

INTERCULTURAL CITY

MAKING THE MOST OF DIVERSITY



KNOWING LEWISHAM

Prepared for the London Borough of Lewisham

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Page 5	Executive Summary
Page 8	The Intercultural City

PART 1: KNOWING LEWISHAM

Page 12	Demographic and Policy Findings
Page 17	Current Planning and Public Realm Context
Page 19	Planning and Urban Design Industry Context
Page 21	The Challenges

PART 2: THE PEOPLE OF DEPTFORD

Page 27	Research Approach
Page 30	What the people told us
Page 35	Lessons Learnt
Page 39	Turning Challenges into Opportunities
Page 41	Study Team Recommendations: Short Term Action
Page 43	Study Team Recommendations: Long Term Actions

PART 3: THE INTERCULTURAL TOOLKIT

Page 45	The Intercultural Toolkit
Page 47	Mapping the Community: Cultural Maps
Page 48	Community Engagement: Intercultural: Listening and Learning Cycle
Page 50	Community Engagement: Knowledge Questions
Page 53	Planning through Intercultural Lens: Cultural Filters
Page 54	Planning through Intercultural Lens: Applying Cultural Filters
Page 56	Intercultural Lewisham
Page 57	Acknowledgments

CITY INTERCULTURAL

MAKING THE MOST OF DIVERSITY

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM



Executive Summary

In 2005 the London Borough of Lewisham joined the international *Intercultural City* project which was launched in 2004 by the UK think tank COMEDIA with core funding from the Roundtree Foundation. The *Intercultural City* is a project, with case studies of cities in England, Norway, USA, Australia and New Zealand, that seeks to better understand the value of cultural diversity and the benefits of cross-cultural interaction in cities.

The intercultural city concept is based on the premise that in the multicultural city we acknowledge and ideally celebrate our differing cultures. In the intercultural city we move one step beyond multiculturalism and focus on what we can do together as diverse cultures in shared space to create greater wellbeing and prosperity.

In order to understand the complex and interrelated issues associated with interculturalism the project set out to research issues associated with the migration experience; questions of openness; and social, economic and environmental wellbeing. A number of research tools were employed including the commissioning of a range of thematic studies and publications by selected researchers and writers. The main focus of the research was on case studies of diverse communities in a range of urban environments. Each of the international case studies have focused on exploring local issues while also providing pieces of the big picture to inform a comparative analysis process.

The “Knowing Lewisham” Goals

In the case of the London Borough of Lewisham study the focus was placed on better understanding the relationship between urban planning and diverse communities in a period of rapid demographic change. Lewisham like many parts of London has been in a period of change with an increasing diversity of migrants settling in the Borough from Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe at a time of potential urban redevelopment such as the Deptford SE8 development and the proposed Convoys Wharf project.

Process

The research and consultation process was undertaken over a twelve month period commencing with a preliminary research and consultation phase in 2005. The more substantive consultation and analysis was undertaken during 2006. Throughout the process there has been involvement of planning and economic development staff in all aspects of the research and community engagement.

The project's community engagement process utilised a range of approaches including one on one interviews, small group meetings and community focus groups. Although the community engagement was by no means exhaustive or totally representative of all the diverse communities resident in Lewisham it did cross a wide range of people from black and minority ethnicities, recent migrants and both local residents and traders. The process also canvassed a range of intergenerational perspectives including meetings with young people and input from local school representatives.

The 2006 focus groups utilised a “Listening and Learning Cycle” approach where participants are invited to talk about their lives from a cultural perspective. Subject matter included exploring how an individual's cultural background influences the way they lead their lives at home among their family and friends and in the public realm with the wider community. The research approach was qualitative rather than quantitative and focused on peoples' perceptions and experiences.

During the “Listening and Learning Cycle” process Council officers were in attendance as observers, providing them with a unique opportunity to listen to the stories of Lewisham residents without there being a focus on a specific development application or redevelopment proposal. The feedback from officers would suggest that they found the experience extremely stimulating and rewarding. Officers stated that they gained a new depth of understanding about segments of the community that they had not previously had the opportunity to spend time with. The final community session was an opportunity for representatives from each of the communities consulted to come together and to listen to council officers and the research team feedback lessons they had learnt from the community and to seek clarification and confirmation of the findings.

Findings

Public Realm Observations

As with most contemporary cities Lewisham is a dynamic mixture of old and new of poverty and wealth. A place where traditional English “pie mash and liquor” stores sit side by side with the “Afro-Caribbean grocer” and the “Halal butcher”. Without doubt a rich and diverse public realm that has many of the qualities identified by the American urban commentator, Jane Jacobs. Jacobs wrote in her seminal 1961 book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* about the need for diversity in creating a vibrant and economically sustainable street, district or city.

While Lewisham and in particular Deptford, has many of the ingredients identified by Jacobs it also has places of urban deprivation that counteract the rich cultural vibrancy. In particular we found through our community engagement that there is a high perception of danger and the threat of crime among the black and minority ethnicity residents that has the impact of limiting their participation in community life.

Life in Deptford, for many of the migrant residents we met is difficult on a day to day basis and especially hard on the home front with a high reliance on public housing that for many is inadequate. We heard numerous tales of families with six or more children struggling to live in a two bedroom flat. The issue is not just that cramped residential conditions put a strain on family life; they also have wider and interconnected impacts across the socio-economic sectors.

Interconnectedness and cultural difference

Our research highlighted the interconnectedness of disparate issues. We have mentioned the problems of inadequate housing and the flow on impacts. These impacts include the failure of many young people from migrant communities to fulfil their educational potential, leading to unemployment and the dangers of falling into crime or delinquency. This report also highlights the flow on impact on the public realm of the perceived threat of youth gangs on the way people feel about and utilise the streets, parks and civic facilities in Deptford. For instance, although Lewisham is well serviced by parks and open space, we were told by mothers that they were nervous about using them because they did not feel safe.

On the positive side there appears to be a strong commitment in Deptford to explore cross cultural and inter faith opportunities. Although, currently the ethnic communities appear to be leading predominantly parallel lives there is an awareness of the value of interculturalism and the value of interaction with others. There is important intercultural activity taking place in the schools that brings together students and their parents in a safe and supportive environment. Likewise the Council libraries were nominated by young people and parents as providing a critical meeting place and a wide range of culturally appropriate programmes.

Professional Mindsets

There have been a number of significant studies and changes in approaches to the built environment professions. These include the *Egan Report – Skills for Sustainable Communities (2003)* and 2004 *Local Development Framework* prepared by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister [ODPM], both documents focus on the need for an interdisciplinary approach to urban planning and development and call for a greater connection between the built environment professionals and the community. Lord Egan in particular makes a strong case that there are at least “one hundred or so occupations” who he notes “spend almost all of their time in activities to do with planning”. The intercultural city concept also relies on a shift in professional mindset towards a more flexible, interdisciplinary and community focused approach with the added requirement for a greater level of cultural literacy among those involved in planning and urban design.

Cultural Knowledge

Cultural literacy is a critical part of bringing about an intercultural approach to planning and design for culturally diverse communities. Building a higher level of literacy among planning officers requires the gathering of local knowledge about the nature of cultural diversity within the Borough and community engagement process as to gather knowledge about the culturally specific issues that might impact on future planning and development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and the community engagement process the study team has made a number of short and long term recommendations. These include initiatives directly responding to community concerns aired during the community engagement process and more profound changes to the way Planning and Economic Development work with the culturally diverse communities in the Borough.

Short term actions

The short term actions are focused on delivering some early initiatives that demonstrate to the community that their issues and concerns have been listened to and actions considered. These actions relate to issues of: safety in public space; improving opportunities for community contact with the planning process, access to community facilities; and opportunities for cultural expression in public places.

Safety was a major issue throughout the community sessions and was seen as a serious barrier to people making good use of streets and public places such as parks. Therefore it is recommended that public safety initiatives associated with “safe pedestrian routes” and “safe park days” be explored. These initiatives need to be considered within the context of improving the design and management of the built environment utilising Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design [CPTED] principles.

The Railway Wall project proposed by the study team for the Deptford High Street underpass has now been completed. This successful project brought together a number of young people who worked cross culturally on the design of the banner. Therefore the project achieved a range of outcomes including: visual improvement to the underpass; recognising and celebrating Deptford’s cultural richness; and demonstrated the value of intercultural creativity.

Long term actions

The long term recommendations are essentially about systemic change and focus on initiatives aimed at building cultural literacy within Council in order to create planning outcomes that are relevant to Lewisham’s culturally diverse communities. The recommendations address these issues through a range of actions focused on the knowledge required to plan and design through an Intercultural Lens, and include: strategies to gain a better understanding of the cultural make up of the Lewisham community; alternative approaches to community engagement with a cultural focus; and focusing on the value of planning through the Intercultural Lens.

The Intercultural Toolkit

The Toolkit has been developed as a guide for both Council officers and their external consultants and provides practical approaches to: cultural mapping; community engagement; and planning and designing culturally.

Mapping the Community: Cultural Maps, section deals with strategies for progressively building a meaningful knowledge base of the diverse communities that goes beyond pure statistical mapping to socio-geographic mapping of people, politics and place.

The Community Engagement strategies detail the Listening and Learning Cycle technique that was utilised by the *Intercultural City* team. This technique is one that empowers the community and provides the attending officers with a wealth of cultural knowledge upon which to build their own cultural literacy and to utilise on future planning and urban design projects. Supporting the Listening and Learning Cycle methodology are the Knowledge Questions which provide a basis for officers to enter into community engagement with the goal of understanding: domestic life from a cultural perspective; public interaction between diverse communities; the needs of both young and elderly residents; and cultural influences effecting the retail environment.

Finally the Toolkit provides strategies for bringing all the knowledge gained through the mapping and engagement processes to the delivery of projects. The team is proposing an approach based on the concept of Cultural Filters which help to focus planners and designers on the potential cultural influences that they can draw upon and conversely to make an assessment of the potential impact of a project on the communities cultural life.

This report attempts to bring together a wide range of findings from the team’s research and community engagement, undertake a meaningful analysis and provide practical recommendations and a delivery Toolkit with the ultimate goal of helping build a rich, diverse and intercultural Lewisham.

The Intercultural City

There is a recognition that the identities of our cities are changing. There is a sense that the time of the intercultural idea is coming as cities increase in diversity and complexity. While the *Intercultural City* project makes no claims to solve all the problems associated with managing diversity it is seeking to better understand the conditions of diversity; the impacts of physical planning and design of cities; the access to and utilisation of services; the opportunities for interaction and sharing; and the role of local government in creating the opportunities for people to work together as an inclusive and culturally diverse community.

The aim of the project is to draw conclusions which will both support policy makers at the local level and to contribute, through comparative analysis, to the wider understanding of these complex but vital issues.

In the context of the international study, multicultural is considered to be the recognition and the right of cultural or linguistic communities to retain, express and celebrate their cultural differences. The term intercultural is used in the context of people from different cultural backgrounds coming together in a common desire to build on the cross-cultural potential of a multicultural society with its ethnic and cultural diversity.

The notion of interculturalism as a planning concept has previously been proposed by cultural theorists such as by Franco Bianchini, Jude Bloomfield and Leonie Sandercock. In *Reconsidering Multiculturalism: towards an intercultural project* Sandercock [2004] discusses interculturalism as an approach that goes beyond multiculturalism and calls for equal opportunities and respect for existing cultural differences. It focuses on the need for a pluralist re-thinking of public space and civic culture linked with innovative and creative economic development for all citizens regardless of their ethnic origins.

In addition to the importance of developing respect for cultural diversity, it is the belief of the international study team that the intercultural city must go beyond passive notions such as tolerance and coexistence to more active approaches that build cross-cultural dialogue, cooperation and mutual growth. The intercultural city is about inclusiveness and developing genuine dialogue between people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds to create an environment that encourages and supports social, cultural and economic development and well-being.

In the intercultural city cultural diversity should be seen as the basis for building a sustainable eco-system of interwoven culturally diverse lives. A narrow approach to the multicultural city may result in cultural groups only gaining civic recognition through celebration at times of spiritual or cultural festivals, while at other times people lead parallel lives with little or no contact with others from different cultural, linguistic or ethnic groups.

The question of parallel lives is one that is being given a great deal of thought across the world. Recent events such as the London bombings, the Paris riots and the images of the racial divide in the USA from cyclone devastated New Orleans have highlighted the negative side to cultural separation within society.

Writing about the racial situation in Britain following the July 7 2005 terror attacks on London, Trevor Phillips, chairman, Commission for Racial Equality, stated: "We are sleepwalking our way to segregation. We are becoming strangers to each other and leaving communities to be marooned outside the mainstream."

Masterplanning through an Intercultural Lens

In September 2005 phase 1 of the Lewisham case study was undertaken with the aim of examining:

... how local development studies and master planning techniques can be enhanced and developed in order to better meet the needs of an increasingly diverse community. This focus on master planning will also help us consider how Lewisham can make the most out of new development opportunities for the benefits of the wider – and increasingly – diverse community.

The case study will set out to develop a new intercultural sense of place in which a greater understanding of under-engaged or disengaged people will provide revealing and practical narratives that will be of enormous

assistance to future processes of consultation and planning. In developing this new intercultural sense of place the project will engage directly with diverse, local, communities to uncover sets of values and perspectives previously unknown to or under-explored by the Borough and partners. The study will aim to introduce 'new' perspectives on place and reveal innovative solutions to planning problems. The project will engage directly with diverse local communities to explore a set of issues, projects and ideas as pre-defined by colleagues and partners in Lewisham. This will include exploring responses to existing buildings and landscapes, as well as testing responses to proposed developments. The project will concentrate, geographically, on both Catford and Deptford but with the intention of developing techniques and tools that can be utilized in supporting master planning elsewhere in the Borough.

Planners and urban designers play a critical role in building city culture. Their decisions can have a profound impact on the way we lead our lives and express our collective and individual cultural values. This also applies to the basic city form that allows for public interaction and about the provision of public space, civic facilities and equitable transportation to allow individuals to partake of city culture.

Diversity of public space is however an urban condition that requires a great deal of care in its development and management, as Jane Jacobs discusses in her 1961 book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*;

So long as we are content to believe that city diversity represents accident and chaos, of course its erratic generation appears to represent a mystery. However, the conditions that generate city diversity are quite easy to discover by observing places in which diversity flourishes and studying the economic reasons why it can flourish in these places. Although the results are intricate and the ingredients producing them may vary enormously, this complexity is based on tangible economic relationships which, in principle, are much simpler than the intricate urban mixtures they make possible.

Jacobs identifies four significant conditions; diversity of activities, fine grain of urban form, diversity of building stock and the all important critical mass of people. Examples of the intricate web of diversity remind us of the parallel importance of diversity in environmental terms. As with ecological conditions if a city or district becomes too homogenous, it becomes vulnerable to environmental shifts. If for instance, one form of activity or business is dominant and it no longer works in the new environment, the entire Borough may be at risk. This phenomena was graphically illustrated by the failed industrial towns of England's north, where specialised manufacturing failed to adapt to the changing global markets.

