding of disability issues and their impacts, and seeking to improve service-provision for disabled persons through dissemination of best-practice to affiliated bodies, secular agencies and in other poverty-related domains where such praxis can be implemented. Research carried out by FBOs consistently highlights both the current gap in welfare state provision and the inadequacies of current service practices with the result that FBOs tend to act as a critical voice in this arena.

Political action

FBOs have been active in campaigning, protest, and parliamentary lobbying to affirm the rights and equality of disabled people. The Children’s Society and Livability (Grooms-Shaftesbury) are most prominent faith-based political actors in this area, campaigning for legally enforceable rights to independent advocacy, key workers and support for education, training and employment. They have also called on government to address the lack of wheelchair-accessible housing for disabled people. Independent living is a major theme running throughout government and faith-based policy and protests. Faith groups, alongside secular disability charities, present a strong ethical rationale which emphasises independent living alongside a balanced system of support that ensures the dignity, choice and equality of disabled people enabling them to participate fully in society as equal citizens.
2.7 Community Regeneration

Introduction

As part of a complex interplay between ideologies of neoliberalism and neo-communitarianism, New Labour have sought to enhance the role of the voluntary and community sector in the regeneration and social cohesion of deprived neighbourhoods (Levitas, 1998). This activity is an ongoing crystallisation of a longer governmental process in which policy discourses relating to the limitations of the bureaucratic and cost-deficient welfare state have been interrelated with a growing recognition of the potential capacity and efficiency of local communities to identify and engage with local needs. The relationship between government and faith-groups has proved to be symbiotic in this respect. Government have used FBOs to gain a sense of local representational acceptance and to make use of inexpensive social capital and voluntarist resources. FBOs have adopted a similar pragmatic and consensual stance in their use of government funding schemes as a way of legitimising, and paying for their activities (Furbey and Macey, 2005). As such community and faith groups have become active but largely subordinate partners within New Labour programmes such as the Single Regeneration Budget, New Deal for Communities and Local Strategic Partnerships (Mayo and Taylor, 2001; Farnell et al, 2003; Furbey and Macey, 2005), representing instrumental or gesture-role partners used by government to provide existing local networks, leadership, management capacity and buildings in order to reach out to ‘hard-to-reach’ people groups and neglected communities with whom official regeneration initiatives were not previously connecting (LGA, 2002: 7–10; Furbey and Macey 2005: 97).

Geographies of poverty and community regeneration

The Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU) launched in 2001 was the latest manifestation in a long line of area-based initiatives (ABIs) seeking to tackle poor job prospects, high crime levels, educational underachievement, poor health, and problems with housing and the physical environment in 88 areas of deprivation in England, covering 40% of the population and 70% of black and minority ethnic communities. These programmes illustrate the highly uneven and racially stratified geography of poverty in the UK, often clustered in multicultural inner city areas (where Muslim, Jewish, Hindu and Sikh communities are concentrated, especially in London, the Midlands, Greater Manchester and Yorkshire) and outer housing estates of cities (often large areas of mainly low rise housing and
white majority areas – see Dorling et al, 2007). With regard to ethnicity and poverty, levels of adequately paid employment and education attainment are much lower for black and minority ethnic communities compared to white communities (Sharma, 2007; Hussain and Choudhury, 2007). As a result, work cannot be regarded as a guaranteed route out of poverty for these key ethnic groupings - 54 per cent of Pakistani and Bangladeshi children in working households are in poverty compared to just 12 per cent of white children (Sharma, 2007:14). Employment rates for women also vary significantly along ethnic lines – 72 per cent of white women are economically active compared with just 27 per cent of Bangladeshi and 30 per cent of Pakistani women (Government and Equalities Office, 2008: 1). As a result there is considerable debate about whether community regeneration should focus on spatial areas, or be targeted at particular social segments of disadvantage (see Lee, 1999; Lawless, 2004; Buck and Gordon, 2004).

Faith-based response to community regeneration

There has been a mixed uptake by faith groups of opportunities to partner with local and central government in schemes to regenerate deprived communities. This is largely due to the fact that many FBOs perceive partnership as a potential threat to their independence, in the setting of their own agendas and the organisation of management structures, or in their capacity to remain spiritually and locally contextualised. Indeed, some FBOs refuse partnerships and compacts which they perceive as an attempt by the state to delegate their welfare responsibilities to voluntary sector (Lowndes and Smith 2006). On the other hand many FBOs seek such collaboration to counter their marginal role in civil life and to publicise their welfare activities. Ironically, black and minority ethnic organisations – working within some of the most deprived communities in the UK – face many challenges in attracting and accessing funding because of over-scrutiny, stereotyping and low organisational capacity (McLeod et al 2001; Davis and Cooke 2004). Here we map the range of national faith-based interventions in community regeneration under the broad sections of service delivery, capacity building and political action.

Service Delivery

Regeneration initiatives tend to seek out local community representatives, congregations and FBOs as opposed to national FBOs as prospective partners. Such partnership formation is to be expected given that community regeneration usually involves a transformation of public and private services
in an area, environmental action to improve landscapes of deprivation, and employment and education training programmes for residents – all spheres of activity requiring local networks and legitimacy. There have, however, been a series of recent schemes in which national-level FBOs have worked collaboratively with central and local government on broader issues involving social cohesion, knife and gun crime and countering radicalisation of British Muslims.

Faith groups are not always simply incorporated into state-run programmes. Some FBOs have pioneered new initiatives in social policy arenas where the state has comparatively weak regulatory control. A good example of a faith-led community regeneration initiative is provided by Soul Survivor, a national Christian social action movement, co-facilitated by national organisations such as Youth for Christ, the Message Trust and the Oasis Trust. Under the Soul Survivor banner Christian groups have been mobilised around the country to provide community fun days, DIY projects, environmental initiatives, clean-up campaigns, sports programmes, and activities for the elderly in many a number of UK cities (Merseyside, London, Brighton, Bristol, Glasgow, Devon, Chester, Preston and Newcastle). These schemes, although short-term, appear to have had a long-lasting impact in the many ‘regenerating’ communities. Another recent initiative, labelled Hope 08, mobilised thousands of churches in an attempt to replicate this festival model of community regeneration across all areas of the UK. Resources and training were disseminated to ensure their ability to sustain these activities on a long term basis, and churches were also encouraged to collaborate with local authorities and statutory agencies. These initiatives have risen in political prominence both on the local level, largely with the Police and local authorities, and in parliament, and similar faith-based social action projects have now obtained funding from secular bodies.

Another kind of FBO initiative in community regeneration has arisen out of the nationwide launch of New Labour’s Neighbourhood Policing Strategy in 2008, in which the police have encouraged faith-groups to work alongside judicial authorities to help bolster the confidence of local communities in the Police, especially in areas of anti-social behaviour and deprivation. In some areas this takes the form of local residents and faith communities sharing concerns and specific needs through active consultation; in others, faith-groups have organised informal patrolling of the streets as a reassuring presence within the community.

Street Pastors is a similar initiative relating to street policing and social cohesion. Since its arrival in the UK from Jamaica in 2003, a number of towns and cities across the country have set up the initiative, with many more cities planning to pioneer or expand existing programmes. Street Pastors patrol the streets from 10 p.m. until 4 a.m., usually on a Friday or Saturday night. They work alongside the police, but not with the police -they do not pass on information to the Police and
guarantee confidentiality to the people they talk to. Areas where street pastors have been introduced have seen dramatic decreases in crime rates and as a result the Police are increasingly supportive of the initiative (Green, 2008:153), although where this initiative appears to have been parachuted down onto local communities, it can be interpreted as an attempt by the state to ‘police on the cheap’.

The last type of community regeneration we would like to draw out in this report often falls under the radar despite operating in several large cities in various parts of the UK. This form of faith-based social action takes up residence with the disadvantaged groups as a ‘lifestyle choice’. Young faith-motivated adults are choosing to move out of their comfortable lifestyles and promising careers in order to move into the most difficult urban estates, sharing the problems of those growing up there and ministering to their needs. Examples of this practice come from a number of different denominations: the Message Trust’s ‘Eden Project’, the Society of St. Francis, the Iona community and the numerous orders of Roman Catholic Sisters (for further discussion, see Section 2.4 Children and Youth).

Capacity Building

There is a wide variety of government, public, private, and European grants which faith groups can bid for to acquire funding and Table 2.7.1 shows the range of FBOs currently using such funds to engage incapacity building, and it is important in this context to recognise the importance of national-level FBOs in participatory action research and policy consultation, as well as in a range of roles to support the capacity of other, more local organisations.

Table 2.7.1: Mapping national faith-based involvement in community regeneration capacity building.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Regeneration Capacity Building Organisations</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Faith-based organisation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Church Urban Fund (CUF), Church Action on Poverty (CAP), Caritas, Faithworks, Gweini, Shaftesbury Society, The National Estate Churches Network (NECN), Housing Justice Regenerate programme, Churches Community Work Alliance (CCWA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Denominational body</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Reformed Church (URC) Community Development Programme, Muslim Council of Britain, Baptist Union of Great Britain, United Synagogue Community Development Group</td>
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Participatory Action Research and Policy Consultation

Along with the Salvation Army and other prominent national-level FBOs, Church Action on Poverty (CAP) is involved in participatory action research which feeds into policy consultation with all tiers of government. This research provides a device for engaging with people experiencing poverty in the development of effective ways of tackling poverty in particular local circumstances. CAP is also involved in facilitating forms of devolved governance based upon participatory democracy. For example, in 2003 CAP and the Community Pride Initiative jointly created the Participatory Budgeting Unit. Which establishes schemes to enable local people to decide how new public investment should best be spent. In July 2007, citing CAP’s pilot work, Hazel Blears, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, announced that all local authorities should be doing some form of participatory budgeting within five years. Since then, over 150 local authorities have asked CAP for some form of help or support, and they have identified a new round of pilots in various parts of the country. In so doing, CAP has become the lead agency for participatory budgeting in the UK, and is now working with other public agencies such as health authorities and police forces around the potential for PB work on pooled budgets.4

Another CAP initiative, entitled Changemakers, aims to develop the capacity and skills of the members of socially and economically disadvantaged communities across England, so that they can become both better equipped to identify and help meet their own needs, and able to participate more fully in local regeneration processes, and in the development of effective local and national urban policy. In some deprived areas of Manchester, Changemakers has mobilised over 40 faith groups, community groups and refugee organisations to enable local people to set the agenda in changing their communities, sometimes challenging the orthodoxy of state-directed programmes. This initiative represents an attempt to sponsor participatory forms of democratic activity alongside representative mechanisms– wherein the poorest and most marginalized communities are not conceived as powerless or indeed the ‘problem’ to be solved through government intervention, but rather as agents of change whose collective voice can begin to establish new political spaces capable of augmenting, challenging or even overturning the tables of power as currently structured.

4 www.participatorybudgeting.org.uk
Support Organisations

National-level FBOs also act as umbrella organisations that serve to develop the capacity of smaller, more local FBOs in the area of community regeneration. For example, Gweini is an umbrella organisation for the Christian voluntary sector in Wales, providing networking opportunities and informing members of best practice, and engaging in political representation and lobbying in the specific context of the Welsh assembly. Gweini’s work boosts the ability of its affiliates who work in some of the most structurally deprived communities in the UK.

Similarly The National Estate Churches Network (NECN) is an umbrella group of church workers, clergy, community workers and others who live and work on disadvantaged housing estates in different areas of England. Founded in 1998 by the Methodist Church and the Church of England, the NECN serves as a network to strengthen local ministry by sharing expertise and problems, and to present the voice of urban estate residents in national politics. In this regard NECN continuously intervenes in public debates about decisions made regarding urban estates by remote policymakers, and in turn, local regional groups submit advice and advisors to NECN’s national Steering Group to ensure that these public interventions chime with the experiences of the people living and serving there.

Another organisation, Churches Community Work Alliance (CCWA), also works in an infrastructural capacity across all parts of the UK and Republic of Ireland to advance and encourage church-related community development work. The remit of CCWA is to promote community development values and principles as the most effective and authentic way to engage with communities. It participates in policy networks and serves as a virtual hub for practitioners to reflect on the theological motivations for community engagement and share best practice.

In addition to these examples, there are a number of extensive umbrella organisations which oversee and support the activities of more local FBOs; these can be a denominational within a particular religious group, (e.g. Caritas, Faithworks), or they can reflect how a particular denomination is involved in poverty and community regeneration. An example of the former category is the Community Missions department of Livability (Grooms-Shaftesbury) whose involvement in capacity building for faith-based regeneration projects aims to equip Christians who want to see change in their communities and offers a range of services ranging from long-term partnerships to one-day training courses. Their services include: conducting community research and surveys; facilitating church away days; writing business plans; evaluating existing projects; giving
advice on management structures; delivering tailored training courses; and finally, sharing examples of good practice and learning.

An example of the latter grouping is the United Reformed Church’s (URC) Community Development Programme, which since 1982 has trained community development workers who are then deployed in local areas and are paid a stipend in the same way as the clergy. This programme also encourages local church congregations to become involved in community development and produces resource packs and videos to facilitate effective projects and partnerships with other agencies. Similarly, the Baptist Union of Great Britain provides Mission Project Grants to help local churches and organisations set up projects in their communities.

Such umbrella support is certainly not confined to Christian FBOs. The United Synagogue’s (US) ‘Community Cares’ programme was established in 2000 to support the development of Care Groups in Jewish synagogues. This organisation acts as a central resource providing information, training, support and advice to more local care co-ordinators and volunteers, and operates a ‘Care Matters Directory’ - a comprehensive resource containing useful information regarding care within the Jewish and wider community available to care co-ordinators throughout all the US communities. The directory assists Care Groups by recommending a range of services including home and hospital visits, home help, financial and legal advice, a care help line, bereavement befriending and more. The US encourages its members to work with existing Jewish agencies that offer care and support, and are involved in referring individual members to appropriate secular agencies if necessary. Many US communities have US Community Cares telephone helplines offering a confidential service to their members who require assistance.

The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) is a national representative Muslim umbrella body with over 500 affiliated national, regional and local organisations, mosques, charities and schools. The MCB encourages individual Muslims and Muslim organisations to play a full participatory role in public life, and has recently launched an extensive capacity building programme in 100 medium sized Mosques in the UK, providing training and advice to enable the organisations to access information about funds and resources available and procedures of applying for them. This is crucial as research evidence suggests that many Muslim, and, more widely black and minority ethnic organisations, feel discriminated against when applying for funding and more generally lack sufficient knowledge and skills to successfully bid for grants (McLeod et al 2001; Craig et al 2002; Davis and Cooke 2004).
In summary there are large numbers of faith-based capacity-building organisations and umbrella bodies. One possible reason for this is the longstanding prejudice towards faith-motivated organisations manifest in the funding and partnership relationships of community regeneration. Thus FBOs perceive secular institutions to be averse to the role of faith in service provision and inexperienced in dealing with the challenges and tensions that arise in partnerships between secular organisations, government and FBOs (Davis et al 2008: 53).

Multi faith support organisations

In addition to these within-faith support services, the government have funded a number of multi-faith initiatives that aim to support and coordinate faith-based community action. The Inter-Faith Network for the UK was founded in 1987 to promote good relations between people of different faiths, following widespread race riots of the 1980s. Its 150 member organisations include national representative bodies of the Bahá’í; Buddhist; Christian; Hindu; Jain; Jewish; Muslim; Sikh; and Zoroastrian communities; national, regional and local inter-faith organisations; and academic institutions and educational bodies concerned with inter-faith issues. It aims to foster co-operation through effective dialogue effective between faiths and provides information and advice to a wide range of organisations and individuals on inter-faith matters and on how to contact communities at both national and local level. It holds regular national and regional meetings and organises seminars and conferences on a variety of issues and projects and publishes material to help encourage and resource inter faith activity.

In recent years a Faith Communities Forum has been developed within the framework of the Inter Faith Network for the UK to provide a mechanism for consultation between national faith community representative bodies on matters of mutual concern, including issues on the public agenda as well as the development of inter faith relations.

The Faith Based Regeneration Network UK (FbRN) is ‘the leading national multi-faith network for community development and regeneration’ (Dinham 2008: 54). Set up in 2002 by practitioners of faith-based community development, regeneration and social action, it aims to:

- ‘connect practitioners to learn and gain inspiration from each other across the different faith traditions in the UK
- encourage the active engagement of faith groups in regeneration build their capacity for this purpose
• provide an interface between policy makers and communities.’

(ibid)

FbRN is managed by a Trustee body drawn from nine faith traditions: Bahá’í, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and Zoroastrian and it has 1,400 individuals and organisations on its contact list, although its reach is far more extensive than this suggests. It produces a Toolkit for practitioners, and runs seminars and training events; for example those in 2006/7 on Faith in Community Development and Faith Communities and Social Enterprise, resulted in policy focused publications and further good practice guides. FbRN is a prominent member of the Government’s Faith Communities Consultative Council and the CLG Third Sector Partnership Board, and with the Inter-Faith Network for the UK, FbRN facilitates the developing English Regional Faiths Forum Network.

Political Action

Many of the above organisations have been active from time to time in the formal political arena, for example through the fielding of candidates in local and national elections, and in participating in formal consultative apparatus. Some of this activity promotes awareness of social issues relating to exclusion and disadvantage, but other such political action is designed specifically to promote the participation and contributions of the FBOs themselves to national-level decision-making. For example, during the months prior to the 2001 General Election, the Oasis Trust called on government to recognise the vital contribution that churches and Christian projects make to local communities, and to end what were perceived to be discriminatory practices against Christian involvement in access to funding and partnership. The campaign entitled Faithworks culminated in a 70,000 strong petition to 10 Downing Street in June, with the backing of several prominent Christian leaders and the support of a number of MPs. In 2002 the campaign became the Faithworks movement, a network of affiliated churches, projects and Christian organisations that serve their communities in various ways. Faithworks is particularly active in demonstrating the relevance and distinctiveness of Christian FBOs in tackling poverty whilst in the same time emphasising to both secular agencies and Christian affiliates the importance of partnership and professionalism in welfare service delivery.
Section 3:
Faith-based Organisations and the Welfare State