A key factor that can be observed from a cultural diversity perspective is that cities often get carried away with the physical form of public places, placing great responsibility on the urban designer to transform a place through new paving, elegant street furniture and improved lighting. While the reality is that many places are dead or decaying for other reasons than poor public realm design, such as failing business or traffic domination. We can see many examples where major city or dockland redevelopments have focused on iconic buildings as a drawcard but have failed to build in the finer grain of diversity and urban life.

Diversity in its many forms is the primary element of a vibrant place, diversity of business, diversity of activities and a diversity of built form creating visual stimulation. Think of the street markets that you have spent hours browsing through. Street markets in London for example often exist in unremarkable settings their vibrancy comes through the interaction between the people and products. The most successful markets are those where there is a great diversity of product, every stall has a different range and somewhere there is a treasure to be found. They also provide the setting for intercultural interaction as people from many cultures go about their business or partake of the cultural atmosphere. Each culture has its shared visual language built up over generations and highly influenced by geography, history and religion. A culture of shared knowledge provides the literacy required to read the meaning in such artistic expression and craftsmanship. In addition to the visual literacy concept we need to recognise that there are significant cultural differences in terms of sensory perceptions. The experience of the body in space, notions of personal space, the sense of touch and the sense of smell greatly influence our experiences of public places and interaction with others.

Therefore if culture is the very foundation of our lives, how does it manifest itself through governance and policy frameworks, through the arts as cultural expression and through the physical forms of our cities and homes. We are consciously and unconsciously influenced by our own cultural background and the culture of others. This

influence can either be a barrier to planning and change or it can be a point of inspiration and strength in the task of building tolerant and fulfilling communities and sustainable urban environments.

The task of contemporary planners, architects and urban designers is to help build new city cultures that draw from the past but are living expressions of contemporary life. Cities and their people do not want to be stuck in a time warp nor should they lose their uniqueness and civic culture in a drive to modernise. However we also need to be mindful that it is not always the city planners and designers who have the primary influence over the look and feel of the built environment. Increasingly it is the people framing the regulations and standards who affect the way a city infrastructure is delivered. In addition a large proportion of public realm infrastructure is in fact created not by the city but by private sector developers as part of development or redevelopment projects and transferred to public sector ownership. This presents a significant challenge to city officials who must establish a clear vision for the city and evolve strong planning criteria to influence the work of others. It does however also provide a significant opportunity to maximise opportunities from developer contributions that meet the needs of both the community and the private sector.

What we need to recognise is that we must also be culturally literate in our own cities. Modernity has brought with it professional classifications and boundaries between professional behaviour and responsibility. Ideally a built environment professional should be deeply engaged with his or her local culture as their professional practice is having a dramatic and lasting impact on our cities and way of life. A culturally literate planning or design professional needs to develop the tools that assist in developing the knowledge and awareness of cultural influences and to be able to tap into the shared knowledge associated with the place they are to work with.

There is therefore a real need to gain knowledge prior to the formulation of a brief for master planning from as many different sources as possible. A mosaic of knowledge gathered from people of different ages, cultures and association with 'place' need to be considered. In the context of the contemporary intercultural city with its highly diverse cultural mix it is clearly impossible for individual urban professionals to accumulate an in depth cultural knowledge of every group represented in their city, therefore we need to evolve new forms of intercultural dialogue. This dialogue must take place across cultural and linguistic communities and generations.

In order to create meaning and dialogue through the function and form of the city the planner and designer needs to consider what will resonate with the cultural life of people and place.

Part 1:



Demographic and Policy Findings

Community Context

"Lewisham is a diverse borough with a history of embracing new communities. In recent years the established Irish and Caribbean communities have been joined by Vietnamese and, most recently, African communities. We have a history of good relations between different communities within the borough, though we must acknowledge that there have been terrible, harsh, incidents in the past."

"Diversity must be defended. It is important for Lewisham that our kids grow up in a world of 'difference' rather than homogeneity. This is, in many ways, the heart of what makes Lewisham work. In a place where we are all different, it is impossible for anyone to be an outsider. And it is important for our future."

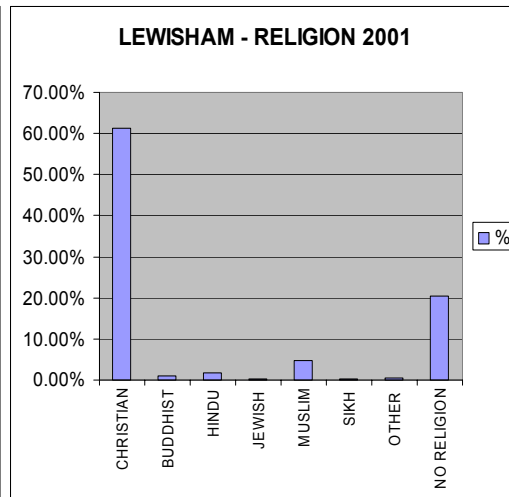
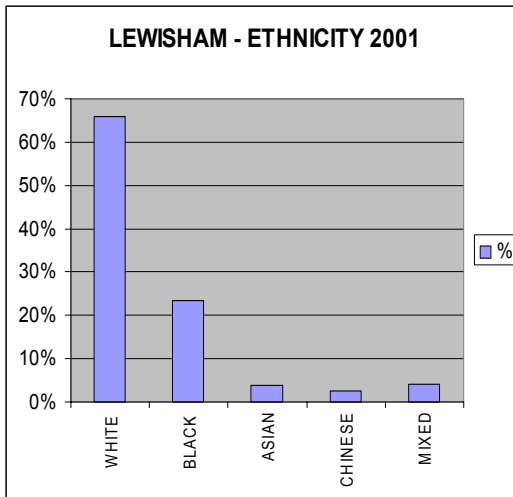
The Place We Call Home, Steve Bullock, Mayor of Lewisham

Census data and Council information

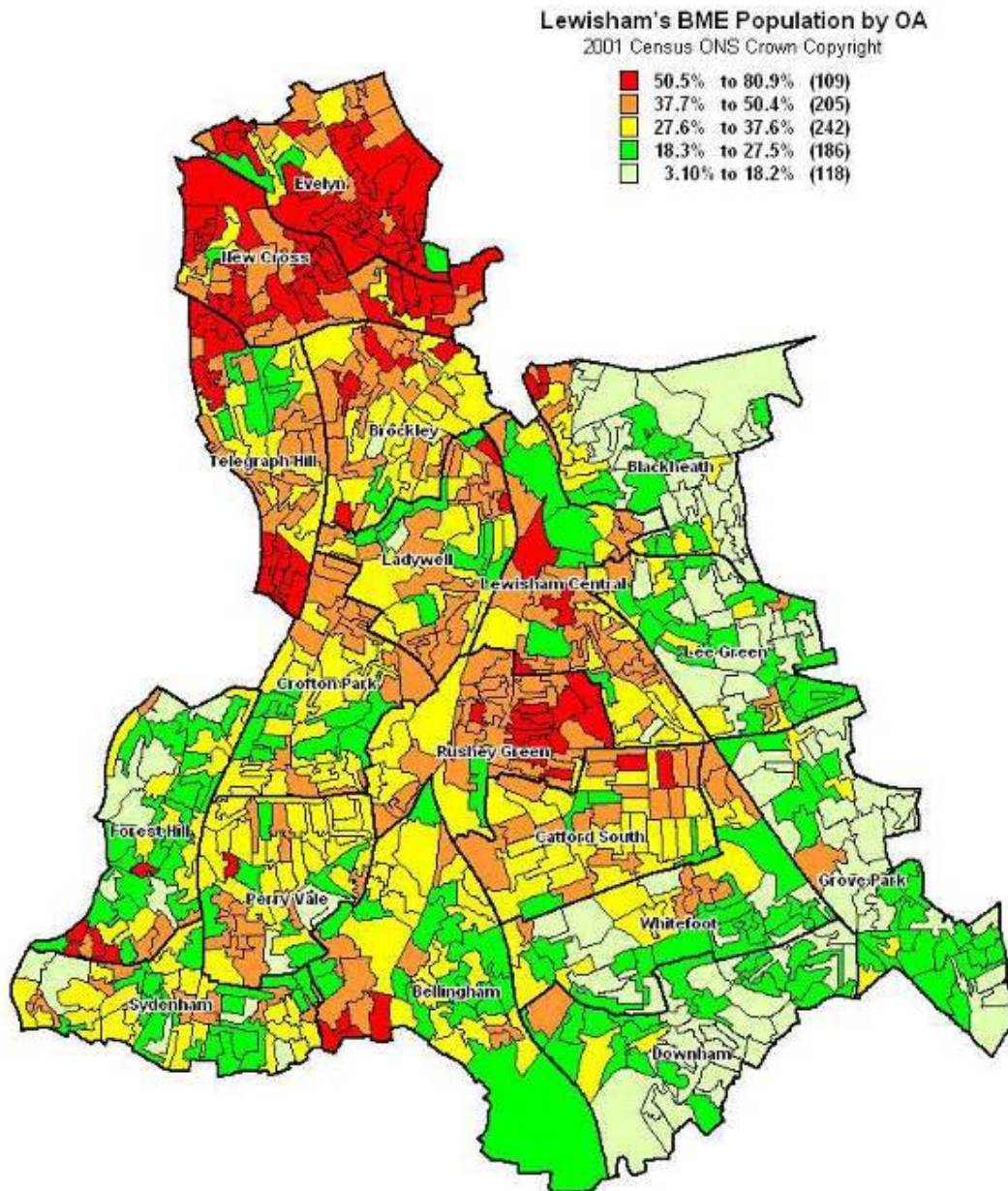
- The 2001 census identifies the following statistics of relevance to Interculturalism:
 - White persons at 65.92% and Black or Black British persons at 23.40% - the Black or Black British cohort is almost double the London percentage of 10.92%
 - Lewisham has a higher percentage of people of mixed parentage 4.18% than London 3.15% and is significantly higher than the national average 1.27%
 - That Christianity is the dominant religion at 61.25% - Muslims 4.62% - Hindus 1.09%

However this is 2001 data and does not actually reflect more recent changing demographics, such as:

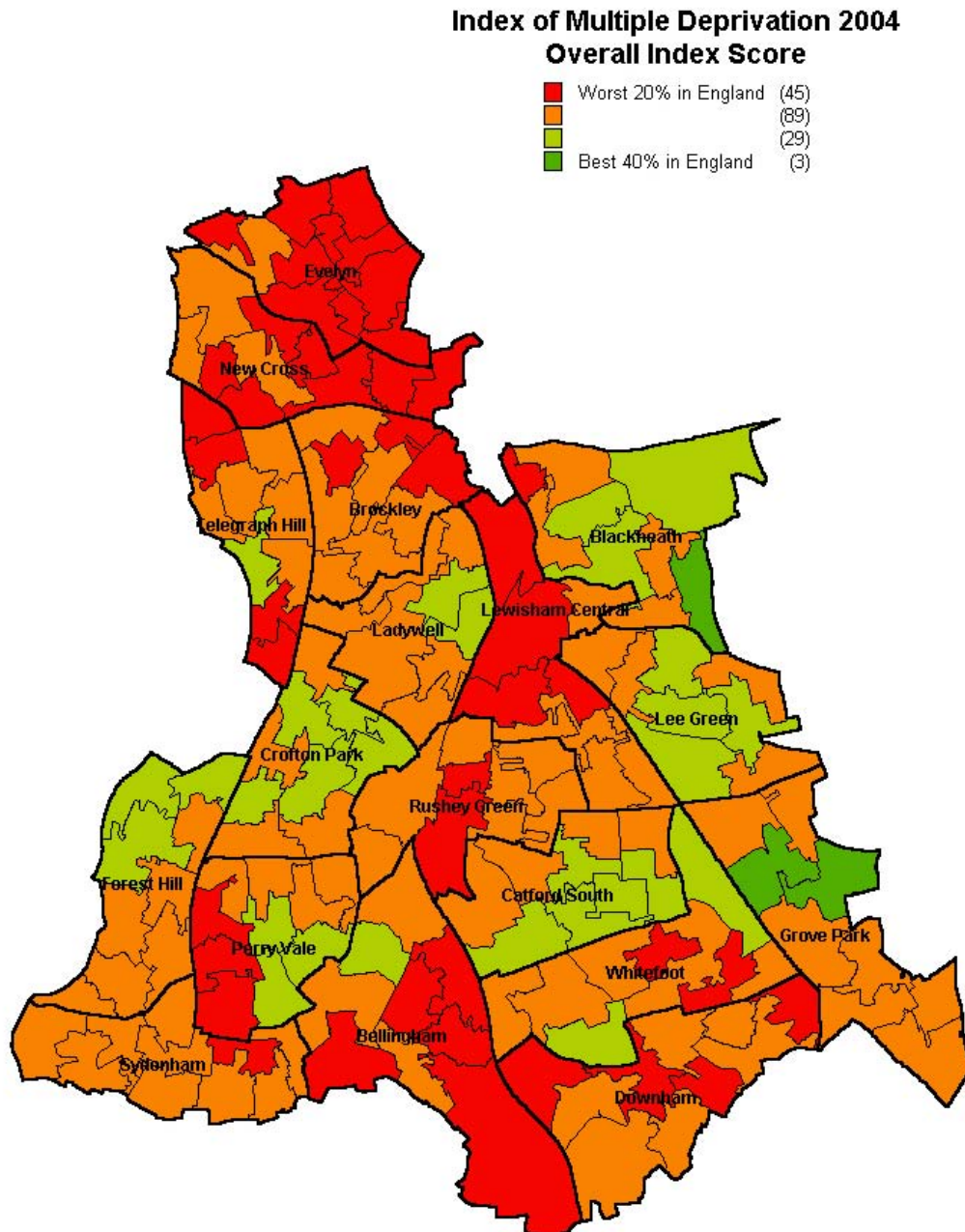
- Diversity is changing rapidly as new groups are added to the established community
- Most recent arrivals are coming from central and eastern Europe and horn of Africa
- Deptford and Catford appear to be generally stable community across low socio economic range



The map below showing wards by ethnic diversity provides an overall understanding of population distribution and clustering. What is harder to establish is the detailed breakdown of the range of ethnicities represented within the concentration areas highlighted below.



The map below shows the distribution of areas classified by levels of deprivation rated against the English averages. As can be seen when comparing the wards by ethnicity with the wards by deprivation the high concentrations by ethnicity do align with the highest deprivation indices, especially around the Evelyn ward.



Social Inclusion Strategy 2005-2013

The City of Lewisham has a stated vision of making "Lewisham the best place in London to live, work and learn".

The *Social Inclusion Strategy* has as its aim "to ensure that the barriers that prevent people from participating in social, cultural, community and economic activities are removed and that the effects of poverty and exclusion are balanced by properly targeted, quality services." While acknowledging that this strategy has been conceived as a social policy addressing inequality and exclusion it has direct resonance for the Intercultural City which is about creating a public realm that is inclusive, welcoming, democratic and expressed the rich diversity of the Lewisham community.