The UK Welfare Regime

The ‘welfare state’ in the UK is often portrayed as the ideal model of provision, where the state accepts responsibility for the provision of comprehensive and universal welfare for its citizens. However it is now, and many would argue has always been, a liberal welfare state embodying a truncated universalism of limited benefits and low taxes resting on the longstanding demarcation of the deserving and undeserving. Thus in Esping-Andersen’s (1999) model of welfare regimes, the UK is labelled as a liberal regime providing a mixed economy of welfare involving a balance between welfare provision by the state, the market, the family/individual and the voluntary sector (see Middlemiss, 2008). In international terms (Manow, 2004), the UK would be classified alongside The Netherlands and Switzerland as non-Lutheran or reformist countries, targeting a residual section of the population eligible for a basic level of assistance. As an exception the UK has followed a complex, even contradictory path of state centralized mixed economy of welfare, whilst maintaining some degree of universalist provision through institutions such as the National Health Service and national pension insurance. The UK welfare regime has undergone considerable change during the latter half of the 20th Century, and currently the primary responsibility for welfare provision is shared between citizens themselves, undergirded by a safety net of flat-rate entitlements and means-tested benefits for eligible socially excluded groups, and a range of quasi-markets (Rose, 1996a;1996b) consisting of public funding for both non-profit voluntarist organisations and for-profit private organisations that become enrolled into the administration of the needs of citizens in order to optimise their capacities to live independent and economically active lives. Market-based logics of individual choice, economic efficiency and competitiveness have thus become hegemonic within the design, delivery and evaluation of social welfare programmes, and organisations, such as FBOs, who are seeking to play a role in these quasi-market partnerships of welfare are finding themselves caught up in these trappings of neoliberal government (see, in the context of housing and homelessness, May et al, 2005; Malpass, 2005; Somerville and Sprigings, 2005; Cowan and Marsh, 2005; Pawson, 2007).
The welfare state in the UK emerged from the aftermath of involvement in worldwide warfare during the 1940s. As part of a new social compact enabled by the (temporary) wartime dissolution of social hierarchies and class privileges, the postwar rebuilding programme included the establishment of a radical new system of state provision of welfare and services, including free education and health care and statutory benefits for those experiencing poverty or related hardship. The welfare reform programme wrought significant impacts on the existing landscape of faith-based charities and organisations. For example, the establishment of the National Health Service in 1946 wiped out the voluntary hospital system, ‘nationalising’ 1143 hospitals while at the same time seizing their endowments. Many of these voluntary healthcare agencies were previously run by FBOs that accordingly became bereft of purpose (Whelan 1996). Equally, the 1948 Children Act allocated to the state the primary responsibility for the welfare of neglected children. This legislation considerably changed the role of faith-based charities that had previously focused on the needs of children. Finding access to their previous client group debarred by new statutory laws, many such organisations had to find a new niche in welfare provision. Barnardo’s, for instance, having previously cared directly for disadvantaged children, began awarding grants to families in difficulties because the breadwinner was unable to work due to illness or an accident. In the mid 1950’s it developed a further scheme to house whole families affected by ill health, housing problems, unemployment and crime. By the end of the decade almost a quarter of the charity’s work involved helping children to stay with their own families. The Education Act 1944 enlarged the role of the state as principal provider of education. Despite the token call of Lord Beveridge for the state to ‘use where it can, without destroying their freedom and spirit, the voluntary agencies for social advance, born of social conscience and of philanthropy’ (cited in Whelan 1996: 61) FBOs were overtaken by these events. The Church of England, for example, willingly abdicated its historic responsibility to collectivist secular provision stating in 1948 ‘the State is under the moral law of God, and is intended by Him to be an instrument for human welfare’ (Davie, 2002, 95) although it maintained an active role in national debates on social policy.

It would be wrong, however, to suggest that all FBOs were completely absorbed by the state apparatus during this period. Instead, in the period up to the end of the 1950s, faith-based and charitable organisations became secondary to the welfare state in the UK, relegated to performing a
cradling function as the ‘underside’ of traditional social democratic welfare provision (Prochaska 2006). FBOs quickly adapted to these new circumstances, with some religious and voluntary organisations working collaboratively with the state through contracts, while others set up co-operative contributory schemes to help pay for various types of health service charges introduced by the NHS, such as for eye and dental care (Gorsky et al 2005). The 1950s saw many FBOs become interested in the relief of poverty in the developing world, establishing overseas education and health programmes, often coupled with evangelical mission. For example, Christian Aid began life in 1945 as Christian Reconciliation in Europe, and the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development (CAFOD) was founded in 1962. In the UK, FBOs colonised other social issues that were regarded as inappropriate as arenas of state action, campaigning for example on issues of morality (such as marriage and sexuality) and science, and delivering recreation and leisure services, particularly in deprived communities. Many prominent organisations such as Salvation Army and London City Mission continued their work with marginal individuals, particularly those who were conceived as ineligible or unworthy such as the single homeless. By the late 1960s there was growing frustration over the impersonal bureaucratic limitations of the size, deficiencies and inaccessibility to the welfare state apparatus (Lewis, 2001). A downturn in the international economy led to deindustrialisation and rising levels of unemployment that rendered Keynesian welfare responses problematic and less effective. Around this time, a number of new faith-based advocacy organisations arose to guide people through and around the welfare state offering advice, promoting self-help/mutual aid and campaigning about poverty. The oil crisis and stagflation in the mid 1970s, culminating in the public sector strikes of the ‘Winter of Discontent’ (1977-8), prompted some market-based approaches to urban regeneration and social service provision, designed to reduce the spiralling costs and bureaucratic inefficiencies of the welfare state. Faith groups began to become more centrally involved in these market-based welfare solutions, although at the time there were concerns that this entailed doing the governments’ work on the cheap (see Lowndes and Smith, 2006).

During the Thatcher era (1979-1992), neo-conservative monetarist policy was deployed in an attempt to assert control of the money supply, restrain inflation and reduce public sector expenditure in the key welfare sectors of housing, education, personal social services. The attack on Keynesian welfare consensus and corporatism (represented at the time by institutions such as the National Enterprise Board and the trade unions) was part of a wider attempt to manage the economy in such a way as to ensure the efficient operation of free markets (see Cloke, 1992). This
involved the destruction of ‘anti-competitive’ institutions like trade unions, the reform of social-welfare programmes and interventionist arms of government and the discreditation of Keynesian-welfarist and social-collectivist ideologies. Instead, market principles were normalised within welfare through so-called new public management (NPM) which entailed programmes of deregulation, privatisation and managerialism in which for-profit management techniques – value for money, the bottom line, and performance rating – were embedded into public services into the provision of public services.

These changes involved both a decentralising of responsibility for welfare service delivery onto the private and third sector and a centralising of control over the direction of policy-making and policy-outcomes through the establishment of regulatory agencies and inspectorates (Deakin 1995). The deregulation of state institutions and the creation of flexible labour markets produced perverse social and economic consequences and pronounced social externalities. FBOs responded in two main ways to these events. On the one hand there were strong statements of the iniquity of failing to deal adequately with the welfare requirements associated with poverty and marginalisation (see for example, Faith in the City: The Archbishop of Canterbury’s Commission on Urban Priority Areas, 1985). On the other hand voluntary and faith-based organisations became increasingly co-opted by statutory funding, and in the process ceded elements of their distinctiveness and political autonomy. Faith-based charities became increasingly reliant on government funding over this period. According to Prochaska (2006), 43% of the income of the top 200 fund-raising charities in 1988 came from local or national government, so much so that the state became ‘the largest single contributor to philanthropic causes’ (Prochaska, 1998, 4). For individual FBOs, state funding became crucial to their operation - Barnardo’s and NCH Action for Children derived 42% and 65% respectively of their 1988 income from fees and grants, almost all of which were paid by statutory authorities, and the Salvation Army became the largest supplier of welfare services after the government with the state being its dominant source of funding (Whelan, 1996). The legacy of this Thatcher era is often associated with a dramatic increase in the levels of both adult and childhood poverty in relative terms in the UK, heightened income inequality between the richest and poorest, the abandonment of a generation born into (de-)industrial heartlands to socio-economic disadvantage, and the geographical clustering of the richest and poorest into private gated communities and sink estates respectively to such an extent that breadline poverty in the UK is not so much out of mind – as it periodically occupies political discourse - but just out of sight for the majority of the population (Dorling et al, 2007; Gordon et al, 2000; Hills and Stewart, 2008). However, it should be emphasised
that this period also saw a substantial incorporation of faith-based groups into the formal welfare system – so much so, that FBOs have been seen by some as adopting both the new vocabulary and the underlying ideological shift of the period. Dinham’s (2008) analysis of the changes between the *Faith in the City* report and its successor *Faithful Cities* (Archbishops’ Council: Commission on Urban Life and Faith, 2006) suggests that the previous challenge to individualist society and to the failure of neoliberal government to deal with urban poverty has become watered down and more accepting of the neoliberal agenda:

“Faithful Cities appears to accept the language of government and, by implication, the consensual, meso- and micro-level analyses of poverty that underpin it. Here, city poverty is seen as a surprisingly persistent problem but one which is solvable at the local level by reconstructing people as “active citizens” in “strengthened communities” (p. 2164)

**From Neoliberal governance to Neoliberal Governmentality**

Neoliberalism has conventionally been understood as a shift from “roll-back” to “roll-out” manoeuvres (Peck and Tickell, 2002), with the former describing a rolling back of the welfare safety net, and the latter suggesting new discourses of welfare reform and new institutional arrangements designed to “contain” or “discipline” marginalised and socially excluded people. Roll-back neoliberalism can clearly be seen in the Thatcher era, while roll-out neoliberalism often refers to the complex patterns of de-centralisation and displacement that have marked the welfare regimes in the UK under the New Labour governments from 1992 (Barnett, 1999; Patterson and Pinch, 1995). The idea of roll-out neoliberalism is, however, sometimes oversimplified, and instead we use the ideas formulated by Ling (2000) to trace a shift from a system of governance to a system of governmentality in the UK. As May et al (2005) have argued:

“Where the former was characterised by welfare pluralism but relatively weak regulatory structures and a certain measure of independence for non-statutory welfare providers... the latter has witnessed the development of ever tighter regulatory controls aimed at securing the self-regulation of non-statutory welfare providers and welfare recipients alike in accordance with what Dean (1999) has termed a “post-welfare” regime.” (p.706)

This shift from governance to governmentality has resulted in new and more complex relationships between central and local government and their non-statutory partners, and therefore has considerable significance for FBOs and the provision of welfare-related services.
Ling argues that the era of governance in the UK began in the mid-1970’s and lasted through to the mid-1990’s and that the shift to governmentality occurred across three broad domains:

(i) **Rationale**: New Labour’s “compacts” with the voluntary sector were an unparalleled act of repositioning the Third Sector in public policy in the UK. This move changed the rationale of state welfare. The Conservatives under Thatcher turned to the non-statutory sector as a means of off-loading the responsibilities of welfare provision from the state onto volunteer and other groups. New Labour’s rationale for partnership with the Third Sector involved both a recognition of the strengths of that sector (local awareness, creativity, expertise and so on), and a recognition of the need for the state to act strongly to ensure issues of quality control and policy direction.