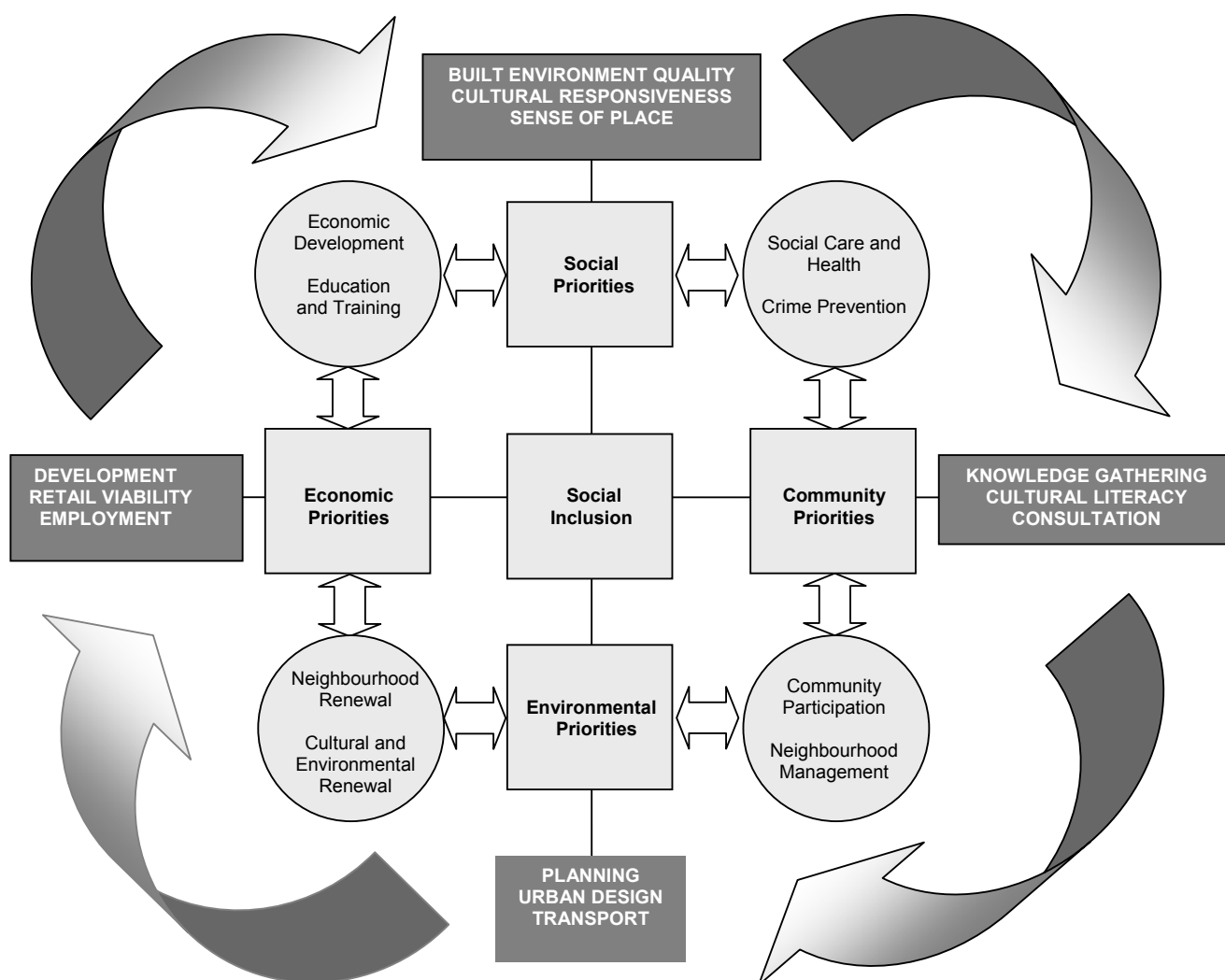
Priorities for social inclusion are identified in the strategy as falling into four categories; social, economic, community and environmental.

From an Intercultural, built environment and planning perspective the:

- **social** priorities would be to achieved through master planning and urban design outcomes that create a public realm that is open and welcoming to all citizens regardless of the socio/economic status and cultural background. It would provide safe and congenial meeting places for people of all age groups and be respectful of the cultural needs and values of different cultures. There would be a special focus on creating spaces and places where intercultural activity can flourish, be it casual encounters or structured networking.
- **Economic** priorities would be to support sustainable development and economic growth through developing a balance between capitalizing on the diversity of the community and supporting small culturally diverse businesses while master planning for culturally sensitive redevelopment projects that bring new opportunities and wealth to the community.
- **Community** priorities would be to build a strong partnership between the community, in all its diversity, and Council. To ensure that there is a high level of cultural literacy within the planning and design staff. This requires going beyond traditional notions of regulatory public consultation to a meaningful and ongoing engagement with the community in order to understand the nature of the community and its diverse needs and aspirations.
- **Environmental** priorities would also reflect through the design of safe and welcoming public spaces and the built fabric of the Borough to meet the diverse needs and to express the richness of the cultural life of the community.

There is an identified need to crate a greater link between social inclusion planning for communities living within a pre-existing built environment and appropriate urban regeneration and neighbourhood renewal strategies. While also providing a social underpinning to new planning and development activity to ensure that social inclusion considerations are thoroughly considered during the planning and design process.

The following chart takes the content of Diagram A [page 13] from the *Social Inclusion Strategy*, in the light grey boxes and wraps it in the context of the built environment in the dark grey boxes. This new combined chart demonstrates the critical interrelationship between the important areas of planning and social inclusion and shows how the issues are all interlinked.



Current Planning and Public Realm Context

Built Environment Context

In Deptford and Catford the existing building stock and the public realm is generally of poor quality and lacking amenity. Despite this low quality the communities of Deptford and Catford appear to have successfully adapted the existing built environment to meet their current needs and also to support a rich cultural life.

From observations during the course of this study it seems that intercultural activity takes place primarily and naturally in the retail sector and especially in the street market environments. It is evident that social interaction takes place on the footpaths of Deptford High Street between traders and shoppers, especially as in many cases the produce spills out onto the footpath providing a rich visual and olfactory experience. However, the food outlets appear to be the only public realm reflection of the great diversity of cultures and creative products of the area.

Other than the retail establishments generally the public realm is uninviting and does not encourage gathering for social interaction. For example, the public realm is not designed to encourage gathering, observing and interacting. There is no evidence of any public seating in the area of Deptford High Street, the market squares or the Albany arts centre. Although Catford is somewhat better equipped with gathering places and public seating there is much more that could be done to make the centre welcoming and inclusive.

The issue of gathering “jamming” places for young people to meet slightly away from but interconnected to main public spaces has been identified through the consultation. The young people consulted explained that currently they and their friends are forced to utilize “fugitive” spaces that are risky and unsafe. During a forum with young people at Second Wave in Deptford there was discussion of the central role of libraries as safe and democratic spaces where they could meet and spend time.

Current Planning Context

Lewisham is on the cusp of major new developments in the Borough that will have critical impacts on the existing community. For example the large riverfront development at Convoy's Wharf will inevitably bring a new community of higher socio/economic resident into the Deptford area.

There are current proposals for the redevelopment of the Deptford station which will drastically change mid point of the High Street and considerations associated with redeveloping the pool and library.

Of major significance is the potential of developments at the ends of Deptford High Street that may have the effect of shifting the critical mass and focal point of interest away from the current diverse strip shopping. Deptford SE8 and Convoy's Wharf will also provide a new range of ‘retail offer’ that has the potential to draw away custom and interest from the Main Street.

It is therefore vital that Council consider how the new development areas, their new public spaces and new facilities will impact on current community. For example questions include; will there be an integration of Convoy's Wharf into the physical fabric of Deptford or will it remain somewhat separate; will there be sufficient draw for the poorer residents of Deptford to visit and spend time at Convoy's?

At Catford the potential to develop a new community/civic heart exists if the road alignment is changed as proposed. Catford Broadway provides an ideal opportunity to create a welcoming and meaningful space for the community as it's scale and proximity to the shopping make it an ideal gathering spaces if free from through traffic.

National Government Planning Requirements

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister [ODPM] has introduced the new Local Development Framework [LDF] as identified in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This Act sets out a new system of planning aimed at developing a range of planning and development documents that address the big picture. The LDF requires a Local Development Scheme [LDS]; the development plan documents; and a series of supplementary planning documents as set out in the Lewisham Local Development Framework.

The framework presents a spatial approach to planning that is highly relevant to the concept of planning and designing through an Intercultural Lens. This new planning approach provides the opportunity to bring together the social, cultural, economic and environmental agendas in future master planning to a greater degree than previously considered.

Local development frameworks will be spatial rather than purely land use plans. Traditionally, the land use planning system has focused upon the regulation and control of the use of land. The aim is to go beyond this, to take account of the strategies and plans of other agencies not traditionally involved in the land use planning system but who also have an impact on spatial development. [Creating Local Development Frameworks: A Companion Guide to PPS12: page 7]

Of special relevance to the Intercultural City approach is the focus, identified in the new planning framework, on understanding the local community and acknowledging the importance of expanding the role of consultation beyond the traditional regulatory requirements.

Survey and evidence gathering – a comprehensive evidence base is a vital aspect of local development document preparation. Authorities need to have a sound understanding of current and future local issues and needs in order to prepare robust and effective plans. The evidence base should include information collected by authorities, external bodies (e.g. local community interests) and original research. Section 5.2 sets out further details on developing and managing the evidence base. [page 28]

The framework document states that in the context of the new framework; *Consultation means a continuous process of informal discussion with people during this phase as opposed to formal discrete public participation required by Regulation 26.*[page 28]

Also of importance is the potential to develop 106 Planning Obligations that can deliver outcomes that support cultural life. Although ODPM are specific that “planning obligations should never be used as a surrogate betterment levy” there are many opportunities to establish cultural outcomes within the context of obligations that are “necessary, relevant to planning, directly related to the proposed development, fairly and reasonably related to the sale and kind to the proposed development, and reasonable in all other respects”.

Planning and Urban Design Industry Context

Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment [CABE]

- culturally diverse representation in the Built Environment Professions
A research project has been undertaken by the Centre for Ethnic Minority Studies at Royal Holloway, University of London.

This research considered culturally diverse representation in education and in employment within the built environment professions. The findings confirm that while culturally diverse students are relatively well represented in built environment courses at universities there are still barriers or perceptions of barriers in employment and progression through the profession.

It is an important study and highlights the need to ensure equal opportunity exists throughout the built environment sector and provides many insights into the experiences of graduates entering the workforce. What the study does not shed any light on is the likely impact on master planning and urban design of a higher representation of ethnicities in the professions. Will they for instance bring a different perspective to their planning and design work or will they adopt the work practices of the mainstream?

The study reports that some of the culturally diverse Architects interviewed stated that they had selected the profession because of the “influence of architecture on society” and that it provided an opportunity to explore the “relationship between race, cultural identity and architecture”. CABE could therefore be approached to extend their research to ask questions of culturally diverse planning and design professionals in order to establish if they approach their work from a different cultural perspective or if they find they must adopt established majority views.

- Place Consultation Tool
The Place Consultation Tool has been developed by CABE Space and is currently undergoing evaluation and trial use especially in relation to parks but also for public open space. The survey form has been designed for use in workshops and not only asks a wide range of well conceived questions but it also asks participants to rate the importance of each aspect of the questionnaire. In addition to the main Place Consultation Tool CABE is developing a further questionnaire to use in street surveys.

Introductory questions relate to:

- Relationship to place
- Usage patterns
- Personal questions including age and ethnicity

The main part of the form is structured around the following three key areas:

Usability: Access – Use - Interaction

Physical Quality: Maintenance – Performance - Made From

Impact: Environment – Community - Individual

Of special relevance to the Intercultural City project are the following questions in the usability section:

- Use – This place is good for everybody [Is this place popular with different people – children, teenagers, adults, older people, disabled people, people from different ethnic communities, etc]
- Interaction – Different things happen here at the same time and people do not argue over space [think about whether people from different backgrounds and ages respect each others space]
- Interaction – People mix well here [Think about whether people from different backgrounds and ages enjoy being together here]

The Place Consultation Tool appears to be a very useful consultation approach but has few questions of relevance to the issue of master planning through an Intercultural Lens. Perhaps CABE could be approached about including additional questions that help to identify different ways that BME groups use public space.

Royal Town Planning Institute [RTPI]

- **Tomorrows Planners**
The RTPI have a range of programmes associated with the professional development of young planners. For example the Positive Action Training Highway [PATH] program helps culturally diverse students in the planning profession. This program has obvious links to the study into culturally diverse Representation in the Built Environment Profession.
- **Planning Aid**
Planning Aid is a voluntary service offering free, independent and professional advice and support on town planning matters to community groups and individuals who cannot afford to employ a planning consultant. It enables local communities, particularly those with limited resources, to participate effectively in planning matters. It also helps town planners to develop their skills and experience. RTPI is working with culturally diverse communities and the Consultation Institute in regards to government planning requirements.

RTPI expressed interest in the Intercultural City project and would be happy to run e-bulletins discussion on intercultural planning questions.

Urban Design Group [UDG]

- **Placecheck**
In association with the Urban Design Alliance Rob Cowan from UDG has been responsible for the development of *Placecheck* a booklet that provides a useful introduction for people to make an assessment of their urban environment. It is a self help booklet with three parts, Part A simply asks three basic questions; "what do you like about this place, what do you dislike about it and what needs to be improved?" Part B and C then go into more detailed questions under the headings of "The People" and "The Place". The booklet is being used widely across the country by councils and communities and provides a valuable tool for community engagement and discussion. *Placecheck* does not engage in questions relating to diversity or how culturally diverse community needs might vary from mainstream usage.
- **ODPM Committee Inquiry into Social Cohesion**
In response to the 2003 ODPM inquiry into Social Cohesion UDAL responded with a range of comments on designing for cohesive communities. Included in their response is a useful attempt at putting "Objectives of Social Cohesion" against the seven objectives of good urban design identified by ODPM.

For example social cohesion might have the following characteristics:

- Community identity – people with a sense of belonging
- Respect – people who understand the difference between people's public and private personas [expressed through such qualities as politeness, courtesy and social responsibility]
- Public and civic life – people who are involved in networks, events, rituals, celebrations, culture and entertainment
- Sociability – people who interact with one another
- Understanding – people who understand and welcome the social conventions and values of others
- Friendliness – people whose social networks are open, inclusive and ever-changing
- Tolerance – people who welcome the differences in other people, both in individuals and groups

The ODPM social cohesion agenda would suggest that there might be value in making an approach to ODPM for funding to further the Intercultural City project's investigation into the value of interculturalism as a contributor to cohesion in the built environment.

The Challenges

As a result of the stage 1 research three critical challenges were identified; firstly to heighten and broaden the planners and designers cultural knowledge base; secondly to review planning and design decisions through an Intercultural Lens; and thirdly to develop a broadened professional mindset.

Challenge 1: Gaining the “Knowledge”

We believe that one of the most important challenges for Council is to gain a deeper, broader and richer “knowledge” of the Lewisham community and its cultures. By this we mean going beyond traditional notions of community consultation and of gathering census data, to building a deep and ongoing understanding of the changing demographic nature of the community and of people’s perceived needs and aspirations.

Research through diversity focus groups and alternative approaches such as working with arts groups to investigate cultural values and their application in housing and public realm design should be considered. During the consultation for this report a session with young performing arts people from Second Wave in Deptford established that they were both informed and articulate about place making issues and would be very interested in working with Council on the *Intercultural City* project and indeed would be interested in ongoing dialogue in regards to planning issues for young people. In addition there were discussions with Creative Lewisham about the concept of an observatory or “Knowledge Base”.

The Knowledge Base might be an important centre for the gathering of the knowledge gained from a wide range of sources, such as the street wardens, town centre managers, arts organisations and community groups. Not only would the Knowledge Base be a repository for data and stories but would provide an opportunity for ongoing investigation into urban life in Lewisham. One of its key functions would be to provide in-depth and up to date community information to planning and policy divisions of Council.

Knowing the People

Knowing the people has as its focus opening up an iterative process of listening to the built environment needs of Lewisham’s diverse community and learning new ways to plan and design. To deliver unique architectural and public realm solutions that provide an open and equitable city that reflects its diversity.

The ODPM companion guide to the Local Development Framework states that:
Authorities need to have a sound understanding of current and future local issues and needs in order to prepare robust and effective plans.

From an intercultural perspective we recommend that this should be done through an intercultural listening and learning circle process as set out in the Intercultural Toolkit. In essence this is a process of giving the community an opportunity to talk about the nature of their lives in a built environment context. Therefore officers have an opportunity to listen to stories about people’s lives lived out in a residential or public environment which will raise issues relating to both needs and aspirations.

The cycle then provides planners and designers with the task of seeking alternative approaches that may deliver benefits to the community, or alternately report back that the issues have no simple solution but they are investigating alternatives that may have an impact in the long term.

The key to the process is that it provides community members with a voice and that it demonstrates that Council is listening and doing/thinking about the issues they have raised. It also provides officers with valuable insights into how people live in the built environment that their decisions control or create.

Challenge 2: Through an Intercultural Lens

While there must be a long term goal to ensure that all development and redevelopment is culturally relevant and sustainable for the Lewisham community there are also a range of current considerations that should be explored through the Intercultural Lens.

Intercultural Interaction

There is an immediate 'challenge' to improve the quality of existing public places in order to create an environment that is welcoming to all people and that will support and encourage intercultural interaction.

Although in the bigger scheme of things the issues of public seating might seem trivial, the reality is that there is a lack of meeting spaces and public seating, or even low walls that can be sat on. In Deptford High Street this means that there is nowhere that people can gather, rest or experience a chance encounter.



Therefore a small incremental step towards creating greater intercultural activity might be to develop a number of 'people nodes' along the High Street which might include seating clusters:

- in front of St Pauls church
- in the market square on the corner of Giffin Street
- around the Albany centre
- as part of the Deptford Station redevelopment.

The provision of seating should be based on careful consideration of the communities needs, especially the needs of the elderly and young people. The centre image above is a simple example of how small groupings of public chairs can provide opportunities for the individual or groups to rest and watch the world go by.

In addition there is a need for interaction among young people from diverse backgrounds. This is about providing safe "jamming spaces" where young people can gather and interact in close proximity to adults and street life and not be forced into using "fugitive spaces" such as wasteland.

Civic Infrastructure

Libraries are one of the most important civic institutions from an intercultural perspective; they are seen as safe, inclusive and a source of cultural exchange.

The positioning of a library is therefore critical to a community. In the event that the Deptford library is redeveloped ideally it should be positioned as a community focus on Giffin Street at the edge of the market square, perhaps in association with the Council information centre. Here it would provide a community focal point and hub of day and evening activity within sight of the High Street. It would therefore have a much higher profile in the community and have the potential to be linked with a public seating node that would create an important meeting point and potential site for intercultural activity. A welcoming entry, designed through the Intercultural Lens, facing out onto a reinvigorated market square would not only raise the profile of the library as an important cultural institution but also increase its role as an intercultural space for all.

Transparent, safe and welcoming entries to civic infrastructure send all the right messages that this is a place of the people, it is not a private/corporate space such as a shopping centre, it is clearly a civic space. In order to encourage the widest participation in civic facilities and civic life designers must understand the cultural nuances associated with passing through a threshold into internal spaces. From an intercultural perspective the entry to a building is perhaps the most critical element of the building therefore requiring a significant level of cultural literacy and sensitive design.

In Deptford the entry to the Albany sends all the wrong messages, while it is an important centre of creativity and culture it is very much about internal vibrancy while portraying an external bunker image. The surrounding public spaces are "desert places" on non market days and at night it is even more uninviting. Which all comes together to send a clear message - "NO".



However, it would not be difficult or particularly expensive to bring some of the creativity out into the public realm and try to animate the area around the entry with artwork and welcoming pools of light. It could become a changing focus for cultural expression from the increasingly diverse community.

New Developments

While the above examples are some of the small incremental changes that could take place immediately with significant benefit to the existing community, Lewisham also needs to face the larger challenge of new developments in the Borough.

The key 'challenge' for Lewisham is how to regenerate and encourage new developments in the Borough without destroying the existing highly diverse, rich and vibrant but fragile cultural life of the community. This is not about preventing or resisting change and development but it is about mitigating negative impacts on the things that people value about their place.

It is easy to see that places such as Deptford High Street meet many of the Jane Jacobs criteria of; diversity of activities; fine grain of urban form; diversity of building stock and the all important critical mass of people. Especially on market days when the diversity of product is greatly increased and the mass of people create a 'crush of cultures'. The challenge then is how to both ensure that a new development such as Convoy's can have a fine grain and diversity of built form supported by sufficient diversity of retail and event activity to create a vibrant public realm. Equally keeping in mind the balance between encouraging new business and economic development at Convoy's while ensuring that it does not 'drain away' the viability of High Street traders.

In Catford the potential redevelopment of the shopping centre should also be considered through the Intercultural Lens especially in regard to maintaining a highly diverse range of retail offer to meet the needs of local cultural groups and also to create new public interface and public spaces that encourage interaction. Likewise at Catford, in the event that the road redevelopment eventuates it will provide the planning and design team with significant opportunities to consider new public realm from an intercultural perspective.

There is the opportunity of redeveloping Catford Broadway into a community space given its proximity to the retail precinct it could be redeveloped to provide a bustling new focal point for community meeting and market places. In addition the spaces between the Council Chambers and administration building if reclaimed from traffic could become a major civic space for the more formal events, exhibitions and celebrations that require sufficient area for the concentration and management of large numbers of people.

We believe that this challenge can only be addressed through broadening professional thinking and by gaining greater knowledge of the community, their values and the things that have meaning to their lives.

Challenge 3: Broadening professional thinking

Critical to planning through an Intercultural Lens is a commitment to taking a broader approach to professional practice.

Interdisciplinary not just multidisciplinary practice

This involves the challenge of building interdisciplinary practice with a high level of cultural literacy. Cultural literacy is the ability to read and understand local culture in order to attribute cultural meaning and significance to anything seen, analysed and produced. A culturally literate planner or designer will therefore have the skills to create public spaces and new developments that have both drawn inspiration from existing local cultures and be responsive to and support the sustaining of local cultures.

Planners are skilled professionals who know how to plan and should plan for community life; urban designers are trained to design and should design to address the needs as expressed by the community; although the community may not be trained planners or designers they do know how they live their lives, they know how a place feels and they know how they interact with others - so planners and designers must, as discussed previously, ask the community about their lives, their needs and their aspirations. Today urban professionals must breakdown some of the narrow professional boundaries that have been established through compartmentalised corporate structures. We need to go beyond multidisciplinary practice where there are a range of professions working together, where each is responsible for their own area of expertise to an interdisciplinary approach where all the skills are pooled and professional boundaries are removed.

For example, the boundaries between the concept of urban renewal and urban regeneration agendas should be brought together so that the social inclusion can properly influence regeneration and development activity in order to meet the needs of people from different cultural backgrounds and across age groups.

In Lewisham we believe that it is critical to not only bringing together social inclusion strategies and urban development master planning activities but to also forge a stronger working partnership between the Planning department and the Policy and Partnership section in order to build a seamless working relationship.

Engaging the planning and design profession

Planning through an Intercultural Lens is not just a challenge for the Council planning and design team it is also about profession engagement with external consultants and development teams responsible for private sector development in the Borough.

If new private developments are to make a major contribution to cultural life in Lewisham the developers and their teams need to understand Council's objectives of supporting diversity and building a meaningful public realm in which people can lead rich, inclusive and financially rewarding lives. It is critical in briefs for new projects that Council has initiated should draw upon the knowledge gained through the intercultural research process and sets out clear intercultural objectives.

In the case of projects that are not Council initiated there might for instance be a requirement that all development applications not only provide their Design Statements but be required to include assessments of the cultural diversity context and a cultural impact statement.

From our discussion with professional bodies such as CABE, RTPI and UDG there seems to be considerable goodwill and interest in the Lewisham Intercultural City case study. It is therefore recommended that Lewisham seek to engage these bodies in further developing the Intercultural City project through inviting members of professional planning and design groups to engage in workshops and listen circles.

The potential for additional financial resources to extend the research work and engage in the process of gathering knowledge should be explored with CABE and OPDM as this study appears to have considerable synergy with their current activities.

Part 2:



Research Approach

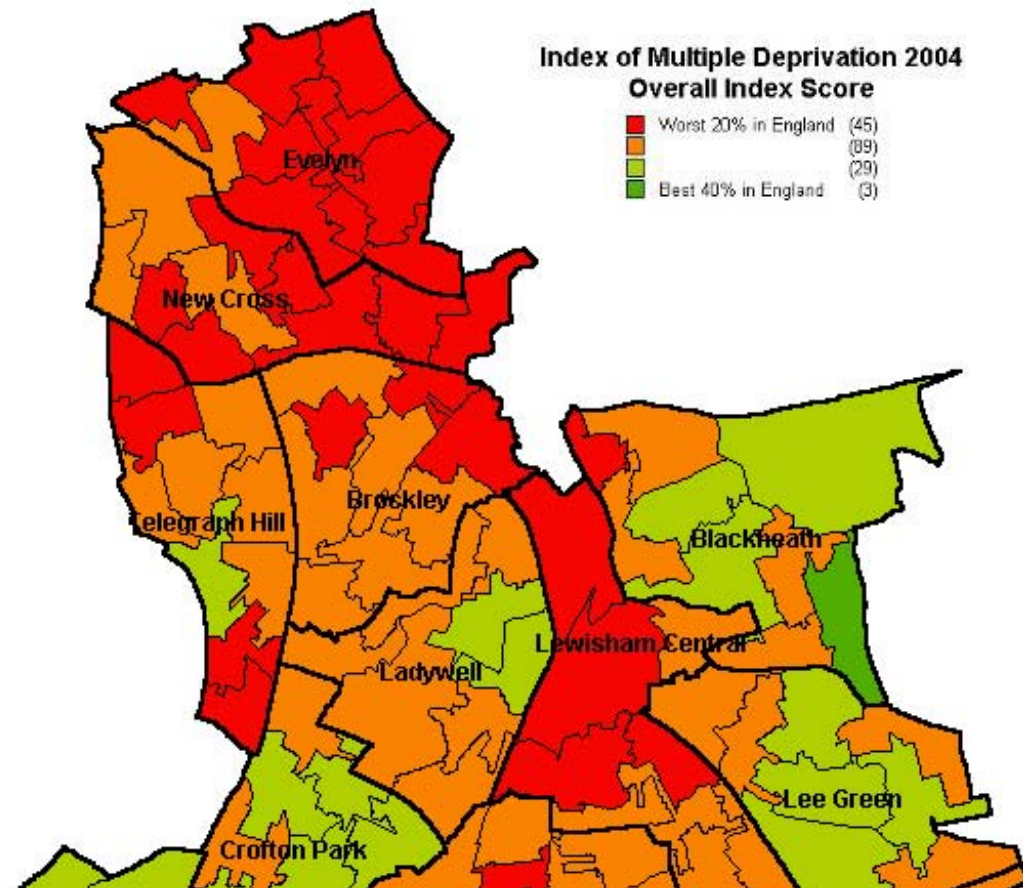
In 2006 Phase 2 picked up the Phase 1 challenges and focused on gaining greater knowledge of the people living in Deptford and the Evelyn Ward. Deptford is of strategic interest because of its highly diverse community and the level of current and potential redevelopment planned for the area.

The ward profile for Evelyn states that:

Evelyn ward has the highest proportion of black and minority ethnic (BME) residents in the Borough. Culturally diverse residents account for 55% of the Evelyn population, compared with an average of 34% across the Borough.

Not only is the ward statistically diverse but it also rates among the worst 20% in the Multiple Deprivation Index for England. Of particular relevance to the Intercultural City project are the poor ratings in the Living Environment, Barriers to Housing and Services and Income Deprivation indices.

In the light of the above statistical profile the *Knowing Lewisham* project set out to gain first hand knowledge of the lives of Deptford residents from culturally diverse backgrounds, local traders, faith groups and service providers. While the focus of this phase was on Deptford and the Evelyn Ward the findings and subsequent recommendations are relevant to planning across the borough.



Community conversations

It is important to state that the *Knowing Lewisham* project is not a conventional research project nor was it a formal community consultation process. It involved a series of strategic conversations with a small number of community groups with the aim of better understanding cultural differences and its relevance to planning and urban design. In addition the project sought to provide planning officers with a greater level of cultural literacy and insight into diversity issues in Deptford.

In July 2006 Council prepared a Planning Policy, "Statement of Community Involvement" as part of the Local Development Framework which states:

1.1 The Statement of Community Involvement sets out how the community can be involved with planning in the London Borough of Lewisham. It has been prepared to ensure that consultation forms an integral part of the planning activities of the Council and in order for the community to know when, how and for what reason consultation is to happen.

One of the critical reasons for the *Knowing Lewisham* project is to gain a greater understanding of the nature of the community, their lives, needs and aspirations in order that future community involvement will be informed, relevant and targeted. The approach taken in Phase 2 was to engage with a small range of community groups and individuals in informal and meaningful dialogue. The study team and Council officers brought together the participants in a relaxed and open gathering where a range of issues were explored [see The Knowledge Questions] utilising "Listening Cycle" methodology.

The cycle took the form of:

Listening: Listening circles of different cultural groups were held to provide an opportunity for Council officers to meet and listen to community groups in an informal setting. A series of "knowledge questions" were posed and the community participants were encouraged to talk about their cultural lives and how they are played out in the built environment. For the study team and the officers the process was one of posing questions and seeking clarification but not to attempt to answer or solve issues during the session. The aim of the sessions was to gain an insight into the interrelationship between people and place.

Prior to the community sessions community advisors were consulted to establish culturally appropriate ways in which the questions should be presented to ensure that the questions were not likely to be interpreted as too personal or seeking a higher level of cultural disclosure than might be uncomfortable for the participants.