(ii) **Technologies**: This compact-reliant rationale for welfare required new technologies of delivery which allowed greater control over how partnering Third Sector agencies actually delivered services. Thus tendering procedures have increasingly spelt out exactly how agencies should fulfil their contract – and along with strictly enforced performance targets, these technologies were designed to ensure that non-statutory partners were “fit” for a role in governmentality. This fitness included the requirement that the ethos and approach of partner agencies should be broadly aligned with the aims of central government policy, and in so doing it is suggested (Newman, 2000) that government have controlled the voice of potential critics by inducing a fear that critical agencies might lose their place at the table of government. In turn, these technologies have induced a process of self-regulation within agencies wishing to maintain their partnership status.

(iii) **Subjectivities**: Welfare compacts have been built around a new series of subjectivities in the relationships between the state, welfare providers and the individual citizen. New Labour has sought to clarify both the rights and the responsibilities of those in receipt of welfare services, but more broadly they have also attempted to redefine broader aspects of citizenship, articulating how people should not only look after themselves but (in direct contrast to the previous Conservative years) look after others as well. Good citizenship in these terms encourages volunteering, charity and a culture of active community
In this welfare landscape, FBOs have played prominent roles in different areas of welfare provision, but we argue that those FBOs most active in Third Sector partnerships are trending to display characteristics of governmentality which may in some ways dilute, or at least press into the background, the very faith-motivations that originally formed the basis of their existence. The more that FBOs have entered into compact contracts, the more they have found themselves locked into centrally-controlled ways of operating. Although there is not necessarily a divergence between faith concerns with justice, inequality and care and equivalent political concerns expressed by government, the technologies and subjectivities inherent in contracted arrangements necessarily subjugate spiritual capital and accentuate government-inspired social capital. An example from the sphere of homelessness (May et al, 2006) illustrates this subjugation. By signing up to the formal government-funded response to rough sleeping in the city of Bristol, the Salvation Army hostel for the homeless was locked into a joined-up system of co-ordination that meant that local authority officials decided who should, or should not be offered hostel places. One outcome of this system was that people arriving independently at the hostel could not be given a place without local authority approval – a situation felt by the manager of the hostel to contravene the Christian ethic of giving shelter to strangers that had for so long been the guiding principle of Salvation Army participation in providing services for homeless people. This process of “alignment” reflects a wider trend of opting into government targets and government ways of projecting appropriate homeless identity. Alignment has also had the effect of bifurcating what May et al (2006) call “insider” and “outsider” voluntary agencies including FBOs. Insider agencies accept government funding, with the strings attached to that funding. In so doing they can find that both their ethos, and their character can change. For example, Barnardo in 1990 described itself as a Christian childcare organisation, but today, it presents itself much more as a secular organisation drawing upon Christian teaching for aspiration in basis and values - largely because they took the view that the label “Christian” hindered the uptake of services within the minority faith communities they serve (Whelan, 1996). More generally, insider organisations have also tended to recruit trained staff from the social work sector, rather than favouring church-related channels of recruitment. Outsider organisations are much more likely to work on shoestring budgets and rely on volunteers with minimal training, and can often be dismissed as “amateur” players. However, it is often these outsider FBOs that can most easily escape the technologies and subjectivities of governmentality.

FBOs, therefore, currently operate in a climate of societal and governmental support, as exponents of what government prescribes as “good” citizenship. They are frequently able to enter into welfare
compacts that resource their role as care-providers, and this partnership gives scope for the promotion of ethical values that broadly align themselves with governmental values. This combination of rationale and subjectivity contributes significantly to wider trends of increasing ethical awareness in the UK and of a rise in postsecular aspects of society, as the spiritual and religious mix with other formative currents in the self-governing citizenships of neoliberal governmentality. This does not mean, however, that FBOs can impose their moral predilections on these partnerships. Time and again, the state’s commitment to liberal or supposedly strategic values prevents religious moralities — for example in the areas of war, health, family values and science — from structuring the technologies of policy and action in the contemporary UK.
Section 4:

Faith-based Organisations and Governance

The context of Faith-based involvement

Much of the broad reaction to FBO involvement in formal mechanisms and structures of governance in the UK mirrors the perceived impact of the much more significant integration of faith-groups in social welfare in the US (Dionne and Chen, 2001; Elisha, 2008). In that US context, battle-lines have been drawn between those who believe that the conservative evangelical portion of American religion should be translated directly into the philosophical and practical underpinnings of governance, particularly in terms of social and moral issues, and those who would wish to draw a distinct boundary between the voluntaristic influence of faith, and the secular political decisions and actions of government. Naturally, this crude binary overlooks a number of other important parties in the debate (see Berger et al, 2008), not least those faith-groups embodying liberal (Wallis, 2005) or even neo-anarchistic politics (Marshall, 1992), and those secular interests who are content to see compassionate faith-groups undertake a significant but strictly limited role in the response to social exclusion.

Nevertheless, these debates rumble under the surface of UK politics; political leaders are often reticent to display overt personal religiosity, attempting instead to maintain discrete boundaries between their political and spiritual selves, yet at another level, the position enjoyed by the Church of England with the constitutional monarch also holding the position of head of the church (at least in title), and senior bishops holding sway in the House of Lords, ensures that church and state are never entirely separated. Drawing on anxieties about the dangers of allowing religious morality to gain too great a political foothold (as is often perceived to be the case in the US) secular political interests have been active in keeping religious involvement in governance at arms’ length, yet four significant factors have militated against such a distancing. First, the very significant traditional association between faith-groups and social welfare in Britain has developed a longstanding faith-presence in the provision of services. Whether it be the long history of church schools, the seemingly timeless activities of FBOs such as the Salvation Army or Barnardo’s or the historic inflection of
social politics in religious denominations such as Methodism, faith has never really disappeared from the political landscape of the UK (Musgrave et al, 1999). Despite the secular kernel of the postwar development of a welfare state in the 1940’s and 1950’s, with its implication that it is the state that provides the necessary care for socially excluded people, there has been a continuing strand of faith-motivated involvement in the welfare landscape of the UK. Secondly, the emergence of a “Third Way” logic in the politics of the 1990’s (Giddens, 2002) represented a turn towards social justice that presented both a philosophical realignment with some religious philosophy and a series of practical opportunities for a new and more sympathetic involvement of faith groups in the mainstream political life of the UK (Dinham, 2008). Thirdly, the Faithworks campaign launched in 2001 called on government to stop discriminatory practices against Christian churches and projects in areas of potential funding and partnership. A declaration from Faithworks proposed a series of measures which were highly relevant to the operation of Christian FBOs: the establishment of objective funding criteria for grants from central government and local authorities to local welfare projects – grants were to be based on best practice and value to the community; the development of consultation forums between churches and government at both national and local levels; and the need for central government monitoring of local government partnership procedures. The campaign was well received by many prominent Members of Parliament who spoke in positive terms of the contribution made by all faiths to the well-being of communities. Each of the campaign objectives were realised in the publication of Faith in the Community good practice guidelines for funding and partnerships between local authorities and faith groups (LGA, 2002). Fourthly, the events of the 2000’s have underlined the actual and potential ramifications of extremist religious participation in the politics of protest and resistance. As part of the governmental reaction to high profile incidents of religious militancy, there has been a strong move to engage with, and to some extent incorporate a range of faith-based and religious groups into the consultative workings of the state.