Learning: A significant element of the learning process was the attendance of individual planning officers at the listening circles to hear first hand about people's lives at home and in the public realm. Each of the officers were asked to identify the key lessons they had learnt and how that impacted on their work as a planner. They were then asked how they might change the existing planning process or how a cultural perspective might change the way in which they addressed their work.

Considering: This step involved inter-disciplinary workshops with professional designers, town planners and Town Centre Managers, where the lessons learnt reported and discussed. The key purpose of this step was to expand peoples' thinking and knowledge about community needs and aspirations. Those involved included Planning and Economic Development officers, Council's Design Advisory Panel, architects currently engaged on key Deptford projects and the representatives from the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment [CABE]. The workshops considered the issues raised and assessed their implications for planning and design of; new public realm projects and civic infrastructure; redevelopment of existing spaces; and place management initiatives by Town Centre Managers etc.

It would be important for these officers and external participants to consider existing regulations and bylaws and investigate what opportunities exist for new and innovative approaches within the regulatory framework. Or if indeed there is a need to seek some changes to inappropriate regulations.

Reporting: A report-back session was held that brought together representative from the community groups consulted. At this session the study team and Council officers reported on the key issues that they had learnt from the sessions they had attended and how those issues related to their work within the planning department.

In addition to the feedback sessions copies of the draft report were circulated to the communities who participated for their comment.

This final phase of the cycle was considered to have been vital in demonstrating to the community that Council had listened to what they were saying and although the team was making no promises of immediate change the team was able to discuss the potential areas for change or for review.

What the people told us

About community attitudes and changes

We were told that although there is a very high level of cultural diversity in the Deptford area and a relatively good level of acceptance of difference there were unfortunately still many serious cases of racially motivated verbal and physical abuse.

The Muslim women reported that there had been a serious increase in the level of abuse since the 2005 London bombing and indeed some feared for their lives after attacks on their homes.

The general impression gained from our interviews was one of relative openness and acceptance of diversity but one of separate lives with little interaction.

It was suggested that there is a noticeable change in the composition of the Deptford community, not only is there increased cultural diversity but also a growing number of people living in Deptford who are commuting to London for work. We were told that there is a noticeable increase in the numbers of people catching the train in the morning and returning in the evening. Traders were concerned that commuters might not spend their money in Deptford as they have access to shops in London. Others raised the concern that the newer arrivals might not have such a strong association with the area as those who had lived in Deptford for a long time.

About home and family life

We were told that many of the migrant communities in the Deptford area had large families, or extended and intergenerational households. This was particularly the case in the Somali community where large families, often with six or more children, were living in two bedroom social housing.

The lack of diversity in housing stock was raised as a significant barrier to meeting the accommodation needs of large families and to them leading fulfilling cultural lives at home. This was especially true for Muslim families who traditionally lead very home based lives where family, community or faith based celebrations brought together large numbers of people.

The housing issue was linked to the need for access to affordable and culturally appropriate community facilities where the community can meet for their social gatherings. We were told that church based groups such as the West African and Caribbean communities utilised church facilities for their major celebrations. It was suggested that the lack of affordable community facilities was contributing to sense of isolation felt by the communities as they are forced to cluster together for mutual support.

Perhaps one of the most critical issues raised in relation to the inadequate housing was the impact on the children's educational performance and the pressures on young adults. We were told that for large families, life in small flats was extremely difficult for school children due to the lack of space and quiet needed to undertake homework or just read a book. Educational achievement in Somali and Vietnamese communities is conically low.

About the lives of young people

We were told that life for children of ethnic minority communities is very difficult as they are a generation in transition. Traditional cultural life and family structures are under considerable pressure as parental control and social structures breakdown in their families and communities due to language barriers, unemployment and chronic poverty.

Many of those interviewed had a perception that groups of young people are seen as a nuisance, or even a threat and consequently are not welcome in the parks and public places. Parents suggested that there were few places where their children could meet and hangout with their friends after school or on the weekends that were safe and under some adult supervision or surveillance.

During a forum with young people at Second Wave in Deptford in Stage 1 or the "Knowing Lewisham" project the

issue of gathering or “jamming” places for young people to meet was raised. Their stated preference was for spaces that were slightly away from but interconnected to main public spaces. The young people explained that currently they and their friends are forced to utilize “fugitive” spaces that are risky and unsafe. It was also suggested by the young people that the library plays an important role as a safe and democratic space where they could meet and spend time.

No Lingerin In Lewisham

No Lingerin in Lewisham was a collaborative project run in 2006 by Goldsmiths Design and Technology in association with Planning and Economic Development staff. The project set out to explore ‘play’ spaces in Lewisham, “spaces that are provided, adopted, imagined, special and future - and the pedestrian/cycle/bus journeys between them”. The focus was on working with young people to gain an understanding of how they related to the built environment and experienced the spaces they moved through or spent time in.

The project rationale stated that the underlying thinking behind the project was two-fold:

1. *Teenagers ‘hanging about’ is often viewed as a negative leisure activity (for example, in shopping centres groups are often moved on for lingering). This project seeks to provoke a creative response to this issue that involves young people mapping alternatives that invite debate with the local council and residents*
2. *The workshops are designed to stimulate creative responses to local urban planning of ‘play’ spaces (from walkways to fields) with those who wouldn’t usually be invited or concern themselves with this kind of intervention*

A series of four workshops were held with fifteen young people around the ages of eleven and twelve. Children were all local students from the Deptford Green Secondary School which had linked the project to the student’s Citizenship and Design Technology lessons. The workshop programme included walks through selected areas, photography of urban elements and sessions where they designed their “imagined lingering spaces”.

Planning and Economic Development staff worked with the Goldsmiths team during the workshops to identify areas of concern and possible solutions that might create youth friendly public spaces. The project highlighted the need to help young people understand the elements that make up safe and usable urban environments through contact with urban professionals in order to help them articulate their experiences of living and playing in the city. The mapping and travel diary process demonstrated that the young people were attuned to and perceptive about their surroundings and that they were very focused on the close-up vision rather than the broader environment.

While the *No Lingerin in Lewisham* project did not specifically focus on the young people’s different responses from an intercultural perspective it did present a valuable lesson in “connecting” with an important sector of the community who are not normally consulted about urban planning and design issues. Further projects of this nature could assist in developing a future community that are informed and engaged with Borough planning issues and develop a greater level of ownership of their immediate environment.

About the lives of the elderly

We were told by participants that many of the elderly members of minority communities live very isolated lives. This is due to a range of factors such as the lack of English language proficiency, difficulty of getting out and about and the lack of public gathering places where they can meet their peers. The Vietnamese participants suggested that in Vietnam the elderly would spend most of their day interacting with the community as they have a very interactive culture.

The lack of public seating in the streets was highlighted as an issue and concerns about safety in the parks was seen as a deterrent to the elderly making more use of the public spaces available.

We heard that there has been a significant shift in the power structures within minority communities as younger people with good command of English increasingly become the family interpreter and official organiser. As part of this generational shift a breakdown in sharing of cultural knowledge is occurring. For example the Somali

participants felt that their children were out of touch with their history and heritage. These factors have left the elderly feeling devalued and more isolated.

About using public space and civic facilities

Attitudes to life outside the home and utilising public space were key areas for discussion during our conversations with all groups. We heard for instance that the Vietnamese who come from a very outgoing and vibrant society would love to make a greater use of public space, whereas the Somali community being a more internal culture where the focus traditionally would be on the courtyard home and very private living were less inclined to utilise public space and facilities. In addition for the Muslim community the need for regular prayer and an appropriate place to pray presents a challenge to utilising public spaces and facilities.

The Deptford area appears to be well serviced by parks and playgrounds; unfortunately there was an overriding perception that the streets and parks were not very safe. For example we were told by some of the mothers that they need places like parks and playgrounds to take their children to because of the cramped home conditions but were fearful of harassment and tended to pack up and leave parks if groups of youths arrived.

Indeed the question of safety was often repeated and related not only to the use of parks. Generally people reported that they did not feel very safe in the streets. Streets feel particularly unsafe in the evenings, people afraid to go out due to fear of crime. This was especially true of residents of the Peyps Estate who had to walk along Grove and Evelyn Streets to get to the High Street.

Repeatedly people commented on the lack of public seating or places to gather in the streets and squares. People suggested that the lack of places to gather limits the opportunity to casually meet friends or to have a chance encounter with strangers. This was particularly seen as a disadvantage for both the elderly and young people who need the opportunity to meet and spend time with their peers.

The library was identified as the most important civic facility and a key gathering point for people across the communities involved in the project. While there were some issues about the limited range of material in selected languages there was general support for the library's diversity of available books, magazines and music. Story telling was seen as a popular activity, especially as many of the parents are illiterate so can not personally read to their children even in their own language.

For young people the library provides a range of opportunities for after school and school holiday activities especially in providing access to computers. In addition the library computers provide migrant families with a mechanism for keeping in contact with their home country, family and friends. We were also told that library use is hindered by safety issues. Parents expressed concerns over the safety of their children walking to and from the library on their own and having to be escorted by an adult limited the times the children could go to the library.

Perhaps for parents the most significant place of interaction between cultures are the primary and secondary schools with their wide diversity of ethnicities and languages.

Deptford Green School states that:

*We are an English college with Citizenship and Drama as our supporting subjects. We have chosen these Humanities subjects as our analysis shows that our pupils living in an inner city environment need to be **empowered to find their voice**. They need to believe that they can **make a difference** to their lives and their communities. They need to discover a **sense of agency** to believe change is possible. We believe that by linking English with Citizenship and Drama we can foster in our pupils a **deeper understanding of human society** and their place in it and also **give them skills to change their world**. Through **developing their voice**, through giving them a sense of **ownership and power** and by **developing their literacy's** we would hope to build **independence of thought** and increase **motivation for learning**. The route to improvement for Deptford Green is to create **literate, articulate, motivated independent learners, active learners and active citizens**.*

In addition to the school as a site for interculturalism, school facilities were seen as an important place for community activities. Although we were told the after hours hire costs were a barrier to the migrant communities making the most of school facilities.

About retail and business life

We heard a range of opinions regarding the question of cultural diversity and its influence on the retail life of Deptford. There were those who felt that the diversity of retail and especially food establishments in the High Street was a very positive contribution to the area, making Deptford a vibrant place to live and visit. A contrary position was also made that there was a danger of too much cultural diversity at the expense of mainstream shops coming into the area.

The High Street traders indicated that there was increasing evening activity in the street with more restaurants opening through the week. This was especially in the northern end as the southern end is comparatively quiet at night. Indeed there were those who stated that the southern end did not feel safe in the evenings. It was suggested that while the current level of evening activity had not as yet reached a critical mass where the numbers of people in the street would discourage anti-social behaviour, there had been an improvement and traders felt positive about the future. For example, there have been licence applications from a West African restaurant for a function licence to hold late night events to cater for the needs of the many shift workers in the area.

Safety and vandalism were highlighted as major concerns by traders from all the communities consulted, with the station environs being singled out as a blight on the street. The issue of shop front shutters was a contentious one, with traders insisting there is a need to protect their windows and stock, while also acknowledging that it does present a negative visual impact.

Throughout the conversations were told that the Deptford High Street markets were a wonderful attribute to the area. People were very enthusiastic about the markets and the range of goods available; this is especially the case for many of the migrant communities as it provides affordable goods to meet the needs of their families. It was suggested by a number of participants that the markets could be improved by introducing a bit more diversity of stalls and greater range of take-away food and that this might encourage people to stay around the High Street for longer and increase the economic viability of the area.

Traders also saw the value of design and creative industry businesses establishing in the area, especially the High Street as good for the economy and to act as a draw to a younger demographic and potential magnet for people outside Lewisham. We were told that there are many opportunities for the creative industries to do more in encouraging cross-cultural activity and new fusion products.

The Vietnamese participants indicated there was a desire among their community to start businesses as a way of breaking out of the poverty cycle; however language is a real barrier. It was suggested that perhaps Council as part of its economic development activities could have targeted programmes for different cultural groups to help overcome the language barrier.

About celebrating their culture

All the groups we talked to were keen to have opportunities to celebrate their cultural and religious festivals and events in public as a way of sharing their culture and traditions. It was considered an important way of raising awareness of different cultures and a way of improving knowledge and acceptance.

It was particularly interesting that in most of our conversations people suggested that they would really like to be involved in cross-cultural activity as a way of breaking down the barriers between the perceived "parallel lives". For example representatives from the Christ Life church suggested that there should be a "common forum" of multicultural communities working together on festivals and events. Such events were seen as a potential mechanism for engaging young people and helping them build knowledge of their own culture and the culture of others in the community.

While there was strong support for festival and events there was also discussion about the most appropriate public place for such events. It was suggested that parks or town square were the ideal locations, with the town square, although not an ideal space, being seen as a good central location close to Deptford Main Street.

We were told by many participants that traditional foods were an ideal way of sharing cultural knowledge and breaking down barriers. Food has universal appeal and provides a common point of reference in building intercultural dialogue and is relevant across generations.

About Faith and Places of Worship

We heard that faith plays an important role in the lives of many Deptford residents, with places of worship functioning as vital community resources. For example the West African community predominantly attend Pentecostal churches which attract large congregations from Deptford and a much wider catchment area.

We were told that finding suitable sites for the many different individual churches was a major issue as planning regulations limit the number of available sites. As the Pentecostal faith involves a very exuberant expression of faith and includes all night vigils there is strong opposition from residents on the grounds of noise when sites in residential areas are proposed. There are also planning regulations that prevent Churches being established in Industrial estates.

For the Muslim community the Mosque centre provide essential facilities for community gatherings as many of the existing community facilities are not culturally appropriate. The Catford Islamic Centre, while it is not large enough nor meeting all fire safety requirements for large gatherings, is used to capacity for both prayer and community activities.

There were strong suggestions that the faith based organisations would welcome opportunities to work across cultures on community events and to share community space.

Lessons Learnt

The findings from our Phase 2 conversations would suggest that there are a very wide range of issues facing the community in Deptford that are highly relevant to planning and economic development. It was at times a confronting experience listening to the community and learning about their lives and the impacts of the social and environmental conditions they live with. It was also a very rewarding experience in that the people really appreciated the opportunity, as culturally diverse communities, to talk to the team and to know that they were being listened to.

One of the important lessons from the group sessions is that there are a number of longstanding and systemic issues that everyone seemed to raise such as housing, safety and rubbish. Issues such as these stand in the way of moving on to discuss other relevant subjects, which suggests that it is important to address some of these issues even if it is only a short term solution, at least to demonstrate that Council has listened and is committed to working with the community on improving the built environment.

Council's housing investment strategy states:

We value our citizens and want to work with them and our partners to create places in which residents can live comfortably and happily, now and in the future. Not only does this mean investing in properties and providing new ones, but also ensuring that the Council's priorities are in harmony with those of the community and other stakeholders and linking the services we provide to the wider renewal agenda.

The Strategy 2004

This is very relevant in the light of the 2003 Egan Report "Skills for Sustainable Communities" prepared for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. In the forward Sir John Egan states that "People are very clear what they want from their communities – places that are safe, clean, friendly, and prosperous, with good amenities such as education, health services, shopping and green spaces". Highlighting the links between safety and green spaces we were told by a number of the women that they do not utilise the parks, although they would like to be able to take their children there, because they do not feel safe.

We also learnt that the lack of suitable housing stock for large families is a significant problem. The Somali community were particularly concerned about the lack of suitable housing and highlighted the negative impacts on family and social life that flow from living in cramped conditions. What the discussion around housing raises is that it is important to consider not just the base issue but also the flow on ramifications and interconnections.

Interconnectedness

The housing issue is a classic case of social consequences flowing from a built environment problem. Cramped housing conditions for large families leads to a range of social problems that then impact on other aspects of the city. For example the impact on children and teenagers in particular of living in a crowded household include poor educational outcomes and an increased likelihood of ending up in the juvenile justice system. Imagine how difficult it would be to concentrate on homework when there are say six or more siblings vying for space in a two bedroom flat. The resulting low educational performances have flow on economic impacts such as limited employment options or worst still a decline into crime. Likewise we were told that the cramped home conditions result in teenagers, especially the boys, spending a lot of time out on the streets with their friends. In some cases this leads to antisocial behaviour or inter gang rivalry and violence.

The challenge therefore of planning and designing the public realm to address the community's needs and aspirations requires a holistic approach that explores the interconnections between planning decisions and social outcomes.

Delivering better communities requires not only the professional skills of planning, architecture and surveying, but also a broad range of generic skills, behaviour and knowledge – such as governance of communities, economic planning for prosperity, communication (especially listening to and selling to communities), risk taking, and above all leadership and partnership working. Local authorities and local agencies will need to

demonstrate high levels of competency in the latter two, as much of the work to develop and retrofit communities will need to be done locally – it cannot be done from the centre simply because it needs to be supported by local people. This presents as much of a challenge for national as for local government. Central departments will need to demonstrate risk taking and delegation skills to free up local agencies to deliver on the ground.

Egan Report - Skills for Sustainable Communities (2003)

Silos and Professional Mindsets

The complicated nature of the challenges facing the Deptford community require the combined skills of the many dedicated Council officers working in collaboration across departmental structures and in partnership with external agencies and community groups. The *Knowing Lewisham* focus groups and associated meetings have clearly demonstrated there are potentially valuable partnerships to be nurtured between planning, the creative sector, culturally diverse communities and associated service providers, institutions such as Goldsmiths and Stephen Lawrence Trust and especially local schools such as Tidemill and Deptford Green.

Cities and their diverse communities have become far too complicated for any one group of built environment professionals to bring together the physical, regulatory and environmental planning to meet the social needs and cultural values. The argument for truly interdisciplinary approach is strongly argued in the Egan Report.

Of the one hundred or so occupations, we identified a significant number as 'core' occupations – people who spend almost all of their professional time in activities to do with planning, delivering and maintaining sustainable communities. These are the built environment professionals – planners, architects, urban designers, etc – and decision makers and influencers – staff from local, regional and central government, developers and investors, staff from voluntary and community associations. A second group comprised 'associated occupations' – those whose contribution is extremely important to creating sustainable communities but who are not involved full time in the development process – examples are police officers, educators, health service managers, and staff in local businesses. A third group comprised those who have a legitimate interest in sustainable communities but who are not necessarily employed in the sector; this includes the wider public, media, members of residents and neighbourhood groups, students and school children.

Egan Report - Skills for Sustainable Communities (2003)

Skills Training and Cultural Diversity

The *Knowing Lewisham* project has clearly highlighted the need for greater cultural literacy among Council officers and the need for strategies that will ensure that cultural perspective are considered when planning, urban design and place making decisions are considered.

There is also a need to encourage greater diversity in the planning and design professions in order that a broader range of cultural perspectives are represented. The existence of the new Stephen Lawrence Trust building in Deptford provides an opportunity for Council to champion increased diversity in the professions.

The Trust's website states that:

The Trust is aware that there are very few architects from black and ethnic minority origin in Britain. We are seeking to change this by investing in the creative talent of young people by providing bursaries to enable them to pursue higher education in this field. This objective comes from Stephen's ambition to be an architect, which was denied because of his tragic murder.

During its first five years the Trust has supported 30 students working closely with several architectural bodies, two being the Architectural Association and the Royal Institute of British Architecture. Some of those students have graduated and are now beginning their professional placement. Others are now fully qualified architects.

Planning and the Intercultural Lens

In a 2005 article in the Guardian newspaper titled *A segregated society is a divided society*, Ted Cattle, who chaired the independent Community Cohesion Review Team in 2001 provided his insight into the situation of black and minority ethnicities in Britain:

There is an element of "self-segregation" as some people will prefer to live in an area dominated by their own ethnic or faith group. However, these "choices" are often constrained by socio-economic factors, the lack of appropriate social and cultural facilities, the location of suitable schools and, most of all, by real concerns about the lack of safety and security in other areas. The "preferred areas" will always be an odd choice, as they contain the poorest housing and have the worst overall environment.

Some degree of "clustering" is not a bad thing. If we are serious about preserving cultural identity, then a critical mass of each community will be necessary to support different places of worship, shops and social facilities. However, the "segregated" communities that we know today are so dominated by particular groups that the possibility of contact with the majority population or another minority group is limited. These "parallel lives" do not meet at any point, with little or no opportunity to explore the differences and to build mutual respect, let alone to see them as enriching our communities. Meanwhile, racists can easily spread myths and false rumours and use this ignorance of each other to demonise minorities.

[Cattle 2005]

The *Knowing Lewisham* forums would suggest that it is not always as simple as "self segregation", rather social circumstances and availability of social housing can lead to structured clustering and segregation by virtue of poverty and the need for social capital. Both the Somali and the Vietnamese community expressed concerns about being, in effect, forced into clusters due to limited housing availability, there were those who expressed a wish to have the opportunity to move beyond the constraints of the cluster environment. As has been previously stated we were told that there is little interaction across cultural boundaries and there is little opportunity to meet and interact due to the lack of gathering spaces and communal facilities.

The planning and design issues associated with the provision of flexible housing options for culturally diverse families was a much discussed issue with residents telling us that there are limited housing options that are culturally appropriate, this was especially true of the Muslim community.

In discussions with a representative from CABE a number of relevant case studies were identified as providing successful outcomes for cultural groups such as Jewish, Muslim and Asian communities.

The following examples provide an insight into housing options:

Case Study 1: Selwyn Close, Oldham

The 18 state-of-the-art houses in Selwyn Close, Oldham, have wind turbines and solar panels on the roof. The homes have up to seven bedrooms, some have bathrooms that face away from Mecca and the kitchens also comply with halal cuisine. They were designed in consultation with the local community in Coppice, which is 60% Asian. They were built after redundant one and two-bedroom flats on the street were demolished. The £3 million project has been developed by Manchester Methodist Housing Association.

Case Study 2: Converting terraces - Blackburn and Salford

In a study of Blackburn terraces undertaken by CABE, EDAW and Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council looked at options for the remodelling of terraced housing. The houses and their structure lent themselves to knock-throughs, both internally and through combining adjacent properties, while roof spaces could be opened up for extra accommodation. There were, however, some caveats. Remodelling would only be desirable if the external appearance of the properties was maintained (in terms of scale and window pattern, for example), and access problems, port sound insulation, lack of storage and poor energy efficiency would all need to be resolved. Redesign, mock-ups and public consultation were felt to be desirable in order to test improvements and to suggest possible solutions.

Creating Successful Neighbourhoods [CABE]

Case Study 3: Remodelled homes - Bensham, Gateshead

*Meeting particular cultural needs has been at the heart of a remodelling project in Whitehall Road, Bensham, Gateshead. Here, 22 Tyneside flats, vacant and in a poor state of repair, have been converted into 11 three-storey terraced houses to address a shortage identified in the 2002 Gateshead Housing Needs Survey of larger family accommodation, particularly for the large and expanding Jewish community. The conversions incorporate within each home a new kitchen and a **succah** extension, which allows for the custom of sleeping under the stars at particular festivals. The success of the model is such that the registered social landlord, Home Housing, is building a new complementary development of 15 five-bed family homes adjacent to the conversions.*

Creating Successful Neighbourhoods [CABE]

These are just a few examples of how planners and designers can meet the challenge of providing for the needs of culturally diverse communities. As built environment professionals planners, architects and urban designers are problem solvers, their task is to listen to and understand people's needs and respond accordingly. To achieve this goal requires an informed professional who has a clear understanding of the issues and design considerations they are seeking solutions to. Therefore they need to be culturally literate about cultural differences and how these differences might effect the planning of streets, residential, retail or civic infrastructure.

Cultural Expression

Despite Deptford's highly diverse community there is little physical evidence of cultural expression in public places. Apart from people on the street the shops in the High Street with their produce and signage provide the only visual evidence of cultural diversity.

There are many examples of migrant communities being very adaptable and making good use of the existing built form. In cities all round the world the Chinese Diaspora have established China Town's as a form of "Cultural Adaptive Reuse", where existing building stock receive a cultural makeover and entries are marked with the traditional gateway structure. As has been discussed in the community feedback section different cultural groups would like to be able to express their culture through the way they use the streets and buildings as well as public displays of cultural symbols.

While there are a number of public art projects around the Laban and the Creekside creative industry cluster there are no works around the more public areas such as High Street, the library or the station. Future public art projects in new developments could seek to engage with the culturally diverse communities to ensure that a diversity of symbolism is to be found across Deptford's public spaces.

It is important to consider not only opportunities for the different cultures to express their artefacts and iconography but also to look at intercultural opportunities where a fusion of cultures can come together in the creation of new and unique imagery and objects.

Turning Challenges into Opportunities

Officers Feedback

During the Phase 2 listening cycle process officers from the Planning and Economic Development unit attended the community conversations. The following section details a range of issues identified by these officers and lists their suggested options for developing a planning response to those issues raised by the community.

General Issues and Observations

Some officers felt that there was very little understanding of what they did as planners, what urban planning involved or how planning impacted on their lives, so they asked the question:

How can Planning process be better promoted?

It was suggested that through partnerships with organisations such as the Stephen Lawrence Trust and local schools Council could:

- establish opportunities for work experience or job placement for young people interested in exploring career options
- involve young people in design panel sessions
- encourage design panel practices to take on placements
- make presentations to students and or parent groups at schools

It was also suggested that there are some real barriers in working with the community on planning issues, and that:

- there appears to be a gap in communication between Council and residents over the importance of proper planning, especially in the conservation zones such as Deptford High Street
- there are a lot of long held grudges about Council services etc that get in the way of dealing with planning issues
- formal Planning Applications are difficult for people from non English speaking backgrounds, especially the way that plans are sometimes displayed without officers present to explain what is shown on the drawings
- a number of the applications received from faith groups have not been of a suitable standard for planning approval

Future Community Engagement

The listening and learning cycle provided the officers with a valuable insight to the lives of a range of groups within the Deptford community and at times challenged their own cultural perspectives and understanding of their work as planners. It was also recognised that the culturally diverse community tend to keep a low profile and that recent migrants concentrate on very basic settlement issues and are therefore not likely to take part in traditional consultation processes. This raised questions about how to imbed the *Knowing Lewisham* approach and how to continue to engage in a meaningful dialogue with the community, especially the culturally diverse groups.

In terms of long term approaches to community engagement officers suggested that:

- it was very important to establish mechanisms to ensure they 'know who is out there'
- the only way to learn about the needs of minority groups was to go to their groups rather than expecting the community to come to Council events
- it is essential that officers know how to target specific groups and what are culturally appropriate consultation approaches and protocols

Housing Options

As has been highlighted in this report the need for a greater range of housing stock is required to meet the needs of many culturally diverse communities with large, extended or intergenerational families units. Council's housing investment strategy identifies this need and reports that it is "constantly striving to find new and imaginative ways to increase both the supply and choice of properties". It does not however include any specific strategies relating

to town planning or architectural design of alternative and more flexible housing product. In response to the issues raised officers asked, how could Council encourage greater diversity and flexibility in housing stock?

The officers suggested that:

- the traditional terrace house found in the area actually allows for a range of different configurations from the single family residence to single bedroom flats
- the terrace house configuration provides a reasonably high density and should be encouraged as a housing form by developers
- that property developers currently perceive the consumer demand is for two bedroom apartments
- the housing associations are focusing on smaller housing

Future Development Opportunities and Processes

The planning officers had an opportunity to hear from residents about development issues on a general level rather than focusing on specific development proposals. Therefore gaining an insight into people's perceptions of planning processes and constraints generally, which led to an awareness that there is a high level of ignorance about the planning process and its importance in maintaining the built environment. This raised the question of how to create a better understanding of planning processes?

In terms of improving interaction and planning proposal processes with traders and developers officers suggested that:

- at present many traders do not engage with Council planners on formal planning issues rather they go ahead and do work that gets challenged retrospectively
- it is noted that culturally diverse traders are not engaging in conservation planning on Deptford High Street so there is a need for new ways to communicate with traders
- an option might be to hold a planning clinic in Deptford for example at the library or at the office of the Centre Manager where an officer would be in attendance on set days of the month – this approach might reduce the work load in long term, while building better relations with residents and property owners
- the draft shop front guidelines being developed by Council might assist in working with traders on planning issues
- Council might consider preparing High St documentation to assist traders lodge better planning application – for example provide outline building elevations of the street frontages that the trader can draw their proposed change onto for submission
- that conservation grants seemed a good way to engage with the traders and to have them do the right thing

In the case of major redevelopment plans such as Convoys, Deptford station and the Giffin Street master plan the officers heard a range of fairly predictable opinions both pro and anti development in the area. There were those who believe Deptford needs much more redevelopment to bring in new investment and those who are concerned that too much redevelopment will destroy the character of the area and drive out the current residents. In addition discussions about the need for community spaces and for places of worship raised a range of questions, such as should there be shared communal spaces or should ethnic communities have dedicated spaces?

The comments from the officers suggest that:

- there should be a range of suitable multiple use community facilities rather than purpose built spaces for individual communities
- there are significant public open space in both the new station and the proposed Giffin Square that will provide great opportunities for cross cultural events and festivals
- alternative retail mix to the Deptford High Street could be focused on Convoy etc which might keep them out of High Street and retain existing mix
- that Council should meet with the faith groups in order to develop a clear policy on church needs and requirements and potential location for places of worship

Study Team Recommendations - Short Term Actions

Many of the issues raised during the “*Knowing Lewisham*” project are significant challenges for Council and many will take time and resources to achieve, however there are a range of opportunities for short term “early winners” that will demonstrate Council’s commitment to developing as an intercultural city with equal opportunities for all its citizens.

Safety and Public Space

In order to build a sense of security it is recommended that Council undertake some short term initiatives to demonstrate that the concerns of the community have been listened to. These might include considering options for some key pedestrian routes and public parks.