The potential contribution of FBOs

There are two main sets of arguments to suggest that FBOs can make an effective contribution to governance issues relating to social exclusion. First, churches and other religious congregations represent the last remaining vestiges of social capital in many communities. The availability of buildings, social leaders and potential pools of voluntary labour and associated finance offer significant potential for social action in a social climate where other frameworks of communitarianism, and voluntarism, appear to be on the wane. It should be emphasised that such social capital remains as simply potential unless particular activating circumstances occur.
Sociologists of religion (see, for example, Aldridge, 2000; Davie, 1994) note that some religious gatherings become preoccupied with inward looking concerns – the church roof, maintaining traditional church-related organisations and rituals, and so on – rather than taking their social capital out in to the community. In such cases bonding capital is not translated into bridging capital. However, elsewhere, faith-based social capital does work centripetally, and as Baker (2007) has argued, such an outward-looking perspective is often associated with some kind of spiritual capital by which the outworking of religious philosophy is made dynamic through spiritual as well as social resources. Secondly, FBOs appear to offer positive rationales for inclusion in schemes of social welfare and civic renewal. Lowndes and Chapman (2005) note three generic rationales used to encourage the involvement of faith groups in these issues:

- a normative rationale – faith groups have motivational linkages to their communities, bringing belief and persistent presence to bear on community values and identities. These normative values translate from religion to society in the form of ethical impulses – love, joy, peace, charity, justice, equality and so on – and can be harnessed in areas of welfare, community cohesion and ethical citizenship. Indeed we have argued elsewhere (Cloke et al., 2007b) that faith-groups have been at the forefront of the development of ethical citizenship, not as an adjunct to the formation of neoliberal citizen subjects, but as a response to the shortcomings of neoliberal individuation. Lowndes and Smith (2006) argue that faith groups can offer a holistic commitment to communities, grounded in longstanding local presence and commitment, and capable of validating and even celebrating diverse expressions of community identity.

- a resource rationale – faith groups have a capacity for organisation, mobilising and training volunteers, providing venues and funding which provide a suitable platform to engage with socially excluded people. This capacity can be adopted in top-down strategies to enrol the resources of faith groups into the more formal objectives of state governance, but also erupts in the form of local initiative that can fall outside of state-led or state co-ordinated activity.

- a governance rationale – faith groups have structures of leadership that often operate at different scales. They thus combine an ability to represent ethical and political views and promote particular understandings of social exclusion at a national level, as well as to encourage the participation of faith-motivated people in local schemes. Within governance,
faith-groups offer a ready-made source of community representation that can be utilised in consultation and partnership exercises that help to “plug the governance deficit” (Lowndes and Smith, 2006: 7) especially in hard-to-reach and disadvantaged communities.

To these categories we would add a fourth – *a prophetic rationale* – which is potentially implicated in new geographies of hope. Religion is in the business of hope, whether in terms of eschatological promise, or in-the-present transformative theologies of social engagement. Wright (2007) argues in a Christian context that the question of what is the ultimate spiritual hope, and the question of what hope is there for new transformative possibilities in the world at the moment, need to be seen as one rather than kept apart. Accordingly, it can be argued (Cloke, 2009) that there is evidence that the hope vested in the subversive power of spiritual belief can be, and is being, accessed via three principal manoeuvres of the imagination. First, faith groups are *engaging in prophecy* (Brueggemann, 1986; 2001) in order to nurture, nourish and evoke a consciousness and perception that is alternative to the consciousness and perception of the dominant culture, so as to energise the community to fresh forms of faithfulness, belief and vitality. Secondly, faith groups are *engaging the spiritual interior* of the current order. Typical analyses of what upholds the current order have turned to neo-Marxist materialism and realism for diagnostics, but faith groups are also able to introduce a spiritual dimension to this analysis. Wink (1984; 1986; 1992) proposes that the heart of systems of oppression is spiritual, and that the outer, political, manifestations of unjust powers and structures need to understood alongside their spiritual interiority. So to question the way things are with a vision of the way things should be means addressing and challenging the spiritual interiority of oppression and domination as well as its outer, more clearly politicised, manifestations. Thirdly, faith groups are *engaging in discernment*. Discerning the spiritual interiority of social exclusion involves both political discernment and a rise in alternative spiritual consciousness, perception and emotion. This mix will sometimes permit a rupturing of the seemingly hegemonic spaces of the current order, producing new lines of flight, and new spaces of hope, especially for those enduring oppression and domination.

When surveying the tensions that arise as faith groups become more integrated into formal systems and structures of governance, this last *prophetic rationale* provides an important framework for understanding. As faith groups become integrated into secular policy-making and service-delivery, there can be significant mismatches in the objectives being pursued and the practices that represent the performance of those objectives. The fear of overt evangelising and proselytising is often a key aspect of mutual mistrust, although there are clear signs that some religious movements are now
embracing a strategy of postsecular caritas (Coles, 1997) in which overt “we serve you in order to convert you” evangelism is being replaced by a more undemanding form of relational service (see Cloke, 2009). More often, tensions appear to arise over an apparent hijacking of the normative religious agenda, and over the incorporation of faith groups into a more professionalised and target-driven way of operating. That is, the values and practices of religious groups can be the first things to go as compromises are made in order to achieve partnership goals within formal governance. The resources and governance potential of faith groups are, then, often compatible with Third Way politics of governance, but the normative faith values inherent to FBOs are often sources of conflict in such partnerships. Our contention is that the root of these conflicts may well be found in the prophetic rationale of faith groups. The normative values of faith practices within FBOs can often be tolerated within the partnerships of governance where such values relate to individual and group motivation and are decoupled from the prophetic imperative. However, where faith-values impart a prophetic discernment of the spiritual interiority of oppression and marginalisation, there can often be both ideological and practical ruptures in the partnerships of governance as the state and its agents become included in, rather than immunised against prophetic critique.

**Assessing the role and contribution of FBOs in UK Governance**

Over the last decade there has been a clear recognition on the part of government that faith communities and FBOs have a distinctive contribution to make to society, and so a series of measures have been put into operation by which FBOs have been engaged with and supported in the practice of governance (Jochum et al, 2007). Some of the key mechanisms for involvement have been:

- In 1992, the Inner Cities Religious Council was established, eventually to become part of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

- In 1997, faith communities were highlighted as significant role-players in updated government advice on community regeneration (DETR, 1997; SEU, 1998).

- In 2002, the Local Government Association produced a guide to good practice for partnerships between FBOs and the local state (LGA, 2002). The Faithworks movement
played a major consultative role in devising this guide, following its campaign in 2001 which accused government of discrimination against Christian- and Church-based initiatives.

- In 2002, a Faith Communities Unit was established to oversee partnership with the faith sector (DCLG, 2004).

- In 2005, a Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) white paper introduced opportunities for new providers of schools. Faith groups were prominently represented as appropriate providers.

- In 2005, the Race, Cohesion, Equality and Faith Directorate was established within the Home Office, and then subsequently relocated as the Cohesion and Faiths Division in the Department of Communities and Local Government in May 2006.

- In 2006, the Charities Act required that “public benefit” be the key test of charitable status. In so doing, advancement of religion per se was excluded as a public benefit, driving faith-group charities further towards social objectives and activities.

- In April 2006, the Faith Communities Consultative Council (FCCC) replaced the Inner Cities Religious Council and the Working Together Steering Group. The FCCC was a non-statutory body focusing on cohesion, integration, social inclusion and community regeneration.

- In 2007, a Faith and Social Cohesion Unit was established within the Charity Commission, to help support faith-based charities as a means of tackling community cohesion, but also as a way of tackling religious extremism.

- In July 2008, the publication of *Face To Face and Side By Side* (DCLG) established a three year programme of investment and support worth £7.5 in order to strengthen the capacity of Regional Faith Forums in encouraging interfaith social action projects.
Aside from these national-level advisory mechanisms, the bulk of partnerships between FBOs and the state occur at the local level through Local Strategic Partnerships, Social Inclusion Partnerships and New Deal for Communities programmes. FBOs are often invited into, or co-opted onto these local umbrella bodies that variously attempt to provide joined-up-governance of myriad and highly fragmented service-providers and other organisations in particular localities. According to Berkeley et al (2006) this local level of participation allows the potential for: wider representation and different viewpoints on community welfare and integration; inclusion of previously isolated faith communities; and integration of strongly rooted and trusted local groups. In addition to these advisory roles, Section 3 of this report clearly demonstrates that FBOs have become prominent as local contractors for tendered service initiatives, thereby assuming a pseudo-state role through participation in state-led but contracted-out service provision.

Evaluation of the impacts of these national- and local-level initiatives to include FBOs into the formal partnerships of governance can as yet only be partial and indicative. Much more can be said following detailed research with particular organisations and in particular areas. However, we are able to offer some pointers to the issues that this ongoing research will need to address. First, assessment of FBOs as a seemingly homogeneous block of organisations is of limited use. This is because the category of FBOs is by no means homogeneous, and any overview is likely to override very significant differences between different types of FBO. For example, there will be differences in the co-option and participation rates of different groups, with some minority ethnic groups seeming to lack access to recognition and to core funding (McLeod et al, 2001). For example, some faith-groups are unable to access Lottery funding because of their religious prohibition on gambling. On the other hand, as a consequence of Muslim extremism in Britain, there have been very focused attempts to include moderate Muslim groups into governance at community level and in terms of national advisory frameworks. Broadly speaking, there are very significant disparities in information, power and capacity to act amongst different types of FBO. Even within seemingly similar groups, for example Christian denominations, there can be radically different outlooks and prophetic interpretations of society. Secondly, there have been notable occasions in which the moral and ethical voices of FBOs have been at odds with government policy and intentions. For example there has been considerable controversy over the provision of adoption services by FBOs to gay and lesbian couples. Faced with equal opportunities legislation prohibiting religious, gender or sexual discrimination in this area, some FBOs involved with adoption services have faced either a dilution of their core values regarding the faith-basis of their operation, or exclusion from secular partnerships.
in this area of social governance. Thirdly, it is difficult to disentangle alternative models of how FBOs are positioned vis-à-vis wider debates on neoliberalism and postsecularism. Although it seems legitimate to question whether FBOs are being incorporated into the agendas of neoliberalism, or whether they are offering some kind of postsecular resistance to these agendas, it is not possible with any certainty to differentiate between these two involvements at this scale of analysis. Indeed, it seems perfectly likely that FBOs can at one and the same time be both drawn into governance partnerships that reflect neoliberal objectives, and be involved in more radical infusion of faith-based ethics into the ideas and performances of welfare.