Safe Pedestrian Routes: As the “*Knowing Lewisham*” project specifically heard concerns about pedestrian safety and vulnerability to race related harassment in relation to the route between the Peyps Estate and Deptford High Street/Deptford station it is recommended that this route be audited to identify if there are any urban design or a crime prevention through environmental design [CPTED] strategies that could help to make it feel more welcoming and safe. Officers should walk the route with women from the Peyps and have them identify the areas of greatest concern.

Safe Park Days: It is recommended that Council investigate options to ensure that the community can better utilise Deptford’s open space by making parks safe.

Options might include establishing “safe park days” where, on designated days of the week, a selected park or parks are regularly patrolled by Street Wardens or Police Community Support Officers to ensure that park users are safe and are not subjected to racial harassment. In addition a CPTED audit should be undertaken on the selected parks including the pedestrian approach footpaths to ensure there are clear view-lines, passive surveillance, lighting etc.

By ensuring that women and children, especially those from the culturally diverse communities, are not harassed there should be an increase in park usage which should have the flow on effect that with increased numbers in the parks over time it will reduce the need for a constant security presence.

Deptford Planning Clinic

It is recommended that the Planning Clinic concept be trialled in either the Wavelengths Library or alternately in the Deptford Town Centre Manager’s office. The proposal is in response to the observations that planning is not understood by the community and that some High Street traders are carrying out refurbishment work in the conservation area without planning approval.

The clinic would involve an officer being present in the Library for a set period of time on a monthly basis. It is intended that the officer would be there to discuss current planning applications, provide advice on how to prepare an application and to help educate the community on planning issues and processes. It also provides an ideal opportunity to continue gathering cultural literacy knowledge on an ongoing basis.

Giffin Street Master Plan

The Giffin Street Master Plan provides an opportunity to address a number of the issues raised during our community conversations. For example Giffin Square can provide the much needed public space for intercultural festivals and events as well as meeting the needs for gathering spaces for both the elderly and young people. Clusters of public seating and areas for informal seating such as the planter box walls and steps will lead to more people spending time in Deptford with flow on benefits for the High Street traders, encourage more passive surveillance and help to build a sense of community.

The proposed collocation of school and library can bring with it significant benefits to the community and address the needs of the culturally diverse community. There will be potential benefits flowing both ways with the school children and their parents having more immediate access to the library in a safe and welcoming location and the library benefiting from the school's growing interaction with the area's diverse community.

Ideally the new development should include multipurpose space within the school/library for the use of community groups during school hours. We heard that it is very difficult for women from culturally diverse backgrounds to organise daytime events due to the lack of suitable spaces. There are spaces available at the school in the evenings or at the weekend but this is both difficult for mothers with children to organise and more expensive than day time use because of additional costs for opening up and closing late at night.

Railway wall project

As a result of the *Intercultural City* community engagement process an artwork was proposed around the theme "the people of Deptford" that would capture the rich cultural diversity of the City should be created. The proposal was to develop a project to improve the visual appearance of the Deptford High Street railway underpass as a positive gesture to the community and visitors alike.

As we were told that many of the culturally diverse children do not know much of their cultural history it was suggested that the project should bring together elders from the different cultural groups to tell their cultural stories as a basis for the design but also to capture the stories as an aural history recording.

As a result the Deptford Town Centre Manager co-ordinated an intercultural group of young people who worked together to create the images and develop the final design. Local creative industry mentors such as graphic designers, visual artists or digital/web designers worked with the young people to provide professional advice on development of the concepts. This approach not only results in an interesting graphic solution but also provides skills training for the young people involved, as well as giving them an insight into the creative industries.

The finished banner, see below was mounted on the railway underpass wall.



Study Team Recommendations - Long Term Actions

The findings of the study suggest that there is a need for Planning and Economic Development to bring about a change in the way they work and connect with their communities. Part of this change in approach relates to the fact that the issues being faced in Lewisham are extremely complicated and interconnected across the areas of social planning, urban planning and economic sustainability are all wrapped in a complex net of growing cultural diversity. This suggests that it will only be possible to achieve quality and sustainable outcomes for the community if planning is approached in a holistic and interdisciplinary way where decisions are culturally informed.

To achieve this interdisciplinary approach requires a high level of cultural literacy about the nature of the cultural groups living in Lewisham from the perspectives of how they live their lives and what the potential impact, both positive and negative, might be of proposed development in the Borough. Therefore it is recommended that Council adopt an intercultural approach to their planning and urban design that includes: cultural mapping; culturally informed community engagement processes; cultural literacy training of officers; and planning decisions made with a vision through the "Intercultural Lens".

To achieve this goal the study team proposes the adoption of an Intercultural Toolkit as detailed in the final section of this report. In essence the Toolkit includes methodology associated with the following actions:

Mapping the Community

There is a clear need to better understand the cultural makeup of the Lewisham community at a finer grain than is perhaps currently done. While the existing statistical maps, such as the BME Population map [as shown in Part 1], can show concentrations of ethnic diversity they do not provide a profile of the overlapping ethnic communities or hot spots of cultural clusters.

It is therefore recommended that new forms of cultural mapping be explored in order to build up a more complex and dynamic mapping of the community that will help to better inform the planning and decision making process.

Community Engagement

The second aspect of building cultural literacy within the organisation is to develop meaningful community engagement processes that can help to inform the planning staff about the nature of community life and the impacts of development decisions. The "Toolkit" therefore provides an innovative approach to community engagement that takes into account cultural differences, sensitivities and perspectives.

There are two elements to the community engagement strategy, firstly the "Listening and Learning Cycle" which is about building trust and providing community members with an opportunity to be heard. The second strategy is to consider the type of questions that are asked and the Toolkit provides a range of "Knowledge Questions" aimed at gaining an understanding of peoples' lives in the domestic and public realm.

Planning through the Intercultural Lens

The concept of the Intercultural Lens is that every planning and design decision can be informed by cultural knowledge and that all changes to the built environment will have either a positive or negative impact on the cultural life of the people. In addition, given the cultural richness that comes from such a diverse community as Lewisham there is a wealth of stories, experiences and cultural knowledge that can be utilised as inspiration and context for future design projects. It is therefore important to plan and design from an informed and culturally literate position.

The "Toolkit" proposes the cultural filter process as a mechanism for interdisciplinary teams to utilise in order to establish their understanding of the cultural resource that can be drawn from and to assist in analysing potential impacts of planning outcomes.

Part 3:



The Intercultural Toolkit

Underpinning the Intercultural City concept is a new approach to inclusive communities that seeks to plan for all citizens regardless of ethnicity and circumstance while celebrating the richness of cultural diversity. As has been highlighted in this document, one of the keys to achieving this outcome is a culturally literate planning team that not only knows the demographic nature of the community but has an in depth knowledge of the community's values, needs and aspirations.

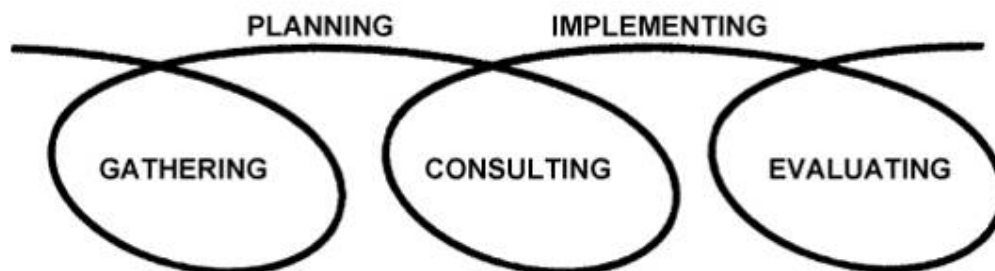
The "Knowing Lewisham" project has been a small step in the process of developing a meaningful engagement with the Lewisham community. It has provided an insight into the urban context of Deptford and the nature of the built environment and the resulting impact on the lives of the residents, especially those from a culturally diverse background. It has commenced a dialogue with a range of significant cultural groups and demonstrated people's willingness to share their experiences and feelings with Council officers.

Hopefully the "Knowing Lewisham" projects will become the start of an ongoing cultural change in the way Council thinks about urban planning and urban design

To some degree the new planning framework requires a major rethinking of traditional/regulatory community consultation techniques. For example ODPM states that in the context of the new Local Development Framework:

Consultation means a continuous process of informal discussion with people during this phase as opposed to formal discrete public participation required by Regulation

We propose that the concept of a continuous process of community engagement should be seen as a series of consultation learning loops that includes not only consulting on planning proposals but also pre-planning knowledge and after implementation evaluation.



The diagram above graphically illustrates the continuous community engagement loops with the following elements:

Gathering: is about building the planning and design team's cultural literacy through new forms of contextual research and listening to the community. This is an ongoing process of building knowledge of people's lives and how the built environment impacts on or heightens cultural life. Gathering of knowledge needs to be done before planning takes place and therefore will inform the initial planning decisions. Project planning based on sound knowledge of local culture will result in proposals that the community can see has considered and attempted to balance the diverse needs and lifestyles of the many cultures living in Lewisham.

Consulting: is about developing techniques to encourage intercultural dialogue and undertake meaningful consultation across all sectors of the community. It is especially important to undertake intergenerational and intercultural consultation in a diverse city such as Lewisham to ensure that projects are of relevance to and meet the needs of all age groups and cultures. It is about asking the right questions that provide the planners and designers with the understanding they need to finalise planning and designing through an Intercultural Lens. Council has prepared the "Statement of Community Involvement" in response to the requirements of the Local Development Framework. This document in association with the Intercultural Toolkit should provide a sound basis for future consultation.

Evaluating: is about working with the community over time to ensure that completed projects meet the stated aims and objectives of the master plan and design brief. It is about seeking to establish and understand the impact of projects on the cultural life of the community in order to draw lessons for future developments.

Toolkit Format

The Intercultural Toolkit is to provide officers and outside consultants with the knowledge and skills to see their planning and design work through the Intercultural Lens and thereby create an environment that is culturally rich in its feel while also delivering the needs of the community on a practical level.

The toolkit is structured to assist in gaining, sharing and applying intercultural knowledge and includes:

1. Mapping the Community: Cultural Maps
2. Community Engagement: Intercultural listening and learning cycles
3. Community Engagement: The Knowledge Questions
4. Planning through the Intercultural Lens: Cultural Filters
5. Planning through the Intercultural Lens: Applying Cultural Filters.

Mapping the Community: Cultural Maps

In order to build up a meaningful knowledge base on the cultural make up of the Borough it is recommended that an ongoing cultural mapping process be instigated to identify the distribution of cultural groups across Lewisham including those areas of significant clustering of ethnic or linguistic groups. This will inevitably be an evolving process as the distribution will change over time.

The mapping process would:

- draw on both statistical demographics and ward profiles as well as feeding in anecdotal information from the communities, service providers and field workers
- result in a visual mapping format that provides a cultural overlay to the Borough

The resulting cultural map would include supporting material such as:

- who are the key spokes-people for a cultural group
- who might be cultural gate-keepers or barriers to engaging with a community group
- who are valuable cultural interpreters and respected conduits to communities

To ensure that officers can fully utilise the valuable information contained in the cultural mapping it would also be important to work with the cultural interpreters to develop cultural protocols, which might include but not be limited to the following:

- who:
 - is it appropriate to talk to men and women together
 - is it appropriate for a male officer to talk to culturally diverse women or female officer to male community members
 - is it appropriate to speak to children and youths without their parents being present
 - how to obtain the opinions of the community's elderly citizens
 - should consultation focus on individual cultural or linguistic groups or seek opinions through intercultural sessions
- where:
 - provide guidance on selecting the best location where the target community will feel safe and open [also consider availability of childcare]
 - identify when it is best to meet with a group on their territory
 - when is it best to bring together intercultural sessions on neutral territory
 - when to walk the streets and parks or visit the homes
- why:
 - be clear about why you are consulting
 - make it clear how the knowledge collected will be used
 - be open honest and build trust over time
- when:
 - select convenient times to suit group and make sure they will be available
 - check that there are no conflicting events
 - may need different times for different groups
 - check that there are no conflicting religious commitment

Community Engagement: Intercultural Listening and Learning Cycles

It is recommended that the Listening and Learning Cycle approach utilised in Phase 2 of the “Knowing Lewisham” project be adopted as a valuable form of community engagement. It should become the approved process for exploring planning issues prior to the development of master plans or change in planning policy. Utilising the cycle will not only ensure that planning is well informed about the community’s opinions but it will greatly contribute to the level of cultural literacy within the planning team. This technique is not a replacement of formal project based consultation, rather a means of maintaining an ongoing conversation with the community.

It is recommended that the next phase of the “Knowing Lewisham” listening and learning cycle should be focused on bringing together cross-cultural groups to share experiences and hear other stories. This might, for instance be a program of sessions held at Tidemill School where there is a significant cross-section of diversity and a high degree of involvement from parents and family.

The future listening and learning cycles might be focused on specific aspects of planning and the built environment. For example in order to feed into the Giffin Street process an intercultural session could explore in detail peoples’ feelings about public space such as town squares and gather knowledge about; attitudes to gathering and mixing in squares; addressing the needs of the elderly and youths; feelings of safety openness; and cultural and community celebration and expression.

Other intercultural sessions might be focused on a detailed exploration of housing and home life to build on the initial findings of this report. In this case it would be good to present examples of some case studies where alternative and flexible solutions have been trialled in order to initiate debate on different forms of housing and to demonstrate that planners and architects can address people’s needs.

The process as shown in the diagram below is essentially one of community engagement through a series of steps through which the planning officers and community can work together and build up a connection based on trust and sharing.

Step 1 Listening: listening circles of different cultural groups would be encouraged to talk about their cultural lives and how they are played out in the built environment. This would not be formal consultation about any specific project or place, rather seeking to gain an insight into the interrelationship between people and place.

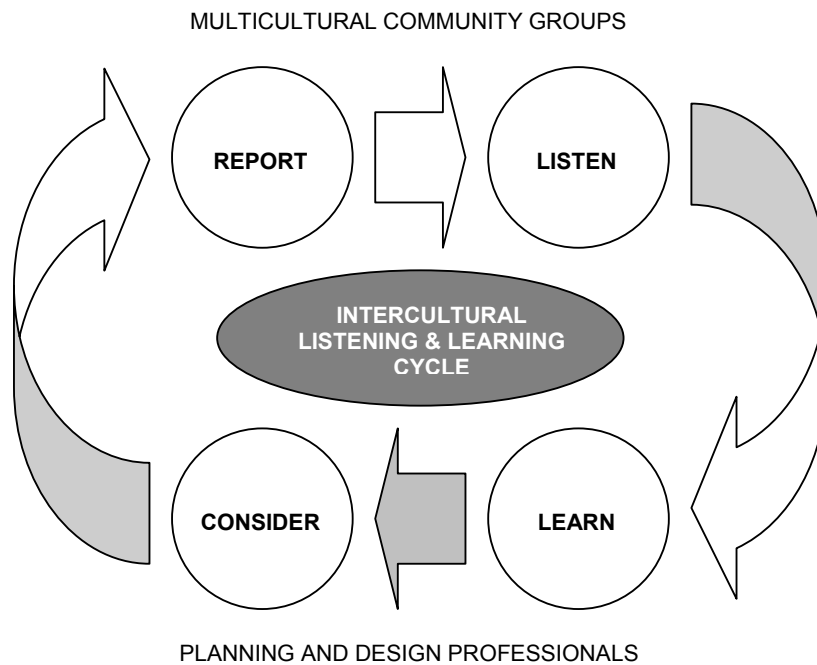
Prior to any community discussions it will be important to establish, with community advisors, culturally appropriate ways in which the questions are presented and consideration of different ways that questions might be answered. It will also be important to establish what cultural limitations might exist in talking to young people, women and the elderly. Also careful consideration must be given to ensure that the questions are not likely to be interpreted as too personal or seeking a higher level of cultural disclosure than might be uncomfortable for the participants.