At this stage of the research, then, we are content to conclude with broad indicative statements:

1. At the national level, there have been considerable moves to integrate faith-groups into the consultative process of governance. This process has certainly involved an enrolment of FBOs into the mechanisms of neoliberal governance, and in so doing FBOs have become associated with ideological concerns such as public-private funding, target-cultures and for-profit management techniques. It has also allowed ministers to demonstrate that they are listening to faith groups.

2. Certain FBOs have gained privileged access to the ear of government at this national level. For instance, the stock of key umbrella organisations (such as Faithworks, Jewish Care and the Salvation Army) and representative bodies (such as the Network of Sikh Organisations, the Muslim Association of Britain and the Muslim Council of Britain) has risen dramatically in these terms over the last decade. It might be argued that this involvement represents a successful campaign to raise the profile of FBOs at national level.

3. It is difficult to see any clear instances of FBOs using this involvement to make significant and radical change to government policy on social exclusion, although there have been some limited successes, for example in the campaign led by the Children’s Society to decriminalise child prostitution and have it treated as a child abuse issue. Some progress has also been made in campaigns and protests over asylum policy. Although there is no direct evidence that changes in government thinking have come directly from faith-based political action, it nevertheless seems to be the case that the presence of FBOs in the consultative framework has ensured that poverty and social exclusion have remained firmly on the agenda. Perhaps the most successful FBO involvement at this level has been in the area of international relations of social justice, where multiple-agency campaigns such as Jubilee 2000 and Make Poverty History have brought ethical concerns to the public attention in such as way that the
government has been forced to act (although the outcomes of this action are unclear and perhaps not as successful as was originally claimed). Perhaps these issues offer a glimpse of the prophetic rationale of FBOs in operation.

4. At the regional and especially the local level, there has been something of a bifurcation of FBO activity into “insider” and “outsider” roles. Certainly the level of FBO involvement in a range of consultations and schemes for community development has grown disproportionately over this period. Equally, many FBOs are now actively involved in the provision of joined-up welfare and advice services as part of multi-agency partnerships, and there are ramifications here of accepting state funding – the attached strings of professionalisation, government-set targets, dilution of normative religious values, and incapacitation of prophetic radicalism are endemic to the incorporation of FBOs into pseudo-state activity. There is little evidence at this stage that FBO involvement of this kind has served to change the policy objectives concerned. However, the performance of care and hope within this insider role may well constitute a significant, if as yet hidden, achievement.

5. At the same time, FBOs have also engaged in “outsider” activities, dictated by the expression of care rather than by the edicts of governance. By and large, such organisations tend to be resource-poor and heavily reliant on volunteers. They may thus fail to gain the trust of more formal local governance, especially since their objectives may well conflict with more formal target-culture welfare. Nevertheless, it is in these outsider roles that countercultural radicalism seems most likely to emerge.
Section 5: 

Faith-based Organisations and the Urban Context

Given that this report specifically focuses on national levels of FBO activity, attention to the spatiality of FBO influence, and particularly to the scale of the city can at best be inferential or speculative at this stage. More detailed analysis can be presented on this issue following surveys of particular FBOs and qualitative case studies in particular cities. However, following the themes laid down in FACIT WP5, and extending these in the light of evidence from the UK, we can begin to formulate some ideas about how and why FBOs operate in particular contexts.

Firstly we should state clearly that rural areas are exempt neither from social exclusion, nor from faith-based responses to social exclusion. Research over the last decade (Cloke, Milbourne et al, 1997; Milbourne, 2004; Shucksmith and Chapman, 1999) has exposed the fallacy of assuming that rural areas in the UK are idyllic and problem-free spaces, devoid of social problematics. Original research by McLaughlin (1986) was confirmed by the Rural Lifestyles Project (Cloke, Milbourne et al, 1994; Cloke, Goodwin et al, 1997) in which 8 out of 16 rural case study areas in England and Wales were found to have more than 20% of households in or on the margins of poverty according to government agreed indicators. Moreover, the idyllic image of rural areas was further shattered by research revealing that homelessness has become a very significant issue in many rural areas in the UK (Cloke, Milbourne et al, 2002). It would therefore be erroneous to assume that issues of social exclusion are confined to the sites and sights of the city, even though popular media coverage of such issues usually portrays this urban bias.

Neither is it correct to assume that faith-based responses to social exclusion are restricted to the city. Research on the provision of services for rural homeless people, for example, (see Cloke, Milbourne et al, 2000; 2001) clearly indicates that FBOs do operate at the scale of the small town, where local congregations (often supported by national, regional or denominational organisations)
provide the lowest settlement scale of intervention into social problems that by nature will often involve considerable mobility and fluidity between different places (Cloke, Milbourne et al, 2003). Scale is significant here, however. Analysis of rural ministry (Gaze, 2006; Richardson, 1988) reflects the problems encountered by small faith communities in establishing sustainable services requiring considerable levels of voluntary labour and funding. We suggest, therefore, that there will often be a sliding scale of FBO activity in rural areas, often focused on service centres with rural hinterlands, where service intervention is sustainable, and regional resources can be mobilised at an appropriate scale. This should not serve to deny, however, that more local FBO activities occur in small rural places, for example, in relation to support for marginalised groups (such as the elderly) or in response to the needs of particular socio-demographic concentrations (such as in-migrant workers).

It is undoubtedly the case, however, that the bulk of FBO activity in response to social exclusion occurs in urban environments, and therefore we recognise that FBO activity in regional and local settings will be intimately connected with the diverse spatialities of the city. Care needs to be exercised here. Traditional mappings of the city tend to oversimplify such spatialities, and Amin and Thrift (2002) have called for awareness of neglected cartographies of urban space – a sensitivity to “the intermesh between flesh and stone, humans and nonhumans, fixtures and flows, emotions and practices” (p.9) that characterise urban life and make sense of the multitude of spatial performances and practices that bring the city into being. These alternative cartographies point to the capacity of the city to act as a space of multiple rationalities and non-rationalities (Whatmore, 2002). The point to emphasise here is that the urban environment both shapes and is shaped by all those who inhabit it (Howley, 2001). Social exclusion can appear to be shaped by the social areas of the city, but it also leaves alternative inscriptions of place which in turn reshape the material and affective environments of the city (Cloke, May et al, 2008). Accordingly it is important in this context to recognise a series of urban spaces which shape and are shaped by social exclusion and FBO responses to that exclusion.

**Urban Spaces**

a) **Spaces occupied by socially excluded people**

One of the dominant devices used to trace the spatiality of social exclusion is the model that reflects a continuum between “prime” and “marginal” space in the city (Duncan, 1983), reflecting the social
values attached to different elements of that city by the citizens of “mainstream” society. Thus “marginal” spaces are often represented discursively as those which have little value to the “mainstream” city, and tend therefore to be inhabited by socially excluded people whose supposedly “spoiled” identities (Goffman, 1968) are least likely to “taint” the spaces and practices of “normal” people. This highly (im)moral landscape of the city both exaggerates and stigmatises particular social areas of the city, particularly the service-dependent ghetto (Dear and Wolch, 1987;1994) and the “sink” estate (Hanley, 2007). Nevertheless, as state and civil elites engage in a new revanchist era of poverty management and policing (Smith, 1996), so-called marginal spaces are often becoming concretised as a key facet of the formally regulated landscape of the city. This is not to suggest that socially excluded people are in any way confined to these marginal spaces – research on homelessness (see, for example, May et al, 2005; 2006; Wardhaugh, 2000) clearly shows that homeless people have an ability to inhabit prime spaces, often incognito – but there are signs that congregations of excluded people are increasingly being policed and regulated in such prime spaces. We can therefore expect that particular spaces of the city will be occupied by socially excluded people:

- Inner city “ghettos” where chronic deprivation tends to be congregated in socially and ethnically specific areas which represent marginal spaces of the city that are commonly recognised in the public discourses of mainstream society.
- Public and / or social housing estates, often spatially distinct and heavily policed and regulated.
- Transient spaces, often spatially placed ahead of contemporary waves of gentrification, where there is a rapid turnover of individuals and social groups as people come and go in search of opportunities, networks of support and inexpensive rented housing.
- Less visible spaces in the city where socially excluded people go unnoticed or incognito, or where they are highly mobile in their use and performance of space. These are usually not perceived as spaces of social exclusion, but here lie the traces and markers of the alternative cartographies of the city where social exclusion acts as a sometimes stark, and sometimes ghostly contrast to mainstream society.
b) **Spaces occupied by FBOs**

The spatial presence of FBOs in the city is highly variable, depending on the type of presence concerned which may reflect the multi-purpose use of religious buildings, the development of specific fixed-space facilities, the operation of mobile or outreach services, and the myriad confidential as well as more visible contacts with socially excluded people. Research by May et al (2006) in the city of Bristol, for example, demonstrates the variety of spaces in which FBOs have developed a service presence in the city. The major nightshelter for homeless people in Bristol is located in a converted industrial building in a distinctly marginal space close to the centre of the city. On the edges of this space are also found a series of hostels and drop-in centres run by FBOs, in one case using a church building located close to the city centre. In and around this marginal space, but also closer to the city centre where homeless people go about their lives “on-street”, a regular soup-run has built up a regular clientele at key landmark points in the prime spaces of the city, while in the red light district close to the nightshelter, a yellow van (nicknamed “the custard tart”) provides a mobile service run by an FBO to support homeless sex workers. To a large extent, these FBO activities reflect the marginal spaces of the city which are already inhabited by socially excluded people; this is a case not only of locating services where needy people are, but also of benefiting from the relatively low property prices in these marginal areas.

However, FBO activity in the city also takes place beyond these marginal spaces. It has been widely recognised (see for example, Baker and Skinner, 2006; Cray, 2007) that FBOs represent the last remaining nexus of social capital in urban communities. FBOs are therefore a crucial site not only for bonding capital but also for bridging capital within and beyond the city. One aspect of the social capital available via FBOs is that the buildings used by religious congregations in both central and suburban locations are typically used to provide support services, notably for the young and the elderly, but also for other socially, physically or psychologically disadvantaged groups. This on-site activity is designed partly to serve surrounding populations – reinforcing the idea that social exclusion is not simply confined to obvious marginal spaces – and partly to serve particular marginalised people who are “shipped in” to what is for them a non-local focal point of activity. In other cases, FBO activity takes a more confidential form and visits individuals with particular needs. Thus services providing, for example, debt-related advice or support for “illegal” immigrants and asylum seekers, or care for the victims of domestic violence, will range widely and often unseen across the diverse spaces of the city.
Accordingly, the spaces occupied by FBO’s will reflect:

- Locations in or on the edge of marginalised space, to meet the needs of socially excluded groups within their own supposed territories.
- The spatiality of existing religious buildings which are used for FBO activity. Here, activities will vary with geographical location, with buildings on the edge of marginal spaces in the city forming appropriate centres to “reach out” from or “drop into”, and other buildings (often in more affluent suburban areas) offering centres for localised or specialised support.
- Peripatetic services, sometimes highly visible but at other times highly confidential, that meet socially excluded people in their places of residence or performance.

**c) The spatial dynamics of FBOs**

The relationships between the spaces occupied by socially excluded people and by the FBOs seeking to serve such people suggest a set of significant spatial dynamics of interconnection in the city. It is clear that the financial resources of FBOs flow both between cities and across particular urban spaces. Some funds will be attracted by national organisations (for example the Salvation Army) and will be allocated to particular services in specific cities. Elsewhere, participation in national or local state-funded service schemes will also mean a flow of resource into particular places. Other funds will be organised within affluent religious congregations, often located in middle class suburban areas, but sometimes also as part of central-city “figurehead” churches, temples and mosques that draw their participants from throughout the city. In either case, there is an actual and potential redistribution of resources taking place across urban space – as the generosity and committed ethical practices of prime-space dwellers is reallocated into inner city or estate-based projects supporting socially-excluded people. In some cases, such redistribution takes the form of specific partnerships between affluent religious congregations and less affluent communities, although elsewhere core FBO locations and resources are exploited by attracting socially excluded people to existing prime-space sites.

These spatial relationships of resource are often mirrored in the spatial dynamics of FBO volunteers and workers. The principal pattern for these service-providers is to commute into marginal spaces where FBO facilities are sited, and to commute back to more affluent residential areas afterwards. An exception to this social movement is found in evidence that as part of particular national and
local initiatives some faith-motivated people are taking the deliberate decision to move their own place of residence into areas where socially excluded people are congregated, so as to serve such people as part of a local community rather than inferring subaltern status through the limited contacts allowed by “breeze-in-breeze-out” servicing. It is also the case that FBO services will often recruit volunteers from amongst previous service users, developing further linkage through localised relations between the FBO and socially excluded people.

Spaces of the Urban

Aside from these spatial sites and interconnections that underpin FBO activity in the city there is evidence that the urban context is also important as a territory for particular social constructions of politics and governance in the UK. The foregoing survey of national-level FBOs has demonstrated the extent to which participation has focused on matters of protest and representation based on particular ethical and political viewpoints. As part of wider postsecular incursions into the individualised and commercialised world of neoliberalism (Cloke, May et al, 2009) FBOs have been involved in establishing forms of resistance and response to prevailing conditions of social exclusion. In some ways these interventions can be characterised simply as an incorporation into the neoliberal model of governance. Dinham (2008) for example traces a change in emphasis in the public utterings of the Church of England from a macro-level political critique of the failure to address poverty that characterised the 1980’s, to a more meso-level approach of community intervention and active citizenship in the 2000’s. However, it can be argued that alongside aspects of such incorporation FBOs are also active in painting prophetically alternative pictures of the city. Faith-motivation not only promotes localised activity on behalf of socially excluded people in particular cities, but also prompts very significant levels of lobbying on behalf of such people. Such lobbying is capable of enrolling the city as a site of alternative representation, a canvas both for the denouncement of socially excluding practices and for the promotion of faith-based partnership, ethical citizenship and moral participation (Cloke, May et al 2007). In part, these lobbying impulses are reflected in particular schemes to position particular urban centres as sites of ethics – as fair trade cities (Malpass et al, 2007), cities of sanctuary (Clarke and Cloke, 2009) and so on. In part, the promotional values implied in these spaces of the urban reflect the perceived need to incorporate religious moral values and spiritual capital in the governance and welfare of the city – a case of adding salt and light to neoliberalism, rather than losing salt and light within neoliberalism. Thus Faithworks, for example, has been a leading advocate of localised FBO provision of services such as schools and community centres, but has also been a vocal participant in government advisory groups
on the tackling of social exclusion in “hard-to-reach” communities. The city therefore becomes both a site of alternative forms of care within neoliberal regimes, and a site of representation allowing the presentation of alternatives both within and beyond those regimes. These representational values are now being extended to the idea of the city as a location of inter-faith collaboration, emphasising the potential for individuals and groups to work collectively and synergistically across denominational and faith boundaries for the benefit of socially excluded people.
Section 6:

Conclusions

In this final section of the report we want to draw out some significant themes which in turn will provide research questions and investigative strands for our ongoing research into organisational and local aspects of FBO activity in the UK.

The Societal Role of Faith

The survey of FBO activity in response to social exclusion in the UK city suggests that faith-motivated organisations and people are significant and active participants in, and influences on, the social policy landscape in contemporary urban life. Both the numbers of organisations involved, and their wide-ranging spatial and social scope, suggest that faith-motivation should not be ignored as a lively and potentially influential factor in UK society. In some ways this conclusion might be thought surprising. A recent review of Christianity and social action in Britain (Prochaska, 2006) argues that present day churches have relinquished their historic role as centres of community life, and paints the picture of Christian social reform as quaintly Victorian and increasingly irrelevant in contemporary society. The narrowing of “faith” to “Christianity” in this instance does not let FBOs off the hook – the acknowledgement of the continuing presence and force of public religion is often grudging and rarely complimentary (de Vries and Sullivan, 2006) and there has been very little public credence given to the idea that FBOs are dominant social welfare actors in sectors such as homelessness (see May et al, 2005). The organisations emphasised in this survey may well represent a more important and well-integrated segment of public response to social exclusion than these accounts suggest. FBOs bring to the public sphere a capacity to represent radical and countercultural ethical and moral viewpoints, to promote ground-level understandings of social issues, to develop skills and confidence amongst their members and within communities, and to get involved in providing services for the socially excluded using the social and spiritual capital at their disposal.
Neoliberalism, Postsecularism and FBOs

FBOs do not operate in a single, easily-characterised niche in the governance of social welfare. Perhaps the dominant characterisation of the socially active activities of FBOs in the UK is as pawns in the neoliberal hollowing out of the welfare state – as part of the incorporation of voluntary resources to occupy the vacuum of welfare space left behind by retreating central and local state activity. After all, religious faith is often seen to promote individual responsibility and is therefore at least superficially in tune with key neoliberal values. The image of right-wing conservative Christianity in the US context is a powerful opinion-former here, offering a view of urban and suburban evangelicals which is entirely in keeping with ascendant neoliberal and neoconservative ideologies (Elisha, 2008). Alternative accounts of the nascent counterhegemonic impulses of American religion (see for example Claiborne, 2006; Wallis, 2006) have made less impact, so it is unsurprising that FBOs struggle to appear radical, countercultural and as offering something different to the neoliberal project.