Step 2 Learn: Inter-disciplinary workshops with Council officers such as town and social planners, urban designers, policy officers and other relevant service providers, such as Town Centre Managers, where the lessons learned from Step 1 are reported and discussed. The key purpose of this step is to expand peoples’ thinking and knowledge about community needs and aspirations.

Step 3 Consider: This step could involve both internal officers and workshops with external consultants and organisations such as Council’s Design Panel or professional bodies such as CABI, RTPI and UDG. The workshops to consider all the issues raised and assess their implications for planning and design of; new public realm projects and civic infrastructure; redevelopment of existing spaces; and place management initiatives by Town Centre Managers etc.

It would be important for these officers and external participants to consider existing regulations and bylaws and investigate what opportunities exist for new and innovative approaches within the regulatory framework. Or if indeed there is a need to seek some changes to inappropriate regulations.

Step 4 Report: Report back to the community groups on how their issues might be considered in future planning or why there are sound reasons that prevent changes to current planning approaches. The process could then be repeated to refine outcomes.



Brecknock 2005

Community Engagement: The Knowledge Questions

The following range of questions was developed during the "Knowing Lewisham" project and will be a valuable starting point for future community engagement processes:

The questions have been grouped to cover questions structured to draw out knowledge about: peoples' family and home lives; issues of relevance to the young and the elderly; public realm; and questions of direct relevance to retail traders.

Family and residential questions

Talking about the size and composition of average families

- are they intergenerational?
- do extended families share or wish to share houses?
- what are their physical space requirements?

Talking about rituals and needs associated with food preparation and consumption

- what are the main rituals and celebrations through the year or rites of passage that involve significant food preparation and sharing?
- what size group will gather to celebrate and where do the celebrations take place?
- what are the special needs associated with such rituals that might relate to the design of private and public places?

Talking about the appropriateness of current housing stock

- how well do existing houses meet the needs of community members in terms of family size, community gatherings and room layouts?
- how well do existing houses meet needs for internal privacy?
- how well do existing houses contribute to a sense of community - i.e. meet needs for interaction with neighbours and people in the street?
- what are the different family roles and relationships from a cultural, gender or age perspective that impact on the nature of housing design?

Talking about family, religious or community events or celebrations

- what are the important cultural considerations in planning such events?
- what are the domestic and public space requirements?
- what events are considered appropriate to share with the broader community?

Talking about daily routine outside the home

- what are the patterns of shopping, working, visiting friends or worship during the week?
- what are the differences between weekday and weekend public life?
- what are the cultural, gender or generational sensitivities associated with public life that need to be understood by Council planners?

Intergenerational Questions

Talking about young people

- are there specific cultural differences between the ways young people use public space?
- are young people respected and catered for in the planning and design of public space?
- what are the key gathering places for young people to meet and interact?

Talking about how appropriate local parks are in meeting the needs of the community

- what are the qualities that make you feel safe and comfortable in the local parks?
- do your local parks provide the right park furniture and facilities to meet your community's needs?
- how do you and your community use the parks for personal or communal activities – i.e. are they gathering places for communal gatherings or for personal quiet time away from family or peer groups?

Public Realm Questions

Talking about how safe or welcoming the streets and public places feel

- what are the qualities that make you feel comfortable in public spaces and shops?
- how well do the existing public spaces, streets, parks and shopping centres meet your needs?
- what are the issues with being in the streets and public spaces during the day, evening and night?
- is the public street a place to be seen and enjoy promenading or a place to use only for essential activities such as shopping or going to work?

Talking about the design of public space such as footpaths, plazas, shopping centres and market squares

- do you have a preference for large open spaces or for more crowded smaller spaces and busy footpaths?
- are there activities such as meeting and gathering with friends that are not currently catered for in the public spaces you frequent?
- would you use public seating in quite public nodes associated with streets and squares?
- do people stay around in the area, spend time and enjoy the area or just do their shopping and business and go?

Talking about retail needs and experience

- how well do the local retailers cater for culturally appropriate products?
- what are the qualities that make you feel comfortable using local shops?
- are there cultural preferences associated with shopping in the small shops of main street as opposed to a shopping mall?
- do your local shops make an effort to address cultural/religious differences and does this effect the design and layout of the shop?

Talking about festivals and markets in public places

- do you take part in and enjoy cultural festivals and street markets?
- how important are cultural festivals etc in providing your culture with recognition and respect from the broader community?
- do the existing public squares and streets adequately meet the needs of local events?

Talking about interaction with people from different cultures

- what factors encourage or make possible interaction?
- what sort of places and or activities are important in bringing people together in a safe and sharing environment?
- how much cross cultural interaction takes place in shops and at markets?

Talking about cultural expression

- do you feel that your physical environment expresses the cultural diversity of the local community – i.e. are there artwork, designs, signs and decorations that celebrate cultures?
- are there colours, designs and symbols which you would like to use on your homes or businesses that would help to express your culture?
- are there barriers to cultural expression that you have experienced with regard to your home, business or local public environments?

Trader Specific Questions

Many of the preceding “Knowledge Questions” are relevant to the local traders as individuals and possibly residents. The following questions have been framed to provide discussion from a retail trader’s perspective.

Talking about people

- are there different patterns of shopping behaviour between cultures?
- are there cultural, gender or generational sensitivities associated with retailing that need to be understood by Council planners?
- have you observed that there are cultural preferences associated with shopping in the small shops of main street as opposed to a shopping mall?

- how much cross cultural interaction takes place in shops and at markets?
- how important are cultural festivals and markets in providing different cultural groups with recognition and respect from the broader community?

Talking about doing business

- how well do you as local retailers cater for culturally appropriate products?
- how do you make people from different cultures feel comfortable using local shops?
- do you have to make special effort to address cultural/religious differences and does this effect the design and layout of the shop etc?
- are there colours, designs and symbols which you would like to use on your businesses that would help to express your culture?
- are there barriers to cultural expression that you have experienced with regard to your business or local public environments?
- will there be an impact on the cultural life of Deptford from increased gentrification?

Talking about the built environment

- how well do the existing streets and shopping areas meet community needs?
- are there issues with being in the streets and public spaces during the day, evening and night?
- do you have a preference for large open spaces or for more crowded smaller spaces and busy footpaths?
- do people stay around in the area, spend time and enjoy themselves or just do their shopping and go?
- are there any special planning or regulatory issues associated with culturally diverse retailing?
- do the existing public squares and streets adequately meet the needs of local markets and events?

Planning through the Intercultural Lens: Cultural Filters

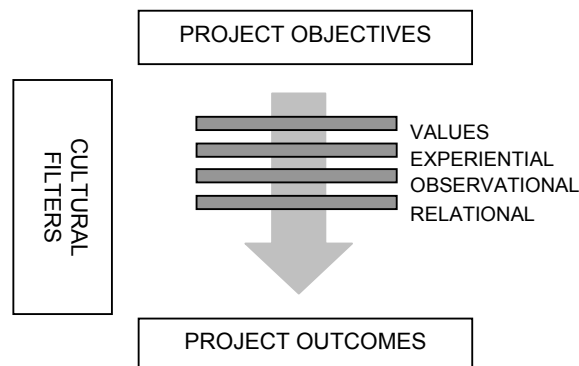
The concept of Cultural Filters provides an analytical structure that allows us to review our personality and our cultural experiences against those of a diverse community. Our perceptions and interpretations are influenced by events 'filtered' through our cultural experiences. These cultural filters develop from racial and ethnic background, as well as gender, sexual orientation, age, economic status, religion and geography. Not surprisingly therefore, we judge the world around us within the bounds of our own experiences and beliefs. Our filters predispose us to assess our city environment and public behaviour in terms with which we are already familiar. For the most part, people are unaware of these cultural filters and normally do not stop to consider where they developed a liking for particular types of food, an ear for certain styles of music or an appreciation for contemporary art.

The danger of personal cultural filters, if not understood, can be that we allow them to influence our design and planning attitudes and our understanding of the needs of other people and other cultures. We have all gathered experiences on a wide variety of topics; politics, education, vocabulary, travel, cultural traditions, family, heritage, ethnicity and sexuality habits to name but a few of the potential influences. All these influences go into forming our own unique cultural filter. It is not surprising that interaction with people of different cultures, whose patterns of belief and experience are quite different from our own, can easily lead to misunderstanding or distrust.

The task in city building is to go beyond the limitations of our own personal Cultural Filters. In conjunction with Cultural Literacy, we need to develop the skills that allow us to know our own assumptions and be open and receptive to the assumptions and needs of others. A structure of filters and strategic questions is proposed to transcend the personal and seek to understand a diversity of influences.

The following framework aims to assist the planner or designer to determine the aesthetic, spatial and experiential needs of the project based on knowledge of their diverse community or to help establish what knowledge questions need to be asked in order to understand the community's needs and aspirations.

This does not necessarily mean that the perceived needs of minority groups must be accommodated at the expense of the majority, nor should the majority view overrule all other aspirations. What it does mean is that all these diverse views must be gathered, considered and understood before a decision based on public good is arrived at. It is after all quite possible to design a park with extensive play facilities to meet the needs of a large and growing population of young families, while at the same time designing sheltered and peaceful areas where elderly citizens can meet friends, talk and enjoy the sights and sounds of the young at play. It just needs understanding, thought and design skill.



Planning through the Intercultural Lens: Applying Cultural Filters

If a set of cultural filters are to be applied to future planning and design in Lewisham they might be thought about as follows:

Values: A consideration of values should include an assessment of the area's traditional working class history, community stories and cherished heritage items and seek to understand the diversity of community ideals, aspirations and dreams. The professional must be in touch with their own values and understand how they effect their professional judgements or how their values might differ from those they work with and those of the community. Working collaboratively or interculturally it is necessary to negotiate difference and to establish areas of commonality or shared values.

It is not only important to understand the values that will underpin the planning or design proposal but to consider what might be the impacts of the project on the values of the community.

Value questions officers might ask include:

- do we know and understand the cultural values of the communities involved?
- what can we draw from the community's cultural values to enhance the policy/project?
- will the policy/project potentially have a positive or negative impact on different cultural groups?

Experiential: The "Experiential Filter" focuses on the felt qualities associated with an existing place and establishes what qualities should be aspired to in the future.

The existing felt qualities might include an exploration of the experiences that go to make up the sense of place such as the experiences of sound, smell and tactile sensations experienced through the interaction with other people, space, planting and material selection. The built form will feature strongly in any assessment of Experiential Filters as the building mass and urban form will communicate strong experiential lessons through its uniformity or diversity, density or openness and negative or positive messages.

Therefore the questions will be based around what feelings are aroused, what sense of history is communicated and what impact does the built form have on people using the space. In framing questions to interrogate a proposed development the emphasis will shift to questions that explore what the impact might be on the quality of the place through the introduction of new or redeveloped elements.

Experiential questions officers might ask include:

- how might people with different cultural values/backgrounds or age groups feel in/about the space/place?
- will the space/place feel open and welcoming to all groups in the community?
- what do we want people to feel when they visit the new public space?

Observational: The "Observational Filter" focuses predominantly on the visual world of architecture, landscape and the arts. It is associated with both the existing and proposed built and natural environment. This might include, but not be limited to, considerations of the aesthetic style of architecture, iconography and narratives included in artworks and wayfinding and interpretive signage. The design of space has a major impact on the way people behave in public. People's behaviour as individuals and as groups must therefore also be considered as it relates to the very form and function of the public realm.

This filter is highly relevant to the design profession and most designers will be well equipped with the visual language and site analysis skills to undertake this process. It may be necessary for designers to test their own assumptions and aesthetics against those of the community.

Observational questions officers might ask include:

- will the appearance of place/space express aspects of the areas cultural diversity?
- will the project incorporate visual icons of the areas history or contemporary community?

- are there any aspects of the projects design that might be misinterpreted as offensive by different cultural/faith groups?

Relational: Perhaps the most rational of the Cultural Filters is the “Relational Filter” which focuses on the existing and potential relationships associated with the project. This includes political, economic and social relationships.

This filter should be used to identify the institutions and functions of place that relate to community intercultural and interpersonal relationships within the proposed development environment. A public park might be an important gathering point for the city’s homeless, a place where there are plenty of benches and a space for a volunteer soup-kitchen to park and dispense sustenance and social interaction. The design of public space in an area of a city with large numbers of boarding houses might need to give special consideration to gathering nodes to meet the needs for the boarding house residents who often do not have access to their rooms during the day.

In the Deptford research we have seen a clear relationship between the design of housing stock to social and economic issues facing culturally diverse families. Likewise there are potential social benefits to community openness and access to services such as the proposed relocated Giffin Street Library and school.

Relational questions officers might ask include:

- what are the social benefits or implications of the policy/project?
- what are the economic benefits or implications of the policy/project?
- what are the environmental benefits or implications of the policy/project?
- who are the groups most likely to be affected and do we know sufficient about how they will relate to the policy/project?

Intercultural Lewisham

Clearly Lewisham is a rich and diverse multicultural community. However, the research found that there is little evidence of cross-cultural activity between these diverse communities, other than through local schools and libraries.

Lewisham Council can however take the intercultural path towards an inclusive approach to planning that helps to break down the barriers between cultural groups and free residents from the constraints of their existing parallel lives. We were told throughout the community conversations that people wish to interact across cultures and would welcome the opportunities to share their culture with others. Therefore the study team believes that the time is right for Council to address the Intercultural City notion through its planning and allied disciplines.

The "Knowing Lewisham" study, this report and the Intercultural Toolkit should provide Council with a good basis upon which to bring about cultural change within the organisation and to establish new partnerships with the community based on the recognition of cultural diversity. Raising the level of cultural literacy in the organisation is an achievable goal and should become a requirement for all officers.

Cultural diversity should be seen as a valuable resource from which the Council can draw on for its planning and redevelopment work. Although there is, among some in the community, a negative perception that minority groups are a burden on society the evidence from the international Intercultural City project is that there is a "diversity dividend" to be had in cities that have embraced cultural diversity.

As a source of exchange, innovation and creativity, cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature. In this sense, it is the common heritage of humanity and should be recognized and affirmed for the benefit of present and future generations.

[UNESCO Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity, 2001]

Lewisham can and should seek to become a leading exemplar as an intercultural planner, thereby the community will benefit from the benefits of its rich cultural diversity in both present and future generations.

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