Clearly, there are aspects of FBO activity which do operate on the inside of neoliberal governance. At a national level, FBOs have accepted invitations from the state to become involved in advisory and even policy-forming capacities. They have acted as part of government initiatives to bring private and third sector investment into mainstream service provision (for example in the building of new schools) and they have been happy to tender for local contracts to supply services, for instance in the fields of homelessness and care for the elderly. It is fair, therefore to understand some FBOs as “insider” organisations, working within neoliberal frameworks and tied into the cultures of responsibility and meeting targets that are inherent in these frameworks. However, the materials analysed in this report hint at a range of possible interpretations of the strategic and tactical purpose of insider FBOs. Some do seem to be in the process of being secularised by the neoliberal apparatus of government. Others, however, appear to be repositioning themselves deliberately, either transforming their ethos in line with postsecular ideas of unconditional, non-proselytising service, or more pragmatically shaping their involvement in order to gain influence and a “faith-voice” in ethical/political and practical debates on social policy and action. These strategic and tactical issues will be investigated in the next phase of this research which studies in detail the ethos, scope, role and achievements of particular case study FBOs.
However, not all FBO activity is insider activity, as we can illustrate in three important respects. First, at the city-level, there are many FBO’s that do not become incorporated in the financial or political frameworks of contracted service provision, with all of the strings associated with being on the inside of public policy. There is plenty of evidence that some FBOs remain as “outsiders” to the neoliberal project, using voluntary resources to fulfil advisory and caring roles that are not nested within joined-up local servicing. Some of these outsider organisations pursue philosophies and objectives of care which contravene the state’s insistence on responsible neoliberal subject-citizenship. This factor can clearly be seen in the provision by FBOs of nightshelters, soup-runs and drop-in centres for on-street homeless people, thereby serving people on-the-street when government policy is infatuated by target-driven reductions in on-street forms of homelessness (see May et al, 2006). Secondly, as suggested above, insider FBOs may not simply act as pawns in the neoliberal system. Although it is sometimes assumed that such FBOs subjugate their faith-motivation to the frameworks of governance they become involved with, it may well be the case that the incorporation of faith-motivated activity will enable subtle but significant shifts in moral and ethical politics from within. As responses to particular forms of social exclusion are performatively brought into being (Conradson, 2003) so the faith-motivation of workers and volunteers can create both a localised fragrance of care that deviates from professionalised uniformity, and a groundswell of experience which at national levels can cumulatively stand in countercultural opposition to the edicts of neoliberalism. Thirdly, some of the national-level FBOs mentioned in this report do not seek incorporation into contemporary social conservatism. Although it can be argued (see Dinham, 2008) that prominent FBOs have abandoned a neo-Marxist critique of individuation, and become content with approaches that emphasise active citizenship at the local level, there remains an obdurate streak of prophetic radicalism amongst some campaigning NGOs that has successfully placed structural interpretations of international poverty and debt on the public agenda. Some of the most remarkable political protests of recent decades have not only been organised in conjunction with FBOs such as Christian Aid, but have featured ethically-inspired demands to drop the debt, make poverty history, cut the carbon and so on that have brought together faith-motivated protestors with others in a positively postsecular display of counterhegemony. With regard to poverty in the UK, many prominent campaigning FBOs (such as Church Action on Poverty, Barnardo’s and Housing Justice) and interfaith protest movements (such as Get Fair, Living Wage, and Still Human Still Here) have been active in mobilising public concern around counterhegemonic rationalities of the poor, and translating these concerns into feasible policy alternatives. In each of these three ways, it seems inadequate to understand FBO activity simply in terms of an incorporated role in neoliberal governance.
FBOs and Sectors of the Social

Although more detailed research is necessary to substantiate any firm claim at this stage, there do appear to be patterns in the findings of this report to suggest that faith-motivation is by no means ubiquitous in terms of the subjects of concern and the particular directions of activity prompted by that concern. Such patterns can be interpreted in terms of particular apparent correlations between particular faiths (or even denominations within faiths – although this is likely to more evident when we begin to undertake research at the local scale) and particular sectors of social exclusion. In some ways comparisons between faiths in the UK context may be invidious given the numerical dominance of Christianity, certainly at the national scale. However, it is obvious from our research that particular propinquitities emerge between faith groups and their social concerns. So, for the Christian faith in the UK, there is particular evidence of three main sectors of emerging care and expertise.

First, at both national and local levels, Christian FBOs place particular emphasis on ideas of prophetic resistance to the structures of power over the social and the economic. In the mission statements of a series of organisations such as Micah Challenge UK, Speak, Christian Aid, Tearfund, Church Action on Poverty, The Eden Project and Housing Justice, the role of faith is equated with speaking truth to the powers that are inherent in both the political exterior, and the spiritual interior of structures of inequality and marginalisation (see Cloke, 2009). This broad but countercultural impulse is grounded at the local level by action that overturns the normal balance of self-other relations in the contemporary city, for example the strategic decision by faith-motivated social activists to live amongst the socially excluded rather than “breeze-in-breeze-out” by commuting to and from more affluent areas. Secondly, Christian FBOs show signs of being attracted to “do-able” local projects, especially in areas where there are well-known Biblical precepts for action. Do-ability involves recognising and establishing appropriate devices (see Barnett et al, 2005) through which Christian ethical action can be achieved, and tends to govern the scale and resource-level of local projects. Precepts for action are more difficult to pin down, but there is, for example, a preponderance of FBO involvement in the area of homelessness, suggesting a substantial and graspable correspondence between Biblical passages (for example in the book of Matthew, chapter 25) extolling the virtues of “giving shelter”, and the highly visible needs of socially excluded homeless people. Thirdly, Christian FBOs, perhaps as an extension of neo-colonial concerns with mission in particular areas of the world (notably Africa), or perhaps out of a mix of Biblical and post-colonial sense of responsibility to God’s
global village, have a particular emphasis on international development, and global relations of poverty and debt.

Other religions on the other hand appear to have their own particular concerns reflected in predominant FBO activity in the UK. Islamic organisations, for example, can be seen to focus primarily on aspects of social exclusion relating to education, political representation, migration and asylum. The Muslim voluntary sector is embryonic at this stage, with the exception of a number of progressive local organisations such as the East London Mosque. However, growing numbers of Muslim FBOs are responding to the problem of alienation amongst young Muslim men in poor urban communities. Hindu and Sikh organisations similarly tend to emphasise religious liberties and exclusions relating to ethnicity. Jewish organisations on the other hand, as well as the anticipated representational lobbying on behalf of the state of Israel, and service through faith-saturated organisations within the Jewish community, are also involved in progressive interfaith partnerships working on localised agendas of care – for the disabled, the elderly, the young and so on. Interfaith FBOs will often adopt an area-based perspective, dealing with the economic regeneration or community development needs of a particular locality. It is too early in this research to suggest explanations for these differences, but there is a fascinating question here to direct at particular FBOs in the next stages of the research.

FBOs and Geographies of Care

One important finding of this study is to emphasise that national-level activity is but a small portion of the wider canvas of FBO responses to social exclusion. Although national scale activity is important in the areas of lobbying and protest, strategic initiatives, inspiring and enabling local activity and disbursing central funds, it is clear that in many other respects the main arena for FBO activity is at the level of the individual city or town. Barnett (2005) distinguishes between “caring about” and “caring for”, reflecting not only a philosophical distinction, but also a scalar one. Caring about social exclusion is typically undertaken at the strategic national level; caring for is more straightforwardly enacted at the local level, as faith-motivated people are given opportunities to come into contact with socially excluded groups, and to develop a care-for response. Particular FBOs such as the Salvation Army have longstanding experience of, and affinity with caring for marginalised people – their longevity and demonstrable passion in serving the poor suggests both an expertise and a prophetic rationale that presents a valuable resource for wider society. Moreover, previous
critiques of such organisations (see, for example, Allahyari, 2000), suggesting that their ethos of care is intimately wrapped up in “with-strings” evangelism and the promotion of self-value by volunteers and workers, is now being confronted by FBOs such as the Salvation Army who in the UK are now in the forefront of promoting unconditional “without strings” service to the poor. As such FBOs are beginning to reflect in the nature of their care key characteristics of a wider postsecular positioning.

Many Christian FBOs will have some connection with a broader national organisation, either as parts of the same outfit (as with the Salvation Army) or as parts of the same denominational or sectoral network (as with, for example, the Church Urban Fund or CARE). Other Christian FBOs however emerge from the concerns and inspirations of one or more local congregations. There is now a proliferation of social action within both traditional denominations (although this is patchy) and particularly amongst newly emerging churches where the idea of practising the Christian gospel amongst socially excluded people has become de rigueur (see Gibbs and Bolger, 2006). It is also at this local level that postsecular allegiances are formed by faith-motivated people and others who are drawn into working with FBOs without necessarily sharing the religious bases on which the organisation has been established. Equally, it is apparent other religions tend to operate at the level of the individual congregation, with social action being centred on the local mosque, temple and synagogue. Although there are national-scale organisations that reflect the issues and concerns of so-called “minority” religions in the UK, the real impact of their work amongst socially marginalised people will only be recognised to its fullest extent in these local contexts. It is at this local scale that care will performatively be brought into being (Conradson, 2003) reflecting not just the ethical and moral ideologies of the religion and organisation concerned, but also the less tangible performative rituals and immanences involved in the embodied practice of care.
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Appendix
Appendix 1: Mapping national faith based involvement in the domains of poverty and social exclusion

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<th>Domain of Poverty and Social Exclusion</th>
<th>National Faith Based Organisations</th>
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| 12) Prison Fellowships |
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| 19) Action for Children (formerly NCH Action for Children) |

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<td>1) Schools&lt;br&gt;2) Residential homes&lt;br&gt;3) Home care&lt;br&gt;4) Training and skills courses&lt;br&gt;5) Supported housing&lt;br&gt;6) Resources (ranging)</td>
<td>1) L’Arche.&lt;br&gt;2) Barnardo’s.&lt;br&gt;3) Jewish Care&lt;br&gt;4) Livability (Grooms-Shaftesbury)&lt;br&gt;5) Jewish Childs Day (JCD)</td>
<td>1) Training&lt;br&gt;2) Best practice&lt;br&gt;3) Funding/grants&lt;br&gt;4) Legislation updates&lt;br&gt;5) Networking</td>
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<td>9) Baptist Union of Great Britain</td>
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<td>10) United Synagogue's (US) 'Community Cares programme</td>
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<td>11) Shaftesbury Society</td>
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<td>12) Housing Justice Regenerate programme</td>
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